



BELO RURAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION - Sponsor an Orphan Project -

PO Box 10, Belo 3 Corners
Boyo Division, North West Region, Cameroon

Email: sponsorphan@berudep.org

Website: www.berudep.org or sponsor-an-orphan.blogspot.com

Registration number: NW/GP/29/97/1373

PROJECT NEWSLETTER 18th Edition - December 2010

Dear Friends,

The New Year is coming soon and it's time for a last newsletter in this year:

CHRISTMAS PARTY

As per tradition of the Sponsor an Orphan Project, we have organized a Christmas Party for all the children and it was held on Thursday, December 23rd. It was a great success and the After School building was filled with laughter, chatter and a lot of smiling faces.



We played a lot of games, some famous ones like Musical chairs and Musical statues and some new ones like racing with spoons in their mouths with a plastic ball balanced on top. Then there were lollipop races and races involving balancing rice corns on chopsticks. Even the older ones were really challenged this time which was fun to watch.



As you are probably aware, I have asked for Christmas cards to be sent to the children and up to this point, we have received 116 cards and more are on their way! Thanks to everyone who has been part of this little project! These cards (and many of them with photos of the sponsors attached) mean so much to the children. It's a sign that someone is thinking about them, that someone cares and this is a feeling they probably don't get too often here. Thank you therefore so much for making this day special for them!



The cards were not the only surprise the children had this year. An even bigger surprise came in a form of a huge (and heavy) parcel from Gunter, the sponsor of Joy. His NGO "Toys Company" which is based in Germany collects toys to give to those who cannot afford them. He decided this year to send some of these donations to Cameroon and to be exact we received over 300 items for example plastic balls, puzzles, toy trucks, pick-up sticks and an army of stuffed animals. We distributed these items mainly to the sponsored and profiled children of our Sponsor an Orphan Project, but also to other children who regularly attend afterschool. You should have seen their faces! Some of them

were so "shocked" by receiving presents (for many of them probably the first time ever) that they couldn't even smile in the beginning. Only when they were back on their seats you saw the amazement in their faces of what just happened to them. It was nice to see that even our older children who always like to appear strong and cool, couldn't keep a straight face anymore. Presents are not something we want to make a rule in this project, but I believe that also all the



children understood that this was a special moment which cannot be taken for granted.



Finally, there is no party in Cameroon without food and of course, also this time we made sure that the kids didn't go home on an empty stomach. This year, we had rice with vegetables and fried fish as well as some more vitamins in the form of oranges. A big thank you goes to Amelita Norona, VSO volunteer of BERUDEP, who gave a

contribution of 20'000CFA towards this feast.

NEWLY SPONSORED



In October Carol from Kirabo, our partner organization in Spain, visited Belo and she brought guests with her. Amongst them was Ioana from Romania who decided spontaneously to take up a sponsorship for Basil, the brother of Francisca. Basil is 16 years old and lives with his aunt. Last year, he was not able to attend school due to the lack of finances and he helped out working on the farm. Basil is currently attending class 6 of primary school and we thank Ioana for becoming part of his life.

WORLD AIDS DAY – 1st of December

Also this year, "Project Hope", an NGO which specializes in HIV and AIDS issues, provided free HIV-tests for everyone. This year, it was unfortunately not possible for them to come to Belo, however we simply went to them. They are located in Njinikom Hospital which is 30 minutes from Belo by car.

As all of the sponsored children were already tested, Velma and myself took only the older children in Belo as well as all those children who we have profiled, but don't have sponsors yet. Due to extension of the orphan programme to Njinikom, we had quite a few of them and many of them even turned up with family and friends.

In the end, we got 37 children tested and it was a quick test. A simple drop of blood from the finger was sufficient to give an immediate result. Of course, some of the children weren't too happy about the needle that pricked their fingers and we had a couple of tears, but in the end the joy was so much the better when we found out that everyone tested negative. A great day to remember for our project!



HILARY IN BAFUT



Hilary is part of our programme since April 2008. Hilary is blind and therefore was enrolled in the Blind and Deaf School of Belo. Unfortunately, he didn't make the progress there which we have hoped for. Partly, this was due to the fact that he is not only blind, but also mentally handicapped. Furthermore, we couldn't find bike drivers who were willing to commit picking-up Hilary everyday from home to bring him to school and back home. As a result he didn't go to school anymore and sat in front of his house all day long without that anyone that could teach him anything.

The goal of the Sponsor an Orphan Project is not to simply provide things like food or clothes, but to provide education so that these children actually have a chance in their future life. Especially, for blind or deaf people it's even more important to learn to be self-sufficient to be able to take care of themselves and their families later when they are too old to be part of this project.

Amanda, a volunteer who worked with Hilary, therefore investigated in the possibilities of a boarding school for Hilary where he could be taken care of 24/7. In May, John Paul and I visited SAJOCA (St Joseph Children and Adult home) in Bafut and we spoke with teachers and looked at the facilities. We liked it a lot and since September, Hilary is living and going to school there. John Paul and Perpetua, one of our older girls, picked him up last weekend for the Christmas vacation and Hilary has changed a lot! He is now much more self-dependent, can go to places alone, can wash clothes and so on and so on. All this wasn't possible before and Hilary also seems to notice this different. He is happier

than ever before and his smile proves that we took the right decision. Sometimes you have to do something difficult, like taking someone out of his normal environment and away from this family to do something good. We all hope and wish for Hilary that this improvement curve will continue and Hilary is soon ready for the challenges of school and learning basic writing, reading as well as talking basic English.

WANTED!

Sponsors

The Sponsor an Orphan Project is urgently seeking funds to pay the salary of two part-time teachers for the After School Education Programme. Because of lack of support at home, the orphans often struggle to pass their exams and performing well at school. Therefore, we would like to hire a part-time teacher for children attending primary school and one teacher for children attending secondary school. To be able to hire these two teachers, we must be able to raise 550 Euros in total. This amount will cover the salary for both teachers for the entire year of 2011.

We have some children that are in urgent need of a sponsor. If you have a friend, relative, colleague or neighbor who might be interested in joining our project, please contact us at sponsorphan@berudep.org.



Jupiter is 8 years old and currently lives with his grandparents. Jupiter's father died in 2003 from illness. Jupiter's mother left him when he was just a baby. Jupiter is currently in class 3 and is very smart but his grandparents struggle to keep him in school as they survive on the grandfather's meagre pension.

Fanuel is 10 years old and is currently attending Primary 4. His mother died in 2000, shortly after Fanuel was born. His father died in 2002. He is currently living at a friend of his mothers. He has been part of our programme since June 2007 however we need a new sponsor now.



Betuel is 10 years old and he lives with his mother and other relatives. He has a serious skin disease and his family is financially not able to fund Betuel's treatment or the ear operation that he requires. Betuel was not allowed to attend school last year. After we got him a doctor's certificate that confirmed his disease is not contagious, he is now allowed to attend class 2 of primary school.

Furthermore, we are urgently looking for donors for the **project support fund**. The support fund helps us to run the program and pays for the admin costs, equipment for the office or the afterschool, electricity or other urgent needs that may arise. These funds ensure that the project will continue to run in an effective manner in order to serve the underprivileged in the Belo community. If you would like to send a one-time or monthly donation, please contact us. We appreciate every donation, no matter how small it is!

Volunteers

We are also looking for volunteers who are willing to devote their time and energy to spend some time volunteering in Cameroon. We are looking for people who can help out in the following areas:

- Volunteer Field Worker
- Project Supervisor (minimum of 6 months required, preferably 1 year or more)
- Online volunteers (fundraising, grant writing, website management)

If you are interested or know anyone who is interested, please contact us for further information.

PLANS FOR 2011

- To get birth certificates (with correct dates) for all children in the programme
 - To provide everyone with all childhood vaccinations as well as the yellow fever vaccination
 - To increase the number of sponsors in order to provide our services also in the Njinikom area
 - To create new structure for the After School Education Programme in Belo and if possible, to hire a teacher for the secondary school students
 - To finish the construction of the toilets, wash basin and fence at the After School building
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VOLUNTEERS COMINGS & GOINGS

Eike, sponsor of Christabelle and returning volunteer (for the 4th time!) has arrived in Belo beginning of December and she will volunteer for 2 months as a nurse for BERUDEP. Fortunately, she has offered to help out with our project as well. She already (re-)started an initiative to check the weight and height development of all children. She used this chance to also check the feet for jiggers and Christabelle was the first one who had one removed. Not sure, if little Christabelle was happy in these minutes that her sponsor came visiting her, but I am sure she got over this very quickly and got back the big smile we are used to from her. Eike also agreed to do a refresher teeth brushing training in January for the children as most of them don't know or have forgotten the proper techniques of keeping their teeth in perfect shape. Thank you Eike for doing all this besides your actual job!

"Hi, I am Kosaku. I was a volunteer from Japan for BERUDEP for 1 year and I returned my country in September. I was the only Asian (apart from VSO volunteers), and the youngest, among long-term volunteer. This was very tough for me and I am proud of myself having completed my mission. Moreover I was surprised that I didn't fall down and made myself absent from my work. I think this attributes to my wonderful cook Bridget. Thank you very much. For orphan project, I taught in ASEP quite a lot. Mainly, I taught maths to secondary school students. The teaching was interesting and exciting, however, it was very challenging and frustrating at the same time. But I learned a lot.

I am only 22 years old and still university student now. So I have many choices in front of me. I haven't decided which choice to take. But I am confident that my experience will help in the future in some ways. Thank you to all the people I met and helped me. Kosaku Hida"

In the name of BERUDEP and all children of the Sponsor an Orphan Project, I would like to wish you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Your sincerely,



Anita Friedrich
Project Supervisor

To find out more about BERUDEP please visit www.berudep.org

To find out more about the Sponsor an Orphan Project visit sponsor-an-orphan.blogspot.com

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