

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Rothumba/Augsburg, December 5, 2022

### **Start of construction of the first Fuggerei of the future**

*Donators lay foundation stone for pilot project in Sierra Leone*

"The first foundation stone for our Fuggerei of the future has been laid," the two founders Stella Rothenberger and Rugiatu Neneh Turay shout with delight as they build the first walls for a primary school in the small fishing village of Rothumba in Sierra Leone together with the residents and local builders. The laying of the foundation stone is the beginning of the construction of a sustainable, social settlement, for which the Fuggerei in Augsburg was the godfather. The initiator Rugiatu Neneh Turay from Sierra Leone is director and founder of the local NGO Amazonian Initiative Movement (AIM) and cooperates with the donator Stella Rothenberger (Frankfurt) from the PfefferminzGreen association. Their social settlement serves the purpose of strengthening and promoting local girls and women by providing them health care and basic education and training. "We want to achieve a sustainable fight against poverty by strengthening self-determination and dignity. With the start of the construction of the school and a training center for women, we have already taken an important step closer to our central goal. Education and income-generating measures promote and enable the sustainable development of local communities," explains Rugiatu Neneh Turay.

#### **Ten-year plan for the first Fuggerei of the future has been determined**

The start of construction is the start of a ten-year plan to implement a sustainable, social settlement in the fishing village of Rothumba in Sierra Leone based on the ideas of the local people. Together with the village community, the donators have developed a step-by-step plan over a period of ten years in which the four central UN sustainability goals `No poverty, `Health and well-being, `Gender equality, and `Less inequality are to be met by means of health, community, and educational institutions. "Our main focus is on strengthening local communities and creating or developing sustainable solutions using local knowledge," explains Stella Rothenberger. "Fuggerei is an ideal and spiritual partner for us, which, with its 500 years of experience and its values, is an example of how it is possible to succeed sustainably to enable people to live a life of self-determination and dignity. We asked the people in Rothumba what is necessary for this in a country like Sierra Leone, because sustainable solutions in the fight against poverty can only be achieved if cultural and social conditions are taken into account and the local communities take the planning and implementation of the projects into their own hands", Rothenberger continues. Stella Rothenberger concludes by pointing out: "For the implementation of the other project components of the phased plan and the realization of the Fuggerei of the future in Sierra Leone, we are looking for people and organizations who are interested in supporting us and our idea of sustainable development cooperation. So we are very happy if we get in touch with interested people through this article, and are happy to be available for further questions and exchange."

### **The first construction phase helps 4000 people and is funded by the BMZ**

In the first phase of the project, which is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the project managers are building a primary school, a training center for the village community and promoting job opportunities for women. In addition, energy and clean water should be made accessible to people. About 4,000 people in Rothumba and the surrounding villages are to benefit from this first phase of the project. The training center for women, as well as the school, is to be completed by the end of 2023 and can be used by 350 children and seven teachers. "The idea of the Fuggerei of the future is thus becoming reality for the first time and shows that the DNA of the 500-year-old foundation concept can be carried internationally into the future," explains Senior Council Chairman Alexander Erbgraf Fugger-Babenhausen and adds: "We congratulate the two founders on laying the foundation stone and note that their local knowledge and expertise are crucial so that people can improve their living conditions on their own and thus lead a self-determined life with dignity."

### **In case of queries:**

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### **PENANCE:**

Rugiatu Neneh Turay and Stella Rothenberger lay the foundation stone for a school and a vocational training center in Rothumba and thus start the construction of the Fuggerei of the future in Sierra Leone.

The laying of the foundation stone is a solemn event, moreover, everyone is coming.

Local construction workers in Rothumba