

About My Building Project

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Project Location: Joloke, Gedébo, Karluway Statutory District, Maryland County, Liberia.

INTRODUCTION: Brief Description of Liberia Political/Geographical Situation:-

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Liberia, a country sparsely populated, has yet to build or establish schools in places where schools are needed or established up to the time of the 1989 civil crisis. The few schools that were established were owned by the Government of Liberia or a mission. During the bitter and devastating, so-called civil war of Liberia, nearly every school structure in the country was damaged or completely destroyed, making the appalling condition from worst to ridiculous.

Before the senseless crisis, according to our long ageless African tradition, relatives or friends living where there were no schools sent their children to relatives or friends who live in school zones. In some cases it worked but it was a disaster for the little ones who were deprived of their parents to attend school in some faraway town, city or even in another county.

About thirty-six (36) years ago, this place that is now styled and known as Karluway Statutory District in Maryland County, Liberia, some of the tribal groups were parts and parcels of the Karluway Statutory District were an integral parts of the then Eastern Province of Liberia. In that political entity the Government owned schools were about ten in number; some of these existed only on paper.

The prolonged civil war that began on December 24, 1989, devastated everything the Liberian nation and its people ever stood for. Every village, hamlet, or city was destroyed, including our much cherished African tradition, being a brother's keeper because every possible means of accommodation was laid waste by this ugly and senseless, so-called civil war.

Maryland County, located in Southeastern Liberia, runs some sort of school system in what they called their urban areas: Harper City and Pleebo City. Many of the schools are church owned schools. Outside of these areas, Maryland County does not have schools that are run well or managed well.

In Liberia, it is said and known that our system of education is centralized. This is very true as Monrovia, where the Liberian Government is based, remotely runs the show. Government teachers are hired and paid by Monrovia. The whole system is government run except the mission schools, in most cases, pay their own teachers but the Government of Liberia directs the running of the schools.

Project Justification:

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Before and after the destructive civil war, educational facilities were/are scarcely found in places where they merely existed. The masses of the people of Liberia live in the interior where schools are scarcely found or where they do not exist at all. And if they are found there, they are negligibly managed. Joloke and the three other villages for which this project is being proposed have had no school. The only school in the area is about seven long miles away and the means of transportation is nonexistent. Few boys and girls were sent to schools where they served as wards to some relatives or friends. But since this wholesome tradition has been radically eroded by the nonsensical, so-called civil war of Liberia that licensed galloping, rampant illiteracy that has choked the war-torn country. Unless schools are built and managed well where the masses of the people live, illiteracy will continue to eat away the fabrics of our society.

Project Methodology/Description:

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The villagers of Joloke, Baweake, Kablake and Tenzonke are burning with a desire to build an elementary school consisting of nine (9) classrooms as specified in the blueprint., an office and a workroom for the teachers. We intend to use dirt (adobe) blocks for the walls and cement blocks for the foundation. For these two types of building blocks, we need two block making machines.

Villagers input::

The villagers stand ready to do all the work for the construction that will not require special skill, such as laying of blocks, carpentry, etc. In fact, we will be at the disposal of the skilled workers, serving as their hands. We expect, upon our request, the Government of Liberia will pay all the teachers and workers of the school upon operation. We humbly request our goodwill donors to supply us with zinc, planks, timbers, strips, cement, nails, shovels, pick axes, wheel barrows and steel rods and pay the skilled workers.. All these are inclusive in the total cost of the school building. Roughly, according to my lay man's estimate, the cost will be about twenty- five to thirty-five thousand US dollars.

Project Expected Output

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The villagers expect at the completion of the building project their little boys and girls will be able to attend school, something they have long wished for.

What is the Background or Reason for this Project?

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Four villages, Baweake, Joloke, Kablake and Tenzonke are a subsection of the subsection of the vast Grebo ethnic group called GEDEBO. So far I know, there was never a school established here for the education of the taxpayers' children in this section except a one teacher school founded by the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the early 1930s. After about two short years stay, the old great grand mother could not stand the raw primitive village life left for her home in Harper, Cape Palmas, Maryland County, Liberia. This school gave me the first taste of education, making me its beneficiary.

It was Pastor Moses Challaba Jasay (illiterate village pastor) and his villagers who appealed to Reverend William Taylor White, then presiding elder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of the Cape Palmas District to bring education to the village dwellers and their children. Of course, the sudden return of the teacher to Harper did not destroy my desire to acquire education as then it was like the taste of Honey in the Rock. I pursued further and farther. During those long years of my struggle for my quest for education, it was surprising and amazing to me that an illiterate pastor of the Christian Gospel saw the compelling need for a Western education for the children of his pastorate. That I am richly blessed by his deep concern about a better life through education challenged/ challenges me and like him, I am burning with the desire to leave some mark on the sand of time by providing some facility in the direct line of education.

Having acquired some level of education, I have been wondering what can I do to establish a school in that little subsection of the Gedebo country. During the senseless, so-called civil war of Liberia that devastated my country and brought it to complete destruction, I decided to write a story, a true story of my obscure life in the setting of the beginning of my earnest struggle for the acquisition of Western education. It was/is my burning desire that the proceeds from the sale of the copies of the book entitled, The Native Boy, would/will be used for the construction of the school.

The story was published about three years ago. But up to this time, I have yet to gather a substantial amount of money for this project, hence this humble appeal to you men and women of Goodwill, I am humbly requesting you to give me the financial help for the construction of the school, which, eventually, will unchain the youngsters from the rampant illiteracy that haunts my country and its bewildered people. This worthy project of mine shall be managed exclusively by me being physically present on the site. No doubt, my thirty-eight years of teaching and my administrative experience qualify me to direct such a building activity.

This is a community project. As such, all the villagers, including the parents, grand parents and even those families who are not blessed with children, will be totally involved by supplying about fifty (50%) per cent of the required labor for the construction of the school. I am in constant touch with the leaders and elders of the impoverished villagers who are now regrettably and completely convinced that it is only through education their children, including their daughters whom they previously denied education, will live a decent life.

PRAYER: Men and women, boys and girls of goodwill, will you please help me financially or in kind, to do something positive for the education of those village boys and girls who are deadly chained in ignorance, poverty and disease. The fourteen years of a senseless, so-called civil war of that small but Africa's oldest independent state destroyed the country almost beyond repair as a result the impoverished country (Liberia) is now struggling to piece the country together, a task seemingly impossible when outside helping hand is not solicited.

Thank you for your timely consideration.

Sincerely,

William Kaminda Reeves

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