



**ONE CHILD AT A TIME**  
Annual Report 20



*First day of school for Safiatu  
(sponsored by Megan)  
2019-20 Academic Year*

# WHERE IS SIERRA LEONE?

## Did you know?

Population (2020): 8 million

[Australia (2020): 25.6 million]

Human Development Ranking (2019): 181/189

[Australia (2019): 6/189]

Life Expectancy (2018): 54.3

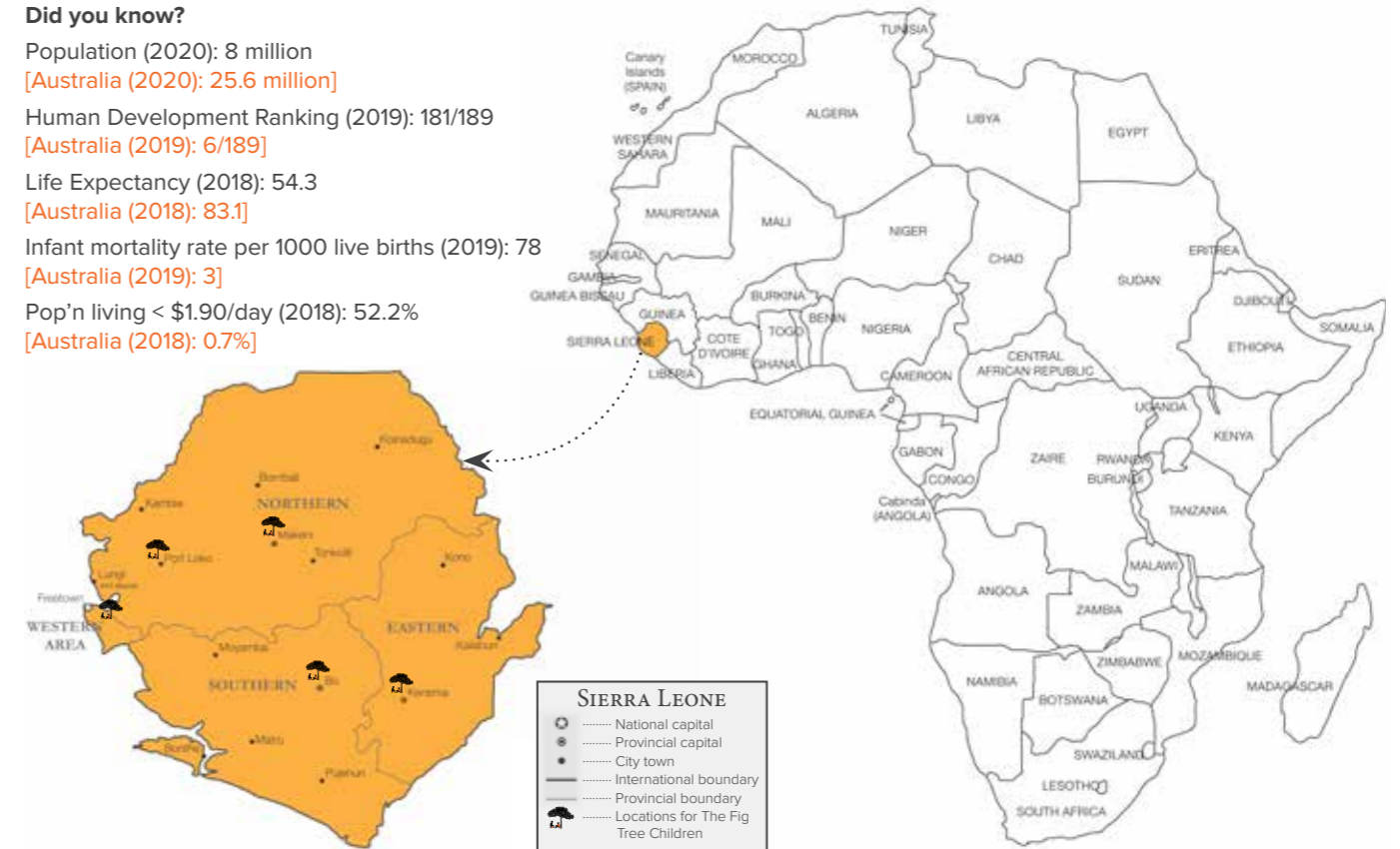
[Australia (2018): 83.1]

Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births (2019): 78

[Australia (2019): 3]

Pop'n living < \$1.90/day (2018): 52.2%

[Australia (2018): 0.7%]





*Hannah (sponsored by Isobelle),  
doing very well in school*

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## Our Mission:

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To improve the wellbeing and opportunities for disadvantaged children and young people in Sierra Leone by providing direct monthly financial support to their carers and paying for their education directly to the school or course they attend, “One Child at a Time”.

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## A MESSAGE FROM JEREMY DAVIES

PRESIDENT  
THE FIG TREE CHILDREN



To say last year was a year of two halves would be a gross understatement. Like everyone else our year turned upside down when Covid 19 hit.

Earlier in 2019 we recognised a strategic need to broaden and improve our fund-raising capabilities. To help with this we commissioned a 3mth MBA Study from the University of Queensland Business School. We asked the MBA “Team Sierra Leone” (three highly experienced mature students) to advise us on how to gain Corporate Sponsorship, how to win Grant support and how to enhance our existing use of Social Media.

In parallel an internal Fig Tree Children team undertook a study of Social Enterprises to assess whether we could use these to raise funds and perhaps also provide employment in Sierra Leone. These studies and our resulting actions are detailed on pages 19-22.

When the extent of Covid 19 became apparent in early 2020 we had to rethink our activities on two fronts. In Australia we had to re-plan fundraising events to consider how to proceed

safely; in Sierra Leone we had to assess risks for the children, their carers and our in-country team and understand how to best provide support in the new, more complex circumstances.

For example, in our Sierra Leone community, few houses have running water or water storage capabilities - so water is collected daily, often from quite a distance; food is also generally purchased daily, from crowded markets and homes have no fridges to store food. Families live in close proximity, sharing cooking facilities, meals and community activities – all aspects at odds with the emerging requirements to combat Covid 19.

On the positive side the Government acted promptly, immediately closing borders and later in the year closing schools. Guidelines for personal hygiene, social interactions, wearing masks etc. - actions which proved such a challenge for 1st World countries - were embraced. Sierra Leone’s recent experiences with Ebola, and the expertise developed in dealing with that highly infectious disease, coupled with the predominantly young age of the population (40% under 15; 3% over 65) helped to moderate what was predicted to be an African disaster.

With your help we ran Campaigns to provide Food Parcels, Veronica Buckets (plastic buckets with a built-in tap) and Soap; we provided Portable Radios, so our children (and often the rest of the community) could listen to Broadcast lessons . . . and, of course, music to dance to, Sierra Leone’s national pastime!

Details of the Campaigns are on pages 14-18.

Sierra Leone remains in a very precarious position. Young people are often asymptomatic and present a hidden risk to



Jane Shakespeare (Founder and CEO) with husband, Jeremy Davies (President)

their older, extended family with whom they live. Healthcare resources are at critically low levels, from a very low base, and as people tire of social constraints there remains the risk of a catastrophic outbreak in the tightly populated slums. The West African Joint Covid Task Force continues to pool its expertise (Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia) and in many ways to outperform the USA and European countries in its fight against Covid 19.

See the Los Angeles Times analysis: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-10-23/west-african-village-survived-ebola-what-it-can-teach-us-about-covid-19>

In the meantime, we've continued to support children and carers. Aminata, our In-country Manager, has delivered monthly support, monitored well-being and managed the Campaigns you've funded.

Your contributions have provided nearly 27,000 days of support during 2019/20 for children and their carers and enabled 75 children to attend school and then to continue studying through the "Radios For On-Air Learning" campaign.

From our inception in October 2014, the Fig Tree Children has grown and each year provided more help to those in need in Sierra Leone. Without your help and that of our partners, none of this work would be possible.

We are grateful to have your generous support and have been asked by the carers and children in Sierra Leone to say a very big, "thankyou".

Jeremy C. Davies

## THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS OF INTERVENTION

The Fig Tree Children is a Charity - a not-for-profit organisation - with its focus areas of intervention designed to have a life changing impact on the lives of vulnerable children. The target beneficiaries include Children/Youths (boys and girls) of School going and tertiary education age.

The thematic areas of intervention are:

No	Activity portfolio	Target Beneficiaries
1	Educational support, Payment of tuition upfront to different Private Schools for 75 children, distribution of learning and school materials, also payment of University tuition - currently for one child.	Seventy-five (75) in Bo, Kenema, Allen Town, Newton, Waterloo, Goderich, Makeni and Lakka respectively.
2	Primary health care, provision of clothing, provision of rain wear, bedding, mattresses, daily need items and payment of house rent for a few people.	75 children.
3	Payment of Monthly Allowances of 150,000 Leones for every child on the programme.	75 children and their carers.
4	Recreational activities for the children (e.g. Christmas and Easter Parties).	75 children.



Above: Fatu (sponsored by Isabelle) and Christmas 2019 - a day out to River No. 2 Beach. Many of the children hadn't been to the beach before.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY *(by Reverend Fr. Peter Alpha Konteh):*

It is another year ending and the work The Fig Tree Charity has done in Sierra Leone cannot only be measured by numbers but by the impact it has on the lives of the poor, needy and suffering children. I see transformed lives, I see starving kids being fed and sick ones being cured. I sometimes reflect on the analogy of standing under a shaded tree that covers us from the direct rays of the sun that could be harsh and aggressive to our skin. But with the Fig Tree Charity serving as that bay needed shade, lives are being covered from the anguish of poverty. Education we have proven, is the singular change instrument that has restored hopes of very poor families to an affluent one. From the child of a single mother who is a stone breaker to a son who is Manager and this is what makes the difference, she managed to keep her son in school against all odds and that changed the story of the family. This is the same for many others and now with Fig Tree Charity the mothers do not have to be under rain and sun only to keep their girls or boys in school. We will help change their narratives and help them become better citizen's of the world. I am Reverend Father Peter Konteh, Chairman of The Fig Tree Children's Charity Sierra Leone Chapter.



## ABOUT US:

The Fig Tree Children is a Brisbane based charity established by Jane Shakespeare in support of the work of Reverend Father Peter Konteh (Father of Priests and Director of Caritas, Freetown) in Sierra Leone. The aim is to help orphaned and vulnerable children and youths. Jane met Fr. Peter in February 2006 when she visited St. Mary's Children's Home, established in 1999 in response to the number of orphans created by the country's devastating 10-year civil war.

Many children suffered unspeakable horrors at the hands of rebels and were left to die in the streets. There was a desperate need for safe havens for children to rebuild their lives physically, emotionally and spiritually and Fr. Peter's home, St. Mary's in Bo, offered this outreach of love and support. Most recently the Ebola virus has been responsible for creating even more orphans on

the streets of Sierra Leone and as a result providing homes for thousands of additional children is once again critical.

Fr. Peter was transferred to Freetown from St. Mary's in Bo and has continued his work with orphaned and vulnerable children there. He has built another children's home in Freetown caring for 26 orphaned children. The Fig Tree Children is working in partnership with Caritas Freetown to provide support for children identified as being in most need.

Our Sponsor Programme supports the carers of these children with a monthly allowance, paid to them directly, and by paying the child's school fees directly to the school. At the end of June 2020, your sponsorships are directly supporting 75 children.



Reverend Fr. Peter Konteh, Dr. Robert Moikowa and Jane Shakespeare meeting in Sierra Leone. Right: Esther (sponsored by Kirstin), at the start of the new school year.



## TEAM SIERRA LEONE 2020



**REV. FR. PETER KONTEH**  
Technical Advisor

Director of Caritas Sierra Leone and also the President of Priests in Sierra Leone. Fr. Peter helped Jane develop the team in Sierra Leone and is influential in how the charity is run there. Nothing happens without his say so.



**AMINATA KPAGOI**  
In-Country Programme Manager

The Fig Tree Children's Programme Manager. Aminata brings valuable experience to our team on the ground; a professional, energetic, and enthusiastic team leader. Our children adore her.



**THERESA KAMARA**  
Treasurer/Bookkeeper Volunteer

Accountant for Caritas Freetown, Theresa oversees a number of Caritas partner's projects, one of them being The Fig Tree Children. She's professional and extremely diligent. Theresa sends us reports monthly on all Fig Tree activities.



**ISHMEAL CHARLES**  
Board Member

A Programme Manager working for Healey IRF and Caritas-Freetown. Charles is a great mentor and motivator. His experience and professionalism working with large groups of volunteers is extremely valuable.

## TEAM AUSTRALIA



**JANE SHAKESPEARE**  
Founder, Secretary & Marketing

A Graphic Designer. An overwhelming desire to want to do something more to help orphaned children in Sierra Leone (after visiting in 2006) led Jane to start The Fig Tree Children. Works full time pro bono for TFTC.



**JEREMY DAVIES**  
President

Jeremy has wide business experience gained from his years in senior corporate roles. Jane vouches that without Jeremy's cheerleading, expertise, compassion and sound advice, the charity would not exist.



**ISOBELLE TORRALBA**  
Board Member

Involved in the Financial Services sector for over 30 years. Isobelle's commitment with sponsoring some of the children and above all her drive and experience supporting a range of charitable work makes her a critical member of our team.



**JAMIE SIMMONITE**  
Board Member

Being a member of The Fig Tree Children Board gives Jamie the opportunity to channel his strengths of Business, Relationships and ICT toward a greater cause.



**NIALL URQUART**  
Board Member

Niall wants to use his experience running his own successful business as well as moderating community oriented social media pages to help TFTC make a difference with some of the world's most disadvantaged children.



**WAYNE MACDONALD**  
Treasurer

Wayne is a practising Chartered Accountant with 20 years corporate experience. His passion for the children of Africa is fuelled by 35 years' experience growing up in Africa before migrating to Australia in 2008.

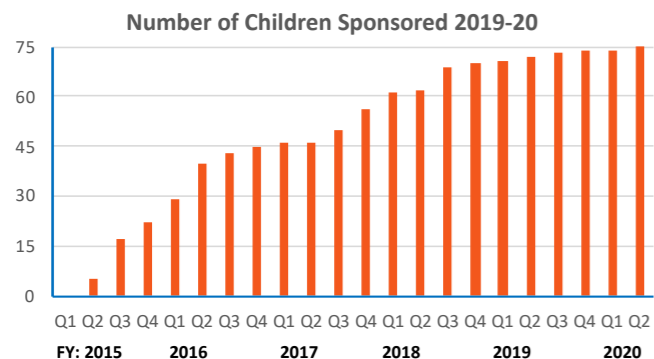


**JAILENE SANTANA**  
Publicity & Marketing

Jailene's studies and work in International Environmental Studies, inspired by her desire to see a world in which poverty and unmet needs no longer exist is extremely valuable to TFTC Team.

## CHILD WELLBEING REPORTS: A HOLISTIC APPROACH

As last year, increasing the number of children being supported has also been very carefully controlled this year, to allow our new in-country Manager, Aminata Kpagoi, to develop close relationships with the children and their carers and so we can provide a more holistic support programme. Aminata undertakes individual wellbeing assessments for each child every month, as well as making regular visits to their schools (20 in total). We have continued to develop our holistic approach to support, seeking to consider the circumstances of each child and their carer – delivered directly to the points of need.



Safiatu (sponsored by Megan) with Aminata (TFTC Programme Manager)

## PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT ‘INSIGHTSTOIMPACT’ PROJECT

We wanted to get an objective, independent assessment of our performance in Sierra Leone; to answer the question, ‘how well are we satisfying our Mission to assist disadvantaged children and young people in Sierra Leone?’

To that end we worked with a start-up in Brisbane, ThirdiManagement, to use their impact assessment methodology (‘insightstoimpact’) with Carers and Young People in Sierra Leone. Our In-country Manager, Aminata, conducted structured interviews to find out what our most and what our least valuable activities are; whether the outcomes we are seeking to achieve are really being delivered; what our shortfalls are and how we could improve to make up these shortfalls.

The information is currently being analysed and the findings and our responses will be made available on thefigtreechildren.org site in Q3 2020. Initial findings have already proved valuable and lead to us increasing the monthly Carer Allowance to Le 150,000 per month to recognise inflation effects on the \$US-Le exchange rate.

The exercise has been valuable and we will improve and expand the approach next year to develop a better on-going dialogue.

We also plan to reach out to our donor and sponsor community, through on-line survey tools, to get feedback on our activities and their thoughts and ideas about what else we could be doing.



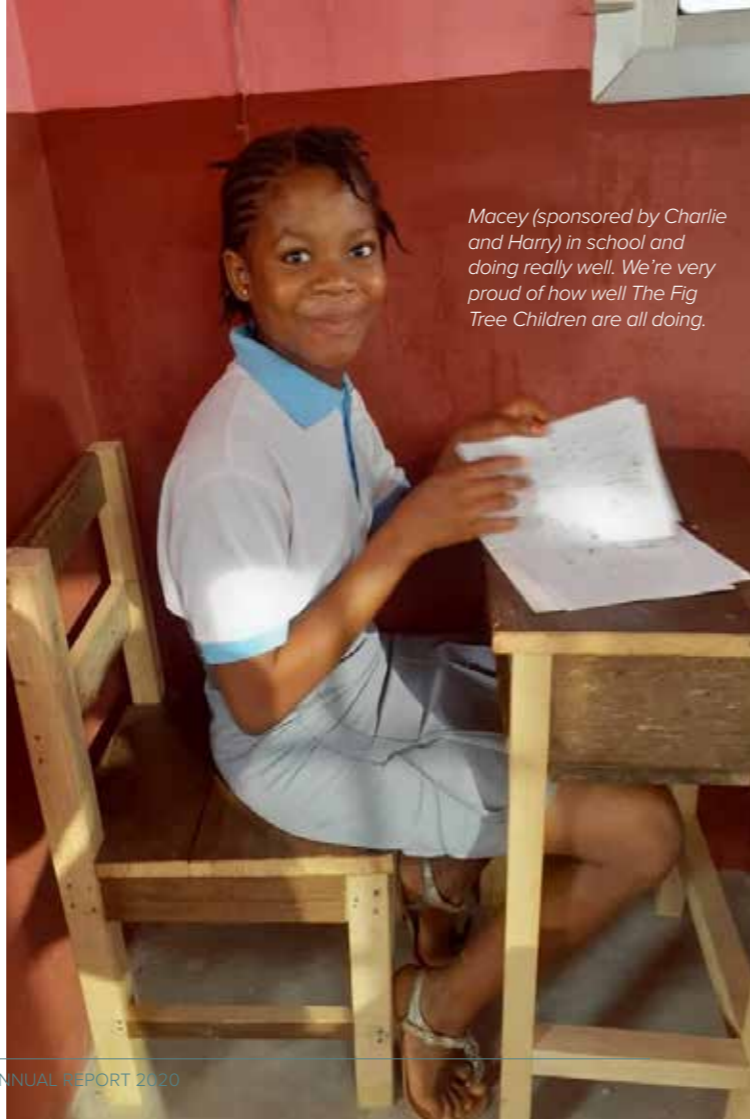
Umaru and Abubakaar (sponsored by Isabelle) seen here with their carer (white top) and teacher (right) are going to school because we give the boy’s carer a monthly allowance and pay their school fees.

## EDUCATING CHILDREN:

At the end of June 2020, we had 75 children in school. All of the children, except one, passed their exams and will move up into their next academic school year, one will repeat a year. We paid school fees and provided school materials for all of the children (in August - or later for children sponsored mid-year).



Paul (sponsored by Caroline) has been made prefect.



Macey (sponsored by Charlie and Harry) in school and doing really well. We're very proud of how well The Fig Tree Children are all doing.

## BICYCLES:

Having a bicycle is a great way for our older children to get around. It gives them independence, exercise and extra time in their day to do other things. We provided bicycles for Habib (sponsored by Tony), Peter (sponsored by Petrina) and Mohamed (sponsored by Jane & Harry).



Habib (sponsored by Tony)



Peter (sponsored by Petrina)



Mohamed (sponsored by Harry)





## EMERGENCIES:

Adama became ill in October 2019. She complained of head and stomach pains. We arranged for her to be seen by a German GP who happened to be working in Sierra Leone at the time. The doctor took tests and Adama was diagnosed with Malaria and a water infection. She was given antibiotics and pain relief medication.

Malaria is common in Sierra Leone and is the biggest killer of children. It was wonderful that Adama recovered quickly and was soon back at school.



Adama (sponsored by Suzanne) in her classroom above and left, being seen by the doctor and nurse.

## CAMPAIGNS:

### CHRISTMAS DAY OUT TO RIVER NO. 2 BEACH:

Christmas provides an opportunity for individuals to come together and participate in celebrations less as friends and more like family. For Christmas 2019, we ran a campaign to raise funds to take the children to the beach for the day. Lots of fun was had, many of the children had never been to the beach before. After the beach they went to Fr. Peter's Children's Home for lunch, music and dancing, they all had such a wonderful time. For those who couldn't make it, we bought them a Christmas gift. All of the children also received a Christmas outfit. Events such as this one give our children a sense of belonging. Thank you to all of you who helped make this happen.



Above: Mohamed (sponsored by Calum), Alpha (Sponsored by Frances), Gadiru (Sponsored by Excite Media), Lawrence (Sponsored by Scott and Erinna)



Emmanuella (sponsored by Excite Media)



Mohamed with Aminata, his mum (sponsored by Isobelle)

### VERONICA BUCKETS AND SOAP:

COVID-19 has caused problems the world over. We're all being told to wash our hands, wear masks and socially distance. In Sierra Leone the homes our children live in don't have running water so we ran



Baby Sheku with his carer, Mariama (sponsored by Janelle and Brad)

a campaign to provide all households where the children live with a Veronica bucket and soap.

The Veronica bucket was developed by Veronica Bekoe and serves as a simple way to encourage proper hand washing using flowing water. The next best thing to having running water in your home.

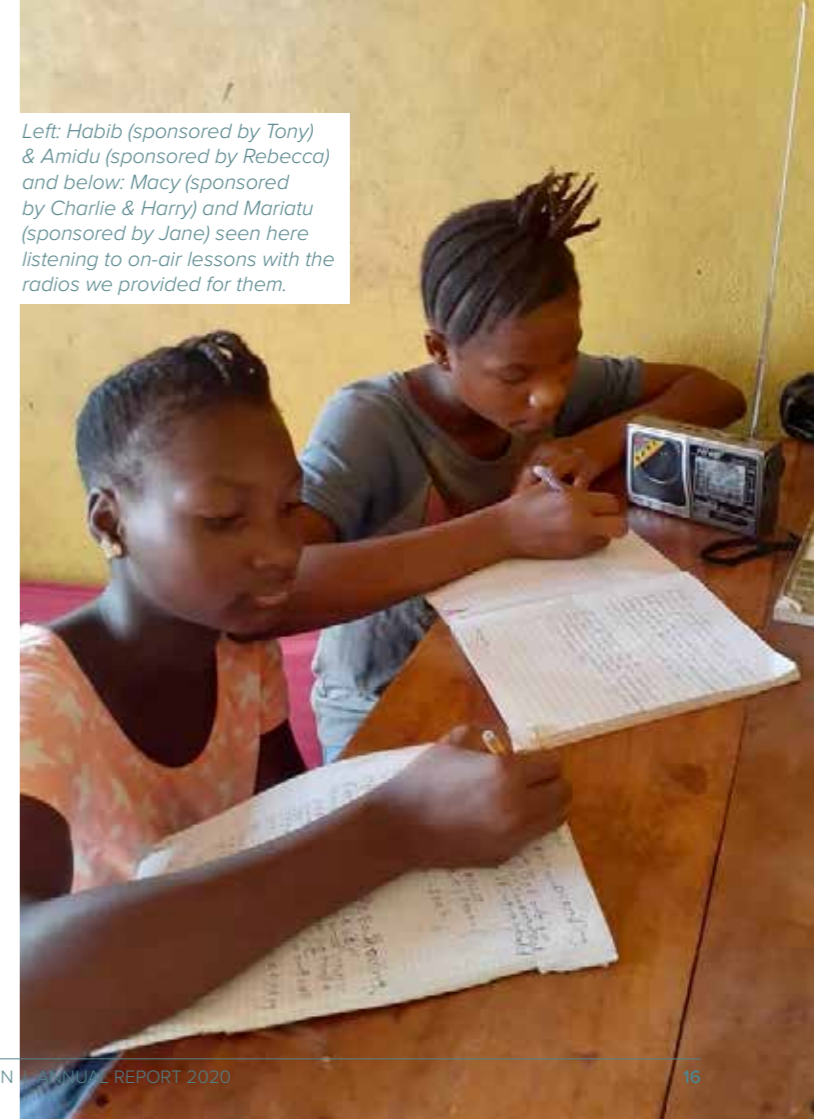
Since Ebola, handwashing has become second nature in Sierra Leone and the children, carers and their families are very appreciative of being able to keep safe by washing their hands regularly during the Coronavirus Epidemic.

### RADIOS FOR ON-AIR LEARNING:

During COVID-19 School closure, the Sierra Leone Government organised On-Air school lessons for children with radios. We ran a campaign to make sure all of the children had a radio and could continue learning.



Left: Habib (sponsored by Tony) & Amidu (sponsored by Rebecca) and below: Macy (sponsored by Charlie & Harry) and Mariatu (sponsored by Jane) seen here listening to on-air lessons with the radios we provided for them.





Hamid (sponsored by Zekia) with his mum receiving a food parcel during the Covid-19 lockdown.

## FOOD AND WATER PARCELS:

Food became more scarce and more expensive during the Coronavirus lockdowns in Sierra Leone earlier in 2020. Many people in Sierra Leone had to queue for food and water. We helped keep our children and carers safe during this time by providing them all with food parcels, drinking water and masks. The food parcels included: onions, rice, oil, sugar, salt, gari, tea, powdered milk, tomatoes and maggi (stock). Thank you to all of you who helped us with this campaign, the families were all delighted.



Thaimu (sponsored by Janelle) and Abu (sponsored by Karinne) with their mum, receiving a food parcel during the Covid-19 lockdown.

## SANITARY PADS:

At the end of this financial year, we started a campaign to ensure the girls in our programme are never without sanitary pads. This is an ongoing campaign where, for only \$38 AUD (£22) donated we will purchase a year's supply of either reusable or disposable (depending on preference and situation) sanitary pads for one girl.

We want to make sure that our girls all have access to sanitary pads, reusable if they have access to clean water to clean them adequately, or disposable, if not. It's their right to choose, as it is ours too. In Western Societies, we are starting to become more aware of the environmental effects of our actions and more and more girls are looking to reusable pads as their choice of sanitary pad. By educating girls in Sierra Leone about environmental issues will equip them to make that decision too.



Johanatu (sponsored by Shelley) with her terminally ill dad was the first of our girls to receive a year's supply of sanitary pads.

## EVENTS:

Every year we organise events to raise funds to help us provide a more holistic support programme for the children. The funds raised give us an emergency fund which has been used for medical costs, any health-related items the children need, much needed items (e.g. mattresses, mosquito nets, extra pair of shoes, rent, etc).

During the financial year ending June 2020, because of COVID-19 we only held one event: in February 2020, Jane and Isobelle organised a movie night showing 'Emma' at The Red Hill Cinema. Thank you to everyone who helped us make this event a success. Those who attended had a wonderful time and we raised over \$1,000 AUD.



## LOOKING FORWARD – UQ MBA REPORTS

In Q3 2019 we approached the University of Queensland's Business School (UQ) to seek advice on how we could increase FTC income. Associate Professor (University of Queensland School of Business), Nicole Hartley, head of the UQ MBA programme, suggested we set up an MBA Capstone Study – the final year project MBA students undertake over a 12wk period.

A team of three very experienced mature students designed a 12 week programme of work to analyse TFTC challenges, review our activities and aspirations and develop a Five Yr Plan in response. On completion in Nov 2019, detailed analyses and comprehensive reports for each of the three projects were presented (available through the Fig Tree Children website). The MBA Team, and UQ's MBA Dept, also donated \$1000 to TFTC to provide Consultancy Fees to help TFTC apply for Grants – one of their recommendations (see Project 2).

The MBA group – “Team Sierra Leone” – recommended we focus on three areas. These are summarised below, with a summary the Actions we are taking in response. A Plan summarising the projects and their status is included on page 24 (Diagram 1).

### TEAM SIERRA LEONE RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

#### 1) Enhance and develop TFTC's Social Media Presence:

Scope of study:

Not for Profit demographic analysis; identifying social media

channels best aligned with TFTC's current and aspirational demographics. Methods and tools for increasing reach.

The timescale, the Horizon for the work, was <1 yr; this activity was considered a priority, could be undertaken quickly and would create short term benefits by extending the TFTC network to potential new donors and sponsors. An enhanced social media platform was identified as a key strategic capability on which to build FTC's future.

#### Actions taken as a result:

- Redeveloped & enhanced FTC Web site; improved Security; Integrated donation and sponsorship tools, e-shops. Instagram and other channels to reach out to
- Gen Z & Millenium demographics introduced.

#### 2) Identify and apply for Grants:

Scope of study:

Suitable grant bodies, appropriate for FTC, were identified and exactly what each of these bodies would expect in a grant application - the foundation requirements – were defined. Given the complexity of the grant landscape (internationally) a specialist Grant Agency was contacted to work as a potential future advisor for FTC. The time Horizon over which a successful grant application would be expected was judged to be 1-2 yrs.

#### Actions taken as a result:

- A Grant Advisory Agency is working with FTC. Team Sierra Leone and UQ MBA funds were provided (\$1000) to develop Grant submissions. Grant Project/Partnership development is in-hand, with FTC's “Pathway to Employment” initiative as the target grant theme.



Many of the children are coming up to school leaving age, we are working on a programme to help them in this next stage of their lives

#### 3) Identify and develop relationships with Corporate Partners:

Scope of study:

Identify characteristics of TFTC and use these to identify potential corporate partners. Create a means of filtering and shortlisting candidate partners. Identify what TFTC need in order to open discussions with candidates and develop relationships that will provide value to both parties. An Excel Tool would

be developed to as a means of targeting potential Corporate Partners, initially drawing data from ASX. The development of a successful corporate partnership was considered to be a long term goal, with a time Horizon of 3-5yrs.

#### Actions taken as a result:

- The project's defined pre-requisites, needed to approach Corporations, e.g. Australian charities certification, ATO registration, audited accounts; Annual Reports (several years); track record of achievements; “Alignment”: geographical, cultural, mutual benefits etc. are being created, year on year, enhancing and preparing our profile.
- We will reach out to potential corporate partners in 2021 to start exploratory discussions.



Abdul (sponsored by Tony), seen here with his carer, is currently at University of Queensland studying Accountancy.

4) Create TFTC on-line shop and develop Social Enterprise opportunities:

**Actions and Progress:**

TFTC is automating links to enable immediate, on-line Donations and Sponsorship - built into the new FTC Web Site. Seamless links to associated Social Media Channels (e.g. Instagram) have been implemented. Major on-line shopping tools are now supported and enable purchase of a growing range of FTC goods.

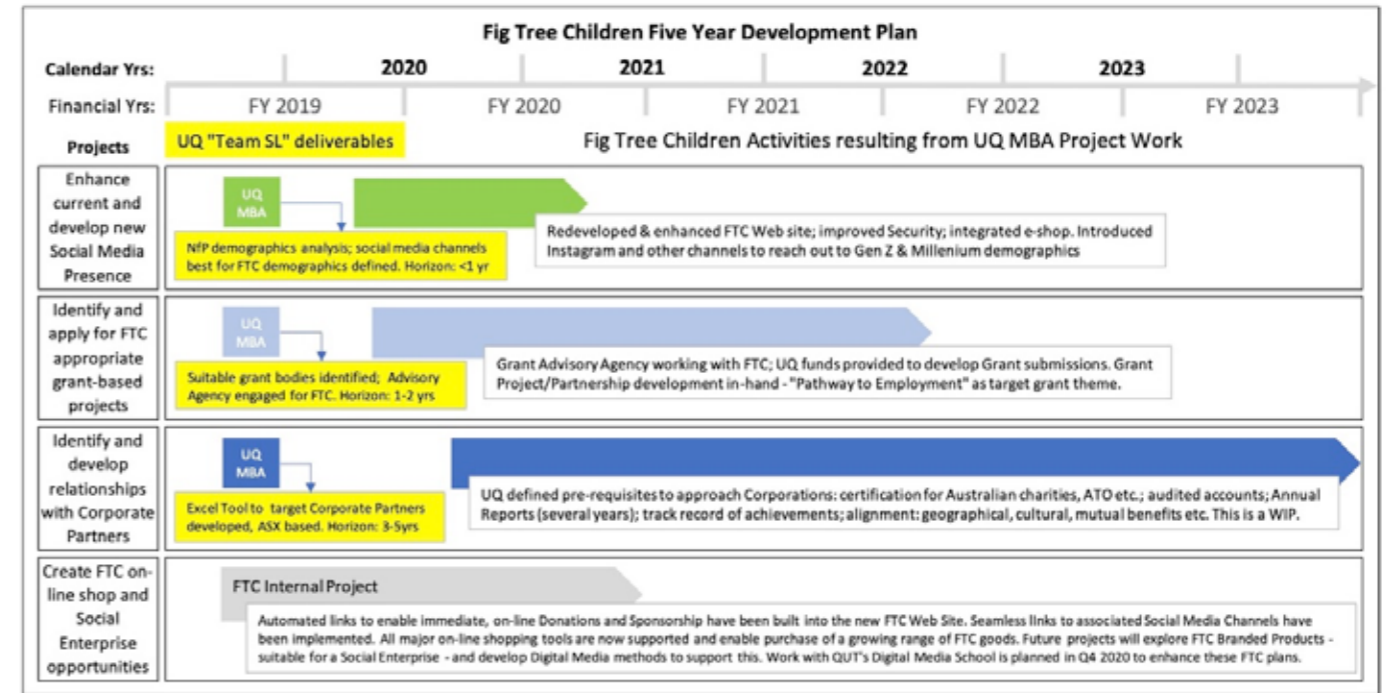
Future projects will explore FTC Branded Products - suitable for a manufacturing based Social Enterprise - and will develop Digital Media approaches to support this.

In order to create media suitable for use through our new channels, we are planning to work with QUT's Digital Media School. Discussions are underway to develop projects with QUT Digital Media Students in Q4 2020, to create material we can present through our new channels.



Above: one of the delightful products we will be selling in our online shop are these cute Kenana Knitter Critters. This a small sample from their Rascal Range, which are all handmade by ladies in Kenya (Kenana Knitters).

Diagram 1: The Fig Tree Children Five Year Development Plan.



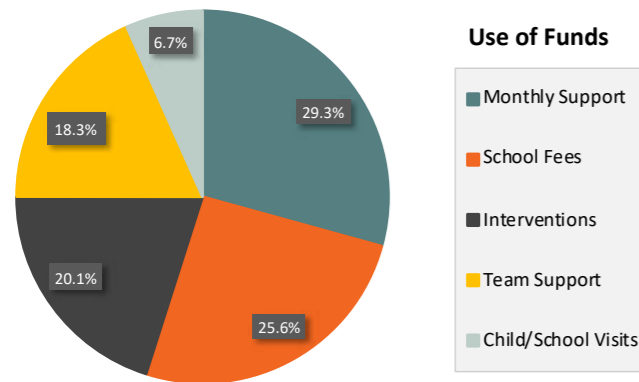
## FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

81.7% of the funds raised through events, donations, sponsorship and campaigns goes directly to supporting children and their carers. At the moment our team in Brisbane and our volunteers in Sierra Leone work pro bono. Our only full-time employee is in-Country Programme Manager Aminata Kpagoi. We also pay a monthly stipend to our Financial Administrator, Theresa Kamara (thanks to Caritas for making Theresa's time available), and costs as incurred for a driver and, when required, a camera man.

In addition, we have an office in Sierra Leone which has been made available to us by Caritas. We have been refurbishing this in this financial year from donations. The funds spent during the year for TFTC Office Kingtom is a one off expense .

All of our Audited Financial Reports can be accessed via our website: <https://www.thefigtreechildren.org/reports/>

### Our Programme in Sierra Leone



## Profit and Loss

### The Fig Tree Children YE 30 June 2020

Account	2020	2019
<b>Trading Income</b>		
Donations	4,349.30	5,056.64
Other Revenue	700.00	239.98
Sponsorship Revenue	45,171.49	36,450.00
<b>Total Trading Income</b>	<b>50,220.79</b>	<b>41,746.62</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>50,220.79</b>	<b>41,746.62</b>
<b>Other Income</b>		
Campaign Income	3,369.39	1,737.04
Fundraising Events Income	3,644.54	5,789.99
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>7,013.93</b>	<b>7,527.03</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Advertising	149.16	
Bank Fees	86.96	67.46
Consulting & Accounting	935.00	1,819.50
Donation Expense (Sierra Leone)	50,985.10	42,302.35
Fundraising Costs	590.73	2,713.25
General Expenses	0.00	558.90
Insurance	816.62	0.00
Office Expenses	0.00	124.00
PayPal Fees	344.08	542.65
Printing & Stationery	0.00	311.80
Subscriptions	844.66	42.00
Travel - International	0.00	862.26
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>54,752.31</b>	<b>49,344.17</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>2,482.41</b>	<b>(70.52)</b>

## THE BEAUTY OF SIERRA LEONE - TURTLE ISLANDS:

The Turtle Islands are in the Atlantic Ocean, located west of Sherbro Island in the Southern Province of Sierra Leone. Of the eight islands, seven are inhabited. Sherbro is the predominant ethnic group. This eight-island archipelagos expands in a zone of 8 miles (13 km) over shallow waters and white sand banks. The islands: Yele, Bakie, Bumpetuk (right), Chepo, Hoong, Mut, Nyangei and Sei. Baki island (below) is one of seven islands that make up Turtle Islands in Sierra Leone.



Turtle Islands is a remote destination and the fishing communities have preserved their faith and tradition in a vivid manner. Residents spend their evenings in groups. Sherbros are very social, spending time together drinking and singing traditional songs focused on bravery and romance.

One of the eight islands, Hoong, is off limits to visitors or women. Hoong island is reserved for initiated men as part of a rites of passage. There is little tourist infrastructure on any of the islands. Visiting this remote area involves considerable planning. Transportation to Turtle islands is erratic and may not always follow safety standards. Most visitors take a 3 hour boat ride from Freetown. 'Visit Sierra Leone' and 'Daltons Banana Guesthouse' operate tours to Turtle Islands.

Photographs © Issam ElSammad



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*The Fig Tree Children is an unincorporated entity and holds Deductible Gift Recipient [DGR] status, meaning it is entitled to receive income tax deductible gifts and tax-deductible contributions*

ABN: 31 162 586 717

Charity No. CH2631  
Registered with the Australian Charities  
and Not-for-profits Commission

## FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



<https://twitter.com/TheFigTreeChild>



<https://www.facebook.com/thefigtreechildren>



<https://www.instagram.com/thefigtreechildren>

*Photographs © The Fig Tree Children*

*Left: Martha, Hannah, Esther, Hawa and Safiatu (sponsored by Tracy, Isobelle, Kirstin, Trish and Megan respectively) receiving Christmas Gifts 2019.*