



LEND A HELPING HAND TO CHILDREN WITH **SERGE BETSEN ACADEMY**

SERGE BETSEN ACADEMY'S MISSION IN CAMEROON AND MALI SUSTAINABLE WORK

Serge Betsen Academy (SBA) is a non-profit organisation born from a meeting. The meeting between Serge Betsen and his country of birth: Cameroon. After spending 18 years far from home, he came back and found that people played rugby there. He founded the organisation in 2004, with the aim of:

- Supporting disadvantaged children from Cameroon and elsewhere through their school education;
- Providing free medical care for these children and their parents;
- Introducing them to rugby and conveying through this sport values and bearings to help them build their lives.

... OVER 17 YEARS...

- Five centres in Cameroon: L'Eau Claire, Etoudi, Jardin Eden, Bafia and Zoétélé
- One centre in Mali: SBA Mali
- Dedicated academic support for disadvantaged children, and in Mali principally for girls
- Medical care through infirmaries at the centres
- And rugby practice.

In all, around 7,000 children have benefited from SBA's support since its inception.

... THREE PRONGS: EDUCATION – HEALTH – RUGBY

CIRCUMSTANCES IN CAMEROON

In 2018, 25 million people were living in Cameroon. Although the country is home to many natural resources, it was only ranked 151st out of 188 in the Human Development Index (HDI) 2018. Over a third of the population lives below the poverty threshold. Children are most affected by poverty. Children born in the poorest households are twice as likely to die before the age of five, twice as likely not to finish primary school and four times as likely to suffer from stunted growth. Causes like malnutrition, a weak health system, high food prices, insufficient vaccination and difficult access to drinking water all contribute high poverty levels. Even more so in rural areas.

According to UNESCO, in 2018, 17.4% of men and 28.4% of women living in Cameroon could not read and write. Access to education is one of SBA's priorities, with access for girls as a particular focus. We see that the children we support can go to school by funding their costs (such as school uniforms and stationery). Our objective is to prepare them for a better future, to offer them ways to get out of poverty, which starts at the youngest ages.

CIRCUMSTANCES IN MALI

UNESCO reports that 53.8% of men and 73.4% of women in Mali are illiterate. According to UNICEF, 52% of women marry before they are 18 and 17% before they are 15. Marriage at such young ages is "a widely accepted norm because of the social and financial advantages it brings". For a majority of girls, it means dropping out of school. In some Malian regions, only 12% of girls complete primary school. Early marriage also leads to child labour and teenage pregnancies, as well as female genital mutilation which 89% of Malian girls suffer. In the face of such an alarming situation, we have decided to focus on girl education, by supporting 25 young students in the first instance. At SBA, gender stereotypes have no place and we wish to encourage these girls to see their school education through.



SBA'S RESPONSE TO THESE COUNTRIES EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Serge Betsen Academy capitalises on 17 years of experience to offer a rich education to the children we welcome. Our objective is to prepare them for a better future, to give them the means to get out of poverty and chronic unemployment, and to support older students in becoming attractive recruitment prospects. This is why we work with companies to help them find internships and training programmes, so they can be ready for work and also mentor the next generation of SBA children.

Since 2004, our exam success rate has been great than or equal to 70% every year.

We work with organisations and charities as well as private firms and local partners while maintaining our political and religious neutrality. SBA advocates to governments, partners and donors for a fundamental change in the way humanitarian organisations operate.

Our objective is for our programme to target people who really have the greatest need at the right time. But we can't do everything on our own. We need major partners.

SINCE 2004 AND THANKS TO OUR FAITHFUL SUPPORTERS, SBA HAS ACHIEVED

6 CENTRES

5 INFIRMARIES

7,000 CHILDREN SUPPORTED, INCLUDING 47% OF GIRLS

620 children supported each week in Cameroon + **90** children supported each week in Mali

Baccalaureate success rates always well above the national rate of 42-48%, with SBA's rate reaching **70%** in 2020

278 NURSE APPOINTMENTS IN OUR INFIRMARIES IN 2020

200 rugby players in 2020

5 WELLS AND **3** WATER TOWERS BUILT

16 solar panels installed

50 volunteers involved a year

4.7 TONS OF EQUIPMENT SENT

2 VEGETABLE PLOTS

1 FARMING COOPERATIVE with 17 mothers that feeds 130 children in Cameroon over 9 months

12,000 meals served in 2020, including thanks to SBA Coop

56,500 pounds raised through the **Recycling Rugby** project in less than 5 years

And there is still lots to do!

CONTACT US TO JOIN THE SBA ADVENTURE

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