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## UEF Love, Learn and Play Club – Sierra Leone Beneficiary Case Studies



### **Case Study: Alimatu**

13-year-old Alimatu attends the Grace Elementary Junior Secondary School. She lives with her Aunt and her three cousins in the hills of the George Brook slum community on the outskirts of Freetown.

“I lost my mother to the Ebola pandemic in 2015. It was a tough moment for my father and I. My mother was a very strong woman. She had great skills in business and she did almost everything for our home. After her death, my father was unable to take good care and focus on me. He was engaged in alcohol drinking and stayed away from home. My aunt realized that my father’s depressions will cause me a lot of harm if not removed from him. I was relocated

to my aunt’s house. My Aunt was the main provider of the family needs as a petty trader. Her husband who helps her is a local builder who hardly gets contracts. This has caused huge problems for meeting the essential needs of us children. Even though I attend school, I have to contribute to raising income for the family’s upkeep by trading after school each day. It is really tough for me to cope with my studies at the same time. This responsibility not only affected my educational performance but also my relationship with my fellow children. I always haste home after school to avoid been late for hawking.”

Our Social Worker met Alimatu in a street situation selling food stuff. She looked very tired.

“At first I refused to talk to the social worker. Then she took a sachet water from her bag and offered it to me. I took it and drank as I was actually thirsty after some long walk within the hills. She sat on the stone with me and asked me several questions about my situation. My Aunt was called and informed about the opportunity of me receiving support from an exclusive girls club where I will meet and be friends with other girls. I was very excited. The sessions helped me to contribute and be a part of a team during our team work activities like the football. I had the opportunity to make friends and enjoyed playing again like other children every week. It was the only time I was allowed to not be at school or working and I enjoyed it a lot.”

### **Case Study: Sento**

14-year-old Sento is attending the Brotherhood Junior Secondary School and tells the story of how the Love, Learn, Play Girls Club Project has helped in keeping her in school.

“I am a girl and I come from a big family. We are five in number, two boys and three girls. Our parents died at an early age and presently we live with our Aunt in a single room in Kroobay community. Presently I am in Junior Secondary School Year 2. At the start of this year, I was





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enrolled with other girls in my community into the Love, Learn and Play Club. During our weekly session I have learnt a lot. I have been meeting with different girls in our community and we have time to play with each other, have fun, practicing martial-arts. Because my parents had died, I didn't have any of these opportunities before. I especially enjoyed the session on the powerful women and girls, more particularly the stories of Esther from Rwanda, how she became a pilot, and the African woman who became president in Liberia. All these stories inspired me that all is not lost yet, I can still make it one day. These are motivating stories to me.

I also learnt skills during the project, like playing football. I stopped believing in the stereotyping which say 'football is not for women'. Through this project I have been able to learn that both boys and girls can also play football. This project has motivated me so much, I believe 'I can do it' and I can also share what I have learnt with other girls. The Love, Learn and Play project has improved how I think and feel – it has motivated me more now to become a powerful woman wherein others will copy my footsteps."