

## Primary Education for unschooled children in Burkina Faso

**Project Location:** Burkina Faso  
**Project sector:** Primary Education (MDG #2)  
**Project duration:** October 2009 – June 2010  
**Amount requested:** £10,000  
**Impact:** 60 children transferred to formal primary schools  
**Output:** 75 children enrolled in 3 Speed Schools  
**Cost:** £3,333 per speed school, £133 per child

### The Problem

In Burkina Faso there are an estimated 1.2 million school-aged children who are not currently, or have never enrolled in a school. The reason is that Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world, with 72% of the population living on less than \$2 a day<sup>1</sup>. Many parents have insufficient income to pay for education, and children are often required to work at home or help with subsistence farming. Once the opportunity to gain an education has been missed at an early age, it soon becomes too late to re-enter the system, because children over the age of 8 are required to pass a national exam to enroll in government schools. Unfortunately no state programme exists to reintegrate children who have been left out.

In 2004 our implementing partner Stromme Foundation West Africa discovered that young out-of-school children were attending adult vocational and literacy training centres in order to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills. In response, research was undertaken to identify ways in which the needs of these children could be addressed.

### The Solution: Speed Schools

The concept of ‘Speed School’ was developed to provide children between the ages of 8 and 12 with sufficient basic education to be able to pass the national entry examination for admittance to government primary schools, enabling them to catch up with their peers. The Speed School curriculum was developed by regional education experts in cooperation with local organisations, and compresses the first three years of primary education into 9 months. It is targeted towards vulnerable children, serving as a link between non-formal and formal education. Teachers receive thorough training in the curriculum, which focuses on literacy in the local language and French, as well as numerical skills - topics that the children have missed. Each speed school consists of one teacher and up to 30 students, who do not pay school fees.

The concept is introduced into each community by ‘animators’ who are trained by the local organisation, and are from that same community. Parent committees are established to oversee the children’s progress and to ensure local ownership and support for the programme. Local communities provide a classroom and housing for a teacher, and the local organisation provides materials such as a blackboard and desks. After 9 months the children are equipped to take the entry exam enabling them to rejoin primary school at an age-appropriate level, and Speed School moves on to the next village<sup>2</sup>.

The objectives of the speed school programme are to:

- Provide access to education for the most vulnerable children between the ages of 8 and 12
- Equip students to pass qualifying exams, enabling them to re-enter the formal school system
- Increase school enrolment rates for primary school aged children.

### Speed School Programme overview



<sup>1</sup> UNDP Human Development Report 2007/08 Indicator Tables

<sup>2</sup> If there is significant unmet demand for catch-up schooling, Speed School stays in that village for another year, or until all the out-of-school children have been ‘caught up’.

The funding requested will enable our local partners to establish 3 new speed schools in Burkina Faso. This contribution will form part of our wider programme, aimed at addressing the educational needs of 3.2 million out-of-school children in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso using the Speed School methodology. Since the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, 644 speed schools have been established, 427 speed school teachers trained and 18,280 children enrolled in speed schools, out of which 16,505 have to date been transferred into primary schools. In 2009 it is expected that another 565 speed schools will be established, into which 14,125 children will be enrolled. So far, community animators have worked alongside 29,383 parents and community members to raise awareness of and support for the programme. The programme has received the endorsement of the governments of all three countries, and Stromme West Africa has signed agreements with all three Ministries of Education who have agreed to support the expansion of speed schools in order to meet the goal of universal primary education.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Stromme Foundation West Africa produces quarterly and annual reports and the results are independently monitored by Geneva Global through staff visits and analysis. Geneva Global produces an Annual Report on the combined West Africa speed school programmes which can be provided, alongside a year-end report specific to this grant.

### Project outcome and Impact

- 3 speed schools to be established (direct impact)
- 75 children to be enrolled in speed schools (direct impact)
- 60 children to be admitted into government primary school in the following school year.

### Outline Budget

Description	Cost
<b>Local partner direct costs:</b> including staff training and salaries, motorbike maintenance and fuel, administration, monitoring and year end technical evaluation.	£3,300
<b>Teacher Salaries</b>	£1,800
Teacher training cost	£750
<b>Centre costs:</b> desks, chairs, blackboard, chair and table for teacher	£1,500
School materials for children: textbooks, notebooks, pens, pencils, chalk	£240
<b>Capacity Building:</b> Training workshops for local partners, quality assurance	£1,410
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	£1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,000</b>

### Case Study

Jamila, aged 12, had never attended school until Speed School arrived in her village. She is the youngest of nine siblings, and since the age of 6 had been sent to the market every day to sell pancakes, and also helped her mother with housework.

Jamila said “I so desperately wanted to go to school that I signed up without my parents knowing”. She is now one of 25 students at the Speed School in her village. In the photograph she is sitting at her desk, smiling – she has been given text books, exercise books and pencils. For many of the children in the class, it is their first experience of school. Jamila’s parents now accept her wish to go to school, and recognise how important education is for her future.

