School library provision within a national information system: a proposal for the Sierra Leone Library Board

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SCHOOL LIBRARY PROVISION WITHIN A NATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM:

A PROPOSAL FOR THE SIERRA LEONE LIBRARY BOARD

by

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requirements for the award of MASTER OF LIBRARY STUDIES of the

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my wife Doris for her unflinching support and inexhaustible
courage, my two daughters - Joanitta and Sarah-Rose for their
abiding faith and enduring affection, and to my mother Sarah who
bravely endured full fifteen months' absence of her only child.

INTRODUCTION

School libraries must be seen within the overall context of the educational process to find not only the justification but the true role of this type of library.

Recent developments in educational philosophy and theory have demonstrated that the key role to social justice and national development is education: education conceived as a lifelong necessity and available to all.

In the light of this basic principle, the aims, methods and structures of education have been thought out afresh. Spurred on by research in psychopedogogy and intellectual development which has resulted in a better understanding of the learning process, educational practice now accepts that instruction might be centred on the learner and should be more individualised and personalised. de Horowitz has observed that:

> School education is no longer considered as an end in
> itself but as a preparation for self-learning and life
> long education (1).

Briefly, the concept of education is limited in time (school age) and confined in space (school buildings) must be discarded. Instead modern democratic education must be conceived as a life long existential continuum which requires a revival of man's natural drive towards knowledge. Basic to this idea is the belief that education has ceased to be the responsibility of a single institution "the school", to become the concern and business of society as a whole.

The conditions prevalent in developing countries (Sierra Leone being no exception) lend validity to these educational ideas and poignant urgency to their applications.

Conditions in these countries are very much related to the

imperatives of economic development and the realities of the population explosion. For the first time in their history these nations have recognised that education on a national scale must precede economic development. The majority of these countries are engaged in a titanic struggle, that of extending the benefits of education to large portions of their populations while at the same time bringing about a renovation of the educational process. Both these tasks, renovating and extending education, are closely interrelated since the former gives sense and validity to the latter.

In effect, the high rate of drop-outs in secondary schools in sierra Leone and the partial failure of our literacy compaigns have clearly shown that equal educational opportunity is not a matter of the legal right nor is it a question of the possibility and feasibility of receiving education; equal opportunity is only determined by the effects of having received such an education. In other words, equal opportunity means making certain that each individual, adult or child receives a suitable education at a pace and through methods adapted to his particular needs. Such are the challenges that confront librarianship in developing countries. School library service provision within a National Information system must be based on a sound judgement and fully take into consideration the educational trends that have just been outlined.

This task will fall most heavily upon two of the components of the system: public and school libraries - on school libraries because of their direct involvement with formal schooling and their potentiality to improve instruction and facilitate learning - on public libraries because traditionally they have been a significant educational resource for society and have made important educational contributions. The very fact that they are situated outside the formal educational system makes them the principal channel of continual self-education and gives them the freedom to innovate, investigate and to travel paths that have not been trodden before.

Although the educational function of the public library has always been a very controversial issue among librarians, recently public

libraries have been in many ways increasingly aware of modern
trends in education and more open to accept educational demands.

The part that public and school libraries will play within a
national system of developing countries will depend on their role
perception and upon their capability to pool efforts from the start
and develop jointly.

The effective use of books is something which should be taught at
the age of formal education, and it is impossible to fulfil this
task adequately without a library or a collection of books. In
primary schools, the pupils are taught to read, write and speak
English which is the medium of instruction in schools, the public
library is available to some children if they are fortunate enough
to live near one, but many village children have no access to books
and even if they do receive a supply collection of books on loan
from the public library they soon become bored with the same
books.

In an article in the <u>Sierra Leone Library Journal</u>, John observed
that:

> The Sierra Leone Library Board which is a Government
> funded body, but which is autonomous, runs a primary
> schools service to about 700 schools in the rural area
> and provinces. It is a poor service in terms of
> frequency of visits, ratio of books per student, content
> of books etc. but the service was initiated by the Sierra
> Leone Library Board. (2)

Book acquisition for this service is totally dependent on donations
either of books or of money. The ratio of total bookstock to
primary school students in the country is one book per 80 pupils
(3). As a result there is no possibility of providing any sort of
nationwide service. The primary library service therefore works on
the principle of putting out its entire bookstock into schools,
collecting it three to six months later and moving on to a new
area. Information from one trip (4) to Tongo Fields in the Kenema
district indicated that 100 books had been provided to a school

that had a total roll of 1900 pupils. The books were left in the school for approximately six months (it was originally planned that they should spend one term in the school before rotating, but a shortage of petrol and vehicles problems prevented this). The loss rate was recorded at just above 50%. To provide a reasonable service to even half of the primary school population would require a dramatic increase in primary bookstock.

Until recently, the primary library service was probably the only organisation putting any significant books into the rural areas at all. If the primary text book project now in progress succeeds in stimulating a reading habit, the service will be the only means the children will have of extending their interests and horizons.

Havard-Williams on his UNESCO mission to Sierra Leone in 1983 observed that:-

> The role of libraries and information centres (and Archieves) needs to be emphasised as organs and services which make a vital contribution to the educational, cultural, economic and industrial life of the country. There should be in the light of this need and in the light of current financial stringencies (both in countries receiving aid and those providing it) be provision for an integrated service of national, public school, college, university and special libraries in the light of the UNESCO PGI programme.(5)

Therefore the main aim of this dissertation is to reappraise the present school library service provided by the Sierra Leone Library Board, look into our educational system and draw the attention of all those concerned with education of the valuable place of libraries in schools in the light of current educational thinking. The Ministry of Education is also aware of the vital role that libraries can play in the education of the child and in the final report of the Education Review it had this to say:-

> It should be possible for the Ministry of Education to provide for the establishment of a National Co-ordinated

system which would be responsible for the development of
libraries, archieves, documentation and museums. Such a
provision would underline the importance and value of
these services both for education and culture in general
and would ensure in due course a fair distribution of
these services throughout the country (6).

Schools should be encouraged to develop their libraries and the
gift books especially those received from the British Council under
the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) Book Presentation
Scheme and other foreign countries should be used to form a nucleus
of libraries in schools. The second-hand gift books from the
Ranfurly Library Service and other foreign organisations donated to
schools by the Board should be monitored and organised with the
assistance of staff from the Library Board. This can only be
possible if there is an effective integrated national school
library service.

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CHAPTER ONE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS SERVICE AND SERVICE TO SECONDARY
SCHOOLS

1.1 School Service provided by the Library Board

The Sierra Leone Library Board is the statutory body responsible
for the operation of a nationwide public library service. One of
the function of the Board therefore is to give assistance to
primary and secondary schools, technical institutions and teacher
training colleges. (1) At present the Board gives little or no
assistance to secondary school libraries apart from distributing
second-hand gift books from the Ranfurly Library Service and other
donors. It also gives advisory and technical services on the
request of individual schools.

> The provision of a National library service will seek to
> serve the following main purposes ... (b) to provide
> effective services for children and young people
> including requisite services for schools ... (2).

The above quotation is taken from section 48 of the Government's
'White Paper' on Educational Development (1958) and had the Sierra
Leone Library Boards' whole-hearted concurrence and support. The
Board is further convinced that the early formation of the reading
habit in children is fundamental to the improvement of educational
standards in the country. Its acquirement will not only make the
teachers' task easier and more productive but provide a tool by
which the child may educate himself during his school life and
after. Generally, it is desirable that children should acquire the
habit of reading and using the library at an early age, so the idea
of providing reading materials to primary school children was
conceived. Furthermore, the need for such service stemmed from the
fact that there is a dearth of bookshops in certain areas of the
country and it was necessary to supplement schools with books other
than their prescribed textbooks.

The Mobile Library Service operated by the Sierra Leone Library
Board was established in November 1961 as the Primary Schools
Service. This service is slightly different from that operated in
other countries since it is concerned only with primary schools in
towns where libraries have not been established. Schools in towns
where there are Branch or Regional libraries are encouraged to use
these libraries. Schools which are fortunate to be located near
the central library in Freetown do heavily use this library and
because of the heavy demand on the children's library in Freetown,
the service has been extended to schools in distant areas from the
central library. For this purpose a plentiful supply of books is
essential and the service is based on the premise that an effective
book service to the children can be carried out by supplying books
directly to the schools.

1.2 How Funded

The scheme is funded by the Ministry of Education for the purchase
of children's books which are distributed by two mobile vehicles.
The vehicles which had a shelving capacity of 2,000 volumes were
extensively used and were constructed to meet our road conditions
which can sometimes prove hazardous particularly in the rainy
season. Two library assistants and two drivers with a layman's
knowledge of library procedures man the unit on a rota system. The
librarian-in-charge gives advice and assistance on matters relating
to the service such as the choice of books or special requests that
may be made by the readers.

When the primary schools service was first established all primary
schools known to be in existence were invited to participate. For
new schools wishing to benefit from the system, an application must
be made to the Sierra Leone Library Board. There are a number of
requirements to be satisfied before an application can be
considered. A reference is usually obtained from the school
authorities testifying to the character of the headteacher and also
confirming the availability of a safe storage place. Information
is also needed on the number on roll as well as staff and above all

whether the school is assisted by the Government or not. From the
answers received, the Board uses its discretion in deciding whether
the application is to be accepted or rejected. It is rare for a
request to be dealt with in the negative.

1.3 Current Library Provision

There are 13 districts in all including the Western/Rural district
and the number of registered schools involved at present is 860.
Each registered school is visited once a year according to district
zoning. A visit to a particular district does not exceed one month
and the length of time devoted to each school is on average one
hour, depending on the size. Due to the fact that the roads to
some schools are not motorable, the headteachers are asked to meet
the mobile library at accessible points, usually other schools in
the area. The schedules of visits are sent at least two weeks in
advance, so that the schools concerned can make the necessary
arrangements for the changing of their stock. Initially books are
on loan for the whole period and on every visit those no longer
required are returned, and a new selection made. Of course at the
discretion of the librarian-in-charge they may be kept for another
year, on the basis that the books are kept in good condition and
the exact number in tact. When they are lost or defaced the
headteachers are penalised either by fines or suspension from the
facility depending on the number of books lost or damaged.

1.4 Selection Procedure

The books for the children are selected usually by the
librarian-in-charge who may be a library assistant or a qualified
librarian and those for the teachers by the headteacher assisted by
a senior teacher. A selection of easy readers, i.e. supplementary
readers, fiction and subject books are issued and it is interesting
to note that one-third of the total amount selected is usually
fiction. Since the service is designed to aid primary school
children, choosing suitable reading materials for them demands a
great deal of consideration. Very often we find ourselves pushed

to breaking points in trying to meet their needs. Requests are
always made for African literature and the "African Writers Series"
is a particular favourite. The books are mainly for use in class
during the library periods which encourage the children to become
conscious of library activities. Sometimes short talks and
demonstrations are given on the care of books and the best means of
deriving pleasure and knowledge from them in the school. On
arrival of the mobile at the school the headteacher would assemble
the whole school if there is enough time at the disposal of the
mobile team and the librarian-in-charge would give these talks.
The children are not allowed to make their own choice of books off
the mobile because each school is only allowed a limited number of
books. The Browne system of issue is employed since it appears to
be the quickest method and it also attempts to familiarise pupils
with public library procedures.

The Sierra Leone Library Board has enjoyed tremendous satisfaction
on the success of the mobile library, however, there are many
failings and short comings which still have to be over come. One
of them is the frequency of the visits which are few and far
between. Headteachers have been complaining that the one-year loan
period is too long. There have been suggestions that visits should
be made once in every term. This could be done on a regional basis
provided a large pool of stock is available. These suggestions
have been examined but until such time when the obstacles can be
surmounted and a better solution found the old routine continues.

1.5 Establishment of the Schools Service Department

In 979/1980, the primary schools service was so starved of books
that the service was suspended and a decision was taken to evaluate
the service and make it more meaningful. Circular letters
requesting comments on the existing service and suggestions for its
improvement were sent to headteachers throughout the country. The
response was very encouraging with a view to providing a more
meaningful service to primary schools and as a result of the many
requests for assistance from secondary schools, a professional
librarian was put in charge of the service. As a result a Schools

Service Department was established with the responsibility of
running the primary schools service and also supervising the
distribution of Ranfurly Library Service books at regular intervals
to all interested institutions. The School Service Department also
maintains a Resource Collection consisting of new books on
Education, Psychology, School Administration, School Curriculum and
various UNESCO books, booklets and pamphlets on education. All
enquiries on education are referred to this department and teachers
are always welcome to consult the materials during the opening
hours of the library. The Board has always enjoyed the
co-operation of the headteachers and the chief librarian and the
schools service librarian have been always invited to seminars,
conferences and meetings organised by the Headteachers Conference
and the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education.

In 1980, the Board took delivery of two landrover type mobile
libraries donated by the British Government as part of the Public
Library Development Scheme. This programme also included the sum
of £6,900 sterling which was donated to the schools service under
the Overseas Development Administration (ODA). The chief librarian
Mrs. Gloria Dillsworth was also able to solicit funds from the
Dutch Centre for Public Libraries (NBLC) and an amount of 9,600 dfl
was presented for the purchase of books worth £1,859 was placed
with Evans Brothers through their representative in Sierra Leone.
The main source for book donations for this service continued to be
the British Government through the ODA.

Today however, due to the lack of funds the service is finding it
more and more difficult to achieve its aims. There are now 860
primary schools with an approximate enrolment of 227,815 children
and 7,000 teachers being served by this programme with just a
bookstock estimated at 16,055 volumes as at 9/2/84. It will be
many years, if ever, before it reaches its desired goals unless it
continues to receive outside help. The problems though are not
insurmountable, and, it is hoped that in time to come, the service
will be able to cope and to extend its facilities further afield.

1.5.1 The Provision of School Libraries in General

School libraries are the responsibility of the individual schools.
(3) Many primary schools have book corners, and the pupils are
encouraged to join the children's section of the Sierra Leone
Library Board's libraries. There are 1,344 primary schools in
Sierra Leone (4) and many of these are in proximity of public
libraries or are served by the mobile library service operated by
the Central Library of the Sierra Leone Library Board's Primary
School service.

Under the International Development Agency (IDA) educational
project schemes, several secondary schools have had library
buildings constructed, and library equipment has been provided.
All sixth form schools and most of the fifth form secondary schools
have library facilities. But in most of these libraries, books and
periodicals are in short supply. The Ministry of Education does
provide a library grant of Le 2.0 (two leones) or 18p (according to
current exchange rate) per pupil in secondary schools but because
of the inadequacy of the amount, many secondary schools
unofficially levy an annual library fee for each student. These
funds are used for purchasing books and other library materials in
those schools administered by progressive principals. In other
cases these funds are used to supplement the general school fund.
During recent years the British Council Book Presentation programme
has provided books and periodicals to the value of £27,500 mostly
to sixth-form schools and schools which have had libraries
constructed under the International Development Agency programme.
To ensure that books and periodicals provided under this programme
are maintained, the British Council encourages the appointment of a
library assistant who will serve as the para-professional staff.
These assistants are also encouraged to use the university or
Sierra Leone Library Board's Training facilities to prepare for the
Library and Information Assistants examination of the City and
Guilds of London Institute. The Ministry of Education therefore
provides the salary of one library assistant who has the required
educational qualification and has at least participated in one of
the university's/SLLB training courses. The university now runs a
two year training course leading to the award of a Diploma in
Library and Information Studies.

Many secondary schools have appointed teacher/librarian to be in charge of their libraries. These are qualified teachers often graduates who are required to attend short library courses organised from time to time by the university or must have offered library studies as a cultural subject in the course of their training.

1.5.2 Libraries in Teachers Colleges

There are six teachers colleges (5) in the country. These teacher education institutions have library facilities for their staff and students. Colleges which do not offer courses for the higher teachers certificate look upon the development of these courses by their institutions as a means of improving their status and their physical facilities. At present, only two of these libraries have full-time professional staff. Until funds are provided for the establishment of an adequate library staff development programme, the further growth of libraries in these colleges will be very limited especially in those which lack the presence of professional expertise.

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CHAPTER TWO

DESCRIPTION OF SIERRA-LEONE'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

2.0 Educational Development since Independence

Educational development since independence has been guided by
several comprehensive educational programmes, most of which have
had the official approval of government. Sierra-Leone now has
free, compulsory, primary education. As stated in the National
Development Plan, the general aim of the educational policy is to
provide every child with an education which takes full cognisance
of the following:-

- Character and personality development;
- the cultivation of desirable attitudes;
- interests, ability and aptitudes;
- the manpower needs of the country;
- the economic resources of the state, so that education
  can be of use to the country and at the same time
  provide opportunities for a satisfying life (1).

During the last decade, educational facilities have developed
rapidly with more places available for children at all levels, and
higher standards being achieved every year. Primary schools have
seven classes, though not all pupils complete them. Some 20,331
secondary school places were taken up during the 1987-88 academic
year (2). In the past the drop-out rate has been high, but the
problem has greatly been alleviated as a consequence to free
primary education. There are over 102 secondary schools in sierra
Leone preparing pupils for the West African Examination Council
G.C.E. 'O' Level exams (3). This body is a multi-national
organisation embracing Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and
the Gambia. It is involved in the conduct of various examinations
in the public interest of the member countries. Several secondary
schools now have a sixth form, where pupils prepare for their 'A'
Level exams. The main objectives are to raise standards and reduce
the drop-out rate. Secondary school teachers, apart from
indigenous Sierra Leoneans, include various volunteers from
Britain, Canada and the United States of America.

Tertiary-level institutions provide technical education in four specialised institutions at Freetown Technical Institute, Kenema Technical Institute, Magburaka Trade Centre and Kissy Trade Centre. There are also four other specialised schools for the handicapped. The Milton Margai School for the Blind at Freetown, two schools at Freetown and Bo, run by the Cheshire Homes for the Handicapped and a school for the deaf at Freetown.

The Institute of Education which was founded in 1968, has assumed responsibility for teacher training education, educational research and curriculum development. There are five primary training colleges in various parts of the country and one for secondary teacher training in Freetown.

The University of Sierra Leone comprises two constituent colleges. Fourah Bay College founded in 1827 which is the oldest institution for higher education in West Africa. From 1876 until it was incorporated as an independent institution, it was a college of the University of Durham awarding Durham degrees and diplomas. The second constituent college is the University College Njala which was founded in 1963. It offers courses mainly in Agriculture and Education. The University of Sierra Leone was formally inaugurated as an autonomous institution awarding its own degrees in February 1969.

2.1 Nursery School Education

All pre-primary schools are privately owned but operate under the Nursery/Pre-primary Schools Association. All of these schools are registered with the Nursery/Pre-primary Schools Association. The aims and objectives of the nursery schools in Sierra Leone are to foster social, educational, moral, intellectual, physical and language development. They provide education for children in the three to six age group.

During the 1977/79 period, the Nursery Association has been responsible for nursery education in Sierra Leone. Every year the Association receives grants from the Ministry of Education, Culture

and Sports to enable it to employ qualified teachers. In order to offer employment to graduates from training colleges, the teacher-supervisor trainer acquaints final year students of job opportunities with the Association. There are in all 37 assisted nursery schools and 41 unassisted in the country (see Appendix 1).

2.2 Primary Education

Primary education is the base of Sierra Leone's formal education system.

Before 1984/85 school year, children were admitted to reception class 1 and then went through a seven year cycle on to Class VII which officially corresponds to age 5 - 12 years but there has been some policy change on this. The schools now accepts children to reception Class I at the age of 6 years and they go through a six year cycle on to Class VI which now corresponds to 6 - 11 years. The majority of the schools in the primary sector are voluntary agency schools like the Christian and Muslim Missions (see page 2 of Appendix 2).
Nursery education which is a subsector of primary education is run by voluntary organisations but the government through the Ministry of Education pays the qualified staff. Staffing in primary education is the entire responsibility of the Government, which through the Ministry also provides for the running costs and development grants. There are three types of primary school:-

      i) Assisted schools
     ii) Independent Schools and
    iii) Private schools.

Assisted schools are run by Employing Authorities on behalf of the Government. Independent schools are owned and run outside the control of the Ministry of Education. Private schools receive no government grants. (See Appendix 2). There are in all 1344 Registered/Assisted schools (see Appendix 5 for primary statistics by districts for the 1987/88 school year).

2.3 Secondary Education

Efforts are intensive to ensure the effective operation of the secondary system. As stated in the <u>Sierra-Leone Education Review</u>, the aim of the secondary school system is to provide a form of secondary education which:-

a) Fosters and enriches those aspects of the Sierra Leonean cultural heritage which are in consonance with the nation's development aspirations; reflects the resources and economic activity of the nation; promotes in pupils national and international consciousness and identification; integrates the school within a society through full utilisation of the material, human and cultural resources in society and by serving as a resource for the life and activities of the community.

b) Offers suitably qualified pupils wherever resident in Sierra Leone and independent of socio-economic status, creed and sex the opportunity to continue their education beyond the level of the educational base depending upon individual aptitude and attainment within either formal apprenticeship schemes, vocational or technical schools or centres or general secondary education.

c) Offers pupils selected for the senior years of general secondary education a full range of alternative programmes each of which provides the means by which skills , knowledge and attitudes may be acquired at pre-professional level leading to further training or sub-professional employment.

d) Offers pupils transferring directly from the educational base to institutions other than general secondary schools (e.g. trade centres) the means by which they may acquire abilities in areas mentioned below at levels appropriate to this stage of

secondary education. It is further expected that the new system will afford direct entry into modes of employment or self-employment not requiring prior training in specialist skills.

e) Provides means by which a cumulative profile of the individual pupil's performance, achievements and aptitudes may be made available to outside agencies; provides assessment procedures by which a variety of types and levels of certification may be made available to pupils so as to permit employment, apprenticeship, or further training/education after specified periods of schooling (4).

There are 205 secondary schools in the country (see Appendix 6 for secondary schools statistics for 1988/89).

2.3.1 Technical and Vocational Institutions

The present technical and vocational education sector in Sierra Leone comprises the following institutions (see Appendix 3). The technical institutes and trade centres were set up by the Government to train technicians and craftsmen respectively for employment in government service, commerce and industry. Students in the formal school system will probably begin specific training for an occupation during their post primary or early secondary years. However, other trainees may be youths or adults with little or no previous education. The Y.W.C.A. vocational institute and St. Mary's Technical and Vocational Institute are government assisted. Other educational institutions offer some technical and vocational training and give some attention to preparation for employment. However, few have the qualified staff or the facilities and administrative arrangements necessary for vocational courses. Under the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources farmer training is going on at Kenema, Makele, Batkanu and Mange. There is also a forestry training school at Bambawo.

The aims of technical and vocational education as outlined again in the <u>Sierra Leone Education Review</u> are as follows:-

a) Technical/vocational education should exist as part of a system of life-long education adapted to the development needs of the country and guided also by the aspirations of the individual.

b) Vocational and technical institutions should concentrate on occupational training and thus training should be available for various grades and levels of students.

c) Vocational and technical education should be part of everyone's general education from the earliest stages so that it

- may be freely chosen as the means by which one develops talents, interests and skills leading to an occupation in a technical field;

- can interest students at all levels to transfer into this field from other types of study;

- is readily available for all types of specialisation within and outside formal education systems and in combination with on-the-job training in order to promote career advancement and job mobility.

- is available on an equal basis to women as well as men (5).

Despite recent developments, investigations have revealed that many urgent problems remain. They can be listed as follows:-

a) Little or no relationship between training provision and labour market requirements.

b) Inadequate liaison between training institutions and

employers. In some cases the quality of training provided at the technical institutes and trade centres is below that required by prospective employers.

c) Lack of counselling and guidance services for career planning and training as well as insufficient follow-up of students.

d) Limited funds allocated to equipment and materials.

e) The difficulty of attracting suitable trainees in sufficient numbers to technical courses. Primary and secondary schools take little account of pupils lack of technical orientation, and the curriculum is therefore partly responsible for this recruitment problem.

f) The low status still attached to technical and vocational education in the community. Conditions of service for teachers are still lower than in other comparable positions, therefore it is difficult to recruit teachers with the requisite professional qualifications and industrial experience (6).

2.4 Teacher Education

2.4.1 Primary Teacher Education

There are five colleges which train teachers for primary schools. They are distributed over the country as follows:-

Northern Region - Makeni Teachers College, Makeni Women Teachers College, Port Loko.

Southern Region - Bo Teachers College, Bo.
Eastern Region - Bunumbu College, Bunumbu.
Western Area   - Freeetown Teachers College, Freetown.

These colleges offer courses leading to the award of the Teachers Certificate or the Higher Teachers Certificate which qualifies the holders of these certificates to teach in primary schools.

a) Makeni Teachers College, Makeni (for men). Makeni Teachers College is housed in new buildings which were financed 75% from Misereor and 25% from Sierra Leone sources. The college has an enrolment of 450 students (see Appendix 4).

b) Women Teachers College, Port Loko. The Women Teachers College is housed in modern buildings, funds for which were provided by Swedish sources. The facilities provided include accommodation for the teaching of specialist courses such as Home Economics and the training of teachers for nursery and infants schools, as well as a general course for primary teachers. The college has an enrolment of 520 (Appendix 4).

c) Bo Teachers College, Bo (for men). This college is an amalgamation of the former Catholic Training College Bo and the Bo Teachers' College of the United Christian Council. The first phase of a building plan funded by the World Council of Churches in Germany has been completed and comprises a classroom block, library, administrative offices, four staff quarters and dormitory accommodation for just under 200 students. Two hundred and fourteen students are housed in the old buildings of the former Catholic Training College and have to be transported daily to the central buildings about five miles away. The college has an enrolment of 414 students (Appendix 4).

d)   Bunumbu Teachers College, Bunumbu (for men). This college was originally founded by several protestant missions working in collaboration, but in 1971 the Ministry of Education took over financial support from the college and appointed its own board of governors. With UNDP/UNESCO assistance it became the centre for a major change in teacher education aimed at training community teachers who are prepared to teach both children and adults in rural areas. This college has an enrolment of 644 (Appendix 4).

e)   Freetown Teachers College, Freetown. This college is different from the other four colleges in being a day college for men and women who though not yet qualified are already teaching in the Freetown area. It is at present in temporary accommodation sharing the same buildings with the Bishop Johnson Memorial Secondary School. As the college functions from 15.30 to 20.20 hours each weekday, its time table will not clash with that of the secondary school. Owing to its special role and organisation its unit cost is much lower than that of the other residential colleges. This college has an enrolment of 415 students (see Appendix 4 for enrolment of students in these teachers colleges).

The quality of students coming forward for admission poses questions to which there are no simple answers. Students who can meet the higher academic entry qualifications to Milton Margai Teachers College and the University will almost always attend those institutions. On completion of their courses they can look forward to higher prestige posts with salaries about three times the starting salaries of primary school teachers with the Teachers Certificate qualification. The rewards of teaching primary school are too modest to make this a preferred option for secondary school completer or even those leaving school after Form 4. At the same time, it is a common observation of teachers' college staff that given the opportunity, some unqualified primary teachers who have

taught about 5-8 years and who show aptitude for learning and
teaching with a strong commitment to their profession have been
among the most successful students in the teachers college - a
group quite distinct from the general category of unqualified
teachers with 15 or more years of service. It is clear that the
teaching profession should attract able students. This will
require greater financial incentives, improved facilities at the
teachers' colleges, more professionalism and more sponsorship by
Government and the public. Obviously, more women students might be
enrolled if more colleges accepted them into the 3-year programme.

2.4.1.1 Educational Materials Used

As a group the primary teachers colleges are well endowed in the
variety and types of educational materials they can muster for use
with students. Four of the five colleges, Makeni Teachers, Port
Loko Teachers, Bo Teachers and Bunumbu Teachers have a separate
library room with a staff member responsible for overseeing its
use. These libraries vary in size, containing 800 - 3000 volumes
for general reading and from 2500 - 7000 volumes for reference use.
Freetown Teachers College, the one college with no library room,
will have such a facility when it occupies the new quarters now
under construction.

All the colleges have electricity and provide a variety of
electrically run teaching aids. All have film projectors, three
have slide projectors and two have overhead projectors. Four of
the colleges have reel to reel tape recorders, two have
school-owned radios and three have epidiascopes. Three of the
colleges are well equipped with sports, science and agricultural
teaching materials, while in a fourth college supplies are barely
adequate. There is a determined effort made in all the colleges to
teach students to make needed learning aids, using locally
available materials. However, there is value in having teachers
see and learn to use more sophisticated materials anticipating the
time when these may well be both available and suitable for the
given purpose.

2.4.2 Secondary Teacher Education

There is a variety of programmes for training secondary school
teachers:-

a) Milton Margai Teachers College

This college is maintained by the Ministry of Education and
offers a three year course leading to the Higher Teachers'
Certificate which carries with it a markedly higher salary than
the Teachers' Certificate. This disparity in salary apparently
causes many able students who are interested in teaching in
primary schools to enrol in Milton Margai for a secondary
teachers course. But Milton Margai is itself a second choice
to the University for most students. Minimum qualification for
entry as laid down by the Institrute of Education are passes at
'O' Level in four subjects including English. The College
occupies modern as well as moderately well equipped premises
near Freetown. The College has an enrolment of 640 (see
Appendix 4). Students of Milton Margai are prepared to teach
general subjects in the lower forms of secondary schools or
special subjects such as rural science. Although they have a
considerably higher salary than the holders of the Teachers
Certificate, they feel themselves at a disadvantage with their
colleagues who come from the university.

b) Fourah Bay College, Department of Education

The Department of Education of Fourah Bay College provides a
1-year course for graduate students leading to a Diploma in
Education. Minimum entry requirement is a degree of a recognised
university. Students should also have studied two subjects which
are usually taught in secondary schools. Students enrolment has
increased over the years.

c) Njala University College

Njala University College offers 4-year courses integrating
professional and academic study for undergraduates and leading
to the following degrees:-

B.A. Education
BSc Education
BSc Agricultural Education
BSc Home Economics Education

Minimum entry qualifications, as laid down by the University of
Sierra Leone, are passes at GCE 'O' Levels in five subjects
including English and Mathematics. Three-year courses are also
offered which lead to the Higher Teachers' Certificate (HTC) in
agricultural education for which entry qualifications are passes at
'O' Level in four subjects including English. The Ministry of
Education meets almost all the cost of teacher training.

2.5 Materials and Media

Books and other written materials - Books for use in assisted
primary schools are selected from a list recommended by a primary
schools textbooks committee set up by the Ministry of Education,
Culture and Sports. The choice is made by heads of schools and
their employing authorities who may add needed books to the list,
prepare orders and submit them for the approval of the school
materials officers appointed by the Ministry of Education.
Approval is always automatically given for the ordering of those
textbooks which are paid for by the Government. These include
Mathematics texts, English course books and accompanying workbooks
for pupils in all classes of schools throughout the country.
Orders may also include texts in Social Studies for teachers and a
limited number of atlases and supplementary readers for pupils.
Pupils in Classes 4 to 5 in the Freetown area are required to
purchase some of their textbooks including social studies, spelling
and table books which they do in the majority of cases. Where
they fail to buy these books, they have to make do without them.
In the regions and rural areas outside Freetown, the purchase of
textbooks other than those provided is optional. Many students
have no books of their own. Intelligence tests and workbooks in
English and Mathematics have also become a feature in the primary
school, where pupils are required to purchase them for use almost
exclusively in preparation for the selective entrance examination.

Library books are in short supply especially in regional and rural
schools, even though there is a school library service operated by
the National Library. This is a mobile library service which
visits some schools once a year and lends books at the rate of
eight books per pupil and two per teacher. Some schools,
especially in the Freetown area and in the Regions have developed
class libraries whilst every encouragement is given to pupils to
become members of the National Library in Freetown and the Branch
libraries in the Regions. Picture books and comics are popular
among pupils in the urban areas. Those who can afford to purchase
them often share them with their less favoured school mates.
Books donated to schools by foreign agencies are usually used for
reference, but those are found in a few schools only. Pamphlets in
science are produced by the Science Curriculum Development Centre
at Njala University College for sale only to primary schools for
the teaching of science. Pupils who purchase their own books have
them for use at home and in homes where their parents are literate
and can afford it, varying number of books, newspapers and
magazines are available. In the majority of cases, however,
especially in the rural areas where parents are not literate and
books are not purchased the home is completely without any reading
material, even where the children attend school. In the more
expensive private schools text and library books are in adequate
supply, but in the inexpensive and poorly organised private schools
books of all descriptions are extremely short.

There is therefore the need to inculcate reading habits in the
Sierra Leonean child from the pre-nursery schools and hence the
need for libraries right from the nursery schools.

2.6 Promoting Reading at an Early Age

In Sierra Leone there are many children (and adults) who have the
enthusiasm to learn the skills of reading and writing but because
of family and social circumstances, find it impossible to do so.
The incentive and the will to learn is apparent but there is very
little motivation. The effort is therefore devastating and
demoralising, and the individual is merely left to himself in his
state of illiteracy. But being unable to read or write is not

indicative of limited intelligence. In fact it is true to say
that many who are non-readers are intelligent. In Sierra Leone,
many of our adults who are illiterates act in their own capacity as
chiefs or elders in their chiefdoms, giving wise decisions from
time to time, and these may even affect those who are literate in
that particular community.

The Bullock Report stressed the importance of language development
in the pre-school child as a necessary element in the successful
mastery of reading skills, and stated that the point at which a
child begin to connect two or three words is usually between the
ages of 18 to 24 months:-

> To reach this stage, he has developed the capacity to
> imitate his parents (7).

The Plowden Report also calling for close contact and the
involvement of parents in the education of the child, pointed out
that:-
> the educational disadvantage of being born the child of
> an unskilled worker is both financial and psychological
> (8).

The Whitehead Report too in its conclusions and recommendations,
stated that:-

> Our analysis identified a number of variables associated
> with the home, which are positively associated with the
> amount of book reading, and that there are therefore
> grounds for believing that family circumstances exert an
> important influence on the amount of childs reading.
> Thus a child with a father in a non-manual occupation is
> likely to possess more books and to see more quality
> newspapers in the home, and is more likely to visit a
> public library regularly and to have parents who read
> books. We can fairly say that this child's home is
> partly responsible for the fact that he is likely to have
> read more books than a child whose father is in a manual
> occupation. (Conversely, the child with a non-manual

father is likely to see fewer periodicals regularly and
to spend less time watching television). We can also say
that the child with a non-manual father is more likely to
be assessed high by his school for ability and attainment
to express a favourable attitude to school ... (9).

Thus, it is obvious that parents who are themselves illiterate
cannot possibly provide an atmosphere in which the young child can
develop his or her reading skills. On the other hand his opposite
number, in an environment more conducive to learning and with
literate parents is at an advantage because as stated in the
Bullock Report:-

He is more likely to be lead to use language of a higher
order of complexity and greater abstraction. If he does
not encounter situations in which he has to explore,
recall, predict, plan, explain and analyse, he cannot be
expected to bring to school a ready made facility for
such uses. (10)

It is therefore imperative that policy makers in Sierra Leone, must
be aware of the importance of providing adequate educational
facilities for children who are the adults of tomorrow. Policy
making therefore implies making choices and establishing
priorities, and that education demands priority is difficult to
deny. In Africa today, education is foremost in plans for national
development and the future of a country depends to a large extent
on the rapid and effective growth of its educational system.

Where there is an inadequate educational library service, the
opportunity to improve living conditions will be completely lost
and the problems of illiteracy will continue and hence remain
unsolved.

The Bullock Report also stressed the need for the child to have
learned to look upon books as a source of absorbing pleasure before
he arrives at school, but there are many homes in Sierra Leone in
which the child is deprived of the benefits of reading because the

family cannot afford to provide books since they do not appreciate their value. On the other hand, there are those children of the elité, and the middle class, who enjoy the benefits of reading because their parents, knowing the values of reading, provide them with books and magazines in their homes. But the question arises, will those children who are unfortunate to be born into homes in which their parents are illiterate or who cannot afford the cost of books because of their poverty, remain illiterate all through their life span? Many do in Sierra Leone, but does it have to happen this way? With vigorous literary campaigns, with a good school library network throughout the country, and with government awareness this need not be so.

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CHAPTER THREE

LIBRARIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

3.0 THE PRESENT POSITION: An Overview of Current Practice

There are school libraries in almost all secondary schools in Sierra Leone even though there is no statutory obligation to provide them. The demand for and provision of these libraries sprang from school proprietors with an interest in education, and from volunteer overseas teachers who believe in the importance of reading. Today the value of school library depends upon the importance attached to it by the principal of the individual schools. As a result there is disparity of school library provision in all the schools as different heads have differing perceptions of the role of Libraries and Information centres and differing views of the priorities which should be accorded them.

Very few schools have their books in a special room designated as a library which is conducive to study. There are a few schools with separate library buildings, for example the Bo Government Secondary School in Bo and the Albert Academy Secondary School in Freetown, which had their library buildings donated by the Old Boys Association. There is a considerable variation between schools in the quality of bookstock and audio-visual resource collections which have never been developed to their full potential. Periodicals are generally in short supply due to shortage of funds, to the detriment of subjects such as geography and science.

In some schools, the school library has tended to be the special, but perhaps the too-exclusive, concern of the English department. This association of books with language and literature is both understandable and proper. However, there is considerable need for the use of the resources of the library to form a normal part of the teaching of other subjects. Teachers of these other subjects must themselves feel convinced of the value of this method of study and must feel able to have ready access to the library. Certainly the colleges where teachers are trained have an important role to play here in seeing that all of their students receive suitable guidance and encouragement in using the resources of the school library as a normal part of their teaching.

Closely linked with this, of course, is the whole range of
possibilities which are being opened up by the curriculum
development projects and new teaching methods for mathematics,
science and language. It is becoming accepted increasingly that
the school library should be "a resource centre" where information
material on tapes, disc, slides, film loops, transparencies for
overhead projectors, illustrations and perhaps even samples and
specimens should be available for immediate use or for loan. The
stock of a school library resource centre may also contain books,
pictures, artefacts, slides, audio and video cassettes, computer
software, pamphlets and other media. Any such material kept
elsewhere in the school should be catalogued in the library with
its whereabouts recorded.

3.1 Educational Factors

Whilst there appears to be general agreement about the need for
libraries and resource centres at schools, there are wide
divergencies both in the role of the library/resource centre within
the school and the use of its resources. Heeks (1) suggests
that:-

> Each school has to formulate a philosophy and establish
> practices for cummunicating the enjoyment, interest and
> value of books to the children so that they become at
> home in the book world. Part of the curriculum policy
> should be the promotion of book provision and use. This
> will include consideration for library resource centre
> facilities and a design for acquiring books in an orderly
> and organised way and not in random fashion. The
> experience of the past decade has shown that surrounding
> children with books is not enough. We must prepare
> programmes which direct children to those books and make
> the use of books an integral part of the school day.

The educational aims may be summarised as follows:-

i) To provide a wide range of books in order to support and
    enrich all aspects of curriculum and to foster the practice
    of reading for pleasure.

ii) To encourage borrowing and browsing amongst children of all

ages and backgrounds including pre-school groups.

iii) To familiarise children with the techniques needed to fully exploit libraries both within school and the wider community.

iv) To organise a range of carefully chosen resources to avoid duplication and ensure wide subject coverage.

v) To allow access for as many users as possible to the schools' resources with the minimum of disruption to others.

vi) To establish simple and effective administrative practice.

There are a number of factors which directly affect the above aims. There is a need for example, to monitor resource collections as a reflection of the childrens' cultural background and to provide support to pupils with a first language other than English. This will involve actively seeking materials in areas less commonly covered by conventional publishers.

Developing technologies require that library policies should not be restricted to books. Resources are available in an increasing diversity of forms all of which require access at appropriate times. The development of information networks of various sorts in the United Kingdom (and hopefully in the developing countries) using microcomputers including Prestel, Teletext and various databases also has implications for the library/resource policy of the future. In order for study skills education to be effective, resource collections must inspire confidence in staff as well as pupils.

> The task of introducing young juniors and especially children straight from infant classes to the arrangement of the books in the central collections, helping them to choose suitable books, initiating them into the procedures for borrowing and returning books and generally training them to use the available facilities were matters of great concern to teachers .... Teachers while attempting to solve these important problems, generally regarded the solutions adopted to be, inevitably, compromises (2).

In Sierra Leone, where school libraries exist without the
supervision of professionally trained librarians or teacher
librarians, they contain a miscellaneous collection of books sent
by the Ministry of Education and books donated by the Sierra Leone
Library Board with no regard for the special needs of the
individual school. The size of the stock is not standardised, the
number of volumes may well be below the 1000 mark.

The Bullock Report (3) recommends that every classroom should have
a book coner, the area should have a quiet atmosphere and include a
good encyclopaedia, dictionary and atlas. Some information books
covering major areas of the curriculum, poetry and 'reading books'.
The collection should be freely exchangeable from the central area
and this should be done at regular intervals to avoid stagnation;
this level of provision represents the ideal situation but is
unfortunately beyond the financial resources of most schools.
In particular, the cost of a good up-to-date encyclopaedia and
dictionary for each classroom proves prohibitive and it is
preferable that one good example is kept centrally than that
several out-of-date editions are kept in individual rooms.

But it is disturbing to note that the few materials the schools
have are not organised (with a few exceptions). It becomes
relevant to ask what the Ministry of Education is waiting for: for
magnificient school library buildings to be erected? Are such
buildings feasible in a battered economy? The economy of the
country is bad; even the facilities our Teacher Training Colleges
and Universities have as libraries today in terms of buildings and
resources, are definitely not what they hoped for a few years ago.
The emphasis now is that the small resources available in the
schools be exhaustively utilised.

For the generation of present school children who are the future
hope of the country really no priority becomes more urgent than
getting school libraries well organised and the resources available
meaningfully utilised. The demands of science and technology
entail that the students be taught to use their hands and brains.
They also demand that the students be skilled in self- study,
self-discovery, and informed decision making: these are
teacher-librarian related roles that are achievable through being
taught the use of the library and its materials. The

teacher-librarian's curriculum related roles cannot be over-emphasised.

3.2 Need for Trained Personnel in School Libraries

The teacher-librarian has a duty to work co-operatively with other teachers, according to Haycock (4).

> ... plan and implement units of study as teaching partners; those units integrate those skills necessary to locate, evaluate, organise and present information from a variety of sources. Through such planning and co-operative teaching, students develop, master and extend research and study skills in different subject contents and at various levels of difficulty.

Students need to build on their teachers/instructors' lectures and notes. This is a prerequisite for independent study skills which students require in order to read, apprehend and grasp necessary concepts. With the new system of education, both theoretical and practical concepts in the various spectra of subjects need be understood. There seems to be no room for memorisation.

Fothergill (5) observed that the pressures for learners are being shifted from the acquisition of facts to 'a broader appreciation of a range of concepts that can mature, develop and specialise as the adult needs demand'. He is not speaking against the need for factual knowledge to develop concepts, rather, he is stressing that emphasis on memorisation of facts will not help the students in acquiring the necessary 'skills', strategies and techniques' needed in later life. He identifies 'self-study' as the most important of such techniques. This assertion has a considerable high degree of relevance to the training of students in the use of the library, a major role that rests squarely on the teacher-librarian's shoulder. Any attempt at denying adequate attention to the provision of efficient personnel for our school libraries will lead us to nothing but a partial implementation of the programme. If this happens students stand the risk of not acquiring the right type of skills essential for self-study and discovery, which are the basic ingredients required to prepare them for the challenges of the adult-world. After all schools exist among other reasons, to

enable the child, and, in the exact words of Warnock (6) 'enter the
world after formal education is over as an active participant in
society and a responsible contributor to it, capable of achieving
as much independence as possible'.

A library stands in danger of being easily stocked with books not
relevant to the needs of the students and where there is no trained
hand to take decisions on selection. In this connection, the role
of the teacher-librarian in liaising with the subject specialists
for the selection of textbooks becomes unavoidable. The
teacher-librarians' role especially in curriculum affairs, is not
that easy. He/she has to work closely with his/her colleagues in
order effectively to discharge his/her role as a change agent.
Haycock reinforced this assertion as follows:-

> The teacher-librarian's major task is to work with classroom
> teachers to plan, develop and implement units of study that
> integrate research and study skills. I did not say the only
> task, I did not say major task ... Teaching involves three
> professional functions; the ability to diagnose learning
> needs, to design programs to meet those needs and to assess
> the degree to which the program is successful. For the
> teacher-librarian to be successful, such activities must be
> done in conjunction and consultation with the classroom
> teacher (7).

To cope with this curriculum-related aspect of teacher/librarian's
role, he/she has to be well educated in librarianship. In the
United States a teacher-librarian requires a Master's degree,
having undergone a combined training in Library Information
Science, Educational Communications and Curriculum Studies.
Education for most school librarians in Australia takes place in
colleges of advanced education. Under this programme, students
take courses in education, librarianship and information studies.
The training in the United Kingdom requires that school librarians
take specialist courses in subjects of their choice as well as
courses in Library and Information Studies (8).

In Sierra Leone the training of teacher-librarian's dates as far
back as 1975 and 1976 (9) when the third and fourth Easter
Residential Schools run by Fourah Bay College under the auspices of

the Extra Mural Department were specially organised for teacher-librarians who were directly involved with the development of libraries in sixth-form schools and schools which had received IDA funding for their physical development. The British Council Books Presentation Programme was by then starting its first phase of development and in support of a National School Library Development programme, the Ministry of Education had agreed to provide the salary of one suitably qualified Library Assistant in each secondary school.

Participants at the Third Library Science Easter Residential School were highly motivated by the ideas developed by the various speakers and by the course director, Mr. Michael Cooke, who delivered most of the lectures on the theme "The Development and Management of Learning Resources in Secondary Schools". A Sierra Leone School Library Association was formed during the course in order to promote the development of school libraries in Sierra Leone. At the fourth Easter Residential School, the objectives of the Sierra Leone School Library Association were consolidated by the production of a draft minimum standards for secondary school libraries. These were later presented to, and discussed and accepted by, the National Conference of Principals of secondary schools and they were transmitted to the Ministry of Education with recommendations for implementation (see Appendix 7 for full text of standards).

This association did not exist for long to continue its work before it was dissolved and the Sierra Leone Library Board now continues to give professional advice and technical assistance to schools wishing to re-organise their libraries. Schools in the Regions do also receive professional advice from the schools service librarian during his routine treks to the various primary schools in the Regions. The standards are yet to be implemented and until further efforts are made to revive this Association, one wonders when the Ministry of Education would realise the importance of libraries in these schools.

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CHAPTER IV

4.0 SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND TEACHER EDUCATION

The role of the school library does not yet appear to have much
impact in Sierra Leone's educational system. This Chapter
therefore outlines suggested roles for the school library and
identifies some constraints that inhibit school library
development. Consideration is also given to school libraries in
relation to educational development and information handling. some
possible curriculum frameworks of integrating school libraries into
teacher education are also discussed.

4.1 The Role of the School Library

The school library has been variously described by Hall (1) as a
place where books are kept, a reading or study centre, a media
centre a source of ideas, a recreational centre, an information
centre, a communication centre, a learning centre and a teaching
laboratory.

The major purpose of the school library has invariably been stated
as to support the total school programme. This statement has been
intended to emphasise that school libraries will differ from
country to country and within countries from school to school,
depending on the goals and the preferred pedagogy of the
educational system and of the school. A clearer idea of the school
library as integral to the educational programme of the school and
related to practising teachers and prospective teachers appears
essential, however, if the school library is to be treated in a
serious way in teacher education. Guidelines for teacher educators
need to be developed with a concept of the school library within
the educational process that responds to teacher's information
needs and that enables an across the curriculum approach to the
teaching of information skills

The establishment of school libraries in developing countries and
in Sierra Leone in particular has been closely related to the
development of formal education. In many countries these libraries
are more likely to be found in secondary schools and to provide

resources in the language of instruction which is probably the second language for the majority of pupils and teachers. It could thus be viewed as a place where books are kept or as a reading or study centre. This may mean that many teachers see the library as peripheral to their immediate concerns.

The possibility of the school library responding to teacher's information needs by taking on additional tasks and avoiding the limited role of a more adjunct service within the school has been advocated by de Horowitz (2). Additional tasks such as the administration of textbooks, contributing to inservice teacher-training, library instruction, becoming a resource centre for the local community and promoting literacy and the creation of the reading habit within the school and the community, have been outlined as appropriate in certain contexts. A strong recommendation has been made that public and school library systems need to be developed jointly as integral to the national system and to focus on the context in which they are placed rather than adopt models developed at other times and in other contexts:

> ....We need a school library committed to the role of
> renovating the formal educational system while at the same
> time responding to its most pressing legitimate needs,
> working within that system without being submerged in it. We
> want a school library which from the start will join the
> public library to push theoretical research and practical
> activity and go beyond the limits traditionally imposed on
> ideas about institutions, methods, programs and users, so
> that the library action may expand to meet the virtually
> unlimited needs of individuals and societies (3).

Essential elements in such a strategy are said to be flexibility to allow for programme modifications, an interdisciplinary approach to allow the participation of other institutions and disciplines, and a change in emphasis from institutions to programmes (4). Temu (5) suggests the possible development of primary schools as community resource centres with particular responsibility for becoming more efficient in teaching literacy, for providing the means of increasing adult literacy, and providing an information centre for the local community.

4.2 Constraints on School Library Development

In analysing school library development in African countries Mwathi
and Ng'ang'a (6) suggest that aspirations for the role of the
school library are often hampered by lack of adequate reading and
learning resources. Other problems are lack of accommodation
designated for library use and lack of trained staff. As might be
expected school libraries are strongest where a policy of the
Ministry of Education or of the National Library Service exists and
planned development to avoid unnecessary duplication of services in
part of the national information system. In some countries,
however, the lack of awareness amongst teachers of the potential of
the school library has meant that a low priority has been given to
this development by school administrators and some existing
opportunities for funds have been lost. A possible explanation of
this low priority is that many developing countries are societies
of predominantly oral traditions. This may result in psychological
and social problems when the introduction of another language
impacts on the community's group orientation and reading is seen
only as a private activity. This is particularly so if reading
experiences are in the language of instructions.

John (7) suggests that school libraries should include non-book
materials and materials on local life to give meaning to everyday
experience and confidence in using language.

These concerns are reiterated in an outline of problems common to
all developing countries. Those given particular emphasis are the
conflict between oral traditional culture and the introduced book
culture, the availability of appropriate and relevant materials in
the local language and the language of instruction, the absence of
information on reading problems in developing countries, and the
need to educate teachers about the role of school libraries. In
working towards overcoming some of these problems Ogunsheye (8)
suggests that training packages on aspects of science and
environment, agriculture, government, culture and recreation be
developed for primary school children and adult non-literates. The
use of oral history methods to create local resources could also be
used. Multi-purpose media centres, which would include simple
production facilities, should be provided to meet the needs of
schools and adult learners, understanding the potential of this

wider role of the school library in relation to other libraries and agencies concerned with the generation, distribution, use, storage, preservation, and sometimes evaluation, of information has been emphasised as essential knowledge for all teachers so that they develop a concept of the information network and the information skills needed to use the network effectively in teaching and learning (9).

The majority of these recommendations have been made by librarians, not teacher educators or teachers. Attempts have been made in some countries, however, to develop documents that incorporate the role of teachers and administrators in school library development. A particular good example is that produced by the Ministry of Education in Ontario, Canada. This document focuses on resource-based learning and describes how partnership between principals, classroom teachers, school librarians and Boards of Education can work towards the development of the library resource centre to implement the goals of the school curriculum (10). The need for a clear statement of purpose for the school library programme, which would focus on the educational and curricular use of the school library has also been advocated. A succinct example is the written purpose of library services accepted as policy in the Vancouver School District Columbia, Canada.

> The aim of the school library program is to assist
> students to develop a commitment to informed
> decision-making and the skills of lifelong learning (11).

It is asserted that such a policy necessitates teachers and school librarians forming co-operative teams to plan and implement units of study which integrate a wide spectrum of information skills.

> Through such planning and co-operative teaching students
> develop, master and extend research and study skills in
> different subject contexts and at varying levels of
> difficulty. A secondary emphasis is placed on language
> improvement and enjoyment and the promotion of voluntary
> reading through co-operatively developed programs (12).

Examples such as these could facilitate discussion with teachers on
the role of the school library within the teaching learning
process.

However, the complexity of implementing these ideas within the
school curriculum needs to be recognised. In the United Kingdom a
review of research on developments in user education concludes that
the main emphasis thus far has been on using the library rather
than on using the information it contains in the implementation of
the goals of the teaching-learning process. Some concern is
expressed about the consequences for teachers and school libraries
of adopting some of the stimulating ideas without enough reflection
and experience (13). This concern is supported by the assertion
that the school library role has been controversial in that its
advocates have emphasised resource-base learning and library
research without providing enough evidence to convince teachers of
its educational worth (14). These concerns suggest that
stimulating greater use of the school library by teachers needs to
be approached with forethought.

4.3. School Libraries and Educational Outcome

In recent years some attempts to provide a research base as a
rationale for the educational and curricular use of the school
library have been made. A summary of the research studies in
developing and developed countries for a seminar for the World Bank
Education Department staff focussed on the teaching-learning role
of the school library and its relationship to pupil achievement
particularly in reading and support for independent learning (15).
A comprehensive review of the research literature which was done in
the United States in 1984 identified twenty research reports
completed between 1953 and 1982 which link school libraries with
enriched learning. Although it is difficult to establish cause and
effect with any certainty and although the strength of the
relationship vary, there is evidence in these studies for linking
school library service with a number of educational outcomes.
These include the verbal component of the Scholastic Aptitude Test,
overall academic achievement, and the quality of reading. In
addition the use of school libraries is related to the development
of problem solving skills, use of newspapers, word study skills,
verbal expression, improved self-concept and critical thinking.

Three studies also showed improved achievement in the curriculum
areas of mathematics, sciences and social studies (16). This
research literature could form a basis for discussion with
prospective teachers and teachers on the relationship between the
school library and outcomes of schooling.

Results of recent research in Australia have reaffirmed the
potential of the secondary school library as an access point to
educational information data bases for teachers. A National
Education Information Exchange Network has been proposed in which
existing information data bases and educational libraries would
co-operate and through which a curriculum information network would
disseminate relevant professional information to schools. The role
of the library would act as a bridge between teachers and the
agency providing the service. Emphasis is put on the proviso that
the school librarian would need to take a more active role than at
present in the dissemination of information and in the
encouragement of its adoption. The principal would also need to
give direct support to the services provided to teachers from the
school library and to the active role of the school librarian in
information dissemination and adoption (17).

4.4 Information Handling and School Libraries

To develop programmes in teacher education that focus on the
integration of the educational and curricular use of school
libraries necessitates confronting the complexity of becoming a
teacher and maintaining continuing professional growth. The
encouragement of school library use thus needs to be carefully
related to the immediate concerns of teachers at preservice and
inservice stages of teacher education without much reliance on the
rhetoric of the potential of the school library role in global
terms.

The evidence in Hall's report (18) suggests that teachers must
surely continue to feel overwhelmed by the complex demands made on
them, and withdraw further into the safety of what they feel they
know best, unless there is a reconceptualisation of teacher
education programmes with the concept of information as a focus.
The tendency of teaching education programmes to provide
prospective teachers with information and resources without also

providing opportunities for them to develop competence and
confidence in a spectrum of skills in the handling of the
information could add to their concerns. Furthermore, if teachers
rely only on the courses that form part of their initial training
and feel they lack the skills to keep up-to-date with educational
information, they are unlikely to withstand the various social,
economic and political pressures placed on schools in countries
throughout the world. The likely future of teachers is that they
will continue to be dominated by a focus on problems and a lack of
time to go beyond their immediate classroom concerns. Making
better use of the school library may be seen as a problem not worth
the time and effort by teachers who themselves lack competence and
confidence in handling information.

A possible focus at the preservice stage of teacher education is
the way that libraries can help in the learning process - as a
prospective teacher and as a student. The concept that there are
skills in handling information needs to be integrated into existing
courses and the relationship between this concept and library use
constantly reinforced. Within the context of the teacher education
curriculum the relationship of the use of the teacher education
institution's library to helping prospective teachers gain
competence and confidence in information skills and increased
awareness of resources and networks available for continuing
professional development needs to be articulated, and opportunities
for successful practical application should be provided. Then,
examples of how the school library can help continued professional
growth through providing access to the wider network of educational
information need to be included in all courses. Within the context
of the school curriculum the relationship of the use of the school
library to helping children learn how to learn and to helping
teachers learn how to teach information skills that transfer beyond
the classroom needs to be constantly emphasised in all courses of
and reinforced by successful practical application.

4.5 Curriculum Frameworks and School Libraries

Language across the curriculum focuses on reading, talking,
listening and writing for learning. Promoting school library use
should help teachers and prospective teachers to analyse how each

of these processes can be used to help pupils learn how to learn as
they complete topic work, projects and assignments. Observations
made in research in the United Kingdom some thirteen years ago
still has relevance when considering school library today:

> The pupils we observed were, in fact, generally
> interested in, and even enthusiastic about what they were
> doing. For the most part they were highly motivated and
> willing to work. The important point is, however, that
> they were willing to find answers to set of questions, or
> to produce presentations for report-back sessions. What
> we did not observe was a willingness to reflect on what
> was being read. The reference book was treated more as a
> treasure trove of sentences and paragraphs which could be
> stolen and marketed again in another setting (19).

Discussions of the variety of purposes in reading and how to help
pupils read to learn can engage teachers and prospective teachers
in some reflection on four styles of reading - receptive reading,
reflective reading, skim reading and scanning - and the need to
provide support for pupils to integrate all the processes of
learning when using the school library (20). The realisation that
effective reading is enhanced by small group discussion can break
down the barriers that some pupils and some cultures have to
reading as an individual and isolated activity.

The information skills curriculum framework can also help teachers
and prospective teachers to consider stimulating the use of the
school library for learning and consider all the processes at work
- reading, talking, listening and writing - in an integrated way.
The skills domain has been delineated as including four major areas
of receptive skills, reflective skills, expressive skills and
personal/social skills and an integrated approach to teaching these
skills co-operatively by teachers and school librarians is
suggested (21). A widely used list of questions which clearly
outlines the process when going through any finding-out activity is
another approach.

- What do I need to do? (formulation and analysis of need).
- Where could I go? (identification and appraisal of likely
sources).

- How do I get to the information? (tracing and locating individual resources).
- Which resources shall I use? (examining, selecting and rejecting individual resources).
- How shall I use the resources? (interrogating resources).
- What should I make a record of? (recording and storing information).
- Have I got the information I need? (interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).
- How should I present it? (presentation, communication, shape).
- What have I achieved? (evaluation) (22).

The advantage of using this last framework within teacher education with teachers and prospective teachers is the emphasis which helps them reflect on their own information skills and, therefore, encourages them to use it for discussion with pupils as they complete assignments. This could help them consider the complexity of the learning process and recognise the need to provide support through the integration of reading, talking, listening and writing. Encouraging the use of the school library could thus be seen as integral to learning how to learn, as it links learning and resources for learning by focussing on the process skills and content oriented to learning how to learn. In addition, careful planning and implementation of school library use provides opportunities for pupils to transfer information skills beyond the classroom.

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CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 THE SCHOOL LIBRARY AS PART OF A NATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE

NETWORK

The objectives of school library services are easy to identify and define if they are seen as part of an integrated library and information service network, whose overall objectives are the organisation and dissemination of all kinds of information to suit the varying needs of all segments and levels of the society, including children and young adults.

Consequently, if the needs of this group are identified as follows:

(i)   to be introduced to books at a very early age, since recent educational research has emphasised the early years as the time when reading habit is generally formed;

(ii) to become familiar with all media as carriers of information, whether for vocational or recreational purposes;

(iii) to develop information retrieval skills which will carry over into all areas of adult life, and

(iv) to constantly pursue the goal of individual excellence by using all the materials and media available to them (1) then the library information network must provide service designed to satisfy these needs; and the school libraries are the best place to do so.

School libraries can be centres not only for curriculum support of formal education systems, but also centres of communication which enrich the lives of students and introduce them to varying aspects of literature, the arts, current affairs and their country's culture.

Mungo (2) suggests certain steps to be taken before school libraries can become capable of satisfying these needs:

(i) Aims of their services must be clearly defined and expressed;

(ii) a workable organisational structure must be established;

(iii) adequate funding must be assured, and

(iv) competent staff must be provided.

These four important pre-requisite are briefly discussed as follows:

AIMS

Whatever aims school libraries hope to achieve as a result of the services they offer should be clearly stated in writing so that school administrators, teaching staff, parents and students may understand clearly what the library can do for them. These stated aims may be part of written policy statements which would also show how such objectives are to be met.

ORGANISATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Once the aims have been identified, a workable organisational framework must be designed for achieving them. The most essential component of such a framework would be the enactment of legislation, included in educational legislation, and embodied in educational codes and regulations, to ensure the provision and continuing progress of school libraries and services. Such codes or regulations would state explicitly

(a) what library services must be provided in schools
(b) what provision should be made for funds, staff etc.

They might also give guidelines for the formulation of boards, committees, councils which would administer them and what powers these bodies would have e.g. re-budgets, personnel etc.

Other elements to be considered would be the making of decisions as to what areas of school library services could more profitably be centralised, how much autonomy might be granted to individual school libraries, the provision of support services such as model libraries and teachers' centres and continuing and/or in-service education and training of staff.

FUNDING

Funding agencies should be clearly identified and procedures should be such that provisions are made for increases to keep pace with rising prices of materials, and for new expenses caused by revision or improvements of services offered. safeguards should also be included so that funds allocated cannot be arbitrarily cut, or diverted to other areas.

STAFF

This is in many ways the single and most important feature of the effective school library, since any service can only be as good - or as bad - as the people who organise and administer it. Therefore provision should be made for staff with special expertise in both education and librarianship; such a combination of professional skills would enable them to select suitable materials, instruct teachers and students in their use, encourage individual exploration and development; and promote the use of the school library not just as part of formal schooling, but as a bridge between children and the whole world of ideas, knowledge and skills which they can use to enrich every area of their lives.

5.1 The School Library as a Centre of Communication

Given the presence of the above four elements - aims, infrastructure, funds and staff - how can the school library function as a centre of communication? In the book National library and information services the authors(3) develop an interesting theory of libraries and communication which may be summarised as follows:

(a) In today's complex society with its dependence on technology, there is an ever-growing need for the dissemination of information to facilitate the understanding of that technology and of the society to which it is to be applied;

(b) Communication therefore becomes a major social function, worthy of study as a subject in itself;

(c) the media of communication have become increasingly complex and varied;

(d) the value of these media depend on efficient organisation for their use as vehicles of information both current and retrospective and as carriers of the cultural heritage;

(e) libraries provide the needed organisation for use and therefore have a vital role to play in all aspects of communication.

This is not too advanced a role to be applied to school libraries. Schools are by designation the places where young members of the society acquire the information and skills which enable them to function within the society; if communication skills are necessary, then they must be taught at school with the school library providing opportunities, materials and guidance and itself acting as a communication centre. The Bullock Report also reaffirms this role of the school library in the following words:

> Dealing effectively with information must now be recognised as one of the major problems in modern society ... (a pupil) must be able to identify his own information needs ... know the sources ... judge the values ... select the limited amount which will serve him best ... pupils should be led in confidence in the use of bibliographical tools and in tapping sources of information in the community at large (4).

There is a need to help children in developing the necessary study and library skills which will enable them to seek out and research information for themselves effectively. Children in the early

ages will need the time and opportunity for learning how to use the library, how to find books using the appropriate coding systems and how to use information books. This has to be supported by carefully planning tasks which help children to select and use appropriate books and material. A conscious effort is needed to develop these areas in a sequential and structural manner. Teachers will need to guide the development of the appropriate skills and techniques which support successful project and topic work. This will entail the identification of the purposes of project and topic work and the recognition of how study and library skills relate to them.

It must also be emphasised that this is not a passive role; it is the business of the library to make its presence felt, to be actively involved in the teaching - learning process. In other words, the library must not only be a centre of communication, it must communicate with all segments of the school population it serves - the administrators, the teachers and the students - constantly explaining, emphasising and promoting its services. this is where the commitment, expertise and vigour of the librarian become of paramount importance; he/she must be able to convince the school population that its library is a valuable resource.

There are many examples of good libraries -i.e. good in terms of resources and planned programmes - which fail to have any impact on the school because of a lack of awareness of their potential; this is a pity and a waste, and it is the business of the librarian to prevent it. Mungo (5) suggests strategies which may be used by the librarian to facilitate the school library communicating with all segments of the school population it serves as follows:

5.2 Communicating with Administrators

Some of the following strategies may be used:

    (i) Presentation to the principal of a written statement of the library's objectives, showing how they support the educational objectives of the school and outling the areas where administrative support is needed. Emphasis should be placed on mutually supportive roles of the principal and the school librarian.

(ii) Regular reports on current trends in school library practice, new resources, technology etc. - and their value to the learning process.

(iii) Working closely with principal to ensure that the school library keeps pace with curriculum development and new approaches to the teaching of various subjects.

(iv) Scrupulous budgeting and accounting procedures and analysis of the cost effectiveness of library resources and programmes.

(v) Finally, aiding the professional development of the principal and other administrators by raising their level of awareness of all aspects of school library practice.

To return to a point made earlier that adequate funding is essential to the success of the school library, it seems obvious that educational administrators who are convinced that the library is vital to the success of the school will be better motivated to provide or support requests for adequate budgets for library services and programmes.

5.3 Communicating with Teachers

Because of the relative newness of school libraries in the educational picture, it is still fairly common to find oneself dealing with teachers who are ignorant of the role of the library and its resources, how to use them in their own teaching and how to stimulate their students to use them. Various strategies are needed here also:

(i) Emphasising the role of the library as a learning centre and of the librarian as a member of the teaching team. It would be useful to circulate to teachers too a copy of the written objectives of the library and show how they provide support for teacher's objectives. In fact a "Library Handbook for Teachers" would be a useful idea, this would also contain guidelines for the use of the library services offered to teachers, suggestions for stimulating use by students etc.

(ii) Providing information and instruction on new learning
resources and their use.

(iii) Becoming involved in curriculum planning and development
and keeping oneself informed of the special needs of
different subjects or grade/age levels.

(iv) Involving teachers in selecting library materials and
planning programmes to suit their pupils needs.

(v) Finally, acting as a resource person and liaising with
other libraries, information centres or other useful
institutions so as to expand as much as possible the
range of materials and services available to teachers
(6).

it is in dealing with teachers that the librarian's expertise in
educational theory and practice becomes invaluable; it makes
possible an understanding of their problems and makes it easier to
meet them on their own level as they are much more likely to accept
suggestions from one whom they acknowledge as being a professional
peer.

Outreach is extremely important, announcements and reports at staff
meetings, providing subject-related displays and/or bibliographies,
inviting different departments to the library and discussing with
them what support materials are there for their area of the
curriculum, all these strategies constantly underline the pervasive
role of the library in the school, but they need competent school
librarians to carry them out. The idea of expertise as a result of
appropriate education and training is constantly emphasised because
observation and research have shown that the librarian is the key
resource in ensuring that successful communication takes place.

5.4 Communicating with Students

If successful communication is achieved between the school
librarian, school principals and other administrators, and teaching
staff, then communication with the students becomes almost
automatic; they will be more or less forced to use the library if
teachers teach lessons and give assignments which demand

investigation and exploration of media, and if school regulations and timetables are sufficiently flexible to allow them easy access to the media and services provided.

This does not however relieve the librarian of the responsibility of establishing meaningful contact with the students, and initiating learning experiences complementary to those supplied by teachers. The school librarians' task here is to support the process of education by providing curriculum-oriented material, enrich it by providing a variety of formats at all levels of comprehension. The following approaches could be tried:

(i) Making the library a physically attractive place so as to catch the students attention and encourage them to enter;

(ii) using various activities to introduce students to the wealth of man's recorded ideas, feelings and knowledge, via the media of print, audio-visual and other materials;

(iii) teaching and reinforcing co-operatively with other teachers, the skills of information retrieval and use.

(iv) encouraging students to be aware of the many differing - sometimes controversial - points of view that are possible in all areas of knowledge;

(v) involving them in the process of selection by carefully noting their requests for particular topics or types of materials and listening to their evaluation of what is provided;

(vi) constantly reminding them that information is all around them in various forms and can be used to satisfy many needs, and acting as the link between students and sources of information both in the school and in the wider community around them (7).

In dealing with students the school librarian is more fortunate than the classroom teachers because he/she is not bound by the limitations of syllabus or exams; his sphere of responsibility is

the whole world of knowledge and culture, and there is no reason why the school library should not attempt to expose students to as much of it as possible. The only limiting factors may be those of finance which may preclude the possibility of acquiring certain types of material, or lack of imagination or expertise on the part of the school librarian, who may not be able to use what is there imaginatively, or promote the library and its services successfully.

In all aspects of school library provision - selection of materials, organisation, instructions, communication etc. - the librarian is the key to success. A well trained imaginative librarian can do more with limited resources than a poor one can do with a wealth of material and especially in the area of promotion of the library and its services it is the expertise and persuasiveness of the librarian which can make the process of communication a successful one.

In many developing countries and in Sierra Leone in particular school libraries are in general not yet very well developed and this state of affairs could be attributed to two reasons. The first is finance, many governments are not spending enough on school library services to help them meet even the minimum standards of acceptability with regard to accommodation, collection and staff. Secondly, because of the low levels of funding and the lack of even minimum standards regarding qualifications of school library personnel, there are many instances of misuse or under-use of the facilities that do exist. It would seem therefore that it may be more profitable to tackle the second problem first, i.e. develop programmes for the education and training of school librarians which would make them more capable of making maximum use of the scant resources that exist and achieving successes which would, hopefully, attract better funding.

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CHAPTER SIX

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sierra Leone Library Board receives a quarterly subvention from central government through the Ministry of Education to carry out its statutory obligations, but all through its years of development progress had been slowed down because of economic and financial constraints in the country.

The part that school and public libraries will play within a national system of developing countries will depend on their role perception and upon their capability to pool efforts from the start and develop jointly. Library services are not cheap. In countries where education is a primary concern and resources are scarce, the sacrifice of investing in these types of services can be justified only insofar as they prove their worth in meeting educational expectations. Once public and school libraries commit themselves to strengthening the capability of the country to improve education, it becomes clear that they are trying to reach the same population groups for the same purposes in different contexts: one within the formal educational system the other outside that system. Evans observed that:

> The first essential to any consideration of the public
> library service is a clear understanding of the purpose of
> such service ... The range of materials to be provided
> must depend on the extent to which individuals may better
> obtain and be able to obtain any material from other
> sources ... The public library must be a comprehensive,
> general service for the use of all sections of the
> community ... special attention should be paid to work
> with children and young people. The library should also
> aim to be the communitys information centre, specialising
> in any subject which is of specific interest in the
> community. To be able to fulfil its commitments, it is
> essential that the library has an adequate budget, the
> support of the state and a well trained enthusiastic
> staff.

> The librarian must be prepared to take the lead in various

cultural activities and be interested in all forms of
community progress. With these essentials, there is every
reason to expect that the public library will take its
place as one of the most important forces in the life of
the community (1).

The development of library services must be indigenous. In Sierra
Leone however, the need to develop library services is often out of
all proportion to the resources available for meeting it. The
stock of the Library Board with which it is carrying out its
functions is still too book orientated and even this is mainly of
donations either in the form of second hand gift books or in cash.
Havard-Wiliams observed that:

> While gifts and exchanges of appropriate quality and level
> are most welcome additions to any library, it has to be
> recognised that nothing can replace a steady flow of
> acquisitions and up-to-date completed sets of journals and
> 'standing orders' bought on the basis of a well-conceived
> policy of acquisitions. Assured and continued funding is
> needed for this (2).

The parlous foreign exchange situation with an unstable exchange
rate of the Leone to the Pound sterling/Dollar has also made it
impossible for the Library Board to add new titles to its stock
over the past five years. This is evident in its annual report in
the following words:

> The severe and crippling lack of foreign exchange has
> greatly affected book acquisition which have fallen
> steadily in the past five years and but for donations of
> books and UNESCOUNUNS from various overseas institutions
> and organisations the Boards' services would have come to
> a standstill. The Primary Schools Service is also starved
> of books and new mobile library vans are also needed. The
> fuel crisis has also affected the smooth running of this
> important service (3).

The situation in the schools are much similar to those in the
public libraries. The general aim of the school library is to meet

curriculum needs of the individual schools. Schools in Sierra
Leone lack adequate funds to meet all their needs. Jalloh (4)
suggests that the National Government can help remedy this
situation in a number of ways: by providing sufficient funds
resources and by recommending standards. In terms of finance, the
optimum solution is to make the school library system part of an
annual appropriation by parliament with its capital and recurrent
expenditure estimated in the accepted manner. This assurance of a
defined revenue makes planning a reality and a programme of school
library development possible. Special needs of individual school
libraries not provided for by state revenues could still be met by
contributions from school funds.

With reference to standards, the disparity of school library
provision warrants the need for minimum standards recommended by
the Sierra Leone Library Association (SLLA) in consultation with
the national government. The establishment of standards for
school libraries should assist those concerned with educational
planning to think seriously of the role of libraries in our
educational system.

In a society as ours where wages are so low and the cost of books
so high, one expects that it should be the duty of government or
government funded bodies to provide adequate information and
library service for those interested in obtaining such service. At
the present much more co-ordination seems necessary not only to
pool ideas but also to exploit to its' fullest the limited
resources at our disposal.

The Sierra Leone Library Board in its efforts to provide a more
meaningful service throughout the country has observed that:

> ... the new chairman and members of the Board have been
> thinking about the role of the Boards' libraries and are
> determined to provide adequate and meaningful public
> library facilities throughout Sierra Leone. But in order
> to fulfil this determination, the financial support from
> government, the political will and the enthusiastic
> involvement of the Boards' staff will be needed (5).

In the Report of the Education Review of Sierra Leone, issued in

1977, no library service was established as an integral part of national education. The library service especially the public library service, is seen to be a national liability, consuming money that could be better spent on more vital services and productive activities in the country:

> How do we justify putting libraries and librarians high in the queue which includes, for example, manpower, buildings and other resources – a queue which includes for example, doctors, nurses and hospitals, schools and school teachers, colleges and universities and staff to teach in them, agriculturists, senior officers of government and many others. Where should those responsible for distributing funds feel that their duty lies? It would obviously be unrealistic to say that, there, occupying first place in the queue, should be libraries and librarians. On the other hand a very powerful case can be made for giving librarians and libraries quite a high place – probably much higher than is often realised (6).

Clearly defined aims, a new role perception and a flexible practical strategy of action that takes into consideration all available options in the light of needs and resources would lead to the effective development of school and public library systems. International assistance is essential, but it must be given with the clear understanding of the particular course of action which is being followed.

In 1986, a mission from the World Bank visited the Sierra Leone Library Board with a view to reappraise current library provision and to evaluate the Boards' needs. The following were their proposals and recommendations:-

6.1 AIMS OF PROPOSED SIERRA LEONE LIBRARY BOARD SECTOR PROJECT

a) The immediate objective would be to prevent terminal decline in the existing Sierra Leone Library Board service.

b) To up-grade the primary school mobile service to provide a genuine service to the rural areas so that all pupils will have available to them at least a limited amount of additional

reading material to support the aims and objectives of the
current textbook project.

c) To provide supportive services for secondary technical and
    further education student members of the library service by
    making multiple copies of key textbooks available in all
    headquarter, provincial and branch libraries.

d) To provide the minimum facilities necessary to support the
    above three objectives, both in terms of capital investment and
    operational costs.

e) To maintain existing staff quality and make provision for
    further improvement by in-service and external training
    provision.

f) To make the professional skills of the Sierra Leone
    LibraryBoard available to the secondary, technical and
    vocational education sectors, in particular in the areas of
    book selection and acquisition. Secondary and further
    education institutions frequently do not have either the
    facilities nor the expertise to select and acquire key
    supplementary or library materials and for the foreseeable
    future the Sierra Leone Library Board should provide maximum
    input.

6.2 Recommended Strategies

At present the Ministry of Education makes an allocation to every
secondary school of L2. (18p) per pupil per annum to cover
secondary school library purchases. This contribution is currently
largely ineffective because of the lack of books to buy
(particularly true in rural areas where frequently there are no
books at all and a lack of catalogue information from which to
select suitable titles). It is proposed therefore that all library
allocation be held by the Sierra Leone Library Board on behalf of
schools and that the Sierra Leone Library Board be asked to produce
a list of suitable reference titles from its own catalogue
resources, organised by level and subject and priced in Leones.
This catalogue should be circulated to schools annually, which
could then select from the catalogue the level of their allocation.

The Sierra Leone Library Board would order on their behalf and supply via the school distribution service. This system will enable school libraries to be steadily developed throughout the country. The annual library allocation at present amount to approximately Le160,000 (approximately £22,500 sterling). This figure is close to the current UNESCO coupon allocation made to the Conference of Principals of Secondary School (CPSS). If the CPSS allocated their coupons to support this proposal foreign exchange cover would be provided for the secondary school library allocation, and an important additional book resource could be added to schools throughout the country at no significant extra cost. It should be noted however that the current library allocation to secondary schools could be doubled with great benefit. This would however require additional foreign exchange cover and an increased allocation of UNESCO coupons.

1. In order to achieve the aims and implement the above recommendation by the World Bank Officers, and in the light of current economic situation in the country, the Sierra Leone Library Board should undertake comprehensive surveys of its services and the survey data obtained should be used as the basis for forecasting future needs and the preparation of a long term plan. The plan should cover the legislative and financial basis for the operation and all aspects of the structure and functioning of these services, including manpower provisions, technological components and co-operative arrangements.

2. A national information plan will have to be developed in accordance with an established information policy and implemented taking into account the priorities of national overall and sectoral planning. The plan should reflect the existing situation, and possible ways of improving it using to the maximum the human and physical resources available, and should provide for the creation of new capabilities and facilities.

3. The various problems of school library use include under-utilization of library resources and facilities brought about by such factors as students lack of contact with

organised libraries from primary school level, teaching methods
and of sufficient education in library use; unsuitable study
and reading environment and school library staff attitudes are
also factors which militate against library use.

Use of libraries should therefore be as part of instructions
offered from the primary school level onwards so that seeking
information becomes a normal part of daily life. The content
of these programmes should be expanded as the advance through
the educational system progresses.

At teacher education level, courses in the use of specialised
literature and sources of information should be made available
as part of the regular curricula, and these courses should be
set up with the full co-operation of the college libraries.

4. The teaching/learning approach in teacher training institutions
    in the country needs changing. Teachers in training should be
    taught to adopt the enquiry method of learning and to take
    control of their own learning. This would result in the wider
    use of the library in schools than there is at present and
    would also result in more effective learning.

5. To make libraries relevant in the learning process, there is a
    need to change Sierra Leone's philosophy of education and the
    teaching methodology in schools. Education should be more
    student-centred than teacher-centred so as to allow the
    students to play a more active part in their learning.

    The Sierra Leone Library Board should also operate a
    country-wide school library service covering both secondary and
    primary schools, and again, should play a leading role together
    with the Sierra Leone Library Association, in fostering the
    development of school libraries.

School library service cannot operate successfully without the
necessary co-operation at national level and at local level between
chief officers, senior staff in the Ministry of Education,
librarians, teachers and audio visual aids advisers. At national
level there should be improved liaison between the several
departments in the Ministry of Education responsible for the

various aspects of school libraries administration and provision.
The Ministry of Education should recognise the need for
co-operation at local level e.g. The Freetown City Council and
other education employing authorities in the country and should
actually promote it. There is also scope for greater consultation
between the Library Association and the various educational
associations e.g. Sierra Leone Teachers Union.

Planning for the provision of school libraries for the maximum
availability and use of the country's information resources should
be integrated with the overall national and sectoral development
plans and interrelated with communication planning as a whole. The
planning of the elements of a national information system (NATIS)
thus becomes one specific aspect of educational, scientific and
cultural planning within the social and economic planning of a
country or region, for within this context this planning can reach
its maximum efficiency.

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APPENDIX I

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORTS - FREETOWN

DATA ON PRE-PRIMARY/NURSERY SCHOOLS IN SIERRA LEONE

1987/88 - School Year

	ASSISTED SCHOOLS	UNASSISTED SCHOOLS
WESTERN AREA	27	29
NORTHERN PROVINCE	3	4
SOUTHERN PROVINCE	4	5
EASTERN PROVINCE	3	3
TOTAL	37	TOTAL 41

1. All Pre-primary Schools are privately owned but operates under Nursery/Pre-Primary Schools Association. All of these schools are registered with the Nursery/Pre-Primary Schools Association.

2. By Assisted it is to understand that the salaries of all qualified Teachers are paid by the Government.

3. Unassisted, though registered with Nursery/Pre-Primary Schools Association these do not qualify for Government assistance, therefore Government does not give them any financial assistance, that is payment of salaries of qualified teachers.

APPENDIX II

AN INTEGRATED PLAN FOR THE ERADICATION OF ILLITERACY IN SIERRA
LEONE

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Structure and Organisation:

Primary Education is the base of Sierra Leones formal education
system.

Before 1984/85 school year, children were admitted to reception
class 1, and they go through a seven year cycle on to class VII
which officially corresponds to age 5-12 but there has been some
policy change on this. Majority of the schools in the primary
sector are voluntary agency schools like the Christian and Muslim
Missions.

Nursery education which is a subsector is run by voluntary
organisations but government through the Ministry of Education pays
the qualified staff. Staffing in primary education is the entire
responsibility of government, which through the ministry provides
running cost and also Development Grants.

There are three types of primary schools:-

    (i)   Assisted Schools
   (ii)   Independent schools and
  (iii)   Private schools.

Assisted schools are run by Employing Authorities on behalf of
Government.

Independent schools are owned and run outside the control of the
Ministry of Education.

Private schools receive no government grants.

Administration

The Primary Division comprises the following:-

I. **MECAS Headquarter Staff**

      Principal Education Officer (P.E.O.P.) 2
      Senior Education Officer Primary   1
      Education Officer Primary   2
      Curriculum Development Officer   1
      Graduate Teachers Attached   2

II. **Regional/Field Officers:**

      Superintendent of Primary Eduation (SPE) 2
      Senior Inspectors of Schools (SIS)   4
      Inspectors of Schools (I/S's)   18
      Supervisors of Schools (S/S)   18
      Teacher Supervisors (T/S)   63

III. **Employing Authorities:**

      There is a partnership between the Ministry and Employing
      Authorities for the management of schools. Employing.
      Authorities Number 64 of which Field Officers I/S also
      serve as Managers of District Education Committee schools
      numbering 18.
      23 Managers of Christian Schools.
      16 Managers of Muslim Schools.
      25 Managers of Independent Schools.

IV. **Schools:**

      Number of Registered/Assisted Schools: 1,344
      Number of Registered qualified teachers: 6,309
      Number of children in school: 441,466
      School entry age has been raised to six (6) years
      School cycle at age six i.e. No. of years in primary
      school six (6) years
      Present (987/88) pupil teacher ratio (PTR) 1:40
      Percentage of qualified teachers over 40%.

Extension of Primary Education:

As a result of rapid increase in enrolment in primary schools and as a result of free primary education, large number of feeder/ extension schools have been established in various parts of the country for which registration and government approval is being sought.

The Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Education and International Development Association (IDA) decided to make primary education a major focus for the Third IDA project aimed primarily at improving and updating:

   i.   the curriculum for primary education, distribution of primary text books, the desemination of Bunumbu experience and the harmonization of the primary school syllabus is actively in progress;

  ii.   the physical facilities and equipment for primary education;

 iii.   teacher-education at pre and in-service levels, and

  iv.   educational administration are vigorously pursued.

APPENDIX III
THE PRESENT TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SECTOR IN SIERRA LEONE

Institution	Level	Location	Date Established	Type
Technical Institute	post secondary	Freetown	1953	
Technical Institute	sec. Form 3	Kenema	1956	
Trade Centre	sec. Form 3	Kissy	1964	Mixed
Trade Centre	sec. Form 3	Magburaka	1962	
Y.W.C.A. Vocational Institute	post primary	Freetown	1961	Women & Girls
St. Mary's Technical Vocational Institute	post primary	Bo	1954	Women & Girls
Forestry Training School	post mid-sec	Bambawo Nr.Kenema	1965	Boys

APPENDIX IV
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF SIERRA LEONE AND TEACHERS COLLEGES 1987/88

COLLEGE	NO. OF STUDENTS	NO. TRS
1. Fourah Bay College	1500	–
2. Njala University College	918	–
3. Milton Margai Teachers College	640	62
4. Bunumbu Teachers College	644	58
5. Bo Teachers College	414	53
6. Makeni Teachers College	450	55
7. Port Loko Teachers College	520	39
8. Freetown Teachers College	415	43

APPENDIX V
PRIMARY STATISTICS BY DISTRICT
1987/88 ACADEMIC YEAR

DISTRICT	SCHOOLS		TEACHERS						ENROLMENT		
	REG.	FEEDER	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	QUAL.	UNQUAL.	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
BOMBALI	93	88	766	319	1,085	503	582	1,085	21,349	13,846	35,195
TONKOLILI	103	100	772	280	1,052	409	643	1,052	17,802	12,563	30,565
PORT LOKO	95	65	471	179	650	239	411	650	13,623	8,195	21,818
KAMBIA	52	82	422	81	503	103	400	503	11,799	5,537	17,336
KOINADUGU	32	52	301	72	373	81	292	373	7,635	4,218	11,853
LUNGI	39	11	197	52	249	90	159	249	6,147	3,488	9,635
KENEMA	132	138	1,407	362	1,769	611	1,158	1,769	36,731	22,704	59,435
KONO	79	34	680	131	811	346	447	811	15,115	17,011	32,126
KAILAHUN	99	135	921	376	1,297	538	760	1,297	25,989	15,765	41,754
BO	158	73	1,341	446	1,788	1,135	653	1,788	31,286	26,290	57,578
PUJEHUN	64	60	351	43	399	114	285	399	5,251	5,277	10,528
MOYAMBA	124	65	655	187	832	362	471	832	13,013	10,973	23,986
BONTHE ISLAND	32	5	83	28	111	50	61	111	2,047	1,613	3,650
MATTRU JONG	40	24	255	78	333	166	167	333	6,147	5,438	11,585
RURAL EDUC. CTTEE.	42	3	194	173	367	228	139	367	7,293	5,813	13,106
WESTERN AREA URGAN	126	15	627	975	1,602	1,030	572	11,602	28,351	25,295	57,404
NURSERY SCHOOLS	32	–	–	64	64	64	–	64	–	–	4,112
	1,344	950	9,407	3,814	13,285	6,309	7,287	13,285	238,087	179,624	441,466

APPENDIX VI
SECONDARY SCHOOLS STATISTICS - 1987/88

	No. of Schools	No. of Teachers	No. of Pupils	No. of GQ	No. of H.T.C.	No. of T.C.	No. of 'A' Level	No. of 'O' Level	No. of GU	Others
EASTERN PROVINCE										
Kailahun District	18	275	7,679	52	81	36	11	65	20	22
Kenema District	19	406	8,897	104	98	25	37	59	53	32
Kano District	16	340	7,492	68	84	59	16	47	35	18
Total	53	921	24,068	224	263	121	64	171	108	72
SOUTHERN PROVINCE										
Bo District	28	681	13,702	200	208	34	40	63	91	42
Bonthe District	6	80	1,760	20	21	7	4	11	9	10
Moyamba District	16	322	4,863	196	80	24	8	48	36	31
Pujehun District	6	87	1,219	17	17	13	4	24	10	2
Total	56	1,170	21,544	433	328	78	56	146	146	85
NORTHERN PROVINCE										
Bombali District	20	495	10,796	82	161	75	30	68	68	65
Port Loko District	12	245	4,756	56	68	19	14	17	38	31
Kambia District	9	151	3,478	24	37	23	5	28	17	20
Koinadugu District	5	70	2,435	18	18	5	2	14	8	5
Kabala District	13	270	5,976	50	77	40	6	29	16	50
Total	59	1,231	27,441	230	361	162	57	156	127	171
WESTERN AREA	37	2,096	28,642	494	497	41	8	42	200	104

APPENDIX VII

University of Sierra Leone
A statement of minimum standards for secondary school
libraries in Sierra Leone

1. The following statement was prepared by the fourth Annual
    Library Science Easter Residential School, held at Fourah Bay
    College, University of Sierra Leone by the Department of Extra
    Mural Studies in co-operation with the college library.
    Acknowledgement is also made to the Ministry of Education for
    its support for the course.

INTRODUCTION

2. The importance of a good library in a school cannot be over-
    estimated. There is not the slightest doubt that it is an
    indispensable element in the learning process, and it follows
    that every secondary school should be equipped with a sound and
    effective one if an enlightened educational policy is to be
    achieved. There are certain basic requirements which should be
    the prerogative of every secondary school library.
    Unfortunately, it is evident that the general situation is far
    from satisfactory, and many school libraries exhibit serious
    shortcomings, or are indeed, virtually non-existent. Some can
    boast of little more than a collection of out of date,
    unattractive fiction and non-fiction books which have little
    relevance to the needs of children in Sierra Leone. Apart from
    the acute shortage of books and other learning materials, there
    are problems of uncongenial surroundings, inadequate finance,
    poor administration, lack of understanding amongst teachers,
    whether responsible for the library or not, about the true
    potential of a library. Consequently, the benefits and
    pleasures of reading are unknown to many children who will
    leave school with limited reading ability, and little
    inclination to read for personal development. There is no
    single aspect of our educational policy in more urgent need of
    development, and it was with this in mind that it was felt that

a statement of minimum standards would do much to provide the national stimulus and direction required.

THE EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL AIMS OF A SCHOOL LIBRARY

3. Before going into matters of detail, it will be helpful to outline the goals to which a school library should be reaching, since without an awareness on the part of the teachers, and those responsible for the administration of schools, they will be difficult to achieve.

   They can be summarised as follows:-

   a) to support the formal teaching programmes throughout the school with a rich and varied collection of books and other learning materials for staff and children alike.

   b) To promote the habit of reading for pleasure, and to provide systematic training in the care and use of books.

   c) To provide individual guidance to pupils in research skills.

   d) To instil an awareness of libraries outside the school to ensure a life long interest in reading.

ADMINISTRATION, ORGANISATION AND FINANCE

4. The Ministry of Education should have a clearly defined policy on the provision of secondary school libraries, formulated by consultation between the Minister for Education, the Chief Librarian of the Library Board, the School Library Association, Library Association, the Conference of Principals, Library Educators and other interested parties. A senior member of the Ministry of Education should be given responsibility for the promotion and systematic development of secondary school libraries.

5. Within the school, it should be the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the Ministry policy is implemented by delegating the administration of the library to a teacher/

librarian. It is further recommended that the principal should promote and support an advisory committee, representative of staff and pupils, to draw up some simple rules and to keep library services under review. Within this framework, the teacher/librarian should carry out the routine administration and organisation in the best possible manner. Particular attention should be paid to the task of acquiring materials most suitable to the school's needs, in consultation with other teaching staff, and in ensuring that these materials are fully exploited.

6. All the learning materials in the school library should be catalogued and classified and arranged according to recognised practices. Ideally, they should be available to all the children in the school throughout the day, and there should be opportunities for home borrowing.

7. It is recommended that all secondary school libraries should receive an adequate grant from the Ministry of Education, and should seek to add to this grant in any way within their power e.g. by monetary contributions from pupils, old scholars, parents, by the raising of funds from social and sporting events. If this grant cannot come from the Ministry, the Board of Governors will recommend that the ministry allow the levy of a library fee as part of school fees. The grant should be of two kinds - (a) a substantial initial grant for a new school, or for an established one where the library is non-existent, or seriously deficient, and (b) an annual maintenance grant for all schools for new books, replacement copies, re-binding, periodicals, library stationery etc. In times of inflation it is difficult to suggest what size these grants should be and they should obviously be linked with the number of pupils, but at the time of writing (April 1976) it is recommended that (a) should be not less than Le500 and (b) not less than Le200. per annum. These figures if adopted, should be reviewed periodically. The teacher/librarian should be responsible for the maintenance of proper records of expenditure from the library budget.

STAFF: STATUS AND QUALIFICATION

8. It is axiomatic that the school library needs to be properly
   staffed by people trained to carry out the multifarious
   activities demanded. Although the ideal for the largest
   secondary schools would be a full time professional librarian,
   every school library should at least be in charge of an
   experienced professionally qualified teacher who has attended a
   residential course in library science. Further, it is
   recommended that there should be recognition in the teacher/
   librarian's time table of the need for him/her to spend a
   number of hours every week on library duties. The amount of
   time will vary according to the particular circumstances of a
   school, and its employment of a full time library assistant,
   but it is suggested that in a well developed library pursuing
   an active programme, ten periods a week would be appropriate
   for the teacher/librarian. It is further recommended that
   because of the special position held by the teacher/librarian,
   the post should carry an allowance similar to that given to
   Science and Mathematics teachers.

9. To support the teacher/librarian, to ensure that the library is
   constantly staffed, and to carry out routine clerical and
   administrative duties inappropriate for a qualified teacher, it
   is recommended that every secondary school should have a
   library assistant. Suitable qualification is suggested to be
   not less than 2 O'levels, and library assistants should be
   given the opportunity to take the London City and Guilds
   Examination.

10. Because of the need for every teacher to be library orientated,
    it is recommended that courses in library utilisation, given by
    a professional librarian, form part of the curriculum of all
    Teacher Training Institutes as well as in the Department of
    Education in both Fourah Bay College and Njala University
    College.

STOCK

11. To be really effective, a school library must contain a
    carefully selected, well balanced stock of books and other

materials which is wholly related to the needs of the
curriculum and to the leisure interests of the pupils. It
cannot be over-emphasized that quality is as important as the
quantity, and that every book should be worthy of its place on
the shelf. It is recommended that every secondary school
should have a minimum of 2,500 books to achieve the aims set
out earlier in this statement. Furthermore, it is suggested
that increasing attention to be paid to the provision of
non-book materials, and educational technology in schools so
that developments in teaching and learning may be supported by
the most up-to-date techniques.

PLANNING, ACCOMMODATION AND FURNITURE

12. A successful school library derives from a number of factors,
     not least its physical attributes. It needs to be centrally
     located, easily accessible to its users, situated in a
     reasonably quiet area of the school, and capable of expansion
     should the need arise. Its size will need to vary with the
     number of pupils, but the smallest secondary school library
     should not be smaller than 800 square feet. In every case, it
     should be possible to seat at least 10% of the pupils in the
     school at any one time. The library should be so furnished
     and equipped as to be a pleasing and functional place for
     staff and pupils to work in, with attention paid to adequate
     storage for books and other materials, adequate lighting and
     ventilation, comfortable seating, and sufficient tabletop
     space for those working in it. Consideration should be given
     to the various uses to which the library will be put and the
     best disposition of furniture to permit them; e.g. small
     group discussion, display area, reference work, periodicals
     consultation, etc. The need for a small office for the
     library staff should also be borne in mind.

13. In installing furniture the need for the utmost flexibility
     should be considered so that changes in lay-out can be easily
     achieved. As a basic minimum the following items of furniture
     are likely to be required by every secondary school:-

         (a) Shelving, wall and island

    (b) Storage for a/v materials and equipment

    (c) Tables and study chairs

    (d) Easy chairs

    (e) Periodicals rack

    (f) A librarians desk

    (g) A catalogue cabinet

Before ordering library furniture and equipment, it is urged that the advice of professional librarian be sought to ensure wise expenditure.