Supporting Quality Education in Sierra Leone

5th & 6th Class and P7 Pupils

Duration: 60 minutes with optional activities for extension work/research/project ideas.

The lesson can be done in three 20-minute sessions as per the **Lesson Format** below

Summary: This lesson examines how Irish Aid is supporting the Teach for Sierra Leone Graduate Programme and how this important programme has impacted significantly on the lives of pupils, teachers and communities to provide a better future for all. This programme involves graduates taking leadership roles in communities and focussing on the key areas of gender equality, climate action and climate justice and quality education for all.

A significant element of this programme is to involve local chiefs, Mammy Queens and parents in creating a more sustainable future for all and in giving a voice to children so that the actions they will take are meaningful to them and their communities.

This lesson also introduces pupils to people in Sierra Leone who are leading the way in climate action, animal conservation and building sustainable futures for all.

This lesson will also offer pupils ideas on how they can further develop their interest and knowledge in these key areas outlined above and present this work for the Our World Awards.

Lesson Format

1. PowerPoint: Introduction To Sierra Leone
2. PowerPoint: The work of Irish Aid in supporting the Teach for Sierra Leone Graduate Programme
3. PowerPoint: The impact of this programme on pupils, teachers, communities.
4. Optional Activities: You can choose to develop or extend these as you wish. Some groups might do these as extension activities or as ideas for submission to the Our World awards
    - Drama activity
    - Social Justice
    - Researching notable figures
    - Combining all for entry to Our World Awards

Supporting Resources:

- Powerpoint Slides for pupils
- The work of Irish Aid in Sierra Leone https://www.ireland.ie/en/sierraleone/development-programme/
- Video link:
  - Irish Aid visit to school in Sierra Leone (0:32 seconds) https://vimeo.com/1112824644?share=copy

Included in this document are

- Step by step instructions for three activities
- Further information for teachers
- Glossary of terms

Learning Intentions:

Pupils will be enabled to

- Learn how Irish Aid supports teach for Sierra Leone to provide quality education for all
- Understand how this programme impacts the lives of pupils, teachers and entire communities to have a lasting impact on future generations
- Learn how this programme supports the Global Goals of Quality Education, Gender Equality, Climate Action, Life on Land and partnership for the Goals
- Explore creative means to present what they have learned
- Suggest and explore ways to become active global citizens

Curriculum Links Republic of Ireland

Links will vary, depending on what activities you and your pupils decide to complete

- **Language**: Oral language, Reading, Writing, Comprehension
- **SPHE:** Developing citizenship, media education
- **SEE:** Geography: Human Environments, People and other lands, Maps, globes and graphical skills, Analysing and reasoning
- **Science** Living things, Plants and animals, Human life, Caring for the Environment,
- **History**: Stories from the lives of people in the past, Developing empathy, Continuity and change over time
- **The Arts**: Drama, Music and visual arts
- **Maths**: Data handling, applying mathematical knowledge to solve real world problems

The key competencies of the Primary Curriculum Framework are

- Being an active citizen
- Being an active learner
- Being well
- Being creative
- Being mathematical
- Being a digital learner
- Being a communicator

These competencies can be developed and enhanced through the Our World Awards programme.

Curriculum Links Northern Ireland

Links will vary depending on the activities you and your pupils decide to complete

- **Language & Literacy:** Talking and Listening; Reading; Writing
- **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**
    - Strand 2: Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community
    - Relationships in the Community
    - Relationships in the Wider World
- **The World Around Us**
    - Geography, History and Science
        - Interdependence: Place: Movement and Energy: Change over time
- **The Arts:** Art and Design: Drama: Music

One of the overall aims of this curriculum is to foster

- concern for others
- community spirit
- tolerance
- moral courage
- integrity

Fostering these attitudes and dispositions aligns closely with Global Citizenship Education generally and with the aims of the Our World Awards programme.

Step by Step Activity Instructions

These are optional. You can choose to take a deep or a shallow dive into these activities. Some groups might do these as extension activities or as ideas for submission to the Our World awards

Activity 1: Video of Irish Aid visit to school in Sierra Leone

Watch the video of Minister of State Neale Richmond visiting this school in April 2025.

- Can you see what is written on the teacher's t-shirt?
- What is written on the back and on the front?
- What does this tell you about the work of TFSL?

Use the following question to perform a drama on children's reactions to the Minister coming to their school.

- How are the children feeling?
- Do their feelings change during the video?
- Choose one of the children from the video and in a thought cloud, tell what they are thinking and feeling.

Activity 2: Inspiring Women of Sierra Leone

This activity allows pupils to carry out desk research on notable women from Sierra Leone such as

- Yvonne Aki Sawyer, Mayor of Freetown
- Eugenie Kargbo, First Heat officer in Sierra Leone
- Roseline Isata Mansaray, Climate Activist
- Fatima Bio – Advocate for Gender Equality

Encourage the pupils to carry out more research about any of the following to support their main research focus:

- Sierra Leone – the country
- The work of Irish Aid in supporting quality education in other countries in Africa
- See how the women connect with work of Irish Aid, climate action and quality education.

This research would be ideal entries to Our World Awards 2026!

Activity 3: Other possible entries to Our World Awards

Option 1

- Using the video of Irish Aid's visit to a school in Sierra Leone, allow the pupils to imagine they are a reporter for News2Day.
- They can prepare a video where they "interview" the Minister of State and the teacher about their experiences.
- Get the children to write a report and present to the class.

Option 2

- Having the children marching with their placards from slide 18 as an example for their message to everyone about their environment, encourage your pupils to think about their message.
- What would the message be?
- Who would they tell?
- How would they tell it?

These headings could form the basis of further research into this project or a starting point for a submission to Our World Awards .

Note

Please use your professional judgement to alter/amend these activities. You know your pupils best!

Further information for Teachers

The Teach for Sierra Leone Graduate Programme, supported by Irish Aid aims to

- Improve standards in education through a dedicated teacher training programme
- Encourage girls to participate in education and to continue to secondary education
- Encourage teachers to lead climate action initiatives in collaboration with community leaders and tribal chiefs
- Enable children to have a voice in their education and in their futures

In supporting your pupils to learn about these issues, the following statistics are important to highlight

- A child born to a mother who can read is 50% more likely to reach their fifth birthday
- If all mothers completed primary education, mothers' deaths would be reduced by 66%, saving 98,000 lives
- The primary school completion rate for boys in 2021 was 97% and 100% for girls, Lower secondary rates was 46% for boys and 67% for girls (UNESCO)

Glossary of terms

The Global Goals

The Global Goals or Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 targets decided by the United Nations and signed by 193 countries in 2015 to ensure a better, fairer, healthier world for all.

Quality Education: This is Goal 4 of the Global Goals

Education is the key to prosperity, unlocks the imagination and is essential for self-respect. It opens a world of opportunity, making it possible for everyone to contribute to a better and healthier world. Learning benefits everyone and should be available to everyone.

Gender Equality: This is Goal 5 of the Global Goals

This means everyone has the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities, no matter if they are a girl, boy or identify as another gender. It is not about everyone being the same but about treating everyone fairly and with respect.

Climate Action: This is Goal 13 of the Global Goals

This means that we need to take action to combat climate change and its impacts including changing weather patterns, rising sea levels and more extreme weathers events

Climate Justice

This means that people in poorer countries are suffering more from the impacts of climate change than people in wealthier countries. People in wealthier countries who have caused damage to the earth should take responsibility and help those who are most affected.

Mammy Queens

Mammy Queens in Sierra Leone are women leaders in local communities who are well respected leaders. It is a term of endearment and is also used for the wife of the President of Sierra Leone, Dr Fatima Maada Bio. Mammy Queens offer guidance and support to young people.

Sustainable Futures

This is the idea that humans must interact with the environment in a way that ensures there will be enough resources left for everyone to have a healthy future.

Animal Conservation

This means that animals and their habitats will be protected from harm. This means that future generations can enjoy the natural world and the beautiful species that inhabit it.

Further Links

Sources of further information

The following websites have facts, figures and graphics to support learning about quality education

https://en.unesco.org/themes/education

https://trocaire.org/our-work/educate/all-education-resources-

https://en.unesco.org/education/girls-women-rights

Videos on Quality Education/Gender Equality/SDGs (suitable for children)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIExX9St4oA

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-OURmsmEKo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dzFbP2AgFo&t=78s

https://www.youtube/WvPuXHjOVh8

Irish Aid in Sierra Leone

https://vimeo.com/1088366780

Planning a school garden

https://greenschoolsireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Designing-a-school-garden_Second-Level.pdf

https://giy.ie/pages/grow-at-school

Books for children aged 8-12

The Red Pencil by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Inside out and back again by Thanhhá Lai

I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai

Mary Robinson; A voice for fairness by John & Fatti Byrne

The librarian of Basra: A true story from Iraq by J.Winter

The boy who harnessed the wind by B.Mealer and M.Kamkwamba

Books about community gardening and sustainable communities

Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel by A.D.Robles and and C.Angel

The Extraordinary Gardener by S.Boughton

We are together by B.Teckentrup

Hey, Wall: A story of Art and Community by S. Verde and J.Parra