

**ChildFund International
Humanitarian Situation Report Template**

**Humanitarian Situation Report # 7
COVID-19 – Sierra Leone
May 20, 2020**

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May 13, 2020- May 20 2020

Part 1: The Overall Situation

COUNTRY

The first case of COVID-19 was detected in Sierra Leone on the evening of March 30, 2020. Two days later on Wednesday, April 1 2020, a second case of the virus was confirmed in the country. COVID-19 cases are rising exponentially in Sierra Leone As of May 19, 2020, 534 cases of the virus have been confirmed by health officials. The country recorded 147 new cases since the last sitrep. It is rumoured there is going to be another lockdown in the coming days, although government officials have not responded. As cases keep rising, the government is increasing the treatment beds in all treatment centers, starting with the 34 Military hospital in Freetown. One of the recent cases is from the Pademba Road prisons in Freetown. Falaba, Kailahun and Koinadugu districts become the recent districts to record two cases each of the virus. A total of 13 out of Sierra Leone's 16 districts have now recorded at least a case of the virus. There are two main characteristics of the cases from Sierra Leone:

- Majority of the cases are asymptomatic.
- It is clear Sierra Leone is experiencing Community transmission given the hike in cases

The government extended an initial 14-day partial lockdown until further notice. The Directorate of Science, Technology, and Innovation (DSTI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS), Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC), and Niche Solutions created the Electronic Pass (E-PASS) Management System (<http://www.epass.eoc.gov.sl>) as part of an integrated ICT response to COVID-19. The electronic issuance of passes will now make it easier and faster for the EOC to process requests and authorize the movement of essential goods, and service providers during the COVID lockdown and curfew in a transparent and auditable process.
<http://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/sierra-leone-s-covid-19-lock-down-and-curfew-e-pass>

One of the presidential guards tested positive, for which President Julius Maada Bio was on self-isolation, starting Tuesday, April 21, 2020. President Julius Maada Bio wrapped up his self-isolation after one of his presidential guards tested positive for COVID-19. Information reaching citizens from State House confirms the President and his family members are tested negative for the virus.
<https://www.africanews.com/2020/05/04/virus-free-sierra-leone-records-covid-19-scuffles-over-quarantine-at-airport/> In another development, President Bio has appointed the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Solomon Jamiru as the official spokesperson for COVID-19.

The country completed the second phase of a 3-day lock-down which started on Sunday, May 3, 2020, and spanned through Tuesday, May 5 2020. Government, through the Bank of Sierra Leone, instructed that all Banks be opened on the weekends leading to the lockdown to enable citizens to access their monies for preparing for the 3-day lockdown. Yet, many people observed the lockdown with mixed feelings. There are grumblings around the government not informing citizens early of a potential lockdown.

Some of the major challenges associated with the lockdown are that the vast majority of the Sierra Leonean population relies on daily wages possibly after the sale of their products, or days job, to survive. As such, they are grappling with food shortages and water crises. Shortages of water, especially in Freetown, has left many tongues wagging. Water is crucial to practising good hygiene, and ultimately, fighting the pandemic.

There are also challenges in procuring Infection, Prevention and Control materials. There is, for instance, a spike in the trade of veronica buckets. There is, at least, a 20 percent hike in the cost of buckets and hand sanitizers. Pharmacies ran out of standard surgical protection. At the Ola During children's hospital, sick children have been turned away since the 100-strong staff went into self-isolation, following a doctor testing positive.

There is heightened sensitization by government officials and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) across the country. CSOs are doing nationwide monitoring of government's actions with regards fighting the pandemic.

President Bio has in a press conference with journalists, informed the nation that 100% of contacts of cases (those who encountered infected persons) have been identified, and 75% of those that came very close to these contacts have also been identified. Meanwhile, a 14 day inter-district lockdown has been imposed starting from Sunday 12th April 2020 to curtail the spread of the disease across the country. This is since been extended indefinitely.

There is heightened fear by Sierra Leoneans to visit hospitals and health centers across the country, for which the government has sensitized there are separate beds for persons infected with the virus.

Total Number of COVID-19 Cases Reported	Number of Deaths	Number of Cases Recuperated
534	167	167

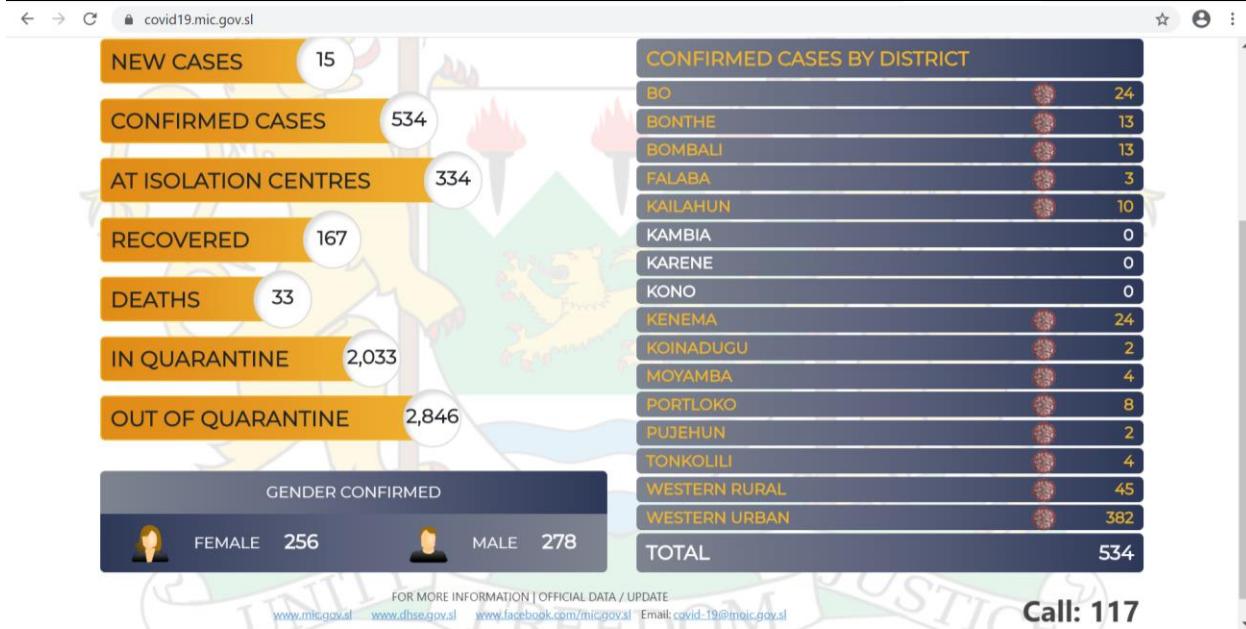
SOURCE: <http://mic.gov.sl/>

ChildFund-supported areas (Provide only if you have reliable data on this. You can report on a consolidated basis or by program state/region/province/etc. if you have this detail.)

Geographical area (country or state/region/province	Total Number of COVID19 Cases Reported	Number of Deaths	Number of Cases Recuperated
Northern West Region	8		
Northern East Region	22		

Eastern Region	34		
Southern Region	43		
Western Area Rural	45		
Western Area Urban	382		

SOURCE: National Ministry of Health or other reliable source: <http://mic.gov.sl/>



- Any relevant background information about areas affected.
Western Area (Sierra Leone's capital city) is Sierra Leone's COVID-19 hotspot, having recorded 81 cases of the novel virus.
- Host government posture: Have they declared a state of emergency and/or requested outside assistance? Which nationwide measures has the government taken, e.g., limitation on meetings, internal travel, school closures etc.
- Sierra Leone is still in a State of Emergency. Government is still calling on donor and development partners to fill in the gaps by giving their expertise and human, financial and material resources in the fight against the pandemic.

The United Arab Emirates sent an aid plane containing seven metric tons of medical supplies to Sierra Leone to bolster the country's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19.

- <https://reliefweb.int/report/sierra-leone/uae-sends-medical-aid-sierra-leone-fight-against-covid-19>

- Sierra Leone is among 25 countries with immediate debt relief from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). See related link: <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/13/pr20151-imf-executive-board-approves-immediate-debt-relief-for-25-countries>. Also, quite recently, the World Bank Group approved a \$7.5 million grants for COVID-19 response in Sierra Leone. This, many people believe, will cushion some of the burden on government and is expected to reduce the hardship in so far as the Sierra Leone economy is concerned.

- What responses has the government put into place to address the health crisis and/or the economic impact?
- Sierra Leone's Public National Emergency Operation Center (PNEOC) is still very functional, as Government together with its partners has paid keen attention to thorough disease surveillance, epidemiology, social mobilization and logistics
- 2,033 people are currently being quarantined
- 2,846 people discharged from quarantine
- 334 people at isolation center
- There is an alteration in the official working hours (8:00 AM -5:00 PM now 9:00 AM-4:00 PM) for government agencies. 8:00 AM -5:00 PM
- Social Mobilization nationwide
- Nationwide night curfew from 9:00 PM-6:00 AM is in effect
- COVID-19 keeps worsening the economic situation in Sierra Leone. Every day comes with new challenges, as government institutes new measures. The recent partial lockdown by the government is affecting businesses. Freetown, for instance, relies on produce from the provinces. With this new measure, business/market women suffer the most, as they are the ones most engaged in producing and selling crops. The transport sector is also affected if passengers are not there to carry from one place to another. Big businesses are still very constrained. Government revenue generation is now snail-paced, compared to how things were before COVID-19.
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- What travel restrictions has the government put in place for travelers entering the country?
- The air, land and seaports are closed in Sierra Leone, except for essential items for fight against the virus. Soldiers are manning the borders with Guinea and Liberia.

Part 2: The Situation in Areas Where ChildFund Works

Partner Organization (Use Salesforce identifying code/name.)	# of Enrolled and Sponsored Children		COVID19 Cases Reported in ChildFund Communities (Y/N/Unknown) Provide number if available.	Number of Enrolled Children Reported with COVID19 (If available.)	Number of enrolled children diseased as result of COVID19
	Sponsored	Enrolled			
Partner 1 4251/ N'domakeh	2727	4000	0	No available information	No available information
Partner 2 4103/ Munafa M'patie	4312	6123	0	No available information	No available information
Partner 3 4104/ Daindembe n	4240	6401	0	No available information	No available information

Child deaths: List any sponsored child (with Partner organization and child ID from salesforce) diseased as a result of COVID19. (Note: These need to be reported immediately following the regular sponsorship protocols.) *At the moment, none of our enrolled children has been infected.*

Partner Organization (Use Salesforce identifying code/name.)	What is the status of the program/sponsorship processes (operational/suspended)?					
	Program Implementation	CVS	M&E Level 2	Enrollment /Disaffiliation	Sponsorship Communication	DFC
Partner 1 N'domakeh-4251	Operational	On hold	Operational	Suspended	Enrollment Operational	operational
Partner 2 Munafa M'patie-4103	Operational	On hold	Operational	Suspended	Enrollment Operational	operational
Partner 3 Daindembe n-4104	Operational	On hold	Operational	Suspended	Enrollment Operational	Operational

Note: As a global measure, all sponsor visits have been suspended.

- What issues are children in these areas facing (food shortages, safety concerns, schools closure, etc.)? Food shortages, safety concerns, schools closure, high prices of food, transportation constraints, Child protection risks caused or exacerbated by crisis situation, limited access to Child Protection Services and increased psychosocial distress among caregivers, child abuse, neglect, teenage pregnancy,

Part 3: ChildFund's Response

3.a. Overall

- Who is or will be leading/managing the response? Who is or will be leading/managing the response? Victor Kamara, Programs and Sponsorship Director
- How is ChildFund linked with humanitarian coordination structures, i.e., in which clusters or working groups do we participate? The most recent/next meeting and who is representing ChildFund? ChildFund is currently active in two main government preparedness clusters (Child Protection and Health) which are leading the government's efforts in preparedness for any potential outbreak of the covid19 disease in Sierra Leone. The Country Director and SMT have appointed Victor Kamara (Programs and Sponsorship Director) to represent ChildFund at all coordination forums and provide an update to SMT on the outcome of all meetings and engagements. The most recent virtual meeting attended was on the 5th May 2020 with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to discuss the need for a large scale food security assessment to determine the impact of COVID-19 on the food security situation of the country. Meanwhile, the Country Director, on the other hand, leads donor engagement on same, as and when an opportunity arises. Currently, the donor community is focused on support government to compliment gaps within the national COVID-19 response budget. Meanwhile, ChildFund Sierra

Leone is tracking and in constant touch with key donors for any potential opportunity that may arise.

3.b. Program Response

Please organize your program response report as per the 4 objectives included in our global response plan. You can add an additional category if you have response activities planned or executed that do not align with these objectives. For each objective use the questions below to guide your report.

- What kind of response activities or interventions have been executed? Medical supplies and IPC materials What support items are needed or have been collected/distributed?
 - The donated items include assorted essential drugs and other relevant medical supplies (hand gloves, respiratory and normal masks among others). The donation by ChildFund came a day after a second case of COVID-19 was announced. Health officials at MoHS say ChildFund was the first International Non-governmental Organisation to make such donations to the fight against the virus in Sierra Leone. Some of the items donated by ChildFund such as: the N95 respiratory mask, is in short supply in the international market, for which the MoHS staff were so appreciative. As of Sunday, April 5 2020, 6 cases had been recorded in the country.



Photo caption: Donation of essential medical supplies to MoHS

- Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) materials (veronica buckets, handwash) donated by ChildFund are currently being used by children in the various communities targeted within the organisation's operational areas in the Koinadugu, Bombali and Kailahun districts.
- ChildFund Sierra Leone has developed a comprehensive COVID-19 plan with complimentary proposal and budget for potential donors. The key areas of proposed response intervention include Direct Cash transfers to vulnerable households, Education support to pupils through the provision of solar-powered radios to follow ongoing radio learning programs, community

awareness through IEC materials, IPC materials and support to coordination efforts by Ministries Departments and Agencies.

- The LPs have submitted their COVID-19 Response plan.



Photo caption: Veronica buckets donated by ChildFund being utilized

ChildFund on May 13 2020 donated 360 veronica buckets and wash and 100 IEC (COVID-19) poster to the Ministry of Trade and Industry for use by Market Women in Freetown.



Caption: Donation of IPC materials to the Ministry of Trade and Industry for use by market women





Caption: IEC Material donated to the Ministry of Trade and Industry

- What is the current progress of implementation vs. the established response plan?
- For sitreps submitted after ChildFund response has been initiated, what is the current progress of implementation vs. the established response plan?

3.a. Cash Transfers

Discussions have been held with LPs to understand lessons learned from previous cash transfer initiative during the 2015 Ebola response. It has been agreed that unconditional cash transfer will be made to most vulnerable children in our operational areas for an initial period of 3 months. The timeline will be reviewed based on emerging trends in the covid 19 response.

Previously, mobile money was used but proved to be ineffective since the service providers lacked the relevant infrastructure to reach remote communities with payments. This led to the cancellation of the contract. Unfortunately, the same service providers and infrastructure are the only available mobile money options in the country that has wider coverage and reach.

Together with the LPs, we have decided to explore the possibility of moving on with community banks this time. Apex bank which coordinates the activities of all community banks have been engaged and a formal MoU has been signed on the 12th May 2020. LPS are currently engaged in beneficiary selection for the cash transfer which was delayed due to the 3 days nationwide lockdown. **Cash transfer funds** has already been transferred into the Apex Bank Account. It is expected to hit their account this week. It is therefore expected that the first payment to beneficiaries will now be done during the week commencing 25th May 2020.

- Who are we partnering or collaborating with to provide our response? Government of Sierra Leone and our Local Partners
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- What kind of response activities are you still planning for the coming period? IPC materials to vulnerable communities, cash transfers, community sensitization.

3.b.1. Stop COVID-19 from infecting children and families

ChildFund's Global Response Plan

To help children and families protect themselves from COVID-19, we are installing community, handwashing stands; educating communities about symptoms, hygiene measures and where to get tested or treatment; and distributing soap, hand sanitizer, gloves and masks to families and frontline, health workers. For children who are being treated for COVID-19 or are subject to quarantine measures, we are creating child-friendly spaces with age-appropriate toys and reading matter.

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3.b.2. Ensure that children get food they need

ChildFund's Global Response Plan

To ensure that the most vulnerable families can keep food on the table, pay rent and cover other basic needs, we are providing cash for those families most needing this support, such as those who have lost their income because of COVID-19, child or elder-headed households, and/or households affected by disability or chronic illness. Where possible, we are distributing food and basic household items directly, carefully abiding by COVID-19 protection measures

3.b.2. 1. Cash Transfers and vouchers

- Is your CO planning or implementing cash transfers or vouchers as part of COVID19 response? Yes
- If so, brief description of progress to date. Cash transfers has been approved for implementation. Disbursement of funds to beneficiaries is expected to commence by 20th May 2020.

Cash transfers or vouchers executed

Beneficiaries		Amount transferred (US\$)	Transfer mechanism (i.e. mobile money, banking system other financial service provider etc,
Total	Gender (if available)		
	Female	Male	

3.b.2.2. Other responses in relation to objective 3.b.2.

3.b.3. Keep children safe from Violence : physically and emotionally

ChildFund's Global Response Plan

We are supporting community-based child protection systems that identify, respond to and refer cases of abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation. We are also providing virtual, online psychological first aid and counseling, and supporting temporary shelters for children who live on the street, providing hygiene supplies, food and other basics. We are also arranging safe and appropriate care for children who are separated from their caregivers due to treatment or prevention measures.

We are supporting children and communities with hand washing materials to ensure proper hygiene practices as prescribed by the government and WHO. Additionally, we are in close contact with community CP structures to identify, respond and refer cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation and all forms of violence against children in our operational areas

3.b.4. Help children continue to do their job: Learning

ChildFund's Global Response Plan

While schools remain closed, we are supporting children's learning through activities and tutoring sessions online or by radio. For students without reliable internet access, we are distributing home learning kits with materials and guides for their use.

We are supporting children with solar-powered radio to enhance their participation in the ongoing radio learning programs

3.b.5. Other responses

Below Sections for Internal Use Only

Part 4: Office and Staff Status

Office Status (Open/Closed)	Number of Staff:				
	Diagnosed with COVID19	Diseased from COVID19	Working from Office	Working from Home	On Special Leave
Open	0	0	All	0	0

Notes:

- Any cases of staff diseased need to be reported immediately to RD and GHR.
- Special leave as per [COVID19 Administrative Guidelines](#).

Number of staff/partner organization staff completed WHO COVID online training

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/training/online-training>.

Part 5 Human Resources

- Which visitors are there in the country ? Please include names, functions, contact information and arrival/departure dates for both IO and RO staff (note: due to the travel ban, this will apply only once the ban has been lifted) No visitors in-country
- Any gaps in staffing/need for deployment from other COs or Global Teams?
- Are there any other major HR issues? No major HR issues

Part 6 Safety & Security

- Are police and other services functioning in the normal manner? Yes
- Are the courts still operating? There has been some changes to court arrangements.
One remand centre inmate tested positive for covid-19 and the inmate is now labeled as case 90. There is an alteration to normal court schedules. See bullets below:
- All inmates at the Freetown male re-integration centre hereinafter called “the isolation and observation unit” at special court be transferred to the male correctional centre at Pademba road;
- All inmates at the remand section at Pademba Road and the correctional hospital are now with immediate effect relocated
- To “the isolation and observation unit” at special court as a quarantine measure; inmates from the correctional hospital will be transferred/treated separately from the other inmates;
- The church building at Pademba Road will be temporarily used as a medical referral centre for inmates at the male correctional centre.
- The current remand centre at Pademba Road is being fumigated and it is currently out of use.
- As a result of the above, it is hereby announced that with immediate effect, there is the cessation of all court activities in the magistrate courts nationwide for one month effective Tuesday, 28th April 2020 to prevent movement of possibly infected persons from police stations to court and court to prisons.

- Are there reports of looting or increased criminality? No
- Have military personal being deployed to patrol towns or cities? Yes, and to man the borders with Guinea and Liberia. Checkpoints are being mounted by military and police personnel on highways, to enforce/enhance hand washing before entering and exiting major district headquarters and the capital city, Freetown.
- Confirm the safety of staff and their families in the affected area.
All ChildFund staff are safe in the affected areas. In keeping with the government’s lockdown measures, all our staff are asked to stay in their districts of operations. Before the lockdown measures, ChildFund staff observed a two-day work-from-home simulation that ended on Friday, April 3 2020. Staff are been encouraged to observe all measures in line with government and WHO regulations to keep themselves and families safe
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- Have Safety and security risks/mitigation plans been updated to current environment? Yes
- Recommendations around any upcoming travel planned for staff or donors (note: Only once global travel ban has been lifted)

Part 7 Grants

List all active grants:

Grant Job Code	Grant Name	Donor	Status of Implementation (Normal/Reduced/Suspended)	Any specific guidance received from donor? (Yes/No)
OXFAM/EULOT2 -99-0256D	BAFS LOT 2 - Crops	EU	Reduced	No
OXFAM/EULOT2 -99-0257D	BAFS LOT 3 - Livestock	EU	Reduced	No
DIP/SGBV-990254D	SGBV Prevention and Response for women and Girls	EU	Reduced	No
P&G -25-04D	School and Community Health Support	Procter and Gamble	Normal	No
N/A	After Filming Support	ChildFund Korea	Normal	No
Grant Job Code	Grant Name	Donor	Status of Implementation (Normal/Reduced/Suspended)	Any specific guidance received from donor? (Yes/No)
OXFAM/EULOT2 -99-0256D	BAFS LOT 2 - Crops	EU	Reduced	No
OXFAM/EULOT2 -99-0257D	BAFS LOT 3 - Livestock	EU	Reduced	No
DIP/SGBV-990254D	SGBV Prevention and Response for women and Girls	EU	Reduced	No

Provide any additional narrative on how the COVID19 crisis affects implementation of your major grants. As it stands now, everything (including our operation) rest with what government suggests. Citizens envisage continued lockdowns. State of emergency is still very active. Business is not as usual. The country's concentration is on COVID-19

Part 8 Funding

Provide information about potential sources of funding, including grant donors, subsidy, Emergency Action Fund, Alliance members, GIK, etc., for these emergency response efforts using the chart below:

Donor	Program	Amount (USD)	Requested? (Y/N)	Confirmed? (Y/N)
Alliance Members <u>(Childfund Korea)</u>	Preparedness and response activities	76,000	Yes	Yes
Emergency Action Fund	Preparedness Activities	50,000	No	No

- Budget
 - o Outline how we will use this funding with a rough topline budget.

Part 9 Media/Communications

- o List of media who will be or have been contacted with press releases.
- Regional Director's "Coronavirus puts children in poverty at greater risk" Opinion Editorial on two dailies in Sierra Leone
- **Africa Young Voices AYV Newspaper:**
<http://www.ayvnewspaper.com/index.php/2020/04/20/corona-virus-puts-children-living-in-poverty-at-greater-risk/>
- ChildFund had one media mention on Africa Young Voices (AYV) Television— the most widely watched television in Sierra Leone that also has wider national and international online presence and coverage. See related link:
https://childfundintl.sharepoint.com/:v/s/programs/AfricaWest/SierraLeone/Ea_1onTTPuGuKZrxFxOBDMBKn9rIIEiYfhRuMkyn-1Aw?e=zadaEA
- Social media is also being updated on a regular basis and has been effective in communicating our interventions and also helping viewers with helpful tips for staying safe during the pandemic.
- Also, in order to engage Sierra Leoneans during lockdown, an article (capturing donation to the ministry of health) was developed, designed and disseminated via whatsapp and got a wider reach. The article in question (with photo folder) has been uploaded to Sierra Leone's page on Sharepoint. See related link:
<https://childfundintl.sharepoint.com/:b/s/programs/AfricaWest/SierraLeone/Ea9LL7CDTxZlh7cToXfY-dIB7nBJ1mqNuLvcAgK5Cit9A?e=dg0LeA>
 - o List of emergency CO spokespeople, including name, location, contact information, and languages spoken.
- The Main Spokesperson for Country office is James Pimundu – Country Director / jpimundu@ChildFund.org | 220 437 8078/79 | +23279876811 | English

In his absence: Victor Kamara – Programs and Sponsorship Director | vkamara@childfund.org
+23276847759 | English

- Plans for collecting photos/videos/stories, e.g., should an outside photographer be hired? Photos and short videos of ChildFund's donation of essential medical items were captured in-house and some have been used for Social Media updates and on articles.
 - Key points for messaging and visibility, particularly any host-government sensibilities that must be considered. Messages and guideline must be in compliance with the government's standard operating procedures (SOPs)
 - Politically suggestive comments must be avoided by all ChildFund staff. Sensitive information, facts and figures on COVID-19 must be sourced from the government of Sierra Leone's site and confirmed before releasing
- Support needed or requested from IO, GSS or Global Teams – whether onsite or remote. The CO requires continued IO guidance on COVID 19 preparedness and response efforts in line with ChildFund's policies and procedures.