Serena Derricks

Literacy and Education Specialist



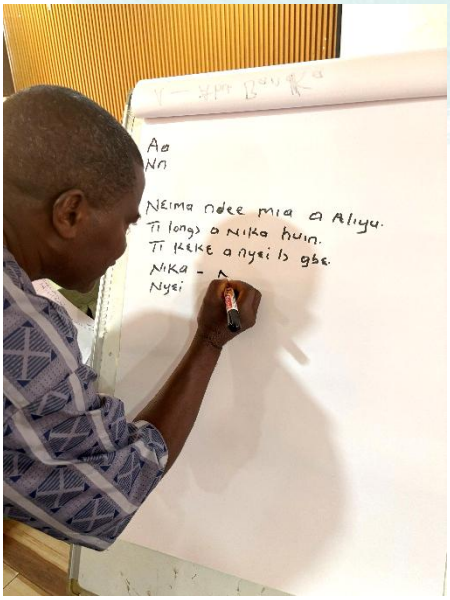
Summer 2026

Indigenous Language Literacy Workshop

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
Philippians 4:7

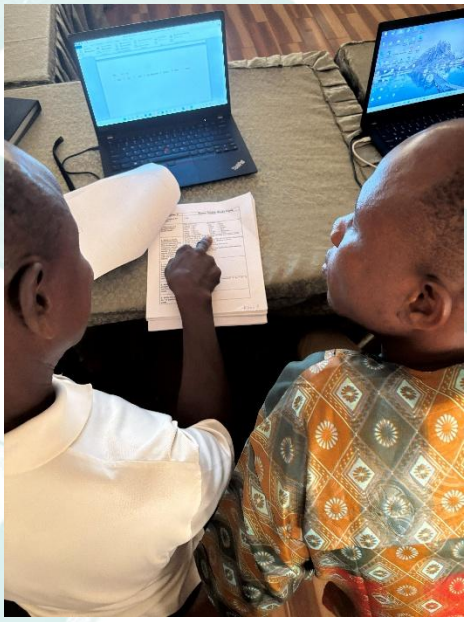
We landed in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in late June and hit the ground running! It was such a joy to see Lamin Kargbo, director of TISLL (The Institute for Sierra Leonean Languages) waiting for us at the ferry station. He was eager to begin preparations for the Literacy Workshop, and his excitement was contagious.

Soon, literacy coordinators representing all eight language groups began arriving from across the country. They brought their literacy assistants along because, when it comes to brainstorming and language development, two heads are always better than one! After spending the past year communicating through WhatsApp and email, finally gathering in the same room was an emotional moment. The Lord has surely blessed TISLL's literacy projects with talented individuals!



Step 2 of the Literacy Workshop was a presentation for the group. This step allowed us to ensure that our methodologies aligned across languages. This was the most fun because words that mean one thing in a language can apparently mean something completely different in another!

Step 1 of the Literacy Workshop was to review the chapters they had worked on over the previous year and present a final draft to the group. Here are two members reviewing their work from Ch. 2 about body parts.



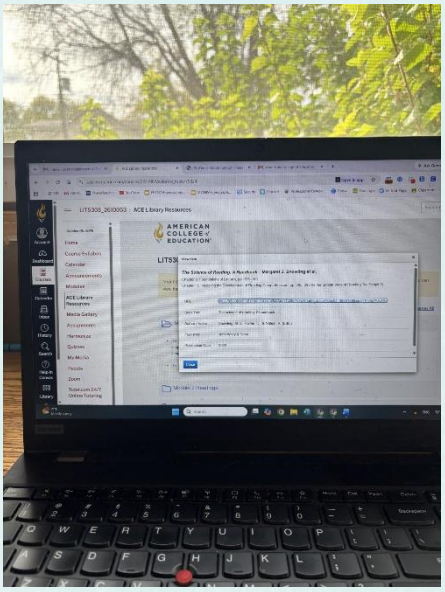


Step 3 of the Literacy Workshop was working with each language individually to ensure their final drafts for each chapter met the criteria required are ready to be formatted and printed!

The workshop focused on three major steps. First, we reviewed the ten chapters each language team had developed over the past year. The coordinators presented their work to the group and made revisions based on feedback and discussion. Next, they began developing chapters 11 through 25 with the goal of completing their literacy books.

While this may sound straightforward, imagine doing it simultaneously in eight different languages, each with its own unique alphabet and linguistic challenges! The room was filled with lively discussion, problem-solving, and collaboration as teams worked to strengthen their materials.

Adding to the excitement, representatives from the Ministry of Education and members of the press visited the workshop to learn about our work. It is an answer to prayer to see growing interest in literacy development and mother-tongue education, and we were grateful for the opportunity to share the vision and progress of the project!



My first course for my M.Ed. in Literacy, The Fundamentals of Literacy, begins in October! Please pray for strong coffee and a mind ready to learn more about what I love the most – literacy!



Lamin Kargbo, the director of TISLL, being interviewed about the project.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise the Lord for a successful trip to Sierra Leone!
- Praise the Lord for all the literacy coordinators and their hard work during the workshop.
- Pray for their continued efforts to help people in their communities learn how to read.
- Thanksgiving that Josephine is feeling healthy again.
- Pray for my MA program as classes begin and I learn more about literacy!

CONTACT

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GIVE

https://lbt.org/project/serena-derricks/

Monthly Pledged Financial Support

