



My Story and Why I am Involved with Vulnerable Population Health



My name is Dr. Jallah Mans Kennedy. I was born and lived an **improvised and neglected childhood in a rural part of Liberia** in West Africa. Liberia is one of the poorest countries in the world with one of the highest death rates, especially for pregnant women and children. I had many life challenges: I endured child abuse, hunger, many illnesses, intermittent dropouts from school due to financial difficulties, homelessness, walking bare feet (no shoes) to school, and working as early as the age of 10 years old to get money to be able to attend school and eat. Many children suffer similar situations in other African countries leading to high illiteracy rates, high teenage pregnancies, and overall **poor health outcomes**. These poor health outcomes especially among children, pregnant women, elders, and the disabled are mostly due to problems related to limited or no services and healthcare. The problems are especially dire for the **poor, rural, hard and far to reach, and other vulnerable populations**.

Despite my life challenges growing up, I was blessed to receive a better livelihood and raise a large family. My **impoverished grandmother** and **many kind people helped me along the way**. I attained high quality education including nursing and biology/chemistry in Liberia, then biology/pre-medicine as well as other disciplines up to a doctorate (PhD) specializing in maternal and child health epidemiology in the United States of America.

Like many other professionals who had similar experiences, I have decided to **use my past experiences as an inspiration to help** others as well to especially reduce the ongoing poor health outcomes affecting **pregnant women and children in Africa**. I founded a nonprofit organization called Roads To Health (RTH) which targets rural, hard to reach, and vulnerable population. RTH works with existing systems to integrate **agriculture (nutrition and food security), education (literacy and school-based), and health (access to primary health care, outreach, and service utilization) programs** with the goal of developing sustainable health outcomes through **research and other evidence-based** activities. We are currently carrying out activities in Liberia and developing similar activities in Guinea and other countries.

Please donate to raise funds toward our work in hard to reach and remote rural village areas with very limited health services. We are working with the local stakeholders to do outreach in order to provide vaccines, prevent and control diarrhea diseases, control malaria, prevent and manage malnutrition, prenatal and childbirth services, and feed the sick and pregnant women. We will train/mentor skilled health professionals, teachers, and village community volunteers to fill in the critical gaps in health services in remote rural areas.

Your donation is tax-deductible. Please donate **any amount in one of three ways**: 1) Through PayPal or credit card at www.rthealth.org or 2) Direct Bank of America deposit in the Roads To Health account #: 381038254039 or 3) Write check/money order payable to Roads To Health and mail to 539 Constitution Court, Galloway, NJ 08205.

\$50.00 a month can pay a **village health worker** to reach over 1000 villagers with basic health services. \$43.00 can **feed 20 pregnant women for three meals** a day (that's **\$0.72 cents/meal/woman**) at a maternal waiting home. \$8.00 can **purchase gasoline for the motorbike** to transport a midwife/nurse/physician assistant and vaccinator **to do outreach in villages too far** for children, pregnant women, and others to reach the local clinic for vaccine; and diarrhea, malaria, pneumonia, and other health services. \$0.25 cent can **feed a child** per meal to manage the **high malnutrition**. \$10.00/day for 10 community members to work on a communal garden/farm to reduce the high malnutrition and increase food security. According to the UN, **investing \$1.00** in providing good water and sanitation services can **yield a return of \$4-12** of health and productivity benefits. We will be glad to share with you more **low-cost ways you can help** rural and vulnerable people.

Thank you.

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