

# Hornby Educational Trust

## Creation of Anglais Teachers' Association Chapter in the West Region Cameroon

2021-2022 Teacher Association Project Report

Anglaise Teachers' Association



## REPORT ON HORNBY-FUNDED TEACHER ASSOCIATION PROJECT

**Title: Creation of Anglais Teachers' Association chapter in the West Region**

**Country: Cameroon**

**Dates of project: October, 2020 to May, 2021**

### 1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

**What are the main issues in your English teaching and learning context?**

**How did these issues influence your choice of project?**

**Were there also other important contextual factors to consider?**

The main issues in my context are the availability of teaching and learning resources and the continuous professional development of teachers. After graduating the teacher training college, teachers are left on their own in their entire careers. There is virtually no in-service teacher development and where it exists, it is done in urban or semi-urban areas; it is often a one-day seminar with less focus on teacher development.

When I took over the Anglais teachers' association which existed only in the North West Region of Cameroon and with my knowledge from a 2-year training program organised by the British Council for to teacher trainers, I laid emphasis on teacher-led professional development activities. During our CPD events, classroom teachers had the opportunity to deliver training. We also planned activities that could have brought teachers together for a more vibrant community. However, a socio-political crisis rocked the North West Region and halted our planned activities.

Mindful of these challenges and success in the North West Region, I decided to extend the association to the relatively peaceful West Region. The objectives were to

- Create a stronger and more vibrant ELT community.
- Build a teacher-led community where teachers share their challenges and solutions to classroom issues.
- Encourage and promote teacher-led solutions to classroom issues.

The project targeted teachers of Anglais, considered as EFL in Cameroon. The focus on Anglais teachers was motivated by two factors

- Anglais teachers teach in a context different from other ELTs. English is not the medium of instructions of their students.
- The language of instruction of most Anglais teachers is French. They developed interests in English language teaching after high school and require continuous development to improve their skills.

### 2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

**What did you hope to achieve?**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>We hoped to establish a chapter of the association in the West Region</b></li><li>- <b>To leverage the power of social media like WhatsApp to enable continuous discussions on challenges and ways to tackle them</b></li></ul> |
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### 3. PROJECT MEMBERS AND THEIR ROLES

<b>Who was involved? What were their roles? How were they selected?</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fadidac Jules, Project leader<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o I coordinated the entire project and its implementation</li><li>o I led the training sessions on the findings of my classroom action research on writing and their impact on my teaching</li></ul></li><li>Dziegain Joel (replaced Mispa Mua Mbi who was on maternity leave)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o He coordinated all bookings and logistics</li><li>o He made all payments</li></ul></li><li>- Dolores Shulika Leinyuy<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o She facilitated communication between the pedagogic offices of the North West and West Regions</li></ul></li><li>- Kenfack Robert<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o He led the training session on using online learning and collaboration platforms: Zoom</li></ul></li><li>- Anestin Lum<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o She led the training session on Managing large classrooms</li></ul></li></ul> |
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### 4. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

<b>What did you do during the project and when?</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- We organized a one-day training workshop on the topics mentioned above</li><li>- We organized follow-up working sessions at the level of divisions</li></ul> |
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## 5. EVALUATION

**What was the impact / were the effects of the project on:**

**a) your Association?**

- We created a local chapter of the association in the West Region even though we have not yet given it a formal structure.
- We were able to have a first-hand experience of the needs of teachers.
- It was an opportunity to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses.

**b) the wider community?**

- Teachers in the West Region welcomed the project with much enthusiasm.
- Participants requested more similar CPD events.
- The community has been exposed to several other training opportunities across Africa and the world.

**What evidence do you have for this impact / these effects?**

- There are ongoing discussions on ELT-related issues in the WhatsApp group after the training.
- Participants were informed of other regional communities of practice through discussions in the forums, and they are actively participating in these communities.
- Some presented at the 2022 West African TESOL conference.
- Teachers who participated in the training are those actively planning the second project for club coordinators.

## 6. EXPENDITURE

**Please give details of your project expenditure. Where there are significant differences from the budget, please explain why.**

Item	Initial cost	Final cost	Reason
Hall	£281	£80	We had planned to use the conference room of the West Regional Delegation. However, the room was not available on the day of the training. That was partly because the date of the event was moved several times as we awaited the payment of the grant. The initial cost was not part of the grant, but we used the funding to pay for a cheaper hall in a secondary school.
Lodging, transportation and food allowance for English Connects Facilitators from Yaoundé	£212	£215	
Lodging, transportation	£114	£67	Only one inspector from the North West Region attended

and food allowance for Pedagogic Inspectors from the North West Region			
Transport allowance to Pedagogic Inspectors in the West Region	£70	£40	Only one inspector attended. The Coordinating inspector also participated, but we did not think he would attend and did not include him in the initial budget. Instead of £14, he was given £26 for his transport allowance.
Transport allowance to teachers	£476	£476	
Conference materials	£99	£120	We did not budget additional materials like the banner and the teaching resources of the trainers.
Transportation, internet data, calls for project team leader	£70	£70	
Lunch during training	£405	£330	The training was initially planned to run for two days. However, due to time constraints and the availability of the trainees, it was rescheduled to hold on one day.
Cascade sessions at Divisional levels	£544	£580	The divisions were remote with difficult aces. The cascade was planned to be a one-day event, but in some cases, it was organised for 2 and 3 days due to the availability of teachers.
Online feedback and evaluation questionnaires	£14	£20	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1998</b>		
<b>Balance</b>	<b>£2</b>		

## 7. SHARING WITH A WIDER AUDIENCE

**Who did you share information about the project with? Why?**

**When and how did you do this?**

**What reactions did you get?**

**Do you have any further plans for sharing more widely?**

I shared the information about the project with the Executive Board of the association in the North West Region and the Regional Pedagogic Office. It was the first project of its kind in a different region. I needed the contribution of different people at different levels. The North West Regional Pedagogic Office helped to establish contact with the West Pedagogic Office. Some Executive Board members assisted in the project's planning and implementation. I also shared the information with two non-members of the association: Kenfack Robert and Chi Anestin Lum. I shared the project with them because I had worked with them in a British Council's teacher training program, and I could count on their wealth of experience.

I shared details about the project before applying for funding with the two non-members mentioned above. Their feedback helped to plan and budget the project. I shared the details with other members when I received the grant. The initial reaction from the inspectors was not a very positive one. They wondered if it was possible and were not very motivated to move the association out of its comfort zone. However, one inspector was enthusiastic about the project and actively participated in its implementation. The most motivated people were members of the executive board and the two non-members of the association.

When I initiated contact with secondary school officials in the West Region in charge of teaching Anglais, the Coordinating inspector asked me to present the project to inspectors first before bringing it up to him. The reaction of these inspectors was a mixed one. They considered the association a rival to the Cameroon English Language and Literature Teachers Association. They asked many questions regarding the association's purpose and were less enthusiastic about it. However, the Coordinating inspector had a contrary understanding of the project and received it with much enthusiasm. He argued that the field of ELT is very vast to be looked after by a single entity and was open to the contribution every stakeholder regardless of their affiliation. He encouraged me and provided administrative support. He was present during the one-day training together with one pedagogic inspector.

I shared the project with teachers in the West Region through Google Forms. The form contained an explanatory introduction with the aims and goals of the project. The form was sent to several WhatsApp fora.

At the end of the training, teachers who participated in the training from the 8 divisions of the West Region shared their knowledge in their various WhatsApp fora. This is the primary medium for disseminating information to teachers in Cameroon. We created a Telegram and Facebook group, which is not functional at the moment.

## 8. OVERALL REFLECTIONS

**As a result of planning, designing, implementing and disseminating THIS project, what did you learn about:**

**a) organizing / managing a project?**

- The most important lesson I learnt is the difference between a project on paper and its implementation on ground. I made a lot of assumptions regarding the realities in the West Region. I faced so many challenges because I did not make a proper assessment of the realities of the West Region.
- Secondly, every context is unique. I was shocked to realise that administrative procedures were not the same in different regions within the same country. The administration of the Regional Delegation of Secondary Education in the North West was more flexible and placed great emphasis on teacher associations led by teachers. The North West Region has a Teachers' Resource Unit which coordinates the activities of all TA. The opposite was true in the West Region. Teachers' associations have no voice and there is no structure that coordinates their activities.
- Another lesson was the number of people involved in the project. Those involved in the planning and implementation of the project were not teachers in the Region. It would have saved me a lot of stress if I had included teachers from the West Region in the planning of the project.

**b) the strengths / weaknesses and future needs of your TA and / or working context?**

- It takes much effort to motivate teachers to take ownership of their professional development. Teaching is a means to an end for many English language teachers. Most did not get into the career out of vocation but out of necessity. Teachers are always looking at the financial gain of belonging to a TA.
- However, many others are passionate about their career and can actively contribute to the TA. This project helped to identify these motivated teachers, and some of them are actively working on the upcoming project. What we plan to do is to continue with CPD discussions in the various WhatsApp groups. We plan to organise social events among members of the association that are not teaching-focused but will further strengthen the community.

**Would you do anything differently next time?**

- I would get as many people as possible to be involved in the project from conception to implementation. I planned a second project with a team of selected teachers in the West Region. Planning the project alone did not help in the implementation phase. I wrongly assumed that everybody would be as enthusiastic about the project as I was.
- I would also plan activities that are realistic and manageable. I involved all 8 divisions of the West Regions in the project and later realized that it was too demanding to follow up on each of them. The ideal plan would have required working 2 or 3 divisions and extending the association to other divisions with time.

We are considering doing that with the second project, for which we expect a grant from the Hornby Trust.

- I would let others take the lead. I was involved in every detail of the project, even in tasks that I had assigned to someone. I thought that my presence was needed everywhere for a successful project. It was tiring and overwhelming. In the second project we are working on, I have taken a backseat role while others take the lead in organizing. I am more of an adviser. I also want to help members of the young association to learn how to run a project.
- Finally, for any future project, I will aim to work with teachers directly concerned with the project. Whenever we plan to create a new chapter in a different area, the teachers to plan and implement the project will be teachers working in that area.

**Would you like to suggest anything to another TA planning to undertake a similar project?**

- It takes much planning to run a TA project, and every step should be thought carefully.
- The saying "Two heads are better than one" couldn't be truer when running a TA project. Teamwork is the key to the success of any TA.
- Set SMART objectives. There are many issues to address within a TA, and we tend to think we can handle them all. Tackling so many issues at once will have less impact than focusing on a few.

## 9. GOING FORWARD/ LOOKING AHEAD?

**a) How does your TA plan to continue and / or build on what has been achieved through this project?**

**b) What might your TA want to try to do next? Why? How might you begin?**

The initial plan of this project was to create chapters of the association in all the regions of Cameroon. However, our experience from the first project revealed that expanding to other regions is not a SMART move. Instead of creating new chapters, we plan to strengthen the newly created chapter. We designed a project to train club coordinators in the West Region in the 2021/2022 school year. By training club coordinators, we want to revive English clubs which are a great place to learn English. We hope to keep English teachers active in and out of the classroom. The Hornby Trust validated the project for funding, but there have been many challenges paying the grants in our accounts. In addition, the 2021/2022 school year was greatly affected by a teachers' strike. That also affected teachers' participation in CPD discussions in WhatsApp groups.

With the beginning of a new school year, we have been holding meetings to revisit the project. The planning team agreed to maintain the project's primary goal of training club coordinators. What we are considering modifying is the scale of the project. We plan to scale down the project and focus on 2 or 3 divisions instead of 8. We also plan to focus on schools that have functional English language clubs so that we can leverage the experience to expand to schools with no English clubs.

## 10. PERMISSIONS



This report is primarily for the Hornby Trustees and British Council internal review and records. However, we do want to promote your hard work and would like to share what you have done with other Hornby awardees and publicly via the Internet.

- Can you please tick here if you give your permission to share your report?
- Please tick here if you would like your project to be considered for presentation at the 2023 IATEFL conference (the Hornby Trust will select up to two projects from reports submitted and will support one team member from each of these projects to attend the conference).

Please indicate who would give the presentation if selected:

\_\_\_\_\_ Jules Fadidac \_\_\_\_\_ (name of presenter)

**Name: Jules Fadidac**

**Date: 15/09/2022**

Some highlights in pictures

- 1) Group photo of the training session



## 2) The 3 trainers: Robert, Anestin and Fadidac



## 3) Training on using Zoom



4) Interactive activity on Enhancing receptive skills led by Anestin



5) Group activity during the session on exploring the findings of classroom action research to enhance the writing skills of students



6) Breakfast and lunch





7) Feedback and evaluation meeting with some active members



8) A cascade session in Dschang, one of the divisions of the West Region

