



Pursuing healthy pregnancies & children in Sierra Leone

www.rhcimnsl.org

Summer 2020 Update



Addressing childhood malnutrition has become a major focus for RHCI. In Sierra Leone, **1 in 3 children are malnourished**. New staff member Umu Shour, a Njala University graduate with nutritionist and nursing degrees, came on staff in Tikonko on May 1, 2020 to lead the child malnutrition program.

Umu's role includes **education** for parents, caregivers and health care workers on proper nutrition, and evaluation and treatment of children ages 5 and under with moderate (MAM) or severe acute malnutrition (SAM). Starting with the evaluation of children at the RHCI motorbike clinics in the Tikonko and Gondama catchment areas, in May, **Umu identified 36 children in 6 of the 8 clinics with MAM or SAM**.

RHCI is now providing supplemental feeding with Pikinmix and Umu is monitoring them. Pikinmix is a nutritional product produced locally in Bo, and is made from sesame seeds, pigeon peas, rice and cane sugar. Several children were severely malnourished with complications and were transported by RHCI's truck to the Bo District Hospital Feeding Program for children. Read more about Umu's work to tackle childhood malnutrition at www.rhcimnsl.org.

COVID-19 Update



As of June 29, Sierra Leone has officially reported a total of **1,450 cases of COVID-19** with 50 deaths. However, the number of cases and deaths may be much higher as testing is limited primarily to Freetown. In Tikonko, RHCI instituted precautionary measures in March at the Mbao-mi Maternity Waiting Home and in the communities served by the motorbike outreach clinics. This included social distancing, frequent hand-washing, and use of face masks. Read more about program changes made in response to COVID-19.

\$300 Donation Deduction

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the "CARES Act"), signed March 27th, 2020, provides **\$300 of tax credits for donations to nonprofit organizations and encourages increased charitable giving to most public charities in 2020**. If you donate up to \$300 to RHCI in 2020, your donation will be directly deducted from your taxable adjusted income for filing year of 2021, if you do not itemize your tax filing. This donation must be a cash donation to a qualifying 501 c3, such as Rural Health Care Initiative. For additional questions email rhcimnsl@gmail.com. To make a donation, go to www.rhcimnsl.org.

Food Security and Nutrition



With a focus on health, RHCI also undertakes some agricultural activities with the objective of contributing to household food security by supporting farmers to increase their productivity, which in turns **improves food availability and household income**. RHCI is currently supporting three Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) in the Tikonko chiefdom. In addition, the Mbao-mi Maternity Waiting Home has four acres of farming land. One acre is in use for vegetables farming to support feeding program at the Home, with plans to put the remaining three acres to further agricultural use with integrated farming system.

Measures to control or mitigate COVID-19 outbreaks are already affecting global food supply chains. District lockdown in Sierra Leone is constraining transport of food to the local markets, causing an increase of food prices. Additional constraints from the pandemic include limited access to farm inputs, such as improved planting materials and fertilizer, which are often imported. Read what RHCI is doing in response to food insecurity in rural Sierra Leone on our website.

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Let's go Zooming!

We want to connect with you, our wonderful supporters, this Summer in a safe way. Unfortunately, we do not have the opportunity to go bowling at Elsie's with you or to share our passion for Global Health during our Round Table event. However, we can connect via Zoom! This event will feature a short presentation by RHCI to update you on what is happening in Tikonko chiefdom during this time of the COVID-19 Pandemic. We'll share the lifesaving outcome of our work with our **impact report**, new **pictures/video from Tikonko** to feel close to the community, plus RHCI's **new child malnutrition program** will be introduced. This is your opportunity to **connect with us, learn more**, and **provide input** towards areas of RHCI's programs that you would like the focus to be. Dates of event are

- Saturday, July 25 from 9:45-11:00am
- Thursday August 6 from 1:45-3:00pm
- Tuesday, August 18 from 6:30-7:45pm

Go to www.rhcimnsl.org to sign-up or email rhcimnsl@gmail.com

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