

EDUCATE WEST POINT INCORPORATED

Annual Report 2020-2021

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BACKGROUND:

Educate West Point - EWP Liberia is a U.S. 501(c)3 public charity dedicated to providing quality education, protection, basic healthcare, psychosocial counseling and financial support to the most vulnerable children living in Liberia's largest slum community of "West Point" and other surrounding communities. As a non-governmental institution, EWP brings together a dynamic workforce to provide a holistic approach to child growth and development. The beneficiaries in our programs consist of families who are identified as at risk, meeting vulnerability criteria and/or having been exposed to human rights violations. Family profiles are generally households without access to sufficient income to support their children's education, often consisting of single parent households, elderly caregivers or parents with a large number of dependents. Through our **Early Childhood Development Program**, EWP provides care to children aged 3 to 5 to kickstart their education while supporting their families' opportunity to focus on their daily work in order to produce income for the household. Through our **Back To School Program**, we support children by providing access to education, healthcare, counseling, and two meals per school day. To enhance our students' confidence in their learning abilities and develop their leadership skills, EWP facilitates an **After-School Learning Program** which provides extended learning in line with the Ministry of Education's national curriculum. Within the reporting period, EWP opened and maintains the first ever **Public Library** in West Point. Established in 2020, the EWP Public Library operates Monday through Saturday each week, supporting student's access to learning materials, reading books and support in establishing research skills.

EWP supports heads of households through our **Livelihoods Program**, providing them with business skills training and access to a **Village Savings and Loan Association** with cash injections to support their small businesses. During the onset of the Coronavirus outbreak and subsequent closure of schools, EWP established the **Community Education Worker Program** in which trained facilitators visited students in small public spaces and / or door to door to ensure continued learning. Students were further supported with take-home lessons and reading materials. Upon reopening of schools, this program transitioned to an extended education outreach program whereas out of school students that EWP cannot support with a full sponsorship due to financial constraints have access to informal learning.

Upon the resurgence of the Coronavirus in April 2021, EWP reactivated their **C-19 Task Force** which carried out community sensitizations on preventative measures, established handwashing facilities and distributed both hygiene and food materials to extremely vulnerable households to promote stay-at-home measures and support community health.

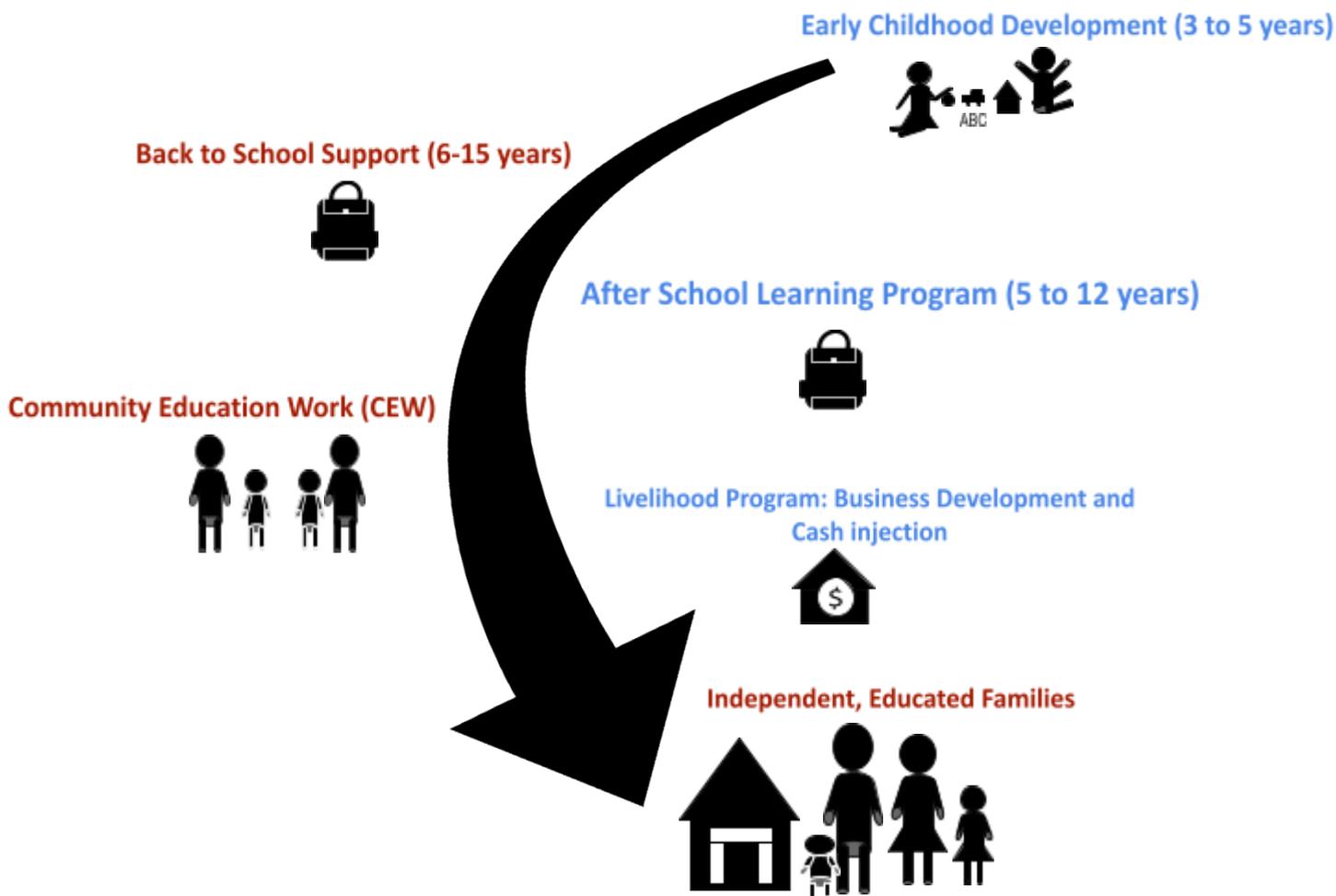
In September 2021, EWP pioneered a **Computer Literacy Training Program** to support interested student's computer skills. The program focuses on typing, Microsoft Word Package mastery and research practice. Though open to the general public, the program prioritizes EWP's sponsored students to support a holistic approach to their education.

Finally, in order to support EWP’s spirit of volunteerism, activism and community development, EWP continued to conduct **Community Service Projects** in West Point on a monthly basis in the form of clean-up campaigns. These service projects are utilized as opportunities for our students to develop a sense of leadership, establish organization skills, improve self-esteem and give back to their community. These campaigns engage EWP’s extended network of beneficiaries and their families to promote social cohesion, support public health and empower community members to be agents of change.

Progress Report 2020-2021:

EWP began the year smoothly with a total of 245 students directly enrolled in our educational programs (ECD, BTS, ASP, Library, Computer Literacy & CEW). EWP has worked over the last 4 years with vulnerable children and youth in and around West Point, aiming to achieve our mission of seeing all children with equal access to quality education. In 2021, with the educational and financial support of partners, EWP expanded learning opportunities to allow our beneficiaries to excel despite being behind in their academic career. By adding service projects into our youth educational curriculum, we additionally teach children to become entrepreneurs, visionaries, and all around change-makers, streamlining the creation of future leaders.

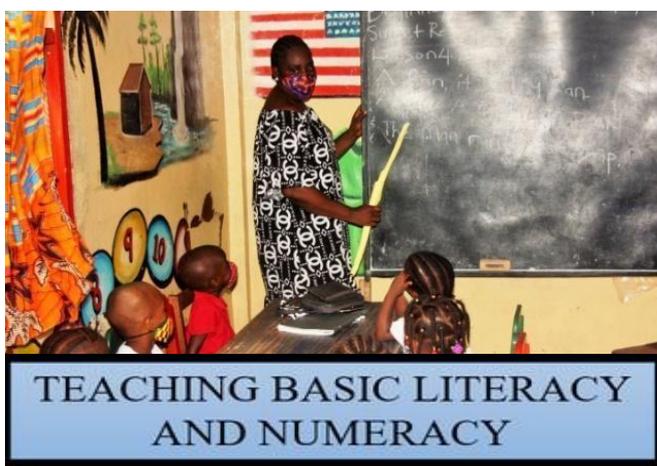
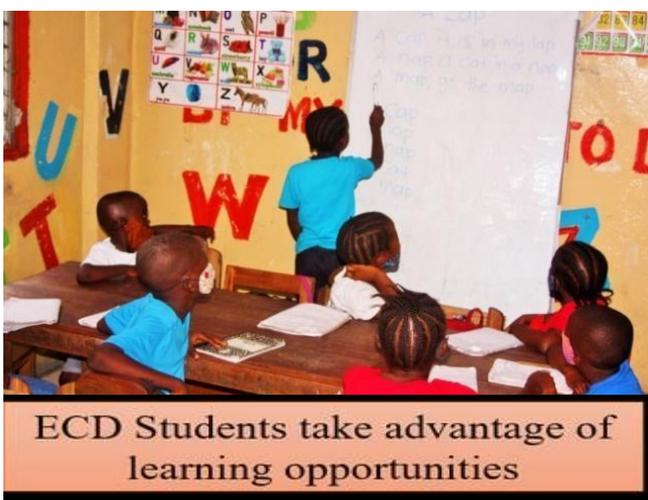
Holistic Family Support Model



Our program activities cater directly to the needs of less fortunate youth. Each child receives individual support for their education and other basic necessities. In 2021, several thousands of children were estimated to be in need of education and special protection, particularly due to family financial constraints which resulted in an increase of human rights abuses and household vulnerability status. Key vulnerabilities noted among households included poverty, high numbers of dependents and a lack of education within the home. Negative coping mechanisms that often result due to this vulnerability status include: children without access to education, child labor, begging, human trafficking and domestic abuse. With all these roadblocks to education, EWP strives for a better future where all children in the community are educated, healthy, and safe. We envisage these kids as humane, compassionate, and capable leaders for a prosperous Liberia. During the year in review we had 65% growth in our operation, thereby bringing our workforce and service projects to 1,485 beneficiaries across programs - ECD, BTS, ASP, CEW, Library, Computer Class, and Livelihoods projects.

COVID-19 Impacts

Reflecting on the 2020-2021 academic year, EWP struggled for all of its beneficiaries to return to school to learn and grow despite additional roadblocks due to the C19 pandemic. Our Early Childhood Development center (ECD) and Community Education Work (CEW) programs started in-person classes in September 2020 with 100 children— 60 ECD & 40 CEW, teaching childhood education across 2 classrooms of ~35 persons each in the fall. However, the pandemic created tremendous stress to reopen classrooms and caused additional economic hardship for our students and their families. In light of the school shutdown by the Ministry of Education (MoE), EWP adapted methodologies, utilizing a combination of smaller classrooms, local community provided venues, and at home learning to ensure education activities were not halted by the pandemic. EWP further expanded our student monitoring and evaluation efforts to gauge student’s progress in the new learning environment. One simple way utilized to assess how the students were coping with the



changes, classes were started in the form of a circular discussion whereas students would go around the classroom and say a few words about how they were feeling that day.

During these exercises, it was observed that most students were tired, stressed, anxious or hungry. Despite a brief period of return to normalcy during a period of reduced C19 cases, the virus swiftly returned and group activities were once again shut down by the Ministry of Education (MoE). EWP thus further expanded home studies in order to complete all of those remaining lessons designated by the MoE through the national curriculum. For two months the team strived to ensure unimpeded educational activities despite the aforementioned challenges coupled with the onset of the rainy season and a team's lack of rain gear.

Despite the daunting environment, EWP saw success in the adapted modalities for at-home learning, facilitating sessions in smaller environments due to the support of the community in provision of safe study spaces. EWP was actually able to increase the number of students reached through the Community Education Workers as the community observed our activities and had a further lack of options on where to send their children upon closure of public institutions, not to mention increased economic hardship on already destitute households. Literacy and Numeracy evaluations of students coupled with surveys conducted with caregivers/parents showed that the majority of students tested "on track" at their grade level and were observed to be engaged and disciplined in completing their studies.



COVID-19 SANITARY AWARENESS:

In April, we launched a 30-Day Antivirus awareness within West Point after the resurgence of the new coronavirus delta variant. The awareness team was composed of eighteen (18) community youth volunteers with vast experiences in sanitation and community service initiatives. EWP, remembering the days of the Ebola outbreak, sprung into action to encourage the community residents who were doubtful of the existence of the virus to keep adhering to prevention measures. Initially, before the commencement of community engagements on sanitation, we conducted door to door surveys and observed that the majority of the community residents lacked access to buckets and cleaning materials to



EWP PROVIDED HYGIENE KITS TO COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

the virus.

In the end, we noticed that many residents who benefited from EWP cleaning materials and preventive supplies were following the health protocols to curtail the spread of the pandemic. Through our monthly **Service Projects**, sanitation campaigns were conducted every first Saturday of the month whereas EWP provided wheelbarrows, tools, and sanitation materials to clean the communities within the Township of West Point. Caregivers of our beneficiaries assisted EWP to mobilize community members to join in the efforts, promoting social cohesion, activism and public health.

promote sufficient handwashing. To sustain this program, exerted efforts were made to educate our network of caregivers daily while donating “stay-at-home” packages (food and supplies), and sanitation materials to highly vulnerable households while establishing communal hand washing stations. Over 300 hundred sanitation kits were distributed to homes with 115 handwashing stations established at cook shops, video clubs and educational centers to continue the practice of the preventive measures against



EWP C-19 TASK FORCE VOLUNTEERS IN GEAR

Back To School, After-School Learning and Livelihoods:

The **After-school Learning Program (ASP)** is an extended learning opportunity provided to EWP’s **Back to School Programs’ (BTS)** sponsored students with additional time daily to deep-dive into cross-cutting topics within the national curriculum, work on homework and interpret their understanding of the lesson among their peers. The ASP also serves as a mechanism for EWP to support informal learning for students who lack access to education, fit EWP’s vulnerability criteria and would ideally be enrolled into the full sponsorship program upon securing additional funding. The ASP is assisting students mainly from the BTS angle through a curriculum based activity that is taught at the local government school - N.V. Massaquoi Elementary & Jr. High School – the one and only public school available in the Township of West Point. At the ASP, we provide meals daily and practice via extra-curricular lessons like research, quizzing, and spelling bees, with a focus on the primary subject areas of English, Mathematics, Reading and Writing. Over the year we

averaged 48 students attending the ASP section daily. Based on the effectiveness of the programs, one of our brightest students, Mohammed Kromah, captained the quizzing team leading EWP to secure victory in the district academic tournament. He was additionally awarded “Best Social Studies Student” in the tournament. Mohammed is currently serving as the junior coach for the elementary division at the N.V. Massaquoi School.

Educate West Point’s scholarship program, “**Back To School**” maintains a roster of 24 students. The sponsored kids of this program just completed the academic year of 2020-2021 with a graduation rate of 95%. The BTS program provides school uniforms, shoes, school bags, and stationery items necessary to attend public school. Sponsorship further supplies 2 meals a day, access to healthcare and family support services that include regular homes visits, psychosocial counseling and livelihood support via business training and access to a Savings/Loan mechanism.



Through our **Livelihoods Program**, a **Village Savings Loan Association (VSLA)** was established to support our sponsored student’s caregivers' income generation efforts to promote a transition from sponsored to self-sustained education for their children. Business women were trained on business management, marketing, savings and reinvestment. Upon graduation of the training, participants drafted business plans whereas EWP would inject \$150 USD worth of goods (often >50% of the value of the existing business) to support business growth. These women then formed a cohort that would require bi-weekly contributions towards savings whereas each member of the group could apply for a loan that would permit additional business expansion. Upon assessment of 5 businesses, the average additional funds saved post investment was ~85 USD per household prior to the onset of C19. After 2 years of the pandemic, savings were depleted across the association in order to adapt to increased cost of living due to inflation and stay-at-home mandates which reduced opportunity for petty trade, the primary income generation mechanism of EWP sponsored families. As Liberia and the world adapts to the “new normal”, EWP hopes to reinvest in these businesses and/or adapt individual business strategies to support sustainable growth.

Cash Breakdown

Worth of goods injected in the businesses	150 USD
Amount Saved per person (one year)	+85 USD
Average savings over 2 years (two years ago)	+81 USD

COVA Project:



**Flow Cups Received By
Our CEO.**

EWP has partnered with the Cova Project over the past years, an Australian based non-profit organization working together to introduce the concept of reusable menstrual cups to communities in need with an aim to improve the quality of life for young girls and women. Provision of these cups to impoverished households removes physical and financial burdens associated with menstruation each month. This past February, we were opportune to receive an additional 2000 reusable menstrual cups from the COVA project to conduct community engagement training and distribute

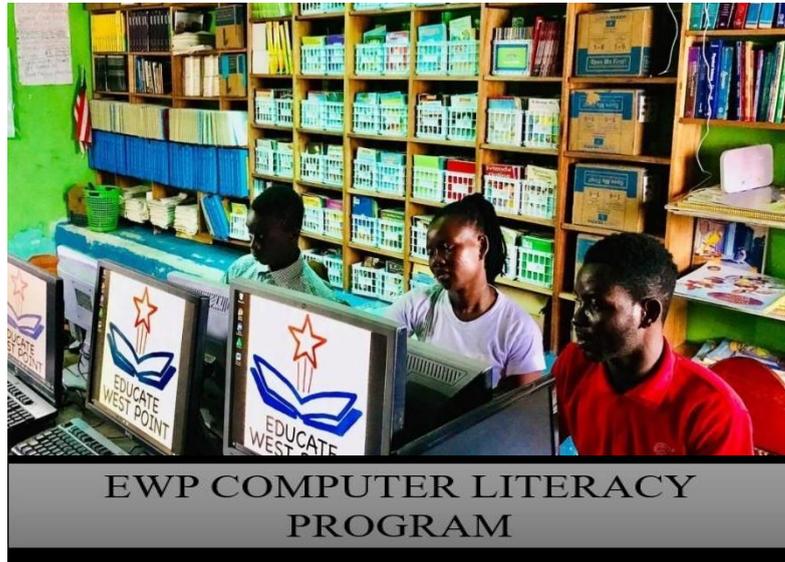
those flow cups to females in vulnerable conditions. EWP worked directly with school principals and community leaders to support the counseling process to ensure that the women can receive the flow cup with open minds and understanding. So far the team has conducted twenty-one (21) trainings and distributed 1,786 menstrual cups to beneficiaries during the year under review. After 2 years of intervention in West Point district, EWP expanded the program to 2 neighboring communities. We are currently planning a further expansion of the program with an additional 2,500 cups to be received prior to the start of the 2022 school year.



**COVA FACILITATORS SHARING IDEAS TO
GIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT THE FLOW CUPS**

EWP Opens Computer Literacy Center

At long last, EWP has kicked off a Computer Literacy Program for students between 3rd to 12th grade, with an additional window daily providing general access to interested community residents. This new computer program seeks to promote digital applications and literacy among our students. Currently, we have 13 students attending the 6 month computer program. The vast majority of students and the community dwellers do not have access to



basic computer training skills while they are in school or working. Undoubtedly, the launch of the computer program for the community of West Point records a major milestone in our programs and vision to ensure that technology literacy is made paramount to our beneficiaries. Over 6 months students who successfully graduate the program will demonstrate basic typing skills, computer literacy, digital communication, and research

problem-solving skills to support their future academic and career endeavors.

EWP - Public Library

Launched in October 2020, EWP manage's a lively library to help children from other institutions of learning and our beneficiaries to have quick access to reading materials and conduct research activities. About 20 students use the library per day to read and do their homework. The library opens from Monday to Saturday from 8:00am to 6:00pm. Since the opening of the library, a reading club has been established, giving our students the appetite of reading to gain knowledge and expand horizons.

EWP notes when children are given the space to access education, poverty decreases, economies grow, and families are strengthened. While many anticipated seeing a decrease in test scores as a result of learning loss due to the global pandemic, we saw an increase in the students' outcomes.†



KIDS REFRESHING IN THE LIBRARY

Progress 2021:

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

<u>PARENT ENGAGEMENT</u>		
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		
Objectives	Indicator	Progress
Parents have a basic understanding of child's rights and cease to violate them	# of caregivers trained on EWP code of conduct and children's rights	45
	# of caregivers trained on Basic Human Right	45
Parents are trained in individualized basic business and saving modules to utilize excess income	# caregivers trained in basic business	10
	# of 1 year business / saving plans developed (inactive due to Covid-19)	5
	% of income invested to child welfare	25%
	% income saved	10%
	% income reinvested	50%
<u>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS</u>		
Our partner school's capacity to provide a quality education in a supportive environment is improved		
Schools are supported with basic resources to empower students and teachers	# of in-kind and cash donations provided to the school for basic materials. Desks, books, etc.	1.5 metric ton book donations and cash
	Provision of a Librarian, 2 hours per day M, T, W, T, F	5
<u>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</u>		
The general community of West Point is engaged to increase Community Health Social Cohesion, Safety and General Well-Being of community members		
	# beneficiary led service projects designed/implemented	9

Community impact projects improve the social fabric and general environment of West Point	# beneficiary led outreach campaigns (Covid-19 campaign – Cova Project Outreach & Community service)	2
	# of community health projects ongoing	3, Cova Project, Clean-up & Covid-19 Emergency Response
	# of public education facilities established for the community of West Point at large	2 (Library, Computer Center)

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Our beneficiaries are supported in their educational endeavors and personal development, increasing learning outcomes and self-worth

Households are provided holistic support to their children's immediate access to education	# of children enrolled in primary school	24
	# of children enrolled in ECD	60
	% retention rate BTS	95%
	% retention rate ECD	100%
After school programs increase beneficiaries learning outcomes while providing child care for families	# of after school program sessions	86
	Average # of attendants daily to the ASP	48
	% increase, test scores, English and Math	55%
The Early Childhood Development Center provides child care services to families while encouraging children's educational growth and development	# of days Early Childhood Center provided child care services	120
	Average # of attendants daily to the ECD	60
The Community Education Work (CEW) Program engages students who are not in school while strengthening community children's literacy and numeracy skills	# of community education sessions	90
	Average # of daily attendants to the CEW	40
	% increase in test scores, Reading and Writing	43%

MAJOR MILESTONES

- ❖ Launched a new **COMPUTER LITERACY PROGRAM**
- ❖ Secured government **ACCREDITATION** (Finance Ministry) & **SECTORIAL CLEARANCES** (Health & Education Ministries)
- ❖ Introduced a new set of **UNIFORMS** for ECD PROGRAM
- ❖ Enrolled **224 CHILDREN AND YOUTHS** at the institution in our educational programs (ECD, BTS, ASP, CEW, LIBRARY, COMPUTER)
- ❖ Vetted, recruited and trained **TWO (2) VOLUNTEERS** to provide technology education, to our computer students
- ❖ Provided **EDUCATION, BASIC HEALTH CARE** and **CHILD PROTECTION** services to over **1,485 BENEFICIARIES**
- ❖ Led **Twenty-one (21) COVA PROJECT** and **CHILD PROTECTION** trainings with community residents, staff, parents, and women groups with **1,786 MENSTRUAL CUPS** distributed.
- ❖ Secured twenty-four (24) **SCHOLARSHIPS** for our BTS sponsored students
- ❖ Launched **EMERGENCY COVID-19 RESPONSE** support for our students, families, and community dwellers

Opened a new Public **LIBRARY** for the first time in West Point

Success Stories:

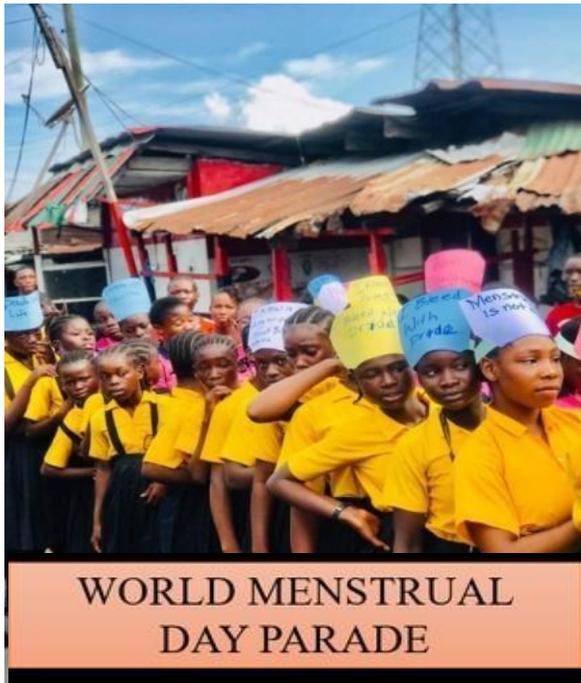
COVA Team celebrated World Menstrual Day on May 28, 2021:

In recognition of World Menstrual Hygiene Day 2021, Educate West Point joined the world in May to celebrate this global event. 2021 World Menstrual Day's theme was "Increase Action and Investment in



COVA TEAM CELEBRATED WORLD MENSTRUAL DAY ON MAY 28, 2021

Menstrual Health and Hygiene, Now!'. The theme was a call to action against gender imbalance and inequality. This occasion is observed globally to highlight the challenges women and school-going children face as a result of their monthly cycle and to provide protection and solutions to mitigate those barriers. On May 28, the EWP's Cova Team marched on the principal street of West Point with five different schools in attendance, hosting a program in observance of World Menstrual Hygiene Day. Dramas were conducted by women and youth to highlight the impediments and marginalization that menstruation brings in such communities, advocating for cultural change and support.



We had the honor of celebrating World Menstrual Hygiene Day with representatives from the government and other private institutions. Those officials include the Commissioner of the Township of West Point, the President of the Elder Council, and the CEO of the Women & Children Initiative Center, residing in the Township. Guest speaker Mrs. Alfreda F. Beyan, a registered nurse working at Liberia's most referred hospital, John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital, closed the ceremony expressing her experience from a medical perspective on the need to normalize menstruation health to negate cultural taboo and ensure women are supported to access health commodities they need. At the end of the program, the Cova Team distributed over 200

cups to those students from the five participating schools.

Aid/Donations

In the midst of uncertainty and the pandemic outbreak, we met many challenges this year. In July a fire incident left two of our beneficiaries homeless, having lost everything they owned. When the fire incident occurred, our Protection Officer along with the Communication Officer went on the scene and assessed the tragedy. After seeing the devastation, EWP intervened with no delay to provide financial and moral aid for two of our students who got affected by the fire disaster.

A week after the incident, our Chief Executive Officer, through the quick intervention and



support of our partners, donated ten bags of 25kg rice and cash to the families of our two beneficiaries with an aim to support the caregivers' livelihood businesses, replacing commodities lost in the fire. This year, we received secured donations from the MoE and the Young Men Christian Association sub-branch within the Township of West Point. The MOE donated a large water station and other cleaning materials to support C19 awareness. The



YMCA donated non-food items / household kits to aid the institution to mitigate the spread of the disease.

An individual contribution was received by one Imam Kamara, which included backpacks, copybooks, pencils and other school materials, received “as his own way of rendering assistance, as well as buttressing EWP’s effort amid the coronavirus pandemic in the country”. Imam Kamara said that his link with EWP is “historic” as he aims to provide future support due the institution’s ideals of supporting education, health, psychosocial counseling and safety of vulnerable youth. A significant contribution further came through the support of one of EWP Inc.’s extended family friends, a couple who pledged 50k USD over the course of 5 years.

EWP Team Participates in a Capacity Building Workshop

On Thursday, 8th July 2021, the EWP team participated in a one-day Capacity Building Workshop with the theme “Study Technology.” The training was hosted by **APPLIED SCHOLASTICS INTERNATIONAL** at the RLJ Kendeja Resort, Paynesville, Liberia. According to the Executive Director, Liberia Branch, Mr. Joseph Yarsiah, “The purpose of the workshop aimed at building the capacity of the team in utilizing technology in the workplace.



EWP STAFF PARTICIPATED IN CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP