

Cornerstone Wesleyan Church began a partnership with the community of Kenenday, Sierra Leone in January 2020. Facilitated by World Hope International (WHI), Cornerstone's generosity has helped promote leadership development and agricultural improvement, in this small, rural village located in the Karene District.

Sierra Leone was ranked one of the least developed countries in the world (184 out of 189 countries) by the 2018 Human Development Index.[1] There is overwhelming poverty with 74% of employed people living on less than \$3.10 a day, a life expectancy of 52 years old, and a literacy rate of 32.4%. Islam is the predominant religion in Sierra Leone, with more than 78% claiming to be Muslim. Less than 21% are Christian, while the remaining 1% adhere to traditional beliefs, also called animism. Subsistence farming is the primary means of livelihood in the region. Limba is the most common language followed by Krio, English and various other tribal languages, including Temne, Loko, Koranko and Mandingo.[2]



1UN Development Program. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SLE>
2CIA World Fact Book. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sl.html>

Village Profile

Kenenday is located in the Sella Limba Chiefdom in the Karene District in the Northern Region of Sierra Leone. Kenenday is comprised of 56 houses with a population of approximately 572 people representing 71 households from the Limba tribe. The village is lead by Headman L. Kamara. The Youth Leader is M. Kanu, and the women are represented by the Chairlady F. Kamara. Village elders, Pa M. Kamara and Ya G. Turay, provide advice to the Village Development Committee. Leadership positions are earned through consultation with elders, youth, and women's societies.

At the time of the original assessment, residents were engaged in subsistence farming including rice, peanuts, cassava, and sweet potatoes. They also reared animals such as goats and sheep. However, the community lived in extreme poverty without adequate seeds and too few animals to have food security. The community members have an overused drying floor to properly dry seeds and a grain storage to store seeds.

The community had one water well, which serves Kenenday and other surrounding communities during the dry season. Only a few latrines were available and were over used. As a result, most people used the bush for



defecation which spreads diseases. Residents lacked a Peripheral Health Unit (PHU) and families walked 5 miles away to Kamakwie Hospital to receive medical care.

Kenenday currently has no primary or secondary school. The nearest primary school is one mile away for grades 1-3. Children in grades 4 - 6 walk four miles to the nearest town of Kamalo or five miles to Kamakwie town. The secondary school students walk seven miles every day, which is one of the reasons for drop out, along with poverty and teenage pregnancy. There are 18 school aged children who are not attending school (7 boys and 11 girls) due to poverty, disability, single headed households, or as a result of being orphaned.

The village of Kenenday is made up of 55% Muslim with 35% Christian and 10% African traditional worshipers. Christians, who are mostly Wesleyan, meet in homes on a rotation to hold Sunday services.

Kenenday is beginning a transformation process which after three years aims to leave the community empowered to continue a cycle of development without continual outside assistance.

Completed Activities: January - June 2020

Baseline Survey

A random group of 10 community members (5 men and 5 women) were selected to complete the baseline survey. This will provide an information base against which to monitor and assess progress and effectiveness during implementation and after the activity is completed.

Village Development Committee

A Village Development Committee (VDC) was formed in Kenenday with the community electing 10 members. It is required that women be included in the membership to empower women in a male dominated society. Time is spent in the beginning of each Village Partnership investing in the foundation of an effective VDC because these leaders are the key stakeholders in the progress and success of the activities during the partnership. WHI acknowledges the fact that sustainable development depends on local leadership.

The workshop allowed community members to discuss their values, share knowledge, and brainstorm using resources to improve their community. The training was conducted with leaders reflecting on the power of dreams and identifying their values. Other topics included an understanding of Child Rights, knowing their roles, addressing conflict, and learning about trust and commitment.

Social Sustainability Self-Assessment

To promote sustainability, the Rural Development Specialist together with the Kenenday VDC conducted a social sustainability self-assessment exercise using transformational development indicators. The exercise showed the community is



growing in the areas of community representation and involvement, leadership, and decision making. They are maturing in accepting the role and importance of women in the decision making process and are willing to maintain that stance. They are still in need of external support from WHI and other development partners as they are still maturing in terms of community self-independence.

Distribution of Seed

The Kenenday community members are predominantly agrarian, engaged mostly in subsistence farming with the cultivation of the main staple crop of rice as well as peanuts, pepper, cassava, and sweet potatoes. The VDC selected the most vulnerable members of the community to receive agricultural seeds and as a result ensure food security. The criteria included female headed households, households with high proportion of children under five, elderly and lactating mothers, and households with people living with disabilities. Twenty-eight women each received two bushels of peanut seeds and 28 men each received two bushels of rice seeds as a loan. By providing this seed, harsh repayment terms to vendors are eliminated. Peanut seeds were exclusively given to women and rice to men as growing rice requires more physical work. The first harvest is expected in September for peanuts and December for rice. Farmers will pay back the community seed bank and the next selected farmers will receive the seed loan.



COVID-19

In early April, Sierra Leone began an inter-district partial lock down and curfew from 9pm to 6am to stem the spread of COVID-19. All non-essential inter-district travel was strictly prohibited and retail trade was limited to only the sale of food items, water, medicine, fuel, and other essential utilities. Citizens were advised to stay at home and strongly encouraged to wear face masks when out in public. All schools were closed. On June 23rd, President Julius Maada Bio announced the curfew would be adjusted to 11pm to 6am and the ban on inter-district travel was lifted. Commercial flights are expected to resume soon. Grades 6,9, and 12 are scheduled to return to school from July - September to take national exams.

We are grateful for the compassion and support your church is offering Kenenday!

WHI staff carefully balance training and community infrastructure projects to achieve sustainable development. The Village Partnership program allows for a continuous process of improvement for an impoverished community delivering opportunity, dignity and hope.

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