

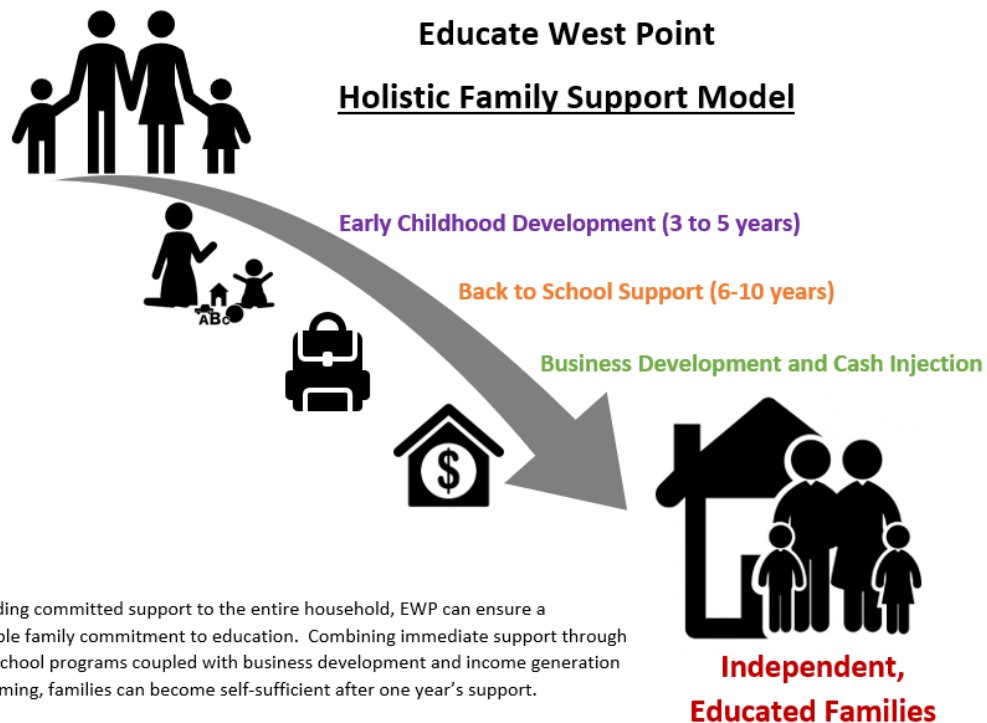


## Educate West Point- Liberia Annual Report (August 2018 – July 2019)

## Background:

Educate West Point Liberia is a grassroots NGO in Liberia working to provide individualized educational, psychosocial and financial support to those most vulnerable youth living in the slums of West Point. EWP brings a dynamic workforce together to provide a holistic approach to youth's development. We support our beneficiaries by facilitating their return to our government school while providing them with access to basic services including healthcare, counseling, and two meals a day. We empower our students to increase their learning outcomes and develop leadership skills through the facilitation of afterschool programs leveraging peer education to increase our children's self-worth and confidence. The afterschool program simultaneously provides students with extended learning opportunities to permit them to excel in their academics despite being behind in their education. By integrating service projects into our youth's educational curriculum, we are emboldening children to become entrepreneurs and activists at an earlier age, streamlining the creation of future leaders.

To encourage a holistic approach to the family's access to education and livelihoods, during the 2018-2019 school year we enrolled 3 to 5-year-old children in sponsored households into an Early Childhood Development Centre where we provide them a safe space for learning and development of social skills. This strategy allows a household-based commitment to education while providing time for our beneficiary's caregivers to focus on their livelihood activities. We provide business training and assist to develop business plans, procuring additional commodities for the family business via a small cash injection.



By providing committed support to the entire household, EWP can ensure a sustainable family commitment to education. Combining immediate support through back to school programs coupled with business development and income generation programming, families can become self-sufficient after one year's support.

## Back To School:

Organized in September 2017, EWP was able to return 9 students to school through our sponsorship program. These children are additionally provided with two meals a day and access to healthcare, alleviating financial constraints on their caregivers. Our protection monitor serves as a resource for counseling of our youth and parents alike to ensure our child's success, both in school and in society.



*Figure 1: EWP primary school students, first day of school September 2018*

In September 2018, EWP was able to increase her beneficiaries on the sponsorship program to 24 students.

These 24 children were selected based on household vulnerability status, such as: Single parent with high number of dependents, low-income household with minimally educated caregivers, and the observation of having been

exposed to one or more human rights violations such as child labor or denied access to basic needs. Children are targeted aged 8 to 12 years old as this is statistically when children are most likely to drop out of school. Our 24 sponsored students were supported with uniforms, school materials, tuition costs, PE clothes, access to healthcare, psychosocial support and 2 meals a day for each day of school plus 3 meals a day during our summer program. Sponsors are asked to pledge for a 5 year sponsorship. Upon taking of placement tests, our beneficiaries spanned grade levels from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

On average, beneficiaries spent 2 years out of school due to lack of financial support, many of which lost these means due to the loss of a care giver's livelihoods. Caregivers were unanimously found to have full intentions to send their children to school but simply had lost all means to do so.



All 9 of our students are expected to graduate at the end of the school year, despite being out of school for two years. On average, students started the year in the high 75's percentile and ended the school year with a 90% average.

## Early Childhood Development (ECD)

EWP-Liberia was able to realize one of her visions for 2017-2018 by establishing the first Early Childhood Development center in West Point.

During the academic year of 2018 - 2019 the ECD was able to accommodate 35 children between the ages of 3 to 5 years providing a supportive atmosphere for play, growth and developmental learning as well as a hot meal a day.

The ECD session runs from 8:30 am – 14:00 from Monday to Friday every week except for holidays.



*Figure 2: EWP's Early Childhood Development Center, opened January 2019*

The educational materials used at the ECD were derived from the Jolly Phonics package, an educational curriculum endorsed by the Government of Liberia's Ministry of Education and drafted through collaborators funded by UNICEF. During the period under review, one curriculum training was conducted by the Country Coordinator for Jolly Phonics, an English lecturer at the University of

Liberia. The training enabled EWP's ECD caregivers to navigate the curriculum and master content delivery.



*Figure 3: ECD children enjoying lunch break*

## Extended Learning Afterschool Program

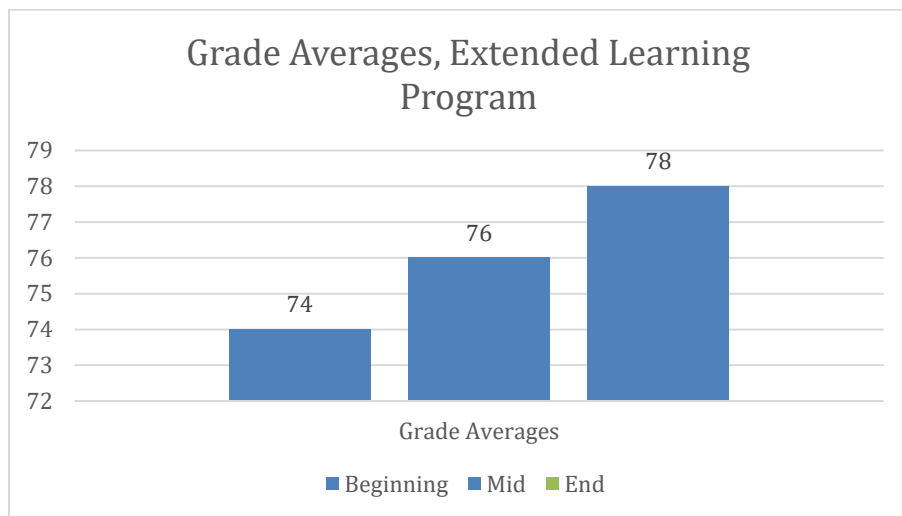
In continuation of the Afterschool program launched in 2017 which allows beneficiaries to have access to extended study opportunities to improve learning outcomes after normal school hours, EWP- Liberia was able to increase the number of beneficiaries from the initial number of 9 participants to 24. The Afterschool Program is held Monday through Friday for 2 hours each school day, and focuses on the key subject areas of English, Reading, Writing and Mathematics. The Afterschool Program facilitator drafts lessons based on the content being taught at the school which they attended during the day, N.V. Massaquoi government school, the only government school available in West Point Township. During the first hour, the students conduct peer-led education among their age group, taking turns explaining their understanding of various topics to their fellow classmates. These sessions are observed by the ASP Facilitator who guides discussions and provides direction. During the second hour, common “core-lessons” are instructed by the facilitator in key subject areas that address common gaps in understanding across various grade levels.



*Figure 4: Godfrey, our chief facilitator, leads a session during the After School Program*

In addition, various personal development qualities are evaluated each quarter, including self-confidence, communication, and leadership skills. These characteristics are assessed and elaborated by the facilitator with the students in order to acknowledge individual strengths and to develop areas for improvement.

Utilizing a peer-education methodology has proven an effective means to give students the opportunity to improve these skills when speaking in front of the class and expressing their understanding of various subject matters in their own words.





## Partnerships

### The Cova Project

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2019, EWP-Liberia in collaboration with the Cova Project, and Australia based non-profit organization, joined to introduce the product and concept of menstrual cups to residents of West Point with an aim to improve the quality of life of women and girls in the community whilst simultaneously increasing school attendance among girls during their monthly cycle.



*Figure 5: Geena, the founder of the Cova Project, leads a training on the use of the cups*

The Cova Project provides menstrual cups to women in developing communities with the aim to remove the physical and financial burden of menstruation each month. Studies show girls may miss up to a quarter of their education each year when not equipped with the appropriate products to manage their period, particularly in regions of the world with cultural taboos in discussion menstruation. When used correctly the cups may last up to 10 years and can be inserted for up to 12 hours, making life much easier, in areas that lack adequate wash facilities.



EWP-Liberia supported the Cova project to train 150 women and girls of West Point on the importance and usage of the menstrual cups. Phase 2 of the project will be initiated in 2019-2020 school year, targeting an additional 300.

EWP-Liberia is closely monitoring and gathering outcomes as well as feedbacks from the early users of the distributed cups and looks forward to working with the Cove Project in the future.

### **AFID**

EWP was lucky enough to partner with Accountants for International Development, an organization that mobilizes volunteer accountants who wish to support international non-profits through advice on Finance and Accounting best practices. Zack Mineo deployed to West Point Liberia for two weeks in May 2019, training the EWP Finance team, revising policy and procedures for best practices, and conducting an informal audit of EWP's finances. EWP was grateful for the support for Mr. Mineo who looks forward to working with EWP again in the future as the organization's project portfolio increases.

### **Houghton Mifflin Harcourt**

Jerold White, an American Liberian and former resident of Grand Bassa County, Liberia, discovered EWP Liberia through EWP Inc.'s co-founder Katie Letheren. Committed to helping his home country, Mr. White sought donations for EWP, ultimately acquiring 2.5 metric tons worth of textbooks and the funds to ship them to Liberia. Jerold visited EWP in February 2019 and was excited to see the Early Childhood Development Center in progress as well as take a tour of West Point. The books generously provided by HMH will be utilized in the After-School Program and ECD center as well as serve as donations to other education institutions in Liberia that lack access to textbooks.

### **Assessment, "New West Point"**

As sea erosion continues to cause residents of West Point to lose their homes each year, the Government of Liberia designated a location some miles away known as Breweville to host relocated residents of West Point. Musa Sheriff, the founder of EWP-Liberia, visited the site in May 2019 with intention to assess available educational facilities.

During his visit he found at the site two schools, one private elementary school and a second public Junior High School which currently cannot accommodate the



number of school-aged children residing in that area. Present 150 households are slated to relocate to the already inundated site which will not be able to accommodate their children in the school system.

Upon consulting the land administrator, Mr. Sheriff was made to understand no additional land has been allocated for the construction of educational facilities at this time but rather the land remains for sale for purchase and utilized how the investor sees fit.



*Figure 6: Housing facilities raised by the Government of Liberia at "New West Point"*

A few of the sites intended for a school were visited along with the administrator who was excited to know that EWP is engaging in educating underprivileged children in the slum of West Point.

## Livelihood Sustainability Program (LSP)

In order to sustain and foster the continuation of the beneficiary's education; EWP launched her Livelihoods Sustainability programs in 2018 which increases the engagement with the beneficiaries' families, partner school, and community at large while extending our reach to more children in need.

A holistic approach to education in the home was identified as a primary need for project sustainability, as well as a mechanism for which caregivers can improve their income generation and generate savings, thereby allowing them to take back responsibility for their children's education. It was decided that basic business training, coupled with a local saving's scheme and a cash injection to the caregiver's business would permit sustainable growth of the livelihoods in the home. The Early Childhood Development Center supported EWP's initiative to work with the children's caregivers as they were now had more time during the day to focus on their income generation whilst assisted with child-care during the day.

Initially, a total of 7 beneficiaries’ parents benefited from the launch of the Livelihood Sustainability Program, which includes business training, business plan development, cash injection and enrollment into a “Village Saving Loan” scheme.

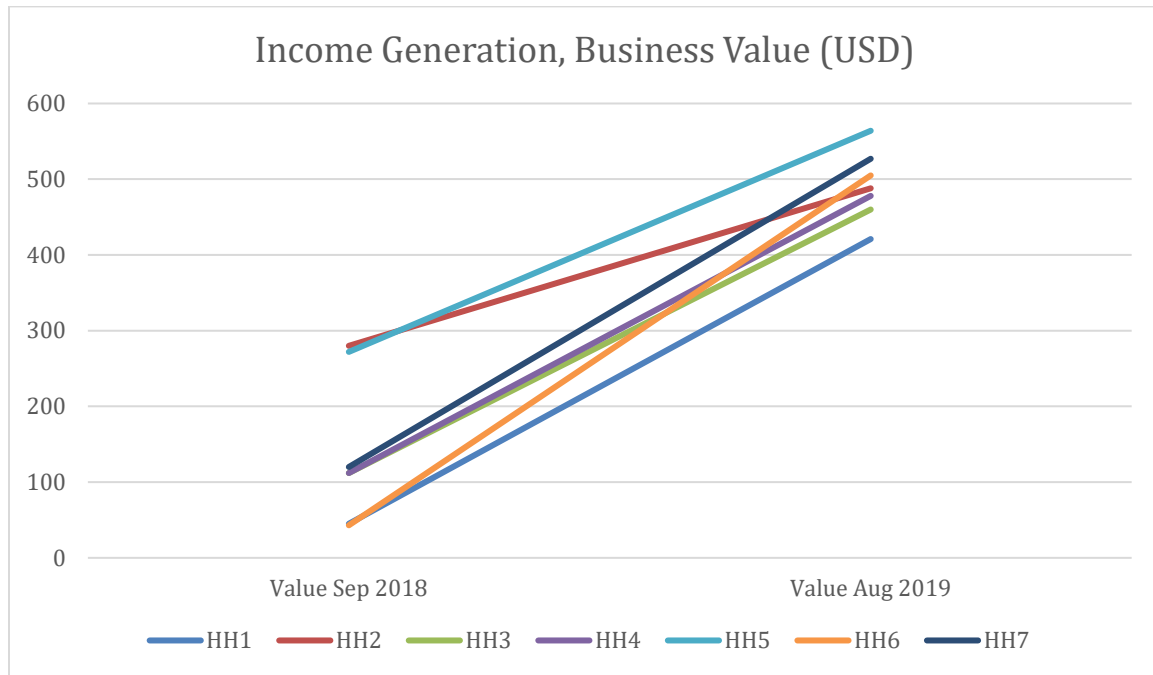


Figure 7: The above figure shows the steady increased total value of the family business once provided with business training and injection of additional business commodities. The amount is recorded in USD.

Beneficiaries were selected based on their regular participation in organized meetings and their willingness to pilot this new initiative. The business was conducted for 5 days, covering basic business management, record keeping, cash flow principles, investment, sales, and savings. Upon graduation from training, beneficiaries were assisted to calculate the present value of their business, considering outstanding credit, debt and savings to insert into a basic personal cash book. Once graduates were able to understand the current state of their business, a business development plan was drafted in collaboration with the trainer as to how to logically move forward with the business as is, as well as how additional funds would be allocated should access to loans be possible. Each of the beneficiaries of the program were ultimately allotted a sum of \$22,000 LD, a value of \$150USD. This amount was an average of 50% of the total value of their present business. EWP’s procurement team assisted with the market assessment and purchase of items for the graduates and distributed them accordingly. After the distributions, graduates were instructed to maintain the daily cashbook for their personal businesses and were assisted for the first month daily to ensure success.



*Figure 8: A market assessment is conducted with EWP Inc. co-founder Mitch Mercer along with Makula, LSP beneficiary and single mother to Aisha, a student in our Sponsorship program*

Now that businesses were growing steadily and cash flow being tracked, participants were trained on the Village Saving and Loan Association scheme. The VSLA, or as the EWP group dubbed their organization “The Savings for Success” group, is a weekly meeting where participants deposit a pre-agreed sum into a joint pot which serves the group as a micro

finance loan and or emergency pot. Deposits and loans are tracked and agreed as a group, permitting a transparent and accountable accounting and savings practice. A total of 270 USD was saved by the 7 households with 1 loan distributed during the period.

Cecelia Dordue one of the training graduates is engaged in selling cold soft drinks and water on the roadside has now opened a shop, complete with a refrigerator. All of our 7 beneficiaries of the sustainability program went through a training which covered the following key area to help them achieve their goal:

- ❖ How to manage a business successfully
- ❖ Good business record keeping
- ❖ How to save and why saving is important
- ❖ When to re-invest in business.

At EWP Success Saving Group, all beneficiaries pay \$ 250 LD weekly for personal saving which is planned to be withdrawn at the end of every year in a total sum of \$ 13,000 LD. From the beginning of the Saving Group all beneficiaries remain committed and compliant to the group policies.



## Activity Breakdown:

The following log frame is utilized to guide and evaluate EWP's programs:

<b>Parent Engagement</b> <i>Parents are involved in the overall success of their child's progress through EWP programs and are empowered to support their children's continuity and success in their education</i>		
Objectives	Indicator	Progress
<b>Parents have a basic understanding of child's rights and cease to violate them</b>	# caregivers trained on EWP code of conduct and children's rights	24
	# caregivers trained on Basic Human Rights	24
<b>Parents are trained in individualized basic business and saving modules to utilize excess income</b>	# caregivers trained in basic business	07
	# of 1 year business / saving plans developed	01
	% of income invested to child welfare	25%
	% income saved	15%
	% income reinvested	60%
<b>School Improvements</b> <i>Our partner school's capacity to provide a quality education in a supportive environment is improved</i>		
Objectives	Indicator	Progress
<b>Schools are supported with basic resources to empower students and teachers</b>	# of in-kind donations provided to the school for basic materials. Desks, books, etc.	0, 2.5 metric ton book donation pending
	Provision of a Librarian, 2 hours per day, M, W, F	0
Objectives	Indicator	Progress
<b>Community Development</b> <i>The general community of West Point is engaged to increase community health, social cohesion, safety and general well-being of community members</i>		



<b>Social impact projects improve the social fabric and general environment of West Point</b>	# beneficiary led service projects designed/implemented	<b>1</b>
	# beneficiary led outreach campaigns	<b>1</b>
	# of community health projects	<b>1, Cova Project</b>
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>Youth Empowerment</b> <i>Our beneficiaries are supported in their educational endeavors and personal development, increasing learning outcomes and self-worth</i>		
<b>Households are provided holistic support to their children's immediate access to education</b>	# of children enrolled in primary school	<b>24</b>
	# of children enrolled in ECD	<b>35</b>
	% retention rate BTS	<b>90%</b>
	% retention rate ECD	<b>100%</b>
<b>After school programs increase beneficiaries learning outcomes while providing child care for families</b>	# of afterschool program sessions	<b>180</b>
	Average # of attendants daily to the ASP	<b>90%</b>
	% increase, test scores, English and Math	<b>20%</b>
<b>The Early Childhood Development Center provides child care services to families while encouraging children's educational growth and development</b>	# of days Early Childhood Center provided child care services	<b>140</b>
	Average # of attendants daily to the ECD	<b>33</b>

## Financial Breakdown

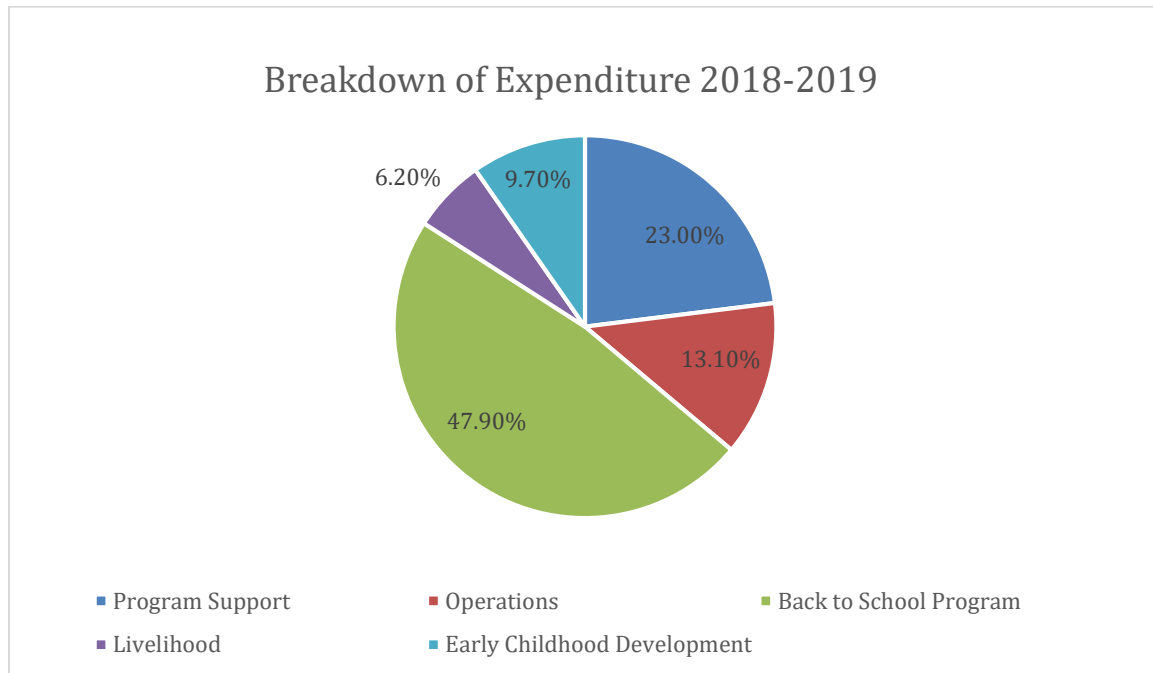


Figure 9 EWP Maintained an annual budget of ~15,500 USD for the 2018-2019 school year with 80.7% going directly to programs

### EWP Success Story during the period under review:

1. On the 15 of July this year, the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Education accredited Educate West Point Liberia to operate educational programs/activities in Liberia
2. George Lee, one of our high-risk students recruited from the West Point's most infamous ghetto, has now successfully completed one school year with us and has been accepted back into our partner school for the 2019-2020 school year
3. Enoch Brown, a student on the sponsorship program, was replaced from the program per the request of his father who found employment at the end of the year. He said now that he could afford his child's education, the opportunity should be provided to another family in need





*Figure 10: EWP Liberia's staff pose for a picture*