



AlansAfrica

"making a real difference" in

e-mail: alanwooly@msn.com

website: www.alansfrica.co.uk

twitter: [@AlansAfrica](https://twitter.com/AlansAfrica)



Sierra Leone – my 12th trip

I went to Freetown in 2005 as a Rotary volunteer believing it would be a **"one off life experience"**, but the 11 days I spent there were life changing. I realised I could **"make a real difference"** if I worked directly with a community and on my third trip in 2007 I began my direct fundraising. If someone had said to me in 2005 that by 2019 I would have been to Freetown 12 times I would have told them they'd got the wrong bloke !

To say this latest trip was a bit different would be an understatement. I often do things for the first time during my trips BUT visiting 3 hospitals for treatment and spending 3 days in one of them wasn't part of my plan!! I suffered with severe nose bleeds (not helped as I am on Warfarin) caused by an acute nasal infection aggravated by the heat & humidity. I have to say that ALL the treatment I received was very good, despite the limited resources. I missed out on doing a few visits and also my flight back to the UK!!

My **sincere thanks** to the staff of Westminster Aviation Security Services in Freetown and the Westminster Group PLC staff in the UK for ALL their assistance during this difficult, stressful time. Once again Westminster Group PLC had sponsored my trip, but after this escapade they may not be so willing next time!

Banbury International Community School



During my visit we officially opened the 2 new classrooms at the school. It was a great ceremony with local community leaders making speeches

with ALL the children, staff and many parents present. I had the honour of cutting the ribbon - with the bluntest pair of scissors in Sierra Leone !



Below is one of the classrooms being used by the Junior Secondary kids the day after the opening - these classes were started at the request of the community. We have come a long way since December 2015 when we started to build the original 2 classroom block and the toilets. We now have 6 classrooms, a store/office/staff room, a well & the number of children has risen from 83 to 170. This development has had a huge impact for this local impoverished community and just proves that we are **"making a real difference"**



Sincere thanks to the main building sponsors: staff at Barclays Banbury, The Doris Field Charitable Trust, the Rotary Clubs of Banbury & Witney, St Mary the Virgin (Broughton & North Newington) and furniture sponsors: Tula Publishing, Colwyn Bay Rotary Club, "Uncle John". Also James (9) & Lewis (7) who each sponsored a desk & bench set.

AlansAfrica is supported by:



WESTMINSTER
GROUP FOUNDATION



These were 2 of the first children I met at the school when it was housed in the cramped church hall back in 2013. They were also the first 2 children that we supplied with school uniform. They have both graduated to Junior Secondary school and are making really good progress.



In Sierra Leone you have to pass a national exam, across all the 12 subjects you study in the primary school, before you “graduate” to a Junior Secondary school. If you do not pass you have to re-sit the year and take the exams again.

Oxford United supporters fund footballs

These 3 lads are part of one of the 4 Oxford United Mahera Wharf teams that have been supplied with kit courtesy of Oxford United FC.



The guys in the photo opposite, from the suburb of Aberdeen, were also so grateful for their new ball and the set of yellow shirts that they received. MANY thanks to Debbie, Alison, Mason & Noah for the footballs & Rosie/OUFC for the kits. Promoting the “**Kick it out**” campaign, with 2 of the coaching staff at Mahera Wharf OUFC.

Bladon Church of England Primary School

I’ve just heard that the School are going to undertake the “**Smartie Challenge**” – each of the 99 children at the school will be given a tube of



When they have eaten them they will put loose change in the tube and this will support the purchase of bench & desk sets at Kunduma school

More information in the next Newsletter.

I would like to thank Debbie @ Horton View Post Office, Banbury for donating the tubes of Smarties
Ducklington FC donate 2 kits to local community



Thanks to Emma & the Club for the donation of the both the sets of shirts, above, which were gratefully received by the juniors & adults.



Calvary School, Lungi

On my first day when Pastor Mark told me he had a surprise for me I wasn't sure what to expect. We visited the school and had a walk round the classrooms so I could see the condition of them and then he took me outside and showed me this !!



I was totally overwhelmed and very surprised. One of the things I love about Pastor Mark's community is that they very rarely ask for anything but if they need something they try a bit of **"self-help"** to get things moving. There is no source of water at the school, the nearest well is about a quarter of a mile away, and they had decided that they wanted to improve their facilities for both the school and the church. They announced their intentions and the community held a "whip round" to kick start the project. The first stage, as you can see, is now complete and the next phase is to build a tower which will house a 3,000 litre tank. Water will be pumped up to the tank and a number of taps will be strategically situated around the compound giving a readily available source of fresh, clean water. This will be a major step forward for the entire community.

I asked Pastor Mark if he needed any financial support for the next phase, I knew the answer would be yes, BUT he did not ask for any money. I have just received the detailed costings for the tower, tank and all the pipework and thanks to a significant donation, that I have received this week, work will start soon and we hope to be able to complete the installation in the next few weeks so that they can take advantage of the rainy season, which usually starts at the end of May.

A hand up NOT a hand out

Free secondary education for all announced

This seemed like a massive step forward until the statement was amended so that it only covered government supported schools. Unfortunately all the 6 schools I assist are community schools and therefore receive no government funding. One of my schools has just been recognised by the government, so moving forward we should get some support in the next academic year. The initial announcement raised the hopes of parents whose children attend community schools only for those hopes to be dashed. Many parents are now refusing to pay school fees as a protest and this means that schools are unable to pay the teachers. That said ALL the teachers are still turning up on a daily basis to teach the children. Whilst I was in Freetown I used some funds to give the teachers a "one off" gratuity payment to help with their living expenses but have re-iterated to them that I cannot pay salaries regularly as this takes money away from building projects. I am hoping that I may be able to raise some funds specifically to pay further "gratuity" payments to the staff. The majority of the staff earn between £30 & £40 per month, which is not a lot, BUT I am dealing with over 60 staff. If anyone is interested in supporting this initiative please contact me directly to discuss.

Liverpool Community School, Waterloo

The last year has been a very productive one - we completed the building of the Senior library & laboratory & the Junior library installing water harvesting on all 3. Also, thanks to Woodstock & Kidlington Rotary Club & a Rotary District Grant we've fitted mains electricity to these 3 new rooms, a further 6 classrooms, the staff rooms & offices & some lighting around the compound. We have completed the first phase of the purchase of the science equipment (absolute essentials) and purchased over 1,400 text books covering all the subjects taught to the 3 age groups.

Fund raising & spending

Since the start of the Rotary year on July 1st 2018 **£27,025** has been raised and we have spent a total of **£28,750** for the various projects in Freetown. This has only been possible due to the fantastic support I receive from a vast network of regular supporters who all know that **EVERY ££** raised is

"Making A Real Difference"

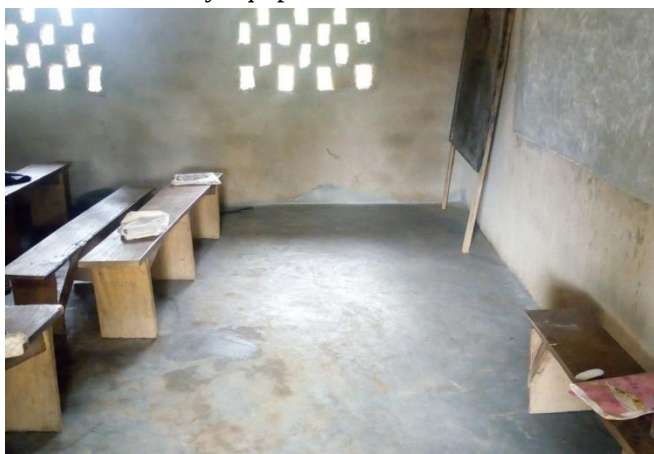
Oxford United parents fundraising to support Sierra Leone football teams

A mum, whose son is part of the Oxford United Academy, says “I recently came in to contact with a football team in Sierra Leone. These children LOVE football, which provides a break from their hard life, they get together with friends and they PLAY. I am trying to raise money so these children can have the basic resources they need including food for after matches, and mattresses as many of them sleep on the ground. Several are orphans unable to attend school as they can’t afford school fees”.

“These children deserve to be able to play and have fun too - can you help? Even a small amount will **make a big difference** to these football loving kids”. A crowdfunding page has received donations from OUFC academy parents and Gerrards Cross School parents. For details visit justgiving.com/crowdfunding/footballkidsafrica

Kunduma Community School

I am pleased to report that we have virtually finished the first phase of the work at the school – all 3 classrooms now have concrete floors and we have managed to render a lot of the exterior of the building and this will be completed in the next phase of work. We are also going to have made enough desk and bench sets to fully equip all of the classrooms.



Summer's here, or near, because the first 2019 “Pay What You Want” book sale has taken place. Last year Sam, Karl & Sandra held 7 book sales and raised an **AMAZING £1,100** which funded 400 text books for the new secondary library at Liverpool Community School. These were the first books the school had ever owned, previously teaching was all “talk & chalk”. Thanks to the Books & Ink team for “**Making A Real Difference**”. This first book sale raised a superb **£226** – many thanks to Sam, Karl & Sandra for all their support.



Micro credit scheme set up for Hawa & Mary



I met these ladies through Fayah – they have both looked at micro credit schemes BUT the interest rate had always been a stumbling block for them. I’m not worried about charging interest & have just sent an initial loan to them so they can set up a small business run from home. With my initial loan, they will buy stock from a wholesaler, sell it on in their community at a cheaper price than it will be available in the local market and they will generate an income from the profit they make. They live in two different areas of Waterloo so they will not be in competition with each other.