



CHILDREN  
OF THE NATIONS®

# PARTNER REPORT

## ORPHAN CARE CENTER

Sierra Leone | Fourth Quarter | 2015



*If we cannot find families for these children orphaned by Ebola, they will join our Children's Homes in Banta.*

### COTN Takes in Children Orphaned by Ebola

As a response to the Ebola crisis, COTN has committed to care for orphans who lost their families during the outbreak. We will care for the orphaned children temporarily while we seek to place them with relatives. If we cannot find families for these children, they will join our Children's Homes in Banta. To do this, our in-country social worker and center supervisor are following a system called "Family Tracing and Reunification," having been trained by the Sierra Leone Ministry of Social Welfare. They interview various contacts and visit villages trying to find relatives who can care for the child.

To date, 11 children have been welcomed to the Orphan Care Center. More are expected.

One child came to us having lost her family, her home, her vision, and her hearing, and having suffered brain damage. All of this devastation is a result of Ebola. She had drifted from hospital to hospital but no one would take her in long-term because she required too much care. COTN's Sierra Leone country director heard about this child and knew the moment he met her that God was calling COTN to care for her. In the midst of the struggle, her new COTN brothers and sisters have come alongside her to make sure she knows she's not



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alone. Once orphans themselves, they understand how she feels.

"It is a privilege to see her COTN family coming alongside her to care for her," says COTN's Sierra Leone Liaison Mark Drennan. Mark had originally thought caring for Mercy would be too much for COTN. Today, he sees the beauty in watching the other children wash her clothes, comb her hair, and calm her when she's frustrated.

Three older children from our homes, Kapprie, Josephine, and Esther, have been selected as volunteers in the Orphan Care Center. They now serve in the center in Marjay Town (just outside Freetown), making sure the children in our care know they are safe and loved. They understand first-hand what it means to have nowhere else to go. They are paying it forward, showing the children who have been through this crisis that it is going to be OK. They have trained with the home father and center supervisor/caregiver to make sure they are giving exceptional care to these children.

It is because of your support that all of this is possible. You are helping these children, making them orphans no more.