

# Walking with West Africa



Sheila Dykstra- serving with Christian Reformed World Missions as Education Specialist in West Africa

## Sneak Peak

*What exactly does Walking with West Africa look like?*

*Let me share the practical ways I've walked along the Christian Education movement these last few weeks:*



### WORKSHOPS

Along with Nigerian “trainers in training”, we provide opportunities for teachers to come together to dialogue, strategize, listen to move forward in what it means to practice holistic Christian Education and how that practically applies in our own situations and contexts. At the Daniel Center, school leaders gathered to share challenges and opportunities of Christian Education. In a 2-day workshop, teachers meet to talk about how an English lesson can be taught from a Biblical perspective.



### VISITS

I do model teaching with partner schools, which gives me the opportunity to do what I love...be with the children! This exposes teachers to new ways of doing things and allows us to dialogue regarding these new ideas. I spent the entire day teaching in Mr. Moses' class (shown in pictures). He had so many questions from how I structured the classroom, how I interacted with the students, the variety of teaching strategies I used beyond lecturing, etc..



### ACSI

I work with Nigerian leaders in Christian Education to network schools together, to build capacity of leaders, to learn more about the realities of the Nigerian Education system. ACSI ([Association of Christian Schools International](#)) is opening a regional office in Nigeria in September. This has been run, initiated, funded, and driven by Nigerians! I believe that this is the avenue God will use to bring Christian Educators together across all of Africa.



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## FIELD TESTING

The [“Educational Care”](#) program is developing new material to train teachers/leaders. I am being trained along with other Africans in the field testing process. The discussion-based course requires us to write and implement an action plans for each module. In traditional African fashion, our planning time was followed up with prayers for the commitments we made. My plan is to start up a “train the trainers” group in Abuja. Join me in praying that God will bring the right people to this group and lead the way as we grow together.



## LOOKING FORWARD

**Travels:** The next few months will involve some traveling into other parts of West Africa. Pray for the exploratory trip to Sierra Leone and Guinea scheduled for late July/early August. In August, I will also return to Kenya for the second module of the “Educational Care” field testing.

**ACSI Nigeria:** In September, this group hopes to open their regional office in Lagos. Pray for favour with the Nigerian government in allowing them to register this organization. Pray that God would continue to shape this group of Nigerians as they lead the Christian Education movement in Nigeria.

*Quote from participant of  
“Educational Care” training:*

*“I have come to realize that everything in the world is God’s property. I now see God in every child and each person. I will be able to handle them with care knowing that they belong to God.”*

**Back-to-School Trainings:** A number of schools and organizations have already made requests for the weeks prior to school resuming in September. Pray for wisdom to know where to go, and for effective trainings and follow-up.

## A BIG THANKS!

I want to take this opportunity to thank God for the ways that YOU, my supporters have been a blessing in the past fiscal year through your financial gifts, prayers, letters, cards, packages, and calls. It is because of you that this ministry is made possible. ☺

**CONNECTING...Sheila Dykstra.** See address below. Phone in Nigeria:011-234-805-315-4243

Email:sdykstra@crcna.org Facebook Group: Sheila Dykstra – Walking with West Africa

Website:www.sheiladykstra.blogspot.com