



## **Proposal to assist the education of underprivileged children especially victims of socio-political crisis, orphans and school drop-outs in the schools of the Piarist Fathers, Cameroon**

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### **I. Formal information**

**Project title:** Support program for the education of underprivileged children.

**Name of the organization:** Piarist Fathers (Order of the Pious Schools)

**Address of the organization:**

Futru – Nkwen, Mezam Division

P.O Box 520, Bamenda, North West Region, Cameroon

**Project site:** Bamenda

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**Project duration:** 1 year

## **II. About the Piarist Fathers (Order of the Pious Schools)**

We the Piarist Fathers are a Religious Order (Order of the Pious Schools), known in Spanish as, "Orden de las Escuelas Pías", and in Italian "Ordine degli Scuole Pie" (Scolopi). The Order was founded by Saint Joseph Calasanz for the Education of Children and Youth especially the poor. Our mission is therefore to educate most especially the underprivileged of our society. The Piarist Fathers arrived Cameroon in 1987 from Spain (Province of Aragon) and have been very much involved in educational, pastoral and socio-cultural activities. The first Piarist missionaries who arrived Cameroon: Frs. Angel Valenzuela, Fernando Negro and Juan Yzuel with the dream of evangelising the children and youth especially the underprivileged through education.

From January December 2013, the autonomous demarcation of the **PIARIST PROVINCE OF CENTRAL AFRICA** was created comprising four countries: DR Congo, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, with Rev. Fr. Javier Negro Marco Sch.P as first Superior. At the moment, the Piarists of Central Africa are under the leader of Rev. Fr. Evaristus Akem Ndi, Sch.P as Major Superior.

The Province has been blessed with many vocations. Regarding current statistics, the Province counts a total of 110 religious, of which 10 are Europeans and the rest, native, the average age being 36 years. Of the 110 religious, 50 are priests, 3 are deacons, 2 brothers (of solemn vows) and 72 are religious with simple profession, of which 34 are studying philosophy, 23 studying theology and 15 are living and working in active communities. In addition to this, we have 21 novices and 15 Postulants (Prenovices).



## **Statistics**

Number of religious: 110, Number of Priests: 50, Number of deacons: 3, Number of brothers: 2, Number of Juniors (simple professed): 72, Number of Novices: 21, Number of Prenovices (Postulants): 15

### **Initial Formation houses:**

- Pre-Novitiate in Menteh/Cameroon with 10 prenovices and Prenovitiate Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo with 5 prenovices.
- Novitiate in Kumbo/Cameroun, with 21 novices from 5 different countries (Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria).
- Juniorate I in Bamenda/Cameroun, with 45 juniors in philosophy at the Catholic University of Cameroon - Bamenda.
- Juniorate II in Yaoundé/Cameroun, with 19 juniors in theology at the Catholic University of Yaoundé and
- Community experience: 15 Juniors are currently have an experience of our community life as well as our educative ministry in some of our communities. During this moment, they are involved in the education of young persons through classes, pastoral activities as well as socio-cultural actives, helping the underprivileged with the means at their disposal.

### **Religious Communities are 16, distributed as follows<sup>1</sup>**

- 9 in Cameroon
- 4 in Equatorial Guinea
- 1 in Gabon (Libreville) and

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<sup>1</sup>Please find attached the background Province of Central Africa with composition of communities



- 2 in Democratic Republic of Congo, one in Kinshasa created in November 2014 and one in Kikonka created in 2016.

Each religious community is made up with 4 or 5 Piarist religious.

A part from the formation houses whose principal objective is to discern and accompany vocations, the communities are involved in ministerial works ranging from educational works, through pastoral administration to the People of God to socio-cultural activities and assistance to the underprivileged.

Number of Schools: 17

Number of Parishes: 8

Pastoral units: 3

Number of Socio-cultural centres: 10

Centres of assistance of persons with disabilities: 1

Centres for street children: 2

### **III. Project background and Justification**

Education is a fundamental right of every child whether rich or poor. Our holy founder St. Joseph Calasanz went to Rome and dedicated himself to the education of children especially the poor. Following this charism and looking at the environment in which we find ourselves we try to follow his footsteps. Most of our schools are situated in villages and we face this problem of some of the children being unable to pay school fees or buying books and other school needs.

This project will help bring education to every child who wants to study and lack the means. There are a handful of children who are orphans who have no one to care for them, children of single parents where the lone parent faces difficulties in educating the children or better still children who leave with parents that have absolutely no source of income. We have most of this vulnerable children are often very intelligence and lack the



means, by this we are going to valorize their potentials and make them feel life like their fellow brothers and sisters who have the opportunity.

Out of the schools we have in Cameroon most of them are found in the North West Region where the socio-political crises have made education a big problem. There is a big difficulty as students don't have the means of going back to school after paying lump sums to no avail. Children need to be coaxed and aided to go to school again as many of them have lost their parents and guardians in this struggle.

We are always very happy when we are able to make a child find life by making him/her go to school because every child has the right to education regardless of the circumstances.

#### **IV. Problem Statement**

- Most of our streets are often flooded with children because they are unable to go to school. This increases crime wave as many occupy themselves in criminal activities.
- The gap between the rich and the poor is widened as only children of those who can afford go to school while the underprivileged lament and roam around doing nothing
- The province has been having a drop down in the number children who attend schools because there are many of these children who want to be educated but due to no means tend to remain in their homes. Most of the schools have been empty that we even have no choice than closing them.

#### **V. Beneficiaries**

The beneficiaries of this project include;

##### **Direct beneficiaries**

- Underprivileged children
- Victims of the socio-political crisis in the country



### **Indirect beneficiaries**

- Parents or relatives of these underprivileged children as we shall shoulder their yoke.
- The schools as the enrolment is going to increase

### **VI. Goals, objectives & project planned effect**

#### **Goal**

- To help the underprivileged children to have education and to feel the same like other children who are apportuned to.
- To make education a priority fir all children and not a few because it is an inalienable right to every child
- To help the community to grow as no child who is able to go to school will not be left out because of financial difficulty.

#### **Overall objective**

- These children will gain happiness as there are not left out. They will not feel any disparity any longer.
- It will boost the activities of the schools as there will see have an increment in the number

#### **Measures/activities**

- To pay school fees and buy school needs for all the children who are unable.
- To ensure that they have a conducive environment of learning that is ensure their lodging, feeding and to furnish them with all their necessary needs.
- To make a fellow up that no child is kept aside from school because of no means
- Ensure that the education of such cases is at a very low cost

#### **Output**

- The children will grow up to be educated and it will be a benefit to them and the society in which they live. It is said that best gift you can give to a child is education.
- It will help to evangelise our mission and charism which is” *the education of the young especially the poor*”



## **Outcome**

Communities experience development growth in the long-term sustained on the improved intellectual growth in the respective school communities under the Province of the Piarist Fathers

## **Indicator**

- Almost all the underprivileged children will be identified and resgistered in schools in year one of the project.

## **Verifiable indicators**

- Management records of schools
- Progress report cards of these children

## **VII. Financial cost & planning**

- Please find attached the financial and planning cost on the excel sheet

## **VIII. Risk assessment**

The project may face some risk. Some of the children may not perform well in school or may not continue. Some of the children may fake their identity that they are vulnerable. This will waste resources in order to move and verify authentic information about them. Equally follow up in the schools to make sure they do well in academic work.

## **IX. Monitoring & Evaluating the project's planned effect**

The project will be monitored based on the list of these children in the various schools through their progress report cards to ensure that they are doing well in school and some of their pictures. The project coordination unit will ensure monitoring that these children are identified and well followed in the various schools they attend.



## **X. Sustainability**

To sustain the project ideals, the children will be followed from basic to higher education so much so that they can have a stand. Upon completion of the higher level we shall ensure employment for them so that they will serve like a spring board to other underprivileged children which will therefore reduce cost for educating subsequent cases.

Also, a mid-term evaluation will be conducted to assess the general progress of the project. We equally will submit quarterly financial, narrative reports and receipts as a means of verification in order to ensure transparency and effectiveness.

## **XI. Conclusion**

Our schools sustain our charism within the different communities. Our educational priorities are in remote communities, more especially founded on the promotion of the participation of the girl and poor child in education. We however, can't sufficiently attain to this goal if our teachers lack the basic competence. The growth of the community is ensured as many of these educated people will be employed or they will create employment for other people through entrepreneurial skills. Eyes that look are many but those that see are few so education is very important for all.

We look forward to your kind response to our proposal.

Best regards,

Fr. Paulinus Abose Sch.P

Piarist Fathers - Cameroon