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Two KP Doctors Help Hundreds in Sierra Leone

As part of their commitment to improve the health of those in need, Kaiser Permanente physicians often dedicate their own free time to visit regions of the world in which a helping hand is needed.

Not long ago, the husband and wife team of Fatu Forna, MD and Shekou Sesay, MD organized a medical mission to serve the people of [Sierra Leone](#), a West African nation known for a high infant and mother mortality rate.

"Approximately one out of every fourth child dies before their fifth birthday and one of every six pregnant women dies during childbirth," explains Dr. Forna, who practices OB/GYN at the Panola Medical Office. "We both grew up in Sierra Leone, so we decided to use part of our vacation to provide much needed medical services to the women and children there."

Drs. Forna and Sesay initially formed the Mama-Pikin ("Mother-Child") Foundation in 2008 to help improve the overall health of women and children in that country. The next step involved visiting four rural clinics in Sierra Leone from May 27 to June 17, 2011 and providing direct medical care to hundreds of patients, as well as donating medical supplies to the pediatric and maternity hospitals in the capital city of Freetown.

"Over the years, we supported several health clinics there with basic medical supplies, but this was our first medical mission to Sierra Leone," said Dr. Sesay, a pediatrician at the Snellville Medical Office. "It was a very fulfilling experience."

A portion of the supplies used to treat patients and donate to the hospitals came from medical supplies at KP clinics that would have gone unused otherwise; the rest came from the Labor and Delivery department at Piedmont Hospital, affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

Drs. Forna and Sesay expressed gratitude to the Kaiser Permanente OB/GYN Department and to Piedmont Hospital for donating the medical supplies used in their medical mission. "We are also thankful to our colleagues for their assistance and encouragement," they added.

The duo hopes to eventually include more of their associates and make the medical mission trips to Sierra Leone a yearly event.



Drs. Shekou Sesay (left) and Fatu Forna sort donated medical supplies at one of the rural clinics they visited while in Sierra Leone.



Drs. Sesay and Forna (on the right) present medical supplies to the medical staff at the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

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