

Year 2007 in review

The year 2007 has seen significant growth in the OK Clean Water Project's work in Cameroon. The project has worked in 14 villages to bring clean water closer to the areas where people live. During 2007, 23 new standpipes have been installed, three new catchments and five new storage tanks have been built and close to 20 kilometres of piping have been laid. In Mbokam, a major project was initiated to bring water from a distant water source to an area that had no previous infrastructure. Phase I of this project has been completed.

In addition, an Advisory Committee has been set up to work with Sister Cathy Molloy and her co-workers and to travel to the areas where the projects are in progress, taking some of the burden away from Cathy and giving more local ownership and responsibility to the villagers. Also, a programme to train local villagers in the maintenance and upkeep of the installations has been undertaken. By the end of 2007, 10 new requests had been made. As well, some older projects still need to be completed.

We are convinced that this model of a project is one that works precisely because it is a partnership that engages people at every stage of implementation both here and in Cameroon.

Thanks to the generous support of so many, we were able to send more than \$55,000 to Cameroon during 2007. School children, here in Ottawa and in Toronto and Japan, raised almost \$20,000 for the project. Many of these schools are supporting the project again this year.

On the homefront, we have seen some significant developments as well. Two successful events were held – a cabaret evening called “Making Waves” at the 4th Stage and a pre-Christmas Brunch at the St. Elias Centre. We printed our first OK calendar, have opened an investment account ready for possible donations, have computerized our financial records and have updated our website. New members have joined our committee and have added new life to the project. Several donors are making monthly or bimonthly contributions and some are celebrating special occasions, like birthdays and anniversaries, with gifts to OK.

2008 marks five years since the project began. We are happy to be welcoming Cathy Molloy for the cabaret on May 7 at the 4th Stage. Cathy will be celebrating 50 years as a CND – so there will be lots to cheer about. Already in 2008, 18 schools are contributing to the project, some for the fifth year in a row. Again, we hope to hold our annual “Brunch with the Bunch” in the late Fall. We will have a display at the Ecofair on April 19 at the RA Centre. We are open to new and fresh ideas!!

Once again, we are heartened by the reports of improved health and lightened burdens for the people of Cameroon and we are encouraged by the enthusiasm and generosity of so many people here on the homefront. Thanks to all who are making it happen!