



Project: Bantam School Project
Project Reporting: December 2016
Project Leader: Barry Hoffner
To: Ms. Ellen Zaroff

Summary of Project

Caravan to Class is focused on building one carefully-selected school per year in villages near the fabled Timbuktu and supporting the schools' operations for a period of time. This year's (2016-17 school year) construction project is centered in the village of Bantam, which is situated on the banks of the Niger River in the Cercle (administrative unit) of Dire. The school is a 3-classroom cement school which includes, desks/chairs (students), desks/chairs teachers, and uniforms. Forix provided a much needed grant to fund these additional items. As the Founder and Executive Director of Caravan to Class, I am responsible for the Bantam project with our local NGO partner, Nord et Developpement (Nor Dev), providing the execution and administration.

Progress

Bantam is the 10th school construction project built by Caravan to Class since 2010. We use the same model for all the schools and the same head macon who supervises construction, with the village providing unskilled labor. Please find attached photos which show the progression of the school. We expect the Bantam school to be finished in late January which is on schedule vs our expectations. I plan to personally attend the inauguration in February 2017.

Staffing

Direct Staffing: Both Mr. Hamadou Toure and Mr. Abdoulaye Toure (of Nord Dev) have, as usual been very involved with the project with Hamadou focusing on working with village leaders and the Ministry of Education to ensure the proper amount of village and government support and Abdoulaye supervising the construction, including taking photos of the progression on a regular basis.

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Budget

Caravan to Class operates on fixed price bid contracts, normally sourcing two different bids. As such, costs were exactly in line with amounts budgeted. See attached bill of sale/receipt.

Other Funding

All other grants noted in Expected Sources of Funding (see attached) came through as expected.

Milestones Current

The Bantam school project went very much according to plan. We have built the last three schools in the same Cercle and Commune (administrative units) where we know the governmental heads well and the village leadership. Thus we are very confident that the Bantam school will be very successful (attendance and village leadership advocacy) as our last two schools in the villages of Samdiar and Kakondji. We really have had no difficult issues, other than the general security concerns in the area which have not impacted our work.

Milestones Future

As mentioned above, we expect this school to be completed in January, latest early February. Should that expectation change, we will flag that in advance. I am personally looking forward to attending the inauguration of the school and, as mentioned, will send pictures of the items the Forix grant funded, when they are available within the next month.

Opinion

We are very happy with the project. The children have been learning in temporary tent accommodations since early in 2016. They see progress on the school construction to the point where they are very excited to be in their new school. We do expect similar numbers of children attending school to our expectations of about 120 children. Please see attached pictures. At the time of sending of this report, we did not yet have pictures of desks/chairs, uniforms, etc. We will send in an update early in 2017.

Finally

Caravan to Class strategy is to build one new cement school per year (and if budgetary feeds exceed the goals for that year, rehabilitate an existing mud-brick school) and support the schools we built for a period of 3 years to allow time for the village and/or Ministry of Education to assume financial responsibility for the village. This is stipulated

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in our contract with the village. In addition, in our contract with the Timbuktu Ministry of Education, they send a direct at their cost, to run the school and the school becomes a “public school”.

Caravan to Class is fortunate and grateful to have a small but growing network of foundations that support our work. Specifically, given our above strategy, it is helpful to have foundations with specific areas of advocacy within our mission to both reinforce and support each area of programming. Obviously, we are grateful for the funding of items like desks/chairs, chalkboards etc. In addition, items like uniforms is a huge help in the pursuit of our goal of “making going to school” a routine part of life and for that we are grateful to the Forix Foundation.

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