



AWC Girls' Hostel Training Programme Report

July 2019

*Submitted by AWC Girls' Hostel Manager and
reviewed by AWC Management*

Background

Between January and June 2019, five (5) girls lived in the Aberdeen Women's Centre's (AWC) Girls' Hostel situated on Wilkinson Road, in Freetown. Fully funded by The Aminata Maternal Foundation the girls undertook a series of training sessions and activities to enable them to gain skills to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for them.

This report outlines the training undertaken by the girls, the outcomes and what the girls are doing now.

Training Programme

The training was primarily focused on three modules of Hospitality, Food Catering, Art and Craft Designing. The training also included a few other subjects such as:

- Understanding a good human relationship.
- Skills in delivery domestic home services.
- Skills in keeping environment clean and tidy.

Within the Food Catering course, the hostel girls were trained to prepare different types of food namely avocado salad, dressed-fish (special), sausage rolls, and rich cake (an AWC Girls' Hostel recipe), fofo and okra soup, fried rice (special recipe from hostel girls), grilled fish and grilled chicken.

Key Outcomes

Following their time in the AWC Girls' Hostel all five girls were:

- ✓ Trained in housekeeping activities, caring for toddlers and newborn babies.
- ✓ Trained in catering with a key focus on basic cooking methods, food hygiene and attractive food display methods.
- ✓ Able to develop skills on how to plan and organise tasks and activities.
- ✓ Taught skills and gained experience to teach colleagues during interactive cleaning sessions.
- ✓ Taught how to manage conflicts well.
- ✓ Given a financial and commercial understanding in petty business and trading.
- ✓ Taught how to design and create bead shoes, armlets, bags and waist-beads and door/floor mats.

Final Practical Assessment

To test whether the girls had learnt from their training over the six months there was a Final Practical Assessment.

For the girls' final practical assessment, the girls had to organise a practical Luncheon Sale, where they showcased their expertise in all the different cooking methods taught.





During this final practice, the girls were encouraged to be innovative with their food displays and/or preparation, by adding either a special flavor or spices to make a unique food that was different from the traditional recipe. One of the girls decided to add grained coconut to rich cake before baking.

All girls passed their final practical assessment with flying colours.

Graduation Ceremony

The AWC Girls' Hostel graduation ceremony took place on the 19th June 2019 in the AWC Classroom. Relatives of the girls and AWC workers attended the ceremony, which was graced with speeches and ended with a certificate presentation and giving of homemade gifts for the girls' babies.

The girls performed a play skit that sent a message to the audience about how much Dame Ann Gloag has transformed their lives and how much they appreciate her support. The girls and caregivers were reminded to support each other following the graduation of the girls and to make use of the skills they have gained from the training. The girls said they wished to be productive citizens in their respective communities, now they had gained this training.



With a donation of 2,000,000 Leones from the Flaming Bible Church in Aberdeen, the AWC management bought graduation items for the girls and their children. The hostel girls were bought shoes, skirts, hair braids, shirts and their children were bought clothes, baby food, and baby hygiene materials.

Reintegration back to families

Before admission in to the AWC Girls' Hostel Training Programme the girls' caregivers and parents committed to accepting the girls back into their care at the end of training.

The Patient Guidance Counsellor, together with the AWC Girls' Hostel Manager, worked on the reintegration of the five girls to their families and caregivers. The parents and caregivers were first



invited for a meeting where discussions on the girls' training were provided and a clear plan on the girls' reintegration was made.

This interactive planning process, in collaboration with the girls' caregivers and families created an easy process to ensure the girls reintegration in June.

On the 21st June 2019, after the Graduation Ceremony, all the girls were successfully reintegrated to their respective caregivers and families. Each girl was picked up at the hostel by her caregiver or family member and a reintegration handing over consent form was signed by all.

Next Steps

As of mid-July 2019, the five AWC Hostel Girls that left the hostel have been reintegrated into their families and are currently occupied as follows:

- Kadiatu Turay has decided to return to formal school with support of the government free quality education and intend to sit to the WASSCE exams.
- Mariama Jalloh has started her own petty catering business, specifically baking and selling rich-cakes.
- We have had discussion and possible Home Domestic Service employment for one of the girls. We are thinking to engage Aminata Mbawoh will take-up a job if she is willing and committed within the Home Domestic Service department at AWC.
- Aminata Lansana and Mabinty Sesay will initially start by doing two shifts a week at the Patient Services department at AWC.

Challenges and Reflections

- ✓ The girls come into the AWC Hostel with no prior hygiene knowledge and so teaching them takes up a lot of time. It is also very challenging to get them to match the basic hygiene practices that the AWC Hostel expects.
- ✓ It was difficult to seek jobs for the girls, particularly with in the tourism industry and fast-food restaurants, because the minimum qualification require for a waiter or support staff is to have passed five West Africa Senior School Examinations. Most of the pregnant teenage girls from communities booked by maternity have just completed junior school, which is a limiting factor in job hunting. Girls who have sat to WASSCE and passed five usually enroll into University education and would not end up on the AWC Girls' Hostel Training Programme.
- ✓ Some girls were challenged to return to their normal life and families after the training program finished.

Conclusion

The AWC Girls' Hostel Training Programme is a very good model to empower adolescent first-time mothers or pregnant girls. The programme undoubtedly helps to build the skills and knowledge of the girls with regard to hospitality, catering and arts and craft activities. Job opportunities should be actively sought out for the next cohort of girls and basic hygiene education will be factored in to the training that is given to the girls.