

## **Community Training Center for 45 teenage single mothers in Cameroon**

IRCCA Foundation is found in Kumbo town the head quarters of Bui Division in the Northwest Region of the Republic of Cameroon. It has geographic coordinates of 6° 12' 0" North and 10° 40' 0" East. Kumbo town is home to about one hundred and fifty thousand people and is one of the most naturally endowed regions in Cameroon with rich natural, cultural and human resources. The major economic activity here is Agriculture which takes different forms from crop production to animal rearing. About 85% of the population practice subsistent agriculture and 60% of these are people between the ages of 45 to 60. Per capita income is far too low of the UN standards of \$1.2/person/day.

A large number of this population is made up of young girls between the ages of 15 and 25. About 45% of these young girls have children, some as many as three children. Less than 25% of them have attempted going to secondary school and 10% of them are drop outs.

Many of them are unable to go to school either because the parents are unable to afford to pay school fees or because early pregnancies made it difficult for them to continue with their education. The families here are poor and as a result cannot take care of the needs of these young girls and the undesirable result is that they solicit help from the men who are responsible for putting them in these early pregnancies

The effect of this can seen in the older adult age group where so many of them have children, are unmarried and unable to cater for themselves or take care of their children.

To tackle the long term effects of this we need to put appropriate corrective measures in place now. There is gloom as many of these young girls still do not see this as a problem and pay little attention to efforts made to rescue them.

Putting up this multipurpose agricultural training center will help pave the way for them and prepare them to face challenges with ease.

Having identified that agriculture is the main income earner here and that production cycles of crops cultivated here are too short we have decided to put up an agricultural training center to help these young girls learn sustainable agricultural practices and be able to produce enough to sell and take care of their needs. Besides this they shall also be trained in other non agricultural activities. These will serve as a support to the main income generating agricultural activities. We hope to help many of these pursue their academic careers and get as far as they intended to go.

**They shall be trained in the following areas**

***Crops with short growing cycles and animals with short breeding cycle as follows:***

*Poultry farming (2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> months)*

*Market gardening and horticulture (tomatoes, cabbage, celery etc-3 months)*

*Solanum potato cultivation (3 months)*

*Huckleberry (1 month)*

*Ware maize integrated with broiler poultry farming (6 months-exceptional cases)*

***They shall also be trained in other non agricultural activities such as:***

*Marketing*

*Computer studies*

*Sewing and knitting*

***Academic programs shall include:***

*English language*

*Social science*

*The following programs shall equally be offered to them*

*Counseling*

*Group work*

*Out door skills*

*Women's issues*

*HIV/AIDS*

*Field work*

*Capacity Building etc*

This is a two year program after which period each graduating students shall be given a certificate and an amount of money to start with. Follow up committees shall be created to see to it that this money is put in effective use in the programs chosen by the students.

All trainings shall be evaluated and each candidate's standing taken into serious consideration and decisions taken as to whether they can further their education in regular academic institutions. During the course of this training we shall pay close attention to those who perform exceptionally well and scholarships shall be offered to them to take up studies in regular academic institutions.

Potential Long Term Impact

Problems of rural communities are identical and especially in the area of falling moral of the girl child. In all communities, teenage pregnancy is too rampant and many young girls tend to drop out of school because of these unwanted pregnancies. The building of this center will not only serve the center where it is built but young girls from other communities. We hope to extend the scope of these activities to other regions in the near future.

***"When a woman succeeds, the Entire community is blessed"***