



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACOMI partners with the WSO in "Tears of Ebola" multicultural benefit concert March 19th, 2015

Winnipeg, MB - January 27, 2015 - On March 19th, 2015 Manitobans are coming together for "Tears of Ebola," a unique multicultural concert in benefit of the Orphans of Ebola that will raise \$100,000 to support the basic needs of the thousands of children who have lost their families in the Ebola crisis.

Presented in partnership between the African Communities of Manitoba Inc. (ACOMI) and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO), the concert will take place at the Pantages Playhouse Theatre at 7:30 pm.

Tears of Ebola will feature some of Manitoba's finest artists including Kelly Bado, Flo, Fresh IE, Casimiro Nhussi, Coffiman, World Village Gospel Choir, the WSO and many more.

Attendees will include Greg Sellinger, Premier of Manitoba, Brian Bowman, the Mayor of Winnipeg, as well as ambassadors from the affected countries and other distinguished guests.

Tickets are \$50 each and available through wso.ca/tearsofebola or the WSO Box Office at 204-949-3999.

For media inquiries please contact Zita Somakoko at arc@acominc.ca or 204-221-6696 or Neil Middleton at 204-949-3999 or nmiddleton@wso.mb.ca.

To make a donation to Ebola Relief please follow the Donate Now link on the acominc.ca homepage or wso.ca/tearsofebola

TEARS OF EBOLA BACKGROUNDER

As we are all aware, the devastating effects of the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa has created ongoing short-term and long-term challenges. In any emergency, children are among the most vulnerable population. The Ebola epidemic has been especially devastating to children in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. To date more than 11,000 children have lost parents to Ebola.

These Ebola orphans are shunned by their communities, face daunting challenges on a daily basis, and are in critical need of support services. These children have experienced deep psychological trauma by witnessing the illness and deaths of family members, and seeing horrors in the streets where they live. In addition, these children are vulnerable to child predators and child soldier recruitment groups.

Most schools in the affected regions are closed, keeping millions of kids out of classrooms for the past six months. Out of school, children are at no less risk for Ebola, but much greater risk for violence, abuse, and other social problems.

Stopping Ebola remains our first priority, but cannot be our only one. We are especially concerned about the thousands of children under the age of five in these impacted countries who having lost all family members, are not being care for by anyone.

In September 2014, UNICEF called on the international community to donate two hundred million dollars to care for the orphans of Ebola but sadly only a third of that money has been collected to date. Tears of Ebola is a project initiated by the African-Canadian community here in Manitoba to address this gap and stand in solidarity and help these children by providing them with the basic life needs, which is protection, food, shelter, clothing and basic health.