
Winter Newsletter



**AFRICA
EDUCATION
PARTNERSHIP**

December 2025



Happy Holidays from AEP! As we reflect on 2025, we have much to be thankful for and excited about leading into 2026. We need your assistance now more than ever!

In the midst of the chaos that seems to surround us and our Nigerian beneficiaries, AEP is very fortunate to have the most wonderful and generous donors to continue helping us achieve our goal of educating the young and providing basic skills training to the disadvantaged in northern Nigeria, regardless of faith and cultural differences.

Gusau

In Gusau, our original location, Graceland International School continues to grow as a prominent local school, now with almost 500 students! In addition, the West Africa Education Council (WAEC) testing authorities have recently re-certified Graceland's status as a regional site for the standardized tests as a result of upgrades made to the administration building and exam hall. Graceland is thriving under the direction of a new school principal, who has done a remarkable job of improving education standards, including attracting teachers and engaging parents.

Kafanchan

In Kafanchan, progress continues on renovating the five schools that just a few years ago were barely inhabitable and in great state of disrepair. The school wall is now being constructed at Kogum River, which includes community access to clean water from the well installed for the school. The Kafanchan schools have become so popular that at some schools, the staff has instituted a split schedule, with classes running both morning and afternoon sessions.

Scholarships and Empowerment

Our student scholarship program has grown to record levels, where we are now supporting a total of 99 (yes, 99!) students between both Gusau and Kafanchan. The scholarship program has built into it a fund for school maintenance, so each school location now receives the necessary funds to keep the buildings from falling into disrepair. And our most recent Empowerment project has enjoyed growth in both locations to provide basic skills to adults who are looking to enter or re-enter the workforce.

How You Can Help

Given the incredible growth our beneficiaries have experienced in both Gusau and Kafanchan, we have a sudden need once again to fund building projects. We are finishing up our planned renovations in Kafanchan, but given their split schedules due to limited space, there is again a need to build additional classroom space. We also have many student families on the waiting list for scholarships, and there is an ongoing need for supplies to help adults in the Empowerment program.

With gratitude,

Don Ghostlaw, President

RENOVATION, RECONSTRUCTION, AND RE-FITTING

by Elaine Chagnon, Project Manager

Gusau- A reason for hope

Graceland International School, our first project in Nigeria, is now 12 years old. The school continues to grow, with an increase of 80 students within the last year and a half. This brings the total to almost 500, a far cry from the first enrollment of 30. In an area that is 90% Muslim and 10% Christian, this is no small feat. The school continues to be a model, not only for academic excellence, but of how Christians and Muslims can peacefully coexist and learn together. In an area that has known much conflict and strife, this is a beacon of hope. It is a testament to our partners for their hard work in peacemaking and reconciliation, as well as your generosity in funding this important work.

As is the way with well-used buildings, repairs are inevitable and maintenance must be performed. Thanks to the structure of the Education Fund, monies are now available for that very purpose.

We were recently alerted by our partners that the roof in the exam hall building, which houses the expanded computer lab, had begun to leak, causing damage to ceiling tiles and walls. The damage was assessed and a plan made for repair. The roof is now intact and walls and ceiling tiles replaced and repainted.

In addition, the 8-foot security wall surrounding the campus had begun to show signs of weakening due to water seepage through the cap, thus undermining the foundation. Repairs have been completed and the wall integrity has been restored.

Other improvements include the refitting of the exam hall as an expanded computer lab with the purchase of 15 additional laptops. The installation of cooling fans and additional lighting has affirmed the site as an accredited location for the computerized WAEC exams.



Kafanchan- Growth in the rural areas = opportunity

The region referred to as “Kafanchan” actually includes 5 school sites in the surrounding rural villages of Kogum River, Jagindi Tasha, Godogodo, and Gidan Waya in addition to Kafanchan. AEP is committed to providing all of our schools with clean water, toilets, security walls, renovated buildings, and equipment. [According to WaterAid Nigeria in a July 2024 article, only 11-14% of Nigerian schools have access to clean water and adequate sanitation. All of the schools in partnership with AEP have access to both.](#)

Outfitted with “amenities” that we take for granted, the Kafanchan area schools have all seen a large increase in student population. Several schools have now had to incorporate a split schedule, running classes in the morning and again in the afternoon. While this is a viable solution in the short term, it is not the best option long term. [That means new construction is needed at a cost of \\$4500 per classroom, complete.](#) Our standard model is for a block of 6 classrooms for a total of \$27,000. We are also in need of funds to complete the renovations at Kafanchan School, including dorms and showers.

Kogum River

All schools in the Kafanchan area have had security walls in place- except Kogum River. Although funding for the project had been secured, government red tape concerning land boundaries and the need for additional permits stalled the project. This left the well mechanism exposed, resulting in frequent damage due to children playing with it or from misuse. We are now happy to report that all issues have finally been resolved and the wall is currently under construction.

Kogum River, completely renovated by 2019, has seen extensive termite damage. Currently underway is retreatment of wood supports and the installation of a new termite-resistant ceiling tile material.



LEFT:
KOGUM RIVER CLASSROOM CEILING WITH TERMITE DAMAGE. TERMITES CHOSE TO EAT THE CEILING TILES. NEW MATERIAL HAS BEEN ORDERED THAT TERMITES WILL NOT EAT REPAIRS ARE UNDERWAY.

RIGHT:
KOGUM RIVER WALL CONSTRUCTION. TREES WERE CLEARED TO MAKE WAY FOR THE FOUNDATION. BLOCKS HAD ALREADY BEEN MOLDED AND WERE MOVED TO THE SITE. FINALLY, GOOD PROGRESS!



EDUCATION: PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIPS AND MUCH MORE!

by Elaine Chagnon, Project Manager

Graceland International School

Based in the capital city of Gusau, Graceland has established itself as a fully accredited institution of learning. Located in a northernmost state in Nigeria, the demographics are 90% Muslim and 10% Christian. The school has maintained integrity and high standards and is a premier school in the area. The site is also recognized as a regional West Africa Education Council (WAEC) testing site. During a recent re-accreditation visit, WAEC board informed our partners that their annual exam is now switching to a technology platform. Thanks to a grant, 15 new laptops were funded and are now in place. This is a good start; however, we are now looking to fund more quality laptops at \$400 each, including dustcovers.

There are a growing number of students wishing to attend GIS. This year alone, we have seen an increase of close to 80 new students, bringing the total population to over 450, up from 365 just a year ago. This is no small feat in an area of the world that has seen more than its share of conflict.

Enter the Education Fund

The Education Fund provides cost coverage for school fees; books, uniforms. It also allows funding for maintenance expenses. We are in need of additional sponsors, as the waiting list of needy students is over 100. For \$300 annually, a student can receive the gift of an education. Sponsors receive a photo and information about their student, trimester progress reports, and opportunities to correspond. **Please consider a sponsorship for \$300 per year!**

Kafanchan Area Schools

The Kafanchan area schools are located in the middle of Nigeria, where the population about a 40-60% split- Christians to Muslims. Subsistence farming, cattle herding, and small local businesses make up the economic picture. In farming families, all are expected to share in the work and the school calendar is respectful of the planting and harvesting cycles.

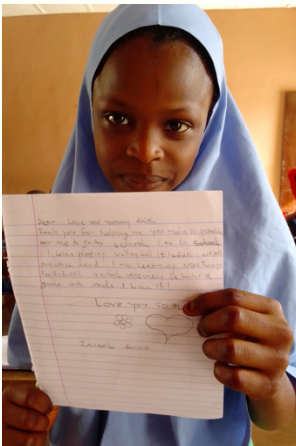
Growth Challenge

The population growth in all of these five area schools continues to challenge our partners, the school staffs, and AEP. With limited grant opportunities available to small nonprofits, we continue the work as funding allows. The total number of students being served at these five locations is approaching 3000, close to a 20% increase in the last 4 years.

With these numbers come students hoping for an education but unable to pay the school fees. Many do not want to attend the free government schools due to issues with teacher retention, lack of quality facilities and lack of clean water and sanitation.

When a student is assigned a sponsor, we try to foster a relationship through sharing of report cards and providing opportunities to exchange letters. Our hope is that the sponsor will invest in a student long term. We pledge to assist students through graduation in grade 12. This means that sponsorship "slots" do not open up frequently- there is always a need for new donors.

Your gift of any amount, will go a long way.



Students respond to their sponsors' letters!

Recess time with friends!!

EMPOWERMENT: EDUCATION COMES FULL CIRCLE

by Fr. Shaw Mudge Director of Empowerment Initiatives & Wendy Bellmore, Gusau Empowerment Liaison

The Empowerment initiatives are progressing in both Gusau and Kafanchan. As noted in our last newsletter, word is spreading throughout the communities regarding the training offered. And there is no lack of participants seeking to develop new skills.

In both locations, these centers started with visions of the Mothers' Union and the Women's Guild. Committed groups of women work together to provide for others in their respective communities. While the visions were present, it took funding from both grants and AEP donors to complete the facilities that house the training.

Now that training is underway, both facilities are looking to include students who are currently in school. In Kafanchan, students receive additional training after school hours and on weekends. In Gusau, the center has opened up a satellite center on the Graceland International School campus, AEP's first project. The hope is to include students in the future.

As with any new initiative, sustainability becomes the key to success. Both facilities are working through plans to determine how best to proceed. In the meantime, AEP will do what we can to support our partners through the growing pains. For now, the best way to help is through the funding of equipment and supplies. Please refer to the list below.

Sewing machine	\$195
Leatherworks materials	\$190
Hair Barbering	\$95
Soap/Cosmetics	\$90
Baking oven	\$205
Beads/Jewelry supplies	\$145
Knitting machine	\$190



THREE WAYS TO HELP

If you are able, please help us continue our important work in northern Nigeria. No gift is too small and anything you can do will be greatly appreciated by both our partners and the AEP board.

General Fund

Contributions to the General Fund are used primarily for major construction and renovation projects. Currently, the renovations to dorms, showers, and toilets at Kafanchan School are needed. Additional classroom blocks for expansion are needs on the horizon.

Education Fund

Sponsor a child for \$300 per year. The funds provide for school fees, books, and uniforms for our students. Dorm students have their room and board covered. In addition, part of the funding is set aside for routine maintenance.

Empowerment Fund

The best way for donors to support the Empowerment Fund is to fund the materials needed to run the classes. Please refer to the list to the right.

How to Donate:

- Scan the QR code which brings you directly to the Donate page of our website.
- When checking out, you may make a designation in the "Note to seller" dialogue box.
- Send a check to AEP, 99 Sand Hill Road, South Windsor, CT 06074



If you would like to learn more about our work, please contact Don Ghostlaw or Elaine Chagnon at africaedupartnership@gmail.com. We are happy to come and speak to you or your group or organization.

Africa Education Partnership is a registered 501c3 nonprofit organization.
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