



Restore Hope: Liberia Annual Report 2019

RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA

a program of the Restore Hope Fund @ TIDES Foundation

ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT FY 2019 • JULY 1, 2018 – JUNE 30, 2019

PROGRAM SUMMARY

In 2014, the world watched in shock and horror as the Ebola virus ravaged across West Africa. Liberia suffered the worst outbreak in history that collapsed critical healthcare systems and services and led the country to the brink of total economic collapse. Though the country was declared Ebola-free in 2016, Liberia was left with inadequate clean water and sanitation, decimated economic, agricultural, and educational systems, and nonexistent healthcare for many.

RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA (RHL) began in an attempt to offer a new, integrative model for post-conflict, post-disaster development, believing that in order for a nation to not turn again to violence and anarchy, people must see hope and opportunity in their futures. The objective of RESTORE HOPE is to establish the necessary conditions for a healthy and peaceful future, creating and executing sustainable programs that include local stakeholders in the decision-making and implementation, and prioritizing health, education, economic opportunity as the three key pillars for building a brighter tomorrow.

2019 marks RESTORE HOPE's fourth year in operation. Prior to this year, we operated as a pilot program and partnered with a non-profit in Liberia (MAGIF) to oversee program implementation. In 2019, RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA registered as an independent, nonprofit organization in Liberia. This step has provided opportunity for the program, and it has provided us the opportunity to revisit our vision statement and to consider the potential impact of our model.

***RHL registered as an independent
nonprofit org in Liberia***

VISION

We believe in community development that is transformative, holistic, fosters agency, strengthens collaborative capacity, and is sustainable. The ultimate goal of this development is to alleviate suffering and extreme poverty, allowing communities to become their own agents of change. Such communities are healthy, productive, just, equitable, secure and peaceful. In such communities, there is strength in diversity and conflict cannot take root. The potential for every human being is maximized.

MISSION

We provide essential support to vulnerable children, and their caregivers, with timely and sustainable resources and activities that will protect their health and wellbeing, ensure access to education, and provide economic opportunities beyond school, thus providing a way out of extreme and enduring poverty.

RESTORE HOPE's **vision** statement reflects our values and it guides our program direction. In each decision we make, we ask whether the desired outcome will align with our vision. Does it move us toward the goal of reducing suffering and alleviating poverty? Does it foster agency and offer opportunity? We carry this vision forward and endeavor to create programs that reflect its goals.

RESTORE HOPE's **mission** remains the same and we continue to serve those who are most vulnerable in conflict and post-conflict contexts, especially the women and children.

ALIGNMENT WITH UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

RESTORE HOPE's work aligns with a number of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. This alignment reflects our holistic approach, addressing multiple drivers of poverty and inequality in order to increase the impact of our investment and ensure the sustainability of the interventions.

- End poverty in all its forms
- End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition; promote sustainable agriculture
- Ensure healthy lives and well-being
- Ensure inclusive, accessible and equitable quality education; promote lifelong learning opportunities
- Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls
- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation
- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and full employment
- Build resilient infrastructure and promote inclusive, sustainable industrialization; foster innovation
- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, sustainable development; provide access to equal justice for all; build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions

RHL's work aligns with many UN Sustainable Development Goals

RESTORE HOPE's holistic approach takes form in a unique, integrated model of services. Our core programs are in healthcare, education, and economic development. Our model is a combination of case management and public health whereby individual children are enrolled in the program and the support extends to the household and community at large. This ensures no child enrolled falls through the gaps of siloed programming, while at the same time allows us to impact a larger population as we endeavor to strengthen the resiliency of the individual and the community.

As we continue to refine our model, we seek ways to further integrate our programs. Our economic development program is linked to our adult literacy



initiative. Our health program is connected to our education efforts through the Peer-to-Peer Health Counselors project. This group of young leaders lead sessions in their schools, discussing various relevant preventive health activities. Previously, the counselors focused solely on sexual and reproductive health, but have since broadened their mandate.

The need for effective, evidence-based programs is on the rise given the deteriorating socio-economic context in Liberia. This year, inflation has continued to rise, over 26% (World Bank) with the Liberian dollar depreciating significantly. The economic impact on the country has been felt at the household level where prices for goods in the local market have increased. We've seen no evidence of investment in the public sector whether in education or healthcare in Kolahun District. Indeed, the healthcare system is further deteriorating.



ACTIVITIES

(The information for this section was compiled from the monthly activity reports.)

Programmatic Developments

- Incorporation in Liberia, including the formation of a Liberian Board
- Publication of digital newsletters to expand visibility and fundraising
- Membership in Global Giving, an online fundraising platform that helped raise funds for our literacy project
- Revision of our Child Protection Policy, which strengthened organizational policies and practices and implemented staff training, with the goal of keeping our beneficiaries safe.
- Completion of the Vocational Education & Training center
- Addition of two Liberian-born RHL advisers



Educational Support

- All able school aged children are enrolled in school and attend regularly
- Each child is supplied with a book bag, books, writing utensils, uniforms, donated clothing, and sanitary care items for girls
- Five high school graduates enrolled at Lofa County Community College with RHL support
- The tutoring school is running Monday through Thursdays 3:00-5:30, with one tutor assigned to conduct home visits to those students residing too far from the tutorial school to attend
- 92 of 96 (96%) students passed their grade
- Special education is arranged for children with disabilities who previously never attended school
- Summer reading camp is held for all students

Guardian Participation

- Conducted regular home visits, with every child visited at least quarterly
- Guardians are provided with psychosocial support as needed
- Adult literacy classes are held two days a week
- All guardians (and staff) have signed the Child Protection Policy and received training
- Guardians attend the monthly caregiver's meeting held by RHL, where active participation is encouraged

Community Engagement & Advocacy

- Held regular meetings with local authorities, including the Mayor, District Commissioner, and Paramount Chiefs
- Participated in NGO Health Coordination meetings for Lofa County
- Participated in the MoH, County Health Team Sector meetings
- Held regular meetings with school principals
- Formed the Vulnerable Women's Group for women whose husbands have died or "left"

Health Care

- Provided monthly food distribution to more than 100 beneficiary households, including rice, beans, oil, and soap
- RHL's Registered Nurse completed her first year in Kolahun, monitoring the children's health and conducting home visits
- Ensured every beneficiary child was up-to-date with their immunizations and preventive health care
- Ensured that all primary and secondary beneficiaries had access to care when they were sick
- Met special needs when essential medications were not available
- Conducted peer-to-peer health counseling sessions in schools across the Kolahun District

Economic Development: the Women's Weaving Cooperative (WWC)

- Welcomed its third cohort of apprentices
- Conducted business skills and microloan training for all WWC members and apprentices
- Disbursed microloans to WWC members
- Explored new markets for "Country Cloth" in the United States

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES MEASURES (PARTIAL LISTING)

| Objective 1 | Vulnerable children and their caregivers will be enrolled in the program | |
|--|---|---------------------|
| <i>Indicator</i> | <i>Indicator Measure</i> | <i>(% of total)</i> |
| # of children enrolled in RHL | 115 | |
| # of children enrolled by gender | 53 M | 46% |
| | 62 F | 54% |
| # of <5 children currently enrolled | 3 M | 75% |
| | 1 F | 25% |
| # of children enrolled who have disabilities or chronic illness | 12 | 10% |
| Average # of people in each beneficiary HH | 9 | |
| # of enrolled children with completed Beneficiary Intake Forms | 115 | 100% |
| Objective 2 | All vulnerable children will have an initial base-line health and nutrition assessment, and routine health and nutrition assessments to follow | |
| # of beneficiaries with completed Medical History & Physical Exam Form | 115/115 | 100% |
| # of beneficiaries with completed Social History Form | 115/115 | 100% |
| Objective 3 | All vulnerable children will have all recommended vaccinations appropriate for their age, including measles vaccine | |
| # of children who are up to date on all vaccines | 114 | 99% |
| Objective 4 | All vulnerable children will receive mosquito bed nets, education in their use and the prevention of malaria | |
| # of beneficiaries with insecticide treated bed nets | 115 | 100% |
| Objective 10 | All beneficiaries will be monitored for possible abuse of any kind and appropriate action taken when necessary | |
| # of staff (paid, incentive, and volunteer) who have signed the child protection policy and received child protection training | 10 | 100% |
| Objective 11 | All beneficiaries will be enrolled in school and attend RHL's after-school Tutorial program | |
| # of school aged and able children enrolled in school | 110/111 | 99% |
| # of children for whom Restore Hope pays school fees | 110/110 | 100% |
| # of school aged children who received scholastic materials and uniforms for the school year | 110/110 | 100% |
| Average number of RHL beneficiaries attending the tutorial school | 73 | 66% |
| # of children who passed their grade last academic year | 106/110 | 96% |
| # of students who graduated high school last academic year | 2 | |
| Objective 12 | Livelihood/Economic Development program available to beneficiaries & caregivers | |
| # of primary caregivers in the Women's Weaving Cooperative | 9/24 | 38% |
| # of microloans disbursed | 23/24 | 96% |
| # of microloans paid back in full | 5/23 | 22% |

CHALLENGES

The greatest organizational challenge RHL faces is developing a diverse fundraising portfolio. The organization must expand its funding base and gain traction in its outreach to foundations and other donors. As a result, the program must prioritize spending on a monthly basis and limit the scope of our support to what the current budget can achieve—at a time when the need is vast.

The program continues to be limited in its ability to ensure access to quality healthcare due to lack of essential medicines at Kolahun Hospital. Inventory stock-outs are common country wide. Our relationship with the hospital is positive and continues to deepen. We continue to have productive discussions about how we might best support them.

Our tutoring program has been organized into small groups based on grade level and subject. Although this has the benefit of ensuring that our students are getting the help they need, in areas where they struggle most in the classroom, we cannot measure the degree to which this is effective. In FY2020, we plan to refocus the tutorial program on reading skills. We have begun partnering with Liberia Reads! to train our tutors in phonics-based instruction.

The main challenge to the growth of the WWC is finding an international market for the Country Cloth. Expanding the market for the cloth will not only provide the women income; it will also begin to build sustainability in the cooperative and savings & loan activities.



PROGRAM ASPIRATIONS

With a fully funded program budget, RESTORE HOPE will be able to:

- Enroll the additional 400 or so children who meet our vulnerability criteria and who would benefit from participating in RESTORE HOPE's program
- Provide the Kolahun hospital with essential medicines and supplies and maintain a fully funded emergency-fund for the hospital
- Implement a community health worker initiative covering Kolahun District, as well as a mental health program that could reach the community at large
- Provide more teacher training to our after-school tutors and other Kolahun teachers interested in improving their skills in phonics-based reading instruction
- Introduce a robust STEM education program.
- Hire a librarian for 3 months to set up the Kolahun community library
- Send more high school graduates to college and provide vocational training and internships in Kolahun
- Support the WWC by providing more business skills training, bringing in textile professionals to help them refine their skills and create a value-added product; and a consultant on cooperatives to provide them with organizational and management skills

PLANS FOR FY2020

RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA's plans for the next fiscal year include (dependent upon fiscal constraints):

- A fourth cohort of 12 weavers-in-training for our 6-month vocational weaving apprenticeship
- A trial of direct Cash Distribution to beneficiary households, in lieu of food distribution
- Kolahun Crescendo – photo and storytelling/art therapy program
- Literacy tutor and teacher training - module 2
- Expansion of Business Skills/Enterprise and Savings & Loan training for WWC
- Parenting Skills Workshop
- Expansion of Vocational Education offerings in Agriculture, Information and Communications Technology, Solar Energy Technology. The women weavers are also asking for more skills training, including sewing, baking/catering, soap making

FY2019 BUDGET V. ACTUAL EXPENSES

| RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA ANNUAL BUDGET v. ACTUAL EXPENSES FY 2019 (JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019) | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| HEALTH | Budget | Expenses |
| Clinical Care / Health Surveillance | 7,720 | 1,240 |
| Nutrition | 19,280 | 19,272 |
| Special Needs | 8,600 | 600 |
| Other, Including WASH | 1,000 | - |
| Subtotal Health Program | 36,600 | 21,112 |
| | | |
| EDUCATION & TRAINING | Budget | Expenses |
| Vocational Training | 22,800 | 14,645 |
| Scholarships, Post-secondary School — Memorial Scholarship Reserve Fund | 5,000 | 385 |
| Primary/Secondary Education — Including school tuition, uniforms, supplies | 9,950 | 4,959 |
| Special Events & Other Educational Activities — Including parenting skills workshop | 3,500 | 440 |
| Subtotal Education and Training Program | 41,250 | 20,429 |
| | | |
| ECONOMIC & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT | Budget | Expenses |
| Micro-finance — Micro-loan Program - Women's Savings & Loan, Additional Capitalization | 1,200 | 1,068 |
| Small Business Enterprise Development — Women's Weaving, Electric & Agricultural Co-ops | 2,500 | - |
| Finance & Business Management Training | 3,200 | 2,784 |
| Subtotal Economic & Enterprise Development Program | 6,900 | 3,852 |
| | | |
| DIRECT PROGRAM SUPPORT | Budget | Expenses |
| Transportation | 4,220 | 4,967 |
| Field Office and Communication | 4,345 | 2,268 |
| Security | 300 | - |
| Central Office Support (Monrovia) | 17,750 | 30,401 |
| Human Resources — Liberia | 19,572 | 23,835 |
| Continuing Education for Staff | 500 | - |
| Consulting — Including Strategic Planning, Organizational & Program Development | - | 650 |
| Subtotal Direct Program Support | 46,687 | 62,121 |
| | | |
| | Budget | Expenses |
| TOTAL BUDGET & EXPENSES | \$ 131,437 | \$ 107,514 |

STORIES FROM KOLAHUN: FINDING RESOURCES FOR A DEAF STUDENT

May 2018

Inside the sweltering rental car, Juliana sits wedged between her parents in the rear seat. The vehicle zigs and zags along the bumpy road, trying to avoid the large potholes. No one speaks. We pass small villages of one-room, mud-brick houses with warped, rusty metal roofs. The landscape alternates between remnants of rainforest, parcels of land cleared for cultivation, and tidy groves of rubber trees and African oil palms.

Juliana is thirteen years old. Her stern gaze is fixed on the road ahead. Her facial expression is blank. There is not the hint of a smile.

What is she thinking? What is she feeling?



Juliana is at the heart of this 45-minute trip from Kolahun District to Voinjama: she is deaf.

Because of her inability to hear or converse, Juliana meets RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA's criteria for beneficiary enrollment in the RHL program that supports

children who are disadvantaged by childhood disability, parental loss or parental disability.

In recent months, both James Kpangbai, RHL's Field Coordinator, and Margret Gieraths-Nimene, RHL's then Country Program Director, have been exploring suitable schooling options for Juliana. In Liberia, schools for the deaf are rare. Although RHL has supplied Juliana and her family with sign language books and although she's enrolled in a conventional local school, it's clear she needs more resources.

A nun, Sister Ann Kelly, had recently told James about a new school for the deaf in Voinjama. Today we're going with Juliana and her parents to visit this school.

In Voinjama, we stop to get final directions to the school. I catch a glimpse of Juliana; her face still

emotionless. Is she nervous? Scared? Apprehensive? Excited? Unsure? Eager? Reluctant?

March 2019

It's been seven months since Juliana enrolled at the Voinjama Academy for the Deaf. James in Kolahun has called to tell me he's sent photos of some of RHL's beneficiaries, including Juliana.



I open the file of photos and read the first caption: "Juliana and her school mates." She has friends, she is connected to the world through relationships. And she's smiling! A sign of HOPE.



RESILIENCE AND HOPE

Ms. Blama's story is one of resilience, of finding hope.

Like most Liberians, she was just a child when the war broke out. During the war, in hopes of surviving, she fled into "the bush", the untamed lands of Liberia's tropical forest. During those 14 long years of an intensely brutal war, she bore children.

The very day she delivered triplets, she was raped repeatedly by rebel forces.

She was then captured by the rebels and held as a prisoner. She escaped once, but unsuccessfully. They "chopped" her, as she describes her own experience. She finally escaped into Sierra Leone becoming a refugee. She eventually made her way back to Liberia but remained living in the bush with her children. She was too traumatized to re-enter society.

When RESTORE HOPE learned of Ms. Blama, our team in Kolahun brought her into the community. With ongoing psychosocial counseling, Ms. Blama is finding a new way forward.

As she says, she can now "go amongst her friends".

With RESTORE HOPE's intervention and ongoing support, she now counsels other women who've gone through such trauma.

Her children are attending school and she's become a weaving instructor in the Women's Weaving Cooperative, supported by RHL. We are proud to know her.



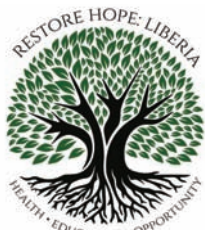


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THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS:

Anything Is Everything
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