

Training Workshop for Facilitators and Caregivers organized by PARE: The Pastoral Resolve

By Mrs. Diane Ede, Open Classroom Program Officer

Members of the Open Classroom attended a workshop at the Center for Development, Training and Research, which took place 26 kilometers outside of Kaduna, on the Abuja expressway, November 22-26, 2005.

The emphasis of the workshop was on early childhood development among pastoralists' children.

It was very relevant for our members to attend the workshop. The Open Classroom has been sharing and demonstrating the design of teaching materials with a group of PARE supervisors. We have also had PARE teachers in for teacher's training, so this is how we have been cooperating in the area of early childhood education for the past one year.

Several papers were given; one was on how facilitators could identify topics pertinent to the community in which they are working. The Facilitator then could use this topic to plan a program that the community should actively participate in. There must also be a way for evaluation to take place in a period of no less than six weeks and no more than one year to assess the success of the program.

Many interesting facts about indigenous cultures came out during the discussion. We saw that some of the problems of teaching in these communities are just common ones brought about by some of their local customs. For example, the manner in which the children are disciplined is dictated by their customs. There were papers given on the child's psychological development. They emphasized the responsibilities of the caregivers and facilitators to be aware of the different stages in order to be more effective in handling young students.

The Open Classroom participated by presenting and showing the practical application of materials that could be used to give the learners incentives to learn. In addition a discussion on ideas of how to motivate and encourage parents to allow their children to participate in school was chaired by the Open Classroom. The facilitators and caregivers appreciated the presence and participation of our members, who requested that a group photograph be taken and sang and danced as the members of the Open Classroom, said their thanks and goodbyes.

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Mrs. Diane Ede (left) and Mr. Seth Kerchiri (center) in discussion at the PARE Teachers' Training Workshop



Note from the Open Classroom CEO

I was privileged to attend the formal Commissioning of the PARE School, Hostel and Borehole supported by the Embassy of Japan. This is a very impressive Center which will provide educational resources for the Fulani and other communities in the area. *D. L. Mohammed*

Open Classroom Meets First Lady of Kaduna State

The Open Classroom paid a courtesy call on the First Lady of Kaduna State, Her Excellency, Hajiya Asma'u Ahmed Makarfi to intimate her about our mission and the work we are doing in the rural areas. We wanted Hajiya Asma'u to know that we have dedicated ourselves to achieving, in our modest manner, the goal of teaching the less privileged and particularly those who have never been to school, yet wish to have an education.

We were very warmly received by Her Excellency. She listened carefully to our mission statement, read by our President, Hajiya Nana Aisha Abu Ali. Her Excellency attached much importance to our programme and encouraged us to plan well so that we could continue to make a positive statement backed up by purposeful action. Hajiya Asma'u promised to lend us her firm support.



With members of the Open Classroom present, our President, Hajiya Nana Aisha Abu Ali reads our mission statement to Her Excellency Hajiya Asma'u Ahmed Makarfi.

The Open Classroom Hosts Professional Teacher Training Course for Kaduna State Local Government Educational Supervisors

Building upon its many years of experience and training in the field of teacher training and research in the field of education, The Open Classroom has organized its first training course for the "Professional Teacher." The areas covered include a Basic Skills refresher course in Reading and Mathematics, Current Events, Problem Solving, Educational Philosophy, Computer Studies and design of visual aids.

The 3-month course began by emphasizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of achieving universal education by the year 2015. In order to achieve this goal, every child needs a teacher. Our first set of participants is a group of 23 local government education supervisors from Kaduna. They will implement improved teaching strategies in each of the 23 local governments in Kaduna State. Every member of the group has shown much dedication backed up by hard work. They have cooperated in concert, like a team with a goal of achieving success. At the close of the course there will be a graduation ceremony where all participants will receive a diploma, a transcript and a testimonial.

Each participant, before graduating, will present a project which involves setting up a learning program for two beginning learners in their local governments.



Rabiatu holds a poster she made at the beginning of the course. The message conveyed is that all children need to be educated and that we need to train good teachers.

The local government course participants actually do the teaching themselves rather than assigning this critical task to one of the teachers they supervise. They make worksheets and classwork exercises that emphasize basic skills in Math and English. The beginning learners, after approximately six weeks of lessons with the supervisors, should be brought down to The Open Classroom for evaluation of their progress.