

# CHANGING LIVES

VOL. 1 • ISSUE 1 • JUN - NOV 2021

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

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## Susan's Bay Fire: Not All Heroes Wear Capes

Susan's Bay is a remote community and a home to over 5,000 people in central Freetown, Sierra Leone. Accommodation for the residents are shacks made of sticks and zinc. Lack of planning means all the houses were near each other, leaving no space for vehicles or bikes to ply. On 24th March 2021, at 6 pm, a fire outbreak burnt down the entire neighbourhood and left many homeless and traumatised.

Five-year-old Musa rushed inside his burning home at Susan's Bay Community, Freetown, to rescue his bicycle. But instead found his baby brother asleep inside. Their mum had left them with a carer to fend for the family when the fire broke out. Musa made a quick and lifesaving decision to leave his bike and instead carry his baby brother out to safety. His heroic deed did not go unnoticed—inspired by Musa's bravery, Kadie Lahai Bundu donated to support Musa. The donation went towards Musa's education and provided Musa's mum capital to start a small business that would help better provide for her children.



## Support for Mariatu and her Two Disabled Children

Mariatu Kamara, a 45 years old widow, lost her marital rights after giving birth to two boys who could neither walk nor stand. The boys were recognised as disabled shortly after birth. She took the prescribed polio treatment for them, but they still could not regain their walking zeal. Just as women's typical African rejection stories linked to witchcraft, neighbours and family mocked and rejected her.

Mariatu's story, a widow with two disabled children published in the Hidden Voice Salone Magazine Issue 5 in 2020, attracted the attention of JNJF and was looking for ways of helping the widow. She had been thrown out of the house after her husband died and accused of being a witch. Eventually, World Hope International (WHI), an organisation that helps disabled children stepped in. WHI provided the necessary rehabilitation, therapy and equipment that will assist the boys to live better with their disability. In addition, in its ongoing support, WHI refurbished the incomplete house that was affecting the family's life and donated capital for Mariatu to invest in her ongoing business to better support her children.



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## Collaboration with Social Income nets Support for Six Widows

JNJF's informal collaboration with Social Income, an NGO, solicits 1% of people's income to help fight poverty and pay it directly to the recipient's mobile phone. Six of our widows to date are the recipients of this USD30 monthly payment guaranteed for three years, which has transformed their lives from poverty to hope. Many of whom, like Edith, have started their micro-businesses to begin charting a path to achieving economic independence.



# JNMF LIGHT-UP A RURAL VILLAGE PROJECT - 2021

## Light-Up a Rural Project Benefits School Children in Benduma, Moyamba District

Through its Light-a-Rural Project, the foundation seeks to provide electricity through solar energy to remote communities across the country. In April 2021, Benduma village in Moyamba District was the first to benefit by installing solar lights to homes and street lights in public spaces.

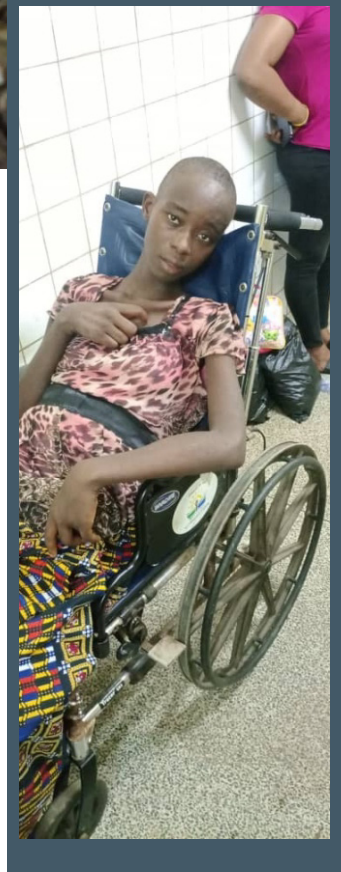
The project benefits the school children immensely with a safe and inexpensive means to study at night. In addition, residents can now commute safely at night across the bridge that links both sides of the village. A teacher in one of the primary schools in the community blessed the foundation for the support and noted the improvement it makes for education in remote communities. He said that the solar lights, especially those installed in the homes, have rapidly boosted students' performance because they now have the zeal to study more at night. We hope to roll this out to other rural villages across the country.



## Brave 17-Year Old Adama, Lost Her Battle with Ovarian Cancer

Adama was diagnosed with ovarian cancer after an operation to remove fibroids. The doctors detected an ovarian Cyst during her surgery. She hailed from a very low-income family that could not afford her medical expenses. Her doctor at the Moyama Government Hospital referred her to Connaught Hospital in the capital city, Freetown, where she was discharged because she could not pay for the treatment.

We launched a GoFundMe Campaign to raise \$5000 for her operation abroad. Unfortunately, Adama died a few days later before we could raise the money. However, we raised some money, which we donated to her family. In addition, our foundation and some donors took care of the cost of her burial, a befitting ceremony for brave Adama. May her soul continue to rest in peace.



## 3rd Anniversary Celebration: Visit the Home of the Old People

In celebrating its third anniversary, our foundation visited the aged at King George's Home in Grafton. As we strive to rise by lifting others, we choose to be among the aged to show solidarity and bring help to underprivileged people as we have done over the years. Meaningful interactions between the foundation staff and the aged people helped them know each other better. We listened to their stories on how they cope in such a time of their life. "I lost my husband at the time I needed him most, and just when I thought of getting my life back, I lost all my children. This is how I found myself here," said Frances, one of the residents.

Mr Williams, one of the oldest participants, said that he met few people at the home when he arrived. It was very challenging for him, but the matron and others helped him, the blind man said. We gathered from the residents that poor water facilities and lack of transportation were their most significant challenges. Occasionally when they fall ill, it is a challenge to reach the nearest hospital.





## Needs Assessment Conducted in Five Deprived Communities for our Women Empowerment Kall (WEK) – Adopt-a-Widow Program

Our foundation has developed a new project to support underprivileged widows and children living in slum or deprived communities. Kroo Bay community, Crab Town Community, Moa Warf Community, Dworzark Community and Gray Bush Community were targeted and assessed, and over 300 widows were identified. We identified these widows and their children; they could barely feed themselves.

Right through the assessment, we captured story after story of the pain and suffering of these women whose only crime was to lose their husbands. For example, Agnes Wagay, a widow at Crab Town community with five children, was dispossessed of her inheritance and left to fend for herself by her husband's family after the death of her husband. She survives by selling charcoal because she has no access to money to start a business that could provide for her children. In addition, three of her children stopped going to school due to a lack of funds.

Yeabu Daramy noted, "I collect discarded plastic bottles and sell to people that reuse them for 5¢ per dozen so I can take care of my three children. I lost my husband three years ago. My children are no longer in school because I cannot afford their educational commitments," says Yeabu, a resident at Kroo Bay Community.

To achieve the project's goals and support these widows, JNJF conducted the needs assessment to establish a rapport with Widows. We wanted to hear their stories and identify their short, medium and long term needs. As a result, widows will be categorised into five support plans and resources solicited to empower them with the support they need.

## JNJF Staff visits the PMB Fire Disaster Area and Families of the Victims

A fuel tanker fire explosion on 5th November 2021 at Wellington, PMB, Freetown claimed over 99 lives instantly. JNJF visited the site to help survivors clean up and clear debris from the aftermath. In addition, the staff of JNJF paid a visit to the victims' families to comfort and support them in their dark moments.

The three-day humanitarian exercise showed solidarity with the PBM Wellington community. This gesture was highly welcomed by the victims' families and by the residents of the Wellington Community. "Let God continue to elevate the foundation; your presence means a lot to us. We appreciate you," noted Mr Kalokoh, who lost his younger brother to the fire incident.

According to the councillor of the Wellington community, Arthur Mansaray, he was touched by the humanitarian gesture of the organisation. He noted that the JNJ foundation was the first charity organisation to intervene in the community after the fire incident. He also expressed appreciation to the organisation on behalf of his community and urged them to continue the excellent work.



## Sekoun Sidime Charity, Guinea Partners With JNJF to Donate Medical Supplies to Wellington, PMB

Sierra Leone faced another disaster on 5th November 2021 when a construction truck collided with a tanker carrying over 3,000 gallons of fuel at PMB Junction in Wellington, Freetown. The impact ruptured the tanker's hull and resulted in a massive fuel leak. People saw it as an opportunity to collect free fuel and did not think much of the fire safety issues. However, after its investigation, the Fire Department concluded that a cigarette smoker far away from the fuel leak dropped a cigarette butt that caused the fire responsible for the explosion.





# IMPACTING COMMUNITIES

After the fire explosion, hundreds of people were hospitalised at three hospitals across Freetown suffering from severe burns. In partnership with Sekoun Sidime Charity, our foundation donated 3 tons of burns and wound-care medical supplies, costing around \$30,000 to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The donation took place at the Cannought Hospital on 12th November 2021. Receiving the items on behalf of the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), Tomaye Morlu Brewah, Deputy Director of Relief and Response at the NDMA, accepted the medical items. In appreciation, he said the donation arrived at the right time because they are desperately needed for the unprecedented man-made disaster.



## SPECIAL THANKS TO

**SOCIAL INCOME**

## Forthcoming Projects

1. Establishing businesses for deprived widows.
2. New skills training for underprivileged widows.
3. Job placement for underprivileged widows.
4. Donation of medical supplies to deprived and rural community hospitals and clinics.
5. Supporting teenage mothers to return to school.

## SeKoun Sidime Charity Partners with JNJF to Donate Medical Supplies to Grey Bush Community Clinic

Through research and our work with widows and underprivileged children across the country, we identified that people living in rural and slum communities face serious health challenges attributable to their living conditions, social isolation, socioeconomic status, and unavailability of medical supplies.

On this basis, the Sekoun Sidime (SS) Charity in Guinea partnered with the Jamil and Nyanga Jaward Foundation to address some of these challenges. As a desire of the founders of SS Charity, Djana Sidime and Keith Joseph, to provide access to advanced wound care medical supplies and training of poor and rural populations, SS Charity, a Guinean based organisation, partnered with JNJF and provided access to advanced wound care medical supplies for Grey Bush Community Health Centre (GBCHC) that provides medical care for a population of about 17,000.

Our Foundation and SS Charity, Guinea, formed a partnership to expand each other's field of operations in reaching more vulnerable populations. SS Charity promotes access to wound care and treatment for hospitals and clinics in Africa. SS Charity donates advanced wound care products for patients in health facilities in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and St Lucia as part of their mission. In addition, it provides advanced wound care training for nurses and education for patients about wounds and prevention. The donation was applauded by the Grey Bush community's people, nurses, and doctors.

- Joseph Skeff  
 Aminata Touray  
 Isa Macedoine  
 Mohamed Sehlu Bah  
 Martin Bamin  
 Charles Fangowa  
 Alpha Diallo  
 Moisia Conteh  
 Bole Bangura  
 Essie Gyampoh  
 John Sugden  
 Frank Bankole  
 Alimamy Kargbo  
 Renner Onana  
 Bara Dieng  
 Abraham Konteh  
 Jennifer Anderson  
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