



Statement by the Liberian Advisory Board of More Than Me

We the Liberian Advisory Board (LAB) of More Than Me regret the incidences that were reported in 2014 regarding the sexual exploitation of some of the students in the institution's care which is the subject of recent media reports. This Liberian Advisory Board was established in September 2015 to advise the US Board of More Than Me.

More Than Me was founded to help educate vulnerable girls from Liberia, most especially West Point. These incidences are contrary to the values, objectives, and principles of More Than Me. We were informed that when the issue of the sexual exploitation was brought to the attention of the administration of the school on June 12th 2014, More Than Me immediately reported the matter to the appropriate government authorities and within four days Mr. Macintosh Johnson, the perpetrator, was arrested by the police. More Than Me worked assiduously with the law enforcement and the justice system to ensure a speedy trial the first of which resulted in a hung jury and the second of which was ongoing up to the death of the perpetrator in 2016. Additionally, we have also been informed that medical records show that examinations were conducted for all 10 of the girls and one of the ten is HIV positive. She is in treatment and healthy. All the victims are currently in school with access to counseling and health care supported by More Than Me.

In reviewing the allegations as published by ProPublica and TIME we uncovered several statements that were either inconsistent with the information provided to us by More Than Me leadership or that were new information. In this light, the Liberian Advisory Board has constituted an independent panel comprising of prominent civil society, women's and professional associations and appropriate Government of Liberia functionaries to review all of the circumstances and allegations. This panel will have no one who is associated with the incidences or More Than Me involved. At this time, confirmed members of the panel include:

- National Civil Society Organization
- Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL)
- Independent Human Rights Commission
- REACH
- Servant of All Prayer (SOAP)
- Disaster Victims Association of Liberia

The panel will be overseen by prominent Liberian lawyer, Counsellor T. Negbalee Warner, in collaboration with a globally recognized international counterpart from the African sub-region. The panel will come up with findings to get the Liberian perspective and present it to the public. Following the release of this report, the Liberian Board in consultation with the US Board will take appropriate actions. Given the urgency of the issue, we expect the panel to conclude its review within two to three weeks. Katie Meyler has sacrificed a lot to support education for vulnerable children, however, given the sensitive nature of this situation the Liberian Board has asked the CEO, Katie Meyler, to temporarily step aside while the investigation is ongoing, and she has willingly agreed for the objectivity of the investigation. The US Board concurs with our decision.

It is noteworthy that since 2014, More Than Me has engendered a number of reforms geared towards reducing the risk of the recurrence of that ugly situation.

- A Liberian Advisory Board was established which is comprised of four renowned Liberian women and three men with diverse backgrounds and expertise in education, health and gender issues;
- The institution has increased its female workforce and reduced its male workforce;
- The administration strengthened our child protection policy so that no adult, male or female, can be alone with any child with the exception of the nurse and social worker.
- The administration established a Whistleblower Policy. This policy outlines individuals to report to and protects the reporter from retribution and allows for anonymous reporting;
- The administration established an Employee Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy;
- The administration established a Fraternalization Policy;
- The administration has conducted ongoing training with teachers, with parents, and with students about preventing abuse;
- The administration conducts thorough reference and background checks on new employees.

Additionally, over the four years following the incidences, More Than Me has been a reliable partner in the fight against Ebola and in supporting the Liberian education system.

The Liberian Advisory Board had an initial meeting with officials of the Government of Liberia (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Gender and Children and Social Protection, and Ministry of Education) on October 12th, 2018 and are willing to fully cooperate with the government in whatever it envisions to do.

It is very important to note that More Than Me’s primary concern and objective is giving our students the opportunity for quality education and a bright future as well as a safer environment for girls. Some of the girls reached out to the Liberian Advisory Board on October 12th, 2018 appealing for the non-closure of the More Than Me Academy and its ancillary programs. They are concerned because they believe that the closure of the program is the end of their hope for a better future. The Liberian Advisory Board is committed to ensuring that our students continue to have an opportunity to pursue their goals, their dreams, and their aspirations and will ensure that there are governance and leadership reforms of the organization.

<hr/> James Dorbor Jallah Chair	<hr/> Aisha Cooper Member	<hr/> Fiona Weeks Member	<hr/> Rosana Schaack Member
<hr/> Dr. Mosoka Fallah Member	<hr/> Samuel Sampson Member	<hr/> Nelly Cooper Member	