

1st Work Report
(December 11, 2025 to April 3, 2026)

**construction of a building holding 3 classrooms
for the Public Primary School of Odja-Odan
Ouinihi-Centre Governorate
Municipality of Ouinihi
Republic of Benin**

We arrived in Odja-Odan on December 11, 2025. We had invited the villagers to a general meeting at 2 p.m. After our arrival, the villagers quickly gathered. The mayor, the head of the technical services department, and the head of the municipal finance department attended the meeting. After the welcoming ceremonies, the contract was read aloud. The mayor himself provided many explanations. It was very important to him that everything was clearly understood and that we would not encounter any problems on the construction site. Once all questions had been answered, the villagers voted in favor of the contract.



Afterwards, the mayor showed us the location for the new building, they had all jointly decided on. We were also shown the workers' sleeping quarters and the storage room for building materials. Everything had been well planned in advance. We asked where we could get planks and teak logs. We had brought nails with us from Calavi. The teak logs were cut in the village. However, we had to buy the planks in Pobé. So we set off to obtain them there and also to buy cement and iron bars. Transportation proved somewhat difficult. Therefore, we decided to spend the night in Pobé and organize the transport the following morning.

The next morning we had good luck. The chairman of our NPO stayed behind in Pobé to oversee the transport of cement and iron. I returned with the driver and the boards in our car to Odja-Odan to set up the string frame.



That same afternoon, the villagers began digging the foundation trenches. At the same time, sand and gravel were delivered.



The masons produced the building blocks and the iron benders made the iron inlays for the foundation and pillars.



We discovered that the manual water pump in Odja-Odan was broken. Thus people were bringing water for the construction work by motorcycle from a water source 2.5 km away.



Once the foundation trenches had been dug, the first layer of concrete was poured, on which the iron reinforcements were placed and the pillars were incorporated.



The second layer of concrete was poured on top, and the foundation walls were then built on the foundation base.



The lower iron anchor was prepared and cast on the foundation walls.

The walls of the building were erected on the iron anchor. In a short time, they reached the height of the window openings. The small iron anchor below the window openings was cast. The veranda pillars were cast.



Soon the walls reached the window lintel. The upper iron anchor was completely encased and then cast in one piece.



The walls were raised by four rows of building blocks. The fourth iron anchor below the roof was then poured.



The gables were erected on the last iron anchor. The ends of the pillars were sheathed and cast.



Subsequently, the ramp, the staircases and the protective wall against erosion were built.





The building shell had to dry for a month before the roof could be made.



The villagers used this time to fill in the classrooms. The mayor had organized fill sand. The whole village was working to complete the sand filling.



Then the carpenters finally arrived at the construction site. The timbers were sawn into beams at the sawmill, transported to the site, and coated with insecticide in the schoolyard. Afterwards, the crossbeams were constructed.



The longitudinal beams were then attached, and finally the roofing sheets were screwed on.



The building with its roof looks beautiful.



I send my heartfelt thanks to all friends who support us in our endeavors. None of this would be possible without you!!
Best regards
Astrid Toda