

## Help Care for Ebola Orphans in Sierra Leone



### Summary

The number of children without parents skyrocketed during the Ebola Crisis. This project provides a safe haven - an orphanage called the Dream Home - to help raise children who lost BOTH parents during the Ebola epidemic in Sierra Leone. The goal of the home is to provide the best care for these orphans as we possibly can. It is a place where they are able to dream again - and they are taught that they can be and do anything. Orphans and other affected children face a heightened risk of marginalization and of dropping out of school, potentially leading to further protection issues. By catering for the needs of these children, we are giving them a bright future and ensuring that they do not resort to undesirable lifestyles.

### Challenge

During the 2014-2015 Ebola Crisis in West Africa, thousands of people unfortunately passed away. Family were devastated as the infection spread through communities, resulting in the deaths of entire families. In some instances, the children survived and became orphans. Many orphaned teenage girls became pregnant after being abused during Ebola. Reports confirm that there are over 3000 Ebola-orphaned children in Sierra Leone. Many of these children are left to fend for themselves and some have resorted to living undesirable lifestyles in order to survive. “Thousands of children are living through the deaths of their mother, father or family members from Ebola,” said Manuel Fontaine, UNICEF Regional Director for West & Central Africa, after a two-week visit to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. “These children urgently need special attention and support; yet many of them feel unwanted and even abandoned. Orphans are usually

taken in by a member of the extended family, but in some communities, the fear surrounding Ebola is becoming stronger than family ties.”

### **Solution**

We are responding to this problem by providing the best care that we can for these deserving children that have lost their parents to Ebola. The Dream Home orphanage gives them everything they need including food, clothing, school related expenses and psychosocial support / counseling. Through this home, the kids will be able to live a normal lifestyle and grow up to be model citizens. As hope grows in Sierra Leone after the end of Ebola infections, there are many obstacles to overcome; devastated health care systems, loss of education and distressed social structures face all those who have lived through the Ebola outbreak. The strongest direction forward requires the participation of all communities to reknit the fabric of the lives and kinship ties that were functioning before Ebola. The Dream Home Orphanage response will give orphans in these devastated communities a reason to live again.

### **Long-Term Impact**

This project offers tremendous benefits in terms of being able to help deserving children grow and mature into model adults that will impact their communities and nation - and even the world. These children will be change agents in their communities. Dream Home Orphanage will be able to instill hope, hard work and confidence in the hearts and minds of these orphans by helping them build a young leadership that will be with us long after Ebola is finally gone. These orphans will positively contribute to society instead of being a commodity to be used by society. The orphanage will protect these kids from stigma, whose major consequences include the limited access to and use of basic services, loss of livelihoods, negative social and psychosocial impacts, marginalization from community dialogue and violence towards them.



## Resources

<http://www.developafrica.org>

[BBC Media Action Visits Develop Africa's Dream Home Ebola Orphan Report](#)

[http://www.unicef.org/emergencies/ebola/75941\\_76129.html](http://www.unicef.org/emergencies/ebola/75941_76129.html)

[https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/p\\_challenges\\_to\\_the\\_reintegration\\_of\\_affected\\_groups\\_into\\_communities\\_nov\\_11\\_2015.pdf](https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/p_challenges_to_the_reintegration_of_affected_groups_into_communities_nov_11_2015.pdf)



### [Develop Africa, Inc.](#)

**LOCATION:** Johnson City, Tennessee - USA

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.developafrica.org>

Facebook Page-<http://www.facebook.com/developafrica>

Twitter Page-<http://www.twitter.com/developafrica>

Google + Page - <https://plus.google.com/b/112795165718965455623/+DevelopafricaOrg/posts>

YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/developafrica>

*Empowering lives in Africa so that they can better themselves, their communities and their nations*

Develop Africa was established in 2006 and is a 501c3 non-profit organization is working to establish meaningful and sustainable development in Africa. Develop Africa was birthed out of the vision that human resource development is the key to improving nation building capacity in Africa. Develop Africa is involved in a range of programs in Africa supporting education, microfinance and small businesses, job skills / leadership development training etc.

Through training, scholarship, investment and partnerships Develop Africa is helping to develop Africa's people through the promotion of transformational education, resource development, investment training and strategic empowerment. Our premise is based on the notion that in order to change one's personal, national or organizational status there must necessarily be a "change in the thinking and processing pattern of the mind."

We envision an African continent fully developed in terms of its human and resource capacity, free from poverty; ignorance, and civil conflict and where the poorest and most vulnerable people become "leaders" and effectively manage their national resources.

We are involved in the following targeted activities:

- care for orphans
- job skills training
- microfinance / micro-lending and small business training
- scholarships
- books, school and teaching supplies
- basic computer training and computers
- mosquito nets, vitamin supplements, start up tool kits (such as sewing machines), school uniforms, Personal Protective Equipment for health workers etc.

Examples of specific activity: We provide -

- job skills training
- microfinance / micro-lending and small business training
- scholarships
- books, school and teaching supplies
- basic computer training and computers
- mosquito nets, vitamin supplements, start up tool kits (such as sewing machines), school uniforms etc.

Develop Africa is helping to establish meaningful and sustainable development in Africa. Develop Africa was birthed out of the vision that human resource development is the key to improving nation building capacity in Africa. We are involved in a range of programs in Africa supporting education, microfinance and small businesses, job skills / leadership development training etc.

We serve and develops Africa' people through transformational education, resource development, investment training and strategic empowerment. Our premise is based on the notion that in order to change one's personal, national or organizational status there must necessarily be a "change in the thinking and processing pattern of the mind."

We envision an African continent fully developed in terms of its human and resource capacity, free from poverty; ignorance, and civil conflict and where the poorest and most vulnerable people become "leaders" and effectively manage their national resources.

**Sierra Leone- Full Country Profile available at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra\\_Leone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra_Leone)**

**Sierra Leone** (<sup>i</sup>/sɪˈɛərə liˈoʊni, -liˈoʊn/),<sup>[5]</sup> officially the **Republic of Sierra Leone**, is a country in [West Africa](#). It is bordered by [Guinea](#) on the north, [Liberia](#) in the south-east, and the [Atlantic Ocean](#) in the south-west. Sierra Leone has a [tropical climate](#), with a diverse environment ranging from [savannah](#) to [rainforests](#). Sierra Leone has a total area of 71,740 km<sup>2</sup> (27,699 sq mi)<sup>[6]</sup> and a population of 7,075,641 (based on 2015 national census).<sup>[1]</sup> Sierra Leone is divided into four geographical regions: the [Northern Province](#), [Eastern Province](#), [Southern Province](#) and the [Western Area](#), which are subdivided into [fourteen districts](#). [Freetown](#) is the capital, largest city and its economic and political centre. [Bo](#) is the second largest city. The other major cities are [Kenema](#), [Makeni](#), and [Koidu Town](#).

About sixteen [ethnic groups](#) inhabit Sierra Leone, each with its own language and customs. The two largest and most influential are the [Temne](#) and the [Mende people](#). The Temne are predominantly found in the north of the country, while the Mende are predominant in the south-east. Although English is the [official language](#) spoken at schools and government administration, the [Krio language](#) is the most widely spoken language across Sierra Leone and is spoken by 97% of the country's population. The Krio language unites all the different ethnic groups in the country, especially in their trade and social interaction with each other.

Sierra Leone is a predominantly [Muslim](#) country,<sup>[7][8][9]</sup> though with an influential [Christian](#) minority.<sup>[10]</sup> Sierra Leone is regarded as one of the most religiously tolerant nations in the world. Muslims and Christians collaborate and interact with each other peacefully. Religious violence is very rare in the country.

Sierra Leone has relied on mining, especially [diamonds](#), for its economic base. It is also among the largest producers of [titanium](#) and [bauxite](#), a major producer of [gold](#), and has one of the world's largest deposits of [rutile](#). Sierra Leone is home to the third-largest natural harbour in the world. Despite exploitation of this natural wealth, 70% of its people live in [poverty](#).<sup>[11]</sup>

Sierra Leone became independent in 1961. [Government corruption](#) and mismanagement of the country's natural resources contributed to the [Sierra Leone Civil War](#) (1991 to 2002), which for more than a decade devastated the country. This proxy war left more than 50,000 people dead, much of the country's infrastructure destroyed, and over two million people displaced as [refugees](#) in neighbouring countries.

More recently, the [2014 Ebola outbreak](#) overburdened the weak healthcare infrastructure, leading to more deaths from medical neglect than Ebola itself. It created a [humanitarian crisis](#) situation and a negative spiral of weaker economic growth. The country has an extremely low [life expectancy](#) at 57.8 years.<sup>[10]</sup>

Sierra Leone is a member of many international organisations, including the [United Nations](#), the [African Union](#), the [Economic Community of West African States](#) (ECOWAS), the [Mano River Union](#), the [Commonwealth of Nations](#), the [African Development Bank](#), and the [Organisation of Islamic Cooperation](#).