

Case Study Friendship Funday

BILAL'S AND ANGELA'S STORY KROO BAY, SIERRA LEONE



Summary

Bilal and Angela live in Kroo Bay, a slum community in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The rivers running through the community are filthy and choked with rubbish. These rivers flood every year during the rainy season that lasts from May until October and flood most of the communities' basic, small houses - many made of corrugated iron and plastic sheeting. Diarrhoea and other related illnesses are extremely common.

Bilal's story

"One evening I went to sleep after dinner as usual. All of a sudden my stomach started to ache. I needed the toilet and started to vomit. I vomited all night. I woke my mother up and she became worried about me. In the morning she sent for the Blue Flag Volunteer. She came to the house and prepared oral rehydration salts for me to drink. When I started to feel a bit better she made pepper soup for me." (Blue Flag Volunteers were trained to make this as a supplementary food for people suffering from diarrhoea.)

"That wasn't the first time I was sick. I always have diarrhoea. My friends and I go to the river to search for plastic to recycle and sell.. We can earn up to 4,000 Leone a day [0.65p]. I go to school in the morning and search for plastic in the afternoon. If I believed searching for plastic in the river gave me diarrhoea, I wouldn't do it."

Angela and Doris, a Blue Flag Volunteer



Doris, seen left, was one of the first Blue Flag Volunteers to be trained. Her Blue Flag Volunteer flag hangs outside her house. She explains “We were given a bucket, a cup, a spoon, a bottle of dettol and some oral rehydration salt sachets. Although we were given oral rehydration salts at the end of our training, there weren’t enough so we have to make our own sugar and salt solution. Sometimes I have to pay from my own pocket.

When we’re brought a sick child we observe them and look for the symptoms - sunken eyes, dry lips, lack of elasticity of the skin, etc. If it’s very serious or isn’t diarrhoea we refer them to the clinic or hospital. This week I’ve had three cases. I treated one and referred the others to the clinic. They were then referred to the hospital and put on a drip. All three cases have survived. It makes me feel happy to be able to save lives.”

Angela’s mother Fatu said “Angela suffered from diarrhoea last month. She was passing frequent stools in the night and vomiting. I was very worried about my child. I knew that diarrhoea could kill her. Angela is at nursery school and I think she may have eaten food there that made her sick. I called on Doris who I know is a Blue Flag Volunteer. Doris prepared oral rehydration salts and gave them to my child. She monitored her for a day and a half, and continued to give Angela salts until she started to get better at lunch time the next day.

After Doris had done her Blue Flag Volunteer training she came back to this area and told us all that if anyone got sick with diarrhoea they should come to her. She advised us to make our homes and surroundings clean. This was the first time I knew about the Blue Flag Volunteers. It’s good because we don’t have to pay for treatment and they’re always available because they live in the community. If Doris hadn’t been trained I would have had to borrow money to go to the hospital. Diarrhoea is a big problem in this community because it can kill. “

Kroo Bay What we do

We’ve been working in Kroo Bay since 2007 when we responded to the annual floods. We have

- Renovated the rundown clinic
- Cleared and banked the Crocodile river to prevent it flooding
- Built a walkway across the river so people don’t have to wade through the filthy water
- Trained 270 Blue Flag Volunteers to identify and treat cases of diarrhoea
- Provided four large rubbish bins so the community can safely dispose of rubbish
- Set up a children’s health club so children can better look after their health

Cost examples

£5 could buy soap for five families to wash themselves and kill deadly bacteria.

£10 could provide blankets to prevent five children catching pneumonia

£20 could buy a Blue Flag Volunteer kit to treat children suffering from diarrhea

£50 could immunize a class of 50 children to prevent them getting Measles

See the interactive Kroo Bay website for more information

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/kroobay/index.php>

Bilal Age 11



Fatu, Angela and Doris

