

**Sierra Leone Community Based Health Care
Programme Q1 2011 Report**

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**for
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Executive Summary

Thanks to the continued support and generosity of Soroptimist International Wales South Health Education & Hygiene Trust, the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society's (SLRCS) Community Based Health Programme is improving the health and hygiene status of vulnerable communities throughout Sierra Leone.

Between 1 January and 31 March 2011, Red Cross staff and volunteers continued to support communities to: improve access to reproduction and child health services, provide support and care to people living with HIV and AIDS, increase awareness on the prevention and control of communicable diseases, and improve access to safe water and adequate sanitation. The communities, towns and villages receiving this support continue to have a strong relationship with SLRCS as well as a sense of ownership over the programme.

Following the outbreak of Lassa fever in Bombali and Port Loko last year, the Red Cross continues to closely monitor the situation and raise crucial awareness about the importance of early detection and control of Lassa fever.

Highlights

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

- 10 health talks and five drama performances promoting the importance of early detection and control of Lassa Fever.
- Youth Peer educators carried out 45 Health Promotional talks on the importance of family planning and contraceptive use with out-of-school youths. These talks reached a total of 765 young people in communities across all 13 branches
- Red Cross volunteers monitored the growth of 1,246 children under five years old. 901 children were found to be healthy, while 345 children were found to be severely malnourished and immediately referred to health facilities for appropriate treatment.

Achievements during Q1 2011

HIV prevention and reducing stigma

During the reporting period, 42 awareness raising drama performances on issues surrounding HIV were conducted by Youth Peer Educators. Reaching 12,532 young people and adults, these performances focused on the prevention of mother to child transmission and HIV voluntary counselling and testing.

A total of 262 Youth Peer Educators participated in 36 meetings in Koinadugu, Tonkolili, Bo and Matru, in which volunteers reflected on past activities, successes and future planning.

In addition, the construction of 14 condom outlets is now in progress across all branches in order to promote HIV prevention.



HIV care, support and treatment

Home Based Care facilitators and Health Officers made 11 home visits, providing a life-line of support to people living with HIV and AIDS in Bo, Koinadugu Moyamba and Bombali.

In Moyamba, Kambia, Kono, Pujehun and Koinadugu, 45 pregnant women and 13 men were referred for Voluntary Confidential Counseling and Testing (VCCT) and Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT).



Promotion of sexual health in schools and communities

Youth Peer Educators carried out 361,109 outreach sessions, including one to one health talks and group discussions for young people across 11 Red Cross branches.

These vital sessions increased awareness of sexual health issues and helped to reduce stigma towards people living with HIV and AIDS.

Immunisation and growth monitoring

During home visits by 227 Red Cross volunteers, 321 children were found to be fully immunised against vaccine preventable diseases and a further 25 children were referred for immunisation at appropriate health facilities.

In addition, Red Cross volunteers monitored the growth of 1,246 children under 5 years old. 901 children were found to be healthy, while 345 children were found to be severely malnourished and immediately referred to health facilities for appropriate treatment.



Maternal and child Health

A total of 913 home visits were carried out by 275 Red Cross volunteers, who disseminated crucial health messages to households including messages about the importance of exclusive breast feeding. Volunteers reached 7,842 people including pregnant and lactating women.

Across all Red Cross branches, 14 community meetings were held to promote family planning and raise awareness about teenage pregnancy.

Early detection and control of Lassa Fever

During the reporting period, a total of 10 health talks and 5 drama performances have continued to promote the vital importance of early detection and control of Lassa Fever. Following the outbreak of Lassa Fever in Bombali and Port Loko last year, Branch Health Officers and the District Health Medical Team have continued to closely monitor the situation and promote awareness-raising activities in communities.

Community discussion groups about Lassa Fever were organized in Bo, Bombali, Pujehun, Moyamba, Kenema, Kailahun, Koinadugu, Bothe & Mattru, Port Loko and Western Area. During these meetings presentations were made by the District Health Medical Team.

In addition, school quiz competitions about the prevention and control of Lassa Fever, malaria and TB were carried out in Bo, Bonthe, Moyamba and Pujehun.



Hygiene promotion and safe water

Between January and March, volunteers chlorinated 49 wells, including 4 hand pumps and 45 traditional wells, which are now providing safe water to 5,674 people. Community awareness-raising sessions on the importance of good hygiene practices took place in 13 branches, reaching a total of 20,772 people.

A further 1,552 people took part in 46 community meetings which promoted safe excreta disposal.