



# VIRIDIANE'S HOPE FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH & EDUCATION

P.O. Box 523442  
Springfield, VA 22152  
<https://vhche.org/>

**Viridiane's Hope for Children's Health and Education (VHCHE, Corp.)** is an IRS approved 501(c)(3) organization established to provide health and educational opportunities for children in underserved and underprivileged communities in both local and international environs. VHCHE was inspired by the life and hopes of a little girl named Viridiane born in Cameroon. She lived a short but full and impactful life. This proposal is the first step in VHCHE's effort to memorialize the life and legacy of this amazing child who touched so many lives.

It is the mission and purpose of VHCHE, Corp. to resource sustainable partnerships projects that enable and empower children to overcome real and often systemic challenges in their communities that adversely impact their maturing and potential. VHCHE, Corp. also aims to advance children's rights and to correct inequality in underserved and underprivileged communities by coordinating and facilitating outreach and education activities. Its principal activities in pursuit of this mission are to provide aid and relief to help eradicate illiteracy and promote healthier environments and behavior in children at local, national, and international levels.

In memory of Viridiane, VHCHE's first project will involve major re-building of an elementary school in a small village in Cameroon. This project will be used as a model for other projects in the United States and around the world.

## **Viridiane's Story**

Viridiane was born on June 19, 1999 in Yaoundé, Cameroon. She immigrated to the United States with her parents when she was only 10 months old and subsequently became a naturalized U.S. citizen.

Viridiane was joyful, caring, compassionate, always smiling, and was the child everyone wanted to spend time with. She was full of hope and always ready to spread her contagious smile and her joyful spirit onto everyone she encountered, whether at her church, school, or neighborhood. She spent most of her life in Austin, TX where she attended school and participated in various activities including singing with the church children's choir and volunteering with her family in various charitable events. Viridiane was also a well-rounded athlete participating in various sports with her school and the YMCA, including running, soccer, basketball, and swimming. Viridiane was conscious of, and grateful for, her very good health. She had a goal to become a medical doctor later in life and to help others in need.

On February 17, 2007 in Austin, TX tragedy struck during a YMCA basketball. Viridiane collapsed and was rushed to the hospital. She never regained consciousness and her wonderful life ended on February 19<sup>th</sup>. It was subsequently discovered that she had an undetected congenital anomaly of the coronary arteries. Over four hundred people participated in her funeral.

To memorialize Viridiane's passion, hopes, motivation, and impact, the Viridiane's Hope for Children's Health and Education charitable corporation was established in the State of Virginia on May 4, 2018, and was authorized by the Internal Revenue Service to operate as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit organization, recognized as VHCHE Corp. For more information, visit <https://vhche.org/>.

**AN APPEAL FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO BUILD THREE CLASSROOMS  
AND A DRINKING WATER WELL AT SAINT ANNE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
NEW MELONG - CAMEROON**

**1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

<b>WORKING TITLE</b>	A partnership with St Anne Catholic Parish, New Melong - Cameroon to begin rebuilding an existing Primary School
<b>LOCATION:</b>	New Melong, Upper Melong Subdivision, Moungo Division, Littoral Region, Cameroon
<b>LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY:</b>	Bishop Dieudonne Espoir ATANGANA Bishop of Nkongsamba Diocese P.O. Box 333, Nkongsamba Littoral Region, Cameroon
<b>ON-SITE COORDINATOR:</b>	Rev. Fr. Daniel TSAGUE Parish Priest, St. Anne Parish P.O. Box 388, Nkongsamba Littoral Region, Cameroon Email: <a href="mailto:tsague002@yahoo.fr">tsague002@yahoo.fr</a> Tel: (+237)699660711
<b>VHCHE Project Coordinator</b>	Frank B. Guest, III VHCHE Treasurer 6403 Bridge Creek Ct Springfield, VA 22152 Email: <a href="mailto:commodore31@icloud.com">commodore31@icloud.com</a> Tel: (703) 980-2526

**2. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION OF PROJECT**

Located about 12km (7.5 miles) from Nkongsamba, Melong is a municipality in the Department of Moungo, Littoral Region with an area of 497 km<sup>2</sup> (192 square miles) and containing about 40 villages (communities). It has an estimated population of 71,189 based on 2012 census data.

Melong is primarily an agricultural area that relies upon the production of coffee and banana to support the local economy. Currently the area is economically depressed and due to the civil unrest in the northwestern and southwestern parts of the country, many families and children are seeking refuge in other localities, including Melong. This heavy influx of migrants is causing more economic stress in many parts of the country, and more prominently in rural communities like Melong.



The crisis in the southwestern and northwestern regions of Cameroon has compounded pre-existing vulnerabilities<sup>1</sup>. Since 2016, political and social instability, exacerbated by sporadic violence, has had a negative impact on the civilian population of Cameroon's Southwest and Northwest regions, hosting four million inhabitants (16% of the total population)<sup>2</sup>. In November 2017, the sociopolitical crisis progressively translated into insecurity and armed violence. Since then, the escalation of tension and upsurge in hostilities between non-state armed groups and defense and security forces have triggered humanitarian needs across the two regions, linked to significant internal displacement. In recent months, the epicenter of the crisis moved from Bamenda (Northwest) to Mamfe and Kumba (Southwest). All divisions in the Southwest region, host to more than 1.4 million peoples, are affected by the crisis.

The crisis has impacted children's right to education, with at least 40 schools affected and an estimated 42,500 school-aged children with limited access to education for the past two years<sup>3</sup>. Several attacks by non-state armed groups have also targeted schools, leading to the death of at least two teachers, further disrupting the educational system. Where schools are still functional, there are significant gaps in teaching and learning material. The disruption of education is putting children at greater risk of exploitation, child labor, early marriage and unwanted pregnancy. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the perception that schools could be targets of attack, resulting in parents refusing to send their children to school. In this climate, Melong lacks adequate educational infrastructure to account for the local and migrant children. Uneducated children are subject to all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, rape, and sex trafficking. Uneducated girls are also more likely to be forced into arranged marriages at very young ages (11-14). Providing a better place to learn will empower and enable children to make better choices and limit exposure to delinquency and exploitation.

Melong was a hub of business, but today, with the decline in coffee production and market price, people face serious difficulties in meeting their daily needs. New Melong is one of the newest communities in Melong, comprised of 4 districts with a total population of approximately 4300. In the pastoral territory of New Melong, there are 2 lay private colleges, both offering general education. There are also 2 elementary schools i.e. Government Nursery and Primary School New Melong and Saint Anne Catholic Primary School New Melong.

According to a recent study by the World Bank, addressing Cameroon's infrastructure challenges will require sustained expenditure of \$1,480 million per year over the next decade<sup>4</sup>. The conditions in which the children of New Melong attend school are deplorable. They are currently being schooled in buildings without running water and proper sewage drainage. There is insufficient lighting in classrooms due to the design of these buildings and their age. The building conditions are not conducive to learning and children are more likely to be exposed to acute and chronic health effects.

Saint Anne Catholic Primary School New Melong was created in 1965. It has both primary and kindergarten sections, and an enrollment of over 240 pupils. Saint Anne also experiences serious lack of infrastructure

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<sup>1</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council <https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2019/5-things-to-know-about-camerouns-three-crises/>

<sup>2</sup> 2018 Emergency Response Plan - United Nation Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/cmr\\_nw\\_sw\\_fa\\_2018-05\\_summary\\_v07\\_light\\_0.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/cmr_nw_sw_fa_2018-05_summary_v07_light_0.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> United Nation Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

<sup>4</sup> [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CAMEROONEXTN/Resources/AICD-Cameroon\\_Country\\_Report.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CAMEROONEXTN/Resources/AICD-Cameroon_Country_Report.pdf)



including degraded roads, lack of drinking water, old and collapsing school buildings, inadequate number and poor quality of chairs and tables in classrooms, overused blackboards, insufficient textbooks, a lack of equipped first aid room or trained nurse, and insufficient training for staff. Additionally, the kindergarten classroom is currently overcrowded as it houses upwards of two classrooms of children in the same locale, just about 90 students. These crowded conditions are pedagogically unacceptable because the pupil-teacher ratio, primary in Cameroon was 1 teacher to 41.47 pupils, as of 2015<sup>5</sup>. A project for the construction of 2 classrooms was initiated by the faithful of the parish. Due to lack of funding the building site was abandoned.

According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), in Cameroon, 20% of children aged 3–5 attend preschools in rural areas like Melong compared to 55% in urban areas<sup>6</sup>. Only 53% of children of the right age attend secondary school compared to 85% of primary-aged children in primary school. About 15% of the national budget is allocated to education sector. The current project to provide a better educational learning environment to children of the community of New Melong at St Anne Catholic school will benefit all children in the rural area of Melong regardless of their faith, religious beliefs, economic, or social status.

In the middle of the primary section is a classroom made of local makeshift materials that is dilapidated because of severe weather. When it rains the roof leaks rainwater into classrooms creating humidity which can cause mold and lead to chronic health conditions for children. The buildings have walls caving in and have no proper ventilation which means that when children play outside during recess, dust is carried into classrooms exposing students to acute and chronic health issues. It is unbearable to see children of this modern time taught under such conditions. Hence this project is to help this school to reorganize its infrastructure to modern standards. Knowing that all this cannot be done in one phase, we have decided to focus our initial phase in building 3 modern classrooms; 01 room for the Primary and 02 for the Kindergarten, and drill one borehole which will provide a source of drinking water to the students.

As coffee production has become mediocre and prices plummet in the market, many parents are struggling to pay school fees and provide certain essential needs to their children, including paying for the most needed textbooks. During this phase of the project, upon completion of building construction, we would also supply the classrooms with textbooks, cupboards to keep the textbooks, furniture (chairs, tables, and blackboards), and equipment (computers, notebooks, laptops, iPad, etc.) to help provide students with access to modern technology. Education is key to success and working together we can provide these children, regardless of their faith or religious beliefs with a second chance to learn, succeed, and develop to take care of themselves and also give back to others.

### **3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 General Objective**

To provide a quality educational environment conducive for effective study for the children of Saint Anne Catholic Primary School, New Melong.

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/cameroon/english/education.html>

### **3.2 Specific Objectives**

- a. To enable children who attend the school to receive quality education because only in a clean and favorable learning environment can knowledge be adequately acquired.
- b. To assist the Church and the local community in providing a quality education to the future leaders of this country.
- c. To ensure that children are well trained in order to guarantee a bright intellectual future for the population of Melong and its environs.

### **4. TARGET GROUP**

The target group is the children of Melong and the indigenes of Mbo'o villages and its environs, particularly Nkah-Mbouango, Mbokola and Elinga.

### **5. EXPECTED RESULTS**

- Over 400 children will receive sound education under very favorable and optimal conditions.
- The population will now see the value of education and work together to further educational endeavors in the area.
- More young boys and girls will be able to avail themselves of educational opportunities to better their life circumstances and prepare for future careers.
- The school will effectively provide integral education to the predominantly Catholic and Christian population of New Melong and Upper Melong in general and will benefit all children in the rural area of Melong regardless of their faith, religious beliefs, economic, or social status.

### **6. SUSTAINABILITY**

In government schools, primary education became free for all children in Cameroon in the year 2000 but parents pay minimal Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) levies<sup>7</sup>. The government is the largest provider of primary education. In the cities, the number of privately-owned primary schools is rising and the price to pay for education is increasing. Tuition and fees would typically run for about \$50 - \$100 per year at St Anne Catholic School, although most rural families receive a subsidy or reduced fees for their children. Since there is a possibility of increased enrollment due to the new infrastructure, it is anticipated that fees will still be collected from families to sustain the school. In addition, the Parent/Teacher Association will lead the effort to identify additional funding sources to sustain the project. Part of the tuition and fees, in addition to other subsidies, will be used to support the salaries and training for qualified teachers.

Taking the above into consideration, we appeal for this financial support from your organization because of your proven commitment to charitable, philanthropic and humanitarian efforts. We remain very grateful for the consideration and anticipated favorable response from your organization.

### **7. MEASURE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Prior to the initiation of the project, baseline information will be collected on the enrollment rate at the school and the state of the infrastructure. At the completion of the project, data will be collected

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<sup>7</sup> <http://haliaccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Cameroon-Education-Facts-Sheet.pdf>

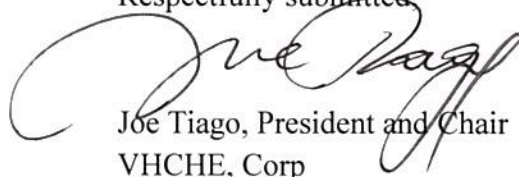


and compared to baseline information to measure the outcome of the project regarding the benefits to the community (e.g, more children enrolled in school and staying in school, etc.).

## 8. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Opportunity will be given to our benefactors or anyone interested to visit the project site. Detailed accounting information will be available as the project progresses. Pictures and videos of the constructions will be made available on the VHCHE website at <https://vhche.org/>.

Respectfully submitted



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Attachments

**APPENDIX A:**

**PROJECT COST FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF  
3 CLASSROOM - CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEW MELONG**

S/N	DESCRIPTION	UNITS	QTY	UNIT COST CFA	TOTAL COST CFA	TOTAL COST USD
A	<b>SITE PREPARATION</b>					
1	Demolish and clearing of the site	m <sup>2</sup>	240		1 200 000	\$2,181.82
2	Setting out	m <sup>2</sup>	240		248 000	\$450.91
	<b>Sub total site preparation</b>				<b>1 448 000</b>	<b>\$2,632.73</b>
B	<b>FOUNDATION WORKS</b>					
	<b>B1: EXCAVATION WORKS</b>					
1	Excavation of foundation and pillar bases	m <sup>3</sup>		5 000	400 000	\$727.27
2	Back filling of foundation, sides and bases	m <sup>3</sup>		2 500	200 000	\$363.64
	<b>Sub total foundation works</b>				<b>600 000</b>	<b>\$1,090.91</b>
	<b>B2: CEMENT WORKS</b>					
1	Stones for foundation	m <sup>3</sup>	23.5	35 500	835 650	\$1,519.36
2	Reinforced concrete pillar bases	m <sup>3</sup>	3.0	75 000	225 000	\$409.09
3	Mass concrete for blinding	m <sup>3</sup>	2.5	40 000	100 000	\$181.82
4	20cm core filled blocks	No.	400	875	350 000	\$636.36
5	Laying of blocks	No.	400	37.5	115 000	\$209.09
6	Concreting of DPC	m <sup>3</sup>	8.8	100 000	880 000	\$1,600.00
7	Over site floor concrete 10cm thick	m <sup>3</sup>	3.1	75 000	607 500	\$1,104.55
	<b>Sub total cement works</b>				<b>3 113 150</b>	<b>\$5,660.27</b>
C	<b>THE SUPER STRUCTURE</b>					
	<b>RAISING OF WALLS</b>					
1	Moulding of blocks	No.	5 000	700	3 750 000	\$6,818.19
2	Laying of blocks	No.	5 000	100	500 000	\$909.09
3	Concreting of pillars	m <sup>3</sup>	3.1	75 000	232 500	\$422.73
4	Concreting of beams	m <sup>3</sup>	2.4	75 000	180 000	\$327.27
5	Plastering of walls	m <sup>2</sup>	96	2 000	192 000	\$349.09
6	Sand screed for floors with trowel finish	m <sup>3</sup>	12.3	7 500	92 250	\$167.73
	<b>Sub total raising of the walls</b>				<b>4 946 750</b>	<b>\$8,994.09</b>
D	<b>ROOFING WORKS</b>					
1	Timber for trusses 2x6	No.	100	400	400 000	\$727.27
2	Timber for purlins 2x3	No.	100	900	90 000	\$163.64
3	Application of solignum	tins	1.0	40 000	40 000	\$72.73
4	Nail 120	packets	10.0	3 000	30 000	\$54.55
5	Nail 100	Packets	10.0	3 000	30 000	\$54.55
6	Nail 90	Packets	10.0	3 000	30 000	\$54.55
7	Nail 80	Packets	10.0	3 000	30 000	\$54.55
8	Zinc nails	packets	10.0	5 000	50 000	\$90.91
9	Aluminium roofing sheets 4/10 gauge	m <sup>2</sup>	720	4 750	3 420 000	\$6,218.18
10	Top ridging	No.	8.0	3 000	24 000	\$43.64
11	Corner ridging	No.	24	3 000	72 000	\$130.91
12	Tole bac for fascia	No.	30	11 250	337 500	\$613.64
	<b>Sub total roofing works</b>				<b>4 553 500</b>	<b>\$8,278.12</b>

E	CEILING WORKS					
1	4mm plywood ceiling including joist, noggins and battens	m <sup>2</sup>	90.0	3 750	337 500	\$613.64
2	Aluminium roofing sheets for external ceiling	m <sup>2</sup>	32.0	6 000	192 000	\$349.09
	<b>Sub total ceiling works</b>				<b>529 500</b>	<b>\$962.73</b>
F	CARPENTRY WORKS					
1	Door frames with hard wood	No	3.0	15 000	45 000	\$81.82
2	Doors shutters complete with hard wood	No	6.0	40 000	240 000	\$436.36
3	Window frames	No	6.0	15 000	90 000	\$163.64
	<b>Sub total carpentry works</b>				<b>375 000</b>	<b>\$681.82</b>
G	METAL WORKS					
1	Fabrication of window frames	No	5.0	37 500	187500	\$340.91
	<b>Sub total metal works</b>				<b>187 500</b>	<b>\$340.91</b>
I	ELECTRICAL FITTING					
1	Fluorescent fittings complete	No	12.0	6 500	78 000	\$141.82
2	Flush wall switch	No	6.0	1 500	9 000	\$16.36
3	Conduit pipe	Roll	6.0	13 000	78 000	\$141.82
4	Cable	Roll	15.0	20 000	300 000	\$545.45
5	Flush wall plugs	No	12.0	1000	12 000	\$21.82
6	Other accessories	sum	sum	sum	200 000	\$363.64
	<b>Sub total electrification</b>				<b>677 000</b>	<b>\$1,230.91</b>
J	LOUVERS					
1	Louver frames	Pairs	20.0	5 500	110 000	\$200.00
2	Louver blades	No	60.0	2 200	132 000	\$240.00
	<b>Sub total louvers</b>				<b>242 000</b>	<b>\$440.00</b>
K	PAINTING WORKS					
1	White washing coat on all surfaces	m <sup>2</sup>	500.0	375	187 500	\$340.91
2	Application of pantex800 on external wall surface	m <sup>2</sup>	400.0	750	300 000	\$545.45
3	Application of pantex800 on ceiling surfaces	m <sup>2</sup>	100.0	750	75 000	\$136.36
4	Application of Email oil paint on skirting	m <sup>2</sup>	200.0	800	160 000	\$290.91
	<b>Sub total painting works</b>				<b>722 500</b>	<b>\$1,313.64</b>
L	FORM WORK					
1	Timber for form work 1x12 boards	No	30.0	6 600	198 000	\$360.00
2	Timber for formwork 2x3	No	30.0	3 500	105 000	\$190.91
3	Timber for form work 2x4	No	30.0	4 500	135 000	\$245.45
	<b>Sub total</b>				<b>438 000</b>	<b>\$796.36</b>
					<b>17 832 900</b>	<b>\$32,423.45</b>
	Miscellaneous 10%				1783280	\$3,242.25
	Sub total				19 616 180	\$35,665.68
	Transportation and labor (25%)				4 904 045	\$8,916.42
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				<b>24 520 225</b>	<b>\$44,582.10</b>

## APPENDIX B:



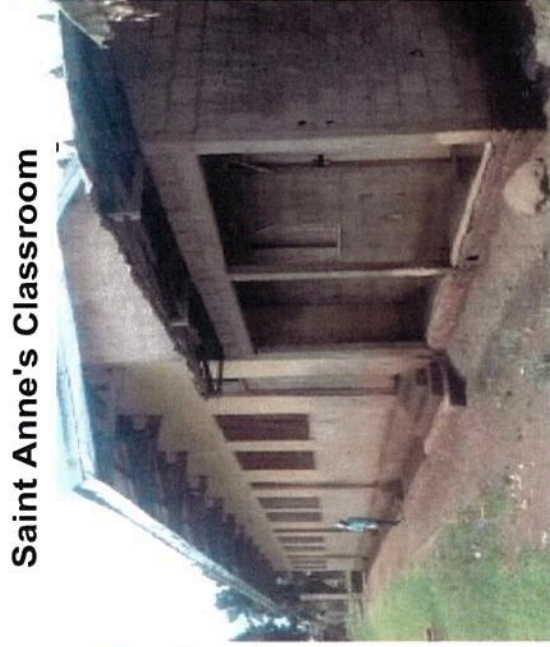


APPENDIX C: PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING STRUCTURES

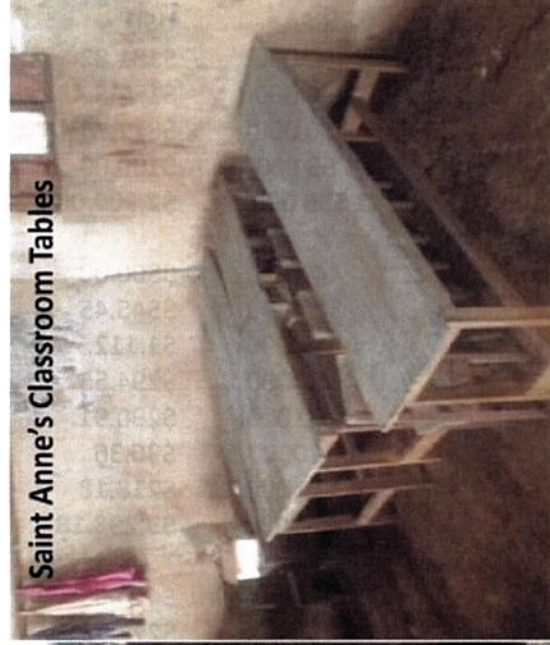
Saint Anne's Classroom



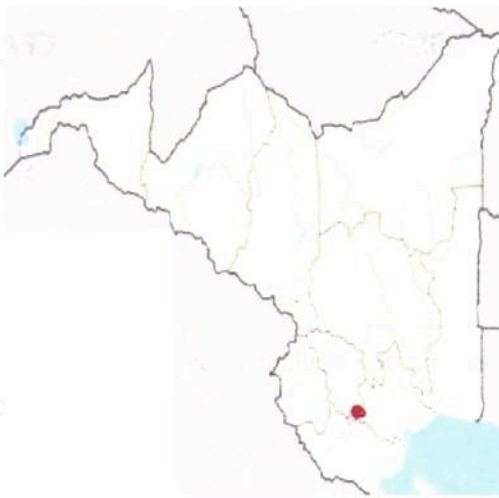
Saint Anne's Classroom



Saint Anne's Classroom Tables



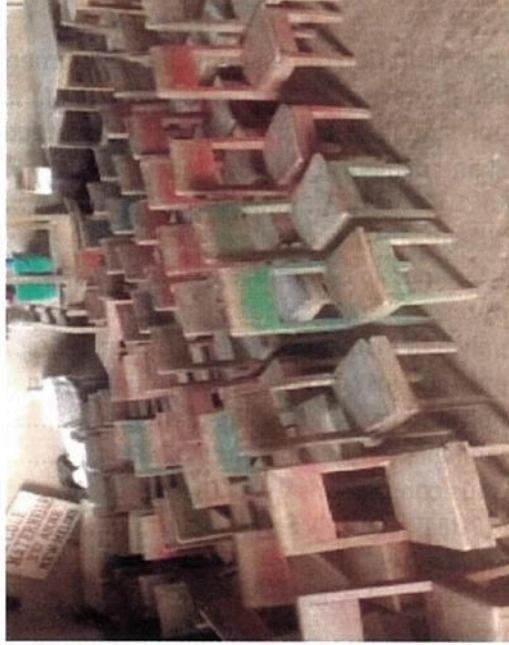
Melong on the Cameroon Map



Saint Anne's Classroom Blackboard



Saint Anne's Classroom Chairs





Children who will benefit from this project.



Current building structure at St. Anne

