

Community Involvement

Since the Project began, it has contributed more than 4.2 billion FCFA (\$6.5 million) to an array of community, health, and environmental initiatives in Chad and Cameroon. Among other things, these funds have:

- Provided seed funding to FEDEC, the independent, not-for-profit foundation described in the previous chapter. The Foundation has been working in support of the Bagyeli/Bakola people, as well as biodiversity protection programs in two new national parks in Cameroon.
- Supported the Project's partnership in the Roll Back Malaria programs in Chad and Cameroon.
- Paid for outreach programs that have taught tens of thousands of people about the dangers of HIV/AIDS and how to prevent this serious disease.
- Funded the building of water wells, classrooms, and clinics.
- Provided support for government vaccination programs to fight polio, river blindness, and other diseases endemic to the Project area.
- Purchased equipment and medicine for clinics and hospitals serving the communities in the Project area.

However, as important as these donations are, they do not tell the entire story of the Project's community involvement. Dozens of Project workers and their families, many of them new to Chad and Cameroon, are volunteering their time and contributing money to special projects that have captured their hearts.



For the past three years, many construction phase workers in southern Chad have been “passing the hat” as they put it. Their personal contributions have been paying the salaries of instructors at a school in the Komé Atan settlement. Employees have also brought schoolbooks and other educational materials to donate to the school as they return from home leave. The original school building was constructed by the residents of the settlement using surplus wood from packing crates used to ship Project equipment to Africa. On the day these pictures were taken, the school was serving over 300 children, including those in a pre-school class in a recently added woven straw structure. Now, the core group of people who are organizing the school support initiative have announced that they have enough funds to construct a new two room school to be built with baked bricks, thanks to the many small donations made by hundreds of Project workers.



Many wives of Project employees in N'Djaména have gathered together to support a number of community organizations. To help raise funds for contributions to a clinic serving a poverty-stricken neighborhood, they make handicrafts (top left) that they sell to the local expatriate community. Some of the women with teaching backgrounds volunteer to teach English classes (top right) at Centre Emanuel. This educational and youth support center serves 1,000 children in various ways, in particular by holding these types of supplemental classes to help the children make the best of their limited school time. Other members of the group have been working with a cooperative of weavers, Cooperative de Tissage Manuel Femin (lower left), to help them market their hand woven bolts of cloth (lower right) and to buy better looms.