

PROJECT GOAL:

The Teachers Resource Centre project seeks to enhance educational quality in Koinadugu District, Sierra Leone, through locally available and locally appropriate professional development opportunities. It will do so by providing teachers in Koinadugu with a central Teachers Resource Centre (TRC) where educators can access **learning and instructional resources, information technology, teaching instruction, and a community centre** for local education discourse, teacher training, and study. The TRC will be a base for community education, with a focus on developing teacher capacities through library resources, computer/internet training and access, teaching aid development, photocopying, laminating, and small-scale publishing services, and a safe, comfortable, lit space for public meetings and evening study. The TRC will directly benefit approximately 1,740 teachers in charge of 75,500 students in 392 schools.

CAUSE Canada's TRC project will: 1) Improve the quality of teaching in Koinadugu District by increasing access to teaching resources and up-to-date information; and 2) Improve the teacher-to-student ratio in Koinadugu by making teaching jobs in the region better supported and more appealing.

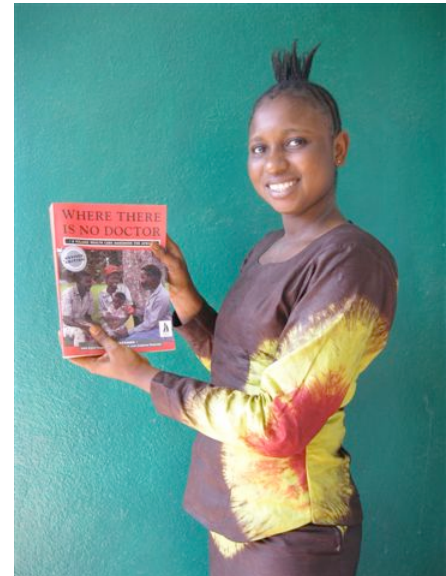
PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Teachers Resource Centre

CAUSE Canada will build a 4-room clay-block building with wooden beams and a tin roof. The building will be painted attractively, meet strict environmental impact requirements, and be located in a central location. In cooperation with Academics for Higher Education and Development (AHED, a Canadian organization whose mission is to support developing countries in building capacity in higher education), CAUSE Canada will partner with Makeni University to provide courses and credentials for local elementary teachers within the catchment area, with the TRC serving as an outpost for Makeni University's education program. Initially, lecturers from Makeni will travel to Kabala (the regional capital of about 20,000 people) for face-to-face instruction. As the Centre can afford new technology, courses could be delivered from a distance.

Library

A key element of the TRC will be a library. The United Nations estimates that Sierra Leone possesses fewer than 3.5 library books for every 1,000 people – 76th out of 81 monitored countries. (In Canada, the number is 222 per 1,000 people – a rank of 44th.) Books are even more rare in Koinadugu District, a major impediment to independent learning for students and professional development for teachers. This project will develop a library of over 500 books. Special emphasis will be on the many culturally relevant books being published in Africa, ranging from fiction to lessons on agriculture, health, sanitation, child development, and much more. A photocopier will also be made available for small-scale publishing of local



authors, to record and promote local knowledge and reading. Available books will increase literacy, independent learning, and a passion for reading.

Computer Technology

Information technology – especially the internet – holds tremendous potential as a pool of current information, professional networking and experience-sharing. Computer and internet access in Sierra Leone, however, is extremely limited. Electricity is available only by individual generators in Koinadugu District and computers are very rare, limited almost entirely to professional offices and a few internet cafes in Kabala. Few teachers have used computers consistently and many not at all. Nonetheless, teachers recognize computer technology as a key to improving their professional qualifications and accessing current information relevant to their classes. Laptop computers with internet capability will give teachers the opportunity to develop their skills and build their knowledge-base for the classroom. The ability to affordably communicate with distant friends and family will also make it easier for trained teachers to keep in touch from Koinadugu District.



Learning Aids & Materials

The TRC will provide all the materials needed to create instructional resources, like topical posters for classrooms. Creative artistic images depicting study subjects – like the water cycle, soil science, language exercises, and math problems – improve information retention and enhance learning. Pens, pencils, markers, scissors, as well as a printer, photocopier, laminator, and workstations will be available for designing and replicating learning aids. The TRC will display examples of posters developed by local educators to be locally relevant and appealing to serve as a guide for others. Resources and materials to develop learning aids will improve the classroom environment, provide locally appropriate learning opportunities, and improve information retention.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Enhanced pedagogical skills for teachers;
- Improved teacher retention and recruitment rates in Koinadugu District;
- Improved classroom environments;
- Improved quality of education in Koinadugu leading to improved academic performance, increased completion rates, and enhanced livelihood opportunities.

BUDGET SUMMARY:

TRC Construction	\$40,000
Library Items	\$3,200
Computer Access Items	\$17,850
Learning Aids & Materials	\$3,700
Teacher Training	\$3,700
Total	\$68,450