

*The Mission of Rural Health Care Initiative
is to partner with rural communities in
Sierra Leone to redevelop health care systems
and to overcome one of the highest maternal
and child mortality rates in the world.*



Rural Health Care Initiative
Improving health & nutrition for women & children in Sierra Leone



Dear Partners,



This past year has been one of consistency and long-awaited growth at RHCI. During the months of unprecedented challenges experienced collectively across the world, our dedicated staff on the ground in Sierra Leone has

continued to provide lifesaving maternal and child health services to the people of Tikonko. This year, through the support received at our two Birth Waiting Homes (BWH) and mobile outreach clinics, **245** women like Amie, whose story you'll hear more about, have safely given birth and returned to their families with healthy babies. More than **4,135** child medical visits have been provided through our Mobile Outreach Clinic and Nutrition Programs. RHCI completed over **10,000 program touchpoints** with BWH stays, Clinic and Nutrition visits, Family Planning, transportation, and beyond.

This year marks a milestone for RHCI as we celebrate our tenth year of providing healthcare support in partnership with the people of Tikonko. While we reflect on this past decade, we are excited and focused on the future. Our programs are expanding thanks to the generosity and support of our donors and volunteers. In March of this year, a team from the US was on the ground in Sierra Leone after a long absence due to the pandemic. While there, the team implemented the Basic OB Ultrasound Program, providing equipment and training to nurses at the Tikonko and Gondama Birth Waiting Homes to perform ultrasound evaluations. We are so excited to have this program in operation and know what it will mean for the care of women and their babies!

We are equally as excited about the growth of our Child Health Program. With the support of



our donors and a matching grant from One Day's Wages, we are expanding care to include newborn home health visits and extending coverage at our Mobile Outreach Clinics to children through ten years of age. Also with support from the grant, RHCI is continuing our commitment to community-based health, with the training of **74 Community Health Workers** that will provide services in Tikonko and the surrounding villages.

None of this would be possible without you, our partners.

Thank you for your generosity and support; thank you for making a difference in the lives of women and children in Tikonko, Sierra Leone.

Sincerely,

Marie Stodolka
RHCI Board, Vice Chair

Sierra Leone Staff

Staff at Tikonko Area

Manley Jongopie,
In-Country Director

Isata Bah

Moses Carter

Allieu Jongopie

Thomas Juan

Mohamed Fatorma

Mohamed John

Mohamed Kabba

Mohamed Kalokoh

Bobson Koroma

Mohamed Momoh

Juliana Sagba

Umu Shour

Marie Songa

Shaka Stevens

Patrick Vandy

Staff at Gondama area

Lamin Abu

Bernadette George

Saffie Jusu

Andrew Kemokai

Fatmata Koroma

Joseph Sogbandi

Margaret Sylvalie



Founder, Alice Karpeh with staff in Tikonko



Staff at Gondama Birth Waiting Home

Over 70 Community Health Workers from many villages in the Tikonko Chiefdom are also trained and employed part-time by RHCI to work at the Birth Waiting Homes and in their home villages.

New Board Chair



RHCI welcomes a new Board Chair, Ajayi Ajayi-Nicol. Ajayi is a native of Sierra Leone. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science With Honors (B.Sc. Hons) in Mathematics and Statistics, from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone.

Shortly before immigrating to the United States, fate brought him to Tikonko, where he witnessed firsthand the difference RHCI was making in the lives of women and children. Ajayi joined the RHCI Board of Directors in 2017 and was voted in as Chair earlier this year.

His commitment has helped RHCI carry out our mission of helping to improve the health and nutrition of women and children in Tikonko. We look forward to the leadership and guidance Ajayi brings to the Board as our organization continues to grow.

“I first joined RHCI because I wanted to help reduce maternal and child mortality in the Tikonko area. Today, I am exceedingly proud of what RHCI has accomplished this year, and over the past ten years. And I am grateful for the generosity of our financial donors and our volunteers, who have contributed over 6000 hours this year to RHCI. I look forward to my new role as Board Chair and to helping RHCI expand its impact in Tikonko.”

Ajayi Ajayi-Nicol
Board of Directors



“RHCI has provided so many benefits to the people of Tikonko Chiefdom, such as transportation. When women are in labor at night, RHCI provides transportation to the health center or hospital and this reduces

maternal deaths. For young children, RHCI has made a lot of benefits. In the past, parents gave children with serious illnesses native herbs and this caused liver problems. Now, when a child has a high fever and is seriously ill, RHCI is called and the child is transported with their parents for hospital care. This has made a huge difference.”

Manley Jongopie
In-Country Director

Board Members

Ajayi Ajayi-Nicol *Chair*
Marie Stodolka *Vice Chair*
Peter Gogra *Treasurer*
Maggie Pilacinski *Secretary*
Sarah Cassell
Rev. Neil Craigan
Dr. Beth Detlie
Komba Fayia
Lamin Foray
Julie Hoffer
Dr. Carol Nelson
Dr. David Parker

July 2021 – June 2022

Rural Health Redevelopment

Health care is inaccessible in many rural villages. This past year our mobile outreach clinics provided:

4,135 Child medical visits

741 Prenatal care visits

2,213 Family planning consultations and care

To fill gaps and strengthen local health care systems, this past year we provided:

584 transports of women and child patients to hospital or home village

\$31,317 medical supplies and equipment donated



Birth Waiting Homes

One in 31 women in Sierra Leone in their lifetime will die related to pregnancy or childbirth, compared to approximately 1 in 3,000 in the U.S. RHCI ensures access to skilled care before, during and after delivery, plus health education, nutritious food, and transportation.

930 pregnant and postpartum women have received care at our two Birth Waiting Homes since 2018

In the past year we have cared for:

245 pregnant and postpartum women at our two Birth Waiting Homes

110 pregnant and postpartum women at two other remote health units we support



Children's Health Program

One in nine children do not live to age 5 in Sierra Leone, 17 times higher than in the U.S. Malnutrition, malaria, respiratory infection and diarrhea contribute to the high mortality. 30% of children are stunted in growth. In the past year we provided:

1,652 malnutrition visits for children

47 critically ill children with transportation and coverage of hospital expenses

74 Community Health Workers with training on childhood malnutrition

As part of our malnutrition program, we provide therapeutic food including Plumpynut and PikiMix to malnourished children, often eliminating the need for hospitalization.



Food Security and Agriculture

In rural Sierra Leone, most women are farmers. Food insecurity is extremely high, leading to malnutrition and poor health. In the past year we provided:

67 farmers with hands-on training and support in learning modern agricultural practices

3 meals served daily for patients and staff at the Birth Waiting Homes including food grown from our garden



Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies



Amie, 32 years old, is the proud mother of 4 children. During her last pregnancy she was referred to the clinic at Kassama, on the Sewa river, which is one of several government clinics that RHCI helps support and has beds available for expectant mothers.

Amie's home village is located four miles on the far side of the Sewa. To get to the clinic Amie traveled on foot carrying her youngest child with her. Arriving at the river she had to make the crossing, which is often a challenge during the rainy season. The only way across is in a traditional canoe cut out from a tree trunk.

Amie knows firsthand the tremendous difficulty she and the other mothers and children in their community face to access health care due to the river and lack of health services on their side of it. Amie and expectant mothers in her community are at extremely high risk if there are complications with their pregnancies. Amie

shared, "Before, whenever we got pregnant, we did not have the money to stay at a clinic and the distance is too far. The last time I was pregnant I was having complications and not breathing well during my pregnancy. I cried a lot."

Thanks to RHCI's support, Amie and other expectant mothers are now frequently referred by Community Health Workers to the Kassama clinic several weeks before delivery to be closely monitored. "Many thanks to you, RHCI" Amie continued, "I was referred to the Kassama clinic where RHCI provided funds for me to stay until delivery. I was fed 3 meals each day and given medications, I relied on that support from RHCI."

Thankfully RHCI has a presence in this community. This means that mothers like Amie will continue to be cared for in a clinic that provides medical monitoring, food, and a safe place to deliver. Mothers like Amie continue to return home to their families, with healthy babies and a sense of security knowing that other mothers in their community have the same option for safe deliveries.

Lifesaving Grant Awarded



RHCI was thrilled to be the recipient of a matching grant from the nonprofit, One Day's Wages (ODW). With \$18,000 contributed by ODW, generous RHCI donors matched over \$21,000 to make the total \$39,144.

This grant has provided the opportunity for RHCI to expand its children's health programs in the rural Tikonko Chiefdom. With Julie Hoffer, RHCI Board Member and Epidemiologist, as the grant writer and project manager, three programs are being implemented:

1. **Training of over 100 Community Health Workers and village stakeholders** on how to prevent, identify and treat child malnutrition
2. Expanding Mobile Outreach Clinics services to **serve children through age 10**, including medications, malnutrition care, and hospital care, doubling our impact



3. Development of a **newborn nurse home visit** program, with the goal of reducing infant mortality

One Day's Wages believes that "simple acts of generosity can make a lasting impact in a world where many people still live on less than \$1.90/day."

Thank you to the many donors that answered the call for matching funds to make these new programs possible. And thank you to One Day's Wages and their staff for investing in RHCI's programs for the children in Tikonko Chiefdom.

Introducing Basic Obstetric Ultrasound to Tikonko Chiefdom



Staff training with Ultrasound Trainer, Inna Gabrielson

Thanks to a group of committed medical professionals and volunteers, basic OB Ultrasound became a reality this spring in rural Sierra Leone. It's particularly welcome, since the West African nation has long held one of the world's highest maternal and infant death rates.

The much celebrated arrival of portable IQ Butterfly Ultrasound followed several years of collaboration between maternal health professionals in Minnesota and in-country RHCI staff in Sierra Leone.

In Tikonko and Gondama, three midwives and two nurses logged on to learn the basics through a Basic OB Ultrasound course. Over Zoom, the Sierra Leone team got expert training from skilled ultrasonographers from Minnesota—Inna Gabrielson and Rachel Skinnert volunteered their time.

In March, Inna joined other Minnesota volunteers in a two week visit to Sierra Leone. The training became hands-on as she worked side-by-side with the staff at the RHCI Birth Waiting Homes and at the Gondama and Tikonko Community Health Centers.

The trainees embraced the new skills, learning how to date a pregnancy, determine position or presentation of the baby, diagnose twins, and gauge the amount of amniotic fluid. Such ultrasound information improves the quality of care for both mother and baby, alerting providers to risks in the pregnancy and helping to determine if the mother should be transferred to the district hospital for delivery.

RHCI is grateful to the generous support of many donors who made this new technology available for women in rural Sierra Leone. Ultrasound is one part of RHCI's "system of care" that is reducing maternal and newborn mortality for families there.

Financial Partners July 2021 - June 2022

\$30,000+

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Petrie Hanson Charitable Trust

\$20,000 – \$29,999

Carol Nelson and Keith Henry

\$10,000 – \$19,999

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Improving Chances Foundation
Seeding the Future Foundation

\$5,000 – \$9,999

First Presbyterian Church
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QBE Foundation
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\$1,000 – \$4,999

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Keith Dawson
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Newborn Twin Boys at Mbao-mi Mothers' Home March 2022

Kathy Diering
 Ronald Dosedel
 Michelle Dougherty
 Kevin Dowling
 Mary Jo Drews
 Debbie Dunst-Wald
 Victoria Erhart
 Janelle Erickson
 Fidelity Charitable
 Richard Feist
 Mary Rose Feldt
 Adama Fofana
 Lamin Foray
 Ethan Frisch
 Dick Fraser
 Matthew Frisch
 Kerriann and Emmanuel Godwin
 Kristin Grage
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 Christopher Harris
 Karin Hamilton
 Joanna and James Hanlon
 Ardelle Hansen
 Karen E. Hardy
 Lori and David Henke
 Marlo and Dan Henry
 Sarah Henry
 Susan Heimbigner
 Irene Helland
 Mary and H. Thomas Heller
 Brenda Himrich
 Mike and Barb Hinz
 Steve and Pilar Hoenack
 Imogene Hoff
 Joni Marie Howell
 Margaret and Ben Jaques-Leslie
 Mohamed Jalloh
 Gary Johnson
 Hussanatu L Kamara

Ramze M. Kamara
 Sheku Kamara
 Maureen Keegan
 Delaney Kohorst
 Jennifer Krzmarzick
 Barbara V. Kuehl
 Linda Langren
 Virginia Langren
 Margie and Jim Lauer
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 Kathleen Lewis
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 Barbara Sunde
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 Ebum and Julietta Thorpe
 Katelyn Tschida
 Elaine and Brad Ulgenes
 Emily Ulgenes
 Jacob and Kat Ulgenes
 Vadnais Family
 Anne and David Vail
 Christine Vogelsang
 Alison and Geoffrey Wagner
 Rob and Mary Weber
 Marilyn Wells
 Gary Wilhelm
 Barbara Wilmes
 Lewi Yonas
 Sarilyn Zimmerman



Staff: Umu Shour and Marie Songa at Mbao-mi Mothers' Home in Tikonko

A special thank you to Cooperate matching funds

American Family
 At&T
 Cargill
 General Mills
 Medtronic
 Optum
 Wells Fargo

RHCI Financials

Revenue

Individual Donors	\$ 148,993	50%
Foundations and Grants	\$ 85,700	29%
Organizations and Churches	\$ 24,987	8.5%
Corporate	\$ 14,746	5%
In Kind Donations	\$ 22,442	7.5%

Total Support: \$ 296,868

Expenses

Program Services	\$ 229,495	87%
Administration	\$ 31,879	12%
Fundraising	\$ 2,467	1%

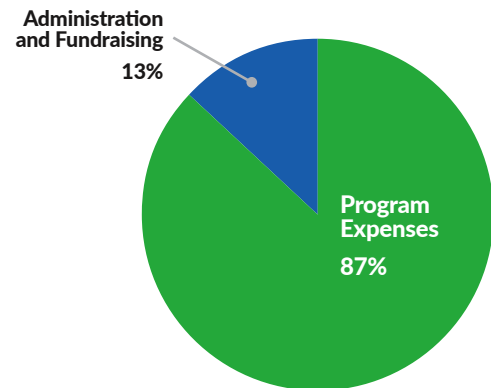
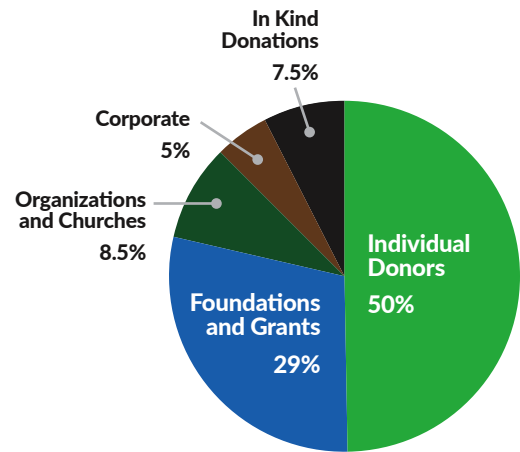
Total Expenses \$ 263,858

Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$ 249,055	
Change in Net Assets	\$ 37,040	15%

Net Assets, End of Year \$ 286,095

Expenditures for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022

In addition, over \$9,000 of donated medical supplies and equipment were donated from Direct Relief and Project Cure.



For updates follow us



Go to rhcimnsl.org for more information
Phone 651.503.1369 • Email cnelson@rhcimnsl.org