



Orphan Relief and Rescue
Annual Field Report
September 2014- August 2015



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Liberia Summary

The program year of 2014-2015 in Liberia was executed by Country Director Matthew Cramer and our amazing Liberian staff.

This year we were able to maintain our current Relief Program, provide a number of healthcare services for hundreds of children, provide additional scholarships for junior high and high school students, and continue our strong partnership with the Government of Liberia through the operation of the Joint Deinstitutionalization Transition Center (JDTC).

Due to the Ebola crisis the first four months of the year were staffed solely by our Liberian staff who did an outstanding job serving the children and maintaining day to day operations of the organization. In January Matthew

Cramer was able to return to the field and re-establish governmental relationships and to strengthen our current programs.

Relief

The Relief Program continued this year with regular food deliveries to two orphanages through May 2015. In June and July 2015 we tapered down the amount of food delivered to one of them, as they are now graduated from our program. We have now graduated three orphanages from our food program and they are now self sufficient in this area.

In March of this year we discontinued the distribution of imported rice and bulgar wheat, instead supplying locally grown and processed rice and locally grown grated cassava, or gari. We are also supplying flour that has been processed here in Liberia as well. This means that the only food we distribute that is not grown or processed locally is the powdered milk.

We also completed our annual Christmas distribution which was a little smaller this year as only our Liberian staff were there to execute it. This year there were 175 bundles delivered to four orphanages and our JDTC (Joint Deinstitutionalization Transition Center). Children received bundles that included toys, candy, toothbrushes, school supplies, new flip flops, and new clothes.

In July we received a shipment of clothes and food donated and shipped by JP Morgan Chase for children orphaned by ebola. We worked with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection to distribute these goods to the appropriate communities.

We also received 30 bags of rice from Universal Outreach which were delivered to Ebola effected families in cooperation with the Ministry.

Healthcare

The most important thing for the healthcare program this year is that none of our staff, children we serve, or friends of the organization got Ebola. However, this year there were the normal bouts of malaria, worms, and other common ailments at our core orphanages.

In May there was a measles outbreak at the JDTC (Joint Deinstitutionalization Transition Center), that infected half of the children. Rebecca was able to arrange vaccinations for the rest of the children with Dr. Sacra from ELWA hospital.

In June, Debbie Dezutter visited and did general health checks at each of our orphanages and the JDTC (Joint Deinstitutionalization Transition Center).

We continued to supply all of our orphanages with with buckets, clorox, and training throughout the Ebola crisis.

Construction

Early in the year West Construction finished the two story dormitory/ school building at Frances Gaskin.



This year we also subcontracted the rehabilitation of one well through a local organization called Orphan Concern Liberia. The project site was at a family home where thirteen people had died from Ebola, and twelve children had lost both parents to ebola and were now being taken care of by the surviving relatives in that same home. Their lack of access to clean water definitely didn't help to keep the survivors healthy and safe. We provided the funds to Orphan Concern Liberia who finished the well within a few weeks. This family is sharing this well with their whole community of a few hundred people.



Capacity Building

Two Orphanage Directors whom we have invested quite largely with, continue to impress us in their strive towards self sufficiency. They are Emmanuel and Evelyn, whom are directors of the Frances Gaskin home. Evelyn returned from her travel to Nigeria, where she received training in September, and immediately started applying what she learned while she was there. She is currently producing laundry soap, dish soap, and herbal bathing soap. They are also trying their hand at poultry, and they continue to cultivate a small garden at the orphanage.

Child Development Program

Due to the ebola crisis, the Child Development Program has not been able to maintain a few key components that has contributed to it's success namely, small groups and weekly teaching times. Despite this, ORR's scholarship program has continued it's success. When schools reopened after the Ebola crisis in March we had a total of twenty six students attending five schools off orphanage campuses. Elementary age students attend schools on campus. All of the students on the Scholarship Program received new uniforms, school

supplies, new shoes, and tuition. One of our scholarship students, was again enrolled at the prestigious boarding school, Ricks Institute. This student continues to perform well academically. In October he will be beginning his senior year. Eight children were enrolled at Carver Mission School, three children were enrolled at Bishop James Ferguson High School, and eight children attended the MacDella Cooper Foundation School.

In August we added four more students that will be enrolling in seventh grade in the next school year.

This year we had six young adults attending local universities. Four of the young adults participated in our Greater Opportunity Program and were provided food, accommodations, and transportation, in addition to their tuition expenses. Overall we have seen great success with the students academically and in their life choices. Pictured here is Eugene. He is going into his 3rd year of university. He is studying accounting.



Joint Deinstitutionalization Transition Center

The first year of operations of the JDTC (Joint De-institutionalization Transition Center) has been an overall success. We have twenty children that were brought to us in May 2014 by the Ministry of Children and Social Protection. Because of the Ebola crisis and the changes governmental structure these children have been in our care longer than we anticipated. After the return of international staff we have continued to encourage the relevant government agencies to find justice for these children through the prosecution of their trafficker. To date the Ministry of Justice has not yielded to pressure to take action in this case due to

the politics involved. In June and July of this year social workers from the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection conducted family tracing for these children and successfully located half of their families. The Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection is currently seeking to make these children legal wards of the state and then will find permanent care for them.

Through the year we have also housed a number of children in our capacity as a transit home. To date we have received seven children and reunified three.

This year the Government of Liberia restructured a number of ministries and agencies. This shake-up saw the removal of Social Welfare from the Ministry of Health as the division was added to the Ministry of Gender making it the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection. We were very happy to welcome the appointment of Lydia Sherman as the Deputy Minister of Children and Social Protection. The Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection continues its push towards de-institutionalizing the children in Liberia. ORR has continued to participate in the planning and execution of the Ministry's long term goals.

This year we also forged relationships with other relevant government institutions in addition to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, specifically the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Gender and Development. Each of these Ministries are key components in the fight for child justice. Through these relationships we hope to see more children helped and able to get justice.

In April we renewed our lease of the team house/ office for another year.

In August we contributed to the running of the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection website. Through this effort we have made it possible for the Department of Children and Social Protection to add important content for transparency. Particularly, they will be able to publish the step by step process for adoptions, the names of accredited adoption agencies, and the findings of the Independent Accreditation Committee on which orphanages are accredited, placed on probation, or closed by the government. We are waiting for them to make this information public as we have funded the means for them to do this, it is now in their ball court to make this happen.

Partnerships

- The partnership with the MacDella Cooper Foundation Academy (MCFA) continues. Orphan Relief and Rescue currently supports 8 children who attend this boarding school.

- A medical partnership with Dr. Samukai at the Family Health Center has continued. While her facility is a little more expensive, the level of care provided for our children is far beyond other local healthcare facilities
- We continued our relationship with the Trinity Dental Clinic as they provide dental care for our core orphanages.
- A partnership with Fabrar Rice was forged to supply our children exclusively with rice grown in Liberia.

Benin Summary

The 2014-2015 program year in Benin was executed by our in-country partners with regular visits and oversight by Rebecca Pratt, ORR President & Co-Founder.

The Benin Orphanage Safe Home

This home continues to be run very well through our partnership with a very trusted Orphanage Director. All the children are thriving and doing well emotionally, physically, academically and spiritually.

This year a Hotelierie School was opened on Campus for the older children in the home who started school later in life and will not be able to graduate from a normal high school program. Eight children from the home attend this school each day, and one young lady from the community. The hope is to open this up to the community on a larger scale in the future. This is a three year certification program in which they will receive a certificate of completion at the end of that three years, and can get a job at any hotel or restaurant or catering type business. They are learning how to bake, cook, cater, host events and all things relevant to the hotel industry.

There are five older children who are in apprenticeship programs living outside of the home. Two young men are in an electricity program, and two young men are in a plumbing program, and one young lady is in a nursing aid program. They are all doing very well. These five will receive their high school diplomas and their trade certificates at the end of their three year programs.



The orphanage director continues to run a large farm about an hour from the orphanage safe home, where she has cows, goats, and seasonal crops growing. She is using the farm to subsidize food for the kids and to train the older children how to farm.

Sebastien, the young boy in this home who received in 2013 one of the highest scholarship awards in the country, is now 15 and continues to thrive. He has now finished two full year at an elite military boarding school outside of the country, and is doing very well. During his school holiday he flies back to Benin to visit, Since he has no living parents, he still considers this orphanage safe home his home.

Benin Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Over the last two years we have been able to rescue 207 children from becoming trafficked from five different villages by intercepting the traffickers from purchasing the children. We have four anti trafficking team members who are from Benin.

Through this team we are able to build relationships with the locals in these high trafficking area's. They discovered that If we can get the children into school, and on our feeding program, and help the parents with micro loans so they can start a business, the parents will sign a contract with us saying they will never traffic their child out. We have had huge success with this.

We have also been able to rescue seven young girls who were slaves in Nigeria from being resold, We were able to put six of them on our sewing program because they were too old to put into school since they had never attended a school before.



The seventh girl is nine years old and is being tutored so she can be put into school in October when school begins. These children's stories of survival and abuse is unbelievable.

Micro-Enterprise Program

In the villages where these rescued children are from, we have put 154 parents on our micro finance program. Each parent has been able to start a business with their loans. Examples of businesses are animal breeding, baking services, buying and selling of household goods, and produce. Since December 2013, a total of 15 sewing machines were also purchased for villagers to start sewing businesses. Each person who wants to be on this program has to come to meetings each week where they learn about business and the value of each life. They also are learning about a God of love. This is also where we keep them accountable and monitor them to make sure they do not sell their children

In hearing these ladies testimonies in June 2015, one woman got up and shared that their whole business in this village used to be selling their children. She began to share that now they do not have to do that anymore. Their whole business now is what we are helping them with. She then pointed to

all the businesses the ladies had brought that day to show us. (See picture with ladies).

The neighboring villages are now begging us for the same program.



Cultural shifts

In some of the largest child trafficking export villages in Benin, we are sharing with them about a God of love who values each life and who has a plan and a purpose for each life. We are letting the villagers know that they are not forgotten as parents, and their kids are not forgotten. Each child has incredible worth and should never be sold or sent away. We know that without bringing them this message of hope, there will be no long-term change in this area. It is critical to help them to understand why human life is so valuable.

We are regularly sharing with parents the reasons why they should not traffic out their children, as well as the reality of what happens to the children when they send them away--the horrible abuse the children encounter. If parents cannot feed their child, we are now giving them an alternative. If parents have no means to send their child to school, they can come to our anti-trafficking team for help.

And, for parents who already sold their child, if they could find out from the trafficker where the child was sold, then we would help them with their child once they got them back. We committed to help get that child into school, on a feeding program, and help the family with small business endeavors.

We now have two girls who parents were the ones who brought them back and those girls are now in our program.

One little girl had been sold to a restaurant in Nigeria at the age of six. She was abused on every level and used as a slave for two years. She is now nine years old and our interview with her was unbelievable. She is now safe and in a foster home getting ready to go to school in October. (Pictured below).

We have been able to completely stop the traffic of children in five villages and plan to continue these efforts.



We are seeing a cultural shift happening in these villages as our anti-trafficking team are in these families homes on a regular basis constantly teaching,

challenging and helping the families of these children. The value of human life is being walked out tangibly in these stories. It is incredible.

Within these five villages, when a neighbor hears that a child is going to be sold to a trafficker, they call the chief of the village to get involved, then the chief calls our anti trafficking team, who then intervenes to rescue the child. These rescue missions have been a great team effort with the village leaders, our anti trafficking team, and concerned neighbors. We are seeing a huge cultural shift.

It currently takes approx. 360 dollars per child to keep on our school, feeding and monitoring program. We currently have a campaign to help bring finances in for this.