



WE CAN RUN PROJECT

Setting a World Record in Ultra-Marathon for Female Education in Sierra Leone

What is We Can Run?

[We Can Run](#) is a fundraising project of ultra-marathon runners as an inspiration for positive social change. We focus on supporting female education in Sierra Leone. Running is more than the physical notion of running; you can run a race, but you can also run a team, a company or simply go step-by-step to overcome obstacles to achieve a goal. Running thus means empowerment, and empowerment is what female education is all about. We Can Run was started by [Elise Zender](#) in 2022.

Running ultra-marathons is challenging and requires both mental toughness and physical endurance. But ultra-marathons are nothing compared to the resilience it takes to study as a woman in Sierra Leone, a Republic in West Africa ranked #182 on the Human Development Index. There, only 15% of girls graduate high school and only 1% of those go on to university. Empowering women is key to helping Sierra Leone.

Partnering with L'appel's Women Empowerment Program

[L'appel](#) was founded in the wake of the Ebola pandemic in 2015 by German medicine students working with Doctors Without Borders and has since grown into a successful organization that also includes a Women Empowerment Program to fund female higher education in Sierra Leone.

One university scholarship costs EUR 4.000 and includes a university degree as well as a stipend for cost of living. In return for the scholarship, recipients volunteer with younger girls who dropped out of the school system in order to reintegrate them and create a virtuous cycle where girls empower girls, and ultimately women empower women. To select scholars, L'appel partner with British NGO [EducAid](#) who operate the highest number of non-state boarding schools in the country. EducAid choose scholars based on grades as well as community engagement.

Promoting female education in Sierra Leone is inherently aligned with four of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals and can thus be placed in the greater context of the current discourse on making a path towards a more sustainable future. Investing in women's education (4) leads in the long-term to gender equality (5), reduced inequalities (10) as well as more dignified work and economic growth (8).

Every single Euro donated goes directly towards the university funds of a girl. It is our goal to raise at least one scholarship with each race, meaning 5 scholarships or EUR 20.000 in total.

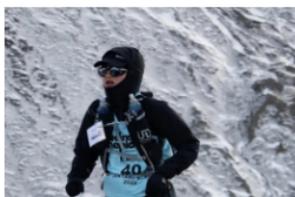
The Challenge

The 4 Deserts Ultra-Marathon Series is a 1.000km multi-stage footrace across the Namib, Gobi and Atacama desert as well as Antarctica in one year. The 4Deserts+ adds the annual roving race (Caucasus), making it five ultra-marathons or 1.250km in one year. Each stage is six days in length and covers 250km self-sustained with runners carrying gear and food as the organization only provides water and medical assistance.

TIME Magazine ranks the challenge in its Top Ten Endurance competitions alongside other athletic feats such as the Tour de France and Vendée Globe Yacht Race. Since inception in 2008, 78 people have finished the full series in one year (Desert Grand Slam) and eight have finished the extended series (Desert Grand Slam Plus).

About Elise Zender

After gathering experience in NGOs, the UN and Investment Banking at Goldman Sachs, Elise moved to Munich where she currently works in the Private Equity Investment Team at Allianz Capital Partners. She holds degrees in both Philosophy and Finance. Elise has placed in the Top 5-10 women and won her age category in every race so far (Namibia, Georgia, Chile, Antarctica). Once she finishes the full series, Elise will hold the world record as youngest woman in the world to ever finish the 4 Deserts+ and will be the first woman from Europe to do so. She is racing in Gobi in June 2023.



Above you can see Elise running in the Namib Desert and fellow racers [Josh Tebeau](#) and [Alex Davydov](#) in the Atacama Desert supporting her efforts.



We offer different PACKAGES according to Your DONATION

Type of Package	Donation	Our Offer to You
Basic	EUR 500 - 4.000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Post your logo on our website as official donors ❖ Print your logo on a flag which we hold at the finish line of Stage 5 (Gobi) where Elise will set the world record
Standard	EUR 4.000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Post your logo on our website as official donors ❖ Print your logo on a flag which we hold at the finish line of Stage 5 (Gobi) where Elise will set the world record ❖ Print your logo on our race shirts in Stage 5
Premium	> EUR 4.000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Post your logo on website as official donors ❖ Post on our Instagram channel that you are official donors ❖ Print your logo in a prominent placement on a flag which we hold at the finish line of Stage 5 (Gobi) where Elise will set the world record ❖ Print your logo in a prominent placement on our race shirts in Stage 5

Links to DONATE to We Can Run and to learn more about the project:

Website to donate: <https://wecanrun.org>

Instagram: [@wecanrunproject](https://www.instagram.com/wecanrunproject)

Medium Blog: <https://medium.com/@wecanrunproject>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/episode/6wEGxRbE7HeVlzhOXbT07A?si=nmGm8jqvQjmAvY85qqnw8Q>

Press: [Ultramarathon: Extremrennen durch Wüsten in aller Welt \(faz.net\)](https://www.faz.net/aktuell/sport/ultramarathon-extremrennen-durch-wuesten-in-aller-welt-15878888.html)