

# Sierra Leone Agape Voluntary Effort

October 2020

From David Musa, SAVE Executive Director

Shallom!

This edition of the SAVE Inc. Newsletter is a "Thank You Note" to God almighty: to Jesus Christ, His One and Only Son: and to the Holy Spirit, for taking us through nearly three decades of ministry in the USA, Sierra Leone, and to a growing extent, other parts of West Africa. Thirty years – oh how the time has flown! It is difficult to catalogue all the blessings the Lord has showered on Sierra Leoneans and other West Africans through your generosity, encouragement, and participation. Your time, talents, and treasures have been invested where "moth and rust will not corrupt".

We cannot forget, and would love to particularly thank and acknowledge our beloved and numerous Partners and supporters over the years. Without your input, spiritually, physically, and fiscally, SAVE would probably be a pleasant but distant memory by now! Cemented in my mind is your personal love and friendship over these years!

Every time I make my annual trip to Sierra Leone, I derive special pleasure in visiting the Bethel School at Malama – one of our early significant investments. What a blessing to realize that through partnerships with indigenous believers, we could make humble but significant contributions to the building of much needed and desired Christian leadership in Sierra Leone.

The growth of Christian witness and contribution to tertiary institutions in Sierra Leone has been very significant in the past two decades. This has resulted in robust participation of committed Christians in nearly all spheres of the Sierra Leonean community. Particularly, it has been interesting and encouraging to note that a significant number of SLEFES graduates and Alumni, now serve in the Sierra Leone Parliament.

In late February of this year, five Board Members accompanied me to Sierra Leone for a medical mission with our partner (Bethel World Outreach) and meetings with our many partners to receive reports on their activities and plans for the upcoming season. While these meetings are always a joy, we heard a consistent thread of financial constraints we hope to address with our US fundraising. We left the country as the US (as well as Sierra Leone) were closing borders due to Covid, but we praise the Lord for safe, uneventful travel for the entire group. You will see in this Newsletters reports on our Medical Mission, and Covid activity there, along with responses by our Partners. We praise God for their ongoing ministry to their varied constituents.

Pray that the Lord will continue to saturate Sierra Leone, and West Africa at large, with His presence and influence through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Villagers respond to an invitation to accept Christ during the showing of The Jesus Film



SAVE meets with Pastor Mahoney and members of DISCET



## Report on SAVE's Medical Mission to Sierra Leone

In March 2020, SAVE supported our Church Planting partner, Bethel World Outreach on a 3-day medical mission to Magbety Village, where a church had recently been planted. The mission Team of 45 people included 3 SAVE Board members but was comprised of many volunteers from Bethel church in Makeni.



*Dr. Palmer and nurses eager to serve villagers*

There was no established clinic in the area, so temporary facilities were prepared to shield people from the hot sun. Also, there was no clean running water in this village (an issue in many village communities), further complicating the work. There were about 12-15 nurses and other medical personnel along with Drs. Palmer (SAVE) and Kangbai (Bethel). The remaining 30 volunteers assisted with various supporting roles.

The primary conditions of focus were hypertension, diabetes and other local health issues like de-worming. The largest single element of expense for the mission was the cost of drugs. Many of the conditions noted above required dispensing of the appropriate medicines. This first endeavor

with Bethel was so helpful in identifying what might be needed in other areas as Bethel replicates the medical mission model



*Villagers waiting to be seen by medical staff*

developed here. Detailed records were kept that can be used for future follow up for medical support. By the end of the mission, over 800 villagers were served, and the team stayed later than scheduled on the last day to make sure all those in line were addressed.

During the mission, The Jesus Movie was shown to 300 villagers in their own language, and 80 of them gave their lives to Jesus! In addition, one story emerged where

a villager opposed to the establishment of a church in the village would not let his granddaughter be seen by the medical team, despite significant burn wounds. But in the end, the love and prayer of the team were effective, and the young girl was brought for treatment. By that time her injuries were such that she needed hospital care. The team collected and donated some funds for this desperate situation, and provided transportation to the hospital, where the child received immediate surgery to the great joy of family members. Thanks to all the SAVE supporters for enabling us to reach out to the least of these in Sierra Leone!

## Sierra Leone: COVID-19 Status in October 2020 (Dr. Emeric Palmer)

On March 11th 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO), declared COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel SARS-2 corona virus, a pandemic. Sierra Leone set up a national COVID Emergency Response Committee (NaCOVERC) to coordinate its response prior to its first confirmed case on March 29th, 2020. Mass closings and two 3-day lock downs occurred in April and May, and a 11PM curfew that's still in place. The gradual lifting of restrictions had continued with resumption of international air-travel into and out of Sierra Leone. The ground border is yet to be officially opened, as of October 2020, although illegal border crossings persist.

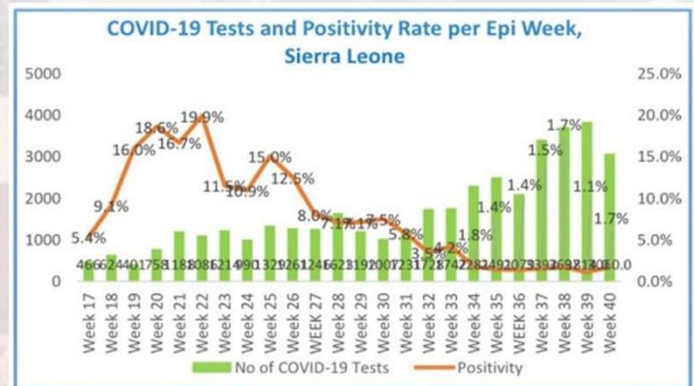


Figure 6: COVID 19 Test and Positivity Rate per Epi Week

There have been 2,295 positive cases, with 72 deaths, an Overall Case Fatality Rate of 0.4%. The following trends have been recorded: decreasing positivity rates with increased testing which suggests slowing of the spread, and no significant excess deaths attributable to the pandemic, i.e. no increase in the number of deaths than would be expected from previous years' statistics. It seems the mitigation measures, however limited, have had a positive impact.

The latest CDC travel guide to Sierra Leone cautions against non-essential travel to Sierra Leone. SAVE has decided to avoid official visits to Sierra Leone during the Pandemic.



## **SAVE Partner Responses to COVID Times**

These are unprecedented times. That almost seems like an understatement. These times can be isolating, with lock-downs and fear of disease rampant. But SAVE and its Partners are not waiting to engage! So in the midst of extraordinary times, we continue to rely on and work through our ministry partners to “maintain a healthy balance between evangelism and social action, embracing relationships with relief.” Here’s some of the ways our Partners are reaching out in these challenging times.

### **DISCET**

Our counseling, evangelism and training partner is currently involved in tailored Premarital Marriage Counseling (as churches are opened for public services), as well as Marriage Counseling, and Preventive Counseling on the radio. In addition, DISCET is engaged with the Ministry of Social Welfare of Sierra Leone, and the head of the psychosocial pillar at the Emergency Operations Center for the counseling of COVID-19 victims. In conjunction with The Association of Christian Professional Counselors in Sierra Leone, DISCET will help provide the experts. We will continue to pray, and have provided extra funding for some of the means to accomplish these goals.

### **EFSL**

The Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone has found themselves overwhelmed with requests from member churches across Sierra Leone for assistance during this period. Unfortunately they lack the resources to respond as they would like. SAVE has increased support to help meet these expanded needs.

### **SLEFES**

With colleges and universities closed nationwide, our Evangelical Student Fellowship Partner has moved its ministries on-line through social media and Zoom meetings, training and fellowships. They are connecting with over 1,500 students from 35 schools. Our Partner states, “The feedback from the students on this initiative is very impressive and comforting knowing that COVID has not been able to close the door of reaching our students with the gospel.” They are also launching Project Food Basket to help meet basic needs in their student communities. SAVE will be substantially increasing support to help meet these needs.

## **Scripture Union**

Our primary-secondary student ministry Partner had opened multiple new school-based ministries earlier this year, before being put on hold with the closing of schools. But there have been increasing Zoom training sessions, and also a new radio program in one district to encourage students to grow in their relationship with Christ.

## **Bethel World Outreach**

With all church meetings being cancelled in Sierra Leone, the funding of our church-planting partner has been substantially reduced, and its pastors going without basic needs being met on a regular basis. SAVE has funded a program to support these pastors with food and supplies, as well as supporting a Bethel outreach to some of their hardest hit communities, bringing great joy to member and non-member community participants as well.

## **Servants of the Word (SOW – Gambia)**

Covid-19 has broadly affected SOW, as headmaster Steven Musa-Kormayea’s entire family contracted the virus, thankfully fully recovering to continue ministry. The Gambian government closed all schools forcing SOW to provide classes in alternate forms, even with teachers stranded outside the country. The leadership and remaining faculty have been very innovative to keep SOW advancing His message to the peoples of Western Africa. Praise God for His grace.

Work on the SOW library had begun with funding from Zionsville Fellowship. Students and faculty have been ordering cement supplies and finalizing construction plans to begin in earnest after the rainy season.

## **SAVE’s Response**

As we read these reports with both hope and heartbreak, we decided to reduce our cash reserves to minimal levels to help fund these needs of our Partners by more than doubling our annual support. We could not do this without your prayers and generous support. We praise the Lord for our supporters meeting the intense needs on the ground in Sierra Leone!

All donations should be sent to the Treasurer or you may contribute on line at [www.SaveSierraLeone.org](http://www.SaveSierraLeone.org)  
 Reminder: SAVE board members are willing to come to your church or Bible study group and personally share what God is doing, how you can pray specifically or how you can partner with Sierra Leone Agape Voluntary Effort. | S.A.V.E., Inc. is a 501 (c) 3, tax-exempt, non-profit organization

SAVE, Inc. | c/o Larry Moran, Treasurer | 3847 Shelborne Ct. | Carmel, IN 46032 | 317-989-2448

## Finance Update

SAVE has opened its treasury and doubled partner funding, and remains committed to finding more ways to support our partners in the upcoming months. We so appreciate your generous prayers and financial support at all times, but especially in this challenging season. While actual travel plans to Sierra Leone must await developments with Covid, our Partners continue their work. Accordingly, we hope to invest as follows for 2021:

Project	Amount
Investment in partner infrastructure lost in Covid	\$ 20,000
Support of ongoing Covid response initiatives	15,000
Expansion of church planting support	5,000
Medical mission follow-up and support	5,000
Expansion of SOW campus in The Gambia	5,000
<b>Total special needs budget for 2021</b>	<b>\$ 50,000</b>

As the Lord leads, please consider an unrestricted gift to SAVE, Inc. so we can continue expanded support for our ministry partners. Thanks in advance for your incredible support in the past, and now, as we move through this Covid season with our brothers and sisters in Sierra Leone. We could do nothing without you!

## Current Board of Directors – 2020

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