



AFRICA/BURKINA FASO - Multi-purpose school and training center for girls in the province of Gourma

Gourma (Agenzia Fides) - The Sisters of the Australian Province of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OLSH) are involved in the project for the construction of a multi-purpose school and a training center for girls in Burkina Faso, one of Africa's poorest countries. The center will be located in a rural municipality of the Province of Gourma, and will deal with health and hygiene education, nutrition and sex education for girls between 9 and 15, as well as offering professional training in various business areas. Burkina Faso is a West African nation with no access to the sea and with a population of 15.7 million inhabitants, which has one of the lowest gross domestic products in the world. Half the population is under 15 years of age and there is a very high number of girls who do not attend school and those who have dropped out. In addition to poverty, the country records the lowest literacy rate in the world, with a quarter of the population illiterate, mainly female. The OLSH project is aimed at promoting the integration of women in the social context of the country, giving them the tools to ensure a degree of economic independence thanks to their skills. In addition, the female literacy and health education would help to reduce HIV/AIDS. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 27/09/2011)