



It's all about the kids

Bomi Hills Library Project LIBERIAAFRICA



THE BOMI LIBRARY PROJECT

The people of Bomi County in northern, rural Liberia travel 60 miles to the nearest public library, making the library inaccessible for most community members.

Community libraries are foundational to the intellectual and socio-economic growth of any area of Liberia where half the adult population is illiterate and less than one-third of the children attend secondary school.

ReclaimKids, a US-based non-profit serving the children of Africa, adopts the Bomi Hills Library project as an extension to current orphan housing and schooling projects operating in Bomi Hills. ReclaimKids partners with a Liberian NGO that has 25 years experience managing African humanitarian projects.

LIBERIA LEARNING CHALLENGES

Liberia suffers greatly from 14 years of society-debilitating civil and rebel warfare. The adverse affect of war and the struggle to recovery are evident in every Liberian home and institution. Education has suffered tremendously from interruptions and from building destruction, leaving many Liberian children 3-5 years behind grade level or simply without schooling.



Bomi County children

In Liberia

- 48% of adults are illiterate
- 30% of youth ages 15-24 are illiterate
- Only 10% of secondary aged girls attend secondary school
- The average woman has 6.8 children
- One out of every three primary-aged children does not attend school

Post-war economic and infrastructure challenges cause all Liberians to struggle getting their children into school but rural areas suffer the most. In rural areas, children are often required for domestic work roles which preclude school attendance. Rural counties are profoundly impacted by illiteracy due to the lack of proximity to learning resources – most fundamentally, books. When you walk among the rural Liberian children, even in the schools, you rarely see any books. The children typically have only their handwritten notes copied from a blackboard. You seldom see books in Liberian homes. One rural teacher walked six hours to locate a dictionary for a class assignment. There is a great need and desire for books in rural Liberia.

In this widely illiterate country with low school enrollments, a rural community library may represent the sole window of learning open to an individual and therefore an invaluable gift to the future of this fragile state.



School children's lessons hand-written in notebooks

“Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army.”

Edward Everett

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever has.” - Margaret Mead

HOW YOU CAN HELP

DONATE BOOKS AND RESOURCES – A specific list of desired books will be posted to ReclaimKids.org/BomiLibrary but all books in a good state of repair, written in English are welcome. All donations of books and other resources are tax deductible and much appreciated.

“A Book and a Five Keeps Learning Alive”: This project is designed for groups such as Scouts, youth groups, schools or employers. Each individual or family in the group donates a single, new or gently used book of high literary quality. Inside each book cover, place a \$5 bill or check for costs associated with shipping the books to Liberia, training librarians and setting up catalog and check-out systems. Inside the book cover, the individual or family writes a note to the Bomi Hills Community. Use first names only and tape in a picture if you wish. Email pbyrd@reclaimkids.org for a flyer to distribute to group members specifically describing the “Book and a Five” project.



Other Resources Needed: Donations of books from publishers, libraries, public or private collections are welcome. Reference books and English dictionaries are needed. African literature and reference books make an excellent gift to balance out the bulk of the collection likely to represent Western perspective. Independent study materials are highly beneficial for individuals seeking education outside of a school environment. When donating multiple books, please consider a donation of \$1 per book toward the cost of shipping.



Mail books and resources to: Bomi Hills Library Project, c/o Patricia Byrd, 59247 West Locust Court, Montrose Colorado 81403. Include your name and email address on a separate sheet of paper along with the book if you wish to receive project updates. The books and resources will be organized and shipped to Liberia as a library “pack”. Email pbyrd@reclaimkids.org to receive a gift-in-kind receipt.

GO TO LIBERIA – JOIN A TEAM

Library Set-Up: 4-5 people will go to Liberia to help set up and catalog the books in the library. The trip is currently targeted for spring of 2010; exact date to be determined fall of 2009. ReclaimKids encourages interested youth 17 or older to go on this life-changing trip. Parents and families are welcome as well. Cost of airfare and lodging is about \$3000 per person. Other expenses include visas, shots etc.



Library Building Team: A team is needed to assist the men in the Bomi community to build the library sometime between November of 2009 and April of 2010; an exact date will be determined by summer of 2009. The library will be a 400 square foot cinder block structure built on the campus of this existing Bomi Hills School and available to the community.

Contact pbyrd@reclaimkids.org for further team trip information.

BUILDING FUNDS – Land, building labor, shelves and furniture will be donated by Bomi community residents and organizations. ReclaimKids requires \$7000 for building materials. Donations in any amount are very much appreciated. Make checks payable to ReclaimKids and mail to 3189 Princeton Road, Suite 228, Hamilton, Ohio 45011. Be sure to designate that the funds are for the “Bomi Hills Library”. All gifts are tax deductible. Donors will receive project updates as well as reports on the lives of community members affected by this project.

THE BOMI HILLS LIBRARY PROJECT
is sponsored by

ReclaimKids.org

Thank You!!
From the people of Liberia



Cinder blocks molded on campus premises

Providing HOPE for Africa's Children | Housing Opportunity Protection Education