



A teacher for the handicapped (in the wheelchair)



Tools and Machines for the Handicapped

Dear Friends!

How can we **help the blind, deaf, dumb and handicapped** to support themselves in this country? This new challenge faced us when an association for the handicapped from Yaounde asked us recently if we could help them.

Besides clothing and wheelchairs etc they asked if we could try to

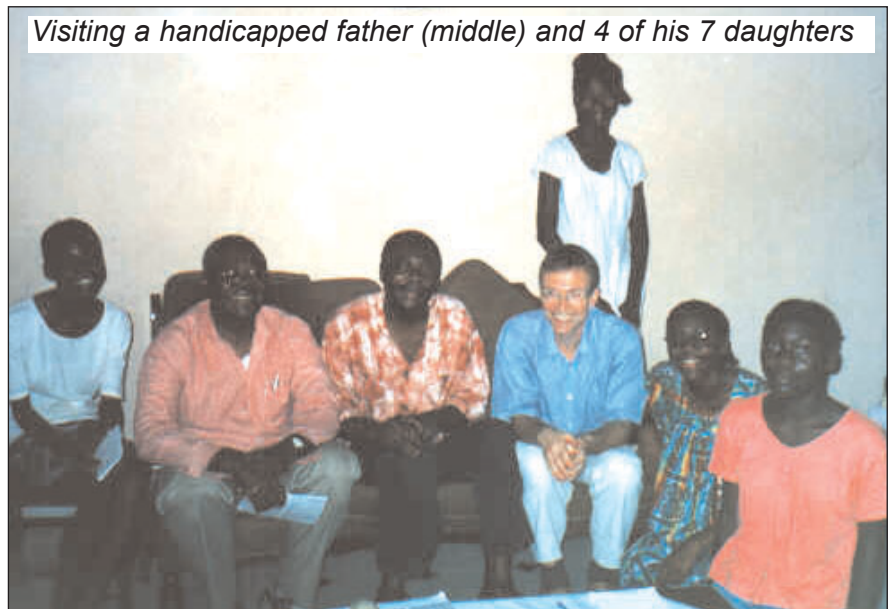
possibly bring some **tools and machines to make shoes and keys**. My oldest brother promptly offered to help us in this matter and contacted the Federal Shoemaker Association and "Mister Minit" in Germany. We hope that we can get plenty of materials and in this way help lots of the most needy here, not just with a "fish", but teaching them "how to fish" – helping them to help themselves.

We were told that about 10 % of the population in Cameroon is handicapped. A lot of them suffer from **polio** or **meningitis**, including **malnutrition** in some parts of the country.

When visiting the association for handicapped personally, we found out that there is also a big **need for sewing machines and carpentry tools**. We are now trying to find people who can help us to also get some of these materials, so that we can help more people. The handicapped will be getting training in these professions, to make it easier for them getting integrated in society instead of living on the fringes. At the same time we hope that they will be able to support themselves in the future.

This challenge spoke to us, and we pray that on my visit to Germany we can collect sufficient materials for this project besides the usual humanitarian aid. During this trip we need to **prepare everything for the container** and after everything is collected, sorted and ready to get loaded, we'll need another miracle, to get it all through customs in Douala! We already made some contacts for this and need your prayers that it works out, once everything is ready, probably in September.

Visiting a handicapped father (middle) and 4 of his 7 daughters

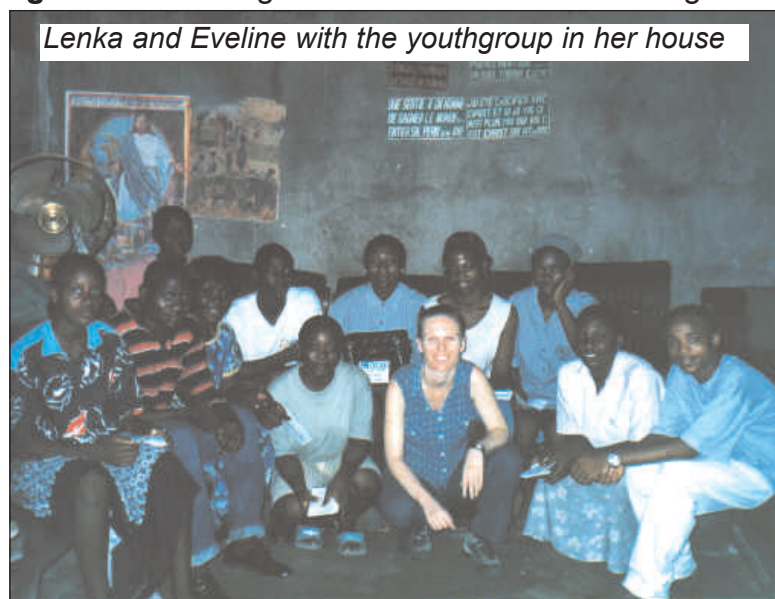


The Minister of Social Affairs, Mme Dr. Fouda, personally guided us through some **old-folks-homes and orphanages** in Yaounde, which we would also like to help. Dear Sisters there are taking in old people, which for example were found living alone and helpless on the street. In one orphanage was a 14 year old boy who was found in the woods and was so weak that he couldn't even walk.

Besides the humanitarian aid we also made **progress on the spiritual side of life**, where there is a great vacuum and need here. Although most people are Christians, a lot of them don't know much about the Bible, but are very interested in it. They are also very thankful if you show them how to keep themselves free from negative spiritual forces. Here is one example:

Lenka is teaching the **youth group of Eveline's congregation** in her parent's living room. She reports: "The very humble room has posters of Jesus and Bible verses taped to the muddy walls. The floor consists of piled up sand. Eveline explained that last year during the rainy season their whole house got flooded and one day she woke up with water above her ankles. Because of a lack of finances they had to use the sand solution to make the ground about 20 cm higher so that they wouldn't get flooded again.

Their youth group was a lively bunch. When we entered they were all up dancing, playing the drums and singing from all their hearts. After our Biblestudy we had an open forum for any questions and were surprised how freely they confided in us some of the problems they encounter in their Christian life in Cameroon. The girls also shared heartbreaking stories of how the women are being abused if they want to pursue a school, get a job, or by their bosses once they have a job, being from poorer backgrounds etc. They explained about the difficulties of being a Christian in a country full of traditional religions, the outcasts they become if they don't want to bow to their village's Gods etc. Our hearts really went out to them. They were in desperate **need of encouragement** and fought condemnation for not doing enough for the Lord. We tried to share with them



Lenka and Eveline with the youthgroup in her house

At an old-folks-home with the Minister of Social Affaires



the Love of God and His tender care for them even if they would fall at times. We also told them about His personal involvement in each of their lives and to what length He goes to to take care of and understand them. "He's touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Hebr. 4:15). They definitely seemed encouraged after we finished, and begged us to come again."

We would like to take this opportunity to **thank you** all, who contribute to our project, financially or materially and through your prayers!

Wolfgang Schmidt und Team.

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