

# The U. S. Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund

Embassy of the United States of America  
Yaoundé, Cameroon

## Introduction

The Special Self-Help Fund (SSH) provides small-scale assistance to Cameroonian communities as part of the U.S. Government's commitment to support development activities in Cameroon.

Since 1983, the U.S. Ambassador to Cameroon has funded small community projects under this program in all ten regions of Cameroon. The maximum support available for most projects is USD 10,000 (or about 4.5 million francs CFA).



Self-Help project in the North region

## Basic Project Requirements

- Initiated by the community and benefits the community by increasing income, improving rural infrastructure, or improving living conditions;
- Benefits a large number of people;
- Involves a significant local contribution such as labor, materials, land, equipment, or money;
- Within the ability of the community to operate and maintain;
- Completed within one year without requiring further Self-Help Fund assistance; and
- Respects environmental norms.



Self-Help project in the North region

## Project Categories and Acceptable Activities and Items

- **Water Supply and Sanitation:** Ensures broadly accessible, reliable and economically sustainable water and sanitation services to bolster healthy, safe and prosperous communities.
- **Social Services:** Improves the life and living conditions of special populations which may be vulnerable or at-risk on a temporary or chronic basis. These could include groups such as the disabled; orphans, children and at-risk youth; victims of gender-based violence; ethnic minorities, internally displaced or other socially excluded groups; the elderly; and female heads of household.
- **Social Assistance:** Provides financial or technical support for road construction and maintenance, irrigation works, reforestation, and soil conservation in post-conflict or post-disaster settings. Provides assistance to those suffering from temporary shocks resulting from economic reform.

## Unacceptable Activities and Items

- Repair of existing facilities that are in poor shape as the result of neglect or lack of funds.
- Payment of recurring operating costs such as rent, salaries, administrative/operating costs, ongoing training/education needs, medications, fuel, animal feed, or seeds.
- Religious, political, or military activities, as well as those relating to police, prisons, or law enforcement.
- Revolving credit schemes.
- Office equipment and supplies such as computers, film projectors, stereos, pencils, paper, forms, folders, etc.
- Equipment or uniforms for national sport teams or national musical or dance groups.
- Land or buildings.
- Vehicles, luxury goods, gambling, or surveillance equipment.
- Abortion-related equipment and services.
- Pesticides, fungicides, or herbicides.

## SPECIAL SELF-HELP FUND

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### Funded Projects in 2010

- Eleven projects received funding to accomplish the following activities:
  - Construction of
    - 7 wells
    - 3 classrooms
    - 2 health centers
    - 2 blocks of latrines
    - 1 food storehouse and 1 cassava-drying area
  - Purchase and installation of a grinding machine
- Projects were located in 7 regions
- Total available budget was USD 90,000

Project Number	Region	Project Type
1	Adamaoua	Well construction
2	Center	Construction of 2 classrooms and a block of latrines
3	East	Purchase and installation of grinding mills
4	East	Construction of food storehouse
5	East	Construction of cassava drying area
6	Far North	Construction of health center ward
7	Far North	Construction of 5 wells
8	Littoral	Classroom construction
9	North	Construction of well for primary school
10	North	Construction of health center
11	South	Construction of a block of latrines

### Selection and Award Process

The program is highly competitive; historically, less than 10 percent of the applications received each year are selected. If a project is selected for consideration, someone from the U.S. Embassy will contact the applicant, verify the information, and visit the site.

### Selection Timeline

Application deadline: Open season. Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.  
Selection period: January - August 2011  
Award period: September - December 2011

### How to Apply for the Fund

Complete the application form. The application form is available online. It can also be requested by mail or in person through the SSH Office. **The Self-Help Application Form is FREE of charge and the Embassy DOES NOT request any payment to receive and evaluate a project.**

### Contact Information

Address: Self-Help Fund  
Embassy of the United States of America  
B.P. 817 Yaoundé

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