

**Operation Day's Work – USA**  
2003-2004 Funding Application

**A. Project Information**

Name of Project: **Life Schools For Advancement (LSFA)**

Name of U.S. PVO: **Life for Relief and Development**

Address (Street, City, Province/State, Country, Zip Code):  
**17300 W 10 Mile Rd. Southfield, MI 48075 USA**

Contact Person: **Zarinah El-Amin**  
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Project Site in Country (Where implemented): **SIERRA LEONE**  
**1 school in the Bombali chiefdom, 1 in the Western Area and 1 in the Bo chiefdom**

Collaborating Organizations: **Al-Fajr Islamic Mission (Sierra Leone NGO)**  
**& Brother's Brother Foundation (USA Based NGO)**

Project Director: **Mohammed Traore, Life- Sierra Leone**

Project Start and End Dates: **July 2004 – June 2005**

Amount Requested: **\$30,000**

Briefly answer the following questions. Application should not exceed **5 pages**.

**B. Organizational Background**

**1. Please provide a brief background of your organization.**

Life for Relief and Development (LIFE), founded in 1992 is a humanitarian, non-profit, 501(C3), United Nation's Affiliated charity registered with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States Development Agency (USDA). LIFE offers a variety of humanitarian, health, and educational services and programs to refugees and victims of natural disasters, wars, hunger, poverty and injustice.

Since inception, LIFE has endowed over \$39 million dollars in medicine, food, computers, schools and training to thousands of individuals in some of the poorest and most war-torn countries. In addition to providing emergency relief aid, in many countries that our services are presently engaged we sponsor long-term and sustainable human development programs in order to offer a lasting and holistic cure.

**2. Please provide any collaborative history between the developing country partner NGO and your organization.**

LIFE began working with the Al Fajr Islamic Mission of Freetown in 1996. Together we have renovated 3 schools, distributed textbooks, and sponsored the education of youth in Sierra Leone.

**3. What prior experience do you and your developing country partner NGO have in the project area?**

Since 1996, LIFE has delivered humanitarian assistance to the people of Sierra Leone and to refugees in neighboring Guinea. In conjunction with Brother's Brother Foundation and the Al Fajr Islamic Mission, we have acquired and continue to distribute thousands of modern textbooks to support higher learning institutions in Sierra Leone. Unfortunately, as a casualty of the conflict and attempt by rebel forces to overtake Freetown, in 1999 our office was burned and our country director's family was forced to evacuate. Since that time, we have re-established our office and services in order to assist victims of war in rebuilding their lives. Our current programs include:

- Education sponsorship of students and orphans through the Al Fajr Islamic Mission.
- A 3 level skills training center in Freetown that houses a resource center, computer-training center and sewing training center for youth and adults.
- A vocational institute in Makeni, one of the heaviest hit regions during the conflict
- Future Projects: Health Clinic/Medical Training Center and possible agricultural site in Calaba Town

**C. Project Description**

**1. Project Goal**

Life Schools for Advancement, our Operation Day's Work Project, aims to bring life to the communities of Sierra Leone through economic development and encouraging, supporting and clean learning environments for approximately 1000 students. This will be achieved by the "adoption" of the school and financial backing by *Life*.

**2. Project Objectives that support your goal (Describe the objectives in measurable terms. This way, your partnership will know what to measure when evaluating whether or not the project succeeded.)**

- Adopt (furnish and restore) 3 schools in Sierra Leone with ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines, blackboards, desks and other needed supplies
- Provide each school with clean water
- Provide students with uniforms and needed school supplies
- Employ local community with construction jobs and skills training
- Provide students with inspiring Sierra Leonean mentors
- Organize a Community Advisory board which will advise concerning curriculum, facility arrangements and maintenance
- Equip the schools with quality educational materials including textbooks

**3. Project Background/Rationale (What are the specific needs/opportunities the project will address?)**

Political unrest and a 10-year civil conflict left immense physical and psychological destruction in Sierra Leone. Thousands of children are orphans, working full time or living in the streets, schools are dilapidated and over 80% of the general population is unemployed. This severe poverty has forced the people of Sierra Leone to lose hope and resort to extreme

survival measures. Education has been put on the backburner in hopes that child labor will provide the basic needs for families. The majority of the children who attend school are boys. The cost of education has caused many families to send only their boys to school, leaving the girls to perform the household chores. In a country where over 75% of the population is illiterate, education is not only essential to the development of children; it is essential to the future of the nation. What are needed most in this Sierra Leone are not temporary aid or get-rich-quick schemes like diamond mining, but proven methods, projects and opportunities that will generate long-term individual and community self-sufficiency.

Our Operation Day's Work (ODW) program, LSFA, is the expansion of successful school adoption programs currently run by *Life* in Afghanistan and Iraq. These programs provide free education to orphans, homeless children and children of poor families. *Life's* financial commitment provides salaries for teachers and support staff, school uniforms, building maintenance, education materials and other needed supplies. Please see attachment for a full report of our current program in Afghanistan.

#### **D. Project Beneficiaries**

##### **1. Who will benefit from this project? (Indicate the beneficiaries' economic status, gender, geographical location, etc.)**

Children as well as the community as a whole will continue to benefit for years to come. The goal of LSFA is to achieve long-term community self-sufficiency; therefore it is difficult to quantify the exact number of beneficiaries for this project. During the first year of implementation approximately 1000 youth and their communities will benefit. These children live in some of the poorest communities in the world. Additionally, approximately 50 adults will be provided with full and part-time employment.

##### **2. How will they benefit from this project?**

The children of Sierra Leone will benefit by having clean and comfortable learning environments in which to attend school. Education in LSFA will be free for all students; therefore more girls will be able to attend school. Parents will be able to put the money previously spent on education towards household necessities. Successful and affluent Sierra Leonean businesspersons will serve as mentors and share with students the impact of how education changed their lives and their careers for the better. These individuals along with teachers will provide desperately needed, positive role models who can motivate the children to pursue education as a means of empowerment and achieving their goals. Communities participating in *Life's* ODW project will benefit by having access to a facility to hold meetings, events and other community projects. Its economic base will also be strengthened through the creation of free education for youth, short-term construction jobs, long-term skills training and employment opportunities.

##### **3. How will the beneficiaries be involved in the planning and implementation of the project?**

To ensure the vitality and sustainability of the schools, communities are being encouraged, through the formation of an advisory committee and support groups, to participate in the long-term management of their schools. These groups will have an active role in the implementation of school activities, programs, curriculum and maintenance.

##### **4. How will the project promote the desirable youth outcomes (for youth in your developing country) of Confidence, Character, Connection, and Competence as outlined in the attached document entitled, "Programs that Work"?**

*Confidence and Character:* It has been our experience that by involving the community and beneficiaries of development projects in their implementation from the planning stages, projects have a much greater success rate and increased long-term benefits. Beneficiaries who become participants have a sense of pride and ownership and thus work hard to realize its achievement. These students will be able to monitor their personal progress through preliminary and post evaluations.

*Connection:* LSFA will increase community connectivity by bringing them together for a common goal of renovating their school. It will also provide the community with an adequate place to conduct public meetings, ceremonies and other events. By increasing access to clean water, LSFA also dramatically increases the children’s overall health and physical hygiene. LSFA will increase global connectivity by linking students in Sierra Leone to the outside world through relationships with positive mentors.

*Competence:* By increasing the literacy rate among the youth, the overall intellectual competence of the community is increased. The social effect is perpetual and nurtures the foundation for producing future community leaders and establishing long-term benefit within the local communities. Through working together as a community for a common goal, strong community ties will be forged.

**E. Project Implementation**

1. **What specific activities will you carry out to accomplish the objectives of your project? (Describe the major activities, including proposed completion dates for each, where, with whom, etc.)**

Life Schools for Advancement Timeline												
Activity	Months											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Assessment of sites and existing materials												
Selection of Schools												
Creation of Community Advisory Committee for each of the schools												
Monitor and evaluating												
Procurement of educational materials												
Procurement of construction materials												
Completion of rehabilitation and furnishing of facility												
Presentations by Sierra Leonean businesspersons (On-going, Minimum of twice a year at each school)												

2. **How will each side of the partnership be involved in the implementation?**

**LIFE Sierra Leone** will conduct the needed assessment of schools, manage the overall project; serve as a liaison with the Ministry of Education and other community members; monitor and recruit volunteers for mentors; and provide funding for overall school maintenance and salaries, provide technical training for current and future teachers.

**El Ihsan Foundation** will assist with needed in-country organization of Advisory committees; gather needed data; conduct evaluation and monitoring of schools; monitor and recruit volunteers/mentors for school presentations.

**Brother's Brother Foundation** - Procure educational materials and supplies to furnish the newly renovated schools.

**LSFA Adoptee schools** - The principal of each school will serve as a local project coordinator for his/her specific school.

**3. What other local individuals, organizations and/or agencies will be involved in your project activities?**

The Ministry of Education, whom *Life* has worked with in the past, has welcomed and will be involved in this project. Equally essential to the project's success are the local community Advisory Boards, school principals, parents and teachers.

**4. What are your plans for continuing the project after these funds are spent?**

Our ODW project is the establishment of a long-term school "adoption." **Life Schools for Advancement** will be maintained and monitored by *Life* through regular funding and the procurement of in-kind donations and/or grants. By providing graduates of *Life's* vocational programs with opportunities to gain practical experience working in an educational setting, a dual benefit is achieved. The schools are staffed with qualified teachers and tutors, and the community's economic infrastructure is increased by the addition of meaningful employment opportunities. In addition, they will be equipped with a strong mentor program, which will continue to provide quality role models for the students.

**F. Project Evaluation**

**1. What results do you anticipate from this project? (How will you know if the project is successful?)**

- Increase in student literacy rate and cognitive skills
- More students attending school as a result of free education
- Increased morale and confidence of students
- Active community involvement in the rehabilitation and maintenance process
- Advisory Committee formed in each town to monitor and maintain the school

**2. What information will you collect and how?**

- Entry evaluation detailing students' personal goals and post evaluation detailing students' level of achievement
- Number of girls and boys enrolled in the targeted schools
- Number of community volunteers participating in construction
- Number of Volunteer Mentors
- Amount of local funds and in-kind contributions
- Number of schools rehabilitated, equipped (equal facilities for girls and boys), and functioning (several sub-indicators to be developed)

**Report on Life schools in Jalal Abad and Laghman Afghanistan (submitted by the Life Afghanistan office) Reprinted "as is"**

Life for Relief & Development has been running two Orphan High Secondary Schools in Afghanistan since June 2002. One school, Habib-ur-Rahamn Shaheed Orphan High School is in Jalal Abad, which is the capital of Nengrahar Province. The other, Umar-Ibn-e-Khattab Orphan High School is in Mehtarlam Baba, the capital of Laghman Province. Previously, these schools were run by Jamiat Al Qatar, a Qatar based humanitarian organization. This organization stopped its operations and humanitarian activities in this region in December 2001 and these schools were

left without any assistance on their fates. LIFE took over these schools in June 2002 and since then LIFE has been running these schools very successfully. These schools are known as institutions of excellence throughout the country.

The condition of these schools was very poor when LIFE took them over in June 2002. The students were not taking interest in studying and most of them were coming to school occasionally. The teachers were not being paid, most were really disappointed and trying to search for other jobs. Some of them actually left their jobs. LIFE took the responsibility of running these schools and a very honest and full attention was given to their development. The Development Director for LIFE held a final meeting with the administration of Qatar group in March 2002 for taking over these schools. The Development Director for LIFE and the Qatar group agreed on taking over these schools from June 2002. The Development Director for Life for Relief & Development visited these schools in May 2002 and met with the staff and students of these schools. She encouraged the teachers to teach and the students to study and told them that LIFE would run these schools and would help them. She was told that the students of these schools were out of uniforms, school bags, shoes, sweaters, beds and blankets for those students living in hostels. They would have nothing to wear during winter. Besides this they needed other things for running these schools. They were promised that LIFE would start providing the food now and would provide school bags, uniforms, shoes, beds and blankets and sweaters to students in September 2002 and the rest of other needs would be fulfilled time by time. Hence LIFE started providing food for students in hostels, salaries for teachers and other thing needed for running the schools in June 2002. The provision of winter school supplies for students was late by the promised time due to some unavoidable reasons but LIFE was able to provide the winter school supplies for students at the end of January 2003, which really encouraged the students, and staff of the schools. The teachers took great interest in teaching and the students tried hard in study and that was the reason that our students won all the awards in debates, study, quiz, sports, discipline and cleanliness in a competition among the orphanages in Jalal Abad. This competition among different orphanages was arranged by Nengrahar provincial Government in February 2003. Impressed by the high standard of education of our schools the Governors of Nengrahar province and Laghman province appreciated LIFE for its full support and honest attention to run these schools and they also rewarded some students with cash money for their excellent performance. They promised the staff of the Jalal Abad School and Laghman School that they would pay a visit every week to these schools. The Governors are now paying visits to our schools at least once in two weeks, which is an honor for us, and it also encourages the students and staff. One student won an award in a nationwide debate competition in English and Hamid Karzai the President of Afghanistan rewarded him with cash money for his excellent performance.



Governor Laghman visits to school



D. Governor Jalal Abad visits to school



Governor Laghman awards a student



D. Governor Jalal Abad awards a student

Looking to the poor condition of these schools LIFE tried to help them even before taking over these schools. LIFE invited the delegation sent by LIFE and AFSC in February 2002 to visit these schools while they were in Afghanistan. This delegation visited these schools and some members of the delegation donated some cash to Jalal Abad School, which really helped them running the school for two months.

**DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL BAGS, SCHOOL UNIFORM, BEDDING AND SWEATER**

Life for Relief & Development distributed School Bags, School Uniforms, Beddings, Blankets and Sweaters to the students of Habib-ur-Rahman Orphan Higher Secondary School Jalal Abad and Umar-Ibn-e-Khattab Orphan Higher Secondary School Laghman in Afghanistan.



Items donated to both schools



School supplies for both schools



Vicki and students with school supplies