

Story Title: TEARS FOR OPPORTUNITY:



The lack of opportunities in the Gbeah's Town had hard-pressed lots of parents to send their children to live with friends or relatives outside the district for educational opportunity. Some of those friends or relatives maltreat those children and end up not sending them to school, so is the story of Quline No Jayo meaning because of this.

Quline-no-Jay lives in a village called Gbeah's Town District 2, Grand Bassa County. The village is located in a farming community where majority of the villagers grow ginger and other food stocks, all most all the children living in the village have not been in school for over four years. She is 11 years of age, the first daughter of five children. Her father abandoned the family for the past two years while the mother and Quline-no-Jay are struggling with the family's well being. Quline-no-Jay is not only a daughter to her mother, but a mother to her little sisters and brother. Her Mother is Yon-ku-Jay, who supports the family through farming, she grows ginger and pine apple, take it to the market and sell the agriculture products to feed and clothes her children without help from the rejected father.

Quline-no-Jay often stay in the village to help beat rice for other villagers for rice in return, when her mother comes from the farm at evening time, she gives her mother the rice to help with food, she takes care of her little brother and sisters' daily affairs in the absence of her mother; . Quline-no-Jay father is Samuel Gwahmo, she rejected her father and refused to use his last name because the father abandoned them, rather she chose to use her grandfather's last name, she said "my name is Quline-no-Jay Gbeah".

Quline-no-Jay has never been to school which is her all time dreams, one evening, as her mother returned from the farm, she asked her mother "I want to go to school, how we are going to make this happen? We are poor and no one to help us" She continued, "I am growing older, and worry about my future. I don't want us to die in poverty, who will take care of you when you get old? Who will take care of my little sisters and brother when you have gon? And her mother sadly answered, "I will send you to my sister; she lives St. John she will help support your education". When Quline-no-Jay heard this, she said, "my hope and my dream will soon come to pass" . The day came and Quline-no-Jay's Mother sent her to live with her aunty in St. John with the purpose to support Quline-no-jay in school

In an interview with Quline-no-jay, she told GOLD, that her aunty maltreated her during the 2 years vacation. According to her, the aunty allowed her to execute all the major home works including cooking, washing, of clothes and dishes, fetching of water, and prepare the aunt's children for school. When the aunt dished up the food she gave Quline-no-jay the crust of the rice to eat, some time dry gari. "I some time sleep with hunger" she said, "but what worried me a lot was that my aunty was not sending me to school so I escaped to the Gay's Town, where I felt protected in the Sandi Bush"

There are over five new Sandi graduates living in Gbeah's Town who escaped to willingly join the Sandi Society for different reasons, they were not forced by their parents as others may think, the smallest of them is 6 years of age.

The absence of educational opportunity in the life of Quline-no-Jay, has developed a psychological effect that continues to tear her apart from within, the effect can easily be recognized on her face, even if she tries to smile. She couldn't no more hold the pieces that were tearing inside of her when GOLD posted this question to her. How you and your family do eat daily? I asked Quline-no-Jay, it took Quline-no-Jay more than two minutes crying when the question was asked. I felt guilty and thought I have caused a lot of damage, I thought it was something she eat that she never wanted to share with me or the question was against her tradition, these are thoughts that were running through my mind. Is anything wrong? I asked her, she couldn't say a word, so I stop the interview and pep her on her shoulder. There were no words that could stop the tears for opportunity. So we both sat in silence for a while

I broke the silence when I called her name Quline-no-Jay! and she looked deep into my eyes with sadness. What will you do for your family and village if you go to school and become a minister? This time her look was full with deep gladness and boldness, "I will build houses for my mother and roof it with zinc" she smiles as she answered, "and I will build school, road, and clinic for the people of this village".

Do you want to tell me how you and your family eat daily? "No" she answered, "I don't want to talk about it anymore". But what GOLD can justify is that Quli-no-Jay cried because of social inequity, which terms to be the tears for opportunity.

Qulin-no-Jay dreams to extend development and opportunity to the people of Gbeah's Town, to enable them demonstrate their individual potential.

GOLD is currently lobbying and advocating with stakeholders, government agencies, local and international organizations to help bring educational opportunity closer to Qulin-no-Jay and the rest of the children of Gbeah's Town. Liberia can be a save heaven if equal opportunity is shared every citizen.

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