

## A MENTOR'S MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE



We are mentors, from Bombali, Bonthe, Falaba, Karene, Moyamba, and Western Area Rural. We are role models, friends and guides. We gather girls into circles of sisterhood, 15,000 girls in towns and villages across Sierra Leone. Together we are saying, and we are showing, and we are shouting that we deserve better, that our sisters deserve better, that we are better.

**AND WE ARE LEARNING THAT WHEN WE SAY THIS LOUD ENOUGH, TOGETHER, THE WORLD MIGHT BECOME BETTER TOO.**

600 of us have gathered together to tell our stories and to learn from our sisters' stories too. We are learning what it means to lift up our voices so that we can help our younger sisters lift up their voices too. We are asking why the world is the way it is, and we are wondering how it might be made different.

We have gathered to talk about our bodies and our babies, about love and learning, about how to care for ourselves and how to create changes right here where we live.

We are talking about power and possibilities and sisterhood and solidarity. When we do this – talk and listen and learn together – the world becomes so full of possibilities. Our heads stand up taller, our hearts fill with fire, and we know a new moon is coming.

**TOGETHER WE SAT DOWN, AND WE IMAGINED THE WORLD WE WANTED TO CREATE, AND WE TURNED IT INTO A MENTOR'S MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE.**

### THESE ARE OUR WORDS:

- We young women mentors from across Sierra Leone, imagine a world where girls are leaders, where we can advocate for our freedom and where our voices are heard. In the world we imagine, we are equal and powerful.
- In this new world we imagine, we are filled with joy and peace and happiness. We are proud and protected, we are full up of energy and full up of love. To live in this world will feel safe and happy, girls will feel recognised and respected, and most of all they will feel free.
- We imagine a community safe from harm, free from violence, where girls can decide their own goals and fulfill all of their potential.
- To create this world, we must end violence, rape, child abuse, child labour and early marriage. We must end violence now if we are ever to build the world we imagine.
- We must end violence now and we must end it in our lifetimes.

### WE MUST END VIOLENCE NOW

In this community, we support one another, and we build for ourselves as girls and young women, but we also know we cannot build this world alone. We need others to join us, mothers and mammy queens, female facilitators, police officers and parents, town chiefs and community leaders. We will need all of the girls of Sierra Leone and all of the Women of Sierra Leone and we will need boys and men too.

We, the mentors of Sierra Leone, we call on all of you to join us to build the world we imagine, the world we know is possible if we build it together.

And we, the young mentors of Sierra Leone, know we have a special role to play. We are inspiration, we are teachers, we are role models, we are comfort, and we are safety. We are valuable and powerful, and together with girls, we will get there together to that world we imagine.

**OH YES, WE HAVE ALREADY STARTED BUILDING. WE ARE ALREADY BUILDING A NEW WORLD OF FREEDOM, BRICK-BY BRICK. WE ARE BUILDING A NEW WORLD EVERY DAY.**