



# NewLife Project Inc.

**NewLife Project Inc.** was founded in Freetown, Sierra Leone in 1994 with the goal of reaching out to economically disadvantaged women and bringing new life to at-risk women and children. Our mission is to see women and children rise to a place of divine accomplishment by fulfilling their purpose, rebuilding their broken lives, and attaining total restoration.

We aim to transform the lives of women and children through effective support systems like education and entrepreneurship programs, relief efforts, and empowerment forums. Currently, NewLife works in Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Canada. Our organization comprises of four divisions, namely:

- NewLife Women's World Forum
- NewLife Design
- NewLife Tutoring
- NewLife International Relief

Within Canada, our objective is to empower recently immigrated women and children, by providing them with skills and workshops to assist them in establishing financial, economic, and emotional independence in their new lives and build their self-esteem, while empowering them to effect change within their communities. Outside of Canada, we equally address the needs of at-risk women and children fleeing violence, poverty, and trafficking in Sierra Leone, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, with services ranging from direct provision of safe shelter, food, medications, school fees, vocational training, and clothing. We have been able to reinstate dignity to many lives.

## **SUMMARY**

This project will help 80 % of children aged 2-5 in land-locked villages such as Belleville, Dioulabougou, Nanibo 2, Samba Coulibaly and Kpakpazè in Grand Lahou district of Cote d'Ivoire to enroll in Community-managed nursery schools and also benefit from yearly free health care, welfare and psychosocial assistance offered by NGO NEW LIFE project in collaboration with NGO FEMDEV . The living conditions of 60 % women will be improved as they will be able to concentrate on their income generating activities without dragging little

children everywhere, they go. The Pilot project has already registered almost 200 children who are eagerly working hard in school.

## **CHALLENGE**

Early Childhood education (2-5-year-old for kindergarten attendance and 6-years for primary schools) is a major challenge in Côte d'Ivoire particularly in the district of Grand Lahou. According to a survey carried out by the National ministry of education, Planning and Strategies Office and released by APA (Africa Press Agency) in March 2018, 89 percent of school age going children (in the district of Grand-Lahou) could not enroll in schools in the 2017 academic year because of lack of educational facilities. And many of them may never enroll in schools. A major part of the population lives on farming and fishing. The three types of agriculture are, cocoa, palm and rubber farming. The prices of their produce have fallen drastically that majority of parents are not able to pay school fees for their children especially when they already have children in the primary school.

**NGOS NEW LIFE PROJECT** and **FEMDEV** have joined hands with the community members to solve this problem of lack of schools for early childhood education by building make-shift schools and providing school kits, canteen and other materials. We are convinced such initiatives could help the government solve the problem of lack of schools and at the same time improve the living conditions of the population. The approach in the medium and long term will lead to women's entrepreneurship because they will have enough time to carry out profit-making activities when their little ones are at school.

## **SOLUTION**

Bringing school (facilities) and qualified personnel close to the rural population with school-age children is a guarantee of successful schooling and a great relief for families particularly the women who normally take with them their 2-5-year old to the farm because there are no nursery schools and no one at home to take care of them.

Providing better school structure, school supplies & qualified personnel close to the rural population will enhance successful schooling and reduce the rate of poverty. This project will help the population to understand that the girl child has a right to education and more

girls will be sent to school. It will provide support to existing schools to enroll more children.

Give opportunity to 80% of children aged 2-5 to enroll in school in the five villages

Sensitize families on the girl-child who must have right to education and avoid being married off at an early age.

## **LONG TERM IMPACT**

The long-term impact is that the living conditions of 60 % of parents especially women will be improved as they will be able to boost their income generating activities. It will equally reduce the rate of illiteracy in the Grand Lahou community which will help the government solve the problem of lack of schools and at the same time improve the living conditions of the population.

## **THE PILOT PROJECT STORY**

At the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year, 21 children aged 2-5 enrolled in our small make-shift school in Nandibo 2 village started by a member of NGO FEMDEV. The community watched in pantomime. The following academic year, 60 other children joined them. Now enrolment has increased up to 150 children during the current academic year. Given the interest the pilot project aroused and the support from the local authorities, we thought it would be a good idea to extend the project to four other remote villages facing the same early child-hood education related difficulties. For the time being, the nursery school is built with wood and so not durable. The community in Belleville has been challenged to begin their own school with few children while other parents are slowly making up their minds and searching for financial resources. During our visit to these villages, we discovered that some teenage girls are kept at home to help their mothers in doing house chores and in farming since they cannot employ domestic servants due to extreme poverty. We therefore sensitized the population about the importance of early child-hood education particularly the girl-child who must have a right to education and not be married off early. We are using the book titled **Chika Goes to School** written by the President of the NGO FEMDEV to do the sensitization. The book is being put in drama form for a more powerful and dramatized sensitization. It is the story of a little girl who was encouraged by her parents to go to school along with her four brothers and four sisters despite the meager income of their parents. She

loved school so much and performed extremely well in school. All her siblings did very well in school and today they are important personalities and change agents impacting the communities where they live. That little girl is the president of NGO FEMDEV, changing lives and making impact in people's lives around the world.

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***“Building Women of Virtue”***

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