

Asociación KIRABO

IT'S NOT EASY

FOURTH EDITION - December 2009

Welcome to the new sponsors Alejandro and Beatriz.

We wish to thank Alejandro and Beatriz for their faith in the Sponsoring program of BERUDEP. As from last summer, Conscience and Randy are very proud of having a godmother and godfather in Spain. You may follow the children's development, some photos and videos in:

<http://sponsor-an-orphan.blogspot.com/>



Auction of T-Shirt signed by Leo Messi of Barça FC

One of the sponsors, a football fan, has given us a t-shirt of the Barça FC, signed by Leo Messi. Guillermo has supported our initiative from the beginning and has looked for ways of collaboration.

The idea of selling the T-shirt (size L) at an auction was a success. It got sold for EUR 300,- to another football fan and the same is now exposed in his office.



NOTICIAS - NEWSLETTER - NIEUWSBRIEF

Dear Friends,

Although we are very happy as to how the different projects in Boyo are developing, things do not always come out as they should. In this Newsletter you may read about Sylvanus (you will probably remember him) and the story of David & Dan who travelled to Boyo to help in the orphanage managed by HCH/Cry Cameroon, but upon their arrival they found that things were not as had been agreed and a group of persons (not connected to any of the organizations) was trying to get involved in order to get hold on the funds received. Fortunately, Dan & David have been open minded and did not give in. Being creative and talking things over with all those involved, they decided to spend their efforts in collaborating with the projects that BERUDEP carries out in Fundong (30kms. from Belo).

It is true that as time goes by and with the corresponding training, we are learning and try to do things better. Looking back it is very possible that we would now give certain things a different focus. Nevertheless, we believe that what is important is to learn from experience and continue to advance and work with the same degree of commitment.



Handing over mosquito nets, food and medicines at the nutritional center - Benin

There are many challenges ahead and we have to think long term. It's important to carry out a strict research with all the stakeholders before preparing any project, follow a detailed control of budgets, actual expenses, the correct implementation as what may be a solution for some may also imply a problem or misunderstandings.

Cultural differences, personal agendas and being far away from the field do not really help to make things easier, but we try. We have also lived this situation in our trip to Benin, a very interesting country thanks to its voodoo culture. The country is poorer than Cameroon and there are many needs. Many locals wish to help and offer to help.

Unfortunately, talks do not always end in effective actions or they may result in an action not carried out as it should have been in a simple act aimed to benefit oneself. And this is not positive for them or for us. We have the obligation and responsibility of analyzing very well what we do in order to benefit the maximum number of members of the community and in the long term. We did find a nutrition centre for babies and toddlers managed by 2 great women with a lot of love for which we donated some food, medicines and equipment in situ (see picture).

So, not everything is easy in this aspect. A lot of time and commitment has to be employed as well as a high degree of professionalism, as in any other sector. That is the reason why we are thinking on KIRABO's future, on what type of projects we should undergo base on whether we should continue this as a hobby or if it should be converted into a full time, professional dedication. Above all, our motto is to do things the best we can wherever we go; otherwise, it is better not to do them.

We shall keep you informed.

Best wishes,
Carol

Sylvanus.

You probably remember Sylvanus, the handicapped boy who lives with his sister, in an isolated place. Since March 2008, we placed funds to pay someone to look after this child. We found a carer who went every day for 4-5 hours to look after the guy, dress and clean him as well as give him to eat and drink. He received a small salary in return. So many hours together has resulted in a friendship and mutual affection. Sylvanus had to be hospitalised in May as a consequence of a pig's bites. Amongst all those present we paid the hospital bill and medicines. Once back at home, things were not the same. Much to our regret and but much more surprised, Sylvanus' sister went to Berudep's office claiming that she should also be paid for looking after her brother. There have been serious arguments between herself and the carer and she does not want anyone to come over as long as she is not compensated for her work. This is a difficult situation which we do not understand from our western point of view as we would be happy to have someone help our handicapped brother for some hours, providing him with friendship and happiness, but necessity and poverty sometimes result in surrealistic situations. We are looking for an adequate solution as it is Sylvanus who is the real loser. Fortunately, the carer secretly goes to see him from time to time.

Fundeng School

After the rainy season, the works on the school have been resumed. The latrines are finished and the floor has also been placed. The cement floor will protect children from jiggers which, once they get under the skin, can lead to harmful consequences for the children. Presently new classrooms should be build. We are waiting to receive a report from Berudep informing on the last developments of the works.

Water for Itinitwang

After more than one year of work, some difficulties, the decease of one of the driving forces of the project and a lot of learning for everyone, we are happy to inform that the project is practically finished. We are waiting to receive the date of opening which will probably take place in January. If nothing prevents us from doing so, we will travel to Cameroon to be present. We enclose a photo of the works.



Trip to Cameroon – August 2009

We are a group of volunteers collaborating with the sustainable tourism project set up by the Banesto Foundation. At the moment they informed us we had to go to Cameroon we honestly didn't even know where it was, what we could do or see over there; we only knew it was the home country of Samuel Eto.

As soon as we learned our destiny we started to gather information, we were very excited and needed to know as much as possible about the country. We bought a travel guide, a map and surfed the Internet for hours.

We also contacted a person who knew Cameroon already and in the end we received so much information, of all kinds, that we somehow got a bit scared about traveling to the heart of Africa. Once we got to know the country and the people we found out that many wrong

Thanks to Kirabo and Carol we travelled to Boyo, did some home stays and visited several of the projects.

Things were not always easy (bumpy roads, a broken bus, miscommunications and cultural differences) but we want to underline we had a great time in a great country. We enjoyed the landscapes, the culture, the markets, but especially the contact with the local people.

We spent hours and hours questioning and discussing on all kind of details like: schooling, work, gender and traditional roles of women within the family, problems faced by women, health, tourism etc.

We were lucky to visit the Baka pygmies in the Dja Reserve, the traditional chefferies in the country of the Bamileké, the Kom people in Boyo etc. It was also interesting to visit projects, not only the ones in Boyo but also in other parts of the country.

To finish we spend some lovely days in Kribi (Hotel Ilomba) ad we enjoyed the wild beach, the great food and long walks.

In few words: a journey we will not forget easily. We like to thank Carol for all the tips and the organization of the same.

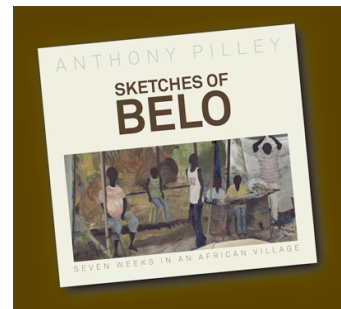
We enclose a picture of our group at the starting point of the Belo walk.

Eduardo & Maite, José Antonio & Esther, Manuel Pablo, Maria & Rosa



Sketches of Belo – last ones

There are still some books left for sale. In the summer of 2007, Anthony Pilley stayed in Belo for 7 weeks. During his stay he painted what he saw and wrote a book with sketches with the curiosities of the place. The result is this lovely book, full of illustrations and funny texts in English and Spanish. Price: EUR 25,- + sending costs . The full amount will go to the projects. Order it at: info@kirabo.eu



House of the Sun

During our last visit in May we were able to buy a huge plot of land for a very interesting price.

The plans are drawn and cleaning of the plot and laying foundations has started. The idea is to have a modern house from the inside however all should look typical Kom style on the outside.

The plan is also to include several rooms for future volunteers who like to assist and take care / play with the children.

Berudep has worked out a plan for sustainability as Kirabo will only pay for the construction and the first 2 years of all running costs. We are working on fine tuning it

Greetings from BOYO

Hi, we are Dan & David. We are writing from Fundong. We have been here for more than one month and a half out of the total two and a half months our stay will last.

We have had very good experiences and we are now used to the life in Fundong. We are working on several projects. In the first place, we have taken the reins of the project of goats for orphans that Kirabo started two years ago. We want to develop this project with the funds we obtained via "Direct Cameroon", a solidarity concert we organized in Badajoz last May.

Likewise, we are working with the After-School Program in Fundong. The other two offices of Berudep already have

their After-School Project to give schooling support to children (orphans) who need it. We wish to thank the two sponsors who have offered to collaborate with the project by subsidizing two teachers to be able to form two groups of about 20 orphans each.

We are also trying to start a project which consists of training groups of disadvantaged widows in how to make soap so that they can have a sustainable way of obtaining an income.

As to our daily life, we are going to share with you some of our most funny experiences:

Time here is really relative (something positive once you have

got used to it). They may tell you that they will pick you up early in the morning and they will come at 5 in the afternoon, smiling and in no hurry at all, not even thinking this is strange. Buses don't have a timetable either (it only leaves once it is full). The name they have tells you everything: "Patience Express" although it has nothing to do with expresses; a trip of 280 kms took more than 10 hours!! No one can tell you a departure time and even less, an arrival time; however everyone knows the price.

Taking a taxi is also an extraordinary experience. At the beginning it may seem surprising; you wait at the stop for the taxi to be full, and we mean

literally full; 4 in the back and another 4 in the front. Sometimes it seems impossible for someone else to get in but by pushing a bit, luggage and suitcases, some free space is always found. It is also possible that people go in the trunk (especially after 6pm when the police go home and there is no control). That means that a total of 10/11 persons get in an old car. Probably a Guinness Record: if Cameroon sets out to it, they will be unbeatable! In the meantime we take it easy and have fun thanks to these experiences.

You can follow our experiences in www.larutadelmango.com

Greetings, Dan&David



Atlantic Coast

The South province is, together with the Extreme North the most visited area by domestic and international tourists (especially Kribi).

The Atlantic coast offers kilometric long sand beaches and the hinterland is covered by large jungle areas. This part of the country is originally home to the Badgeli pygmies, ethnic group that still conserves a life style based on hunting and harvesting. They have to deal with many structural problems due to the general "modernization" of the area and the wood industry. Presently the Badgeli are few, surpassed by various Bantú speaking groups, like the "bakolo", "mabea", "batanga", "bulu" and "fang" (the latter two in the jungle areas).

Apart from Kribi, being a touristic spot and the nearby oil exploitations, this is an extreme poor area whose inhabitants are struggling, day after day, to survive, to feed their kids, send them to school and have an occupation in order to generate some income. Girls and women are especially poor and often lack any kind of education. Fifinda (the main chefferie of the Lokoundje area) is setting up an educative training center for this collective. The idea is to train youngsters in general hygiene and health issues, teach them how to read and write and for the more advanced ones there will be vocational teaching in jobs like: sewster, cook, accountant etc. Micro-credits will be available for the entrepreneurial ones. We are discussing possibilities of cooperation with the board.

In this area French is the language. It's only a 2,5 hours bus trip from Douala.

We are a registered independent NGO.

Inscription in the National Register of NGO's in Madrid, Spain: Grupo: 1 , Sección: 1, Número Nacional: 591019, date July 11th 2008

The Board

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