

## 2022 News Roundup

It's been a great year for the Dorothy Springer Trust, and none of this could have happened without our wonderful supporters. We are a small charitable Trust, but with a lot going on. We post some news on Facebook, but not everyone has access to this. So here's a few updates from 2022.

One of our major activities every year is delivery of computer training to people with disabilities, to enable them to develop the skills they need for employment. At the end of August, six DST students completed seven months of sponsored intensive training in Intermediate Level Information Communication Technology (ICT). The students have various types of disabilities including mobility as a result of polio, visual impairment and a person with albinism. DST funds every aspect of the course, and covers food and transportation costs to



enable students to travel to the DST training Centre to attend classes. The DST Employment Bureau is open to the students who have completed their studies, for us to work with them to help secure skilled employment. Tamba Sesay, from the class of 2022, said "I want to be very much grateful to you and your entire team at DST for giving me the ICT training which has added to my CV and given me advantage in the job market. As I write you I am currently the Administrative Secretary for a construction company in Kono district, which may last for three to four years."

We will begin planning the next round of training in the new year. (An intermediate training course lasts between seven and eight months, and it costs around £130 per student for every month.)



People with disabilities in Sierra Leone are often at the margin of society and experience high levels of prejudice and disadvantage. Although training is a big focus of our activities, DST is equally well known for advocating for the rights of people with disability. Much of this is done by Dr Abs Dumbuya, our Chief Executive based in Freetown (the capital of Sierra Leone). Abs does this in a variety of ways. For example, he is a regular contributor to TV and radio shows, and has given talks to school assemblies on



the implementation of inclusive education. In May, DST met with partner organisations outside Freetown City Council for the 2022 'We Ring the Bell' Campaign, promoting inclusivity for young people with disabilities in education.

Government bodies also ask Abs to be involved in their activities, representing disability rights. In October Abs was invited by the Sierra Leone Ministry of Social Welfare and the United Nations in Sierra Leone to deliver training on advocacy and lobbying, as part of the implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) accountability framework.

It's sometimes hard to see the effect of the lobbying and advocacy role of DST. But it doesn't go unnoticed. In June Abs was awarded the Sierra Leone National Scouts Award (2022) for services to persons with disability. And earlier, in January, the British High Commission announced, on behalf of Her Royal Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II, that Abs would be honoured with the prestigious Points of Light Award – an award which recognises outstanding individual volunteers. Alistair White, Acting British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone said “Dr Abs is an inspirational figure, known and respected across Freetown for the work he does to empower disabled people through ‘The Dorothy Springer Trust’”.



At the end of August, Sierra Leone was struck by devastating flooding, following days of persistent torrential rain. DST responded quickly. Working with the Freetown Cheshire Home, and with funding from supporters across the world, DST was able to provide emergency accommodation and supplies to people who had lost their homes.



DST has also been busy delivering the Child Empowerment Programme (CEP) for 170 children with disabilities living in and around Freetown. This is the third year DST have taken this role,

in partnership with another charity called One Family People (OFP), and funded by the Dutch organisation Liliane Fonds / Foundation (LF). The aim is to make these children's living, playing, and learning environment more accessible so they can participate in their communities to the best of their abilities. Children with disabilities receive a range of

support, including the provision of learning materials, home care, uniforms, shoes, bags, toiletries, mobility aids / assistive devices (wheelchairs and crutches), hearing aids and transportation costs.

Finally, the trustees want to assure you that your support has been crucial in making all this happen. Young people with disabilities have been given hope and lives have been changed. A huge thank you to you all!

Wishing you a happy Christmas and blessed 2023.

For more information visit <https://dorothy-springer-trust.org.uk/> or write to 35 Woodmancott Close, Bracknell RG12 0XU.

