

## **March 2009 case study – Young Mothers Project, Bo**

### **Suba**

Suba, now 17 years old, joined the Young Mothers Project in Bo a year ago. She lost her mother during the war and was abducted by militia fighters, aged four. She suffered many forms of abuse and lost all contact with her relatives, including her Father who became a militia fighter in another region of Sierra Leone.

When the war finally ended Suba was reunited with her Grandmother at a displaced persons camp. Shortly after, she fell pregnant and sadly her baby died after birth, due to the lack of appropriate care that was available to them. This painful loss coupled with the prevailing hardship in the camp devastated Suba and she became very frail and sick. Fearful for Suba's health, her Grandmother escaped with her to Bo in search for better medical care.

In Bo they found themselves with no shelter, food or money, as they had sold all of their possessions to travel there. They were unable to afford medical help and the Grandmother had to resort to begging on the streets. At this time, Suba was reunited with her father who had suffered amputated limbs from the war. Suba was happy to have a family again and somewhere to live but without the assurance of money to provide daily food and medical care, Suba was unable to support herself and her family.

Suba couldn't make enough money from selling local goods so resorted to prostitution at night to earn money to care for her family. Her father was angry with her for doing this and confronted her about it. Sadly, he later passed away.

Whilst working one night, Suba robbed a man and was detained by the police. During a routine visit to the police station, one of HANCI's social workers met with Suba and after hearing her story they began counselling her. They encouraged Suba to stop working as a prostitute and to engage herself in something worthwhile for her future. Suba was enrolled on the Young Mothers Programme and the team has continued to counsel her.

Suba opted to be trained in tailoring and she has shown admirable signs of commitment and success. She remains fully engaged in learning her new trade, whilst helping her Grandmother with her small business work. The HANCI team has also discovered Suba to be a very talented singer who most enjoys singing traditional songs.

Suba's Grandmother is very proud of her Granddaughter and grateful to HANCI for their timely intervention in her life. She is so happy to know that Suba has a secured future.

Names have been changed to protect identities.