



Edina Robert, Student at Chiseka Primary School. Photo Credit: Charity Chisomi in Malawi



A Book for Every Child

BOOKS FOR AFRICA 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Friend,

2023 was another successful year here at Books For Africa! Your generous support this year has allowed us to make great strides in fighting the African book famine. We are pleased to share with you some of what we achieved in this, our 35th anniversary year!

We shipped books by the millions (yet again): BFA continues as the world's largest shipper of donated books to the African continent, shipping almost 60 million books and serving every single African country in our 35-year history. This past year, Books For Africa shipped approximately 4,029,000 books, valued at over \$32.6 million, to 32 African countries, the most books ever shipped by Books For Africa in a single year. Approximately 800,000 digital books were also shipped on 116 computers and 150 tablets. Over \$2.6 million was raised to ship these books to partners across Africa.

We were recognized as one of the best non-profits in the U.S.: BFA received top recognition again from the premier charity recognition organizations in 2023. We garnered our 12th consecutive top 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, putting BFA in the top 3% of all U.S. charities for fiscal responsibility and transparency. We also secured the 2023 Guidestar Platinum Seal of Transparency. We were also pleased that our partner, Abdullahi Mire, a native of Somalia, was presented with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees highest award in a ceremony in Geneva, Switzerland in December in large part for his work in distributing tens of thousands of BFA books at the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya.

We connected with key partners: 2023 featured a number of high-level collaborations. We were honored to host best-selling author William Kamkwamba, "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind," from Malawi as our keynote speaker for our annual spring luncheon. Approximately 300 people were in attendance at this event, which also featured remarks from Minnesota Governor Tim Walz. We were also honored in June to be hosted in Washington, D.C. at the Embassy of the Republic of Kenya by His Excellency Lazarus O. Amayo. Ambassador Amayo served as the BFA Summit Society Honorary Chair for 2023, representing our top donors and supporters. In September, we welcomed His Excellency Philip Jada Natana, the ambassador from South Sudan, Africa's newest nation, to the U. S. as the keynote speaker of our 35th anniversary gala. The event was also attended by Her Excellency Elsie Sia Kanza, the ambassador to the U.S. from Tanzania, who provided the keynote speech at the VIP reception prior to the gala. In November we hosted Peace Corps Director Carol Spahn for a reception with top Books For Africa supporters and facilitated her keynote presentation to the Minnesota International NGO Summit in Minneapolis.

More and more and more volunteers!: In our warehouses in Atlanta and St. Paul, we were happy to host volunteer groups in 2023 from Amazon, Americorps, Capital One, the CDC, Dell Technologies, Delta Airlines, Delta Sigma Pi, Emory University, FedEx, IHG - InterContinental Hotels Group, Kennesaw State University, Microsoft, Omega Phi Alpha, Salesforce, Starbucks, Target, Coca-Cola, Truist, UPS, Walmart, and many others! We hosted approximately 10,000 volunteers in our warehouses this past year. These volunteers sorted millions of books that we shipped in 2023. We could not have done it without them!

We brought books from far and wide: BFA continues to work to put high-quality, relevant materials in the hands of African learners. To accomplish this, we have cast a wide net for the best materials available. In addition to the millions of books shipped out of our Atlanta warehouse, we also shipped books from London, Paris, Montreal, Annapolis, San Francisco, New York, Houston, and Lexington (KY) in collaboration with

our many partner organizations. Large quantities of books were supplied by our strategic partners Better World Books, Thomson Reuters, Elsevier, Capstone Publishing, Superior Text, Lerner Publishing, Norton Publishing, Wiley Publishing, the American Bar Association and Walker Bookstore. We are also grateful to the thousands of individuals as well as the schools, universities, and libraries that contributed books on a regular basis!

We undertook some unique projects: Books For Africa continues to press ahead, seeking new partners and initiatives. This year, we co-sponsored the World Literacy Summit in Oxford, U.K. and attended the World Expo Presentation in Paris, France. BFA continued our partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense Humanitarian Assistance Program, shipping 30 sea containers to partners including UNESCO, the Sir Emeka Ofor Foundation, the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia, and the Malawi National Library Service. Our unique work has been recognized in the media, including by the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Minnpost, the BBC, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, KSTP TV, and Mshale.

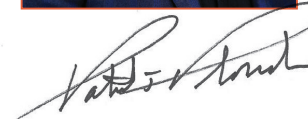
We listened to our African partners: Since we began our systematic survey process in 2016, we have received valuable feedback from 289 recipients in 36 countries. For the seventh consecutive year, we surveyed our book recipients to assess impacts of our activities. As with previous surveys, we are pleased to know that recipients overwhelmingly rate BFA books as high-quality and agree that the books will be very useful in promoting literacy in local communities. In 2023, we heard from 40 recipients in 14 African countries! We were also pleased to host once again our friends at the Mandela Fellows Program to gain insights into needs in their countries. Twenty-four Mandela Fellows from across Africa gathered at our Minnesota warehouse in honor of Mandela Day of Service.

In 2023, we engaged our partners on all levels in order to deliver millions of books. This year marked our 35th year of working towards our vision of helping children to read in every African country. This was the dream of the late Kofi Annan, who stated, "Literacy is quite simply the bridge from misery to hope." We are honored to have the opportunity to help bridge this gap, and we appreciate your help in making this happen.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Essien".

Mike Essien
Board President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick J. Plonski".

Patrick J. Plonski, PhD
Executive Director



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Books For Africa Board President Mike Essien speaks at the 35th Anniversary Gala. Photo Credit: Lena Lakoma

Jack Mason Law & Democracy Initiative Co-Chairs

In memoriam

Kofi Annan, Former U.N. Secretary-General, Founding Co-Chair

Walter Mondale, Former U.S. Vice President, Founding Co-Chair



LAW & DEMOCRACY
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Frank Babka, Friend of BFA

Sharon Sayles Belton, Thomson Reuters

Robert Davidson, Hey Man Productions

Genevieve Eba-Polley, Ghana Book Trust

Matt Erickson, Poet Nation Media

Ken Fitzgerald, Walker Bookstore

Kassahun Getachew, Ethiopian Knowledge & Technology Transfer Society

Kim Harms, River's Edge Dental

Pat Harris, PMA Financial

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Bob Marx, Amphora Wines LLC

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John Stacey, Course Hero

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Asratie Teferra, Friend of BFA

Lawrence White, MN National Guard

Melissa Young, Hey Man Productions

Nate Zhang, Taimei Technology



BFA Board Member Louis Brownstone visits Ghana. Photo Credit: Louis Brownstone.

Books For Africa has shipped nearly 60 million books and over 6.8 million digital books, serving all 55 countries on the African continent since 1988

TOP 10 COUNTRIES ALL TIME



COUNTRY BOOKS SHIPPED

Kenya	6,529,076
Ethiopia	5,933,849
Ghana	5,411,163
Nigeria	4,813,353
South Africa	3,743,018
Tanzania	3,686,183
Uganda	3,571,419
Zimbabwe	2,611,251
Liberia	2,183,516
Sierra Leone	1,694,826



Uwemi Mlaga, student at Sparrow Primary School in Malawi. Photo Credit: Charity Chisomi

Books For Africa collects, sorts, and ships books, computers, tablets, and library enhancement materials to every country in Africa. In collaboration with worldwide donors, publishers, and African partners, we provide the tools of empowerment to children and students across Africa. Our vision is an Africa rich in readers — in classrooms, during leisure time in libraries, and throughout university and prosperous careers. We supply varied, relevant books in English, French, and national languages, computers and tablets with digital content, specialty post-secondary materials, and supplies to create vibrant learning spaces.



A crane unloads a container of books at Dorper Wind Farm in South Africa. Photo Credit: Mamoso May

Our mission is to end the book famine in Africa.

BFA SHIPMENTS IN FY 2023

A YEAR IN EVENTS

COUNTRY	BOOKS	COUNTRY	BOOKS
Kenya	966,708	Madagascar	68,510
Ghana	471,606	Uganda	65,022
South Africa	456,101	Botswana	62,711
Sierra Leone	390,177	Tunisia	55,460
Ethiopia	280,283	DRC	45,975
Nigeria	275,680	Rwanda	36,720
Zimbabwe	206,008	Djibouti	23,350
Tanzania	179,786	South Sudan	16,191
Malawi	157,502	Gabon	15,000
Zambia	153,539	Côte d'Ivoire	2,144
The Gambia	100,226		



Ambassador Howard Jeter speaks at the 35th Anniversary. Photo Credit: Lena Lakoma



MN Governor Tim Walz speaks at the 2023 luncheon. Photo Credit: Jonathan Pavlica



Tom Warth, William Kamkwamba, Patrick Plonski, and Gabrielle Gerbaud at the 2023 Luncheon. Photo Credit: Jonathan Pavlica



Participants of the 2023 Book Walk. Photo Credit: Books For Africa

Books: 4 million+, Countries: 32,* Container Units: 222, Computers/ Tablets: 266, Law Libraries: 8, Digital Books: 798,000

TOTAL VALUE: \$32.6 million

*Eleven countries (Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Senegal and Togo) received books or tablets from Books For Africa outside of a dedicated conventional container unit shipment.



Members of the African Diplomatic Corps gather at the Kenyan Embassy for the 2023 Summit Society Event. Photo Credit: Books For Africa



Peace Corps Director Carol Spahn speaks at a Books For Africa reception. Photo Credit: Books For Africa

DEFYING THE ODDS, 30,000 BOOKS ARE DELIVERED TO RURAL TANZANIA

When Books For Africa began working to send a container of books to Emanyata School in Ololosokwan Village, Tanzania, no one knew how the odds would stack against this project. The project champions in Tanzania, the Pastoral Women’s Council, confronted a setback when their community faced relocation from their home. Setting aside the project for several months, the women worked to preserve the land that held many community spaces including Emanyata school. Finally, the books were delivered to the school, where they will serve a community of 400 students and the surrounding community.



Students at Emanyata Secondary School help unload the delivery of books in Tanzania. Photo Credit: Kasosa Leitura

OVER 1.6 MILLION BOOKS SENT TO ZIMBABWE WITH THE ZAMBEZI SCHOOLBOOK PROJECT

This year, Books For Africa collaborated with the U.S. Department of Defense Humanitarian Assistance Transportation Program to deliver a significant shipment of over 175,000 books to Zimbabwe. The Zambezi Schoolbook Project, a longtime partner of Books For Africa that has organized the delivery of over 1.6 million books to Zimbabwe since 2014, played a crucial role in organizing this endeavor, partnering with various organizations such as Children in the Wilderness (CITW), Padenga Holdings, Rotary Club of Harare West, and the African Wildlife Conservation Fund (AWCF).

Following the shipment’s arrival, CITW undertook the challenging task of distributing books to 20 rural schools and community literacy centers in the Victoria Falls area. In remote locations, community members actively assisted CITW, using unconventional methods like ox carts to ensure every box of books reached its destination. Padenga Holdings distributed 604 boxes to 18 schools in the Lake Kariba area, addressing significant book deficits and garnering positive feedback from recipient schools.

Recipients shared stories of the positive impact, with Madam Kuzonyei of Dumisa Primary School noting increased pass rates since 2017, and Hassani, a Form 2 student at Samu Secondary School, highlighting the importance of community libraries.



Dominic Nathi and James Moyo unload boxes of books in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Photo Credit: Courtney Pritchard





Koketso Chauke in South Africa displays his new books. Photo Credit: Room to Read South Africa



Books are unloaded by Neo Masina and Tshapo Mosuoie in South Africa. Photo Credit: Room to Read South Africa

2023 SHIPPING HIGHLIGHTS



TEN YEARS OF COLLABORATION WITH ROOM TO READ

Over the past 10 years, Books For Africa has partnered with Room to Read on projects in South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Room to Read offers a comprehensive Literacy Program that combines home-language classroom instruction with high-functioning libraries. Over 1.8 million books have been shipped to the programs by Books For Africa, with 1.2 million going to South Africa.

Those books support Room to Read in its efforts to combat racial inequality in South Africa by ensuring that each student in its Literacy Program has access to the quality education they deserve. The Literacy Program has also responded to the dire need for school libraries, teacher training and reading materials across South Africa’s 11 official languages.

During the Covid pandemic in 2020, BFA sent 116,000 books to South African libraries and another 320,000 books to Tanzania and Uganda in support of Room to Read. Tiffany Yancey, a Development Associate, summed up the impact this way: “I wanted to take a moment to thank Books For Africa for all your support during one of the most tumultuous years of our existence here at Room to Read. We could not have filled our libraries and children’s homes with high-quality books without your support.”

Rotarians sort books in Nigeria.
Photo credit: Rotary International District 9125



MANY HANDS COLLABORATE TO SEND A CONTAINER OF BOOKS AND TWO THOMSON REUTERS LAW LIBRARIES TO NIGERIA

In 2022, two Books For Africa Board members, Charles Cogan and Fatima Lawson, teamed up to accomplish a longtime dream to send books to the northern Nigerian city of Kano. Together with Books For Africa, Rotary, and the Attorney General Alliance, they embarked on a transformative mission to send a full 40-foot container of books and two brand new law libraries published and donated by Thomson Reuters, a premier sponsor of Books For Africa.

Lawson’s nieces in Nigeria, and Nigerian Rotarian Sagab Sani Ahmed, a passionate advocate for education and Rotary District 9125 Governor, worked to ensure that all was ready on the ground in Kano for the arrival of the books. Understanding the power of collaboration, Sagab harnessed the strength of six Rotary Clubs in Kano. One of the recipients of this literary treasure trove was Bayero University, Kano—a local hub of knowledge with a full-fledged law faculty. The prospect of receiving the Thomson Reuters law libraries was met with immense appreciation by the university.

In the city of Abuja, another Thomson Reuters law library found its home at the newly built Justice Chukwuweike Idigbe Law Faculty of the Veritas University in Bwari, Abuja.

Books For Africa launched the Law & Democracy Initiative to address this emerging continent’s acute scarcity of law and human rights books, and by doing so to further the rule of law in Africa. Thomson Reuters developed a specialty law library for the Books For Africa law program composed of books selected to be most useful in the African and International context.





Nia Brown packs a shipment for Tunisia. Photo Credit: Books For Africa



A student at Ksar Jedid School. Photo Credit: Ecole Primaire Ksar Jedid

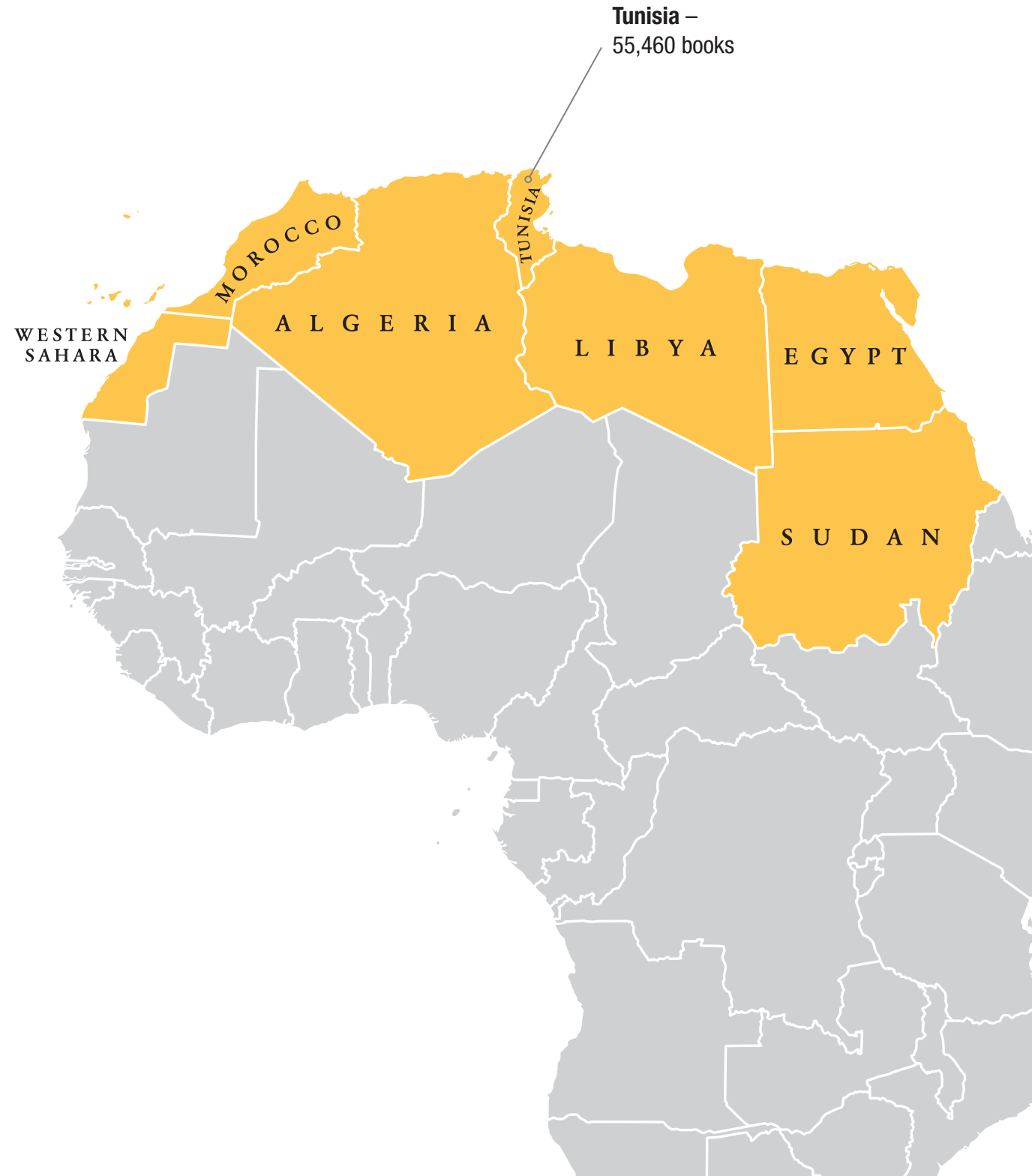
FRENCH AND ENGLISH BOOKS SHIPPED TO TUNISIA

This year, Books For Africa sent a shipment of books to Tunisia, sponsored by the Wasily Family Foundation. The shipment of nearly 30,000 books, school supplies, and solar lamps donated by Solar Buddy was truly the work of many hands! The solar lamps were assembled by students in San Francisco, and the container was packed to order by volunteers in our Atlanta, GA warehouse. These books and supplies were sent to Ksar Jedid Primary School in Medenine, Tunisia, where many of the books were shared with local secondary schools. The books were primarily focused on English reading skills, as well and French leisure reading.

Volunteer Marcellus Lewis. Photo Credit: Books For Africa



Solar Buddy lamps ready for shipment. Photo Credit: Books For Africa



Your Support Makes a Difference

50¢ provides a student in Africa with a book

\$100 sponsors 200 books for a classroom

\$500 sponsors a Girls Empowerment Collection

\$1,000 stocks an entire school library — join our Kilimanjaro Society!

\$11,000 provides 22,000 books — a full 40-foot sea container!

Please visit www.booksforafrica.org to donate or learn more about the many ways you can help support Books For Africa. Books For Africa is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit, all gifts are tax deductible as specified by law. Our EIN is 41-1627391.



Statement of Activity

SUPPORT AND REVENUES

	2022	2023
Contributions	\$2,383,046	\$2,282,703
Interest Earned	\$87,769	\$138,746
Value of Books Contributed	\$28,997,749	\$31,281,593
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUES	\$31,468,564	\$33,703,042

EXPENDITURES

Program Operating Expenses — Overseas	\$28,997,749	\$35,894,963
General and Administrative Expenses	\$79,165	\$119,052
Fundraising Expenses	\$212,400	\$242,609
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$29,289,314	\$36,256,624

Change in Net Monetary Assets **\$(270,230)** **\$(115,952)**

Change in Book Inventory **\$2,712,176** **\$1,387,911**

2023 CONTRIBUTORS

Fiscal Year 2023 donor listings represent contributions received July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Individuals

SUMMIT SOCIETY

\$18,000-\$40,000

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Berhanu Abegaz
Dr. Karl & Marianna Anderson
Greg Davis
The Dr. Clark & Vonnie LaChapelle Family Fund

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*Cassandra and Andy Stillman
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\$5,000-\$9,000

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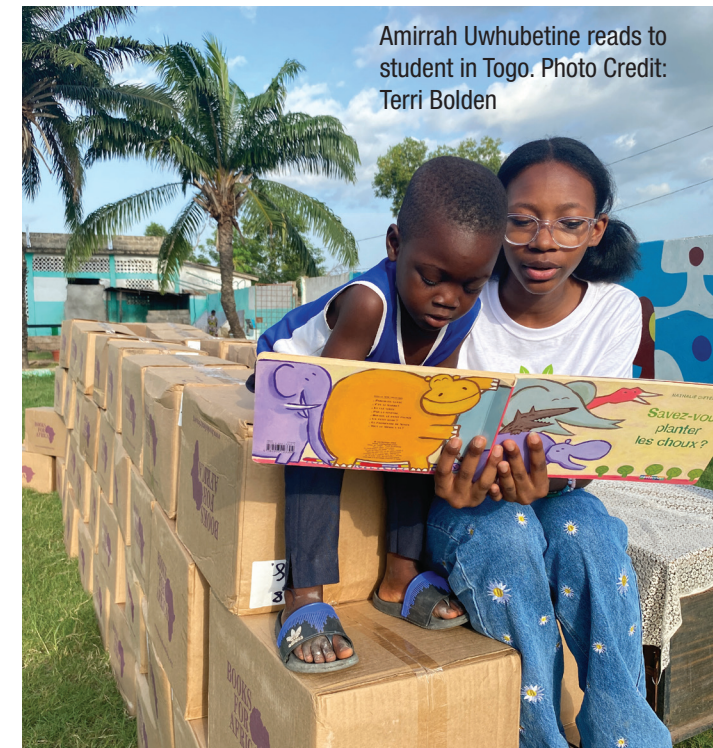
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Amirrah Uwhubetine reads to student in Togo. Photo Credit: Terri Bolden

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A law library is delivered in Sierra Leone. Photo Credit: Victor Kamara

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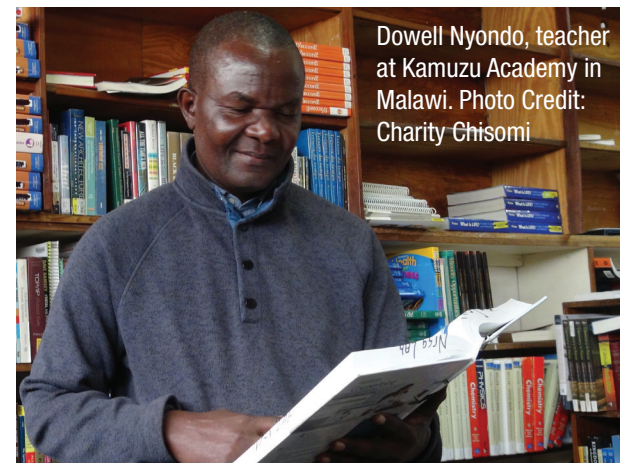
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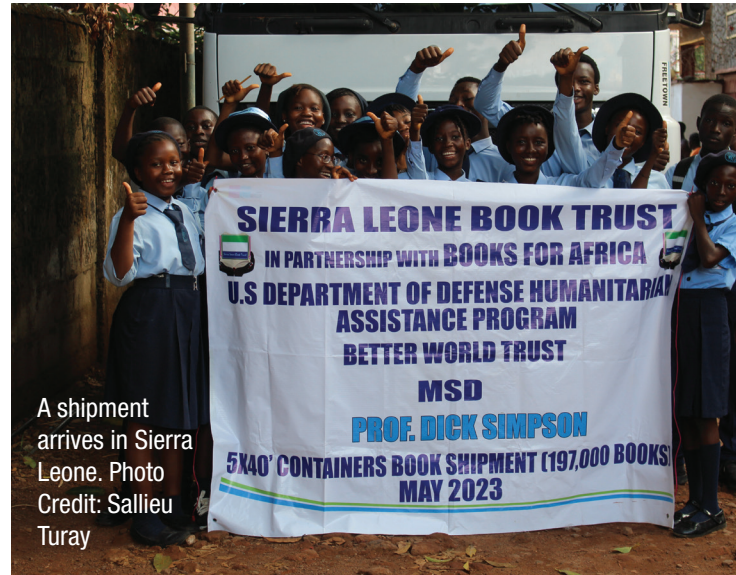
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