

**Evaluation 6 years of school support  
Stichting Taiama-Andreas (STA)  
Heerlen, the Netherlands  
and  
the Youth Advocacy Network (YAN)  
Kabala Sierra Leone August 2017-January 2024**

**Introduction/ background**

In August 2017 Stichting Taiama in the Netherlands started a project in Kabala, Sierra Leone to support children in the age of 12 till 23 years old to attend school.

Immediately after starting the support, out of the beneficiaries the Youth Advocacy Network was founded.

YAN, also supported by STA, is a group of young people that stands for their rights. They have a strong motto: We thrive by positive change.

Their core business: education, advocacy and engagement.

YAN meets every week at their office to talk about children's rights, to organize advocacy activities. Peer to peer support is one of their strengths.

With the help of these young people STA was able to build a program that benefits a lot of children in one of the poorest countries in the world.

Attending school in Kabala isn't that obvious. Because of poverty not every parent can afford to send their children to school. Sometimes there isn't even money to feed all the children and girls are forced into early marriage.

## **The schoolsupport**

From September 2017 Stichting Taiama-Andreas (STA) in the Netherlands supported young students in Kabala, Sierra Leone with school materials such as uniforms, shoes, exercise books, pens, math sets and bags. In 2017 and 2018 STA also paid school fees. Since 2019 there is free education in Sierra Leone.

### **Total amount of students.**

The total amount of students STA supported during these years is 85. 65% were female and 35% were male. At this moment 26 of these students do still get support.

### **WASSCE. (eindexamen)**

31 students sat WASSCE.  
49% were female and 51% were male.

### **Drop out before WASSCE.**

The amount of drop out before WASSCE is hard to determine because some students changed their names during their school career without informing STA. That means we cannot mention the exact/ correct amount but an estimate amount.

28 students left school before sitting WASSCE.

70% were female and 30% were male.

The cause of the drop out often is unknown.

5 girls got pregnant.

2 girls were forced to marry.

2 young man moved with their family to Freetown/ Kenema.

2 students decided to go to a private school. (which STA doesn't support)

### **Total amount of years of support.**

In total STA supported 208 years for primary and secondary school attendance. That is an average of 2,4 years per student.

Remark: for some students the support started at the beginning of their school career, for some students it started at the end their school career, before WASCCE.

### **Further education. (vocational/ university)**

From the beginning STA was hesitating to support further education after BECCE (examen onderbouw) or WASSCE.

Some of the reasons are:

1. Inside Kabala high quality education is hard to find.
2. Outside Kabala in the cities, education is expensive and for students it is tough to survive without the support of their families, especially for the vulnerable girls.
3. For university alumni it is hard to find a job without the right connections.

### **Vocational education**

In 2019 4 students got support to go to FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists) in Kabala; two women and two men.

One young woman started catering, one young woman started tailoring and two young men started electrical engineering. All were active members of YAN. Unfortunately none of them were successful. One of the reasons was lack of teachers and materials at FAWE.

In 2020 three young men got support to go to the GTI (Governmental Technical Institute) in Kabala for electrical engineering and solar installation. One of them was successful. After two years he got a certificate. Right now he is working for a boss. One of the other men left for Freetown to start at a university on his own, the other left also for Freetown to go to a university but with the permission and support from people in the Netherlands. (later).

During the 6 years of support 4 men did a computer course at the library in Kabala. They all four got a certificate.

### **College/ university**

In 2020, with the help of another foundation and 2 private persons in the Netherlands, STA managed to send one young woman to college in Makeni to do 2 years agriculture. This was successful. After her study she got support from STA to start her own farm. Half of the money was meant as a micro credit. We made an agreement on that. Unfortunately up till today she never paid back to STA/ YAN.

In 2021 one young men went to a university in Freetown to start his study as a Social Worker. He is successful and is now in his third year out of four.

## **The future**

It is hard to look into the future especially in Sierra Leone but for 2024 we are very hopeful. YAN is developing very well. YAN has ambassadors who monitor the secondary school students we support.

In September 2023 we gave support to 32 students at different secondary schools; 14 new students and 18 who we continued supporting.

Beside that we encouraged active YAN-members to write a request for support for further education in Kabala.

There were two people who got support for computing at GTI and one person started at Koinadugu College\* for the two years education tourism and hospitality.

For one young woman we made an exception to start education in Makeni. For six years she has been supporting and advising YAN members, always willing to advice STA. She comes from a very deprived background and was a victim of teenage pregnancy and early marriage but managed to work on voluntary base in the governmental hospital in Kabala. Her dream is to become a nurse. In 2023 STA decided to support her for a three years education at the EBK university in Makeni. She started in January 2024.

\*Koinadugu College (KC) is the first higher institution of learning in Koinadugu District. The college started conducting classes in September 2023 with short courses after launching its undergraduate degree program. In July 2023 KC received the necessary accreditations from the Tertiary Education Committee. We are hopeful that in the future YAN members can build their future with the help of the education at KC. KC brings experiential learning along with the values of Sustainability, Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Indigenous Knowledge, Pan-African education an global thinking.

## **Conclusion**

The trip we made with YAN from 2017 till 2024 was a trip full of successes and challenges.

In 2017 we started with a group of young people not knowing where this trip would lead to.

We were unexperienced, they were unexperienced.

We were all willing to learn from each other; from our different cultures and habits.

We can say that this journey has brought all of us so much more than supporting children to go to school and we are still learning.

Yan became a group of young people who learned how to take responsibilities and share responsibilities. They grew into a group that takes care for each other.

STA learned about the challenges of people in another country and how young people have to deal with these challenges.

The Netherlands and Sierra Leone, the gap between these two countries is tremendous, But we can say, by talking to each other, listening to each other, having respect for each other we made a change in the lives of all of us.

For more information, visit our website

<http://www.taiama-andreas.org>

or

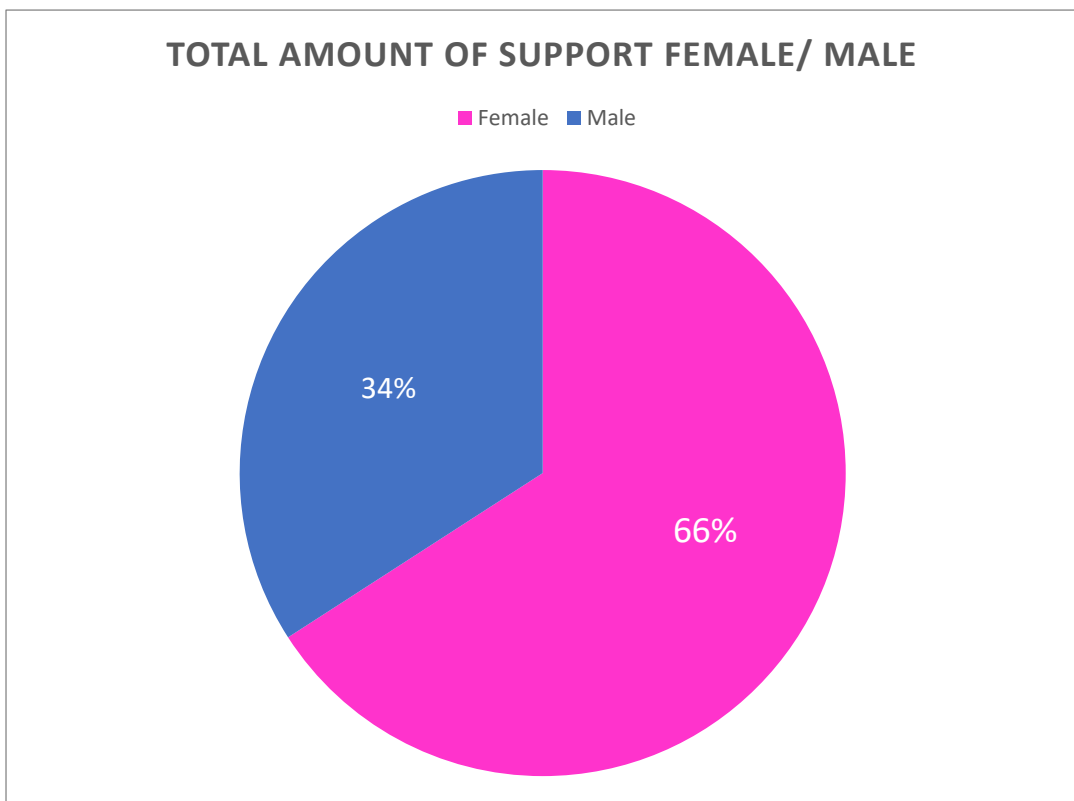
send an e-mail to

[info@taiama-andreas.org](mailto:info@taiama-andreas.org)

April 2024

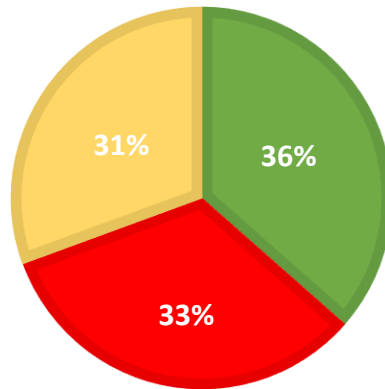
Marie-José Brounen

Voorzitter Stichting Taiama-Andreas



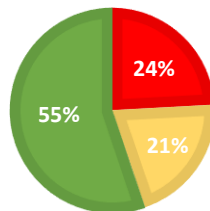
**SUCCESS TOTAL  
 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

■ WASSCE ■ Drop out ■ Still supported



**SUCCESS MEN  
 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

■ Drop out ■ Still support ■ WASSCE



**SUCCESS WOMEN  
 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

■ Drop out ■ Still support ■ WASSCE

