



Moyibo Community, Sierra Leone

MABINTY'S STORY

For decades, the residents of the Moyibo community in southern Sierra Leone have farmed and raised livestock. While the community members take pride in their cultural traditions, they faced significant challenges due to the remoteness of their community. The residents lacked many basic services, like sanitation facilities and running water. Open defecation and improper waste disposal were common practices, resulting in environmental pollution and a rise in waterborne diseases. Additionally, residents had a limited awareness of the importance of sanitation and hygiene practices, which further hampered the community's development.

Mabinty Bangura is a pregnant mother of four in Moyibo. She and her family rely on subsistence farming for their daily wages. She shared her experience: "My family and I were unfamiliar with proper sanitation and hygiene practices; we practiced open defecation in the bushes near our homes. We didn't know this posed a severe health risk. We had increased medical expenses, and our children couldn't attend school due to their health problems. Like all homes in our community, ours lacked essential facilities like latrines. The absence of these necessities caused immense embarrassment and discomfort for us, especially when visitors from larger towns came to our community."

Then, Mabinty met a Living Water Sanitation and Hygiene Facilitator, who introduced her and several neighbors to sanitation and hygiene training.



Without access to safe water, residents had no choice but to collect water from surface sources like this.



Mabinty can now use a tap stand to wash her hands after using a latrine.

Mabinty felt compelled to spread her new knowledge of sanitation and hygiene practices throughout Moyibo. She, alongside Living Water facilitators, organized awareness campaigns and engaged in door-to-door visits to educate her fellow residents about the adverse effects of open defecation and improper waste disposal.

Mabinty explained the transformation in her community: “We were inspired by the vision of a cleaner and healthier community, and we united to construct latrines in our households, ensuring a safe and private space for sanitation needs. We also established a waste management system that involves compost fencing, encouraging proper waste segregation and disposal. As months passed, the impact of our collective efforts became increasingly evident. Our once-prevalent open defecation practices were eliminated, and we have embraced a newfound sense of pride in our clean and hygienic surroundings. Moreover, the improvement in waste management practices led to a significant reduction in environmental pollution. The widespread malaria infection has greatly reduced, and our children are now experiencing good health. We have truly witnessed positive effects on our health and well-being, with a noticeable decline in waterborne diseases and a decrease in instances of cholera and diarrhea.”

Access to safe water and better hygiene practices has led to health and healing in Moyibo!



Residents in Sierra Leone participate in sanitation and hygiene training.