

Abomey-Calavi, September 6, 2023

Dear friends and supporters of our work in Benin,

I actually wanted to get in touch with you at the beginning of the new year 2023 and thank you from the bottom of my heart for accompanying me for so many years. And now it's already September!! 8 months have passed since the beginning of the year? I hardly noticed it.

At the end of 1992 I set foot on African soil for the first time. Back then, I had no idea that my life would change in every facet. That was 30 years ago. There are friends among you who experienced this time with me, who shared my worries, hopes and dreams with me. I can't thank you enough. You were my strength and my protection. Since then, many new friends have joined. We have become a big family. My father told me in my childhood: "If you meet a true friend in your life, God has blessed you for your whole life" What a blessing I have received!! I'm a millionaire!

Thanks to your support, we were able to implement many projects in 2022:

- For the Secondary School 1 in Golo-Djigbé, in the municipality of Abomey-Calavi, we built two school buildings holding 4 classrooms each, a borehole with water tower and two toilet blocks with showers and sinks, a special gift for the girls of this school. We enjoyed working on this construction site thanks to the friendliness of the students. To show my appreciation, I created a little game corner to keep them busy during break time. The classrooms were inaugurated on February 16, 2023.



- Then we built a building holding 2 classrooms, an office, a storage room and toilets for the preschool of Atinkpayé. This preschool was housed in the very first building of the village's primary school. The classrooms were dark and it was very hot inside because of the low roof covered with corrugated iron sheets. On April 21st this building was opened. The children enjoy going to school now and feel right at home in the new classrooms.



- Thirdly, we built a single classroom and toilets for the primary school of N'Gbeho in town of Abomey-Calavi. Since the school is located in an area with a high groundwater level, the building had to be reinforced with additional anchors in the foundation. We built the toilet pit above the turf to protect the groundwater. The building opened on May 2nd. This project was fully financed by the “Fly and Help” association.



- At the secondary school 1 of Golo-Djigbé and at the preschool of Atinkpayé we once again conducted awareness-raising sessions on the topic “What is plastic and how does it affect our health?” This time our volunteers from the French association Planète Urgence visited the students in their classes. Following the sensitization, we fenced off school gardens and made compost from organic waste with the students and parents.

I myself was invited twice by the University of Abomey-Calavi. At the first meeting with the students I covered the same topic “What is plastic and how does it affect our health?” The second time I talked about solution ideas regarding waste.

- In Atinkpayé and Golo-Djigbé we have built special houses to dry moringa leaves to produce powder. In Golo-Djigbé in particular, the women have taken the project to heart and are committed to producing good quality powder that is sold in shops in Calavi.
- Some of our sponsored children have achieved qualifications:
Divine and Marcos have passed their high school diploma and are preparing for university.
Jacques and Gael successfully defended their bachelor's thesis.
Téophile received his master's degree.
This means great joy for all of us. We wish the young people who leave the sponsorships much success in their future lives.

I wish all of you a nice autumn and a good ending of this year. Stay healthy!

With my heartfelt thanks I am

Yours Astrid