



Sierra Leone Community Based Health Care Programme Q3 2011 Report

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for
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Executive Summary

Thanks to the generous support of the Soroptimist International Wales South Health Education & Hygiene Trust, the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society's (SLRCS) Community Based Health Programme is continuing to have a significant impact on communities.

Between July and September this year, dedicated Red Cross volunteers carried out a host of activities to raise crucial awareness about the importance of early prevention and control of Lassa fever. In line with the trust's Licking Lassa Fever initiative, volunteers reached community leaders, chiefs and teachers with vital information about Lassa fever prevention.

In addition, the Sierra Leone Red Cross opened seven new youth clubs, reaching even more children and young people with crucial health messages and information about HIV and AIDS.

Highlights

Here are just some highlights of what we have been able to achieve this quarter:

- Throughout August, 360 members of Mothers' and Fathers' Clubs participated in a three day training course on HIV. The course has improved their confidence in accurately communicating messages around HIV and health to their wider community.
- 260 Youth Peer Educators carried out 455 outreach sessions and group discussions for young people, in order to raise awareness on sexual health and to reduce stigma of people living with HIV.
- During September, Red Cross volunteers conducted community cleanup campaigns, reaching 1,324 people with information on the importance of early prevention and control of Lassa fever.

Achievements during Q3 2011



HIV prevention and reducing stigma

Between July and September this year, the Sierra Leone Red Cross formed seven youth peer clubs for out of school youths in Moyamba, Mattru, Kambia, attracting more than 220 new members. This has ensured that Youth Peer Educators are reaching even more young people with crucial messages about HIV.

In addition, 272 Youth Peer Educators conducted more than 53 sessions in their communities on vital issues around HIV including the prevention of mother to child transmission. These sessions have reached 5,344 young people.

Youth Peer Educator conducted 24 drama performances which focussed on the vital importance of male participation in the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission and Voluntary Confidential Counselling and Testing; the performances reached 10,108 people. A radio jingle on HIV awareness was also produced by the young people and aired on local FM radio.

HIV care, support and treatment

During the reporting period, Branch Health Officers made home-visits to 120 people living with HIV, in order to provide a life-line of practical support and to make referrals where appropriate. Home-based care kits were distributed to 160 people living with HIV; these included essential hygiene items such as towels, antiseptic and soap.

Immunisation

In the first week of September, community volunteers participated in the National Immunisation Days for Polio rounds 4 and 5. Volunteers led activities to encourage parents and guardians to immunise their children, and reached more than 14,290 children.

During home visits carried out by 278 Red Cross volunteers, 2,102 children were found to be fully immunised against vaccine preventable diseases. Volunteers referred 211 children under five for immunisation at health facilities.



Growth Monitoring

Volunteers undertook home visits where they monitored the weight and growth of 2,102 children under five-years-old. Of this figure, 1,857 were found to be healthy, while 245 were severely malnourished and were instantly referred to health facilities for appropriate treatment.



Maternal and Child Health

280 Red Cross Volunteers carried out 1,409 home visits in their communities, reaching families, including pregnant and lactating women, with crucial health messages including the importance of exclusive breastfeeding. During the first week of August, Red Cross volunteers in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, commemorated international World Breastfeeding Week and raised awareness in local communities about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding.

Between 9th and 28th August, seeds and tools were distributed to 35 Mothers' Clubs. Crucially, this is improving women's access to nutritional foods meaning they are able to provide their families with a balanced diet. The women were also able to sell some surplus produce to raise money for School fees and other costs.

Early detection and control of Lassa Fever

During September, the Sierra Leone Red Cross conducted community clean-up campaigns, where they raised awareness on the importance of early prevention and control of Lassa fever. This campaign reached 1,324 people.

On 15th September, community leaders including chiefs, teachers, women's leaders and youth leaders attended a stake-holders meeting designed to raise awareness on TB and Lassa fever prevention. In addition, Mothers' Clubs members also led health talks on TB and Malaria control and prevention and the importance of using insect-treated nets, reaching 4,571 in their communities.

Hygiene promotion and safe water

A total of 478 wells were chlorinated, supplying vital clean water to more than 37,389 people. Red Cross volunteers carried out crucial awareness raising activities in their local communities on the importance of good hygiene practices, reaching 15,325 people. During the reporting period, 14 new committees were formed in Bo and Kambia. They will promote clean water, sanitation and health in their local communities.

Fathers' Clubs

Nineteen new Fathers' Clubs were established across all Red Cross branches, in line with the Ministry of Health Initiative to encourage partner involvement in the reduction of infant and maternal mortality. As fathers are traditionally seen as the head of households and main-decision makers, these clubs will put them in a better position to make appropriate and timely decisions regarding health issues in the family and increase the uptake of Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission services.

