



### Sample Case

Mrs. Sanyade sweats under tremendous stress these days. As CEO of FambulTik (meaning family tree in her native Krio), she is determined to see the social venture she founded 10 years ago remain viable and continue to make its vital contribution towards alleviating poverty in Sierra Leone. However, over the last four months, FambulTik has suffered severe battering from a number of crises resulting from the several lockdowns initiated by the government to curb the Covid-19 pandemic. The venture is now at breaking point, requiring critical strategic actions that will not only keep it viable, but also firmly on track to fulfill its social mission and vision.

It is the mission and vision of FambulTik that provide strength to Mrs. Sanyade not to buckle under the pressure of the past few months and shut the venture down. In several years' past, they have given her drive and a sense of purpose. Her country, Sierra Leone, is one of the poorest in the world. It has been regularly placed near the bottom of all human development indices and, according to the latest statistics, has about 57% of its population living in monetary poverty and about 65% living in multidimensional poverty. These high levels of poverty are especially critical in households headed by women, where literacy, employment, health and other human development factors rank at acutely low levels. To help deal with the prevalent problem of poverty in Sierra Leone, Mrs. Sanyade started FambulTik as an intervention which focuses on working with networks of family units that will collaborate within and among themselves to break out of cycles of generational poverty.

In all the years the venture has been in existence, Mrs. Sanyade has always envisioned an expansive network of deprived family units in Sierra Leone, standing as one to end cycles of poverty for themselves and their communities. And she and her team of 5 salaried staff and tens of volunteers have dedicated their lives to training, counselling, and resourcing the most vulnerable families in marginalized communities, so that those families will have the necessary knowledge, skills, and values to maximize their potentialities and opportunities toward living productive and sustainable lives.

The basic approach the venture has employed so far to achieve its goals is to partner with high income households, impact investment firms, and other social impact ventures in 'adopting' family units that live in circumstances with acutely limited access to education, employment, healthcare, and other basics required for decent living. Through this approach FambulTik has placed 350 children from poor backgrounds into schools, facilitated job and small business opportunities for 80 unemployed parents, and provided training and counselling to scores of households in deprived communities on issues related to family life and health.

Funding always being a critical challenge, FambulTik operates out of an office space that it freely shares with a charitable organization. This keeps administrative costs down. Mrs. Sanyade started a related clothes-making business two years ago to contribute regular funding towards meeting those administrative costs involved in running FambulTik. The business also serves as a training and employment opportunity for young adults interested in clothes-making. Fifteen beneficiaries of FambulTik's services are currently engaged in the business as either trainees or tailors/seamstresses.

Certainly, there have been challenges in the past, but FambulTik has always managed to hold its head above water, delivering on most of its goals. The last quarter of 2019 particularly brought a lot of promise. A subsidiary of DFID in Sierra Leone had partnered with the venture



to provide mentoring and counselling services to young women from poor homes to start small business. An appreciable grant had already been approved, and the project was due to start in April this year. In addition, toward the end of 2019, a large government school awarded a contract to the clothes-making business to sew uniforms for its pupils. And there was the growing network of individuals and high-income families that have always faithfully given toward the cause. In December of 2019, when the venture had its fundraising event, the pledges that came in pleased Mrs. Sanyade and her team. So, plans were afoot for big and bold initiatives in 2020.

Then Corona virus and its aftermath happened. Mrs. Sanyade finds herself reeling from the devastating impact the pandemic has had on FambulTik. Despite her vision and determination, she knows she cannot carry the weight of what is at stake alone. She has therefore convened a three-day Zoom meeting of key stake holders to help her come to terms with the extent of the damage done to the venture, and also develop strategic actions steps that need to be taken to save this FambulTik that has nurtured the lives of so many deprived people out of poverty.

