

Alberta Canada Primary School Romano Village, Sierra Leone

Education empowers communities and helps to break the cycle of poverty. Education helps to build strong, healthy communities by increasing individual awareness of health and social issues impacting each community and gives community members the tools needed to deal with these issues.

In 2002, the United Nations Secretary-General commissioned the UN Millennium Project, aimed at reversing the grind of poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people living in developing nations. The top three goals of the project are to “eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, and promote gender equality and empower women”.

According to the United Nations Development Program, Sierra Leone ranked 176 among the 177 nations on the ‘Human Development Index’. The ‘Human Development Index’ is a statistical ranking which combines measures of life expectancy, access to schooling and average income.

Sierra Leone is located in Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Guinea and Liberia. Sierra Leone is a small country faced with the overwhelming challenges of reconstructing a nation after an 11-year civil war. As a result of this dark history, 74.5% of the population of Sierra



Leone lives on less than two dollars a day and only 29.6% of the population has had the privilege of attending school.

Memonatu Dura Kamera immigrated to Canada three years ago with her seven children (six of her own and one adopted) from Sierra Leone. This remarkable woman was the president of a refugee camp between Sierra Leone and Guyana for seven horrible years, where she underwent every kind of deprivation, abuse and torture, before she managed to immigrate to Canada.



Since arriving in Canada three years ago, Memonatu has managed to go from a grade three level of education to obtaining a nursing assistant diploma and is now continuing her studies to become a social worker, while providing for her eight children.



Memonatu was haunted by the suffering of her loved ones and community back in Sierra Leone and recognized the key to breaking the cycle of poverty and violence was to empower her community through education. Memonatu started a project to build a primary school in Romano village, Sierra Leone, through a variety of fundraisers with the help of her friends.



CHANGE FOR CHILDREN ASSOCIATION (CFA) is an Edmonton-based non-profit, non-governmental organization with a 30-year history of working for sustainable, grassroots community development in Latin America and the Philippines. Our development projects, their cost and priority, are determined by our Southern partners according to the needs of their communities. In Canada, our education program engages the public in a process of awareness raising, analysis and action on issues of global justice.

Through their fundraising efforts and the support of Change for Children, Memonatu was able to build a new 9-room school block in Romano Village to replace an old, make-shift school that burnt down during the war. The old school house lacked teaching materials and furniture (students sat on tree trunks rather than at desks) and the building was built of sticks, palm fronds and mud.

Volunteers from Romano were joined by other volunteers from five neighbouring villages to build the Alberta Canada Primary School, which now services the six communities.

Over the last year Memonatu and Change for Children have successfully raised funds to hire eight teachers (with the yearly Sierra Leone salary of \$1,400 per teacher). Unfortunately, these teachers have a job that no Canadian teacher would envy. These teachers must teach 630 children, sitting five to a bench, basic reading and math skills with very few textbooks and only 100 notebooks and pencils.

Teachers are also faced with the challenge of figuring out how to feed all of their students before the end of the school



day because many students are faced with a two-hour walk home to their villages.

The Alberta Canada Primary School plays a large part of the reconstruction of this community. Community members spend their days tending the community gardens, which attempts to stretch enough food for everyone and digging wells for potable water. The community is also trying to build a community health centre aimed at decreasing the infant mortality rate and children dying from easily treated illnesses.



But the villagers are courageous and hard working because they have hope. They know that Memonatu has been vigorously working to ensure her loved ones will have a sustainable infrastructure and eventually have their basic needs taken care of.

The Romano Village project in Sierra Leone needs ongoing funding to rebuild this war torn community. The Alberta Canada Primary School is just one of the many projects in the Ramono Village that donors may choose to support.

Donors may choose from a variety of projects ranging from supporting the community farms to contributing to teacher and health care worker salaries or purchasing healthcare supplies. Donors may also choose to contribute funds for school supplies and textbooks for the 630 students. You will also have the opportunity to hear directly from the people how their funds have helped to rebuild their community, through the videos and letters sent regularly to Canada via Memonatu.

Change for Children is asking you to help make Memonatu's dream a reality. Your donation will help to break the cycle of poverty and rebuild this war torn community.



PLEASE SUPPORT THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT

Complete the form below and mail it with your donation to:

Change for Children Association:

2nd Floor, 10808-124 street, Edmonton, AB T5M 0H3

Ph: 780.448.1505 • Fax: 780.448.1507 •

cfca@changeformchildren.org • www.changeformchildren.org



Yes! I/We want to support the Alberta Canada Primary School in Sierra Leone

Name: _____

Group/Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Amount \$ _____

Tax receipt required:
(donations of \$10 or more)

Yes or No

If yes, receipt in name of:

Individual or Group
as noted at left

Please make cheque payable
to Change for Children.