

Background of Self Reliance Promoters' NGO

The Self Reliance Promoters' NGO is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation situated in Kumbo, Bui Division, North West Cameroon. Bui Division is one of fifty divisions in Cameroon, covering an estimated land surface of 2300km² and a population of approximately 380,000 inhabitants. It is a rural area with one of the best natural endowments of any region in the national territory, where the main occupation is agriculture and animal husbandry. However, the national development index ranks the area amongst the least developed in the country, with limited infrastructure, a high birth rate, high unemployment, as well as a high level of HIV/AIDS transmission and widespread poverty. This distressing situation prompted the formation of Self Reliance Promoters (SEREP) in 1997, with an aim of addressing the social problems caused by such poverty.

The NGO has been operating under its legalised registration number: E26/CSQB/SCQB/63/243 since 1999. SEREP acts as a union striving to assist in the development of 46 groups. These groups, which are all members of SEREP are situated across the Bui division and vary in their common initiatives, for example; Mbosha Women's Group; Bonker Social Group (a group where all members suffer from HIV/AIDS); and Bongatar Farmer's Group. The overriding purpose of the NGO is to work in partnership with these community groups, in order to promote self reliant activities through local initiatives, reducing poverty and instigating action towards development.

In addition to working towards alleviating the widespread poverty experienced by group members, SEREP also initiated a project of its own. In 1999, SEREP set up a training centre for children aged between 12 and 16. The specific aim of the training centre is to provide education to orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC). Of the 82 current attendees enrolled 47 are considered as OVC. The Training Centre has allowed for OVC to gain access to education within an un-stigmatised environment. SEREP considers the Training Centre as an optimal way by which

these youths can be integrated into society. In addition to providing OVC with necessary education, the centre allows less privileged youths to be identified and brought together for self-help courses.

➤ **Summary of Self Reliance Promoters' main activities.**

Education

We offer free education to orphaned and vulnerable children through the Self Reliance Training Centre (including HIV/AIDS education and psychosocial support), providing these children with an opportunity to be re-integrated into the school system and society thus, leading them towards a brighter future.

Advocacy

SEREP works towards sensitizing the masses, especially women on the importance of education, HIV/AIDS, A significant amount of the NGOs' work concentrates on the integration of less privileged youths into the society through life skills training, creating awareness on various gender issues and women's empowerment. This is done through women groups and Unions in Bui Division.

Development

The NGO is involved in grass-root development projects through local initiatives and self reliant programs e.g. water projects, corn mill projects and community farms warehouses/halls and school projects. We encourage networking activities with different common initiative and women groups.

- Since SEREP began working in the field of development it has ensured the realization of the following projects:
- Construction of the Mah Health Post and provision of medical equipments with support of the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives, Yaounde.
 - Studies for the Kikakilaki Health Post with support of the American Embassy.
 - Self Reliance Corn Mill Project supported by the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives, Yaoundé.

- Junior library for the Vocational Training Centre with the support of Book Aid International, through the British Council.
- Development of “Home industries” in the production of Detergents (Omo), soap and rubbing oil.
- Organization of various workshops on such issues as: financial management, conflict management and gender sensitive participatory approaches. Home industries on the production of Detergents (Omo), Soap and rubbing oil.

Context and justification

The Self Reliance Training Centre was created in 1999 with a priority focus to identify and provide vocational education to orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC). The OVC rate is on the increase in Kumbo and in Bui division in general because HIV/AIDS is highly prevalent. The disease has caused many children to become orphans and vulnerably affected. Many orphans do not have the necessary means to attend secondary school and lack affordable training after primary school, because their parents are no longer alive to support them. Often this situation leads many to seek marriage at an early age, or to look for easy means of helping themselves thus remaining uneducated and dependent. In addition, the harsh conditions that inhabitants within the Bui division have to face in their daily lives (such as; long term illness, a lack of infrastructure, sanitation, and running water) means that the number of children considered as vulnerable is significant. It is this dim but very real situation that stimulated SEREP to take action.

RISE OF THE PROJECT

SEREP identified the need for a training centre that would provide orphans and vulnerable children with a learning structure, which ensures quality education of a practical nature within a non-stigmatised environment. The Self Reliance Training Centre is now in its ninth year and this provides an indication that SEREP is fulfilling one of their core competences; integrating less privileged youths into society. SEREP ensures integration in two ways. Firstly, only a proportion of

students enrolled at the Training Centre are considered as OVC, which avoids the Training Centre from being stigmatised as a centre for the 'poor and needy'. Secondly, students are integrated within society once they graduate as they are given the necessary education to enter employment and compete alongside others. To see this as an indicator the graduates are currently employed in the following institutions:

- Three are employed by Mbve Credit Union and one is currently the manager of Yaoundé Branch,

- Two are employed by the Government and have been integrated this year.

- Two are employed by the NGO are currently helping the orphans also.

Some are now at higher institutions of learning as follows:

- City College High school, Comprehensive High school Bamenda,

- University of Yaounde above all the Blind student who was assisted to master the typewriter

Keys and has just graduated from Buea. Etc and some have become responsible house-wives.

SEREP hereby propose the construction of a permanent premise for the training centre. There are several reasons which explain why this project is a top priority for the NGO.

First and foremost, the construction of a permanent premise would help significantly in improving the financial position of the institution, allowing it to help more people. Since the centre was established in 1999, SEREP have had to pay heavy rental charges with limited means.

The Training Centre provides free education to all students that are identified as OVC and a very small contribution is expected from the other students that make up the total enrolled at the centre. SEREP have had to begin increasing the small participation fee that non-OVC caregivers pay. SEREP are reluctant to increase the fee as the majority of caregivers struggle to pay the minimal fee that already exists.

Constructing a permanent site for the Training Centre would enable the organisation to avoid rental charges and would therefore solve this problem. Secondly, there are no similar training centres/schools that provide for the OVC within Kumbo and the surrounding area and thus, the demand for this type of support is continually increasing. The Training Centre is currently at full capacity and is unable to admit any more students.

The proposed training centre is larger in size compared to the existing premise and would solve this problem. Increasing the capacity of the Training Centre will not only enable more students to gain access to the invaluable support that the centre offers, but will also raise the total contribution made by caregivers of non-OVC children. These funds could then be directed towards other needs, such as the purchase of textbooks and other necessary equipment.

CURRENT PRESSURE IN THIS PROJECT

The present Land Lady who has housed these children for almost 6 years gave a notice for us to quite from the present house before June and to make sure that we look for a different house or manage to construct our own since we already have a plot. We are therefore going to face a lot of difficulty because we would not have another house which has a space that could accommodate them. Even if one is found, we may not be able to pay the rents since we are dealing with such children whose caregivers may not have a means to pay higher participation fee to enable us meet up with the running cost. We are therefore in desperate need of your financial assistance.

BENEFICIARIES

The direct beneficiaries are the students themselves and in particular the OVC. If the project is realised, it is estimated that the Self Reliance Training Centre will be able to enrol 120 students compared to the current 82. Other beneficiaries include the caregivers. The non-OVC caregivers will be relieved from financial tensions

which are currently being produced by increasing fees that are used to cover rental charges.

In addition, the new premise will also provide for the wider community. There are plans to extend the existing programme of HIV/AIDS education which takes place on Friday afternoons at the Training Centre to include other activities. It is hoped that the centre will provide further education opportunities (for example, home industries education) and act as a community meeting point, where seminars can take place on such issues as women's empowerment, financial management and sustainable farming techniques.

Aim of project

To construct a permanent premises for the Self Reliance Training Centre.

Specific objectives of project

- 1) To create a conducive learning atmosphere for orphaned and vulnerable children.
- 2) To reduce financial tension in a struggle to assist these children.
- 3) To increase the capacity of the Self Reliance Training Centre for admission of more students.
- 4) To have a permanent site to be used by SEREP and the wider community for additional programmes (e.g. HIV/AIDS education, women's empowerment programme).
- 5)

Details of the project

➤ Location of the project

The project shall be carried out in Kumbo, the administrative seat for the Bui division. The location map attached (See Appendix I) offers precise details of both the present location of the Centre and the construction site where the initial stages of the development have begun. Entering Kumbo either from Square or from Tobin any enquiry about Self Reliance Promoters NGO and its Training centre can be made to find out the location of both the Head office and the Training Centre.

PROPOSED BUDGET

DESCRIPTION	BUDGET TIME LINE	DONOR	GRANTEE/LC	REMARKS
PHASE 1				
1. Site clearing/Excavation	unskilled labour	/	150,000	completed
2. Construction of foundation	sand	120,000	/	
	stones/gravel	60,000	40,000	bought some
	cement	110,000		
	unskilled labour	/	25,000	trainees
	skilled labour	50,000		owned funds
total phase 1		340,000	215,000	
PHASE 2				
A. Walls construction	Sand	120,000		
	cement blocks	450,000		
	5m iron rods	39,000		
	cement	275,000		
	unskilled labour	/	52,000	own funds
	skilled labour	80,000		
total phase 2A		689,000	52,000	
B. concrete beams	Rods	28,000		
	concrete	25,000		
	timber		44,000	material con
	assorted nails	12,500		
	binding wire	3,500		
	cement	137,500		
	skilled labour	35,000		
	unskilled labour		22,000	community
total phase 2B		241,500	66,000	
total phase 2A + 2B		930,500	118,000	
PHASE 3				
Roofing	zinc	600,000		
	zinc nails	25,000		
	assorted nails	38,500		
	timber		128,000	own funds
	skilled labour	76,000		
	unskilled labour		15,000	P.T.A C
total phase 3		739,500	143,000	
PHASE 4				
Plastering/flooring	sand	180,000		
	cement	302,500		
	skill labour	110,000		

	unskilled labour		30,000	by PTAC
total Phase 4		592,500	30,000	
PHASE 5				
Painting/Fittings	white wash	18,000		
	oil paint	50,000		
	imulsion paint	30,000		
	skilled labour	38,000		
	Locks	42,000		
	window frames	142,500		
	Hinges	8,000		
	Bolts	6,400		
	Door frames	30,000		
	Timbers		10,000	material cont.
	window glasses	12,800		
	shorters	30,000		
	skilled labour	46,000		
total phase 5		453,700	10,000	
GRAND TOTAL		3,056,200	516,000	

Summary

PHASE	DONOR (Amt. in FCFA)	LOCAL CONT. (Amt. in FCFA)
1	340,000	215,000
2A	689,000	52,000
2B	241,500	66,000
3	739,500	143,000
4	592,500	30,000
5	453,700	10,000
Grand total	3,056,200	516,000

Amount to raise – 10% of the grand total

i.e. **305,620FCFA**.

Hence 305,620 added to the above total of local contribution will give **821,620FCFA**

Therefore amount being requested is 2,750,580FCFA

Two million seven hundred and fifty thousand five hundred and eighty francs CFA

ACTIVITY TIME LINE

The below activity time line is presented on indefinite months because as soon as we are assisted, the work will not delay.

Phase 1 2009

Site clearing/excavation	All these are already done			
Remaining work to be done	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4
Construction of foundation	X			
Construction of walls/beams	X			
Phase 2				
Roofing/Plastering		X		
Phase 3				
Painting/Fittings			X	
Official inauguration and start of use				X

WORK ALREADY DONE

Site clearing and all the excavation has been done, 4 trips of stone have been bought.

WORK LEFT TO BE DONE

Once we have funds, the project will start from the construction of the foundation (part of phase 1) through phase 4 above.

The above budget includes labour and transportation costs. Since SEREP NGO began, it has relied on people's goodwill and therefore, is heavily reliant on volunteers within the community. The Training Centre will provide for the entire

community and therefore, many are keen to contribute to the labour costs in order for the project to be realised. Labour is readily available and the community's attachment to the programme was demonstrated when the land for construction was donated and when the excavation and levelling were all carried out by individuals within the community, free of charge.

➤ **CONSTRUCTION INDICATORS**

-All purchases shall be backed by receipts following our internal procurement procedure, (which involves selecting the best estimate from two or three possible suppliers) where requisition shall be made and approved by the project committee.

-Progress reports will be devised with images presenting each stage of development.

-A final report, including all copies of receipts, shall be submitted on completion of the project and an official inauguration of the project will take place.

Donors shall be received at the site to see for themselves the realities and on the spot, to contribute their own advice and encouragement where ever necessary.

Organisation and management of project

SEREP have vast expertise and have acquired much experience in organising and managing projects. Members of the NGO have attended many seminars with a particular focus on capacity building and the handling of finances. Some of these seminars have been organised by Canada-Cameroon Co-Operation and The Integrated Development Foundation. SEREP also have experience working with different sponsors. The NGO has worked closely with The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives and Care Cameroon who have provided funding for SEREP's projects in the past. Being responsible for projects from start to finish –from the initial stage of writing proposals for funding, through to the projects completion and continuous evaluation – has provided SEREP with invaluable knowledge and expertise in project management.

VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT

Currently we have a Spanish volunteer working in the Hardware and Software department of the centre for one year. This department is located in a different apartment because of lack of space in the present rented house. If we are assisted, current volunteers shall help us to manage, monitor, evaluate and submit reports accordingly. However, The Board of Directors shall work together with them.

SEREP is enriching the experience that SEREP already holds. SEREP are therefore confident that their experience will enable them to ensure the efficient and successful construction of the Training Centre.

SUSTAINABILITY

Since the Training Centre was established in 1999, it has progressed steadily without any major, long-term donors, indicating a sign of effective management. The NGO is therefore able to confidently declare that once the construction of the permanent premise is completed, the project will remain sustainable. SEREP will continue to ensure that frequent assessments are undertaken and reports devised in order to evaluate the progress of the Training Centre. In addition, SEREP is researching the possibility of partnership agreements and launching economic projects with the aim of reinvesting any profits into the organization's activities. These partnership agreements will be with organizations from the business and non-profit making sectors, both nationally and internationally, while feasibility studies into several economic projects are progressing in order to bring in income and aid in the sustainability of the organization.

FINAL REMARKS

The construction of the Self Reliance Training Centre is the NGO's top priority project **and the N.G.O has been sustaining the centre since 1999**. The Training Centre has never received funding from any donors except the assistance given by Care Cameroon Global Fund in the form of buying textbooks, uniforms and the payment of participation fees for one year (2005/2006). The NGO has been

working very closely with the community and our common initiative groups, which act as our main stakeholders.

We would hope that having been made aware of the inclusive nature and positive impact of Self Reliance, you would find it within the aims of your organization to help us construct a permanent premise for our training of youths and community development work. Any funding you could provide would greatly assist in improving the prospects of disempowered young people, within, Kumbo and North West Cameroon in general and provide a base for numerous community organisations to co-ordinate their activities.

If you have any queries regarding the proposal please do not hesitate to contact us. We wait for your response and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Managing Director
Directors

Chairman of the Board of

For self Reliance Promoters NGO - Cameroon

CONTACT DETAILS

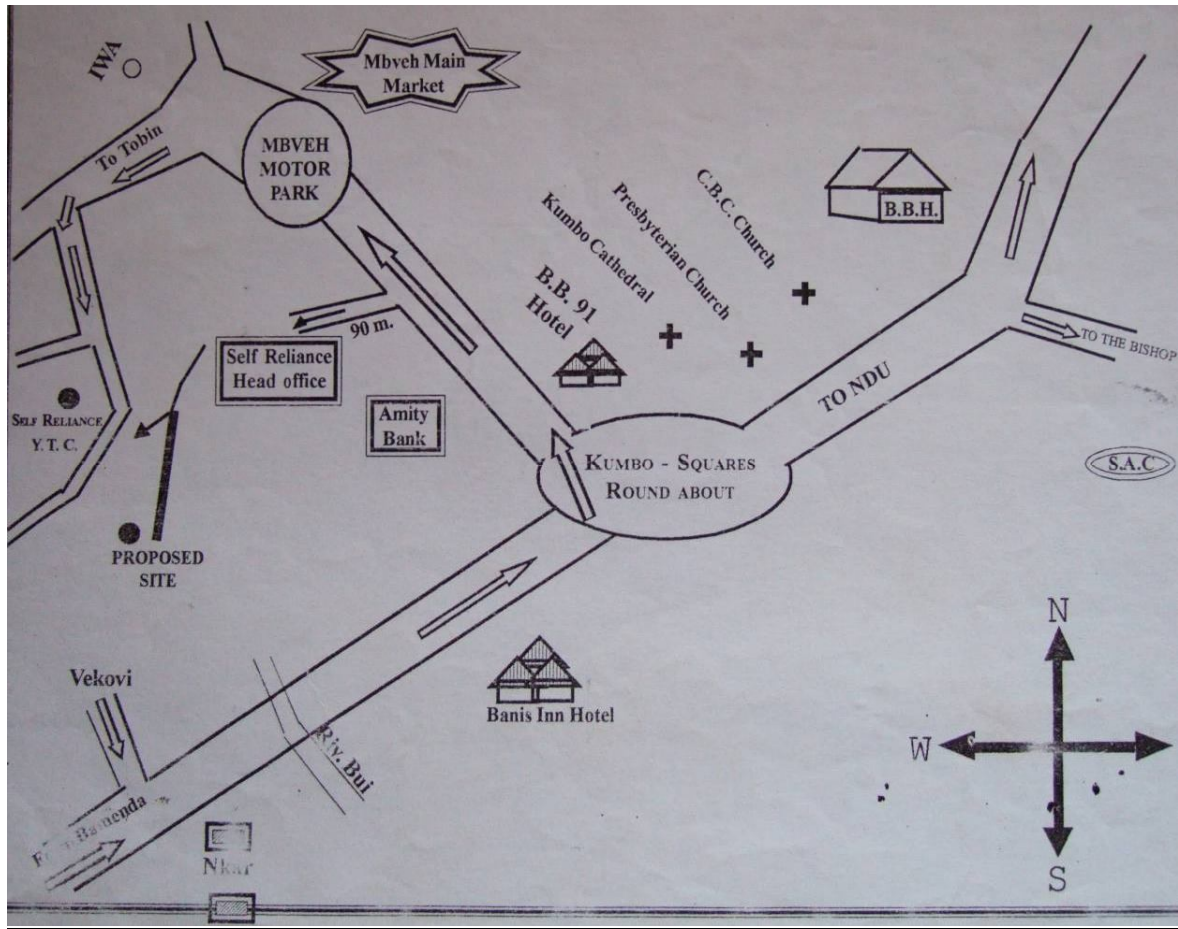
Self Reliance Promoters' NGO,
P.O. Box 27,
Kumbo-Nso,
North West Province,
Cameroon.

Tel: (237)3481465

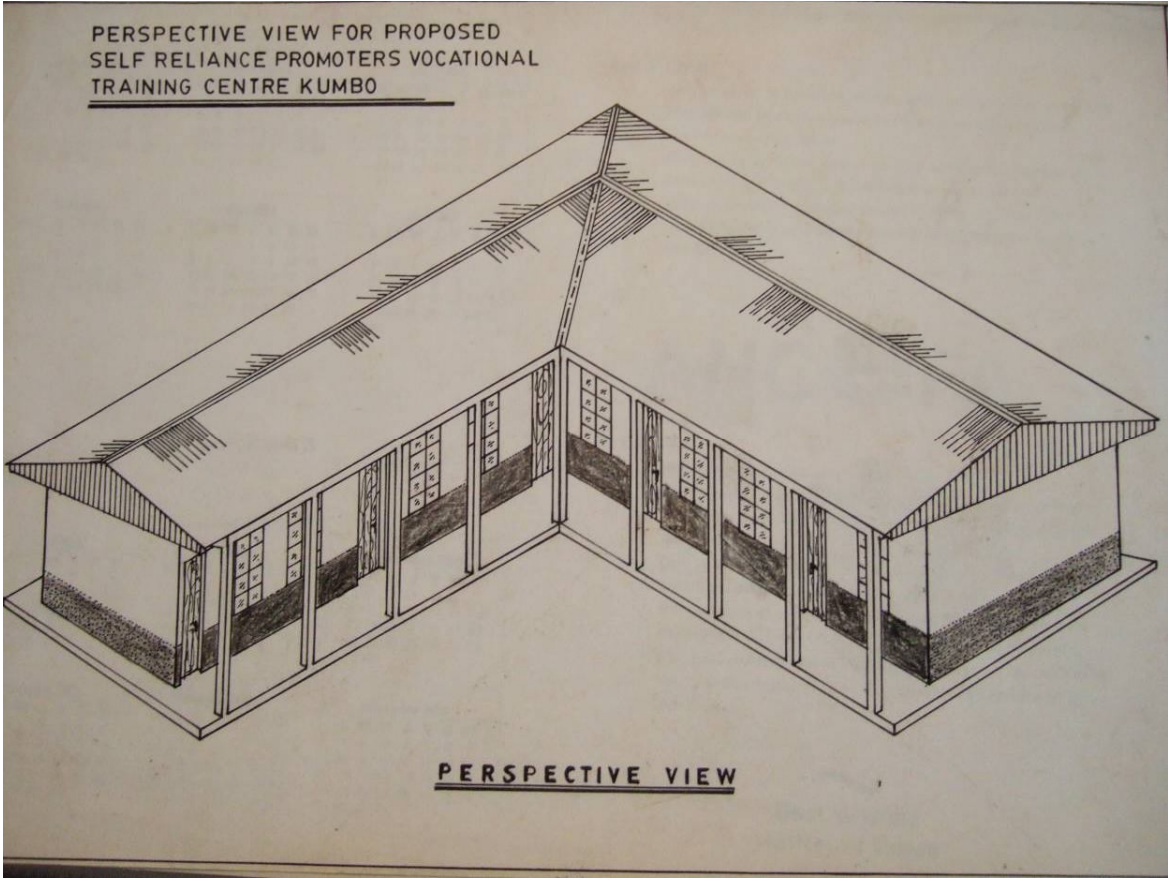
Mobile: (237)7575133

Email: selfreliance@yahoo.com

Appendix I –Location of construction site



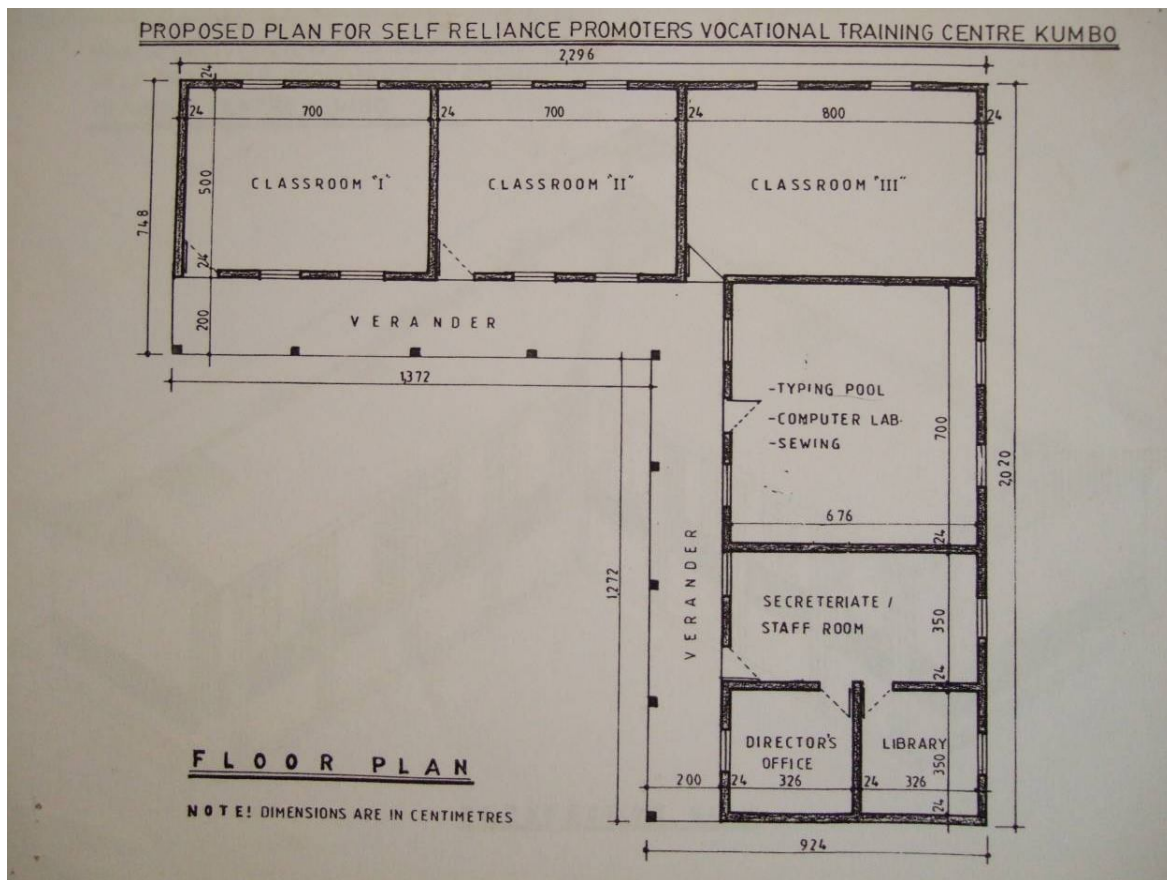
Appendix II –Perspective view for proposed Self Reliance Training Centre



We really want to construct a normal building that is small and suitable for training the less privileged and this can also help the community as a social centre where Developmental meetings can be held, women seminars of the NGO and a wider community will also have access to it in all other programmes that are geared towards improving the living standard.

The quarter in which it is located is also in dear need of such a structure and that is why they are very much in support and as they evidently participated in the excavation and waiting for when the project will continue for them to continue with local labour.

Appendix III –Proposed ground plan for the Self Reliance Training Centre



From the foundation it can be seen that for now we only need a normal structure so as to be training the most orphaned and vulnerable children with a minimum number of 25 in each class. Kindly help us and from here we will be able to sustain our training without incurring any rents. **The current Land lady cannot allow us in her house as from September and we are desperate.**

Appendix IV – Photo of students outside the existing Self Reliance Training Centre.



This was given for training of these children and now we have been asked to look for a different house in September where as we are not able to pay rents when we quit from here. Parents and Care givers are not able to pay reasonable participation fee because of their conditions.

KINDLY HELP US TO HELP THESE CHILDREN TO BECOME RESPONSIBLE FUTURE CITIZENS AND THROUGH OUR MORAL AND HIV/AIDS EDUCATION THEY MAY ESCAPE FROM FALLING VICTIMS OF THE PANDEMIC

Appendix v – Photographs showing students working on the excavation and levelling at the plot



Students doing ground work at the plot



Students doing ground work at the plot



Excavation at the plot



Excavation at the plot



Students preparing the plot for the laying of the Foundation

The students are playing a good role in labor contribution. This is done during labor periods and as need arises.

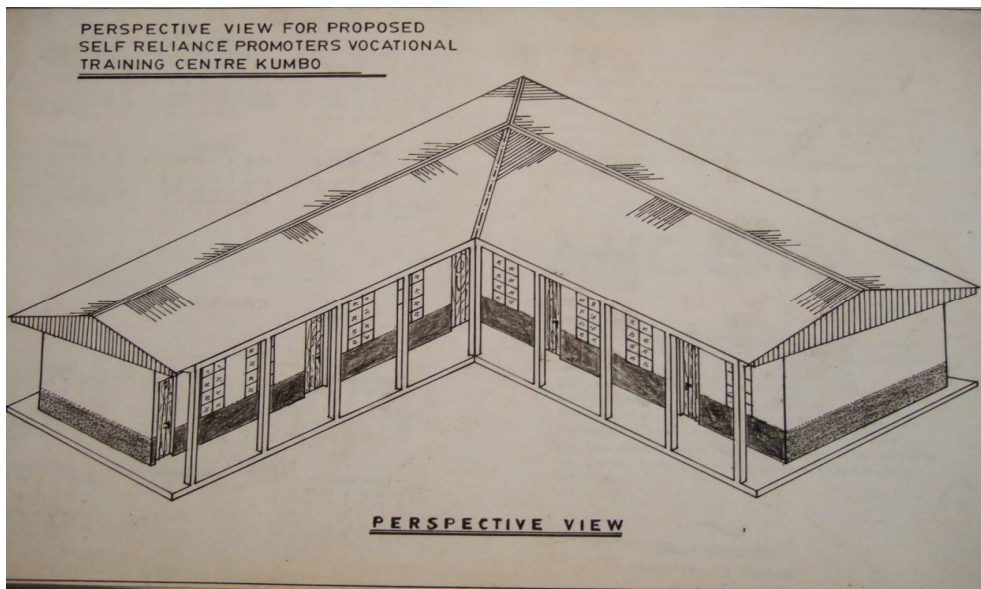
STUDENTS PLAYING A BIG ROLE IN PREPARING THE PLOT



STUDENTS ON THE PLOT



LEVELLING PLOT



PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE PROPOSED STRUCTURE



EXCAVATION



EXCAVATION

