Kirker African Medical Relief Association - KAMRA

Barbara Kirker School students line up for classes to begin

January 2015
A recent report from the UN showed that more than 10,000 people arrived in eastern Niger in December, fleeing violence in Nigeria. In all, more than 150,000 people have fled Nigeria since 2013 deadly attacks by Islamist Boko Haram and the fierce repression of the military. Among these refugees, there are mainly children separated from their families, and women vainly searching for their children, and young men who fear being forced to enroll in the islamist group.

In December, and early January Boko Haram attacked Gaidam, a town located less than 10 miles from the Niger border, and 20 miles from Maine Soroa. More attacks occurred in Maiduguri, Damaturu, and Damasak, in Borno and Yobe states all in Nigeria, in a radius of 100 miles from Maine Soroa.

On January 2nd, 2015 the Barbara Kirker Second Chance School admitted 96 refugee children who fled Boko Haram attacks in their villages in Northern Nigeria. This first set of students are temporarily attending classes in two tent classrooms. Construction of two cement classrooms will start soon thanks to a support provided by UNHCR. UNICEF provided school kits and supplies needed to start the school year. In the district of Maine Soroa, more than 2,000 refugee children aged 9-14 years await such opportunity.

The Barbara Kirker Second Chance School, established in 2007 as an alternative for disenfranchised children to get an education, currently has 112 students. The school has had over 90% percent success rate in graduating students who have caught up with their peers and entered the mainstream education system at the secondary school level. The 96 refugee children join the school as they pursue an education which is being denied to them in their home country due to the violence.
Refugee children currently in Niger live in refugee camps, or with extended families in Maine Soroa, and other nearby communities, as a result of their security having been shattered, separated from friends and family members. Vulnerable, and in desperate need of education, these children deserve to get the means of rebuilding their lives through adequate educational opportunity. They are at risk of depression, idleness, and in the worst case, they could join the very extremist group which is recruiting among vulnerable and disadvantaged social categories like theirs. Exposed to a great deal of hardship and trauma, these children and their parents have shown tremendous determination to make the best of a bad situation, and to prepare for the day when they can resume a normal life. This includes the interest shown towards schooling by many of the children whose dream of getting an education was brought to an halt by Boko Haram.

To help provide education to these refugee children, victims of Boko Haram violence visit our website, www.kirkerassociation.org, and click on the donate button to make your contribution. You can also send your contribution by check to:

**KAMRA**

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