

A photograph of two young girls with dark skin and hair, wearing blue school uniforms. They are standing outdoors with green foliage in the background. The girl on the left is smiling and holding a book titled 'Environment' with both hands. The girl on the right is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The book cover features a map of Africa and some text. The image is framed by a dark blue diagonal band in the top left and a red diagonal band in the bottom right.

2024-2025

IMPACT REPORT



A Message from Our Executive Director

Una Kushe-O,


It is my honor to serve as executive director of Schools for Salone (SfS), succeeding our visionary founder, Cindy Nofziger. After twenty years of leadership, Cindy leaves a profound legacy of collaboration, impact, and commitment that has lifted the lives of many of Sierra Leone's children.

We are excited to celebrate this year's 20th anniversary of opening our first school and reflect on SfS's journey from post-conflict reconstruction to driving systemic, positive, educational change with our local partners. Our history demonstrates the power of these partnerships, starting with Cindy's and John Sesay's early work together and then expanding to form alliances with Programme for Children, Uman Tok, The Learning Foundation, Sierra Leone Book Trust, and Clinton Caulker.

The following report highlights our milestones and speaks both to our past and our future. We are proud to stand on a strong foundation rooted in the belief that every child deserves a quality education. This academic year, we made significant strides forward by constructing new schools, distributing resources, training teachers, and promoting gender equity. We are pleased to share examples, metrics, and financial information in the Impact Report that follows.

I am eager to implement our plans for the years ahead, as we prioritize teacher support, expand literacy programs, and deepen our work to ensure equitable opportunities for girls. We will also strengthen our evaluation processes to support learning and growth. Our goals will continue to build on our successes, scale our impact, and adapt to the evolving needs of Sierra Leone's education landscape.

The future of Schools for Salone is bright because of you and your involvement and support. With the dedication of our staff, partners, and donors, we will continue to transform lives and shape a radically better future for generations of Sierra Leonean children. Thank you for being a part of this journey!



Allison Sinning



OUR HISTORY



Schools for Salone's history demonstrates the impact of collaboration in strengthening and supporting Sierra Leone's education system. Strategic partnerships with local leaders and organizations have been central to expanding access, ensuring quality learning, and addressing critical needs like girls' education. This enduring commitment to shared vision and local expertise continues to drive SfS's work as it enters a new chapter.

1985 – 1987:

Cindy Nofziger arrives in Sierra Leone as a Peace Corps volunteer and works as a physical therapist at the Masanga Leprosy Hospital in Tonkolili District. During her Peace Corps service, she formed a lasting friendship with John Sesay, a Sierra Leone leader and advocate.

1990 – 2002:

Civil war ravages Sierra Leone with over 50,000 casualties and 2.5 million people displaced during the conflict. Education grinds to a halt with 70% of children out of school and school infrastructures destroyed.

2004 – 2005:

Cindy returns to Sierra Leone and reconnects with John. With the education system in shambles, Cindy and John collaborate to build a school with the help of friend Joseph Williams-Lamin and Programme for Children (PFC). The first Schools for Salone (SfS) partner school opens in John's hometown in November 2005.

2005 – 2008:

The collaborative efforts of Cindy, John, and Joseph through PFC rapidly expand access to education by establishing seven schools. This growth led to SfS formally registering as a U.S. non-profit.

2009 – 2014:

Strategic partnerships deepened SfS's impact. Collaborations with the Sierra Leone Book Trust and The Learning Foundation focused on building literacy and teacher capacity.

2014 – 2016:

The Ebola epidemic shuts down the Sierra Leone education system and highlights the vulnerability of girls. In response, SfS, guided by PFC's Juliet Rhoman, forges a vital initiative providing sexual reproductive health education and menstrual hygiene support, directly addressing the crisis's impact on girls' education.

2019:

Expanding its reach through a new partnership with Clinton Caulker, SfS extends its work into the northern districts of Koinadugu and Falaba.

2020:

Demonstrating the power of local leadership, Juliet Rhoman's vision culminates in Uman Tok becoming an officially registered non-profit in Sierra Leone, further strengthening SfS's support for girls' education.

2021 – 2024:

Prioritizing local leadership for sustainable growth, SfS intensifies its partnerships with five Sierra Leonean organizations. This strategic collaboration focuses on expanding educational access and ensuring quality learning in classrooms.

2025:

Marking two decades of partnership and growth, SfS celebrates its 20th anniversary and embarks on a significant leadership evolution. Cindy Nofziger transitions from executive director to the vital roles of founder and senior advisor, ensuring the continuity of her foundational vision. Allison Sinning is promoted to executive director, charting an exciting new strategic direction for SfS's future impact.

OUR MISSION

Schools for Salone is on a mission to give children in last-mile communities access to quality education.

OUR PILLARS

Schools for Salone envisions a Sierra Leone where quality education is a normal part of every child's life. We strive to fulfill our mission, in collaboration with our partner organizations, through three key program pillars.

Pillar 1: Access to Education

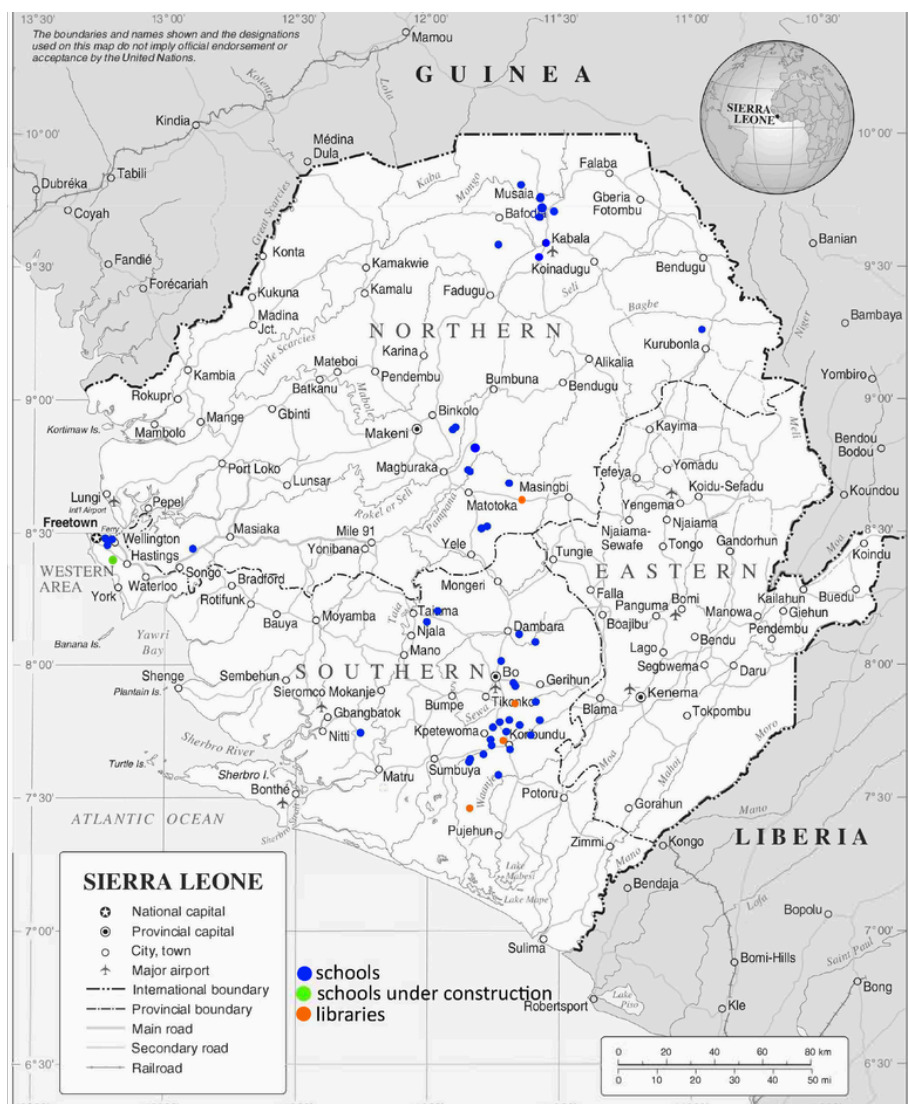
Expand educational opportunities by investing in infrastructure and removing barriers that prevent children from attending school.

Pillar 2: Quality Education

Enhance classroom learning by equipping teachers with the support and resources needed to help students thrive academically.

Pillar 3: Equity in Education

Ensure all students, especially girls, have an equal opportunity to succeed in their education.



Schools for Salone works in six districts across Sierra Leone – Bo, Moyamba, Tonkolili, Koinadugu, Falaba and Western Area (Rural).

OUR IMPACT TO DATE



Pillar 1: Access to Education

- 47 school buildings constructed.
- 5 libraries constructed.
- 18,200 students enrolled.
- 1,000 bikes distributed.
- 477 students sponsored.*

**Since 2021–2022 academic year.*



Pillar 2: Quality Education*

- 412 teachers received Ministry of Education teacher training certification.
- 338 teachers trained in literacy and reading comprehension skills.
- 250 librarians trained in resource management.
- 13,000 books supplied to community and school-based libraries.

**Since 2021–2022 academic year.*



Pillar 3: Equity in Education

- 50,000 menstrual kits produced and distributed.
- 26,165 boys and girls received sexual reproductive health education.



Mamusu, Head Teacher at Education for All Primary School in Western Area, training other teachers about consonant sounds at The Learning Foundation's Level 1 literacy training.

OUR PARTNERS

Programme for Children

Programme for Children (PFC) and Schools for Salone (SfS) became partners in 2005. Since then, SfS has provided PFC with funding to build 36 schools and distribute learning materials in the Moyamba and Bo Districts in the southern province, Tonkolili Districts in the northern province, and the Western Area. Support for SfS enables PFC to maintain and renovate schools, assist with teacher certification, and improve the educational system in last-mile communities.



Uman Tok

Schools for Salone established Uman Tok as an independent NGO in Sierra Leone in 2020. Since then, SfS has provided Uman Tok with funding to produce over 50,000 reusable menstrual hygiene pads and to provide sexual reproductive health education to girls, boys, and their communities. Support for SfS enables Uman Tok to provide girls with the necessary resources to stay in school.



The Learning Foundation

The Learning Foundation (TLF) and Schools for Salone partnered in 2014. Since then, SfS has provided TLF with funding to train 388 teachers in early childhood literacy and oversee school reading programs in Falaba, Koinadugu, and Tonkolili Districts (Northern Province); Bo District (Southern Province); and the Western Area. Support for SfS enables TLF to improve learning outcomes in Sierra Leone.



Sierra Leone Book Trust

Sierra Leone Book Trust (SALBOT) and Schools for Salone partnered in 2012. Since then, SfS has provided SALBOT with funding to establish ten library spaces, promote reading, distribute books, and train teacher librarians. Support from SfS enables SALBOT to cultivate a love for reading in young people across Sierra Leone.



Clinton Caulker

Clinton Caulker and Schools for Salone partnered in 2019. Since then, SfS has contracted with Caulker to construct ten schools and distribute learning materials in Falaba and Koinadugu Districts in the Northern Province. Support for SfS enables Mr. Caulker and his team to maintain and renovate schools, assist with teacher certification, and improve the educational system in last-mile communities in the North.



OUR ACADEMIC YEAR



PILLAR 1: ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Schools for Salone is committed to providing access to education throughout a student's full academic career. Whether financing a school construction project or providing innovative solutions for kids to get to the school in their area, our goal is to ensure kids can take full advantage of their educational opportunities.

This year, Sfs, through our partners, built three new schools. Clinton Caulker and his team completed Lengekoro Senior Secondary School and Koromasilaia Senior Secondary School in Koinadugu and Falaba Districts. These two schools ensure a complete educational cycle within the community, allowing all children to pursue their full twelve years of basic and secondary education without leaving for larger towns.

The Programme for Children team finished construction on the Pentagon Primary School in the rural Western Area, one of our most challenging projects to date due to the area's difficult, hilly terrain. This school is a crucial step in expanding access to education, reaching 200 children in this underserved community.

In partnership with Village Bike Project, Clinton Caulker, and PFC, we significantly scaled up our bicycle project providing over 890 bikes to students in Bo, Tonkolili, Koinadugu, and Falaba districts. These bikes not only provide improved transportation, which has increased attendance for many students; they also improve safety for girls who are often vulnerable to harassment during long commutes to school.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 8,321 students enrolled in Sfs supported schools
- 3 new schools built
- 890 bikes distributed
- 76 students sponsored

IMPACT STORY

Pedaling Toward Hope: Fatima's Journey from Struggle to Success



For Fatima, a twelve-year-old in northern Sierra Leone, getting to school was difficult. She had to walk three miles to school every day. This meant she often missed the start of class and fell behind, eventually having to repeat a year. But Fatima was determined. This year, she received a bicycle. It wasn't just a way to get around; it gave her hope. The long walk became a short ride; she could get to school on time; and she wasn't as tired in class. Finally able to focus, Fatima's natural intelligence showed, and she came in second in her class in the first term—a real sign of her strength and how much a simple thing like a bicycle could change her life.

PILLAR 2: QUALITY EDUCATION

Investing in teachers is key to ensuring students receive a quality education while in the classroom. Our partners, The Learning Foundation and the Sierra Leone Book Trust, actively work to boost reading comprehension in our schools.

Foundational reading skills are critically low among students in Sierra Leone. This challenge is significantly compounded by the fact that only 35% of educators have received essential training in phonics instruction. The Learning Foundation addresses these issues by providing crucial professional development to early primary school teachers and establishing vital reading clubs for struggling readers at both primary and secondary levels.

This academic year, The Learning Foundation trained 62 teachers at 23 primary schools in instructional strategies to develop children's literacy skills; 590 students participated in reading clubs in 15 schools, with 23 teacher librarians trained in improving reading skills.

The Sierra Leone Book Trust fosters a love for reading in schools. With only 13% of children aged 7–14 in Sierra Leone having more than three books at home, ensuring access to books and library resources is crucial for building foundational literacy. This year, SALBOT supplied 3,882 books and trained 56 teacher librarians to support six Inspiring Readers programs and two community libraries, resulting in over 21,000 library visits.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 62 Teachers participated in Literacy training
- 23 teachers and 590 students in Reading Clubs
- 23 teachers in distance learning certification
- 56 teachers in library programs & 3,882 new books
- 21,000 library visits

TLF's Reading Club is an afterschool program designed to help struggling readers gain reading comprehension skills. Trained teachers follow a specific curriculum that covers five areas: introduction story, read/write practice, hands-on activities, kinesthetic learning, and final projects to demonstrate student comprehension and mastery of the material. TLF designed a curriculum for each book title to help teacher-librarians guide students through reading. Each title is to be completed in six weeks, covering the five outlined activities. The goal is for students to finish nine titles by the end of the school year.

IMPACT STORY

TLF's Reading Clubs empower the dedicated teachers who lead them



Millicent, a primary school teacher leading a reading club shared how the training profoundly improved her approach.

"I learned many things from the training, including how to introduce a book to children for them to predict without opening it, how to connect contemporary issues with what is happening around them, and how children can analyze and draw things from the book and what they have learned. The training helped me improve my teaching skills by helping me learn how to analyze characters and how to help children understand the main idea. As a result, students in the reading club have improved their academic performance, now reading at their grade level, analyzing texts, answering questions, dramatizing stories, and showing improved phonics skills."

PILLAR 3: EQUITY IN EDUCATION

This academic year marked significant progress in gender equity within SfS-supported schools, with girls' enrollment exceeding that of boys at the primary and junior secondary levels. Notably, our senior secondary schools also saw near equal enrollment for boys and girls. The vital work of Uman Tok is instrumental in sustaining this positive trend, empowering girls to remain in school through the critical transitions of puberty as they move from primary to secondary education.

Without access to menstrual hygiene resources, girls can miss up to 20% of the school year, or more than eight weeks, due to a lack of menstrual hygiene resources, poor sanitation, and societal stigma surrounding menstruation—a significant barrier that can disrupt this positive trend in girls' enrollment and limit their future potential. This academic year, 5,337 students (both boys and girls) received sexual reproductive health education, and 1,728 menstrual hygiene kits were distributed to girls who have started their period to support girls' education.

Parents and community members play a vital role in breaking stigmas around menstruation and sexual reproductive health. During this academic year, Uman Tok engaged not only students but parents and community members. When parents are equipped with crucial health knowledge, they can better support their adolescent children and pave the way for a safer future for girls. Additionally, family members of our female students—parents, aunts, big sisters—were also given kits, so our girls do not have to share kits with other menstruating women in their household.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 2,872 girls and 2,428 women participated in sexual reproductive health education
- 2,465 boys and 1,206 men participated in sexual reproductive health education
- 3,759 menstrual hygiene kits distributed to girls and women

IMPACT STORY

Uman Tok's work is having lasting impact on both students and parents



Sarah, a 14-year-old student, gained the ability to attend school without anxiety. "I feel empowered because I now know how to manage my period and can go to school without fear."

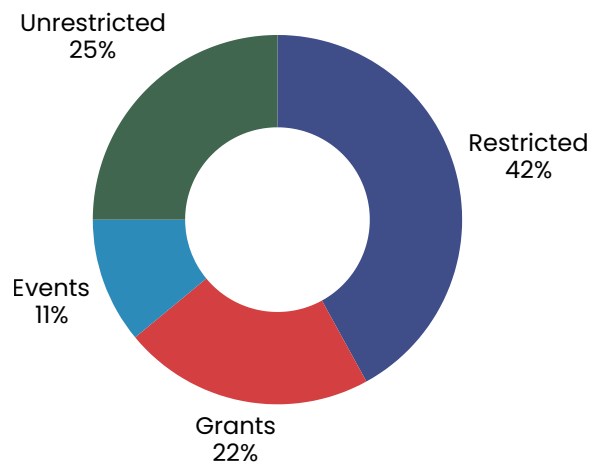
Mabinty, a mother, felt unsure how to support her daughter as she reached puberty. "Before attending this session, I didn't know how to talk to my daughter about menstruation. But now, I feel more confident in guiding her, and I know the right words to use without making her feel embarrassed."

James, a father, never saw menstruation as something he needed to understand. "Menstruation wasn't talked about in my family. When my eldest daughter got her first period, I felt unprepared. I used to think it was the responsibility of mothers to handle such issues. However, after attending a workshop by Uman Tok, I realized that fathers also play a key role. I started talking to my daughter openly and even taught my sons that menstruation is normal. Now, they help their sister when she needs support, and our home is a safe space for open discussions."

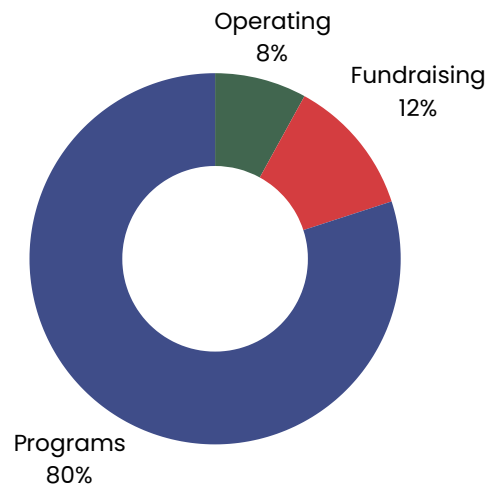
FINANCIALS

In Fiscal Year 2024, Schools for Salone's financial outlook was strengthened with a 20% increase in donations compared to the prior year. The growth in donations, as well as new donors, corresponded with our founder and long-time Executive Director Cindy Nofziger's decision to transition into an advisor role. Schools for Salone does not receive funding from the Federal Government. The ongoing generosity of hundreds of individual donors, combined with private foundation grant income, enable continued impact and progress toward our mission.

Income: \$826,277



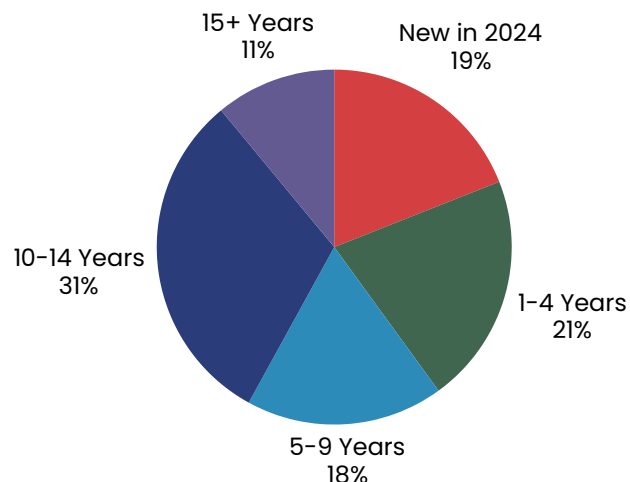
Expenses: \$743,881



OUR GIVING COMMUNITY

Schools for Salone has a thriving community of both new and long-time donors. 31% of our donors have been supporting our work for over ten years. Our supporters come from all over the U.S. and beyond. Currently, we have donors from 43 states.

2024 Donor Tenure



LOOKING AHEAD



Program Manager meeting in Freetown in June 2025 (left to right) - Saidu (TLF), Allison (SfS), Clinton, Yusif (SALBOT) Messie (PFC), Mannah (PFC), Mariatu (UT), Augustine (UT) and Saio (TLF).

2025 marks the 20 years since our Schools for Salone's first school opening. While expanding access to education in Sierra Leone will continue to be a key programmatic focus, ensuring students gain a quality education will be our priority. This year, SfS will be doing strategic planning to help define our next chapter.

2025–2026 Program Goals

- Prioritize teacher support and professional development.
- Build a senior secondary school in Tonkolili in honor of Cindy.
- Promote collaboration among our partners who have shared goals for deeper impact.
- Continue to scale up bike distribution, capture and apply lessons learned.
- Pilot a comprehensive school evaluation process to help us better understand our schools' performance and their challenges.
- Expand TLF reading club programming to more schools.
- Continue to engage students and parents in sexual reproductive health education in our school communities.



Thank You!

Donate today!
www.SchoolsforSalone.org