

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER



The heart of our work at KEEP Liberia is based on social justice and closing the inequality gap.

We believe that a more literate Liberia means a more economically empowered Liberia. We believe that that economic empowerment gives people choice, it gives dignity, it gives hope.

That's why we have honed in our efforts to focus on promoting literacy and sustainably empowering the communities we work with.

Despite serious financial challenges In 2022, we managed to create our first Braille reading room as well as 3 other reading rooms in Montserrado and Nimba.

Our economic enhancement programs saw increase in revenue for the community based groups we work with and this means more families are able to enroll and maintain their children in schools, support their families with dignity, and change the narrative of their lives.

We also saw an increase in access and usage of our reading rooms by up to 40 % and launching of 2 new books. One of which was published by the students of our reading clubs.

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

On behalf of the Board of KEEP, our team, those we serve, I extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone who continues to support our efforts across 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 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 4 (four) thematic pillars through which its pragmatic activities are executed. These four pillars are:



**Promoting
Literacy**



**Advocacy &
Awareness**



**Economic
Enhancement**



**Computer
Literacy**

IMPACT IN FIGURES (2022)



30

Reading Centers
created to date

8,789

Books
distributed 2022

1770

Visits to reading
rooms 2022

9

Reading clubs
created in 2022

135 (48 g/42)

Reading clubs members

850

(data needed)

Accelerated learning
program students enrolled

184

Reading sessions
conducted

390 Members

Economic enhancement
program participants

13 Clubs

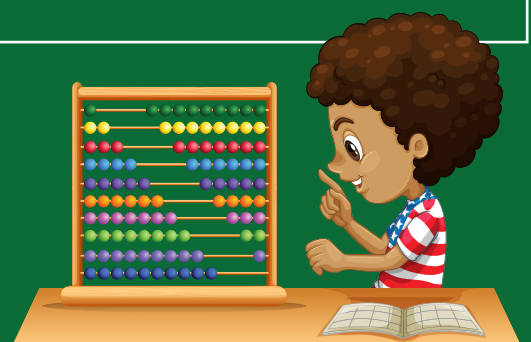
Economic enhancement
clubs

209 (123 f/86 m)

Advocacy participants

47 – 23m/24f

Students trained in computer literacy



PROMOTING LITERACY

Reading Rooms Creation

Montserrado County: School of the Blind: **KEEP Dedicates Its First Braille Library**

In January 2022, KEEP Liberia in partnership with Dan McNaughton Foundation dedicated and officially turned over its first braille reading room to administration of the school for the blind in Mango, Town, Brewerville, Montserrado, Liberia. This project kicked off during the course of 2021 after the school for the blind engaged KEEP to consider refurbishing and restocking its existing reading space for its 41 visually impaired students.

The room was formally dedicated by the Executive Director of the National Commission on Disabilities, Hon. Daintowon Domah Pay-Bayee who stated “We’ve been working on other means to educate the visually impaired but to have a library that visually impaired students can use to make research is the first of its kind in Liberia”. She also encouraged the students to not see their disability as inability.

Excitedly receiving the room, the principal of the school for the blind Mr. Jackson Suah “this is the beginning of a partnership that will give students at this school the opportunity to read and the capability to explore the global village”. He then thanks KEEP Liberia and promises that the reading room will be used by the students and the facility will be kept intact.

The books stocked in the reading room are a combination of books purchased by KEEP and donated by the Dan McNaughton Foundation and the following libraries: Clear Vision, National Library Science, Maryland State Library for the Blind, and Hawaii Library Service.





Mariella Simone Reading Room (Caldwell township)

KEEP also partnered with the Mariella Simone Foundation to create a Reading Room at the Samukai Town Public school, located in upper Caldwell, Montserrado County. The reading room was named after Little Mariella Simone, Daughter of Hon. Mawane Diggs, CEO of the Mariella Simone Foundation.

This was the school's first dedicated reading space since its creation.



Bates Family Foundation Reading Room – Careysburg City



In collaboration with the Bates Family Foundation, a Reading Room was created at the Careysburg Public school in Careysburg City, Montserratado County. The reading room was named in honor of Edward A. Bates and Evelyn Bates by the Bates Family Foundation.

The family, represented by Mr. Jeff Bates commended the KEEP family for working with the Bates foundation to complete the project and proudly shared at the dedication “ *It is our duty to give back and to look back. The Bates family is the biggest Bates family in Careysburg and its history goes back to over 100 years. It is a family that values education. Reading is important and as a child growing up, books were our foundation. Take good care of the room and the property is yours. I would like to say thank you to KEEP Liberia for making this dream possible*”

The school has 395 students and was stocked 2,450 pieces of assorted leisure reading books.

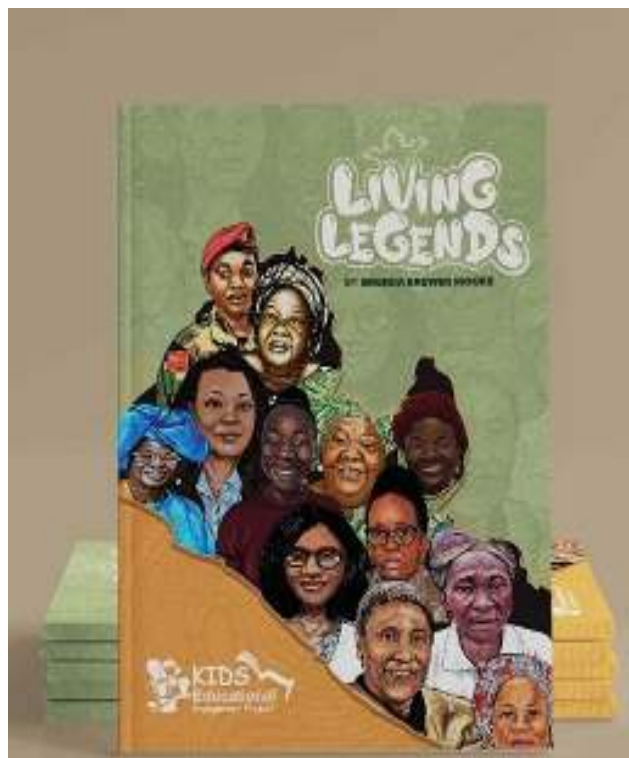
Nimba County

With funding from the Bility Development Foundation, KEEP established a reading room at the Kpoahpa Whenten public school. The school was established in 1975 by citizens of Leahwahpea Mah, Nimba County and has enrolled, 241 students and goes up to the 9th grade. Located approximately 250 kilometers from the capital, Monrovia, the school is a public school and caters mostly to children from the nearby village on the Sacleapea road, Nimba County. The community is one that consists of mostly sustenance farmers who grow rice and cassava and engage in backyard gardening that feeds their families. The school has a faculty of 12 staff, 2 of which are volunteer teachers. This was the first reading room (mini library) the school has ever had, and it was stocked with 1,921 assorted books valued at U\$11,518.



Publications

Developing relatable reading content for students as another way of promoting a love for reading, KEEP embarked on another book project, this time to shine the light on the contributions of Liberian women to the development of Liberia.



Living Legends

Over the years, Liberian women have proven to be hardworking, innovative, resilient, defiant and inspirational.

Yet, too often, their contributions to making our nation better isn't recognized, or recognized and appreciated post humorously. Living Legends is a book recognizing the remarkable little and big contributions of amazing contemporary living Liberian women from all walks of life.

The book also serves as a tool to inspire and motivate young girls to explore the diversity of professions available as well as see women they can relate to as role models.

The book highlights over 25 professions as well as provide simple activities kids can do to play while learning and being inspired.

Once Upon A Time

Few years back, our team began compiling the short stories being written by students in our Reading Clubs as a way to encourage and nurture their storytelling skills as well as another strategy to get them reading more.

These stories were compiled and titled "Once Upon A Time" and published in partnership with Forte Publishing, featuring 15 stories from 6 young authors.



Reading Clubs & Reading Sessions

During the course of the year, we conducted over 184 reading sessions across 10 reading rooms. These sessions entailed arts and crafts, read aloud, storytelling and spelling bee activities.

9 reading clubs were established comprising of 135 students and these clubs consumed 56 teacher guided reading books.

Combined, our reading clubs and community targeted reading sessions completed 105 books which also entailed 1,770 visits across 10 reading rooms.

PROMOTING LITERACY: TUITION SUPPORT & SPONSORSHIPS

Since its inception, KEEP has provided tuition support to several students from low-income backgrounds. We also focus on children whose parents are physically challenged or themselves physically challenged. In 2022, all 11 sponsored students passed to the next grade level and 1 student graduated from high school.

MEET ASHA NYOUN

"At age 2, I lost my father and was left alone with my mother. At 10, I lost my mother and had to move in with my stepmother. I have resided with her ever since. For the last few years, I have been fortunate to benefit from a tuition support program with KEEP Liberia through the Destined Kids Assistance Program (DEKAP).

I am proud and very happy that at age 16, I have successfully graduated from high school. I want to save lives and so, my dream is to become a medical doctor. Because KEEP believed in me, I have reached this far despite the challenges.



MEET ELIJAH MEATOE

Elijah Meatoe, a visually impaired student supported by KEEP Liberia, is doing exceptionally well in his academic activities at school of the Blind.

Elijah's single mother Florence, is also visually impaired, which makes taking care of their family very challenging

at 17, Elijah dreams of becoming a journalist and is currently benefiting from KEEP Liberia's tuition support program.



PILLAR 3 : ECONOMIC LIVELIHOOD



Out of 11 clubs KEEP has established, 6 clubs generated Total L\$2,430,590 approximately U\$16,204

In 3 of our project locations (Rivercess, Gabrpolu and Montserrado Counties)



These groups used funds generated to scale up their individual small businesses as well as conduct communal farming projects which has enabled them maintain their children in school, build their homes as well as start small businesses to increase their disposable incomes.

ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

KEEP continued creating awareness among children and young adults on body autonomy, corporal punishment as well as gender and negative social norms.

This included group discussions at schools, churches and conducted radio and online awareness.

We also utilized two of our published books, *My Body, My Treasure* & *Free To Be Me* to stimulate and guide the discussions.



Partnership Programs

She Leads Project (Plan International)

KEEP remained intentional with pushing the aims and objectives of the She-Leads Project with the Five Girls and Young Women led groups in five communities in Montserrat. The project aims to support girls and young women in challenging and transforming negative gender norms and taking on key decision-making positions in their communities, schools, and the society at large.

The Girls and Young Women engaged members of the Legislature, the Children Parliament, Civil Society Organizations, line Ministries (Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Information and Ministry of Education), International Actors (EU, ECOWAS), and their Community leaders and members. These engagements covered issues faced by the Girls and Young Women and possible recommendations, measures to ensure the proper implementation of feminist laws and policies, the progress made by the Government to ensure GYW participation, and the collection and presentation of data collected on the status of girls and Young Women involvement in decision-making spaces.

The Girls and Young Women led groups were also privileged to participate in a media talk show that depicted the importance of GYW involvement in decision-making spaces. They developed advocacy messages and jingles that was aired on ECOWAS Radio. They were opportune to network with She-Leads Sierra Leone for the purpose of learning and linking.

As a result of these engagements, the GYW-led groups are now attending community meetings and are being charged in their communities to handle the affairs of the youths in constant consultation with the community leadership. ECOWAS has also given these GYW groups the platform to share the data collected on the status of GYW involvement in decision-making spaces on the ECOWAS Radio





Second Chance Project (Luminous Fund)

Working with out of kids school children.

Approximately more 210,000¹ 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 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 – 14 participate in an intensive 10 month learning program that focuses on reading and numeracy.

At the end of the program, students are enrolled at partner linked schools at the appropriate evaluated grade level.

¹ www.luminosfund.org

Mercy Corps – SEAL Project

In its 3rd year under the European Union SEAL Project, KEEP in partnership with Mercy Corps conducted several capacity development trainings for staff including: Project Management, Grant Writing, Procurement/Logistics, Monitoring & Evaluation, Phonemic Awareness trainings.

These combined trainings strengthen the skills & capacity of KEEP's staff. The project also included an advocacy component that focused on corporal punishment in schools.



Volunteers:

Special thanks to those who made time during the course of the year to volunteer with us on our various reading promotion projects.

Particular thanks to British Charge Affairs, Kate Thomas, Deddeh Miller and Mr. Lawrence Doe. Lawrence was our most consistent volunteer in 2022 and volunteered over 20 times!



KEEPers Lost

Special recognition to Ms. Gail Farngalo and Mr. Daniel Menyon, two very strong supporters of KEEP who passed away in 2022. Their contributions to our work over the years was outstanding. Rest in peace #KEEPers

PARTNERS & SPONSORS



INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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Deweh Gray	Barbara Cooper
Salamartu Duncan	Sametta Togba Scott

**KIDS EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (KEEP)
AUDITOR'S REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022**

STATEMENT OF FUND BALANCE AND CASH STATUS

CURRENCY: US DOLLARS

	<u>NOTE</u>	<u>2022</u>
A FUND BALANCE		
Brought Forward		8,561
Add: Total Receipts during the year	2	407,367
Total Funds Available for Operations		<u>415,928</u>
Less: Total Payments during the year	3,5,6,7,8,9	(210,596)
Balance (End of the Year)		<u>205,332</u>
B CASH STATUS		
Cash on Hand		7
Cash in Bank	4	<u>205,325</u>
Balance (Cash Status)		<u>205,332</u>
Difference (A-B)		<u>-</u>

These financial statements were approved by the Management on December 31, 2022


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Chief Executive Officer


.....
Finance Officer

The notes on pages 9 to 13 are an integral part of these financial statements