



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



www.keeplib.org

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER



At the heart of our work at KEEP Liberia is social justice and closing the inequality gap. We firmly believe that fostering literacy in Liberia is synonymous with empowering its citizens economically. Economic empowerment, in turn, grants individuals the precious gifts of choice, dignity, hope, and freedom from servitude. That's why we have honed in our efforts a key focus on promoting literacy and sustainably empowering the communities we work with through economic opportunities.

Despite grappling with significant financial challenges in 2022, we overcame adversity to establish our inaugural Braille reading room and three additional reading rooms in Montserrado and Nimba Counties. This strategic emphasis on literacy underscores our deep-seated value for inclusion, exemplifying our commitment to achieving more, even amid resource constraints.

Our economic enhancement programs experienced notable success, witnessing a substantial increase in revenue for the community-based groups we collaborate with – rising from xx in 2021 to xx in 2022. This financial growth signifies that more families can now enroll and support their children in schools, fostering dignity and fundamentally altering the trajectory of their lives.

Furthermore, our reading rooms witnessed a surge in both access and usage, registering an impressive xx% increase. Concurrently, we celebrated the launch of two new books, with one being a testament to the creativity and achievements of students within our reading clubs.

All of this is made possible through the support of individuals, corporate sponsors and partnerships.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the generous support of individuals, corporate sponsors, and partnerships. On behalf of the Board of KEEP, our dedicated team, and the individuals we serve, I extend heartfelt gratitude to all those who continue to stand by us and support our transformative efforts throughout Liberia.

ABOUT KEEP

Established in 2014, the Kids' Educational Engagement Project (KEEP), is a national non-profit organization that is working at the grassroots level in the four counties of Montserrado, Grand Gedeh, Gbarpolu and Rivercess, in Liberia.

Our Mission is to provide various resources and self-empowerment opportunities that would enable a better life especially through increased access to improved education and educational facilities which are community-owned, managed and sustainable.

KEEP seeks to promote social justice and wholesome educational development of vulnerable children and youth by strengthening their educational capacities, exposing the needy to economic life-skills. Our success is never ours alone to own because an educated child is a benefit to the family and community. KEEP thrives on developing and maintaining enduring partnerships. As such, we place a premium on our community engagements including with parents, students, teachers, community leaders, social structures and other relevant partners.

KEEP constructs and establishes mini-libraries and safe and conducive reading spaces for children; promotes women and girls' economic independence, livelihood and advocacy initiatives around women and children rights.

CORE VALUES

KEEP subscribes to the following core values:



Blog: www.keepliberia.com

Website: www.keeplib.org

Facebook: <https://web.facebook.com/KidsEducationalEngagementProjectLiberia/>

Twitter: Keepliberia Instagram: keepliberia

Contact us: info@keeplib.org

Care To Support?

Donations make it possible to do what we do. And yes, with your donation, we can do more! If you would like to support our work, various options on how you can are:



Bank of America

Number: 483070203331



PayPal

donation@keeplib.org



International Bank Liberia

Number: 00521970872590102



Mobile Money

0886510731/0777510731

CORE PROGRAM PILLARS

The Kids Educational Engagement Project (KEEP) Liberia has 3 (three) thematic pillars through which its pragmatic activities are executed. These three pillars are:



**Promoting
Literacy**



**Advocacy &
Awareness**



**Economic
Enhancement**

IMPACT IN FIGURES (2023)



3

Reading Centers
created

Valued at
U\$63,350

Books donated: 9,050

1770

Visits to reading
rooms 2022

9

Reading clubs created
in 2023

135 (48 g/42)

Reading clubs members

850

Accelerated learning
program students
enrolled

184

Reading sessions
conducted

390 Members

Economic enhancement
program participants

13 Clubs

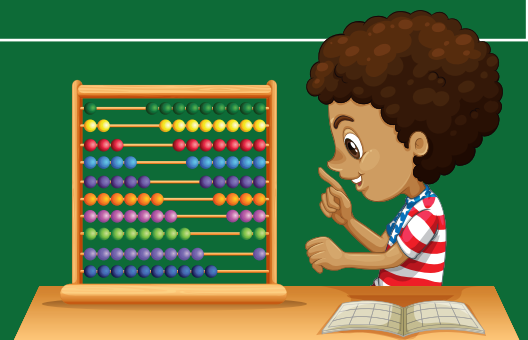
Economic enhancement
clubs

209 (123 f/86 m)

Advocacy participants

47 – 23m/24f

Students trained in computer literacy



PROMOTING LITERACY

Reading Rooms Creation

Accessing reading centers and ensuring access to the right reading materials is crucial to enhancing literacy and learning in Liberia at grassroots levels. KEEP's reading rooms host books relevant to children's cultural and local realities to heighten interest, ensure they have experiential learning, and improve creativity. In 2023, we created three (3) new reading rooms in Montserrado and Nimba bringing our life impact of constructed reading rooms across Liberia to 34. We also donated 9,050 books across our reading rooms valued at US 63,350.



54 years later- Madina Public School Gets Library in Grand Cape Mount County

A noteworthy milestone across the year was the dedication of KEEP's 32nd reading room on April 11, 2023, at Madina Public School in Grand Cape Mount County, with a combined construction and furnishing cost of USD 10,500.00, with books costing US \$ 17,500.00 and a total price of US \$28, 000.00. The dedication ceremony was attended by chiefs and elders of Medina, the Assistant Minister for Basic and Secondary Education, Madam Felecia Doe- Sumah, the County Education Officer Hon. Elijah Freeman, and District Education Officer Hon. Mambu Golafale. Established in 1969, the school currently has almost 800 students and in 2022, topped the County's results in the regional exams (WASSCE).

Another reading room, KEEP's 33rd, was dedicated at Tosor Public School, Commonwealth District, Grand Cape Mount County, costing US \$10,200.00 on May 23, 2023. Furthering our impact, KEEP, in collaboration with APM Terminals, established the 34th reading room at Marvii Sonii Public School in Clara Town, Bushrod Island, on December 8, 2023 and in November 2023, renovated a Second Chance Class at Kendejah Public School, which hosted 1,060 students in both elementary and junior high.

Across the year, KEEP conducted 175 reading sessions at YWCA, June Moore, Baptist Seminary, Arthington Public School, Goba Town Public School, A. Glenn Public School, C.D.B. King, and Gabriel Kpolleh Public School. One hundred ninety-eight (198) children participated in these sessions (91 males and 107 females), including 175 other learners who constantly visited. Over the year, the learners read 139 books and were introduced to 148 new words.



Reading Competition - Read2Ride

In 2023, KEEP launched the Read2Ride pilot reading competition, aiming to assess the impact of providing incentives for students to read and ride bicycles. Recognizing that many families cannot afford bicycles, the project encourages community kids to commit to at least one hour of reading and one book per week. The goal is to achieve at least 25 hours of reading over a 6-month period. Successful participants in the pilot phase were rewarded with bicycles and digital tablets. Due to the success, phase 2 of Read2Ride is set to commence in February 2024.

Establishing successful partnerships, creating more reading rooms, and ensuring access to books and activities that enhance students' participation in literacy proved meaningful throughout the year. It also enabled us to scale our impact notably, in service to communities and fostering access to learning facilities.

To continuously enhance educational facilities, KEEP collaborated with Csquared to unveil a Resource Center-Computer Lab-Reading Room at John Wesley Elementary & Senior High School in Nimba County, benefiting approximately 1,200 students. The partnership aligns with Csquared Liberia's larger initiative to connect 21 government schools to high-speed internet connectivity in collaboration with the Government of Liberia and USAID. Facilitators underwent a refresher training program covering crucial topics around class management, students' assessment tracker, intensive coaching, etc., during the activity in Gbarpolu County.

December 2023 marked a significant partnership as KEEP signed an agreement with the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Foundation to establish a reading room and conduct Reading Strategy training for teachers. This initiative aims to enhance students' reading skills, foster interest in learning, and elevate the overall standard of education in selected under-resourced schools in Liberia.



Computer Literacy

KEEP's Computer Literacy program celebrated a remarkable achievement by graduating eight students. Although the program initially had a small intake, it has grown significantly and is now providing training to 117 students across four locations. The participants, who may have had little to no prior experience with computers, are put through an intensive 3-4 month training program. With careful planning and proactive measures, the program administrators are confident that nearly all of the enrolled students will successfully complete the program. This success demonstrates the long-lasting impact of the program, and the commitment of the program administrators to provide excellent training opportunities to those who need it most.



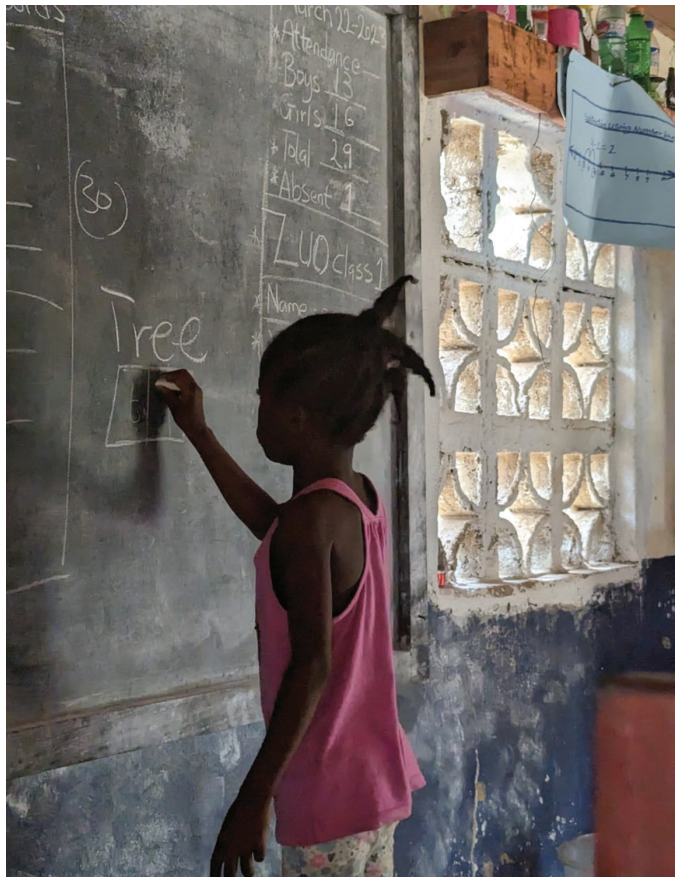
In societies where illiteracy is a significant challenge, computer and digital literacy can play a transformative role. These skills empower individuals and contribute to progress, fostering inclusivity and reducing educational disparities between rural and urban communities. In such societies, computer and digital literacy can act as equalizers, providing individuals with access to information, online learning, and the digital economy. These competencies not only enhance personal development but also contribute to community growth, enabling individuals to connect globally, access online education, and explore economic opportunities in the digital realm. As the world becomes more interconnected, computer and digital literacy become increasingly important, breaking down the barriers of illiteracy and offering pathways to knowledge, economic participation, and societal advancement.

ACCELERATED LEARNING PROGRAM

Luminos Fund (Second Chance) Montserrado

Approximately 210,000 out-of-school children are missing out on education in Liberia. In partnership with the Luminos Fund, in 2022, KEEP worked with 754 students in 19 communities across Gbarpolu and Montserrado Counties in an accelerated learning program called "Second Chance". The Second Chance program employs an intensive, child-centered approach to reach the most marginalized children denied an education due to poverty, conflict, or discrimination. In 2022-24, the Luminos second chance program aims to support learners to achieve functional literacy- reading 40 words per minute(wpm), demonstrating fluency with addition and subtraction, with or without regrouping- by scoring more than 50% on addition and subtraction EGMA tasks.

Second Chance classrooms blend child-centric pedagogy and activity-based learning methods to ensure children not only grasp the minimum learning competencies but also develop a positive experience towards learning by incorporating activity-based education and other engaging learning techniques. The program works with students who have either never been to school or dropped out of school due to a myriad of reasons. Children between the ages of 8 and 14 participate in an intensive 10-month learning program focusing on reading and numeracy. At the end of the program, students are enrolled at partner-linked schools at the appropriate evaluated grade level.



Promoting Literacy: TUITION SUPPORT & SPONSORSHIPS

Access to education in Liberia is frequently hindered by financial constraints, especially for many out-of-school children. Economic challenges pose a significant barrier to educational progress, with added complexities for parents or students facing physical disabilities. From its establishment, KEEP Liberia has been committed to addressing this issue by extending tuition support to numerous students from low-income backgrounds.

Our dedication extends to children with physically challenged parents or those facing physical disabilities themselves. In the year 2022, the impact of our sponsorship program became evident as all 13 supported students successfully advanced to the next grade level. Furthermore, one exceptional student achieved a significant milestone by graduating from high school. The students' progress underscores the effectiveness of our financial assistance initiatives. It reflects the transformative power of education in overcoming challenges and empowering individuals for a brighter future.

Meet Garcedar

Born to both parents with visual disability on January 1, 2004, Garcedar experiences growing up as a child is of no exception to the many children facing similar difficulties in Liberia.

Many parents living with disabilities find it difficult to survive and support their families. Thus leaving them in many cases to resort to street peddling and having to send their kids to hawk wares and condiments to supplement family income.

For the past 10 years, Garcedar has been a part of KEEP's Tuition support program- since he was in grade 2. He is now in Grade 12. A proud moment for us here at KEEP Liberia to have stood by his side all these years.



Books Donation

In 2022, KEEP continued its mission of promoting the love for reading and donated a total of 8,789 books to eight different organizations. These books cover a diverse range of topics and genres that are valued at USD 43,945. The impact of this donation is significant as it represents a considerable investment in knowledge dissemination and a sincere dedication to fostering a culture of reading and learning among children in Liberia.



PILLAR 3 : ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS

Investing in local communities to build resilience requires a significant effort to tackle economic challenges and empower individuals to sustain their livelihoods. KEEP Liberia is actively engaged in two impactful programs designed to achieve economic empowerment: one focuses on skills development in snail farming, while the other facilitates easy access to startup capital through local savings clubs. These initiatives collectively aim to empower local women, helping them achieve financial independence, improve their livelihoods, and stimulate vibrant local economic activities.

Snail farming (Heliciculture)

In recent years, KEEP Liberia has empowered local cooperatives through small grants, enabling them to expand businesses or venture into new enterprises. Responding to the growing interest among members, KEEP Liberia initiated training in heliciculture (snail farming), recognizing the increasing demand for snail meat in Liberia. The training focused on women in Millsburg and Arthington, Montserrado. The farmers were also provided start up snail pens and snails to begin their own snail farming venture. “The global snail market was valued at USD 549.7 Million in 2019 and is anticipated to reach USD 766.6 Million by 2027.” [1] Given its nutritional value and market potential, the training covered various aspects of snail care, including adult care, egg management, feeding, and juvenile care. Participants received start-up kits and will undergo a 10-month mentoring program to enhance their income and living standards. The pilot project also aims to document snail care and growth for future scalability, aligning with the global snail market's significant growth projections.



Savings clubs

In June, KEEP took an important step towards financial empowerment and community development by establishing two Village Savings and Enhancement Clubs (VSLAs) in Madina and Tosor Towns located in Grand Cape Mount County. The initiative involved providing seed funds to both towns, with Madina receiving US \$1,000.00 at an exchange rate of US \$175 and Tosor Town being allocated US \$1,000.00 at an exchange rate of US \$180. A targeted approach was taken in Tosor Town, where \$500.00 of the seed money was specifically designated for women engaged in petty entrepreneurship, thereby enhancing the impact on local economic resilience and empowerment.



ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

KEEP Carries Out Awareness on Oct. 10 Elections; Says It's Crucial to Liberia's Democracy

KEEP Liberia conducted awareness on Liberia's October 10, 2023 elections, emphasizing the election's critical role in the country's history and the need for an orderly, peaceful, and transparent electoral process. The elections mark the first since the withdrawal of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia, symbolizing the nation's progress towards self-reliance and stability.

The voters' registration process, a crucial aspect, commenced in two phases according to the National Elections Commission (NEC). However, challenges such as voter disenfranchisement, electoral irregularities, and limited transparency persisted, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities and hindering inclusivity. The lack of transparency and accountability in campaign financing and electoral processes, coupled with gender underrepresentation, posed a threat to democratic principles, requiring immediate attention and reforms.

KEEP's engagement focused on some of the deep-rooted societal divides, to foster a legitimate, inclusive, and transparent electoral system, ensuring political stability and peaceful conflict resolution. The awareness and engagement campaigns emphasized unity among political parties, commitment to peace, and concerted efforts to amplify the voices of underrepresented communities, particularly women and youth, in the democratic process.



My Vote Counts (SWISS EMBASSY PROJECT)

At KEEP, we strive to increase awareness on the rights and responsibilities of citizens targeting girls and young women. We acknowledge that civic education is not limited to participation in politics and society but also encompasses participation in classrooms, neighborhood, groups, and organizations. Last year, KEEP Liberia in partnership with the Swiss Embassy supported girls and young women led- groups in conducting awareness on civic education in schools, and communities targeting other girls and young women.

In May 2023, Girls and Young Women (GYW) held a productive meeting with the Swiss Ambassador, discussing ways to enhance the My Vote Counts project. Subsequently, GYW-led groups developed crucial voting and voter registration messages disseminated through various channels, including radio stations, local newspapers, social media, posters, and flyers. In addition, GYW-led groups worked towards raising awareness among first-time high school voters in Montserrado, Bong, and Gbarpolu counties. They conducted civic education sessions and participated in media talk shows on selected radio stations. The efforts focused on educating first-time voters about Liberia's electoral process, upcoming elections, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Overall, these activities helped to foster civic education and empowered young women in civic engagement throughout the year.



Girls and Young women (GYW) who are first time voters were given the platform to learn, contribute through volunteering, and collaborating with others to improve society. This initiative empowers girls and young women to actively participate in civic, political, and public engagement activities, moving beyond theoretical knowledge to practical and informed action.

Project Accountability Safe Space (PASS)

In November 2023, KEEP joined the Coalition of Women's Rights Organization (ORWAOCH, CHI, Women for Peace Action, FeJAL, Women's NGO Secretariat, and PAYOWI) on the Project Accountability Safe Space (PASS) Observing, Monitoring & Providing Legal Aid & Legal Response to violence against Women in Politics during Liberia's Election.

Violence against women in politics remains a pervasive and profoundly concerning issue, impeding the progress toward gender equality in political spheres. Women involved in politics often face various forms of violence, including verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation, and physical harm, aimed at discouraging their participation and stifling their voices. The PASS project focused on addressing issues that infringe upon women's fundamental human rights and undermine the democratic principles of inclusivity and diversity. The fear of violence discourages many women from entering politics or expressing their opinions freely, perpetuating a cycle of gender-based inequality within political arenas. PASS rolled out comprehensive efforts, including legal support, awareness campaigns, and fostering a culture that promotes respect and equality to ensure a more inclusive and safe political environment for women.

Cross-cutting Civic Engagement Activities

During the latter half of the year, KEEP actively participated in various initiatives to promote child protection and sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR). We attended nine Child Protection Network (CPN) meetings, showcasing our commitment to the cause and leading up to our leadership role in the CPN-SBC two-day awareness event in December 2023.

KEEP also facilitated the participation of GYW in the SRHR Conference, and contributed towards Amplifying Rights' successful execution of conference arrangements. Additionally, we demonstrated our commitment to civic engagement by participating in the Naymote 2-Day CSOs Conference in June 2023, aligning with the theme of building CSO resilience and safeguarding civic space in anticipation of the 2023 elections.

Furthermore, our participation in the Democracy Network (DEMNET) intensive training on promoting democracy through free and fair elections was successful, securing one of five seats among Liberia's delegates from a poll of over 12,000 applicants. This empowered us to craft awareness activities promoting peace and peaceful elections based on the knowledge acquired.



PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

She Leads Project (Plan International)

She Leads consortium is a consortium that brings together child rights and feminist organizations, focusing on empowering girls and young women (GYW) to influence decision-making and transform gender norms. The project operates under three domains: Socio-cultural, aiming to reduce discriminatory social gender norms; CSO, enhancing collective action of GYW in civil society; and Institutional, facilitating meaningful GYW participation in decision-making. KEEP led various activities, including the development of jingles, engagement with male-led CSOs (FLY, He-for-She, YMCA & YOCEL) on the inclusion of women to serve in key leadership positions at their institutions. We also implemented activities around radio talk shows highlighting gender issues, GYW internship, and SDGs data collection to support UN Women's interventions of promoting inclusion in decision-making spaces.



Public Recognitions

In 2023, KEEP Liberia received two notable recognitions from USAID and Lonestar Cell MTN. KEEP emerged as the USAID 2023 Civil Society Organization (CSO) of The Year in recognition of our service to community and through education, economic empowerment, and advocacy. We were also recognized as the 3rd Place MTN Momo Heroes of Change by Lonestar Cell MTN for trailblazing efforts that inspire change, enhance access to opportunities, and address the needs of underprivileged groups. These recognitions bolster our passion as a team, and validate the work we do at KEEP.



Brenda B. Moore
Kids Education Engagement
Project, Exec. Director

[002]

Dial ***415*002#** to vote.

MoMo | Lonestar Cell | MTN



KIDS Educational Engagement Project

USAID
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Congratulations
To Us @KEEP Liberia

LIBERIA DEVELOPMENT AWARDS 2023

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION (CSO) OF THE YEAR

Kids' Educational Engagement Project

keep liberia



PARTNERS 2023



INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Tanya Garnett	Wadei Powell	Eve Mai Cole
Justin Togba	Delvin Cooper	Dorothy Edwards Beyan
Massa Mamey Clarke	Jonah Kotee	Elizabeth Johnson
Beverly Barnes	Marsha Wilcox	David Morgan
Mayatu Passawe	Mardia Dennis	Nguye Kaladokubo
Alyce Anderson	Mayatu Passawe	Marcus Blamo

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

**KIDS EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (KEEP)
AUDITOR’S REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023**

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	<u>NOTE</u>	<u>2023</u>
INCOME:		
Income		
Total Income	2	521,249
EXPENDITURE:		
Project Cost	5,6,7,8,9	362,939
Administrative Cost	3	55,172
Total Expenditure		(418,111)
Excess of Income over Expenditure		<u><u>103,139</u></u>
Fund Balance		
Available Fund Balance		521,249
Less: Expenditure		(418,111)
Ending Fund Balance		<u><u>103,139</u></u>

The Financial Statement approved by the Board of Directors on December 31, 2023.



Dear Shareholders, Partners and KEEPers,

As we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year, I am continually amazed by the resilience, grit and determination of our dynamic Executive Director and her team.

I am proud and deeply grateful of the work that KEEP is doing in our Nation. Our focus on innovation and adaptability has enabled us to thrive in a rapidly changing economic and market landscape. Through all of this, we have held on to our core values and remain constant in transforming lives and communities. By exploring new ways of getting the most bang for our buck and forging strategic partnerships, we have strengthened our position of being best in class in our line of work.

Appreciation and thanks to all our partners, our supporters, our team and those that make use of our reading rooms and other services. Your feedback and collaboration have been invaluable as we strive to exceed expectations and deliver exceptional service and value.

Looking ahead, we are confident in our ability to navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie in the coming years. With a clear vision, a strong team and a commitment to excellence, we are well-positioned to achieve even greater success in the years ahead.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support and confidence in us – together we will KEEP on KEEPing!!!

Warmest regards,

Romelle A. Horton, Ph.D

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RH', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chair of the Board

