



142 North 17th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103

February 16, 2014

Dear Sponsors,

It was a pleasure to have spent time in Cameroon this past January with the majority of the children sponsored by each of you! Raphia Noumbissi was in Fouban from December 31- January 22. Patty Hewson, Melissa Hewson and Emilie Wlodaver were there from January 6-18. We wanted to write and tell you about the program overall and let you in on some of our joys and trials in this recent attempt to improve the well being of our children in Fouban.



As some of you may already know, our visit this past January was fueled by the fact that two of our HIV positive children who were on HIV medications died over the past 6 months. This along with the knowledge of low CD4 counts on some of our other children through a special program that was available this past July in Fouban, made it especially urgent that we plan some type of intervention to prevent needless death and illness in some of the other HIV positive children in the program if at all possible. We

also wanted to oversee construction of the roof of the Community Day Center that did get completed while we were there.

On January 6th Raphia met with the Caregiver's Group who have been meeting monthly over the past year. During that visit the functioning of the group was discussed and some changes were made to make them more effective as a group to monitor the health, education, and general well being of each of the children entrusted into their care. We also provided a day of health education to the group discussing topics which were pertinent to their needs such as headaches, arthritis, and diabetes. Some of our donated medications, vitamins and eyeglasses were distributed to this group.

On January 11th we held a Fun Day for all of the orphans. The day included craft projects, teaching some of the girls how to use a rainbow loom, played games with the parachute – all fun -- and while at it applied fluoride to each of the children's teeth to help prevent decay. In return, the staff and children put on a talent show for the SHAHICA team and their caretakers that included speeches, songs, and a fashion show. Recorded below is the introductory speech given prior to the show by Arouna, one of the older boys in the program:

Dear Parents, Dear members of Shahica, Ladies and Gentlemen,

You are welcome by the children of Shahica and Happy New Year to you all. We are very happy to welcome you again and to see you among us. The year 2013 was not so good for us because we lost two of our people, that is Abida and Nji Mohammed. So this made us to be sad and we would say may their soul remain in perfect peace.

I will like to say furthermore that I am so happy to see most of you among us and I wish to make you understand that I will like to see success and joy in the eyes of most of all of you sitting beside me. So due to this event I will like to say that most of the children sitting here are unhappy of their present situation but they will present.

Not to say more of what you all know, I will like to make us know that me in particular and all of us in general are very reluctant to remedy the situation all over the world but we try our best to do so.

So dear parents, friends, I will like to say may the soul of those who left us Abida and Nji Mohamed rest in peace and may the Almighty give long life to those sitting here like Mama Raphia, Patricia, Emily, Melissa and the rest and also a long live to Shahica.

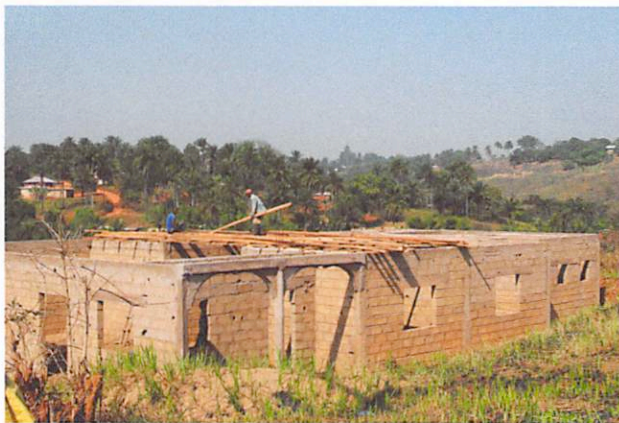
The day ended with the children receiving pencil boxes so lovingly put together for each child by Narberth Presbyterian Church. Each was personalized and had a hand written letter inside of it. The caretakers group also brought presents for each child and many of our American sponsors also sent a gift to their sponsored child. It was very much like Christmas!

We were able to do some home visits and succeeded in getting one of the orphans onto the second line of HIV medications which is available at no cost from the government. This process took a total of three trips to Baffousam (a two hour trip one way) for the mother and child (the younger sister of one of the orphans who died recently.)

The other area of major progress was with Sodetou one of our orphans who is a congenital dwarf with a severe scoliosis. She has been losing function and feeling in her lower legs. Her American sponsor raised enough money for her to have corrective surgery in Cameroon. After pursuing this option through two different facilities, it became apparent that her condition is not correctible through the surgical techniques currently available in Cameroon. In the process we were able to collect the necessary information to continue pursuing help for her in Philadelphia. In the meantime, we used some of the funds raised to purchase a wheel chair for her which will increase her ability to function temporarily. We plan to apply to Shriner's International surgical program in Philadelphia to see if she might qualify for surgery here. We will keep you apprised of our progress!



We also wanted to include some pictures of the progress of the Community Day Center as we watched the roof growing each day that we were there. It was an exciting sight!



We would like to thank each of you who have continued to support the educational costs for your orphan and those of you who have contributed toward the building of the Community Day Center. We wish that we could have beamed each one of you to Fouban for this one day so that you could have personally interacted with your sponsored child and been able to join in the fun. Perhaps next time!

Sincerely,

Raphia and Patty on behalf of SHAHICA