

## *Invest in women and children's health care: Poverty and poor health*

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### *Abstract:*

Poverty and Poor Health in Africa including Sierra Leone are inextricably linked. The causes of poor health for millions in African and globally are rooted in political, social and economic injustices.

Poverty is both a cause and a consequence of poor health. Poverty increases the chances of poor health. Poor health, in turn, traps communities in poverty. Infectious and neglected tropical diseases kill and weaken millions of the poorest and most vulnerable people each year. Maternal and Child Mortality are a huge concern for every Sierra Leonean women. The high rate of maternal and child mortality is caused by many underlying issues. Adolescent pregnancy is one driver of child marriage. 28% of girls and young women aged 15-19 have a child or are pregnant. Statistics also reveal that Sierra Leone has the 19<sup>th</sup> highest Child Marriage rate in the world with 13% of Girls Married by age 15, and 39% by age 18. Many young people enter unions that are not registered as formal marriages, especially in rural communities where mortality rate is high as 57%. Successive governments in Sierra Leone have struggled with these dangerous and astounding statistics. Maternal and child deaths are not a new challenge. For decades, the women and children of Sierra Leone have suffered from poor healthcare, poverty, malnutrition, a lack of quality education, political isolation, and so on. Adolescent and teenage pregnancy constitutes 46.8% of maternal deaths, and child marriage has caused and continues to cause a vicious cycle of deprivations and disempowerment for girls. Many young marriages are characterized by violence and servitude, which force girls out of school. Ending child marriage and reducing teenage pregnancy will yield considerable benefits, helping to lower population growth and build a healthier and more productive workforce

**Keywords:** Sierra Leonean Women, Invest in Women, empower women, Health Care, Children's Health Care, Poverty, Poor Health, Infectious, Neglected Tropical Diseases, Maternal, Child Mortality, and Preventative Healthcare

### *Biography:*

Isatu Mamadi Boima was born on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1986, has 8 years working experience, working directly with the public for Gender, Humanitarian and business matters. She works on many activities involving Advocacy, Gender Issues, Public Health, product pricing, advertising and distribution. Skill in Fund raising, Marketing, Gender affairs etc. Diploma in Business Management and Administration, from Sulisha Institute of Management and Computer Studies, Diploma in Information Technology and Computer from the same Institute. Certificate in Public Health from Women's network.



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