



This map is for reference only.

Information about Sierra Leone and Kono where Chernoh lives

Sierra Leone lies on the coast of west Africa, bordered by Guinea in the north and Liberia in the south. The population is made up of over 17 different ethnic groups, the largest being the Temne and the Mende. Freetown is the capital city.

A 12-year civil war in the 1990s devastated the country. Tens of thousands of people lost their lives and over two million people fled to neighbouring countries. A Peace Accord was signed in July 1999, but it wasn't until 2002 that full peace was established. In 2012, Sierra Leone held its first political elections without the presence of the UN - a major milestone for Sierra Leone.

The long journey to rebuild people's lives, communities, schools, and businesses following over a decade of conflict, ground to a halt in 2014 when the country was hit by the devastating Ebola outbreak.

This deadly disease killed thousands, overwhelmed the health system, halted business and trading, closed schools, and crippled

Sierra Leone's economy. People's health, livelihoods and access to food were all critically affected, pushing families deeper into poverty.

Kono, the community where Chernoh lives, wasn't spared. ActionAid's child sponsorship enabled us to deliver emergency aid to the people in most need. We also invested in education programmes, so people understood how to protect themselves from Ebola, training that has proven vital in helping the communities combat Corona virus.

ActionAid's key priorities in Kono

- Rebuilding people's livelihoods** - ActionAid is supporting families living in Kono to develop sources of income. This includes improving farming, training in alternative income-generating skills and rearing livestock. We are also forming community groups and cooperatives to help individuals come together to share skills and maximise profits.
- Increasing school enrolments and providing children with a quality education** - The civil war and Ebola devastated the education system in Sierra Leone and thousands of children missed out on getting an education. With your support we are now working to get children back into school and we are doing this by rebuilding schools, training teachers and ensuring adequate school materials are available to all children.
- Tackling the inequality women and girls face** - despite farming the land, looking after the children, collecting water and being responsible for feeding the family, women continue to lack a voice in their family or community decisions. ActionAid is working with women in Kono to form groups, tackle violence and change opinions to ensure the rights of women and girls are met.

Despite the many problems that the people of Sierra Leone face, there is hope. ActionAid is working with local people to resolve these issues and bring lasting improvements to the lives of children and families in Sierra Leone. Together we are changing lives, for good!

Information about Chernoh

Chernoh, 3, is one of a family of 2 children. Chernoh speaks Temne, a predominate language in this part of Sierra Leone.

Typically, families like Chernoh's, live in homes built using traditional techniques and local materials - mud-clad walls and a thatched roof. Homes are built this way as the materials are cheap and easily available, but they require regular upkeep. Access to water is an issue in the area, with families like Chernoh's having to collect water from streams, rivers and unprotected wells, meaning waterborne diseases are common.

Diamond mining is a main source of income, but very little of the proceeds reach the community. Many families like Chernoh's rely on agriculture and grow rice (the main food crop), cassava, maize and vegetables. Food shortages are common between May and September.

Chernoh currently attends a local pre-school, when he progresses to primary school, unfortunately he will face dilapidated classrooms, high pupil/teacher ratios and lack of learning materials. As a result, many children never complete their primary education. In some areas of Kono 98% of the population are illiterate. Through your sponsorship of Chernoh, ActionAid will help to improve the education system, increase school enrolments and tackle issues of school dropouts.

While health care is free for children, distances to health centres and the poor quality of services provided means many families resort to traditional methods. This means children are particularly vulnerable to preventable diseases like polio and cholera.

ActionAid is working in Kono, in partnership with families like Chernoh's, to secure adequate healthcare, improve education and develop livelihoods. The rights of women and girls are at the heart of everything we do, and our programmes are developed to ensure they will gain the skills they need to play an active role in the future development of their communities.

Chernoh would love to hear from you, so if you would like to write a message, this is the address to use: ActionAid, UK Child Sponsorship Office, Chard Business Park, Jarman Way, Chard, Somerset, TA20 1FB.



Child name: **Chernoh**

Child reference: SL00406094

Sex: Male

Year of birth: 2018

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Sierra Leone

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