Green orphanages

Project description, background and objectives

# Project background

## Vulnerable children in Cameroon

## *Although human development figures for Cameroon show a brighter face than those for most other African nations, many challenges still remain. Rural areas are marked by food insecurity and thousands of children from marginalized families remain without access to education. Women and children who live in rural areas are particularly hit by high levels of poverty in Cameroon (SOS Children Villages).*

## Children are the first victims of poverty in the rural areas of Cameroon: malnutrition, child labour, child trafficking, lower school enrolment rates, sexual abuse and physical punishment are frequent.

## On the other hand, the fertility rate in Cameroon is fairly high, with an average of 4.17 children per woman. In addition to this, around 54,000 children aged between 0 and 14 are living with HIV. The HIV/AIDS pandemic remains one of Cameroons most striking public health concerns. The overall prevalence rate is high at 5.3 per cent. Nearly 340,000 have lost parental care as a result of HIV/AIDS.

## Environmental education

Green Cameroon’s focus lays on environmental protection, conservation and community development. This is achieved through sensitization, education and capacity building projects. At Green Cameroon, we strongly believe that citizens possessing the right information and the right tools can be important actors of change. That is why an important part of our projects are education and sensitization campaigns and programs. Today’s children are tomorrow’s leaders. And we want them to be able to live in a healthy and stable environment, it is their right and it is Cameroon’s future.

One of the focus activities of Green Cameroon in that field area are the environmental clubs.

## Environmental clubs

Green Cameroon has a strong environmental and educational background and is currently running environmental clubs in 5 different schools of Buea. Starting an environmental club is a great way to get youth energized to take care of the Earth and help their communities, while learning about some of the most important issues facing the world in the 21st century.

* An environmental club is formed by a group of children gathering to learn more about the environment in general, environmental issues and local environmental challenges.
* Environmental clubs are part of the official extra curriculum activities for primary and secondary schools recognized by the Cameroonian ministry of education.
* They should meet on a regular basis, preferable weekly, to keep children engaged and active. They are lead by a school teacher or any other adult representative of the school with an educational or professional background in environment, sciences, geography or biology.

## Human right to a healthy environment

Looking at environment under the human right perspective, we can say that there are two basic conceptions of environmental human rights in the current human rights system:

1. The right to a healthy or adequate environment is itself a human right; as seen in both Article 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and Article 11 of the San Salvador Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights.
2. The idea that environmental human rights can be derived from other human rights, usually – the right to life, the right to health, the right to private family life and the right to property (among many others).

# Description and objectives

With this project background, the orphanages are an obvious action area for Green Cameroon and we decided to launch the Green Orphanages project.

## Project description

The idea is to broaden and adapt the concept of the environmental club to orphanages. Conditions of participation for the orphanage would be to have a minimum of 10 children, have a time frame we can fit in and have a personnel member to manage and follow up on the activities.

The environmental club in orphanages would contain less theory and more practical activities compared to the school environmental clubs because of the extra-scholar context and because of the important differences in age and in level of education of the children.

An important benefit of having these clubs in orphanages is that the children are living there. This means more time consuming, long term projects can be held such as: gardening, tree nursery, composting, small farming and agricultural activities and even nature walks. Children will be able to follow up on the activities and see how it evolves. It will also keep them busy outside of the environmental club hours and create a new collective project they can work on together.

The frequency of the environmental clubs would depend of the orphanage’s organization and schedule, but we were thinking at holding an activity every 2 weeks or monthly.

## Mission and objectives

As stated before, the Green Orphanage project is perfectly in line with the general Green Cameroon objectives of environmental protection and community development, as well as Green Cameroon’s focus on education and sensitization.

More specifically, there are the objectives we are targeting:

* Bring new added value to the orphans’ lives by proposing constructive and collective activities
* Provide children with the opportunity to learn more about their surroundings and participate in service projects at the orphanage and in the community;
* Promote environmental awareness and develop social and life skills;
* Increase and promote children’s awareness of environmental issues and give them the ability to make a change or a difference;
* Provide opportunities for children to become directly involved in a variety of projects relating to the environment.
* Offer the children outside activities to allow them a break from their day to day life in the orphanage

## Funds and Material

Green Cameroon is a local NGO with limited financial as well as human resources. All the school activities, clubs and educational programs managed over the past 10 years have been an investment of time, energy, skills and volunteers. We are not looking at financial support or any kind of donations for the implementation of the environmental clubs in the orphanages.

Concerning the material needed, an inventory will be done in every orphanage to see what is existing and what material is at disposal in the orphanage. Activities will be managed based on that and on what Green Cameroon can bring in from its own. Of course fund raising or donation activities can be organized by the orphanage or by Green Cameroon if estimated necessary.

We are currently developing a manual for environmental clubs containing small lesson modules with practical activities and theoretical concepts. With this tool, teachers, orphanage staff members or other education personnel that is interested and engaged can manage environmental club activities themselves without help of experts.

## Orphanages in the pipe

1. **Roots4Kids**

Created and managed by Christel Hooijkaas from The Netherlands and mister Moussa Yaya, Cameroonian and contact person in Buea. Visited orphanage already, met Moussa and also have approval from Christel by email to launch the environmental activities in the orphanage. The proposal is to have the club every 2 weeks for a start and focus the activities on the pig farm and the garden.

**Contact Roots4Kids**
Upper Bokova Village, Buea.
[www.roots4kids.nl](http://www.roots4kids.nl)
+23774084503
+23777570980
christel.hooijkaas@roots4kids.nl
moussayaya799@yahoo.com

1. **Hotpec**

**Contact Hotpec**
Mile 14, Buea.
<http://www.thebarkfoundation.org/>
+441162677576
bark\_foundation@btinternet.com

The most important orphanage of Buea with more than 130 children. An official and well managed orphanage with their own primary and secondary school, as well as agricultural activities. Contacted by mail, no answer yet. Also possibility to get in touch with them through Cornelia, from GIZ or Hilda.

1. **Grace of God Philantropic Foundation Orphanage**

**Contact**
Bonduma gate, Buea.
[www.gragopf.kingdomitservices.com](http://www.gragopf.kingdomitservices.com)
marysumeebane@yahoo.com

Small orphanages with too many children. 28 kids for 1 care mother. Not recognized by the government and no financial support. Although it will not be easy to implement environmental activities here because of the number of children, the difference in age and education and the lack of space, Mary is open to the idea and the kids will be happy to have some new activities.

1. **Mountain kids orphanage**

**Contact Mountain kids**
Babtist Junction in Bokwaongo, Buea.
<http://www.mountain-kids.de/>
Executive Director, Awasum Malcolm
+23775616734. Brmalcolm2001@yahoo.com
Assistant Director, Katharina Pfeifer
+23778991718
pfeiferkatharina@ymail.com

Newly build orphanage in Bokwaongo, not a lot of children yet, but we paid them a visit and they are open to environmental activities, there is also enough green space around the house. Stay in contact to be able to start activities when there will be more children.