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We're nearing the end of our second week here in Cameroon and it's been a busy one! We've covered a lot of miles, travelled through four different cities including Bamenda which we haven't been to for five years now because of the war - and it was such a thrill to return.

Unfortunately things are still tense there, we had to be extremely careful when we went out onto the streets to meet the women on the economic empowerment project. More stories about them and the ones we met in Yaounde will be on our website in the coming weeks.

We were very fortunate to meet Nigel Holmes, the Deputy High Commissioner at the British High Commission and it was a great opportunity to brief them on our partnership and our work with SHUMAS.

They also invited us to the UK trade and investment mission that was being held in Yaounde this week to meet business representatives and partners.

Following that, we got to meet a number of UN agencies and this has been very helpful for us and for SHUMAS. It's been a great week. More news below!

Marianne dictating the newsletter on the go!



A winning formula for 2023

We have continued to meet more and more women who have been benefiting from the Economic Empowerment for Education program, and each of them has impressed us with their determination to succeed, and their courage to face all their many and various problems.

Every woman we have met has made a success of their business, paying for their children's school fees, and they are so delighted to be part of the SHUMAS family.

The success of the programme has led SHUMAS and Building Schools for Africa to agree to seek funding for another 500 women to be included on the project in the coming year. These will be from six priority regions in the country. This will be a comprehensive program that we will develop and share with you soon.



Back to Schools!

We visited a number of schools while we were in Bamenda. They were all church schools because these are generally considered 'safe' and have some protection from the war.

We have funded a science lab at **St Joseph's** secondary school recently. This is proving to be of great benefit to the whole school, and particularly to senior students studying science as they can now participate in the essential practical classes for their A level exams. The school roll has increased considerably as many pupils from other secondary schools, that have forced to close, are now attending.

We also visited **St John's** primary school in the centre of Bamenda. We recently constructed a new toilet block and a borehole providing drinking water for the whole of the primary school. There's now 1400 children at the school including many hundreds of IDPs. Both the headteacher and the sister in charge said what a huge benefit the water has been for the children's health as well as their ability to keep the school clean.



St Paul's is a new primary school, created because of the high demand in this part of the city to provide a safe learning space for the children. They're currently using a converted church, crudely divided into six classrooms with plywood.

There are no ceilings to the classrooms and the noise of children participating in their lessons is deafening.

The school has land outside so we are hoping to provide three classrooms and the new latrine for this primary school in the coming year.

As we were travelling towards Yaounde we stopped off at two schools that we funded in recent years, when we haven't been able to visit Cameroon because of COVID.

Incredible impact



The first was **Kon Yambetta** which was funded by the Hindle family. This school has developed beyond all recognition and has had an enormous impact on the local community.

The number of pupils is increasing and they're looking to employ a few more teachers to cope with the demand. The school, when it was first visited by SHUMAS was just a

thatched hut but it now has three BSFA classrooms, a new latrine and the government has since built an additional two classrooms.

We also funded a borehole at the school because there was no safe source of water on site. The headteacher told us that it's made an enormous difference to the health of the children. Previously, there were a high number of students regularly off sick with stomach pains because of drinking dirty water but since the borehole was drilled almost 18 months ago, there have been no cases of water-borne disease at the school.



Our final stop was at [Government Bilingual High School Ntui](#) in the centre region where we provided three classrooms and a new toilet block at the end of 2020. The number of children at the school has gone up by more than 300 of which 203 are IDPs from the anglophone regions. It has made the school a real cross cultural celebration of children's education!

Thank you so much for all of your continued support and generous donations, we could not do any of this with you.

Andrew, Ian, Judith, Marianne, Nick and Stuart
Trustees



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