A Model for Service Abroad Courses:
Agriculture Development in Sierra Leone

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Introduction

- Internationalization of campuses and companies
  - Need for cross-cultural project management (Trooboff, 2008)
  - Ability to work in complex and fast changing environments (Williams, 2005)

- Partnerships formed
Sierra Leone

- Civil War 1991-2001
- Infrastructure destroyed
- Agriculture and educational capacity diminished
Objectives

1) Introduce appropriate technologies into a community to improve food security for local populations

2) Place American university students within a learning environment where they were required to use their knowledge and skills to achieve an objective with limited resources

3) Introduce American students to the challenges and opportunities in international development
Methods

- Pre-departure Training
  - identified project ideas

  - attended training:
    Water4
    soil/water testing

  - collected materials for projects
Methods

• Separated into three groups:
  - food production
  - nutrition and economics
  - biosystems engineering

• Worked with children from local orphanage

• Each group taught children applied math, science, engineering concepts
Agricultural Production

Increasing food security:
- soil testing
- conservation agriculture
- composting
- drip irrigation
Nutrition and Economics

Fighting malnutrition:
- Market price evaluation
- Meal plan budgeting
- Studied “consumer” acceptance
Biosystems Engineering

Providing Clean Water:
- Well site selection
- Well drilling
Impact

Richard:
- Formed company
- Investors
- Contracts
Impact

Jesi:
- cont. well digging projects
- Fullbright Award
- Training students
Impact

Mark:
- Taught science and math
- Created Terra Rubea Engineer Exchange
Impact

Liberty:
- Soil and Water Conservation grant
- Built bio-sand filters
- Njala /Wellington training
Suggestions

- Pre-departure cultural class
- Structured discussion upon return
References
