



Mission:
Implementing viable, sustainable
Community based projects through
strategic Partnerships in Sub-Saharan
Africa
www.brightlightprojects.org

Bright Light Projects

Project Title:

Upholding Sensitive Prevention and Control
to Curtail the Spread of COVID-19 virus in
BLP Operational Communities

Country: Sierra Leone

Project Title: Upholding Sensitive Prevention and Control to Curtail the Spread of COVID-19 Virus in BLP Operational Communities

Project Focus: Providing immediate and long-term Sensitization, education and Prevention to Control the spread of Covid-19 in BLP operational communities

Targeted Beneficiaries: The project targets BLP operational communities which include Western Rural Area and Bombali Districts

Project Location: Western Area Rural and Bombali Districts in Sierra Leone

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Project Life Cycle: Initiation, Planning, Execution, Monitoring and Control, Closure

Project Total Cost in Leones: 61,600,000 Leones

Project Total Cost in Dollars: \$6,776.00

Project Period: One Year (12 Months)

Abbreviations and Meaning

BLP	Bright Light Projects
BLPSL	Bright Light Projects Sierra Leone
AFE0	Africa for Ebola Orphans
MDG	Mend the Gap Schooling Program for Vulnerable Ebola orphans & Survivors
GSR	Girls Shall Rise
BLPMC	Bright Light Projects Mothers' Club Familiarization Program
SLOIC	Sierra Leone Opportunity and Industrialization Centre
KTC	Komra Training Centre
JVC	Jui Vocational Training Centre
MSWGCA	Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender & Children's Affairs
DHMT	District Health Medical Team
CARCAP	Consortium for the Advancement of Rights for Key Affected Population
MDA	Ministries Departments and Agencies
WHO	World Health Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
RODA	Rofutha Development Association

BLP CORPORATE OVERVIEW

Bright Lights Projects (BLP) is a United States based Public Charity 501© (3) Non-Profit Organization with Headquarters in Houston Texas. Born out of the passion for music. Music is a catalyst for social change and sustainable Development the world over. One of the cornerstones of BLP's success is its ability to build strategic partnerships with organizations championing specific humanitarian needs for example, concert for Ebola Relief in Maryland in 2014 which benefited Doctors without Borders and International Medical Corps. BLP is registered in Sierra Leone as a Community Based organization (CBO), in Guinea Conakry as an (INGO), with some operations in Nigeria and Cameroon.

Mission:

Implementing viable community-based projects through strategic partnerships including the Corporate and Academic sectors to provide cost effective sustainable programs to both urban and rural Communities in Sub –Sahara Africa...

Vision Statement:

To promote and support BLP beneficiaries to become self-reliant and contribute positively to the development of their communities.

Core Advocacy Areas:

BLP has a simplistic approach to support and conduct non-partisan initiatives in rebuilding broken communities as part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in Sub- Sahara Africa in the domain of:

- Refugee & Internally Displaced Persons Support (IDPs)
- Gender-Equality and Social Inclusion (Domestic Violence and Servitude)
- Human Rights (Disabilities, Women, Children and Youth)
- Education (Formal/Informal)
- Community Healthcare / Psychosocial Care
- Prison Inmate Reintegration
- Clandestine Immigration & Returnee Support

Project Overview / Background

In December 2019, the whole world noticed the threat of COVID-19. World Health Organization (WHO) stood up as a lead to alert every country to prepare their health emergency systems to tackle the unfortunate breakout of the virus. Unfortunately, Wuhan province in China was the first highly hit province in China and the world at large. The province, which holds about 14 million people continues to be hunted by the disease. In January 2020, numerous cases of infected individuals, continued to be recorded by the Chinese Centre for Disease Control through the Chinese health care system. The virus has its easiest way of infecting and transferring to individuals through droplets transfer by sneezing or coughing, close contacts in public gatherings and handshake.

As the challenges of the spread of the virus continued, modalities were put in place by the Chinese Government within a period of one month. Preventive procedures such as regular hand washing, social distancing, lockdowns and stay at home for a period of time suggested by Government, stopping public transportations, cough/sneezing using elbow, avoiding regular touching of facial parts and help reporting or call medical Centre to report anyone identified case with COVID-19 symptoms. As the Chinese people continued to curtail the virus through the stringent measures, the pandemic continued to threaten the world with a rise in some countries in Europe including Spain, Italy, England, France and Germany, the Middle East and the United States of America. As time passed by, high rates of infection and death of the virus continue to rise in some of the greatest power countries of the world including Italy, Spain, United States, France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Africa got introduced to the virus through travelling of businesspeople, Government officials, Diplomats and other African citizens. Africa as one of the most vulnerable continent struggles to contain most outbreaks and other health related sicknesses found it very difficult to prevent the virus from entering the continent. Same way, all other countries of the world continued to implore the measures taken by China to fight and prevent the virus. The World Health Organization (WHO) continue to give their support to every Country that have recorded 50 cases above in order to give close attention to already affected victims and prevent the unaffected

populations from the virus. Yet, the world has not found any cure for the virus, while some drugs like chloroquine has been suggested by some medical researchers, it has not been clinically proven to stop the spread of the virus in human body.

Sierra Leone and COVID-19

According to the Ministry of health report, COVID-19 was first discovered in Sierra Leone on March 31st, 2020. This was from an individual who came into the country from Europe. This affected victim case was traced from the first set of people that came into the country through the Freetown International Airport and had to be quarantined for a period of two weeks in a hotel in Lungi town. The 21 days' quarantine is the incubation period of the virus before immense testing by a medical Doctors to determine if they are positive or not. When these people were freed from quarantine, the first victim identified in Sierra Leone decided to isolate himself from his family saying he was not sounding well. When he was later tested, he was found positive with the virus, but before that a suspected case that travelled from England to Sierra Leone was quarantined and admitted at the Magbenteh hospital Makeni. Her test was taken to Freetown and she was found negative from the virus. The second case was also discovered who is a nurse working at the Ola During Hospital in Freetown.

On March 24, 2020, His Excellency President Bio declared a state of emergency for twelve months during a press release on Television. The President stated ““The rapid global spread of the coronavirus poses a great risk to human life and can cause enormous socio-economic disruption in Sierra Leone. This situation, therefore, requires effective measures to prevent, protect, and curtail the spread of the coronavirus disease in Sierra Leone,” During the subsequent days, the Country's Parliament met and decided to debate and review the 12 months' state of Emergency period and reduced it to three months. Along with that, stringent measures were continued to be enhanced by the President in fighting the spread of the virus. A three days (72 hours) lockdown was also announced by the president for everyone to sit at home with all businesses and works of life closed from the 5th-7th April 2020. After the lockdown period, two weeks of partial township and District lockdown was also imposed by the president, that started 12th April 2020 and will have to end 26th April 2020. The Government of Sierra Leone is using

every measure to fight and curtail the deadly virus. BLP's intervention as usual, will be complementing Government efforts.

Project Justification:

With a very fragile Health Care System, still suffering from the enduring and devastating effects of a prolonged 11-year civil war (1991 – 2002), The civil war brought all the health and economic infrastructures down to zero during the war. Many clinics that had been established by the government were demolished. There was a massive rural – urban migration from the countryside into main cities and towns, which compounded the poor health and sanitation situation.

A Washington Post publication on June 23, 2018 titled “Ebola in Survivors family shows deadly virus's lasting effects” underscores the fact that complacency on Ebola virus is the biggest mistake. One of the biggest mysteries about Ebola, has been recurrent disease in survivors coupled with health-related complications. The fragile health care infrastructure in Sierra Leone calls for more attention, proactivity in dealing with related viruses. There is a need to keep systems that can help prevent another outbreak from happening. Proper hygiene and Sanitation is the key in combating any resurgence at local levels and BLP COVID-19 sensitization campaign is part of this sustained effort. The Ebola virus outbreak of 2014 with so many human and psychological scars, the mudslides, and other related challenges, there is a need for a sustained long-term intervention in combating the deadly COVID-19 pandemic. Rural communities always stand to suffer a lot from natural disasters and virus outbreaks since most emergency Aid and Assistance is mostly limited to big cities and towns.

Proper Hygiene and Sanitation are at the forefront fighting COVID -19. Upholding Sensitive Prevention and Control to curtail the Spread of COVID-19 virus in BLP operational Communities is essential given Sierra Leone's history. BLP played a key role in the fight against the EVD outbreak and is actively playing a key role in the recovery process. Rebuilding and mending the Gap after the devastating EVD virus. BLP is providing extended support to EVD orphaned children and survivors by helping them go back to school, provide learning materials,

medical attention, vocational skills training, support to caregivers and close monitoring in homes and schools.

BLP's approach to COVID-19 is a long-term sustained intervention making sure our flagship WASH programs are fully integrated into our COVID-19 sensitization initiative. Just like we provided and are still providing post Ebola recovery to EVD orphans and Survivors through our pioneer program called "Mend the Gap Schooling Program for vulnerable Ebola orphans and Survivors. We plan to make our COVID-19 campaign become part of the daily lives for our communities. We must think beyond this pandemic just like we all failed to think beyond Ebola in 2014

During periods of confinement, teenage girls suffer the most due to increased abuse, rape from family members or friends. It is very crucial to provide community counselors with basic phones and recharge cards so they can call the Government 117 Hotline to report any cases of abuse or rape in the community.

Disabled people suffer the most since they depend on the goodwill of the public in making a living due to their inability to provide for themselves. Reaching out to the disabled at this time of COVID-19 confinement is necessary to not completely isolate them completely. A sustained engagement with the disabled community providing basic WASH facilities and support will go a long way in helping them deal with the ordeal of this pandemic

Bright Light Projects in the Community:

BLPSL has embarked on several projects, including Africa for Ebola Orphans (AFEO), Mend the Gap Schooling Program for vulnerable Ebola orphans and Survivors (MDG), Girls shall Rise (GSR), Bright Light Projects Mothers Club Familiarization Program (BLPMC) in Western Rural and Bombali Districts with very positive outcomes and impact stories.

Presently, BLP is implementing the above projects in three chiefdoms within five communities in Bombali District including Gbanti Chiefdom which include Rosint and Manor, Bombali

Sebora which include Masathi, Pate Bana and Makeni. Since 2017, About 84 beneficiaries are benefiting from the MDG project in Bombali District. This project has a focus of providing Learning Materials, School fees, uniforms, vocational skills training, psychosocial counselling to EVD orphans and Survivors. About 27 beneficiaries are benefiting from MDG project in Western Rural Area of Waterloo in the following communities: Kissy Town, Tombo, Mabureh, York Community, Cole Town, Lumpa, Monkey Bush, Camp Community, Newton village. In line with Government policies in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender & Children's Affairs (MSWGCA), BLP has been able to record a remarkable victory in providing positive impact in the lives of our beneficiaries over a period of three years in Bombali & Western Rural Districts of Sierra Leone.

BLP Girls Shall Rise Project (GSR) Provides support, skills Training, advocacy for Survivors of Gender Based Violence (GBV) specifically violence against women and children, Commercial Sex workers, and women living with HIV AIDS. This project targeted 55 beneficiaries after effective and efficient assessment done by BLP teams in Makeni & Waterloo. the team carried out urgent need-based assessment based on the projects' key performance indicators and arrived at selecting beneficiaries for the first face of the project. These beneficiaries are currently enrolled in Sierra Leone opportunities and Industrialization Centre (SLOIC) in Makeni, Komra Training Centre (KTC) and Jui Vocational Training Centers in the Western Rural District (Waterloo Area)

Bright Light Projects Mother Club Familiarization Program (BLPMC) focuses on continuously engaging parents and caregivers of our beneficiaries to ensure they understand the objectives and long-term benefits of BLP's programs thereby helping their children grow in a dignified environment with the support necessary for them to succeed. With about 100 women participating in the Mothers Club program, it has become a hub to reach out to underserved Communities and will serve as a good support system for BLPSL COVID-19 intervention.

BLP team in Makeni took part in two-day Disaster training session with CARCAP and RODA including other local partners and MDAs. This training has built the team to take up any emergency intervention like the odd times of this COVID-19 outbreak

Objectives:

"Upholding Sensitive Prevention and Control to Curtail the Spread of COVID-19 Virus in BLP operational Communities" is part of our WASH Initiative in helping communities improve long-term proper Hygiene and Sanitation practices in their communities thereby encouraging healthy living improving the livelihood for all citizens. Objectives include:

1. To carryout continuous sensitization messages of prevention of contacting the COVID-19 virus in both English and Krio
2. Organize a community stakeholder's engagement meeting in Waterloo to sensitize community heads to kick start BLP COVID-19 sensitization program
3. To provide preventive kits and WASH facilities for BLP operational communities and also engage the disabled community as they are the most affected during this time of lockdown and confinement
4. BLP's new Eco-Water Hand Washing System, provides a non-contaminating, hands free, feet controlled, long-term affordable solution in combating COVID-19 will be provided in some key communities and training of the locals for maintenance will be part of the campaign
5. Provision of psychosocial and counseling support and medical referrals for suspected victims of COVID-19
6. Provide basic phones and recharge cards to community counselors to call the Government hotline and report any cases of rape, abuse of young girls, and to call in any suspected cases of COVID-19 in their different communities

Activities / Implementation Strategy:

Building strategic partnerships is key in achieving BLP's program objectives in providing cost effective, measurable, sustainable impact driven solutions in both Urban and Rural Communities

in Sub Saharan Africa. This program will be implemented along with Government partners from the DHMT, MSWGCA, Local chieftdom authorities, Councils and other partner's organizations in both Bombali and Western Rural Districts. As outlined in the objectives, several preparations and readiness will be enhanced with the appropriate authorities and the communities to be implemented. Some of the key activities to be undertaken include:

1. Sensitization and conveying of BLP prevention and control messages in various communities within our operational areas: BLP Team Members will lead the campaign to reach various communities, with community's counsellors and stakeholders to sensitize the people on the dangers of the COVID-19 virus, how it is contacted, the way it spreads and what to do to prevent and control it in their communities. This will be conducted with help of printed educational material in both English and in Krio
2. In order to kick start the BLP COVID-19 sensitization program, a community stakeholder engagement meeting will take place at the BLPSL head office in Waterloo engaging the community heads, so they understand the objectives of this campaign and its long-term impact and benefits to their communities.
3. The team will take up the distribution of available WASH facilities and COVID-19 preventives kits to communities: effective distribution of WASH facilities such as soap, hand sanitizers, veronica bucket and face masks to key populations of the beneficiaries in BLP operational areas. The team will also ensure the distribution and pasting of physical and visual translated messages on walls and public places like markets, schools, health Centers to be viewed and read by all community members and strangers.
4. BLP's new Eco-Water Hand Washing System, provides a non-contaminating, hands free, feet
5. controlled, long-term affordable solution in combating COVID-19 will be provided in key
6. communities as part of this campaign. Training will be provided to the locals for proper maintenance for the benefit of the community
7. Continues engagement on healthy measures and hygiene practices: Various health measures like referrals by calling health officials for any sick patient with COVID-19 symptoms.
8. Monitoring and providing psychosocial support to COVID-19 victims and BLP beneficiaries in different communities

Potential Long-Term Impact:

Our approach to COVID-19 is a long-term sustained intervention making sure our flagship WASH programs are fully integrated into our COVID-19 response initiative. Just like we provided and are still providing post Ebola recovery to EVD orphans and Survivors through our pioneer program called "Mend the Gap Schooling Program for vulnerable Ebola orphans and Survivors. we plan to make our COVID-19 campaigns become part of the daily lives for our operational communities. We must think beyond this epidemic just like we all failed to think beyond Ebola in 2014.

A long-term approach will transform communities into local Hygiene and Sanitation hubs which will increase the well-being of the inhabitants also increasing life expectancy. A "Stop and Go approach" will not work in combating this virus. COVID-19 which has come to stay so fighting it should be at the grassroots providing local communities the tools to do it themselves over a sustained period. "Upholding Sensitive Prevention and Control to Curtail the Spread of COVID-19 Virus in BLP operational Communities" is part of our WASH Initiative in helping communities improve proper Hygiene and Sanitation practices.

Monitoring and Evaluation:**BLPSL & MSWGCA Joint Monitoring Task Force:**

BLPSL and the MSWGCA are already carrying out joint monitoring in previous BLP projects to ensure Project activities are fully delivered to the right beneficiaries and ensure that beneficiaries make good use of such support. Both in western rural District & Bombali. BLPSL staff will carry out joint scheduled visits with staff from the ministry to harmonize operations making sure BLPSL is working in line with the goals and objectives of MSWGCA. Intervention will be:

- Regular and routine monitoring and supervision of support given
- On the spot visit to determine the progress of the activities
- Liaise with BLPSL Community representatives, chiefs and village heads to give report on the utilization of the support
- Continuous training of locals to maintain WASH equipment and items for the benefit of the community

- Bi-weekly and monthly reports to address any challenges as they become due

The community people own the project and oversee the daily operations for the benefit of the community. Thus, it is important that a routine monitoring is carried out to ensure effective implementation of the project.

Budget: Please see Budget Sheet attached

BLP supports and is implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals # 1, 4, 5, 6, and 17

