Week: 9th – 15th August 2020

Big Idea of the Week:
Masks here, masks there. Masks worn by all, everywhere!

World Mask Week (#WorldMaskWeek) is a global movement to inspire more people to wear face masks to help stop the spread of coronavirus, and Sierra Leone is on board! #MaskUpSalone

Studies continue to prove that more mask wearing, together with handwashing and physical distancing, helps stop the spread of coronavirus in communities everywhere.

The coronavirus pandemic is not over. It is still here and spreading in Sierra Leone, and it is spreading rapidly in far too many places around the globe. But there is hope!

If we pull together in solidarity – if we pledge to wear a mask when in public correctly and consistently – we can slow the spread. And we can save lives.

International Youth Day is Wed., August 12th. We applaud all the young people who are stepping up and helping stop the spread of coronavirus by wearing a mask. You are making a difference.

Young people, let's show others the future we want – one where we protect ourselves and one another from coronavirus. "I wear my mask to protect you; you wear your mask protect me."

If you're on social media, snap and share a photo of how you #MaskUpSalone!

Suggestions for people to interview

- Community leaders who are serving as role models by promoting and/or enforcing use of masks in their communities such as chiefs, councilors, and mammie queens

- Youth leaders and young people who are wearing masks and encouraging their friends, peers, family members, and others to do so too

- Community champions leading by example by always wearing cloth masks correctly such as market women and traders, bafa/ataya/bar/restaurant owners, and traditional healers

Suggestions for questions for interviews and panel discussions

- What role do masks play in stopping the spread of coronavirus?

- Why is it important for *everyone* to wear masks?

- What does it mean to wear a mask correctly?

- How can we encourage others to wear a mask or wear one correctly? What has worked well to help other wear a mask or wear one correctly?

Additional information on the movement for masks

World Mask Week (#WorldMaskWeek) is a global movement to inspire more people to wear face masks to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

Community masking is critical to stop the spread of coronavirus, and the science backs it up.

Until we have vaccines or medicines, mask wearing is one of the best tools we have that we can all use (along with social distancing and hand washing).

We now know that any of us could be carrying and spreading the virus, even if we're not experiencing symptoms. Wearing a mask shows your care for each other— "I cover my face to protect you; you cover your face to protect me."

The coronavirus pandemic is not over; in fact, it's spreading like wildfire in far too many places around the globe. But there is hope! If we pull together in solidarity – if we pledge to wear a mask when in public consistently and correctly – we can slow the spread. And we can save lives.

A review funded by the World Health Organization of 172 research studies from 16 countries and six continents found that face mask use could result in a large reduction in the risk of infection.

Based on this growing evidence on how to slow the spread of coronavirus, the global public health community agrees: wearing a mask or face covering when in public helps protect communities.

That's why we support World Mask Week (August 7-14). This movement demands each of us do what we can to slow the spread of the virus and to save lives in our neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, and communities. We want to applaud everyone who has been wearing a mask and invite more people to join the movement.

We must ensure that everyone, everywhere knows and understands the benefits of wearing a mask and how only together as governments, leaders and individuals can we rise up to meet the challenge and overcome this pandemic. World Mask Week is the time to do this. And beyond!

Why should we wear cloth masks?

Coronavirus spreads easily from person to person.

If one person has the virus and spreads it to others, and then each of those people spreads it to others, within a short time, the virus can spread throughout a community.

Most people with coronavirus have only mild symptoms or do not show any signs and symptoms.

It is possible that you, or the person near you, have the coronavirus and do not even know it.

While most people who have the virus feel fine, they can still spread it to others.

Some people who get the virus can get very sick and even die, especially people who are older or have other health conditions.

We all have loved ones who are older and have other health conditions.

Sometimes, people do not know they have other health conditions until they get worse and they get sick. Those other health conditions, even when we do not yet know about them, can make our bodies weaker in fighting other sicknesses, like coronavirus.

Let's all do our part to wear our masks correctly and protect our own and each other's loved ones.

Corona fet na we all fet!

How does a cloth mask help stop the spread of coronavirus?

When someone coughs, sneezes, sings, or even talks, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus.

If someone is close to a person with coronavirus who coughs, sneezes, sings, or talks, they can breathe in the droplets and also get the virus.

Wearing a cloth mask correctly over your mouth and nose helps catch the spray of those small liquid droplets from going into the air or onto surfaces that could then spread to other people and make them sick.

That is why wearing a cloth mask correctly, even when we feel healthy, helps stop the spread of coronavirus and protects our loved ones.

Additional messages on correct wear and care of cloth masks

- Cloth masks used alone do not stop the spread of coronavirus, but they can help when used together with other actions.
    - The most effective actions to protect yourself and others against coronavirus are to wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, cough and sneeze into your upper arm or sleeve, and keep a safe distance of at least 1 meter or arms-stretched length from others.

- An effective cloth mask should:
    - Be held to the head by ties or ear loops
    - Use multiple layers of fabric
    - Fit close against your face
    - Fully cover your mouth and nose and not fall down when talking
    - Allow for breathing without problem
    - Be able to be washed without damaging the mask

- It is important to know how to wear a cloth mask correctly and care for it safely.
    - Always wash a cloth mask before trying it on or wearing it.
    - Before putting on a cloth mask, wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol-based.
    - Cover your mouth and nose with the cloth mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
    - Tie the mask behind your head or place the elastic loops over your ears.
    - Make sure the mask fits well. Move it around using the ties or elastic loops to get the best fit. Do not touch the cloth part of the mask.
    - Once you have put on the cloth mask, do not touch your face again until you take it off.
        - If you touch the mask, wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
    - Cloth masks should not be lowered when speaking, coughing or sneezing. This is when they are most important!

- o To take off the mask safely, undo the ties or loops. Do not touch the front of mask or your eyes, nose and mouth. Carefully fold the cloth mask inside out and hold it by the ties or loops.

- o Wash the cloth mask right away with soap and water or put it in a plastic by itself until you can wash it later. After removing the mask from the plastic, throw the plastic away.

- o Dry the cloth mask well before using it again. Iron the cloth mask if possible.

- o Use a fresh, clean cloth mask every day. If the mask gets damp from sweat or from talking or breathing, replace it with a clean dry one.

- It is good to have at least two cloth masks so you have a clean, dry one you can wear while the washed one dries.

- Masks should not be placed on young children under the age of two or any person who cannot remove it themselves or tell someone they need help.

- Do not share cloth masks with others.

- Place cloth masks that have tears, cuts, or holes in a plastic and throw away.

- While the use of medical masks for hours at a time can be uncomfortable, it does not lead to poisoning from carbon dioxide (CO_2) or a shortage of oxygen.