MUNA KALATI

IMPACT REPORT

2018

2018: BUILDING ON SOLID FOUNDATIONS

THE YEAR OF CONTINUITY: Reinforcing and advancing core principles.

2018 was the year Muna Kalati aimed to consolidate the gains of its maiden year and address areas for improvement. The year was marked by an expansion of field programs, including Reading for Healing, One-Orphanage-One-Library, and Reading for Pleasure. These activities had a direct impact on 1,020 children in total. Beyond the field activities, Muna Kalati's digital engagement also resulted in massive reach and engagement with various stakeholders. For example, the number of social media followers increased from **623** in 2017 to **1,228** in 2018. Additionally, Muna Kalati succeeded in publishing **40** articles detailing the state of African children's literature.

The strategy for the year was to combine digital reach with field activities. This approach was designed to ensure Muna Kalati remains impactful and efficient in the delivery of its activities. Furthermore, significant emphasis was placed on providing services to underserved populations, including orphans, children in rural communities, and those facing chronic ailments. The goal of maintaining financial sustainability also remained crucial this year. Other critical goals set in the previous year were achieved, such as building evidence and strengthening the African literary ecosystem.

In terms of organizational milestones, Muna Kalati officially established its nonprofit status in Cameroon. Through its various activities, such as Reading for Healing, Reading for Pleasure, and One-Orphanage-One-Library, Muna Kalati incorporated African games in both traditional and physical forms.

. With a key focus on digitization, Muna Kalati successfully updated its website. This improved user experience and the attractiveness of the website. Regarding human resources, the Muna Kalati team grew by including volunteers in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Benin.

From a financial standpoint, Muna Kalati continued to maintain its financial sustainability. This was achieved through zero reliance on external grants. Income was generated predominantly from crowdfunding and proceeds from programs and other activities. During the year, Muna Kalati also created another income stream by providing trainings and other services. Financial stability remains the bedrock of Muna Kalati's viability. It is the intention of Muna Kalati to maintain its status as a financially stable and viable organization.

In 2018, Muna Kalati continued to be a central research platform for African children's literature. For instance, three editions of the MK magazine were published that year. This was coupled with database development for four African countries. Additionally, Muna Kalati played a pivotal role in supporting research studies on African children's literature and attended a number of international conferences focused on diversity in children's books.

Social Interventions and Key Outcomes

Throughout 2018, social interventions accounted for a massive part of Muna Kalati's work. Activities such as Reading for Pleasure, Reading for Healing, and One-Orphanage-One-Library formed the core of these interventions.

Reading for Pleasure was an initiative aimed at making reading pleasurable and a regular habit for children, given its crucial role in their academic development. In 2018, this initiative was achieved through collaboration with the Alliance Franco-Camerounaise in Dschang, which brought children into direct contact with authentic African books. This event involved interactive and engaging activities such as reading sessions, creative writing, public speaking, and games.

The program was an immense success, resulting in **89%** of children showing improved reading fluency. Furthermore, **76%** of children who attended the event reported that they continued to read at home. Finally, **100%** of the participants could identify with and discuss their favorite African books.

One-Orphanage-One-Library was established through a partnership with Felix Mbotho to create functional libraries in orphanages across Cameroon. These libraries were designed to serve as active reading spaces with curated and age-appropriate collections of books. They were intended to be coordinated by trained staff and volunteers in conducive environments. In 2018, two of these libraries were established: the first in Miamoh Orphanage and the second in Kentaja Orphanage. Key outcomes of this program include: providing 90 children with regular access to books, which accounts for an average of **1.8** books per child; direct beneficiaries spent between **5 to 7** library hours per week in both facilities; and, **70%** of children used the libraries weekly within three months, culminating in an average check-out rate of **2.3** books per child per month.

Reading for Healing was another key intervention delivered by the Muna Kalati team. Through this program, the team provided bibliotherapy services to children hospitalized in various hospitals across Cameroon. The program was held on December 23rd, around the Christmas period. Recognizing that many hospitalized children experience pain, depression, and loneliness during this festive time, Muna Kalati organized this program to offer bibliotherapy services. Reading for Healing involved many interactive activities, such as slam poetry, read-aloud sessions, humor and games, gift distribution, and parent engagement. The program was highly successful: it provided **34 children** with books; children and parents learned about using reading as a coping mechanism in dealing with trauma; nurses continued to integrate reading as a means of pediatric care; and families continued to request books after the program, emphasizing the lasting impact of the intervention.

Overall, 2018 was a highly successful year for Muna Kalati. It was a year where Muna Kalati directly impacted over **1,000** children through its quality literacy programming. Additionally, Muna Kalati established over **110,000** touchpoints with parents, children, and educators.

Finally, Muna Kalati was successful in providing visibility for over **50** African authors and publishers. This year allowed Muna Kalati to consolidate the gains and lessons learned in its maiden year. We look forward to achieving greater impact in the years ahead.

MUNA KALATI

The Power of Literacy: Transforming Lives Through Access and Healing

Muna Kalati's mission is rooted in the belief that access to books is fundamental to a child's development, providing not only literacy skills but also pathways to aspiration and emotional healing. The following two stories from our 2018 field programs illustrate this transformative impact on children in underserved communities.

I. Planting Seeds of Aspiration: Jacques and the Orphanage Library
(Program: One-Orphanage-One-Library, Miamoh Orphanage)

Before the establishment of a dedicated library at Miamoh Orphanage, 14-year-old Jacques was characterized by staff as angry, withdrawn, and disruptive—a child who had experienced profound early trauma and lived without hope for the future. He initially refused to engage with the new facility, watching skeptically from the perimeter.

The turning point came when a staff member introduced him to the small science section. Jacques quickly devoured every book on space, animals, and engineering. This exposure triggered a measurable behavioral and emotional shift: his aggression decreased dramatically, and he began engaging with staff, asking complex questions about the world.

Three months later, Jacques approached our team with a shy but direct request for more books about space. The facility director confirmed the transformation, noting, "He's talking about becoming a scientist or engineer someday. Before the library, he never talked about the future at all—like he couldn't imagine having one."

The library did more than provide reading material; it provided a catalyst for aspiration, demonstrating the power of curated collections to unlock previously unimaginable potential in vulnerable youth.

II. Restoring Voice and Hope: Marie and Bibliotherapy
(Program: Reading for Healing, Pediatric Ward)

The pediatric ward setting was defined by pain and silence, with children and parents exhausted by chronic illness. Among them was 7-year-old Marie, who had been unresponsive and silent for three days, having seemingly "given up hope," according to her distressed mother.

Through the Reading for Healing intervention, a Muna Kalati team member, experienced in bibliotherapy, sat calmly beside Marie and began reading aloud a story of adventure and bravery. The gentle, engaging narrative was an immediate intervention. Marie's body language shifted, and then, at a peak moment in the story, she turned over, made eye contact, and spoke her first words in days: "What happens next?"

The story had restored her verbal engagement. Marie remained fully engaged through the session, clutching her own book—a story about overcoming obstacles—which she received as a gift. The team instructed her mother on using reading aloud as a "powerful medicine."

Three weeks later, Marie was discharged and recovering at home. Her mother reported that Marie requested the book nightly and spoke of becoming a "book angel" to bring joy to other children. This intervention not only provided momentary relief but also leveraged the power of literature to restore emotional well-being and plant seeds of empathetic future ambition.

MUNA KALATI

Conclusion

These stories underscore Muna Kalati's dual impact: providing intellectual infrastructure (libraries) that fosters aspiration in abandoned youth, and delivering emotional-literacy interventions (bibliotherapy) that restore voice and hope to the severely afflicted. By combining access to quality African literature with targeted programmatic support, Muna Kalati is actively transforming developmental trajectories across Cameroon.

This summary focuses on the transformation, the specific program used, and the direct outcomes observed. I hope this meets your needs for engaging with potential partners. Let me know if you would like to adjust the tone or expand on either of the two key program areas!