

Education as a Vehicle for Development: Bethel Secondary School, Gourcy, Burkina Faso

Giving Africa Ltd

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Education as a Vehicle for Development in Burkina Faso

Giving Africa

A unique charity whose vision is 'an Africa whose children have the opportunity to create empowered communities and live healthy and prosperous lives.'

Our belief is 'Everyone can learn and make a real difference given the opportunity and supportive conditions. Through quality education, children can develop the skills, values and confidence they require in order to lift themselves, their family and their community out of poverty'.

How: 'Our mission is to improve the quality of and access to education and vocational facilities, to benefit the most impoverished children and communities. We will form strong partnerships, in the UK and Africa, and through the 'power of learning' we will enable and empower people to step forward, lead and make a difference: both in their lives and for their global friends.'

Project

Design, improve and expand the school infrastructure, facilities and curriculum of Bethel Secondary school; creating a child-friendly learning environment for 1100 children.

Location

Gourcy, capital of the Zondoma Province, is in the Northern region of Burkina Faso, West Africa.

Goal

To contribute to the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the local community by providing a safe and flexible environment for children to study, learn and develop a wider range of skills.

Objectives

- To increase the capacity of Bethel school and enable education for an additional 450 students
- To facilitate an improvement in the quality of education through: the creation new child friendly learning environments, the integration of vocational curriculum and resources, and the integration of personal and social education
- To provide the material resources required to improve the quality of education and introduce vocational programs

Case for Action

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the World; it ranks 161 of 169 on the UN's Human Development Index (HDI), and 172 of 173 on the HDI for Education. There are 1.8 million secondary aged children not in secondary education; and according to the World Bank (2010), Burkina Faso has one of the lowest Gross Enrolment Rates in post primary education, in Africa.

Secondary education in the Zondoma province falls below the national average, with only 15.9% of secondary aged children in secondary education. Over the last three years the number of pupils in secondary education has grown between 15% -20 % per annum, through new schools and increased capacity in existing schools.

Last year, Bethel School turned away 100 pupils due to overcapacity; with increased focus on increasing the provision of primary education, by both the international and national governments, the demand for secondary education continues to grow exponentially.

"One of the most important requirements for sustained progress towards better education is an improved learning environment, encompassing school infrastructure, textbook availability, the learning process and the interaction between children and teachers" (UNESCO, 2010)

Each child educated can find employment, or start a business, and lift another 12 people from poverty. Part of a virtual development cycle: improving all aspects of life including health, mortality, environmental sustainability, socio / economic position and equality.

Human Development Index (HDI) HDI for Education	161 of 169 172 of 173
Under 5 mortality rate Average life expectancy	18.1% 53.7
Adult Literacy	29%



Children learning in an AEAD speed school

Intended Results

- Increased access to education
- Increased literacy rates in the Zondoma Province
- Increased quality of learning spaces and resources, to increase student engagement and retention
- Increased vocational skills in the community
- Improved exam results for Bethel School

Beneficiaries: Hundreds of children, in the Zondoma Province, who are trapped in a cycle of extreme poverty and need quality skills based education in order to equip them with life skills.

Partner NGOs

Association Evangelique d'Appui Developpement (AEAD): Our partner NGO in Burkina Faso, who will run and manage the school, already operate a successful education program including:

- 2 kindergartens
- 3 primary schools
- 2 secondary schools
- 1 vocational training school
- 20 speed schools and
- 60 literacy programs

All of these programs embrace both teachers and students from all religions. AEAD's objective is to become the best educational provider in the province; and for this school to improve life by creating and developing best practice through an integrated approach in education, training, and socio-economic development.

Article 25: a London-based, UK-registered international development charity that provides built solutions to global problems. The charity is named after the 25th Article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which describes how adequate shelter, housing and infrastructure are fundamental to our human rights and to meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Article 25 are providing architectural design and construction expertise, and community participation strategies. They will project manage the build to ensure the school is completed to a high quality, reducing costs and providing expertise and training in the field: ensuring the project is sustainable, affordable, well designed and lasting.

Activities:

AEAD: education programs, community development

Giving Africa: resources, funding, awareness, collaboration with relevant partners

Article 25: physical infrastructure, skills-sharing, community participation strategy



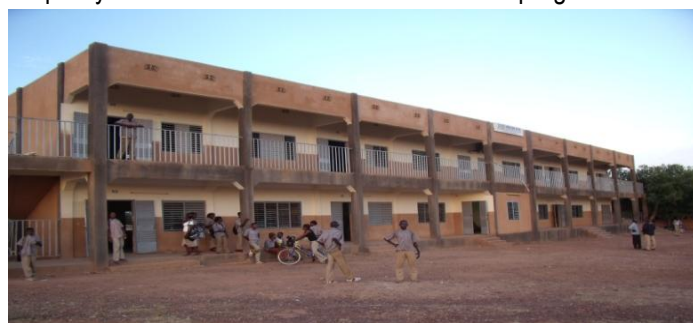
Bethel School football pitch



Potential beneficiaries - primary students in one of the villages



Potential beneficiaries - primary students in one of the villages



Bethel School - existing two storey building

Feasibility Study

Article 25 and Giving Africa spent six days in Gourcy, Burkina Faso carrying out a feasibility study and assessment of the viability of this project. The study comprised of an assessment of the need and financial viability, suitability of the site, the potential for architecture intervention to improve learning conditions, establishment of community needs and priorities, and preliminary recommendations.

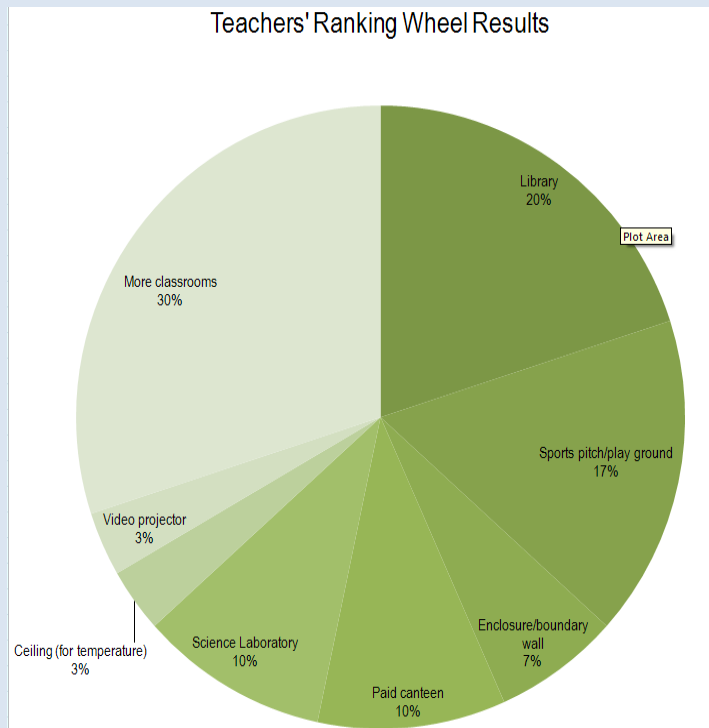
The work included a site survey, assessment of the existing building, soil tests, four community workshops, other school site visits, contractor interviews, visits to material suppliers, and meetings with AEAD, Ministry of Housing and Ministry of Education.

Conclusions: the need for another school is apparent (severe overcrowding, poor learning conditions and increasing demand for secondary school places). The students and community need improved conditions, teaching and learning resources, increased capacity, and the introduction of vocational and personal/social education programs: to equip them with life skills.

The new school design should minimise the use of imported materials, optimise local skills and resources, address performance of the existing school, moderate the harsh classroom environment conditions – creating a sustainable child-friendly learning environment.

Community Workshops

Community participation is a key part of this project and has helped us to develop a design plan that best fits the current and long term needs of the school, whilst ensuring usage and sustainability. The graph below is an example of community priorities, detailing the findings from the teachers workshop.



Workshops were held with teachers, school children, the school management committee and parents.

Design Brief

- Additional 8 classrooms (increasing the capacity to 1100 students), including flexible design facilities to enable vocational training use
- Bore hole/ new well (water provision)
- Library with books, IT and internet provision
- Science laboratory and equipment
- Canteen/ food kiosk and shaded eating area
- First aid clinic/ reception/ security
- Additional 10 toilets
- Increased shaded area for parking additional bicycles
- Improvements to the existing classroom block: ceilings, lighting, shade and noise prevention
- Staff room and wc
- Flexible/ shaded outdoor space for teaching/ studying
- Trees and 'soft definitions' to reinforce the boundary and improve security
- Hard surface playground area
- Sports pitch and equipment
- Showers
- Educational garden



Example of external covered study area

Budget/ Costs

Until the design stage is completed, the costs of the project are unknown. Five years ago, the existing school cost was tendered at £75,000. To replicate the same building today would cost an estimated £130,000.

We are designing and building a more cost effective, child-friendly and sustainable school. We will also be providing significantly more resources and materials in order to give these children a quality education, that will equip them with vocational and life skills.

The budget for designing and building phases one and two is £130,000. More details will be available once the design stage is completed.



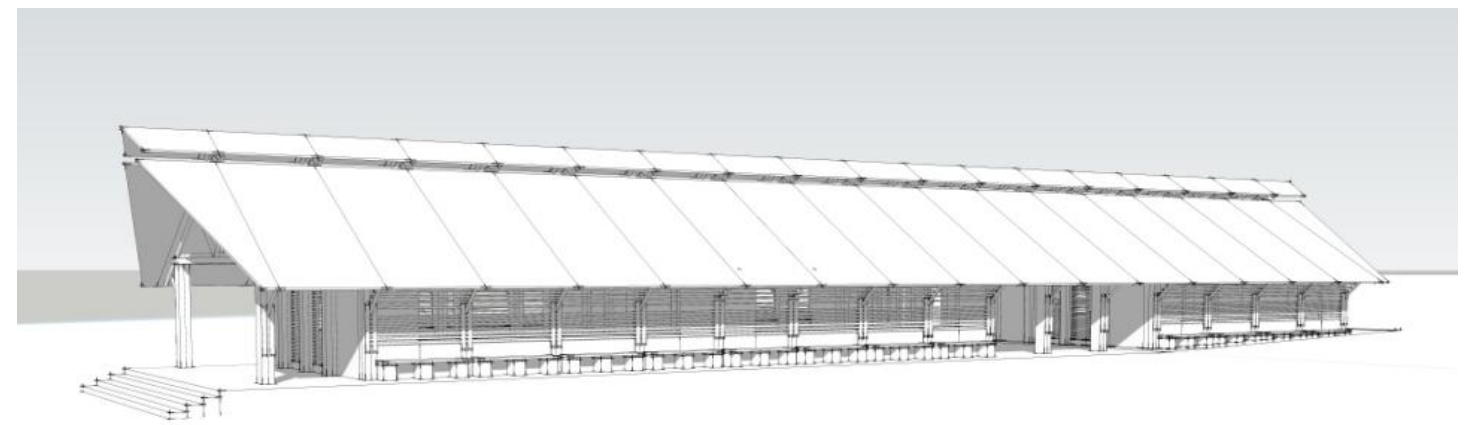
The existing washing facilities



Bicycles in the shade to prevent sun damage



Parents in a community workshop



Education as a Vehicle for Development in Burkina Faso

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

One of our primary objectives is to develop sustainability in the community through this project. We are committed to providing new facilities to meet the community's needs and to gain sustained funding and resources for teachers, materials and maintenance.

Doubling the school's facilities successfully and sustainably will require a staged approach to community participation, fundraising and construction. In order to help facilitate this change we are currently envisaging a phased construction. Phase 1 starting in 2011, Phase 2 in 2012 and Phase 3 in the summer of 2012. This will give the local partner, AEAD, time to recruit teachers, and will give Giving Africa and Article 25 time to raise funds. Additionally, phasing the project in will enable us to include thorough community participation, ensuring we understand and meet the community's needs and increase the value and impact of this project.

The phased approach puts the most urgent priorities first whilst ensuring donor funds are used the most effective way to improve education and break a cycle of poverty.

SUSTAINABILITY

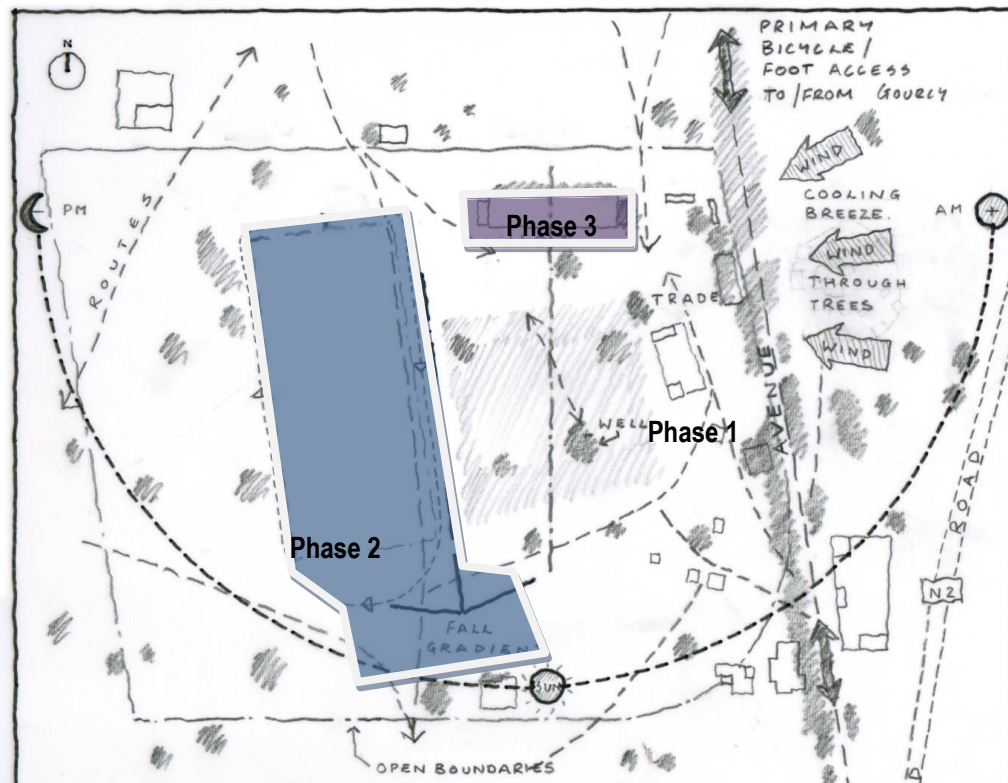
Giving Africa is committed to ensuring the long-term viability of this project. We are working with AEAD to explore income generation programs including: scholarship programs, adult education programs, business enterprise opportunities, and farming/ gardening opportunities.

PHASE 3

- Football pitch
- Multi-purpose play surface & equipment
- Changing facilities
- Garden
- Improvements to the existing school



One of the existing classrooms



Classroom window – letting in minimum light



Bethel School's running track and football pitch

Phase 1

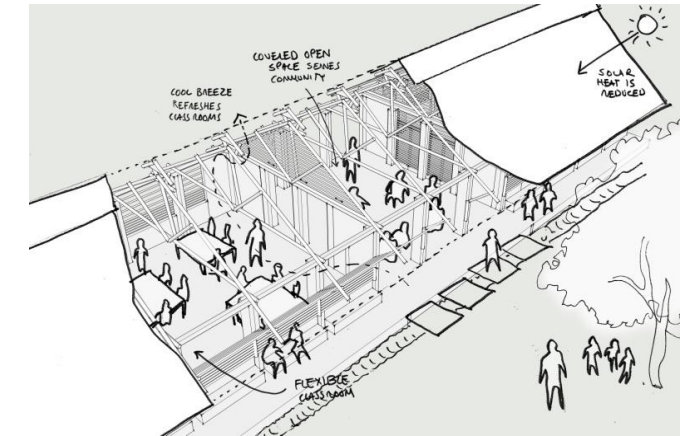
- Four classrooms
- Library facilities
- External covered flexible/vocational teaching spaces
- Science lab basic facilities
- 10 toilets with male/female segregation
- Water supply system
- Reception/ first aid/ security



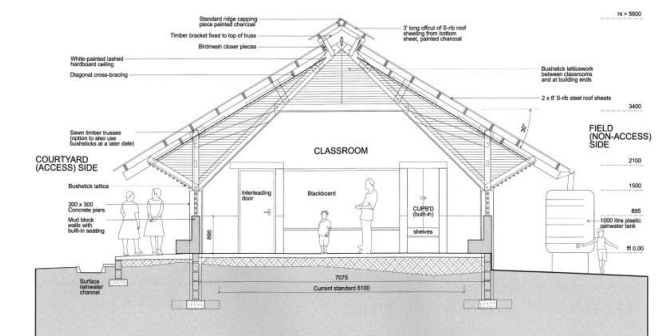
Article 25 School Project in Sierra Leon

PHASE 2

- Four classrooms
- A food kiosk & kitchen
- Sheltered bicycle location
- Landscaping (inc trees and soft boundaries)
- Staffroom & WC



Article 25 School Project in Sierra Leon



Article 25 School Project in Sierra Leon

