

Land, Food, Diamonds

An Exploration of Policy and Development in Sierra Leone

World Tour 2009

Part reality tour, part development opportunity, *Land, Food Diamonds* participants will travel to mining and reclamation sites and engage with local groups fighting to change policy and promote sustainable rural livelihoods. Guided evening discussions will provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on the day's activities and integrate these experiences into their understanding of themselves, their work, and the world.

When: March 13th to 23rd 2009

Where: Freetown, Koidu, and the Banana Island Guesthouse, Sierra Leone

Why: Because an absence of conflict doesn't guarantee human security. In spite of its mineral wealth, Sierra Leone ranks last on the UN Human Development Index. Join One Sky staff for a hands-on experience of our land reclamation, sustainable agriculture and advocacy work in this former conflict zone.

This is no beach holiday: delegates should be prepared to enjoy rustic accommodation, local foods and rough roads. The itinerary includes trips to villages and farmer groups, meetings with conservation staff, mining executives and local leaders, discussions with development workers helping convert open pit mines to communal farmland, and plenty of time to interact one-on-one with locals.

The final stop on the tour is the village of Bandafayie where One Sky has provided agricultural extension services since 2001. In May 2008, villagers in Bandafayie saw 5.5 acres of heavily impacted land adjacent to their village reclaimed for agricultural use. The project, a joint effort by One Sky, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone and Swanfield Mining Co., provides a successful example of how devastated lands can be reclaimed to promote sustainable livelihoods. It also shows what a difficult, expensive and politically challenging process this conversion can be.

Sierra Leone routinely falls last on the United Nations Human Development Index after enduring a civil war fuelled by the trade in conflict diamonds and fought by child soldiers. Join us as we travel from the headquarters of the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone in Freetown to the western province of Kono, the heart of the country's diamond mining industry and one of the country's most destitute, war-scarred and environmentally devastated regions.

Itinerary

Thursday, March 12th to Friday, March 13th: Travel to London and onwards to Lungi airport, Sierra Leone, arriving Friday evening. Participants will be met at the airport and transported to downtown Freetown.

Saturday March 14th: Day trip to Lakka. Morning on the beach. Lunch followed by informal meeting with available EFA/ENFORAC staff and forest walk. Return to convent for dinner and discussion of first impressions and personal experiences. Possible night out.

Sunday March 15th: Morning off for individual reflection. Afternoon orientation to Freetown with walking tour of the city and visits to museum and markets.

Monday March 16th: Introduction to CSSL staff and presentation by Executive Director, DD Siaffa on the organization, its history and current work. Updates by staff on their current projects and possibly other presentations by partner organizations followed by a group discussion. Free time before dinner and a guided group dialogue and reflection session in the evening (conservation oriented)

Tuesday March 17th: Early morning departure for Kono stopping en route for a picnic lunch. Arrive in Koidu in the afternoon. Meet local CSSL staff and tour town. Dinner with Kono staff and friends.

Wednesday March 18th: Morning meeting with mining executives and local leaders for background information on the diamond industry, the Kimberly Process, mining regulations and

current reclamation efforts. Afternoon trip to artisanal mining area and conversation with artisanal miners. Travel to Foundation for Environmental Security and Sustainability reclamation site. Tour site with project leader and speak with farmers. Evening discussion and reflections on personal experiences (resources and development oriented).

Thursday March 19th: Morning meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture and representatives from the farmer's groups. Walk to Kainseh to view co-operative gardens. Travel to Woama for tour of village and gardens. Evening discussion (food security and agricultural development).

Friday March 20th: Walking trip to villages stopping enroute to visit K-Tec Technical Training Facility for Women. Presentation on the aim and scope of this organization. Return to Koidu late afternoon. Dinner and evening discussion (gender and sustainable livelihoods).

Saturday March 21st: Trip to Bandefayie. Tour reclaimed area, co-operative garden, village, and fish pond. Meeting with villagers to discuss successes, challenges and hopes for the future. Lunch with villagers then travel to Freetown.

Sunday March 22nd: Wrap up activities and prepare for 21:55 flight from Lungi airport. Optional morning trip to market for souvenirs. Possible press conference.

Monday March 23rd: Continue traveling home OR embark on an optional three day retreat (based on a minimum of four people) to Banana Island Guest House (Friday, March 27 flight from Lungi to Heathrow).

Logistics

Cost: \$1500 includes everything from the minute you land at the Lungi airport including accommodation, meals, food, drinks, transport, entrance fees etc.

Not included in cost: Flights, transport to airports outside of Sierra Leone and airport improvement fees. Mandatory emergency medical and evacuation insurance, optional travel insurance (advised), inoculations, visas and toiletries or other supplies (sunscreen, mosquito net, anti-malarial drugs, etc.). Any expenses incurred to weather, unforeseen acts of God, etc. Personal purchases of souvenirs, local wares, excursions and costs outside of those scheduled.

What to Expect: As a grassroots organization working directly with marginalized groups, One Sky staff are accustomed to living and working in more rugged conditions than you may be used to. Please be prepared to enjoy basic or rustic accommodation with unreliable electricity, and limited running water. We support local women by employing them to cater our events. You can expect to enjoy colorful local cuisine prepared by women in their own kitchens. We may opt to travel by local transport or walk when circumstances permit. In these cases, please expect to receive plenty of friendly attention and to become quite dusty and hot.

What to bring: Mosquito repellent, a sleeping sheet, hat, sunscreen, light clothes for extremely hot temperatures, sturdy sandals, raincoat and long-sleeved shirt in case of an early rainy season, bathing suit for the beach, a small headlamp or flashlight, personal medications and prophylactics for malaria, notebook, pencil and camera.

Attire: Participants should wear lightweight, breathable clothing. For women, light skirts or light Capri pants are ideal. Although shorts are tolerated, they are seldom worn; men are commonly expected to wear pants and shoes and this combination is more intelligent during the evening hours when it is important to avoid mosquitoes. Good comfortable walking shoes, a light hat for the sun and plenty of changes of socks and underwear are important. Don't forget sandals, a bathing suit and towel for the beach! You should also bring any toiletries you need as they can be expensive and hard to find locally.

What not to bring: Don't bring jewelry or items you don't need and avoid showing signs of affluence. Don't bring perishable items that will melt or spoil in the heat. See the section on gifts for information on making appropriate personal donations while on our World Tour. Internet connections are extremely difficult most of the time and electricity is unreliable making laptops impractical items to bring. There are internet cafes in Freetown and Kono as well as readily available cell phones for contacting loved ones back home.

Climate: Sierra Leone is hot and humid near the coast and just simply hot as you enter the interior. March is the hottest month of the year; expect hot and humid conditions during which you will sweat profusely. It is a rare Canadian that will ever need a sweater, although early rains may bring cooler temperatures in the evenings. A lightweight, long-sleeved shirt is a good item to include.

Participants: The group is limited to 12 participants and may have up to four group leaders or session coordinators. Participants should be reasonably healthy, able to walk in hot, humid conditions, and be open to personal reflection, growth and other cultural viewpoints. All participants are REQUIRED to have Yellow Fever Vaccinations (documentation is mandatory to obtain a visa), valid visas for Sierra Leone and passports that are valid for at least six months from the date of entry.

Photography and Filming: Photography is encouraged and cameras are welcome at most occasions. Sierra Leone tends to be a friendly place for “snaps” with the exception of military and police institutions and personnel which is illegal. Delegations make for an excellent photography opportunity as the whole event is considered special and worthy of photographs. We do, however, encourage dialogue with locals and seeking permission before you shoot. We also discourage cameras or videotape from interfering with your interactions with others.

Gifts and Personal Donations: At One Sky we believe your generosity is always appreciated and that you should be given appropriate opportunities to act charitably. However, even

giving away pencils, small change and candy to children or individuals sets precedents that are difficult to break and can cause problems for other travelers and One Sky staff later on. Because of this, we ask that you please make donations during your own free time when you are on your own and are seen to be acting independently from One Sky. Preferably, please consider giving through formal channels: community groups, organizations, campaigns, and even to individuals through targeted programs.

Payment Schedule: A deposit of \$500 per participant must be paid in full to secure a seat on the delegation and the remaining balance of payment is due 30 days in advance of the scheduled World Tour. Please apply first to receive conditional approval before sending us any funds. Pre-departure documents and permission to join a delegation or tour are only issued once all documents, forms and payments are received. For wire transfers, please note that your financial institute will likely charge you a service fee, for which you are responsible. Returned cheques are subject to a \$25 CDN fee. For flight bookings, the full amount of the ticket is due prior to flight confirmations.

Prices: Prices quoted are based on fares in effect at the time of publication and are subject to change without notice prior to departure. All prices are quoted in Canadian dollars. Please read all of the conditions carefully. Payment of a deposit of any part or full payment for a reservation shall constitute consent to all of the provisions contained herein.

Cancellations and Refunds: All cancellations and refunds must be received in writing. Cancellations received 45 days in advance are refunded in full less a \$100 administrative fee per participant. If a cancellation is made less than 45 days but more than 14 days in advance of the tour, cancellation is 55% of the tour cost. For cancellations made less than 14 days in advance all deposits and tariffs are forfeited and no refunds will be made. Prices quoted are based on group participation and no refunds will be made for any part of the program in which a participant chooses not to participate. It is understood that refunds cannot be made for participants who do not complete a delegation or tour for any reason.

Delays: In the event of a delay, participants will be responsible for additional meals, accommodation, transfer and flight changes should they be required.

Baggage: The less you bring, the lighter you will travel. Airlines generally restrict baggage allowance to two bags plus ONE carry-on from London. Participants who are able to travel with only one bag and are willing to carry project goods for transport to or from the destination may do so voluntarily if they choose. This is always appreciated by One Sky and we encourage you to open and inspect anything you are asked to transport for someone else, including One Sky project items prior to travelling.

Insurance: Due to the remoteness of this tour, emergency medical evacuation and travel insurance is mandatory (a policy number must be presented prior to travel). Comprehensive trip cancellation and travel insurance is recommended.

Itinerary: The Itinerary described is subject to change at the discretion of the One Sky group leaders or One Sky head office. This is an adventure to a remote and at times precarious region of the world where conditions change and circumstances predicate good decision-making. Although we provide what we consider to be a valid and sensible itinerary, the actual schedule may change in the field due to unforeseen circumstances. Every attempt is made to stick to itineraries and travel routes. One Sky reserves the sole and exclusive right (at its discretion) to alter or omit any part of the itinerary or change any reservation, feature and/or means of conveyance without any notice and for any reason whatsoever including but not limited to weather conditions, political events, road conditions and any factors beyond our control without allowance or refund and with any and all extra costs resulting therefrom paid for by the participants. We expressly reserve the right to cancel, without prior notice to participants, any tour prior to departure in which case payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part including, but not limited to the payment of interest thereon. It is understood that all decisions will be made in the best interests of the participants and with regard to the safety of the locals.

Travel Advisories: Participants should familiarize themselves with the travel reports issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade available at www.voyage.gc.ca

Contact Information: If you have any questions or require clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact the One Sky office at info@onesky.ca or 250-877-6030

Terms and Conditions

Prior to leaving, participants will receive two copies of a standard contract/liability waiver. Please read this carefully and retain one copy for your records. While One Sky and its sponsoring organizations and partners exercise all reasonable care, we accept no responsibility whatsoever for any property loss or damage and or any damages resulting from illness, personal injuries or death which may be sustained by reason of, or while engaged on, any tour whether due to ownership, maintenance, use or operation of any manner or means of conveyance including, but not limited to, ship, aircraft, helicopter, automobile, train, motor coach, bicycle, boat, vehicle, common carrier, or any other conveyance used in carrying out these tours for any reason whatsoever. We cannot and do not accept any responsibility for any losses whatsoever whether caused by failure or delay or other irregularity, acts or omissions occurring during a

tour under which the means of transportation or other services provided thereby is offered or supplied by owners, operators, or public carriers for whom One sky acts only as an agent. One Sky shall not be responsible for any injury to person (whether or not resulting in death), damage to property or additional expense or the like due to, or arising out of, any act of war, insurrection, revolt or other civil uprising or military action occurring in the countries of origin, destination or passage or changes caused by sickness, weather, strike, quarantine, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. Any and all such losses shall be borne solely by the passenger as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated.

One Sky strongly urges individual participants to obtain appropriate insurance coverage. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely. One Sky will not be held responsible for inadequate travel documents; visas, passports and travel documents are the responsibility of the participant including proof of vaccinations when required for border crossing or entry to a country.

One Sky, its agents and sponsoring organizations and partners do not assume any responsibility or liability whatsoever for any claims, damages, expenses or other financial loss related to the operation of this tour. All legal questions and actions against One Sky must be brought in Smithers, British Columbia, Canada and by accepting participation on a World Tour with One Sky, the participant waives any right to bring an action in any other forum.

By forwarding a deposit, the passenger certifies that he/she does not have a mental, physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other participants. One Sky expressly reserves the right in our sole and arbitrary discretion to cancel or withdraw any participant as a member of a tour or delegation at any time.

Participants must sign a legal waiver form and agree to certain conditions before travel. All participants must show valid proof of health insurance and additional travel

insurance. All responsibility for subsequent travel, logistics and arrangements are the responsibility of the participant. Travel to and from Sierra Leone can be arranged through One Sky or our travel agent but remains the responsibility of the participant along with all necessary visas, inoculations, and special medical needs. A formal invitation to Sierra Leone for the purposes of obtaining a visa will be provided.

Application Form

Full Name (as on passport): _____

How you would like to be referred to (e.g. printed documents): _____

Passport Number: _____

Date Issued: _____ Expiry date: _____ Place of issue: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Birthplace: _____ Nationality: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____ (home) _____ (work) _____ (cell)

Fax: _____

Medical concerns (please list allergies and medications): _____

Emergency medical insurance:

- I already have a policy
- I will require a policy, please send me information
- I have all the required vaccinations
- I need vaccinations, please send me information

*Special Dietary requirements: _____

Emergency contact

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

I have read and agree to all the Terms and Agreements above

Signature

Print

Date

Please include a couple of paragraphs detailing your overseas and cross-cultural experiences, language ability and current work/volunteer affiliations (we will share this with other participants prior to the tour). We are also interested in knowing more about your personal motivation for taking this trip and what you hope to achieve by taking it.