



Dear friend,

Two months after the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Nigeria, Plan International in the West and Central Africa (WACA) region and our partners have been busy responding to the impacts of the crisis on girls and boys. This #StopCovid19 external Snapshot provides you with examples of some of our achievements to date.

In all 14 countries we are working, as well as through our Lake Chad and Sahel regional lenses, we are also adapting our future long-term work to include distinct elements of the updated Global Humanitarian Response Plan that we have a comparative advantage in, being an organisation promoting children's rights and equality for girls. We remain worried as an organisation about the secondary impacts of COVID-19 on girls and young women in particular: the increase of gender based violence, distorted education provision impacting progress made on girls' education, reported decreased levels of income for economically active girls and young women and suspension of access to SRHR services are all negative trends we are asking our friends and partners to continue to monitor and to address in their own responses.

We sincerely hope you will be enjoying this second edition of Plan International WACA's #StopCovid19 external Snapshot!



GIRLS VOICES FROM WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA



"When you're forced to leave where you've always lived, it's hard. Since we arrived in Bamako, my husband has been trying to find a job, but he hasn't succeeded. We live on donations and there are days when we have nothing to eat. With the Covid-19, it's even more complicated".

Mariam, 22, IDP in Mali.



"There is a lot of information circulating on the Coronavirus over the Radio and TV. But my sister and I can't get it because there is no one on the TV to interpret for us the deaf. We even got the news that classes will start over the TV soon. We wonder how we will access that as we are already left out at this stage."

The Diawara deaf and dumb sisters in Togo.



A web application to respond to COVID-19.

"Because of the Coronavirus, millions of people are confined. This unusual situation makes access to health care difficult. In order to help out, we have developed CONFIDENCE. It is a web and mobile application that will allow young people and people suffering from infectious diseases to interact with doctors, psychologists, gynecologists and infectious disease specialists. As young people are more sexually active, the platform offers a comprehensive sexual and reproductive education session through interactive content."

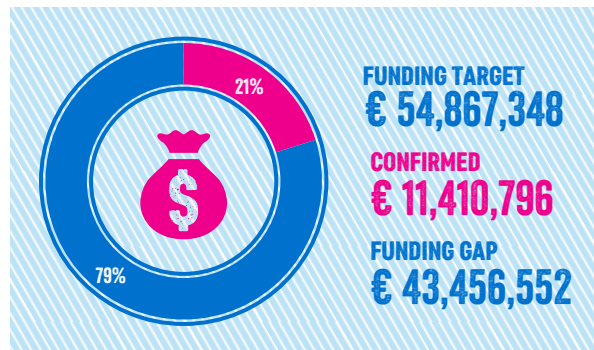
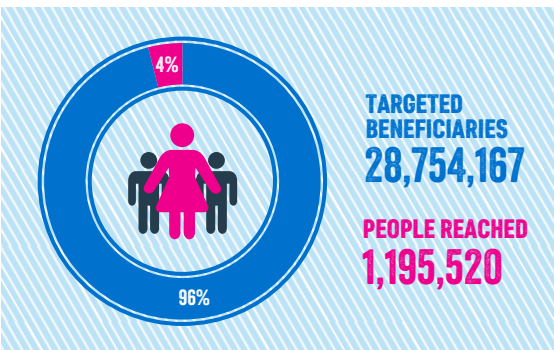
Madjidath, Young global influencer on GGE campaign and powerful Start-Upper in Benin.



My main weapons are my smartphone and my voice.

"Not so long ago, most members of my community in the suburbs of Dakar, denied the existence of the disease. Whoever talks about denial is also not complying with the prevention measures. I decided to dedicate my daily routine to the development of awareness raising messages to disseminate through social networks and sensitize around. People start to change behavior."

Khadyja, 23, member of Plan International's Girls Out Loud online platform in Senegal.





CHILD PROTECTION (INCLUDING SGBV)

Enabling young people for more impact:

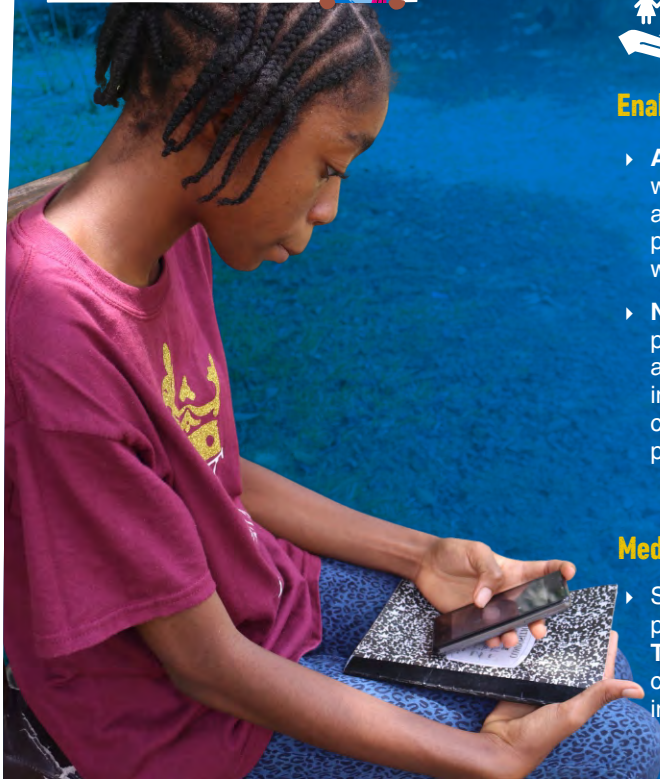
- ▶ **Almost all WACA Country Offices** are enabling and working with young people to multiply our impact through community awareness actions on COVID-19, thus ensuring maximum protection to millions of children, especially girls and children with disabilities across the region.
- ▶ **Niger** promotes availability and use of masks and people's protection by supporting girls' income-generating projects aiming at producing reusable masks either distributed for free in refugee camps, IDPs' host communities and sponsorship communities, or sold at social prices. 13, 421 masks produced so far.

Media and Online Campaigns to prevent SGBV:

- ▶ Supported by Plan International Alumni and other youth partner advocates, **Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea Togo, Niger** and **Liberia** have launched online and Media campaigns to protect girls and enable them report and refer increasing SGBV issues.

Standing with to the most vulnerable people:

- ▶ **Ghana** supports existing community structures (e.g. Queen mothers, female leaders, youth groups) to promote SGBV campaign including teen pregnancy and Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM).
- ▶ **Nigeria** supports 85 Children Associated with Armed Forces and Groups (Boys 67 and Girls 18) with NFI kits as part of community-based reintegration Service provision in line with their individual needs across Bama, Pulka and Damasak in Borno State.
- ▶ **Senegal** ensured protection to some 100 street children (boys) in Saint Louis and Thies by working out for their return into families. The mapping activity continues in the Regions of Dakar and Kaolack.
- ▶ **Sierra Leone** collaborates with UN Women, UNICEF and Child Rights Coalition to develop SOPs on the protection of children in the COVID-19 response. These SOPs are integrated into the national response plan.



The COVID-19 and SGBV warriors in Guinea

Fanta is a determined young woman who is raising awareness of COVID-19 in her community. A member of the Guinea Girls' Leaders Club supported by Plan International, she and her fellow group members are working in their respective communities to inform people about the danger of the coronavirus and how they can protect themselves.

With all schools closed and girls and women confined to their homes, the risk of all forms of violence against women and girls is high.



“No way to lower the guard” Fanta says. *“Malicious people take advantage of this period of confinement to abuse girls. Not more than two weeks ago, we stopped an early marriage, which was due to take place in 24 hours. Sometimes we are criticised and even insulted, but this does not discourage us, because there are more people who encourage us than those who are against us and we are confident that they will all eventually understand the meaning of our struggle.”*

• Full story [here](#).





HEALTH (INCLUDING SRHR) AND FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY

- ▶ **Burkina Faso** supplied 200 Individual Protection Equipment, 24 hospital beds, 80 laser thermometers, 1,000 diverse tablets, 4,000 blood sampling tubes, 2,000 masks N-95, and some laboratory equipment to 8 COVID-19 care centres across the country.
- ▶ **Ghana** is supporting the Ghana Health Service in the Upper West Region to undertake mass education on meningitis and COVID-19 to about 12,000 people.
- ▶ **Guinea** distributed 43,977 facial masks in Coyah, Dubréka, Macenta, N'Zérékoré and Youmou areas, in support to the government's 18 April 2020 mandatory law to put on facial masks.
- ▶ **Liberia's** field offices are part of the Incident Management System led by the Ministry of Health tasked with the responsibility to coordinate the COVID-19 Pandemic response.



03 beneficiaries of food distribution on their way home in Monguno Borno state, Nigeria.



School girls beneficiaries of supplementary feeding supplies in Sierra Leone.

- ▶ **Niger** provides 30 hand-washing facilities to health centers, to reach 9114 persons and 70 cartoons of soap to reach 1076 sponsored children in Maradi Region.
- ▶ **Nigeria** provided in-kind food assistance to 54,760 people in Borno state as well as fortified supplementary food for 4117 children aged 6 to 23 months, including 2,128 girls.
- ▶ In **Senegal**, Saint Louis Region, 300 Community Health Workers (199 W/101 M) were oriented on COVID-19 and gender-based violence.
- ▶ Supplementary feeding programme in **Sierra Leone** reached 1,828 households in Tonkolili District and 3,139 households in Port Loko district, with a total beneficiary reach of 29,802 including 9,934 girls and 4,967 women.
- ▶ **Cameroon** reached 1442 households (4163 males and 4978 females) with COVID-19 cautionary messages (use of mask, respect for social distancing and symptoms) in the East region.
- ▶ **Togo** supported the Regional Direction of Health with a Vehicle to facilitate the supervision of COVID-19 response activities.



Plan International airlifts 10,000 protective masks into Central African Republic

Plan International airlifted 10,000 protective masks into the **Central African Republic (CAR)** to support the war-torn country in combating COVID-19.

The aid cargo was sent on a humanitarian flight organised by a group of 13 international aid agencies, including Plan International, with support from the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (ECHO).

CAR has been unstable since its independence in 1960. Fighting and instability have rendered its health systems fragile, putting a huge section of its population at risk from the pandemic.



Populations living in conflict contexts such as CAR are acutely vulnerable to the direct and secondary impacts of COVID-19. Refugees and displaced populations are particularly exposed. By chartering a special flight in the wake of lockdown and flight restrictions, the international aid organisations have demonstrated that they can pool expertise and resources and help deliver lifesaving aid to help millions in need."

Cecile Terraz, Plan International's Director of Logistics and Procurement.

Plan International is significantly scaling up its aid-delivery and will be shipping 1.3 metric tonnes of PPE to 12 countries within the next two weeks using commercial airlines.





WASH (INCLUDING HYGIENE PROMOTION/ SUPPLIES, WASH FACILITIES AND MHM)

Children, girls and their families including those in remote areas are reached with handwashing supplies and other hygiene kits to ensure prevention of the covid-19.

- ▶ **Benin** delivered 998 hand-washing kits in several communes, schools and public spaces across the country.
- ▶ **Burkina Faso** installed 10 POLYTANK (1,000 liters) in 10 IDP sites in Centre North region. 10 hand-washing kits (device and packs of soap) were also provided in Koupela central market.
- ▶ **Cameroon** has identified 21,538 households in 81 sponsorship communities that are to receive WaSH Kits. Sensitisation and distribution has started in 7 of the communities.
- ▶ **Ghana, Niger and Nigeria** moved the extra mile to supply about 1,800 girls with 3-6 months supply of sanitary pads in their homes and schools, thus ensuring their menstrual Hygiene is catered for during their period.



The young people install a tipy tap at the head of canton's compound



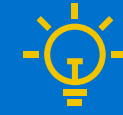
Liquid soap fabrication by partner youth groups in Burkina Faso

Dignity kit beneficiary, Nigeria



Menstrual and personal hygiene education session for adolescent school girls in Borno State, Nigeria

- ▶ **Ghana** reaches some 9,534 people in 12 communities in Volta region with 12 water facilities equipped with hand pumps. Impact: improve hygiene practices, and reduce the pressure on girls who go looking for water.
- ▶ **Guinea** reaches more than 692,600 people in Kissidougou and Macenta areas with soap, bleach and 235 hand-washing devices distributed to public administrations, schools, households and partner CSO structures.
- ▶ **Niger** reached some 93,322 people in Dosso and Tillabéri regions with TIPY TAP hand washing devices, and soap. 100 hand-washing kits were also provided to health facilities, communes and girls learning centres, in Dosso and Tillabéri.
- ▶ **Togo** provided 171 jerry cans of hydro-alcoholic gel to health facilities in PIIA Plateaux area.



Youth hold village leaders accountable for people's safety in Burkina Faso

As part of the fight against the coronavirus, the members of the M'pelemon association, in **Burkina Faso** organized and held a meeting with the village head, in the presence of the cantonal president of the chamber of trade and the cantonal president of development. The objective of the meeting was to encourage them to assume their responsibilities and lead a synergy of action with young people. All the participants agreed on the urgency to act to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, which is threatening the whole world. It was thus decided that masks should be made for the population, hand-washing devices should be set up in public places, and families should be sensitised to equip themselves with a hand washing devices. Preaching by example, the young people set up a hand-washing device at the head of the canton's home, at the end of the meeting.



Youth of M'pelemon Association in a meeting with their traditional authorities



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- ▶ **All WACA 14 countries** reach out to millions of people with awareness raising messages on COVID-19 prevention through IEC material, media programmes, and digital platforms.
- ▶ **Benin** carried out two Rapid surveys in Bohicon area to collect information about the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the communities about COVID-19, including gender and inclusion considerations.
- ▶ In **Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Togo** empowered and supported young beneficiaries of the YEWA project contribute to the protection of their community members by organising community engagement and awareness sessions.
- ▶ **Burkina Faso** trained 406 Community Volunteers on the prevention measures of COVID-19 in Centre North and Centre East Regions and sensitised 1,550 women members of 60 Village Savings Schemes.
- ▶ **CAR** targets 43,000 children and adolescents with 2500 additional copies of “child friendly” posters for prevention and response to COVID-19.



Partner Youth groups sensitizing local drink sellers in Sotouboua, Togo



Sponsored child reading preventive messages pasted all over the community

- ▶ **Ghana's** young Alumni created a [video](#) to educate people with hearing impairment on the COVID-19 and the precautionary measures outlined for adherence.
- ▶ **Guinea**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Action and Women Promotion and Guinea's girls' leaders club, reached 688,396 people with hand-washing kits, soap and awareness raising posters in Conakry urban area and suburbs.
- ▶ **Niger's** community engagement and awareness raising actions leads to production of 4,452 local hand-washing facilities by community members in Dosso and Tillabéri.
- ▶ **Cameroon** has been able to reach more than 7,000 **Nigerian** and **CAR** refugees through door to door sensitization, capacity building, parenting sessions, etc. in the Far North and East regions.
- ▶ Feedback sessions organised with IDP children in **Nigeria** on Covid-19 and its impact on CFS activities, revealed that only 2 girls out of hundreds are aware of the COVID-19 and no child is aware of the isolation centre provided by IOM. Awareness sessions are being held using IEC material.
- ▶ **Sierra Leone** actively contributed to the national Social Mobilisation pillar development of lockdown guidance messages, Social Mobilisation SOPs and COVID-19 prevention campaign strategy.



Meet Tahiru, the Covid-19 fighter in Ghana

Tahiru K. is a GAA youth advocate from Sagnarigu district in Northern region of Ghana.

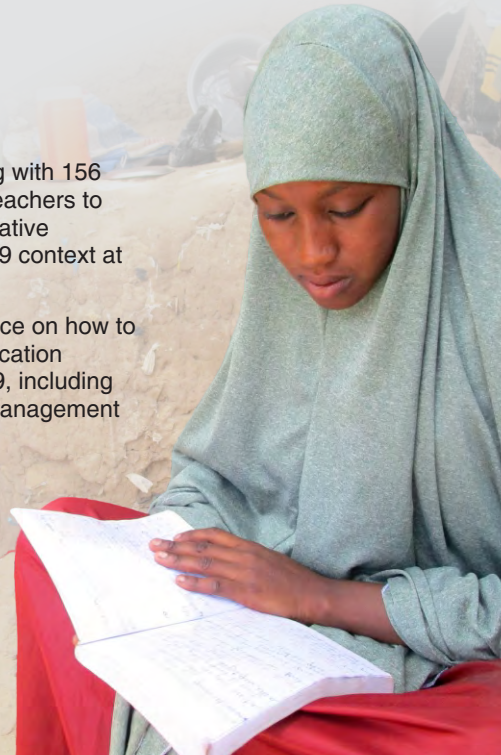
She took upon herself to embark on a COVID-19 education initiative in the main Tamale market, Ghana. She educates women and other sellers on how to handle food and money during this COVID period, and the need to respect preventive measures. She also personally sponsored and donated some facemasks, to the market women.





EDUCATION (INCLUDING EARLY LEARNING AND PARENTING)

- ▶ **Burkina Faso** organises remedial courses on the radio for grade 6 students in the Centre East region.
- ▶ **Senegal** continues advocacy with the Ministry of Education for its participation as implementing agency in the Global Partnership for Education funding.
- ▶ **Sierra Leone** procures radios for 5,700 households to reach 11,400 girls and 11,400 boys with distance education programming.
- ▶ **Benin**, in collaboration with other stakeholders, started the design of Global Program for Education appeal for project submission.
- ▶ **CAR** is organising distribution of wash kits for schools to benefit 8,265 students.
- ▶ **Cameroon** held a meeting with 156 educational leaders and teachers to develop strategy on alternative education under COVID-19 context at Minawao refugee camp.
- ▶ **Nigeria** developed guidance on how to protect participants to education activities during COVID-19, including pupils, teachers, school management committees, staff, etc.
- ▶ **Guinea Bissau** is working with UNICEF to support the Ministry of Education on the translation of education lessons through radio.



E-learning for Basic school children effective in Ghana

In order to cover up with schools closure and the stop in education in Ghana, Plan International Ghana agreed with the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service to undertake distance learning for Basic school children consisting of Junior High Schools, primary schools and Kindergartens. This is made possible thanks to Plan International Ghana's T4T and MG-Cubed project studios, provided for the purpose. Recording of selected subjects are going on with full participation of Plan International staff. All students will have online teaching on mathematics and English; with Upper primary pupil getting additional tuition in science, and Junior High Students getting additional tuition in Social Studies.



"In Burkina Faso, the Pambao professional centre in Cassou is a centre that benefits from the support of "Association Promo-Monde Rurale (APMR) in the implementation of the YEWA programme. As a contribution to the fight against COVID-19, this centre has taken the initiative to produce masks made in Pambao. It is with great satisfaction that these masks are sold at a social price among the population. The benefits of the sales are used to expand the Centre's activities and sustain the livelihoods of all the young girls, teenage mothers and boys involved in the activities. Long live YEWA, long live the resilience of young people!"

Réné, YEWA Project Facilitator, Sapouy, Burkina Faso.



ECONOMIC SECURITY

- ▶ To date, **Niger** supported young girls to produce 13,421 washable masks, with 1381 already sold, reaching 1274 persons in Dosso and Tillabéri.
- ▶ **Nigeria** continues to follow up 2,700 youths within the GIZ-YEE project on vocational training, entrepreneurship development and apprenticeship.
- ▶ Still in **Nigeria**, 125 persons, including 117 young women and 3 others living with a disability benefited from unconditional cash transfers, including 70 adolescent girls that were provided with start-up kits in selected livelihood skills including cooking, oil extraction and perfume making.
- ▶ **Senegal** is organizing the distribution of cash transfer and flour to vulnerable families in Thies Region. About 9500 under 5 children and 55,500 children will directly benefit.
- ▶ In **Togo**, 43 young women living with disabilities were trained to produce masks to be sold at social prices in Maritime area.
- ▶ **Ghana** trained vulnerable girls including "Kayayee" (head potters), to sew face masks and reusable sanitary towels as source of livelihood.
- ▶ Plan International in **Liberia**, through the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) has been approached by UN Youth Envoy to identify advocates to contribute to the Youth Envoy's blog series on Young People Leading COVID-19 Response in their Communities.



 **HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION, INFLUENCING, PARTNERSHIP AND GENDER EQUALITY**

- ▶ **All countries across WACA** actively participate in strategic cluster and coordination meetings at all levels, and do high level engagement with other strategic partners such as government ministries, UN bodies, CBOs, CSOs, INGOs, to position ourselves and ensure good collaboration in all aspects of the response.
- ▶ **The WACA Regional Hub** is actively participating in the OCHA-led Regional Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group (R-EPRWG) as one of only 4 INGOs.
- ▶ **The WACA Hub** is also actively participating in COVID-19 Regional response working groups and IASC coordination meetings.
- ▶ **Burkina Faso** conducts a gender rapid assessment to inform programs and determine gaps as well as additional changes required to make gender aware.
- ▶ Together with UNFPA, **Sierra Leone** successfully lobbied the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to collect disaggregated data by age, gender and disability into all response activities.



Country Director of Plan International Senegal presenting Emergency Response Plan to Senegal Minister of Community Development and Social Welfare.



Government Official practicing hand-washing after receiving kits from Plan International in Benin

- ▶ Plan International **Burkina Faso** has actively worked with UNICEF, other INGO and Embassies of Partnering Education Body to provide inputs on the emergency response plan of the Ministry of Education; making sure gender related issues are considered and response is at least gender sensitive.
- ▶ In **Cameroon** a rapid Gender Analysis carried out in collaboration with the ministry of Women empowerment and the family, and civil society organizations is ongoing across the country.
- ▶ **Ghana** plans to collaborate with UNFPA on issues related to sexual reproductive health rights related to COVID-19.
- ▶ **Guinea Bissau and Senegal** are in the process of signing an MOU with the Government to frame our support to COVID-19 response and influence the government for the response to be considered with a gender and child protection lens.
- ▶ In collaboration with the Young Ambassador for Change (15-24), **Liberia** has set up an online platform for continuous engagement with young girls to report cases of GBV in the local communities.

- ▶ In **Mali**, International NGOs including Plan International, the UN System, and Civil Society Organizations are advocating for the respect of the safe school declaration, especially during COVID 19 response.
- ▶ Plan International is the only INGO member of the committee, that lobbied for the creation of a community response committee to conduct and supervise community interventions in the context of the COVID_19 pandemic in **Niger**, together with ministries, UN bodies and national CSO.
- ▶ In **Nigeria**, a Position Paper titled “COVID-19: Protecting the rights to life of the Almajiris amidst the pandemic” is jointly produced with other INGOs and National NGOs in a network comprising of Street Child, Plan International Nigeria, ActionAid Nigeria, Riplington Education Initiative (REI) and Almajiri Child Rights Initiatives.
- ▶ Plan International **Togo** started its partnership with Togo Red Cross society to scale up the intervention against COVID-19, especially the awareness raising, considering their community anchorage.



“I don't see myself as a driver, but as a humanitarian worker.”

HEAR IT FROM A HUMANITARIAN WORKER

Michael joined Plan International Sierra Leone in July 2019. He is one of the five drivers identified to go round within 14 days, to 6 districts and 61 communities in the northern and southern provinces of **Sierra Leone** for the distribution of supplementary feeding, reaching 5,559 households with 83,333 direct beneficiaries. He shares his experience as a frontline worker.

“My distribution days start as early as 6a.m. when I get up to prepare. I reach the field office at around 7a.m. and I start by cleaning the car and doing the necessary checks. Then I go to the hotel to pick my other colleagues with whom I am on the trip. We hold a quick meeting to organise the day and plan the various destinations. Then the distribution journey kicks off. We move in convoy, all vehicles on central lock, glasses up, masks on all vehicle occupants. Plan cars ahead, and the trucks behind.

Reaching to the beneficiary communities is very challenging. The road network is very bad. It is full of potholes, broken bridges, muddy paths, etc. Sometimes we come across some frustrated non-beneficiary villagers, who try some malicious attacks or damages on the convoy. Thank God we always find our way out. Once we reach the distribution site, another phase of my journey begins. I support with the offloading of the truck, the packaging and the counting. I also support in the identification of the beneficiaries and I monitor the strict compliance to the physical distancing by all beneficiaries in queue. While doing that, I constantly throw an eye on the cars and trucks to make sure they are safe.



“

To my fellow colleagues drivers, I will say: **Never consider yourself as a mere driver, but look upon yourself as someone who can and is impacting children's and girls' lives in a specific capacity. The space is all yours, offer the best of you.”**

Our financial supporters so far include, but not limited to:



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