



WEST AFRICA

For over 15 years, Right To Play has operated programs in West Africa in countries and regions representing some of the most disadvantaged communities. They face key challenges resulting from political unrest, poverty and low quality education and health systems. In partnership with governments, civil society organizations and communities, these programs focus on engaging children and youth in play-based activities that improve health and education outcomes.

With generous support from Global Affairs Canada, Right To Play is carrying out programs to address these challenges.

Based on core principles of child protection, community engagement, inclusion and gender equality, Right To Play programs currently:

Reach over

188,000

(48% female)

Children and youth through weekly play-based activities



Delivered by

3,400

(40% female)

Trained teachers and community coaches



Supported by

1,000

(38% female)

Junior Leaders

Projects generally focus on three core outcome areas:

Enhancing education quality, transforming health practices and fostering peaceful behaviours.

KEY PROJECTS CARRIED OUT IN WEST AFRICA

Play for the Advancement of Quality Education (PAQE):

Operating from April 2015 to September 2017 in eight countries, including Benin, Ghana, Liberia and Mali, PAQE aims to improve educational outcomes and participation for boys and girls, ages two to 15. (For more information, see enclosed page on PAQE.)

Jam Suka (Mali):

From April 2016 to March 2020 in the regions of Sikasso, Mopti and Keyes and with a \$10 million budget, Jam Suka aims to improve the protection and welfare of **72,000 (36,287 female) vulnerable children** affected by the crisis in Mali. The project is developing the capacity of communities to ensure better protection of children, especially girls, during and after crises, against harmful practices and providing access to basic social services and measures of rehabilitation for children impacted by violence.

Promoting Sanitation and Hygiene Behaviour Change in Schools Through Sport and Play (Ghana):

Using a Sport-for-Development approach, Right To Play is partnering with UNICEF and Ghana Education Service to implement a Menstrual Hygiene Management project that directly engages young girls, boys, teachers, schools and communities to facilitate the mainstreaming of menstrual health programming into schools.

IMPACT

GHANA

Teaching Methods -

89%

of teachers identified improved approaches to teaching, including an improved ability to promote **gender equality**

(AHEAD Final Evaluation, 2015w)

LIBERIA

Health -

89%

participating children and youth provided correct answers to questions on HIV transmission and 73% correctly **defied myths associated with HIV**

(Liberia External Evaluation, 2011)

BENIN

Improved Life Skills -

59%

of participating youth felt they **had influence over decisions made in their community** versus only 35% of non-participating youth

(Play To Learn Final Evaluation, 2014)

HEAR FROM A YOUNG LEADER

“Thanks to the techniques of advocacy and social mobilization learned from Right To Play, I conducted a **negotiation with the leaders of my community**, which resulted in them granting some terrain for the construction of playing fields.”



LIBERIA

Right To Play's work in Liberia pre-dates its presence in the country, with trainings and technical support provided to community leaders since 2001, when Liberia was embroiled in its second civil war. After the conflict ended, a network of dedicated coaches began working in Monrovia and Northern Liberia, setting the stage for the successful launch of our programs nationwide in March 2006. Since then, Right To Play has partnered with and built the capacity of a number of community-based organizations to establish the largest network of community-based volunteers of any international entity in Liberia.

Due to the devastating Ebola outbreak in February 2014, Right To Play worked in coordination with Liberia's government and other NGOs to provide coaches and teachers with psychosocial support resources and an Ebola Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support resource to bring play into the lives of those children traumatized, stressed, worried and stigmatized by Ebola.

Right To Play is reaching over 21,000 (46% female) children and youth in Liberia, through the work of 570 (42% female) dedicated volunteer teachers and community coaches.

PLAY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF **QUALITY EDUCATION**

Funded by Global Affairs Canada

In Liberia, PAQE began in April 2015 and will run until September 2017. The project operates in 11 educational districts in the counties of Montserrado, Margibi and Bong in collaboration with the Government of Liberia and a number of national and community-based partners including the Liberia Youth Network (LIYONET), Restoring Our Children's Hope (ROCH) and the Liberia Rural Children's Psychosocial Development Organization (LRCPSDO). The project seeks to improve the educational outcomes and participation of 12,000 (5,400 F) girls and boys through gender sensitive, child-centered, play-based learning in schools and in communities. To do so, PAQE focuses its efforts in three key outcome areas:

- Improved positive, participatory and gender-sensitive learning environments that promote play-based learning,
- Improved commitment of community stakeholders to address education barriers such as early marriage and child labour,
- Strengthened education systems to promote gender-sensitive, child-centered, play-based learning policies and practices across communities.

PAQE has made considerable progress since its implementation with 90 per cent of all planned outputs achieved. Through the Continuum of Teachers Training, 240 (112 female) teachers, 115 (21 female) principals and school administrators, and 38 (12 female) community coaches receive regular training on play-based methodologies and positive learning environments. In addition, the project is engaging children and youth through 40 school clubs in awareness-raising initiatives on gender equality and child protection.

Right To Play has also provided technical support to the government on the incorporation of child-centered play-based learning into the curriculum of the country's teacher training institutes. The Kakata Rural Teacher Training Institute (KRTTI) is one of the key teacher training institutes responsible for the training of primary school teachers. KRTTI and Right To Play began discussions in March of 2015 for the introduction of the play-based methodology into their training. A joint review of the existing curriculum will determine how to integrate play-based learning into their training.

RESULTS

240 (108 female) teachers trained from **40** schools.

11,434 (4,895 female) children and youth reached and engaged in regular play-based activities, exceeding targets.

120 (36 female) principals and vice principals and teacher-trainers benefit from three trainings to build their knowledge and skills in play-based learning techniques, as well as skills in facilitation and mentoring. This has strengthened their ability to provide continuous support to teachers.

40 PAQE schools indicate improved attendance and retention, especially among female students, as per school tracking records.

40 schools and communities each with **30** active members, established teacher networks. These networks advocate for the promotion of gender sensitive, child-centered, play-based learning methodology and opportunities to discuss common challenges, experiences and lessons learned.

BUILDING PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES THROUGH **SPORT AND PLAY**

Funded by Smart Peace

The Building Peaceful Communities through Sport and Play project is a two-year, peace-building initiative (April 2015 to June 2017) in the northern provinces of Lofa and Nimba. The project aims to engage 6,000 in- and out-of-school youth and their families in activities and discussions to resolve conflicts peacefully and without violence. It also contributes to harmonious multicultural integration and social cohesion through the positive powers of sport and play. The project is building the capacity of 200 teachers and community coaches to implement play-based activities and support youth to organize community mobilization/sensitization events to promote peace and change harmful behaviours.

OUR WORK IN CANADA

PROMOTING LIFE-SKILLS IN ABORIGINAL YOUTH (PLAY)

The PLAY program works in partnership with 87 First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and urban Indigenous organizations across Canada.

The program is designed in collaboration with communities to deliver high-quality sport and play-based activities that address the unique challenges their youth face. The PLAY program engages these youth to improve their overall health and well-being, foster positive relationships with themselves and each other, and supports them to set and achieve education and employment goals.

Created in 2010 and in cooperation with Grand Chiefs and the Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, **Play provides Indigenous children and youth opportunities to play, share, learn and grow.**



HOW PLAY WORKS



Training & Support

Right To Play works in partnership with the community to hire and train a local youth worker as the PLAY Community Mentor.



Community Driven

Community Mentors work closely with their local leaders, youth and stakeholders to design, deliver and measure a PLAY program that meets the self-identified needs of the community.



Consistent Year-Round Programming

Community Mentors run weekly, after-school and youth leadership programs, summer camps and sport clinics, promoting physical activity, healthy living and relationships skills, improved education and increased employability.

OUR IMPACT

90%

of youth say their self-confidence has increased since joining the PLAY program.

97%

of PLAY partner communities say they have observed increased leadership skills in their youth.

89%

of PLAY partner communities say they have observed increased healthy behaviours among children and youth.

PLAY IN ACTION

5,092

Children & Youth were reached during regular PLAY programming across four provinces.

1020

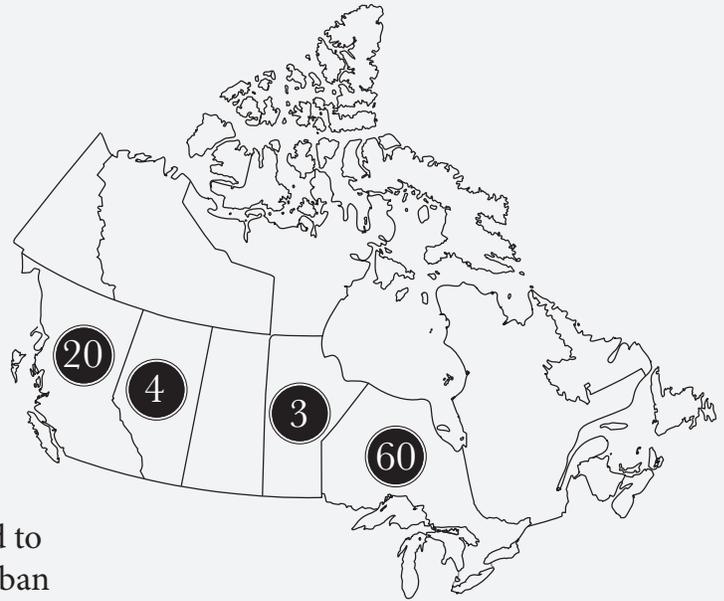
Children & Youth participated in 10 Sport For Development Clinics in Alberta and Ontario.

73

Local Community Mentors were hired and trained to implement PLAY Programs in communities and urban organizations across four provinces.

49%

of total PLAY participants are female.



87

The PLAY Program reached youth in 87 communities across British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario.

YOUTH TO YOUTH

Empowering Students

Youth To Youth (Y2Y) is a Toronto-based, peer-to-peer leadership program that empowers youth living in Toronto's high-needs neighbourhoods by training more than **750 Youth Leaders** to run play-based programming in **50 schools and community centers citywide**. Reaching more than **2,500 children weekly**, Y2Y enables young people to improve educational, health and employment outcomes, by creating safe, inclusive learning environments.



PLAY YOUR PART

Inspiring Changemakers in Canadian schools

In January 2017, we're launching the educational initiative *Play Your Part* in **200 schools across Canada**, empowering **55,000 students** to become changemakers!

Using Right To Play's unique and innovative learning methodology, interactive activities and original video content, this three-part engagement series teaches students about youth around the world and builds the leadership skills they need to play their part as global citizens!

Thanks to the support of the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada, *Play Your Part* is available in French and English and free for schools to join.



Play for the Advancement of Quality Education (PAQE) is an eight-country, two-year (April 2015–June 2017) project spanning Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda and Tanzania. Despite advancements in education enrolment and access, several issues continue to hamper education for children, including poor quality in basic learning (literacy and numeracy), limited early childhood education and pre-primary learning and a significant disparity in girls’ access, attendance and completion of primary education. PAQE seeks to address some of these challenges and utilizes a play-based teaching approach to ensuring quality education for all children, especially girls.

PAQE seeks to achieve four outcomes:

Improved positive participatory and gender-sensitive learning environments promoting play-based learning.

- Train teachers, coaches, district-level education officials and parent-teacher associations in the use of child-friendly learning approaches.
- Mobilize child- and youth-led clubs and sport leagues to undertake community development initiatives to address barriers to education.

Enhanced policy and regulatory environment for the delivery of gender sensitive, child-centered, play-based learning policies and practices across communities.

- Provide technical assistance and mentorship to civil society partners and governments on policies and practices promoting child-friendly learning.

Improved commitment of community stakeholders to address barriers to education.

- Work with children and the community’s youth, parents, teachers, groups and local authorities on the project challenges. Dismantle the underlying barriers to educating children, especially girls and transform these communities into champions for their children’s right to education.
- Particular attention is paid to mobilizing these communities to champion the education of girls.

Increased engagement of targeted Canadians and Canadian institutions in activities promoting the value of sport and play to advance quality education in developing countries.

- Create awareness with Canadian public and business leaders in sport and play based approaches for education.
- Actively engage Canadian students in such activities.
- Athlete Ambassadors promote these methodologies.
- Build exchanges between educators in Canada and Right To Play PAQE project countries.

REACH TO DATE

999 coaches and **4,949** teachers have completed teacher training.

69,549 community members including parents, children and youth attend play days, tournaments and special events. This raises the community's awareness and commitment to being change-agents on issues like: the importance of education, the inclusion of girls and the protection of all children.

169 school management committee, parent teacher association and student committee members trained on gender-sensitive learning environments and child protection issues. They will become the drivers of community ownership for access to and the quality of education.

402,098 (194,463 female) and **134,938 (64,395 female)** children and youth ages two to 15 years receive better educational outcomes in formal and in informal education settings, respectively.

400,000 Canadian school children and youth participate in Right To Play-coordinated play-based activities. They learn about Canada's international development efforts and become champions, advocating play as a tool for child and community development.

2,600 Canadian school children trained as Junior Leaders to lead play-based teaching activities and to mentor their classmates.



GENDER EQUALITY



OUR WORK IN GENDER EQUALITY

Right To Play works with communities to ensure girls have access to a quality education and are provided with safe spaces to learn. We train teachers in gender equality, supporting them to address and reduce gender discrimination and encourage equal participation.

- Develop specific teacher training sessions on gender-based violence, child marriage and menstrual hygiene management.
- Support schools in developing strategies to help prevent and decrease the level of school-related, gender-based violence.
- Build safe, separate sanitation facilities in schools.
- Work with parents and communities to tackle the barriers to education, including harmful traditional practices, inadequate sanitation facilities and cultural norms which favour boys' education over girls' education.

RESULTS IN WEST AFRICA

96%

of program teachers across 5 West Africa countries take action to **support the inclusion of girls** versus 70% support from non-program teachers

(DFATD AHEAD Final Evaluation Report, 2015)

Through participation in Right To Play programs, girls build valuable life skills and have increased opportunity to take on leadership roles in their communities.

- Right To Play programs promote life skills development in girls, including self-confidence and communication, while also promoting positive masculinities.
- Right To Play trains boys and girls to be Junior Leaders. Junior Leaders plan, design and lead play-based activities and awareness initiatives to promote gender equality.

To date in PAQE, Right To Play has trained 4900 teachers in Gender Equality, 2000 of whom are in West Africa.

(PAQE Sept 2016)

RESULTS IN BENIN

58%

of program **girls felt they had input into community decisions** versus 29% for non-program girls

(DFATD AHEAD Final Evaluation Report, 2015)

Right To Play's play-based approach creates safe spaces for children to discuss and reflect on Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) topics, which are often taboo. Children gain Sexual and Reproductive Health knowledge and become more aware of their rights.

- Through Health and/or Child Protection clubs, girls learn advocacy techniques to create awareness with their peers and community on SRH issues.
- My Life, My Plan is Right To Play's key SRH resource supporting teachers and coaches in implementing play based learning activities for children and youth on SRH knowledge and attitudes.

To date, PAQE has engaged over 16,000 girls in school-based groups and clubs, over 70,000 girls in weekly community-based activities and has trained over 1900 girls as Junior Leaders in their communities.



RESULTS IN TANZANIA

GIRLS

in Tanzania **are more confident in exerting their rights: the percentage of girls who believed they could say no if they didn't want to have sex** was 4.5x greater after 18 months of programming, increasing from 13% to 59%

(NORAD Midterm Final Evaluation Report, 2015)

RESULTS IN LIBERIA

55%

of participating children demonstrated **an increased knowledge of issues related to HIV and AIDS**, compared to 32% of non-participating children

(Liberia, 2012)



JEANETTE Grade 2 teacher
Slip Way Public School, Liberia

Jeanette George, 35, has been a major influence in the lives of hundreds of children in Monrovia. An elementary school teacher for 10 years, Jeanette thinks of herself as a mother to all of her students.

“I am also a parent, therefore I feel responsible for all these children,” says Jeanette. “I want the best for them, I want them to succeed.” Jeanette believes it’s her duty to improve the lives of the children any way that she can.

“The other day, a girl came to class with unkempt hair,” explains Jeanette. “I asked her why her mother didn’t fix it and she said her mother was too busy. I couldn’t let her walk around looking like that so I got a comb and quickly tidied her hair.”

The Grade 2 teacher has a very busy schedule teaching eight subjects, including mathematics, English, science,

social studies, spelling, reading, writing and bible studies to the 56 children in her class. The work load is demanding. Earlier this year however, Jeanette received Right To Play’s teacher training and has begun applying the play-based, learning methodology to her lessons.

“When I started to play with the children in class, my work became so much easier,” says Jeanette. “I used to be so stressed out at the end of the day, but now I am more relaxed. I also see that the children have changed completely and they behave better in class.”

Jeanette flips through her lesson plans pointing out how the children are improving. “Teaching mathematics and English is no longer difficult for me,” says Jeanette. “The children are engaged, involved and enjoy participating. Before this, I would ask a question and none of them would even move a finger! But now, nearly everybody has their hands up all the time. I love this program because I give my children something exciting; when they are happy, they learn faster.”

She has even recommended two of the children be promoted to Grade 3 before the end of the school year. “They are doing better and have improved beyond my expectations, therefore we made a decision to promote them to the next class.” She beams broadly as she reveals that the two exemplary students are both girls. “I am very proud of them because I personally went to their parents and encouraged them to send their daughters to school this year,” says Jeanette. “I even bought for them uniforms so their parents no longer had an excuse to keep them out of school.”

One of the girls, Alice, is almost 12 and she started school later than other children her age. According to Jeanette, this is a common problem in Liberia, resulting from the political and economic upheaval of past decades. Her class would ordinarily be made up of six to seven-year-old children, but the youngest is eight and the oldest is 14.

Even harder for her to watch is the effect poverty has on the children. “Many have nothing to eat all day,” says Jeanette. “Their parents are too poor to afford lunch for them. In my class, I encourage the children who bring food to share what they have. We put our resources together and try to give every child a bite.”

“Liberia is going through tough times,” adds Jeanette. “But if the children are having fun at school, at least they will remember what they learn and use the knowledge for a better future.”



ALICE Grade 6, Slip Way Public School, Liberia

14-year-old Alice struggles to hold back tears as she talks about her family. In the end her tears win, spilling over as she sobs quietly into a tissue.

Alice mourns the loss of two people in her life.

Her father, John, left home several years ago and mysteriously never returned. They think he died of Ebola, alone and unidentified. A tumultuous period followed, forcing Alice to drop out of school and work alongside her mother in the markets and streets to earn money to provide for her three siblings.

Eventually Alice's mother remarried, a kind man named Harris who gave the children his name, some stability and a baby brother, Small Harris. At the age of three the little boy tragically died, resulting in months of heartbreak for Alice.

"I miss him so much" Alice cries. "And I wish my father would come back!"

School gives Alice some comfort. "I enjoy coming to school every day, even when I walk a long way and I have no money for lunch," says Alice. "At least I talk to my best friend and we play games in class."

This term, the children in her class are learning English using Right To Play's play-based methodology. Their teacher, who happens to be Alice's stepfather, leads them in a game of stringing words together to make a correct sentence. They identify a noun, a verb, an adjective and practice conjugation. Alice giggles as she makes up sentences to explain the process.

"The old woman is eating all the food."
"The bad girls are climbing the mango trees."

The games are so much fun that English has become her favourite subject. "I can use English in every part of my life," says Alice. "Language is very important because we use it all the time. Before the games, I didn't do so well in English, but now I am among the best in my class."

Alice has a plan for success for when she grows up. "I am going to be a musician," says Alice, smiling. "When I sing I feel better. I sing at church and I sing at school during devotion time. I will have enough money to help my mother and my family. My children will not suffer because I will have money to take them to hospital."