

International Friends Committee of Bebor Model Nursery/Primary School

2016 Annual Report

May 30, 2017

Referencing the approximately \$1.15 billion of US assistance awarded in grants and contracts as of 2013, “the vast majority of USAID funds awarded for post-quake Haiti relief and development have gone to NGOs and contractors not in Haiti, but from the United States and specifically from inside the Beltway, in Washington, D.C., southern Maryland and northern Virginia.... just 0.7% of USAID awards have gone directly to Haitian businesses or organizations.” – Jake Johnston and Alexander Main, *Breaking Open the Black Box: Increasing Aid Transparency and Accountability in Haiti* (Washington, DC: Center for Economic and Policy Research, April 2013), p. 9.

This is the fourteenth in a series of annual or bi-annual reports delivered by the International Friends Committee of Bebor Model Nursery/Primary School (BMN/PS). Previous annual reports are posted online in the documents and reports section of the school’s <http://www.bebor.org> website.

In terms of numbers, we sent \$16,100 in three separate rounds of funding to our schools in 2016. This is slightly higher than the \$15,750 of funding we sent to our schools in 2015 and it is a bit higher than the \$14,372 of funding we sent the schools on average from 2007 – 2015. By the end of 2016, the International Friends Committee had provided BMN/PS with \$182,350 worth of funding. Including the non-scholarship contributions of our partners at Safe Child Africa (formerly Stepping Stones Nigeria) which funded boreholes for drinking water at the schools in Bane and Bodo brings this figure to \$194,450.

As I have noted previously, our funding numbers go up and go down in any individual year and that is often connected to how fast or timely the schools can both utilize the funds we have provided them and how quickly (or not) they can provide us with documentation that the funds have been used properly. As has always been the case with this project, I want everyone to know that we are not obsessed with numbers or dollars of output. That is how many corporate charities measure what they do. We are not like that. Please don’t get too excited that 2016 was up on 2015 and please don’t worry too much if 2017 is down on 2016. Such fluctuations are inevitable with a micro-scale project like this.

There is, however, one set of numbers that I think is significant and is a reflection both of some of the things we have achieved or accomplished with this project and some of the new directions we have recently taken it. Outside of tuition fee scholarship funding for some of the poorest students, the bulk of the funding we provided to the schools during the first decade or so of this project went toward providing classroom buildings. From 2006-2013, an increasingly large segment of our funding went toward providing boreholes for cleaner drinking water and boys, girls and teachers’ toilets at each of our three schools. We did not start providing funds for our initial pilot health program in Bodo until September 2012. Gradually, over time, we have shifted from providing infrastructure (classroom buildings, boreholes, toilets) that enables the children we serve to attend schools with decent facilities to investing more directly in the children themselves. To date, this has largely been done by expanding our health program to

provide basic immunizations (measles, polio, typhoid, tetanus, yellow fever and Vitamin A supplements) and deworming treatment to all the children at our three schools in Bane, Bodo and Bori + the pupils at St. Patrick's Nursery and Primary School in Bodo. In late 2016, we provided our first funding to develop a pilot nutrition program for 50 of our poorest students in Bodo that we hope to expand to our other schools over time, as we did with our health program. This is a long way of getting around to the numbers that I think really are fascinating: in 2015, approximately 70% of our funding went to physical infrastructure (a roof, a generator, a borehole pump and a security wall) and approximately 30% went to our health program. In 2016, approximately 59% of our funding went to the health program, approximately 31% went to the pilot nutrition program and approximately 10% went to scholarships for the children and a portable generator for our school in Bodo. **Put simply, we transitioned from 70% infrastructure funding in 2015 to 90% health and nutrition funding in 2016.** It's certainly possible that these numbers could change or shift in any given year. We might have to do some infrastructure maintenance or repair at some point in the future. But, I think the general direction of less investment in physical infrastructure and more investment directly in the health and well-being of the children we serve is likely to be the longer-term trend for our work in the rural areas of Rivers State, Nigeria.

In discussing the funds we sent to the schools in 2016, let me break things down into four parts. First, we provided \$9,500 to our health program which now covers the 700+ children at our three schools plus another 500+ children at St. Patrick's Nursery and Primary School (a Catholic school in Bodo which already had its own facilities and infrastructure in place before we extended our health program to their students). After building the security wall at our school in Bane (described in last year's 2014-15 bi-annual report) which addressed the overwhelming health and safety concerns that the Bane mothers had for their children at the school, we were able to extend our deworming program to Bane in March 2016. The 2015-16 academic year was thus the first year that our health programming covered all three of our schools plus St. Patrick's Nursery and Primary School. If you have not already seen it, our friend and supporter Jesse Winter put together a wonderful 6:23 video of our health immunization work in Bodo in 2015. It is posted on the main home page of the school's <http://www.bebor.org> website and it gives you a great idea of the wonderful work the Nigerian doctors and nurses who run this program do.

Second, we provided \$5,000 of funding to launch a pilot nutrition program for 50 of the poorest students at our school in Bodo in the Spring 2017 academic semester. The pilot nutrition program features something called Ogi Soy Plus which was developed by a Nigerian nutritionist named Pastor Ben Inaku. Ogi Soy Plus is based on three main ingredients: crayfish, millet and soybeans (every 1 kilogram of Ogi Soy Plus comprises 0.5 kg of soybeans, 0.3 kg of crayfish and 0.2 kg of millet). All three of these ingredients are available locally and are in widespread use locally. In combination, they provide an incredible array of nutritional benefits. Given shipping costs and the problem of corruption at Nigerian ports of entry, we felt it was imperative to use only locally available ingredients. We also wanted foods that the parents and students would already be familiar with. The pilot nutrition initiative is run by Dr. Nabie Nubari Francis who coordinates our health program. Dr. Nabie and his colleagues are testing and measuring the children participating in the pilot nutrition program in several ways to generate before and after intervention data that will hopefully demonstrate the effectiveness of Ogi Soy Plus in addressing the widespread malnutrition among the children we serve. Our hope is that the data gathered will help us secure additional funding so we can expand this effort to all the children in Bodo and then to the children at our schools in Bane and Bori as we already did with the health program.

The first good photo we received from the nutrition program is pasted below so you can get a sense of what it looks like on the ground:



In this photo, the Ogi Soy Plus is in the bowls or containers. The round thing on the lids is a Scotch egg which is basically a hard-boiled egg with meat around it that is cooked. The Ogi Soy Plus can be delivered in different formats (in powdered form with rice or in a semi-solid form that the Nigerians call “pap” as shown here) and different items like Scotch eggs are used to supplement it during different feedings. Please check our website or Facebook page for additional updates on the progress of the pilot nutrition program as they come in.

Third, we provided \$1,000 in scholarship funding for the poorest students in Bodo. Some of these scholarships will be used by Reverend Moses, the school director, to cover the recipients’ tuition fees. In other cases of greater need, the scholarships might also include school uniforms and school supplies.

Finally, we sent \$600 to purchase a new portable generator for our school in Bodo. To be honest, I am somewhat frustrated that we cannot maintain the generators well enough to get a few more years of life out of them. Yet, we supported this request because it is the generator that powers the school’s borehole which produces safer drinking water for the pupils and teachers and the water that they use to flush the school’s toilets. I was not particularly happy to have to

spend another \$600 on a generator, but \$600 is a very small price to pay to keep the school supplied with water for years to come.

From October 27, 2015 to January 3, 2017 (see previous annual reports for earlier figures), we contributed \$1,640.37 to our partners at Timmy Global Health (see <http://www.timmyglobalhealth.org> for more information) as part of the 7% administrative fee they instituted on all their programs starting in June 2010. Given the numerous services that Timmy provides to us (not the least of which is enabling me not to have to set up my own foundation and report directly to the IRS); I believe this is a fair charge to help ensure their longer-term viability as an organization. Aside from this, Timmy Global Health has also generously provided far more support to our health program than we have contributed to them as administrative fees and we remain extremely grateful for that support and proud to work with them. As noted on many previous occasions, we will continue to do everything we can to ensure that the other 93% of your donations go directly to our schools in Nigeria. I personally absorb a lot of costs like postage to mail thank you letters or registering the bebor.org domain name or having our website hosted and our local Nigerian partners at the Center for the Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD, <http://www.cehrd.org.ng>) also provide several free services and absorb many costs themselves. Anyone, me included, who travels to Nigeria to visit the schools, will continue to pay all their own costs out of pocket with no support coming from donated funds. In contrast to the ridiculous quote cited at the beginning of this report, the overwhelming majority of your donations will always go directly to supporting the children at our schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. We purchase materials from local Nigerian suppliers, our schools and boreholes and toilets have been built by local Nigerian construction workers, our students use locally purchased school supplies, our school directors and teachers are all Nigerians, our health and nutrition programs have been designed and implemented by Nigerian doctors, nurses and volunteers. In contrast to the incredible statistic that “just 0.7% of USAID awards have gone directly to Haitian businesses or organizations,” 100% of the \$16,100 of funding we sent to support our schools in 2016 went directly to our partners in Rivers State, Nigeria.

If you have not already done so, please like Bebor’s Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/BeborSchools>. Facebook is a nice venue for brief updates and it has reached some people that were not previously connected to this project. A lot of stuff gets shared there before it makes it onto the school’s website or into one of these annual reports.

Looking to the future, we will maintain our existing achievements in terms of physical infrastructure including water and sanitation at all three of our schools and address any problems that might arise with any of our buildings or facilities. We plan to continue our health programming at all three of our schools + St. Patrick’s Nursery and Primary School in Bodo. Our pilot nutrition program started with 50 of the poorest and most health-challenged children at our school in Bodo. Funds permitting, we hope to at a minimum sustain it and expand it in Bodo and then ideally expand it to all the children at our schools in Bane and Bori as we earlier did with our health program. We have other more distant goals but continuing to sustain our health program and trying to expand our pilot nutrition program are our most immediate objectives in the next few years.

We will continue to move forward with this project as we always have by remaining humble, sincere and accountable in our service to some of the poorest people in the rural Niger

Delta. It truly is a great honor to be able to work with and on behalf of them. We remain indebted to our local partners in Nigeria whose dedication, creativity, talent and honesty while working on the ground in the villages underlies everything we do. It simply would not be possible to do the work we do without them. We especially thank our school directors, Reverend Moses Nyimale Lezor (Bodo) and Leelee Wiwa Tanen (Bane and Bori), our health program coordinator, Dr. Nabie Nubari Francis, the coordinator of CEHRD, Nenibarini “Doc” Zabbey and our Ogi Soy Plus partner Pastor Ben Inaku. They have all done and continue to do incredible work on behalf of the more than 700 children at our schools in Bane, Bodo and Bori and they all make it possible for me to do the work I do and for you to support it. We also remain profoundly grateful to our domestic partners at Timmy Global Health.

Obviously, we also remain indebted to you, our international donors, who have so many charitable or philanthropic options to choose from yet remain loyal to this micro-scale development project that strives to bring the benefits of primary education and basic healthcare and nutrition to hundreds of children at our three schools in Rivers State, Nigeria every year. We will always remain focused on using our limited funds wisely and generating tangible results that directly benefit the children at our schools and demonstrate to you that your donations are having positive impacts.

If you have any questions or need more information, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me via smpegg@iupui.edu or (+1) 317-361-8329. As always, thank you so much for your past, present and hopefully continued support of the school project.

Thanks,



Scott Pegg,
Chairman, International Friends Committee of Bebor Model Nursery/Primary School