Promoting every child's right to read

THE CODE READER:
Your Gifts in Action

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YOU'RE HELPING GIRLS LIKE MARTHA STAY IN SCHOOL

"Being able to read makes me feel happy and clever," says Martha. "It makes me feel good about myself." Martha is 12 years old. She is currently a grade 3 student attending public school in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia.

Between 1989 and 2003, Liberia was devastated by two lengthy civil wars. Even today, the legacy of those long conflicts is taking a heavy toll on Liberia's children – especially girls.

Most girls in Liberia lose out on early childhood education and find themselves entering school at an age far older than their grade. Martha was one of those girls. Martha did not start grade 1 until she was already past her 10th birthday.

But the GALI program is there to support Martha. GALI is the *Girls' Accelerated Learning Initiative*. GALI provides over-age girls with specialized tutoring to speed up their learning and help them achieve foundational literacy and numeracy skills. Women who are better educated are better informed about health matters, they have fewer children and marry later, and their children are usually healthier.

Last year, we brought you news that, thanks to your support, CODE and the WE-CARE Foundation (CODE's partner in Liberia) were expanding GALI. We set a goal of doubling the number of schools where the GALI program operates and bringing the benefits of GALI to 1,960 girls over a three-year period.

Because of the GALI program, Martha is already making fast progress. She started GALI at grade 1 and went up to grade 2 in her very first semester. She is now in her second year in the GALI program.

An exciting new chapter has begun with the Board's announcement of Janice Ciavaglia as CODE's Chief Executive Officer. Janice assumed the role in October, succeeding Scott Walter, who held the post for 16 years.

A classroom teacher by training, Janice has dedicated her professional life to championing every child's right to a quality education.

Janice has held senior leadership positions within public and philanthropic organizations and has been recognized for her inspirational leadership. She was named one of Canada's "Top 40 under 40" in 2021 and in her role as CEO, led the Assembly of First Nations to be named one of Canada's "Top 100 Employers" in 2023. **Learn more about Janice and her vision at code.ngo/ceo**

Martha's love of learning is inspiring. Learning to read has given her a sense of achievement and strengthened her self-esteem. "It is good to be able to read because when you read, you learn new things, new ideas, new words and you can speak well," Martha said. "Every time I read a book to the end I feel proud of myself."

GALI is also benefiting others around Martha – including her family members. Neither Martha's mother nor her aunt, who lives with them, can read. "Sometimes, I help my aunty read text messages on her phone and help her send messages," Martha says. "I can help my mother fill in her susu card [savings and loan club] and record the number of months she has paid for." Martha's love of learning is inspiring and we're delighted to have her in the program.

Learn more about GALI at code.ngo/gali

THE LATEST GIVING TREND. HAVE YOU DONE THIS YET?

A movement is building across the country. Over 3 million Canadians have left a gift in their Will to charity. We're not talking about celebrities or wealthy philanthropists; these are ordinary people who are using the power of their Wills to make a big difference.

This trend in "ethical Wills" has surged in the past three years, and it's no surprise. With so much change in the world highlighting new and growing needs, people are looking for effective ways to make a big impact.

We wanted to let you know about this trend, because it really is an all-around win. Here's why:

- You can make a major contribution to a cause you care deeply about
- You won't use any of the money you need now
- You'll still support your loved ones and inheritors in the future

As you may know, we've partnered with Will Power, a national campaign that educates Canadians about the power of leaving a charitable gift in their Will. They have a great tool to show you how big an impact you can make.

The Will Power Legacy Calculator lets you see for yourself what even 1% of your estate can do. We invite you to give it a try at **code.ngo/legacy**

We all want to help where we can and make our mark in the world. This movement is about finding a way to do that, while still protecting your finances and family's future.

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

We wish to extend our deepest gratitude to Michael Meneer, Vincent Greaney and Brian Traquair for their dedicated service on CODE's Board of Directors. We extend a warm welcome to Christopher Norris, Jeff Kehoe and Dr. James Hoffman who joined the CODE Board of Directors and Foundation Board this past year.

IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023

CODE's annual Impact Report and Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year 2022-23 are now available online at code.ngo/accountability. Thank you all for contributing to an extraordinary year that saw us support over 506,000 girls and boys on the path to becoming confident and capable readers! Visit **code.ngo/accountability** to read online or contact Clare at **cmcinnes@code.ngo** for a printed copy.

CHARITY INTELLIGENCE AWARDS CODE HIGHEST POSSIBLE RATING

At CODE, we know how important trust and impact are to donors when they are deciding which charity to support. Recently, CODE achieved a triple honour from Charity Intelligence, an organization that exists to help donors navigate where to make their donations. Charity Intelligence rated CODE a "Five-Star Charity" as well as a "Top 100 Charity" and a "Top 10 International Impact Charity."

Every year, Charity Intelligence looks closely at over 800 Canadian charities. They independently rate charities on five key metrics: transparency, results reporting, program cost coverage, demonstrated impact, and funding reserves. CODE scores highly on every one of those categories.

"To get five stars, a charity has to be performing well on every one of those metrics. It's quite an honour," said Cory Eybergen, an impact analyst at Charity Intelligence. "Five-star charities are very, very accountable to donors, and they're showing evidence for the change being created by their programs."

Cory is part of the Charity Intelligence team that evaluates charities' impact. "We look at all the programs a charity has, and we try to put a dollar value on the change being created by those programs. How are people's lives different after the charity has helped them? We want to get an idea of not only how successful a program is, but also what would have happened if the charity wasn't there."

We asked Cory if he had any advice for CODE in terms of our reporting back to donors. "CODE should continue to report to donors on the change their gifts are supporting," he said. "Try to get as much evidence as possible for those changes – changes in literacy and what literacy leads to including better educational outcomes and later life employment outcomes."

CODE has long made it a high priority to be accountable to our donors, and our commitment to accountability and transparency is as strong as ever. In 2024, we will be doing all we can to report back to you on how your gifts are being used and the impact your generosity is having on the lives of children in education.

CHARITY INTELLIGENCE 2023
TOP 10 INTERNATIONAL IMPACT CHARITY

2023
TOP 100 CHARITY
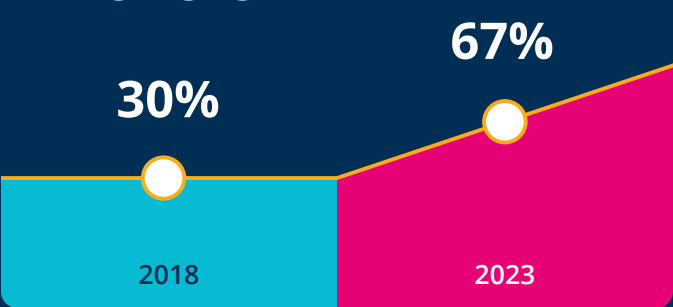Charity Intelligence's Highest Rated Charities
★★★★★

WITH YOUR HELP, WE'RE DELIVERING RESULTS!

We're excited to share a couple of impact highlights from this past year

In Mozambique, in our project co-funded with Global Affairs Canada, the **competence of teachers** entering the workforce is steadily improving.

Teachers achieving excellence in teaching language arts:

30% 2018
67% 2023

In Liberia, girls in the Girls' *Accelerated Learning Initiative*, funded entirely by CODE supporters, **achieved better writing scores** than their peers.

Average score on writing tests:

93% Girls in GALI
51% Girls not in GALI

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE WORK BEING DONE TO ACHIEVE 2030 GLOBAL EDUCATION TARGETS

"In regions with fast-growing populations, access to education has increased dramatically," said Marcela Gutierrez Bernal, an education specialist at the World Bank in Washington DC. "Today, most kids are in the classroom. The problem is that classrooms need to deliver better learning."

Marcela was speaking at a CODE Connects live event on the issue of *learning poverty*. The online event was an opportunity for CODE supporters across Canada to hear from education experts based in Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Canada, and the US. The experts, who are all currently working to tackle the global learning and literacy crisis, exchanged insights about *learning poverty*, and shared their perspectives and experiences.

Learning poverty is defined as the inability to read and understand a simple text by age 10. In sub-Saharan Africa, *learning poverty* is estimated to affect 90% of children.

Learning poverty violates a child's right to an education – a right enshrined in international agreements and global commitments like the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 17 SDGs – including Goal #4 committed to ensuring quality education for all – were agreed upon by world leaders meeting at the United Nations in 2015 with the leaders agreeing to make the goals a reality by 2030. Although much good work has been done, we still have much work to do to guarantee that all children in 2030 enjoy their right to a quality education.

Sybil Bailor, CODE's Country Lead in Sierra Leone, spoke about her work in the West African country. "We can't talk enough about the need for resources in classrooms," Sybil said. "Critically, children need books in their hands in order to learn to read. Children cannot read without materials. Thankfully, CODE's work in Sierra Leone involves book development and book distribution."

Sybil also spoke about CODE's initiatives to improve the quality of teaching. "CODE is investing in training," she said. "We've worked with trainers over the years to train other teachers in new approaches and methodologies. The trainers are themselves teachers who have been in the profession for a long time."

One recent CODE-supported project in Sierra Leone involved 100 experienced facilitators providing training for about 3,000 teachers who returned to their classrooms equipped with new and effective teaching methods. Importantly, the project also ensured that the teachers were well supported after the initial training course. Teacher Learning Circles and coaching were set up so teachers could continue to learn and support each other in the application of new techniques in the classroom. CODE projects like this one continue to be successfully rolled out in communities across Sierra Leone, thanks to support from donors like you.

There are just six years left to achieve Goal 4 of the SDGs. And, yet we know that we cannot "leapfrog" over the need for foundational literacy in our bid to help every child realize their right to a quality education. To refocus governments and funding agencies on the basics, the World Bank has established a new operational global learning target, to reduce global learning poverty by at least half before 2030. With your support, CODE is doing everything we can to contribute meaningfully toward this effort.

Listen to the full conversation – "It's Time to Tackle Learning Poverty" – at code.ngo/events

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Visit our website at code.ngo