DR FRANCIS AMARA
IUBMB Ambassador for FASBMB

STEM Outreach in Sierra Leone

The K-STEM Centre has started hands-on science activities to teach elementary school pupils about cells, as the unit of living organisms. The kids can visualize different types of cells from human tissue slides under the light microscopy. They are so excited to learn that the human body is made of diverse cells performing several different functions.

These kids are the lucky ones to have the opportunity to see a microscopy in real life, not to mention to touch and work with it!

Sierra Leone is an extremely poor country. There are no microscopes in schools and most colleges and universities. In fact, the only medical school in the country can hardly boast of more than 3 working light microscopes in good conditions.

These activities have made the kids curious about the human body and to become interested in bioscience.

A class 4 student said: “I wonder why the cells in the dog's intestine look so different in shape and size.”

Another student asked: “when are we going to see cells from a human intestine.”

Their teachers and parents are telling us how attendance of the class 4 pupils has increased since they have started coming to the K-STEM Centre, because only those students who attend class regularly can join the Science Buddies Clubs.

The parents too tell us that their kids seem to like school much better now, since they have started doing the hands-on activities at the K-STEM Centre.

They are also making new friends in their groups, as they learn to collaborate and share equipment.
Dr. Francis Amara teaching basic microscopy to primary school pupils.

STEM Outreach in Sierra Leone, West Africa