

REPORT ON BASIC COMPUTER  
SKILLS TRAINING/ LITERACY  
PROGRAMME FOR CIVIL  
SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS  
(CSO'S)

*Written by:*  
*Abraham Gborkie*  
*Kailie*

**Project Officer,  
Advocacy  
Initiative for  
Development -  
AID-Sierra Leone**



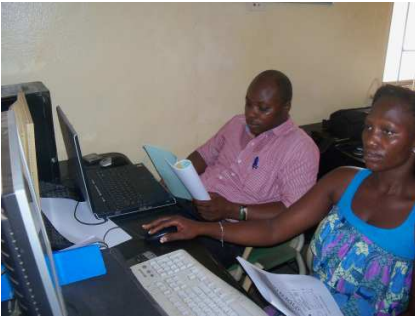
## ADVOCACY INITIATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT (AID –SIERRA LEONE)



### 1.0 Introduction

Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) are grass root institutions with usually low capacities striving to compliment governments' efforts in national development at community levels. In this post war era of Sierra Leone's development phase, so many programmes have been designed and implemented with the aim of building the capacity of Civil Society Organizations in different area of development to enhance effectiveness in their operations. Computer literacy or skills training programme is one of such opportunities; it is a capacity building strategy that empowers individuals or institutions to be knowledgeable in the use of computer applications. In other words, a person who knows how to use the machine to complete any task is a computer literate. Computer literate often connotes little more than the ability to use several very specific applications (usually Microsoft Word, Microsoft Exel, Microsoft Internet Explorer, and Microsoft Outlook) for certain very well-defined simple tasks, largely by rote. Multi-lateral institutions are strongly advocating the building of knowledge societies where the power of information and communication helps people access the knowledge they need to improve their daily lives and achieve their full potential.

Increasingly, the concept of information literacy is considered as crucially important to enable people to deal with the challenge of making good use of information and communication technology. Indeed, governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, academia, civil society and the private sector have all come to the conclusion that computers, the Internet, and hand-held wireless devices are driving today profound changes in the way pictures, voice, and information are being created, transmitted, accessed and stored. But they also conclude that learning computer and media technologies are not enough if nations, institutions and individuals are to reap the full benefits of the global knowledge societies. Computer literacy can empower people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals". In the digital age, what computer literacy means is that understanding technologies is not enough. What everyone must also do is learn how to utilize those incredibly diverse and powerful technologies efficiently and effectively to search for, retrieve, organize, analyze, evaluate information and then use it for specific decision-making and problem-solving ends.



The intervention of AID Sierra Leone in computer literacy/skills training programme for civil society organizations is an indication of its response and commitment to globalization.

## **1.2 Objectives**

The main aim or goal of the computer literacy programme is to capacitate Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) in the three basic Microsoft office software applications to enhance administrative or operational effectiveness in their various organizations for better networking or collaborations.

## **1.3 Outcome of the programme**

The computer literacy programme organized by the Advocacy Initiative for Development (AID-Sierra Leone) with funding support from Develop Africa (DA), took place at the Sulisha Institute of Management and Computer studies at Regent Road. It was a week programme, starting from the 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012 (Monday to Friday). The training process was incredible and interesting, as the Sulisha institution provided the environment/

space, Tutors and training manual/ curriculum that covers all the three programmes (Windows, Microsoft word and Microsoft excel) and was distributed to each participant before the start of the process. These are the three basic Microsoft office applications required by every employee to understand and carry out their tasks no matter the individual's designation. The programme targeted seven (7) Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) with very low capacities in terms of staff number and technical strength, which includes representatives from Advocacy Initiative for Development (AID – Sierra Leone), Sierra Leone Union for Disability Issues (SLUDI), Peace- Links Sierra Leone, Youth Action International (YAI), FAKS Humanitarian Relief Organization and the Door of Hope.

Content of the computer literacy training package for the CSO's includes:

### **1.3.1 Windows/ DOS**

Starting a computer may be a very tricky thing to one who has never seen or touch one. Using the mouse, managing various windows, alternating between the use of keyboard and mouse, minimizing windows, opening and closing files, etc. can be daunting tasks for the uninitiated ones. However, familiarization with the parts and functions of the computer was critical to the capacity building process at the initial stage. Below is the summary of the main issues dealt with in the training manual under this topic:

- Definition of the word information technology
- Definition of a computer
- Key words related to the definition of a computer.
- Types of computers
- Definition of a computer system and their types.
- Knowledge about Computer generations
- Some uses of computers
- Advantages & Disadvantages of using a computer
- Elements of computer
- Relationship between Hard ware and Soft ware
- Detail knowledge about the Central Processing Unit (CPU) or Processor

- Direct Input devices (Keyboard) and functions of the various keys.
- Indirect input devices ( Mouse)
- Output devices (e.g. Monitors, printers etc.)
- About printers and their types
- Computer output on microfilms (COM)
- Knowledge about disk drives
- Storage devices and their types
- Rules of handling diskette
- The anatomy of the computer virus
- The cause, effects, preventive measures and types of computer virus
- Application of system software
- Functions of the operating system
- How data and programs are represented in the computer
- Knowledge about computer language
- Booting a computer from the Hard and Floppy disk
- How to open and save a file in editor screen
- How to create a document in editor screen
- How to exit from editor screen
- Copy and Paste option
- Cut and Paste option
- How to Copy a file from one drive to another

### **1.3.2 Microsoft word**

This is the most basic of all skills. It involves typing basically, but when using computers it deviates a little from the common typewriter. There is the enter key replacing the carriage movement and there are commands (simple ones) for paragraph, indent, spacing and so on. The best of word processing is that you can modify with ease any part of the text you entered. The word processing is the minimum one should know because it will be used in each and every application of computers. Below is the summary of the practical issues dealt with regards Microsoft word:

- Definition of Microsoft word

- Three ways in starting Microsoft word
- Exploring the word screen environment
- Understanding some unique features in Microsoft word
- How to work with Microsoft word (set a working folder; create a new document, opening an existing document, insertion of text, save your document, saving your document with a new name etc.)
- Inserting symbols and special character
- Inserting the date and time functions
- Adding bullets and Numbering
- How to insert Paragraph spacing
- How to align text
- How to cut & paste/ Drag & drop a document
- How to close your document
- How to exit Microsoft word
- How to apply keyboard short cut
- How to change ( e.g. Upper & Lower cases)
- How to do line spacing ( e.g. Double line or single line spacing )
- How to insert pictures
- How to insert Header & Footer
- How to divide the document into column
- How to insert tables

### **1.3.3 Microsoft excel**

One will also need to use a spreadsheet of excel sheet for computing and chalking out financial plans. This is a must in any presentation and knowing the basics on how to use and read a spreadsheet will be extremely helpful to any young executive. As with others, this too will require a lot of hands-on practice and a little theory to master. Below is the summary of the main issues dealt with in the training manual during the process:

- Introduction to MS excel ( Spread sheet)
- How to add a work sheet
- How to hide and unhide workbook & worksheet

- How to group a sheet
- How to ungroup a sheet
- Understanding the functions of the worksheet special keys
- How to select cell rows & columns
- How to protect work book or work sheet
- How to use formula operators
- Understanding errors that affect a cell
- How to centralize labels
- How to add comment to a cell
- How to enter data in a spread sheet
- How to work with charts
- Procedures to create a chart
- Understanding the types of chart and their functions
- How to work with data base entries
- How to manage the data base
- Introduction to MS Excel applications
- Understanding the advantage of using an electronic spreadsheet

On daily basis, Lunch was provided for participants including the Tutor. At the end of the training, examinations were set up to assess the level of understanding of participants about the three programmes. The result proved that participants understood the parts, functions of the computer and the designed Microsoft office applications of the training programme. The training process ended in a certification ceremony for all participants on the last day that was done by a senior authority of the computer school. Transport refunds were given to all participants after the certification process.

#### **1.4 Conclusion**

The one week computer literacy/ skills training programme organized by the Advocacy Initiative for Development (AID–Sierra Leone) for seven Civil Society Organizations, with funds from Develop Africa (DA) was a success story. This was a deliberate attempt to contribute to national development and create opportunities for effective networking and collaborations for Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) in Sierra Leone.

## **1.5 Recommendations**

- Expansion of the programme to other parts of the country to accommodate more civil society organizations (CSO's).
- Solicit support for more computer training programmes that will create opportunities for more Civil Society Organizations in the country.

## **Certification Photo Gallery**

