

# BETTERNEWS

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ESSENTIAL IN SCHOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TO BEGIN TO TAKE ROOT IN AFRICA

W.P.E. has been very much active in executing some of its priority projects in the course of the two previous years, the most successful being the "Projet Ecole" which was designed to cover schools with E.E. (environmental education). This project has covered about a hundred and fifty schools all around Cameroon and has witnessed clear effects in changing and modifying behavior of children towards environmental awareness. Beside the famous "Projet Ecole", W.P.E. has developed alongside another related project, known as the "Green School Project", which is all about planting trees in school environments in the optic of creating good, healthy and beautiful campuses, and the trees serve as a shelter to pupils and students too during outdoor periods and activities but as well help to combat dryness.



*Launching Environmental Education in a primary school to make pupils understand sustainability and environmental issues*



*WPE donating some ornamental and shade trees to colleges (above) and teaching tree planting in primary schools (below) in Yaoundé*



### NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS OF VEGETABLES

Research has shown that eating five servings of fruits and vegetables each day reduces the risk of cancer, heart disease, and other illnesses. Vegetables are rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants such as Lycopene. Lycopenes are part of the family of pigments called carotenoids, which are natural compounds that create the colours of fruits and vegetables (beta carotene is the orange pigment in carrots). Research shows that lycopenes are the most powerful antioxidant in the carotenoid family. Antioxidants, which include vitamin C and E, are important in protecting the body from free radicals which may harm many parts of the body.

*Valley View Farms - USA*

**PLANTING TIP: Get the whole family together to decide which vegetables you want to grow and eat. It is fun to get the kids involved! Kids love to grow pumpkins, radishes and watermelon. Valley View Farms - USA**



*Showing the children pictures of some endangered animal species that need to be protected for the future generation*



*Primary school pupil being taught how to plant*

A Memorandum of Understanding between W.P.E. and B.S.N.C. (Better World Students Nature Club) has recently been signed by the two partners. W.P.E. is really very happy about this and hopes for a pleasant and successful collaboration with B.S.N.C.

**WILD PLANET ECO-PROJECT**

# BETTER NEWS

## WHAT DOES CONNECTING CLASSROOMS OFFER?

The Better World Student's Nature Club runs e- Classrooms Programmes which aim to make a positive impact on society by familiarizing local level children with education, youth activists with sustainability leadership skills and shared ethics through the use of new technologies that foster interaction, inclusive culture and the wide distribution of global youth perspectives.

The ultimate goal is to further develop young people's capabilities through "Together for a Better World" Summer Work Camp with the skills necessary to conduct Earth Restoration inspired action projects which can be replicated in the participants' own communities.

### SUNRISE IN AFRICA

#### BETTER WORLD INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA – EUROPE-AMERICA

A new day has dawned in Africa

As Better World Cameroon Renaissance

Your time to arise is here

A decade and a half after

You are now mature enough to reproduce

And what shall your offspring resemble?

This idea cannot die

This vision can not be squashed;

It can not be quenched because it is founded

On a mystery – the "Spirit of Ndanifor"

Out of Africa it emerges

"Simper a liquid novi ex Africa"

Certainty? This is novel and strange!

A Good a thing it is a good idea!

*Emmanuel Ngwa Nkweti (21 06 11)*



*Pupils with their teacher after a lesson of basic computing preparing them for e-classroom*

The opportunity to work with partner schools on collaborative curriculum projects which enable learners to interact across geographical boundaries - enhancing their understanding of each other's societies, languages and cultures, and preparing them for life and work in a global society. Professional development for teachers and school leaders, which builds capacity to integrate an international dimension in the curriculum, support international partnerships and work in an international environment. There will be eligibility for International School Award accreditation, which recognises a school's commitment to forming international partnerships and developing global citizens. Advice and support in the use of ICT tools that develop and sustain partnerships, including a range of online teacher forums. Our West Africa region offers a great variety of cultures and traditions, some of them little understood or even known internationally. Connecting Classrooms partnerships with this region provides a platform for young people and educators in other countries to gain real and first-hand knowledge of vibrant and diverse cultures and to challenge any misunderstandings and pre-conceptions.

*Joshua Konkankoh*

DONTEN LITERATURE

**Never say you can not do it, start first and the rest will follow**

# BETTER NEWS

## THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT SPARKS HOPE IN STUDENTS CAMPAIGN



I am Mbah Sonita second year student in Performing Art and Cinematography and the brain behind Theater for Development (TfD) at Better World Cameroon (BWC).

With the concept of TfD, the performing arts become a process through which man studies and forms an opinion about his environment, analysis it, expresses and shares his point of view about it and acquires the frame of mind necessary to take action, and to improve upon it. Theater thus becomes economic, social, political-indeed life itself.

TfD in our context at Better world is a development concept which covers the pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial periods in Africa. We use celebrations, festivals, rituals and myths to promote the African culture, promote unity and solidarity enhances non conventional communication.

TfD for us has grown to become popular theater, theater of the people by the people for the people. In our popular African theater we use drums, culture and language of the people to appeal to their conscience on issues concerning their community. TfD can also be referred to as Community Theater. It is Community Theater because it is done in a specific space for example in a church. It belongs to the community and is for the interest of the community.

Better World Student's Nature Club (BSNC), the advocacy wing of BWC has adopted TfD as its campaign strategy for youth mobilization and sensitization, with the main objective aimed at promoting collective participation. TfD becomes a tool for identifying and proposing possible solutions to the problems of the community through theater.

At BSNC, we use TfD promoting sustainability education, for us it is theater for social change. That is why the Change Makers of BSNC intend to travel to institutions of agriculture with a road show about food sovereignty and producing a documentary film on food issues and climate change. The goal is to ensure effective communication and awareness raising as guarantor in strategic planning for sustainable development.

The up coming "Together for Better World" International Summer Workcamp taking place from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2011 will serve as a launch pad and melting pot of cross-cultural education as international volunteers from Nice Japan, Solidarites Jeunesses France and Voluntary Action for Peace UK will take part in "Why Change Changed" which is the Piece that will be presented.

If you're interested in becoming a change maker wishing to understand completely the context of globalization; where we are coming from? Where we are going to? How we are going to get there and what we want to achieve by staging **Why Change Change**, why not make it a date with us!

*Sonita Mbah.*

# BETTER NEWS

## WELCOME CEREMONY OF THE NEW VSO VOLUNTEER TO BETTER WORLD CAMEROON ON MAY 21, 2011



*From left to right: Kelvin, Benice, Laura, Hye Mi and Aysha*

The ceremony started at 10:00 am and was attended by:

Kelvin Ayuk (VSO Programmes Officer for the P & G)

Hye Mi Ahn (New VSO OD Advisor for Better World Cameroon, BWC)

Aysha Johnson (New VSO Advocacy Advisor for CEFAN)

Joshua Konkankoh (BWC Coordinator)

Isaiah Nembongwe (Better World Students Nature Club)

Wirdin Benice (Better World Students Nature Club)

Atabe Senge Laura (Better World Students Nature Club)

Ambe Julius (Ndanifor Dance and Theater Troupe)

Ambesifuh Ernest (Ndanifor Dance and Theater Troupe)

Yumiko Shinya (JICA)

The event consisted mostly of introductions, brief discussions on expectations and socializing.

Wirdin Benice representative of the Better World Students Nature Club (BSNC), in her welcome speech said *"We hope that with your assistance we may be able to consolidate our position in the VSO Participation and Governance (P & G) Program for Community Development and Youth Empowerment"*. Kelvin, in reaction to this gave a brief background of the previous VSO Placement to BWC and BWC's activities and link to VSO's P & G Program.

Hye Mi expressed gratitude for the warm welcome and said she looked forward to doing her best to make this new relationship fruitful.

BWC coordinator Joshua Konkankoh then gave an overview of BWC's past and present situation and its expectations for the future.



*Family photo of the BCW-VSO team on the first contact day at the BWC Head Office in Yaoundé*



*First common meal shared between BWC and VSO volunteers as a sign of a new relationship and solidarity*

There was a tour of the BWC Head Office premises including the new volunteer's house and the taking of family photos accompanied by socialization.

This was immediately followed by the sharing of a common meal provided by BWC, and then the signing of the visitors' book.

The two teams had a great time together getting to know each other better. The VSO team equally appreciated the meal which was provided.

The meeting ended at 12:45 pm with the VSO team leaving and Hye Mi promising to be at the BWC Office in Monday 23 / 05 / 2011.

We hope that the arrival of this new volunteer will mean a new way forward for and the completion of the Organizational Development (OD) Process that was started by the previous VSO volunteer.

**ATABE SENGE Laura**

Coming together is the beginning, staying together is progress and working together is success!

# BETTERNEWS

## A NEW PAGE OPENS FOR ISAIAH NEMBONGWE AS HE OBTAINS A MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE

The 26th of May was a very special and memorable day for Better World Cameroon (BWC), as one of its members Nebongwe Isaiah defended his thesis in Master of Science in Agro forestry and Natural Resource Management.

The defense started at 2pm prompt in the "Ancien Laboratoire Biologie Végétales" at the University of Yaoundé I Campus. The members of his jury included Prof. AMOUGOU AKOA (President of Jury), Dr. MBARGA BINDZI (Academic Supervisor), Dr. ARNHEM Eric (Field Supervisor) and Dr. BOYOMO ONANA (Examiner). The audience present was made up of the coordinator of BWC and his volunteers, Isaiah's family members, friends and well-wishers.

Isaiah through a PowerPoint presentation presented his work in 45 minutes. This was followed by questions from the members of the jury and audience. There were also suggestions and recommendations both by the members of the jury and the audience.



*Isaiah's PPP – Camera tracking for mammals in forest conservation*

Then came the moment of tension and truth as everybody waited for the jury who went on break to deliberate on the outcome of his presentation and proclaim his final result. Back in the hall people were worried on what could be the fate of Isaiah. Some said since a series of tough questions were asked by some members of jury, there was fear that he had proven unsatisfactory. After 15 minutes the jury came back and the president of the jury proclaimed his results as "Très Bien" (Very Good). Isaiah was happy to shake hands with the members of the jury and the audience cheered and clapped.



*Attentive members of the jury (above and below) impressed by Isaiah's eloquence*



*Members of jury declare the thesis (Honours) with distinction*

The BWC team was very proud of Isaiah. There were general photo shots with the members of the jury, family, friends and well-wishers. Isaiah was very happy and fulfilled as he felt like an accomplished researcher.

**WIRDIN Benice**



*The BWC family, from left to right: Laura, Joshua, Isaiah and Benice*



*Isaiah with friends after the proclamation of his results*

# BETTER NEWS

## WATER HYGIENE AND SANITATION IN NSIMEYONG II

Better World Cameroon (BWC) by her vision of clean environment finds it pertinent setting the pace for cleanliness in her surrounding environment of Nsimeyong.

From this vision of clean environment, BWC developed an organ in partnership with some local community activist that is in charge of water and sanitation.

The action also involves collecting all the rubbish deposited in the water course and around the borders, in order to make rid of potential dirt that may be poisonous to aquatic biodiversity and humans. The rubbish collected from the flowing streams and borders is heaped and destined to the urban dust bin.



*Clearing debris on river course as part of BSNC's slum regeneration programme*



*BWC and an urban sanitation activist cleaning the surrounding*

BWC is looking forward to partnering with high technical organizations, in order to develop local innovative techniques that can harness the transformation or the recycling of biodegradable matter collected from the water courses and borders, ahead of clean water and sanitation for the city.



*BWC at work for a clean healthy environment*



*BWC and Partner (community sanitation activist) filling pot holes on the road*

In addition to this, the organ handles the task of filling pot holes on the road. This eases the circulation of vehicles. As well, the filling of pot holes discards stagnant water pools on the roads. The initiative is in line with the action plan of global environment facility.



*Community activist partnering with BWC to do WASH at the Biyeme River course*

**NEMBONGWE Isaiah**

**Do not ask for a lighter burden, but for broader shoulders**

# BETTER NEWS

## RESTITUTION OF INTRODUCTION TO PERMACULTURE DESIGN WORKSHOP HELD AT BETTER WORLD CAMEROON HEAD OFFICE ON 03<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2011

The workshop started at about 10:30am and was attended by the new Organizational Development (OD) Advisor to Better World Cameroon (BWC), some BWC volunteers and a representative of one of our partner organizations, Wild Planet Eco-Project (WPE). The attendance was as follows:

1. Hye Mi Ahn (BWC OD Advisor)
2. Emmanuella Youngyeh (WPE)
3. Sonita Mbah (BWC)
4. Isaiah Nembongwe (BWC)
5. Wirdin Benice (BWC) (Facilitator)
6. Atabe S. Laura (BWC) (Presenter)

**The purpose of the workshop was** to enable participants to have a general understanding of what Permaculture is all about.

**The objectives of the workshop were:**

To give participants a basic knowledge of the origin, concept and definition of Permaculture

To understand how Permaculture works in different real life situations

To encourage collaboration, share information and work with fellow BWC members and members of other NGOs in and out of the environment field

To create open space for questions and ideas on ecological sustainability



*Attentive participants (above and below) during the Permaculture workshop*



**The content of the workshop included the following:**

- General introduction to Permaculture/Definition
- Permaculture Ethics and principles
- Ecosystems, Food Chains and Food Webs
- Material recycling
- Land Sectors and Zones
- The A – Frame and how it is used
- Types of plants for various cropping systems
- Soil Formation and Composting and Mulching
- Animal incorporation into a Permaculture Design
- Energy Cycles

There were a few questions and answers and participants expectations were met by the end of the workshop. All the above mentioned objectives were attained.

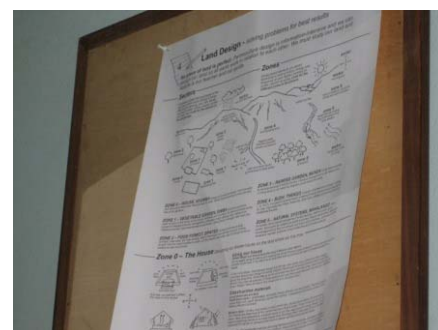
**The outcomes of the workshop were:**

Participants were informed and had a better understanding of what Permaculture is and how to apply its ethics and principles in daily life

Participants were motivated to want to learn more and continue discussions on this topic

Participants were more inclined to share information and invite each other to events and workshops.

Participants equally agreed to set up a second meeting to complete the workshop on a date that would be arranged later.



*Land Design chart used during the workshop*

**ATABE SENGE Laura**  
with contribution from Hye Mi AHN

# BETTER NEWS

## INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT A SUCCESS

To start off the workshop, we participated in an icebreaker energizer called **“Hum that Tune!”** Each person randomly picked a song of someone else’s choice, written on a piece of paper, humming the tune of that song, and the rest of us had to guess which song it was. Turned out to be a fun exercise that got us energized for what followed.

The topic of the workshop was **“Introduction to Organizational Development (OD).”** A total of 14 people were in attendance, from various backgrounds, staff from Basic Education Foundation for the Underprivileged School, a representative from the NGO ‘Wild Planet Eco-Project,’ and even the local chief! It was a good venue for people to meet each other, some for the first time, to exchange questions, opinions, and ideas.



***I believe that what we focus on grows.*** When we give something our attention, when we think about it, have discussions about it or make a choice because of it, this all have an effect on development.



### **Organization=Development**

A brief explanation was given about the objectives and overall aim of the Participation and Governance (P&G) program, one of VSO Cameroon’s three program areas. But one of the main messages I wanted to get across was that the organizational developmental tool can be used and adapted in different organizations and networks. Some of the things I wanted people to think about were where they are, where they want to be, and how to get there.

According to the discussion we had at the end of the workshop and from the written evaluations, participants seemed to have grasped the basic understanding of what organizational development is and how it can benefit them. An abbreviated definition of organizational development is a planned process of change and activities which strengthen capacities so people are more effective in achieving set objectives. They were eager to learn more and start using this valuable tool.

But one has to have the skills to use any tool efficiently, so we went over the qualities of an ideal leader and OD committee, the main driving force of the OD process, from beginning to end; Qualities such as transparency, accountability, diversity, commitment, communication, sharing, impartiality, cooperation, empathy, empowering, flexibility, and innovation. Building individual capacities and skills all leads to helping the people we are serving. Some of the key steps in the OD process is forming the OD committee, the self-assessment (workshop), and creating the work plan for a specified time period.

People tend to have a clear idea of where they are and where they want to be; I think people walked away from the workshop believing that applying organizational development can help them get there.



**Moving towards a happier community life**

*Hye Mi AHN*

# BETTER NEWS

## WEBSITE RENEWAL PROCESS IS GOING ON!

Do you know what « BWC » means? Better World Cameroon. You are right, but there is another meaning: **Better Website Committee!**

The website of Better World Cameroon has been created since 2006 and since then new information has been updated to the website, but it is not easy to expose the dynamism of Better World Cameroon to the public through website. Making activities visible requires more human resources, more budgets and more IT skills.

Let me share my experience. Before coming to Cameroon, I used to work for a Japanese NGO. I tried to know what kind of activities the NGO was implementing through its website, but the website did not explain all aspects of activities. The NGO could not afford to have an employee who was in charge of IT affairs.



*Yumiko SHINYA, BWC IT Volunteer*

This situation urged me to learn IT skills and to contribute to improving the website. Though I was ignorant about making websites, with a lot of help by other volunteers who were more familiar with IT, I succeeded in remodeling the website. It became obvious that the opportunities for the NGO to receive more support were enlarged.

This successful experience has motivated me to be involved in the improvement of BWC website. “Better Website Committee” has brainstormed on a new structure for the website, and is now collecting latest information and more visual materials to be posted, and train one person to be in charge of the maintenance of website. I am looking forward to showing you all the good work of the Better Website committee!

*Yumiko SHINYA*



*Better Web Site Committee*

**PUTTING TOGETHER POSITIVE NEWS, WE GET A UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO THE SCALE OF THE GLOBAL EFFORT TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE, JUST, EQUITABLE, HEALTHY AND FUFILLING WORLD. AS YOU WILL SEE FROM THE ARTICLES ON THIS WEB SITE, IT'S HAPPENING IN PEOPLE'S INDIVIDUAL LIVES, IN COMMUNITIES, INORGANIZATIONS AND EVEN IN BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENTS. FOR THIS POSITIVE MOVEMENT TO SUCCEED, WE MUST ALL REALIZE WE CAN PLAY A PART. OUR TRANSITION APPROACH IN BETTER WEBSITE COMMITTEE SHOWS THERE IS A GROWING DEBATE ABOUT WHAT REALLY MATTERS IN LIFE AND HOW INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY CAN REALGN WITH NATURAL LIVING. IN DOING SO WE CAN SOLVE PRESSING PROBLEMS AND ACTUALLY BECOME HAPPIER. BETTER WEB SITE COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO TAKE INSPIRATION FROM THESE WEB PAGES AND BE PART OF THE SOLUTION.**

**WE HOPE YOU WOULD LIKE THE NEW LOOK OF OUR WEB SITE AND, PLEASE SEND US YOUR FEED BACK ON THE DESIGN AND OF COURSE ON OUR CONTENT. LET US KNOW WHICH ATTICLES HAVE INSPIRED YOU AND IF THERE ARE ANY YOU WANT TO CHALLENGE. IN THE MEAN TIME LET US FOCUS ON THE “SPIRIT OF NDANIFOR” AND GROW A BETTER FUTURE WHERE WE CAN ALL FLORISH.**

# BETTER NEWS

## COMING SOON

- ✓ Better World Cameroon attendance of Development Education Summer School in Helsinki – Finland
- ✓ ‘TOGETHER FOR A BETTER WORLD’ International Summer Workcamp
- ✓ **Regeneration of the Ndanifor Community Garden**
- ✓ Building of Common Wealth Eco – Lodge
- ✓ IT infrastructure for Permaculture online-lessons
- ✓ Long term partnership agreement with VSO and Implementation of OD
- ✓ **Implementation of P & G in the North West Region**

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