

The Open Classroom Newsletter

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Educating Africa's Children

JUNE 2012

Our 10th Year...

Founded in 2002, and Still Moving Ahead

The Open Classroom is located at The African Heritage Village of Essence International School. 20 Kashim Ibrahim Road, Kaduna, Nigeria

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A Young Population Looks Forward

Mrs. B. H. Garba, our Vice President, cradles one of the babies at Rugan Fulani



Just like in the larger areas of the country, the population at Rugan Fulani is young and growing. As new babies are born plans must be made to keep them healthy. Their loving parents have high hopes for their future well-being and education, and they would want them to carry forth their cherished customs and traditions. The Open Classroom is working in collaboration with the National Commission for Nomadic Education to ensure that the community

has access to education, healthcare and the veterinary services they need for their herds. We are liaising with Igabi Local Government officials to ensure that the community gains recognition as one of the area's stable and resourceful group of indigenes with capable leaders who provide for their families and who meet and plan for the immediate and eventual growth and success of the next generation.

Our Members Work to Secure Birth and Indigenization Certificates for the Rugan Fulani Community... in support of the National Registration Program, National Integration, Human Rights, and the Rights of the Child



M. Sani and Mal. Sambo filling the forms



: Mallam Usman of Rugan Fulani thumb printing the form

As part of The Open Classroom's mission, the NGO saw the need of getting birth and indigenization certificates for the Rugan Fulani communities resident at Gwazaye (off Airport Road) in Afaka District, Igabi Local Government area, Kaduna State.


The NGO set up a committee comprising of Malam Sambo Saleh, Nasir Musa. and Sani Roufai to see to the regularising of the birth and indigenization certificates for the community. The team contacted the community leaders about our mission and set up a date for taking passport photographs of the Rugan Fulani inhabitants.

The committee visited the Igabi Local Government Secretariat, on the 26th March 2012, to present our letter to the council's Chair-

man. He was away at the moment, but we were received by his personal assistant who directed us to copy the same letter to the District Head (Hakimi) of the area of domicile of the people. We therefore visited the District of Rigasa (Hakimin Rigasa). He informed us that the district has been divided into two and Rugan Fulani falls under the Afaka District. The team visited the Mai Girma Rubun Zazzau, Hakimin Afaka and Village head of Gwazaye on the 2nd April, 2012 to intimate them of our mission and seek their assistance. The District Head received us warmly expressing his appreciation of the untiring effort of The Open Classroom in uplifting the status of the Fulani people and the community in general. He promised to assist us where necessary.

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Birth Certificates cont.



Form B 2

Caution: Any person who (1) Falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate or (2) uses a falsified certificate as true knowing it to be false is liable to prosecution.

ORIGINAL

REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION

Certificate of Birth A11_ 2533733

Issued under the Births and Deaths Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Decree No. 69 of 1992

Registration Centre: JAGI

Town/Village: CUSA 2740

L.G.A.: JAGI

State: KADUNA

Volume: 11 | Year: 72 | Entry No.: 1330

This is to certify that the birth, details of which are recorded herein has been registered on

13 03 72
Day Month Year at this Registration Centre

1. Full Name: ZAKAR, SAPIYA
(Surname first) (In block letters)

2. Sex: Female 3. Date of Birth: 13 03 72
Day Month Year

4. Place of Birth: CUSA 2740 Town/Village

5. Full name of Father: ADAMI ZAKAR
(Surname first) (In block letters)

6. Full name of Mother: ZAKAR, Halima
(Surname first) (In block letters)

Place of Issue: JAGI

Date: 13-03-72

NATIONAL REGISTRATION PROGRAMME

Name of Registrar: [Signature]

Signature of Registrar: [Signature]

Here is one of the original birth certificates for the community. A young baby has just been certified and legally registered as a Nigerian, entitled to all the rights of the child. This is a precious document that entitles every citizen to enjoy the wealth and prosperity of the land and also enjoins each one of us to be hard working, loyal, and patriotic.

At every point of our visit we presented letters of introduction to them expressing our mission and seeking their assistance.

On 3rd and 4th April, we were at Turunku, Igabi Local Government Secretariat to see the officer in charge of population. We were given some forms that required lots of information. We filled the forms in conjunction with the Rugan Fulani elders. It took us 3 days to complete the forms for every member of the community and they thumb printed each form.

After a lengthy discussion with the officer, a copy of the list of all Rugan Fulani community was handed over to him. A few weeks later, the officer called us to collect the birth certificates.

The Indigene certificate would have been ready at the same time as the birth certificates, but there were no hard copies of the certificates at the Local Government Headquarters. However, assurances were given that as soon as the certificates are ready, we would be intimated to come and collect them.

CONSTRAINTS

Because of the security situation in the country, there was some resistance from the Local Government officials when we first approached them about the registration of the Rugan Fulani Residents. They asked us why now? We had to educate them on the need for the certificates and solicited their assistance towards making sure we get the certificates. In this regard, the Hakimi had to step in and talk to them to assist us as those people are his subjects and they reside in his domain.

RECOMMENDATION

We suggest that the original certificates be laminated and handed over to the members of the community while a copy to be kept by The Open Classroom for record purposes.

Learning How to Ride on the Bicycle Path



Riding a tri-cycle is not as easy as it looks. The Open Classroom brought some tricycles for the nursery students at Rugan Fulani. They seemed happy to get on the trikes, but were not sure about how to get them moving. Parents basically had to push them along. When they finally made a connection between pushing the pedals and moving forward, they opted for parents to push them!



We are still hoping that the little ones will learn how to pedal, steer, keep their hands on the handle bars, and their eyes forward. There is a bicycle, walking or jogging path at the new school building. This is a place where they can practice under supervision.

School Children Receive New Tee-Shirts



A New and very basic designed white tee-shirt was introduced this term. This is virtually fade-proof—since it is already white. The children were happy to receive them and they promised to keep them clean and wear them to school . We realized that wearing jeans and a tee-shirt was a practical way for the children to feel relaxed and at ease on the playground where they do a lot of climbing, jumping and sometimes even hanging upside-down. If they fall down once in a while, the jeans will protect their legs from scrapes.

Students Establish School Garden



The school garden is ornamental and designed to beautify and protect the school environment by fixing the soil so as to reduce the amount of dust in the air during the dry season.

The school farm will be used for growing vegetables.



The Open Classroom Team supplied tropical ginger plants and ornamental green plants with bi-color leaves for the flower beds. The Fulani were asked to prepare the flower beds by opening up the soil, removing the rocks and applying natural fertilizer from their animals to improve the soil. Most of the plants have been put into the ground and we are now waiting for them to stabilize. We also intend to plant fruit trees around the perimeter of our site. The school children and adults have pledged to water the plants. We have been lucky thus far during this rainy season, for most of the plants appear to be fully established.

We intend to include gardening in our school curriculum so that the children and the community at large will learn to appreciate plants as living things of beauty and the basis of our food chain. One of our goals is to plant vegetables and fruits all around our perimeter so as to increase the availability and variety of food for the families. They are not aware of the “food chain” or “food groups,” so this will be a main theme at our next assembly. We understand that food security begins at the community level. There is no national public school feeding program, and it doesn’t appear to exist at the state level either. So families and communities would be wise to set up small and medium size farms where they can grow corn, beans, peppers, onions, tomatoes, cabbage and potatoes.



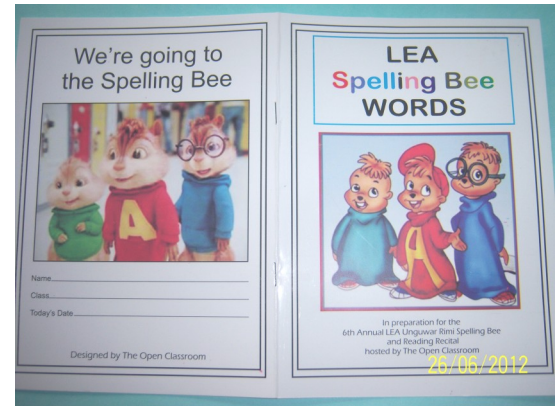
The new school building, donated by The Open Classroom, houses two classrooms and an office, a garden and playground outside, and a walkway for riding tricycles, walking or jogging.

As the community grows, they will need to expand their options for education and training.

Spelling Bee at Unguwar Rimi

L.E.A. Primary School

The Open Classroom presented the first ever Spelling Bee at Unguwar Rimi L.E.A. Primary School on Monday July 2, 2007. Since then, it has become an annual event in the school.



SPELLING BEE BOOKLET

Public school children are willing to participate in activities that enhance and enrich the school curriculum. The children are eager to come to school, learn new concepts and show off their good work. It is upon this premise and others that the Open Classroom has taken it as a privilege to work with Unguwar Rimi LEA Primary School. The various Principals and teachers in the school have been so helpful and understanding, and they show so much interest and give their full cooperation.

Towards the end of last year 2011, the Open Classroom made a donation of reading books for the various grade levels to enhance reading in Unguwar Rimi LEA Primary School. To ensure that the Open Classroom achieves its aims and objectives of educating Africa's Children and beyond, a three-member committee was appointed by the CEO of the Open Classroom, Mrs. D.L. Mohammed, to follow up the reading programs in the school. The committee is made up of Mrs. Florence Osara, Mr. Arthur Joseph, and Mr. Kwame Donkor. They made several visits to the school to monitor and appraise the reading programs.

It was during one of such visits that the committee was introduced to the new administrator of the school, Mrs. Lawal. Like her predecessors, she has been very supportive to the committee.

On May 14, 2012, the CEO of the Open Classroom mandated the committee to start preparations for the annual Spelling Bee at Unguwar Rimi LEA Primary School. The sixth in succession was slated to hold on Wednesday July 4, 2012.

The Committee swung into action to prepare a time-table and assign classes to interested teachers who indicated their desire to prepare the children for the Spelling Bee. To encourage the pupils to develop a reading culture, the CEO of the Open Classroom, Mrs. D. L. Mohammed made a donation of booklets containing words for each grade level. These were distributed to all the 1,750 pupils in the school. Also, school supplies such as copybooks, pencils and crayons were given to the pupils. Worksheets and flash cards were also prepared for them.

This year, all the classes are participating in the Spelling Bee with the exception of Primary 3 which is reading "Zahra and Coco Alphabet," written by Dr. Fatima Akilu.

It is our earnest expectation that, like the year before, more talents will be revealed this year. Indeed, it is a great privilege for the Open Classroom to work with Unguwar Rimi LEA Primary School, Kaduna.

Poet's Corner

Hope Springs Eternal

Oh peace where are you?

Come cover me with your blanket so large

Keep me warm and reassured

That my tomorrow will not lie in ruins

From the rancour of today.

Ever so loudly, I hear the wailing of the afflicted

Crying for your embrace and assurances

In your cocoon, hope springs eternal

I close my eyes and dream dreams so sweet

I think thoughts that can move mountains

Ever so large your ambience builds shades of opportunities
unlimited

Yet so weak and ephemeral, you sift through my clutch

Your warm embrace a veneer that rents in a thousand shreds

At the slightest show of indifference by those you seek to protect

Like a scared bird, you take flight and with you, your shade.

Howbeit I seek for you for I find solace in your presence when the
shreds are mended.

In your presence, the grass and trees are greener

The sun shines brighter

I carry a smile as a stamp of reassurance

That hope springs eternal.

by Nasir Musa

Immunization at Rugan Fulani



Preparing to give the MMR shot for measles, mumps and Rubella, Mrs. Jummai Mamuda tries to reassure one of the small children.



Mrs. Jummai Mamuda assists with immunization, deworming Rugan Fulani. There was also a question and answer session on family planning- all sponsored by Kaduna North Local Government.

Guaranty Trust Bank Donates to Rugan Fulani and LEA and U/Rimi Items will be distributed to both schools.

