



Working Together to Fight Ebola, the “Family Disease”

Villagers aren't waiting for foreign experts to solve the Ebola crisis; they are taking matters into their own hands

Pujehun, one of the villages in Eastern Sierra Leone where OVP works, suffered an Ebola outbreak from early August until late September. The entire village was quarantined; people couldn't access the market or their own farm. By the time OVP delivered emergency food supplies in September, many families were near starvation. In total, 24 Pujehun villagers died from Ebola.

Homes of those directly exposed to Ebola are under strict rules: no one is to leave or enter. Ebola can only be transmitted through infected bodily fluids, but if you come in direct contact with an infected person, it's likely you will become sick. In an overcrowded house, proximity to Ebola is dangerous. Whole families have been wiped-out. **This is why Ebola is called the “Family Disease” in Sierra Leone.**

To address the dangers of sequestering whole families together, OVP Operations Coordinator, Yusuf Johnny, recently held discussions with village leaders and “Contact Tracers” – trained community members who volunteered to be the first line of defense against Ebola to spot the signs and follow protocols. **As a result, villagers are aggressively and proactively fighting Ebola with better education, cross-village communication, and construction of isolation units.**

OVP assisted the Contact Tracers supporting new ideas to craft their Ebola education messages for maximum impact and brought the village teams together to share information and strategies. Each team averages 40 home visits a week, educating their neighbors on the disease. Unifying efforts across six villages is strengthening communities' resilience.

One solution to the “Family Disease” is to build village ‘Isolation Units’: places where those who have been directly



Nurses in front of the Gbeka Clinic: Josephine Kallon, Josephine Sika

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Contract Tracers from Pujehun. Front: Comfort Jusu, Baidu Jusu; Back: Sao Morrison, Sao Allieu, Amara Sallia

OVP Hand Washing Initiative Expands District Wide

Working with Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health, OVP reaches 60,000 people

In July, OVP delivered 20 hand washing stations to the six villages where we work. Since then **habits have shifted dramatically**. Washing your hands thoroughly with chlorine is an effective means of stopping the Ebola Virus from spreading, and the message has sunk in.

Washing hands dramatically reduces your likelihood of contracting many other diseases too, such as diarrheal illnesses—one of the leading causes of death in Sierra Leone. Still, for many, hand washing has never become routine, until now. **“It’s a new normal for us,”** an elderly woman in Jokibu told OVP staff. **“Hand washing has become something we do without even thinking about it.”**

In November, OneVillage Partners provided 200 hand washing stations to the District Government’s Ebola Task Force in Kailahun. Working alongside officials, these hand washing stations will be delivered to rural villages in all 14 chiefdoms across Kailahun District and placed in strategic areas in urban centers. This has expanded our impact to dozens of villages hundreds of kilometers from our normal area of operations, **assisting up to 60,000 people in stopping the spread of Ebola and many other diseases too**. If thousands of people see how stopping Ebola is possible through washing hands, this time of intense health care investment in the country **could spark a revolution in health practices in Sierra Leone**.



Contact Tracer, Baindu Jusu, using a hand washing station in Pujehun.

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exposed to Ebola but are not yet sick can go into quarantine away from their family. People in these units are delivered water and food by the Contact Tracers, who also monitor for signs of Ebola and follow protocol if symptoms develop. This prevents spreading the “Family Disease” and protects villagers

from future Ebola outbreaks.

Yusuf said **the atmosphere was “energizing”** as teams not only shared their stories of how this outbreak has affected them personally, but they also identified and developed their own plan of action. **Community members are not simply waiting for technical experts to fight Ebola**. As one of the chiefs said: **“This will all be useless if we don’t do it right. It’s up to us to unite and use the isolation units properly so that we keep ourselves healthy and safe.”**

OVP began construction on the isolation units in January. Villagers working with OVP have learned a lot about Ebola since the outbreak in Pujehun. They are also learning how truly capable each of them is to fight the spread of this disease in their village. This realization isn’t just powerful, it is genuinely transformative.

Health Team in front of the Mamborna Clinic:
Asmana Joseph, Foday Kaneh, and Aminata Dana.



Thanks go out to Jon Foss and the Foss Swim Schools’ staff for hosting fun family swim events to benefit OneVillage Partners. Fifty-two families joined in the fun, raising \$1,325 with an additional full match from the Foss Swim Schools for a total gift of \$2,650!

This gift will help provide hand-washing stations and sanitation education to rural Sierra Leonean villagers. What a great start to an on-going partnership with Jon, his wonderful staff, and their caring swim families.



Relief Efforts Underway

Sierra Leone Community of Minnesota and OneVillage Partners Send Emergency Supplies to Sierra Leone

OneVillage Partners is joining forces with the Sierra Leone Community of Minnesota (SLCM) to send emergency medical supplies to Sierra Leone via a cargo shipping container. The supplies gathered include essential items the country desperately needs, such as surgical gloves, masks, gowns, hand-sanitizers, soap, stethoscopes, and body bags.



Dr. Jonathan Rose

Dr. Jonathan Rose, the Board Chair of SLCM and a native of Freetown, Sierra Leone, has led efforts to ship supplies to Sierra Leone for the past two years through RHCI (Rural Health Care Initiative), a subsidiary organization of SLCM (where he also serves on their board). All large shipments go through another local nonprofit organization, Matter More, which has extensive experience shipping goods internationally.

Dr. Rose grew-up in Sierra Leone, coming to Minnesota to work for 3M in 1988 as an engineer. Since then, Jonathan has been deeply involved in helping his fellow Sierra Leoneans in Minnesota and in Sierra Leone with issues such as family care, immigration, tobacco control, and health care. Jonathan has received help from his company and other 3M employees like Dr. Oyebode Taiwo, 3M's Medical Director, who assists with in-kind medical items donated through 3M—over 1 million dollars in donated goods in 2014!

“Sierra Leone needs our help” says Dr. Rose, “Now more than ever. Especially after years of struggle during the war, after the war, and now Ebola – it is devastating.” Although over 8,000

people have died in Eastern Africa from the Ebola Virus, over 10,000 have survived it. “We know how to take care of Ebola—what is needed is earlier intervention and education”—as exemplified with the quick and early response OVP provided to the villages where we work.

The shipment will go out by the end of January, and will take 30 days to arrive at the port in the capital of Freetown, Sierra Leone. Items will then be sent directly to two clinics serving well over 100,000 people, both in the Mende-speaking region of Bo, as well as to mobile medical units serving Eastern Sierra Leone.



Through partnership efforts, a shipment container of emergency medical supplies like the one pictured to the left will arrive in Sierra Leone by the end of February 2015.



Shipments arrive in Freetown, Sierra Leone where they are then distributed over land to Eastern Sierra Leone.



The OVP “Breakfast Club” (l-r): OVP Founder, Jeff Hall, Laurie Greeno, Jessica Cook, Carol Truesdell, Carol Friendly, and Jaclyn Carey. Not pictured: Jeanne Mooty.



Breakfast Club Volunteers

Thank you to the “Breakfast Club”, who worked all year to help make OneVillage Partners’ first annual “Changing Lives” Breakfast held on October 22, 2014, a huge success! Through your efforts and the generosity of our donors, OVP raised \$416,910 (\$180,575 for 2014 and \$236,335 pledged for 2015-2019)!





2104 Stevens Avenue South
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Sierra Leone Still Needs Your Help

Even with our six OVP villages now free of Ebola, they still vitally need our support. Villagers have come together to utilize the communication and planning tools they have learned from OVP to develop their own plan of action in warding off Ebola and other contagious illnesses. To execute an effective plan, **they need resources!**

The villagers need your support. Help OneVillage Partners meet the following critical needs for the villagers' health and well-being: hygiene, intervention and monitoring from Community Contact Tracers, and the ability to immediately isolate those who display signs of contagious illnesses. This support not only helps villagers with the current outbreak, but also helps build the infrastructure and skills for the future health of Sierra Leone.

Your support means so much to us at this time. Thank you for all that you do to help the villagers move towards a brighter future. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Your donations will help support the villagers in the following ways:

- \$50** purchases a hand-washing station for multiple families.
- \$100** provides health monitoring and education for an entire community.
- \$500** supports a peer network of Community Health Workers.

If you have already given, **Thank You!** If not, please consider a gift at this time.

Please send checks to: OneVillage Partners
2104 Stevens Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404

To pay by credit card, please use the provided remittance envelope or go to www.OneVillagePartners.org and click on **Donate Now**.

