

CHARITABLE PROJECT PROFILE

BOOST LIBERIA

Project Name: Boost Liberia

Year Formed: 2018

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Primary Program Areas: Meeting Basic Needs, Dignity of Life, Help the Disadvantaged, Economic Opportunity, Orphan Care, Spiritual Development, Education

MISSION STATEMENT:

Mobilizing culture changers in Liberia through the sponsorship of education and discipleship.

OVERVIEW:

We exist so that eventually there will be no more orphaned and abandoned children in Liberia and the cycle of poverty be brought to an end through sponsorship, education, and discipleship. "God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing" Psalm 68:6.

In summary, we believe the power of Christ and His gospel within safe relationships can heal the heart of these kids. It is through love and provision for needs that have gone unmet that these kids not only stand a chance at encountering wholeness; but they also can be enabled to be culture changers in their country.

Problem Being Solved?

All of humanity experiences a poverty and brokenness in the four core relationships that God has set in to place: Relationship with God, relationship with self, relationship with others, and relationship with the rest of creation [or stewardship], because of the fall of mankind and sin. Because of this, no one person has any platform for which to have a God complex in attitude upon another. However, here is a particular suffering and devastation that stem from being materially poor. Historically if an individual were to ask one of the boys [listed above] how they were, their response would often simply be gratitude "to see the day". Sadly this is all too common among the destitute. Their struggle merely to secure their next meal, can leave them so

emptied of confidence, and buried under the weight of shame and powerlessness in a way most of us will never know. This is an emotionally crushing and paralyzing experience for them. In addition to this, there are many factors that are connected for the materially poor such as insufficient assets, vulnerability, isolation, lack of quality education, and dissemblance of the nuclear family, that leave them feeling trapped in a web. Whenever they try to make a change in one small area, they end up caught by another strand of their situation. If one is lucky to try to make change at all in one area, often their ensnarement by other issues is negatively reinforcing enough to lead them to ultimate resignation. They conclude it is better to lie still. According to Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, "It is this lack of freedom to be able to make meaningful choices - to have an ability to affect one's situation - that is the distinguishing feature of poverty."

Scripture also specifically addresses the poor in passages such as 1 John 3:17, Acts 6:1-7, Luke 4:17-21, Luke 7:22-23, Deuteronomy 15:4, Isaiah 1:10-13, 16b-17 and Isaiah 58:1-3, 5-10 to name a few. The Old and New Testament clearly convey how dear to the heart of God the poor are. It is also made evident, they stand in a category of urgency all their own, of which God calls his church to attention and action on their behalf.

It doesn't stop here. There is another layer to this that needs to be acknowledged. The poverty stricken that Boost Liberia has stumbled upon have been kids. The complex developmental trauma they have endured is staggering and heart wrenching. Their experiences range from any or all of the following: neglect, emotional, physical, spiritual and sexual abuse, severe illness, witnesses to violence, war and death, displacement, separation, and malnutrition. Most recently, they encounter post-traumatic stress disorder from a year and a half scrounging for food in a quarantined nation, trembling from the daily sounds of sirens during the Ebola epidemic of 2014-2015. As a result, their neurological brain development has cultivated a biology of fear deep into these kids. Their constant vigilance, high levels of stress without the skills to cope, and lack of healthy attachment figures, have left them virtually defenseless in a high threat environment. Without the subsiding of high emotion reactivity within their brains, the pre-frontal cortex [where clear thinking and healthy growth occur] has remained off line. Therefore, these kids stand little chance of cultivating what is necessary to go on and become full functioning, healthy, successful adults without intervention.

In summary, the five boy's needs [which represent every orphan or abandoned child in Liberia] cover the span of everything necessary for healthy and holistic growth and development. They are in need of food, shelter, clothing, loving community, medical care, education, Biblical counseling and discipleship, healing of emotional wounds, life skills, and hopefully employment in the not too far future.

How are you solving it?

We seek a holistic approach, broken down as follows:

Sponsorship: Financing their housing costs, food, medical care, and basic needs, to support education

Education: Financing their tuition costs, school materials, uniforms, visa fees and travel expenses.

The school system in Liberia results in many students trading money or sex for grades. To make matters worse, if a student succeeds in graduating from the 12th grade, their level of education is comparable with that of a high school freshman here in the U.S. Beyond not being prepared for college, most cannot afford any higher education. With the lack of jobs, 80% of the people in Liberia find themselves unemployed. In lieu of this bleak outlook, many high school students drop out, resort to drugs, drinking, teen pregnancy, or wind up on the streets. Therefore we believe keeping these kids in school [which they continually express is their desire] and connected to biblical teaching/community is their best chance at not becoming another statistic.

Discipleship: This includes weekly bible study with a trusted pastor to teach the boys the Gospel of Grace. Their “household father” a local teacher and Christ follower also provides structure and care for the boys on a daily basis. In addition to weekly phone calls and video chats between our team and the boys, we believe yearly trips to visit by our team members are a crucial component to affirm our relational investment in their lives.

In summary, we believe the power of Christ and His gospel within safe relationship can heal the heart of these kids. It is through love and provision for needs that have gone unmet, that these kids not only stand a chance at encountering wholeness; but they also can be enabled to be culture changers in their country.

Why are you qualified?

In the last 10 years, as the four of us [who make up Boost Liberia] have met each one of these kids, we have been incapable of returning home only to revert back to our lives as normal. We have not been able to ignore the call of God in James 1:27, which offers us a clear picture of His heart for the orphan. It is through the word and this call to action that we seek to humbly respond and be His hands and feet through this grassroots initiative. A Harvard Study reports that “Every child who winds up doing well has had at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult”. Therefore, we seek to help heal the trauma they’ve accrued through cultivating consistent, loving relationships, and provide for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. We do this through sponsorship of their education and discipleship. We currently have committed support to 5 Liberian orphans, as well as a local pastor and a “house father” who provide support for the boys in our absence. If funds raised ever exceed what would be necessary to meet the needs of these 5, there will be an opportunity to take on other children.

What is the urgency?

Liberia ranks as the 5th poorest country in the world, with its capital Monrovia listed as the world’s poorest city. The country has been ravaged by decades of civil war and the greatest Ebola outbreak since the discovery of the disease. Currently 85% of the population are under the age of 25, most of them abandoned or orphaned. Most of these young people come from backgrounds of severe trauma: physical, emotional, sexual, and spiritual. The wounds of these young people are vast and with their rapid development into adulthood before they are even ready [due to the abuse and their environment] the time to act is now.

Budget 2018: \$24,700.00