

# Books For Africa

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## BOOKS FOR AFRICA TO EXPAND WAREHOUSE AND SHIPPING OPERATIONS INTO ATLANTA AREA

### *Books For Africa aims to end the book famine in Africa*

ATLANTA, Ga. (**March 25, 2009**) – Books For Africa (BFA), the largest shipper of donated books to Africa, today announced it will open a new warehouse in the Atlanta, Ga., metropolitan area that will become the organization's primary shipping, receiving and sorting center. BFA will continue to keep its organization's headquarters and operate a warehouse facility in St. Paul, Minn.

BFA has secured a 20,000 square-foot warehouse/office facility in greater Atlanta just inside I-285 off Atlanta Road. BFA's new warehouse facility will be located at 2971 Olympic Industrial Drive SE, Suite C, Smyrna, GA, 30080. The organization will officially open its Atlanta operations on May 1st and is actively seeking volunteers, book donations, and financial donations from the Atlanta area.

"Atlanta's logistics advantages will enable Books For Africa to more effectively accomplish their mission to promote educational opportunities for children in Africa," said Bob Pertierra, vice president of logistics industry development for the Metro Atlanta Chamber. "The Chamber helped Books For Africa open their new distribution center and connect with key leaders in the business community."

With a mission to end the book famine in Africa, BFA collects, sorts, ships and distributes high-quality books to children in Africa. Books donated by publishers, schools, libraries, individuals and organizations are sorted and packed by volunteers who carefully choose books that are age and subject appropriate. Over the last 20 years, BFA has shipped more than 20 million books to 45 African countries. Each 40-foot container, which contains approximately 22,000 books, benefits approximately 250,000 students over the life of the books. Each container costs approximately \$9,500 to ship, which is less than 50 cents per book.

BFA expects to ship approximately 100 containers a year from the new Atlanta warehouse, which is close to major shipping ports on the Eastern seaboard.

"We are thrilled to be expanding into Atlanta," said Patrick Plonski, Books For Africa's executive director. "The greater Atlanta area offers us exceptional opportunities to interact with diverse corporations and businesses, schools and universities, and community leaders and organizations."

Books For Africa is working closely with local business groups such as H.J. Russell & Company and the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. "H.J. Russell & Company is committed to business and community partners and excited about our involvement with Books For Africa and their mission," said Elisa Voelkel, external liaison for H.J. Russell & Company." Books For Africa was represented in its facility search by Beth McClurg of Cushman & Wakefield. Building ownership was represented by Brian Cardoza of Prologis.

Education is one of the only opportunities young people have to end the cycle of poverty and attain a better life. Most African children who are able to attend school have never owned a book of their own and many classrooms share one textbook between 10-20 students. The larger community also benefits from access to reading materials, opening up a world of ideas, critical thinking and self-esteem.

Founded in 1988 with an annual economic impact of \$20 million, St. Paul, Minn.-based Books For Africa ([www.booksforafrica.org](http://www.booksforafrica.org)) promotes literacy and provides educational opportunity for all children in Africa. BFA has for the third consecutive year received a "4-Star" rating for exceptionally sound fiscal management from Charity Navigator, America's premier charity evaluator. According to Charity Navigator, "Only 11% of the charities we rate have received at least three consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Books For Africa consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America."

Individuals interested in volunteering at BFA to help sort books for shipment to Africa can view available dates at [www.booksforafrica.org/volunteer/georgia.html](http://www.booksforafrica.org/volunteer/georgia.html) or contact BFA directly by e-mail at [Deb@booksforafrica.org](mailto:Deb@booksforafrica.org).

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