



Project Sierra in action – the ACTIVE Family Support Model

Project Sierra aims to help disadvantaged women and children in Sierra Leone face their futures with confidence. All of Hope and Homes for Children's programmes target an extremely vulnerable population who are often left out or are under serviced by agencies and government services. Across Africa and in Sierra Leone, Hope and Homes for Children's support is focussed on children living with their siblings without an adult carer and children living with frail and dying adult carers.

Through Hope and Homes for Children experience and expertise they have developed a new way of supporting women and children like these, who are living in abject poverty. Called ACTIVE Family Support, this is an evidence based approach to supporting vulnerable children and their families'.

One size fits all' is not a successful approach to international development. Instead, Hope and Homes for Children tailor their support to cater for individual needs. They measure the outcome of their support in five integrated areas – living conditions, family and social relationships, education, physical and mental health and household economy. An intervention targeting one of these areas might help in the short term, but if not supported by others, it will not have a sustainable impact. Equally as importantly, Hope and Homes for Children do not work in isolation; children, their families and communities are all proactive partners.

The flexible nature of the model and the range of factors it takes into account means that it can be adapted to fit any culture or community, thereby helping any vulnerable family become or return to self-sufficiency.

ACTIVE stands for:

Appropriate: Taking into account the background and culture of the people, and the current socio-political climate, helps to ensure that projects fit well within each community and also improves the chances of local ownership.

Community: All of the projects in Sierra Leone have a significant involvement with the local community. The team work alongside local Management Committees (e.g. the local Chief and other prominent and respected people within the community) to identify beneficiary families to join the programme.

Targeted: The monitoring and evaluation tool is used to measure the impact of Hope and Homes for Children's projects. It helps the teams to estimate the support needed for families to achieve self-sufficiency and is therefore useful to assist with future planning. It has assisted teams in choosing which families should enter the programmes and also ensures that the Project remains dynamic, as they can identify other families to join when families achieve self sufficiency and leave.

Independence: The targeted approach of the monitoring and evaluation tool enables Hope and Homes for Children to design support plans that predict the type of interventions appropriate to families, and also the time frame for these interventions. The support offered creates a culture of independence, rather than engendering a culture of expectation, and contributes to the strengthening of local communities. This is particularly important in the context of the huge poverty in Sierra Leone.

Value: Hope and Homes for Children programmes represent value for money as well as delivering high quality interventions.

Effects: Because of the careful planning and implementation of Hope and Homes for Children projects they are more likely to result in the achievement of sustainable change for children and their families. This also has an effect on the wider community and, in some communities, Hope and Homes for Children interventions have encouraged community members to support poorer neighbours.



Hope & Homes for Children