Dear Friends,

These first six months of 2020 have been extraordinary in every way, with COVID–19 upending lives everywhere and the #BlackLivesMatter movement accelerating in strength and impact.

We are profoundly grateful for your unprecedented support. Thanks to your generous gifts, our teams in Sierra Leone are putting on the finishing touches to six new school-construction projects—with all planning to hold openings in September—and repairing one of our older schools.

With the arrival of COVID-19 in late March, our on-the-ground partners have needed to adjust, once again, so that they may continue to serve our school communities during the pandemic, despite all obstacles. Sustained by your generosity, they are making it possible for us, together, to advance our work and advocate for the countless number of voiceless children and families who seek literacy, education, health, and a better future.

Below are some highlights as we join together during these unsettling times to foster health among students and their families and help education become a normal part of every child’s life in Sierra Leone. As we closely follow news from Sierra Leone and hope that COVID-related deaths remain low, we also remain committed to our mission and the belief that all children, no matter where they were born or the color of their skin, should have the opportunity to follow their dreams and choose their own pathways.

Thank you for your continued support. Please stay in touch.

Warmest regards,

Cindy
COVID-19 RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic brings back painful memories and fears from the 2014–2016 Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone. Our partners’ tireless efforts to distribute sanitation supplies, food, and information on how to stay healthy were essential to keeping our school communities Ebola-free. Our partners are implementing some of the same strategies they developed through their extensive experience working on the frontlines during the Ebola crisis.

Uman Tok is now sewing facemasks in addition to their usual production of menstruation kits. The Learning Foundation has been providing online reading and learning activities, and Programme for Children and our Project Manager for the Kabala area, Clinton Caulker, have been distributing sanitation supplies and food as they continue to manage school construction projects. These efforts, combined with donor generosity, are helping students and their families to stay healthy and limit the spread of COVID-19.

So far this year…

• 400 buckets, 13,800 bars of soap, 10 thermometers, 587 bags of rice, and 44 bags of salt for school communities

• 201 radios for students to listen to the Ministry of Education’s radio lessons while schools are closed

• Online reading program to keep students engaged with learning

• 14,326 facemasks produced for school communities, hospitals, frontline workers, and other organizations, including the US Embassy and Peace Corps Sierra Leone
SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

This year, we have expanded our partnerships and our geographic areas of coverage within Sierra Leone. In the northern part of the country, our new partners, Clinton Caulker and SKA Ventures, have been managing three school construction projects. All of these schools are in very remote areas, and are being completed just before the rainy season. Programme for Children has been managing four school construction projects in communities in the southern part of Sierra Leone.

So far this year…

• Two new primary schools with toilets and rainwater collection handwashing stations: one in Largor in the South and one in Kadanso in the North
• Two new junior secondary schools with toilets and rainwater collection handwashing stations: one in Laoma in the South and one in Koromasilaia in the North
• New classroom building with a water well, toilets, and a rainwater collection handwashing station for Muloma Women’s Technical Vocational Center in southern Sierra Leone
• Two additional classrooms with toilets and a rainwater collection handwashing station at Niagorehun Primary School, originally constructed in 2009
• One school refurbishment at Kamagbengbeh Primary School, originally constructed in 2016
MENSTRUAL HEALTH & EDUCATION

Periods don’t stop for pandemics. Our partners at Uman Tok have been diligently working to continue producing Days for Girls menstruation kits while they are also producing thousands of face coverings in response to COVID-19. At the end of last year, they moved into a larger space, allowing them to maintain social distancing while sewing these essential resources. Our partners continue to safely deliver menstruation kits to all our school communities, even in the midst of the pandemic.

So far this year…

• 495 kits produced
• 740 menstruation kits distributed to groups for girls in school
• Uman Tok became its own NGO with an expanded space to sew menstruation kits and procured its own vehicle for distributing kits and conducting reproductive health education.

THANK YOU FROM ALL OF US AT SCHOOLS FOR SALONE!

SchoolsforSalone.org