



# Computer Training Centre

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# Mind to Change – Sierra Leone

## COMPUTER TRAINING CENTRE

### INTRODUCTION

Mind to Change aims to help (re-)build the postwar society in finding ways for the society to absorb and involve vulnerable groups and people who find themselves in the margins of society, through the empowerment of members of vulnerable groups with the tools to help them develop into responsible citizens and to help them (re)build their own lives.

### WHO

Mind to Change will mainly target former child soldiers, war affected youths, the war disabled and children and youths who deviate from mainstream society, as well as talented young people who lack the means to develop themselves in their professional careers.

### GOAL

Our main goal is to bring members of vulnerable groups back to mainstream society and to actively involve them in their communities, raise their awareness of their rights and duties as citizens of the community and the necessity of their contribution to society, and finally, to enable them to take responsibility over their own lives.

### BACKGROUND

The main activity of Mind to Change is education, in every sense thinkable. The promotion of computer literacy among the population of Sierra Leone, falls under education and is therefore directly linked to our main aims and objectives.

Sierra Leone is a post-war nation recovering from a brutal decade-long war which left a severe damage to its economy. The conflict is ended and the country is grappling to re-build its economy. The country's transition process is fraught with many challenges and unemployment and poverty are among these. In a bid to create sustainable job opportunities and livelihoods for adults and young people development organizations and stakeholders have accepted that computer technology is a remedy for job creation and sustainable development that will positively contribute to strengthen and further curtail threats to the transition process. Technologically, Sierra Leone has a long way to go,






more so as the country's poor economic performance is an obstacle to create and access computer opportunities for its citizens.

Moreover, as the transition process progresses businesses expand and in many of these there is the introduction and use of computer technology in the daily administration of these businesses. For students and individuals seeking employment opportunities, knowledge and experience, computer technology is now a criterion in obtaining jobs both in the public and private sectors. Unfortunately, computer training opportunities and access is not available in all institutions of learning; few of the country's citizens and institution have access to it.




Technological empowerment is economic empowerment for the poor and un-employed; this will enable them to undertake self-employment and entrepreneurial initiatives and help meet long-term sustainable development needs. This also will bolster up the post-war economy. A career opportunity for youth and adults within the modern day technology has been recognized as one of the key tools for addressing the issues of poverty and un-employment, which serves also as a threat to the country's regional and national transition process.

## OBJECTIVES | one

Promoting computer literacy among the population of Sierra Leone, through support, empowerment and training (SET).

-  Give impetus to the development of the service sector in the country,
-  Promoting the development of local communities as business centers,
-  Connecting local communities to global communities and business,
-  Making knowledge available to the local communities, through the internet
-  Encourage a culture of 'passing on knowlegde'

To:

-  Help (re) build the postwar society
-  Prepare individuals for the job market
-  Create better job prospects for individuals

## TARGET GROUP | two

Mainly, but not limited to, vulnerable groups in society, with a special focus on the war affected, like: former child soldiers, war orphans, and the war wounded, as well as on disadvantaged youths, and students, who can use ICT skills to enhance their chances on the job market.







### **Broadening the target group:**

Computer training, and computer and internet facilities will be made available for the whole community, against market price. The revenue will be invested in the free computer training of identified vulnerable groups.





## METHOD | three

Apart from the start capital of the Mind to Change Computer Training Centers (CTC), which should be funded by institutions, the CTC'S should be self-sustaining to ensure their long term existence.

We wish to establish that, through:

-  **Business center:** Establishment of a 'state of the art' business centers that can service the complex needs of businesses in remote and unconnected business throughout the country. The income generated from the business center, will be fully invested in the maintenance of the equipment and will fund the free computer trainings to the identified target group.
-  **Internet service:** Commercial internet service against market price for the population other than the identified target group. The income generated from commercial internet services, will be fully invested in the maintenance of the equipment and will fund the free computer trainings to the identified target group.
  -  Reduction tariff will be provided for students, to increase their access to knowledge.
-  **IT related services:** IT related services such as printing, data-entry, photo copying, etc. will be available against market price. The income generated from these activities, will be fully invested in the maintenance of the equipment and will fund the free computer trainings to the identified target group.
-  **Commercial computer training:** Commercial computer training will be made available for the population other than the identified target group, that can afford the payment for such service. The income generated from these activities, will be fully invested in the maintenance of the equipment and will fund the free computer trainings to the identified target group.
-  **Expert learning and Train the Trainer:** We will employ a reciprocal approach; if you receive, you have to give in return. We will bring in experts from countries that are leading in ICT technology

to train our trainers, who in turn pass their knowledge on to our trainees. Our trainees will be engaged in teaching in our CTC's after finishing a training module:






-  This will create a culture of the passing on of knowledge
-  Trainees will have thorough knowledge of the material
-  Ensure the long term existence of the computer training centre
-  And decrease costs for skilled personnel

## IMPLEMENTATION | four

The establishment of Computer Training Centers in the main economic centers of the country.

### Startup phase

The Mind to Change Computer Training project will launch in Bo Town, in alliance with local (community) stake holders. The choice for Bo Town as our main target population is multifold:

-  Bo Town is the second largest city of Sierra Leone. It lies at the heart of the country and gives access to the country's main economic and production areas. The development of (international as well as local) businesses in the country will benefit from a modern business center, a labor population skilled in ICT and a growth of the service sector in Bo Town,
-  Computer literacy in Bo Town is virtually non-existent,
-  Availability of ICT in Bo Town is virtually non-existent,
-  Unemployment under identified vulnerable groups is high with little alternatives on the (local) job market,
-  Bo Town has a rich student population, that can benefit from computer training in terms of their educational curricular and job skills, and their educational level can be enhanced by the access to knowledge, through the internet.

## SUSTAINABILITY | five











Through the project, Mind to Change Sierra Leone will develop the skills of staff and all persons involved in the project. Mind to Change Sierra Leone will also collate data and activity to gain valuable experience in implementing, the project.

Mind to Change will also collaborate and partner with NGO's and other stakeholders in the district exploring possible partnerships for funding, accessing more computers for expansion and further trainings of beneficiaries. Mind to Change SL will also partner with NGO's with the intention of

creating employment facilities for trainees that excel in the programs, these trainees will also be recruited to voluntary help in training new beneficiaries

## MONITORING & EVALUTION | six

It is somehow difficult to quantitatively gauge the success of this project ahead of implementation; however Mind to Change Sierra Leone will be able to assess the impact of this project through the following:

-  An evident increase in the number of students, employed personnel, mainstream and marginalized young people that will be able to successfully complete the training packages designed for them and adequately make use of this after the training
-  Mind to Change Sierra Leone will also evaluate the project strategy and its impacts on the life of the beneficiaries and situation, and the contributions of trainees to promote computer literacy in Sierra Leone. that will be developed by young people to contribute the transition process and the impact of this contribution to the process
-  Mind to Change will also evaluate the collaboration between NGO's participating in the project and the impact of their contributions on beneficiaries of the project.
-  The active participation of project beneficiaries in the project signifying their willingness to help make use of the opportunities that the project is offering
-  Mind to Change Sierra Leone will also monitor the project through the regular supervision of all volunteers and staff working in all project activities. Mind to Change staff working on the project will be meeting on a weekly and monthly, basis to discuss the progress and implementation constraints. The staff will also find solutions to emerging constraints. Quarterly reports will be compiled and sent to donors. Mind to Change Sierra Leone will also use the monitoring tools mentioned below:
  -  Monthly collection of activity reports
  -  Feedback and impact of project activities on beneficiaries and transition process
  -  Weekly staff meetings
  -  Monthly staff and volunteers meetings in Makeni and Freetown
  -  Final comprehensive report

## OUTREACH | seven

Mind to Change will work with the print and electronic media to help inform the residents in the districts about the project, its objectives and opportunities. The engagements with the media will also help Mind to Change to inform the district residents about the impact of the project in the life of beneficiaries and the community.

## ASSOCIATED RISKS | eight

The number of youth and adults that have expressed interests to benefit from the programs surpasses the resources available for the project. Mind to Change SL will introduce a shift system for beneficiaries. This will put accepted beneficiaries on a shift basis to help others benefit from the program.

Absence of qualified technicians to repair computers in case of damage or technical problems. Mind to Change SL will create a budget for the hiring of (a) technician(s) that will be up-grading and maintaining the computers. Mind to Change SL will also work with the technician(s) to introduce Computer Hardware Programs for trainees that will be interested to pursue computer hardware training; this will increase the number of technicians in the district for the maintenance of the computers.

## PROJECT ACITIVITIES | nine

This outline comprises a first draft of proposed project activities, to inform stakeholders about our plans. We hope to develop the project activities in association with relevant stakeholders.

### **Six (6) Months Evening After School Training:**




-  *Activity Beneficiaries: University Students in Bo*
-  *Number of Beneficiaries: 100*
-  *Project Strategy: Support/Empowerment & Training (SET)*

This training has been designed for university students in the township with little or no access to computer training. Computer knowledge is of essence to these students, especially final year students who are mostly required to be submitting computerized assignments, term papers, dissertations and project works, as a partial fulfillment for the awards of certificates and degrees. The lack of computer training, knowledge and centre is often an impediment to dates and schedules for the submission of these academic works. Moreover, even when these are done outside, the quality of work done does

not often reflect the presentation expectations of students. This project will therefore help to reduce students related computer academic needs, access and allow them to be able to present quality academic work.




The trainings will be conducted three (3) days a week after the enrolled beneficiaries must have finished taking classes from their regular college/university programs and also last for three (3) hours. Project activity beneficiaries will be given two (2) hours of tuition on computing and will be allowed to practice for one (1) hour making it a total of three hours. In all enrolled beneficiaries will have (6) six hours of computing tuition and (3) three hours of practice a week. The time and training contents will be evaluated and later revised by Mind to Change Management.

### **Computer Training for Employed Adults**

-  *Activity Beneficiaries: Employed Adults in Bo*
-  *Number of Beneficiaries: 80*
-  *Project Strategy: Support/Empowerment & Training (SET)*

Most of the employed adults in Bo district lack knowledge in computing and the use of the internet. Some have not been able to secure employment with some institutions as a result of their inability to use computer and this has often create room of the swelling of unemployment figures in the township. In light of this, Mind to Change has designed this pilot activity to help build the capacity of employed adults on the use of computer. This will help immensely to make use of computers assigned to them for work. Moreover, the skills will also help them with the skills required for the internet. This will expose them to opportunities and information on the internet, which most of them have not benefited from as a result of lack knowledge on the use of the internet. Mind to Change believes that this project activity will help employed adults acquire basic skills on the use of computer and the internet.

### **Weekly Weekend Training for Mainstream and Marginalized Youth**

-  *Activity Beneficiaries: Mainstream and Marginalized Youth in Bo*
-  *Number of Beneficiaries: 100*
-  *Project Strategy: Support/Empowerment & Training (SET)*

This training has been designed to empower marginal and mainstream young people within the township that are interested in accessing computer literacy training. This package will also include internet training for the beneficiaries. Mind to Change Sierra Leone want to create opportunity for young people to access information from different organizations and programs advertised on

websites that are intended to empower young people. This training will be conducted five (5) days a week-Monday to Friday afternoons and evenings. The trainings will last for three (3) hours. Training beneficiaries will benefit from two (2) hour classes and one (1) hour of practical trainings. Mind to Change will put in place a registration and grading system to track the attendance and performance of all the beneficiaries in the project. This will prevent individuals enrolling in all three (3) programs thereby preventing others to access and benefit from all the packages offered in the trainings.