



## June - July 2016 Trip Report

Camps Goz Amer and Djabal, eastern Chad

Refugee sites Bethanie, Bozize, Guiwa, and Gado, southeastern Cameroon

Dates: June 11 – July 5th, 2016

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### Trip Overview

Through June and early July, the iACT team returned to refugee camps Goz Amer and Djabal, eastern Chad, and visited three refugee sites across southeast Cameroon. In Goz Amer, iACT worked with its all-refugee Assessment Team to complete a follow-up assessment of the first Little Ripples Ponds students, conducted leadership training with iACT refugee Project Coordinators and Little Ripples Education Directors, and observed the Refugees United Soccer Academy (RUSA). The team also visited camp Djabal to meet with partner Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), refugee friends, and RUSA coaches. Following Chad, at the request of JRS, the team traveled to Cameroon for the first time in order to conduct a needs assessment and explore the opportunity to expand iACT programs to support the needs of refugees from the Central African Republic.

## Chad

### Little Ripples Assessment

Refugee camp Goz Amer was the first stop for Founding Executive Director Gabriel Stauring and Director of Programs Sara-Christine Dallain, so they could visit iACT's early childhood education program, Little Ripples, and the Refugee United Soccer Academy. The Little Ripples school year was coming to an end as the summer rainy season was beginning, and many families were preparing to spend their summer away from the camp, farming and growing crops on small plots of land. Following two days of assessment review training, Dallain and the refugee Assessment Team were able to complete a follow-up assessment of the 45 students attending the first Little Ripples Pond (referred to as "Pond #1"), and 43 children from the control group. iACT evaluation consultant Dr. Nathan Jones of the University of Wisconsin Survey Center will analyze and release a report of the survey results.



A Little Ripples student asked to name colors during an assessment interview.

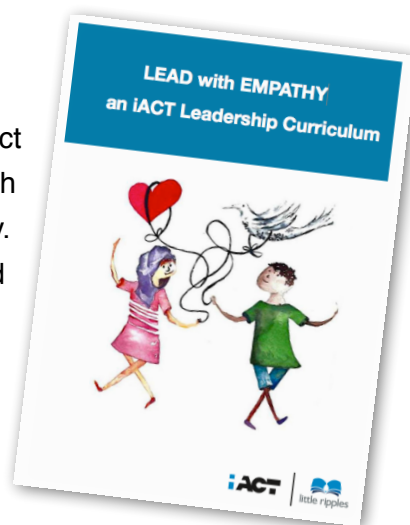
### Leadership Training

Stauring held a three-day training course for the Project Coordinators and Little Ripples Education Directors, during which the new iACT *Lead with Empathy* leadership curriculum was introduced. This

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curriculum was developed in order to support iACT refugee Project Coordinators, Little Ripples Education Directors, and teachers with tools and skills to be leaders at Little Ripples and in their community. The curriculum is structured as a guide for peer-to-peer learning and includes 30 modules that build the foundations of empathy and peace and provide information, tools, skills, and activities on leadership, story-telling, human rights, facilitation, conflict resolution, community organizing, goal setting, and communication. The Education Directors will facilitate the learning of one module per week during the weekly Little Ripples teacher meeting.



Front cover of Lead with Empathy curriculum

### Refugees United Soccer Academy - Goz Amer

During their time in camp Goz Amer, Stauring and Dallain also had the opportunity to observe the Refugees United Soccer Academy and connect with coaches Souliman, Sadiya, and Issag (Thouhilia was sick). This RUSA is currently serving 670 children. The coaches conduct three sessions a day, dividing up the children by age group. The coaches reported that the program is going very well, and they feel it's been very impactful on the players. The coaches also reported that they've been doing work off the field. They've begun to visit primary schools across their camp in order to introduce RUSA, and to begin to build relationships with the students, teachers, and school directors. In doing so, they aim to get a better sense of the number of children ages six to thirteen, and to encourage more children to participate—especially girls.



RUSA Coaches Sadiya, Issag and Souliman meeting with a school director.

### Refugee Camp Djabal

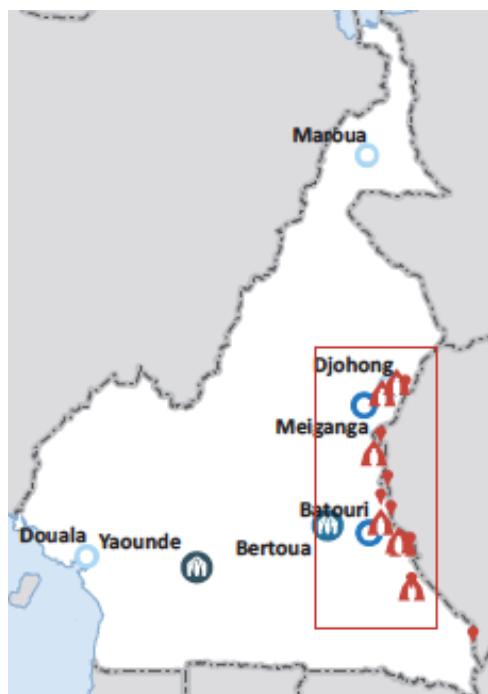
Before departing eastern Chad, Stauring and Dallain spent one day in refugee camp Djabal. The team was able to visit new education projects implemented by partner JRS, connect with RUSA Coach Ramadan, and spend time with a refugee family that iACT has long been friends with and supporting: Achta and her children.



## Cameroon

### Needs Assessment

Based on the success and impact of Little Ripples in eastern Chad, iACT was asked by partner organization Jesuit Refugee Service to expand Little Ripples to Cameroon, for refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR). Following the visit to Chad, iACT's Stauring and Dallain traveled to Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon and to refugee sites in Batouri, Bertoua, and Garoua-Boulai—three towns along the CAR border in southeast Cameroon.



Over two weeks, Stauring and Dallain conducted needs assessments in refugee sites Bethanie, Bozize, Guiwa, Gado 1, and Gado 2, identifying the conditions, needs, wants, and strengths of the beneficiary refugee communities. At each site Stauring and Dallain attended meetings with implementing organizations and local stakeholders, and spent time with the CAR people: listening to their stories, needs, and ideas; identifying their strengths and resources; getting to know their leaders; and beginning to work with them to see how Little Ripples could be adapted for their children and their community.

Refugee sites, southeast Cameroon. Source: The UN Refugee Agency

Refugees from CAR have escaped unimaginable violence and refugees of all age groups often spoke of wanting peace and security above all else. iACT also found that very little to no early childhood education programming exists for children ages three to six, exposing a critical need and potential for Little Ripples to plant the seeds of education and peace for these communities.

iACT Stauring and Dallain meeting with leaders at refugee site Bethanie, Cameroon.





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### Meet Mairama

She has been living in refugee site Bethanie for three years with her husband and four children. It took them two months to reach Cameroon by foot. Her husband works in the field, farming. Her children attend a Koranic school in Bethanie. In this refugee community, attendance to primary school is extremely low – in part due to the distance to the school and in part due to the lack of value or need placed on education. Education for most families means sending their boys to Koranic school. Most of the adults we spoke with did not attend school growing up in the Central African Republic. None of the mothers we interviewed, including Mairama, ever attended any school.



### Refugees United Soccer Academy - CAR

In addition to a needs assessment, iACT also traveled to Cameroon prepared to launch the first-ever Refugees United Soccer Academy for refugees from the Central African Republic (RUSA-CAR). This was the first opportunity for iACT to expand its programming outside of Darfuri refugee camps in eastern Chad. After visiting the five refugee sites and speaking with stakeholders, leaders, and refugees, iACT selected sites Gado 1 and Gado 2 to implement RUSA-CAR. Thirty-four refugee men and women, ages 18 to 35 and representing each site, attended and completed three days of coaches training. It was an incredible group of talented players and diverse, strong leaders.

iACT is proud to announce that under the leadership of Stanislas Ibrahim, Gislaine Feïdangaï, Rachidatou Oumarou, and Haron Ngbonzakala (pictured left to right below), the Refugees United Soccer Academy will begin serving refugee children ages 6 to 13 from Gado sites 1 and 2, Cameroon in mid-July.

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### Stanislas

Stan (his nickname) is 32 years old and lives in a small, one-room home made of mud and brick with his younger 20-year-old brother in refugee site Gado 1. He's been in Gado since 2014. He is a skilled player and great leader.

### Gislaine

Gislaine is 23 years old. She lives with and cares for her young daughter and little brother. She has been living in Gado 1 for one year and seven months. She wanted to be a coach because she believes in working with and developing children.

### Rachidatou

Rachidatou is 22 years old and has been living in refugee site Gado 2 for two years. She is divorced and lives with her two children: a two-year-old boy and a five-year-old girl. This is the first time she has had the opportunity to work and serve her community.

### Haron

Haron is 21 years old. He is not married, has no children, and lives with his older sister. He has been in Gado 1 for almost two years. Haron was one of the best-skilled soccer players during training and wants to share his passion for soccer with children.





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## Partner Highlight: Jesuit Refugee Service

iACT's visit to Cameroon refugee sites was made possible by partner organization Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). iACT would like to thank JRS for its guidance and logistical support in Cameroon, in particular Father Eric, Bizoza Michel, Abdoulaye Binaté, and Sister Sosephina. Thanks to the in-country support, knowledge, and relationships JRS has with refugees and local actors, iACT was able to launch the first Refugee United Soccer Academy-CAR, and now looks forward to expanding RUSA and implementing Little Ripples at different refugee sites in Cameroon in partnership with JRS. Thank you, JRS, for your shared vision, heart and tireless efforts in working with refugees.





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### Excerpt from iACT Blog

“These feet have escaped unimaginable violence, walked countless miles, and crossed international borders. These are the feet of refugees, and now they to get kick footballs—and experience the pure joy of play.

For us to be here, so many things have to come together. It is years of planning and work, combined with support from caring people on the other side of the world—so far from these refugee sites. We now get to share in the joy as we see the refugees run, kick, and laugh. This will be their Academy. The four coaches selected will take on the great responsibility of leading hundreds of boys and girls. They will be role models and provide a special space where it’s safe for refugee children to use their feet, their minds, and their hearts.

I cannot get close to explaining what I feel, as I stand on the sideline and watch this group of young men and women on their way to becoming Refugees United Coaches—using their feet to make their community a better, more hopeful place.”

— Founder and Executive Director, Gabriel Stauring, iACT blog, July 3, 2016

### Blogs

For more in-depth stories, photos and videos of iACT’s recent trip to Chad and Cameroon, please visit <http://www.iactivism.org/our-work/i-act/iact-24/>.

### Get Involved!

1. Become a Refugees United Soccer Academy Sister Club: Connect your club with refugee girls and boys while helping provide \$10 sponsorship of players for an entire year at the Academy.
2. Global Citizens Program: For U.S.-based preschools, iACT is creating a 4-week, 30-minute a day, empathy-based curriculum that builds a relationship between your community and the students and teachers at a Little Ripples Pond.
3. Become an iACT Ambassador: Increase your involvement with iACT, help educate your community, and raise funds to sustain and grow iACT’s impact.

**Contact Katie-Jay Scott at [ktj@iactivism.org](mailto:ktj@iactivism.org) for more information.**