

The 11th trip to Ghana

19.10.22 – 29.10.22

Final report

WHAS HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

FACTS AND FIGURES

Of a school that grows steadily and young people who are given perspectives

Even the many current crises in the world could not break a habit: Our annual project trip to Ghana! The duo Caro and Lari,



reunited on their way to Gomoa Tarkwa, with many, many plans, tasks and ideas in their luggage and anyway

already in a celebratory mood, because: Our project celebrates its 10-year anniversary! 2012 we were the first time in Ghana, and back then the literal foundation stones were laid for the first of many new buildings in the project.

But back to the the present: After a long journey and a night in the capital Accra, the arrival at the project in Gomoa Tarkwa was for us, as every time, a mixture of two things: Perfect habit, as if we had never been away, and incredible joy and excitement to see the children and the progress of the project.

Even though throughout the year we are in regular contact with our on-site project director, John, the headmaster of the school and some of the older children, who have their own cell phones, the only thing that makes it the total Ghana package is to be live on site: The heat, the sounds, the smells - this is the only real combination complementing the joyful excitement of what we will experience during our time on site.

At our first meeting with John on our first evening at the project, we had 42 items on our agenda - and we are proud to announce that in just under ten days on the ground we were able to check off almost each of them!

The „Home for Hope Preparatory School“

As you know, we are by now an educational project. Therefore, in addition to the support of our 35 children and teenagers who live permanently in the project, the

further development of our school has priority. It has obviously grown again since last year, and so...

- attend **289 pupils** between the ages of 2 and 16 y our school
- we employ in the entire project a total of **22 employees**: 16 teachers, including a headmaster, and 6 other employees, including John Essaah
- are **12 classrooms** in use, plus two rooms of the newly opened ICT Center and the library



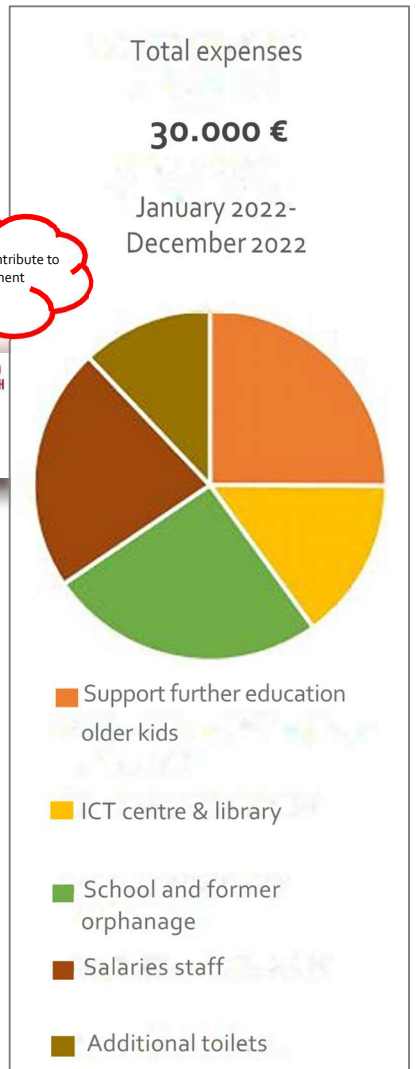
The school starts at 7.30 a.m. and finishes at 3 p.m. and continues to offer space for the classes Kindergarten -



Junior High School II - that means at our school pupils can get a basic school diploma which is roughly equivalent to a secondary school diploma in Germany.

Chronologically, the following has happened for the school during our presence in Ghana: On our very second day in the project, we sat down with the headmaster and all the teachers - this is extremely important to us, because we want to know from our staff what's on their minds, what they like and dislike, and what they need.

All in all, they are satisfied with their workplace, but the current problem is however the smoldering economic crisis and inflation (see below for more information) – nowadays our employees receive only a tenth of the goods for their money compared to what they received when the school was founded in 2016. We have taken this problem as an opportunity to increase the salaries extraordinarily. In lengthy discussions with John, we have also developed our own small pay scale system, in which our employees are assigned to different groups according to experience and duration of working in the project. We are quite proud of this, because it provides a fair and transparent salary system for our employees and also gives us a better overview.



Last month an **educational consultant** of the Ghanaian Ministry of Education came to our school to conduct a quality check, and, together with the headmaster, to find solutions for any deficiencies. Hearing this really pleased: Any expertise that our school can receive we are very happy to receive.



For us, for the students, the teachers, the headmaster, John and all others involved in the project this trip had a very special highlight: As you have witnessed the last months finally the building of our new **computer laboratory** ("ICT Centre") and the **library** was

completed. So we had the exciting task of equipping the two rooms with technical equipment and furniture and



during our time in Ghana to open it officially - a sporty undertaking, but with a lot of determination and a little luck with our electrical dealers in Agona Swedru we have we actually made it -

we could equip and open the ICT Centre with 10 computers and internet access!

And that will bring a pretty big benefit to our project goals and thus to so many people: For our school, it means that we can finally offer **computer classes** starting in grade 5. Specifically for our students, this means that they will finally be given the **digital**



skills on their educational path that will enable them to have better prospects on the Ghanaian job market after graduation. For the children who live permanently in the project, whole new worlds are opening up, and they can finally get the **permanent access to (digital) education** and to completely new

sources of information that they have wanted for so long. And for the village of Gomoa Tarkwa this means that by offering evening classes for adults, we are creating a place of **digital education** that is local and for which you don't have to drive an hour to the next largest city.

The ICT Center will be supervised by one of our employees, who has a great affinity for computers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the family S., whose donation enabled us to equip the entire ICT Centre!

And the **library** is also a real blessing for the project: For a long time we had the wish to have our own library, and this has now become reality. The room right next to the ICT Centre is home to the library, and there is now a large shelf with many, many books: scientific books and Ghanaian and international light literature



(recommended for all those interested in Ghanaian literature: The classic "Home Going" by Yaa Gyasi, for example, is on our shelf and well worth reading).

Finally, all children and young people project have the opportunity to read free of charge and to do homework in peace



- this privilege is by no means a matter of course for many of them. Due to the immense relevance and the long planning time of these two new educational components in the project, the opening was quite emotional for us - videos of the opening can be found on our Instagram channel. Thanks again to BILD e.V. "Ein Herz für Kinder", through whose support we were able to construct the building in the first place!

A possibly not so exciting, but all the more important topic for our school: **toilets**. With the growing number of students, the existing toilets are no longer sufficient to guarantee a hygienic learning environment. Therefore, we have commissioned the construction of five new toilets while still on site.

For the school, we are planning to purchase a **new school bus** in the future, as our old, but beloved school bus is getting very old and we cannot ensure the safety of our school children in this



way. We also want to build a new building that will include a **sick ward** for ill school children and a **sleeping wing** for the children and teenagers who live permanently in the project.

And of course a big topic of conversation, especially with our headmaster, was the **independence of the school** from us and our donations in future. As you know, our big goal with Home for Hope from the beginning has been that the project will eventually be self-supporting and no longer depend on our donations.

This is an ambivalent undertaking, especially for the school: Through your donations we can support the school financially to



the extent that the salaries of the teachers, repair works and school equipment do not have to be paid out of the school's small income, the bill would not even add up. This is a luxury that no other school in the region has, and that is why we can offer very good education for very low school fees, which in turn is in line with

our project goal of enabling every child, regardless of their financial means, to attend school regularly. The parents, the staff and the whole region appreciate this special situation and are very happy to send their children to our school. However, in the future we will have to find a way to provide the school with another source of income that will make it independent of our donations in the long run, without having to increase school fees to the point where families can no longer afford to attend school with us.

We are currently exploring possibilities, e.g. support through the state of Ghana, and will keep you informed!

In addition, our school is to be expanded up to the Senior High School, so that children can really go through their primary and secondary education with us from kindergarten to the highest level of education. Again, we will keep you updated on the progress.



By providing sufficient toilets we contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 6



By providing good education we contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 4



The former orphanage & other

We have not been bored during our time on site: We got a lot of visitors this time! On the one hand from a Ghanaian filmmaker, who filmed our project from above with a drone. You can find the full version of the video on our Instagram channel or in a shortened version on our homepage - just click on this QR code:



Then we were visited by two German doctors from the aid organization "Doctors for Africa", which was certainly a highlight of our trip. To hear how intensively they work for the medical care in a hospital near Kumasi really impressed us. And not only we were impressed - the Schwäbische Post has written an article about the visit of the doctors, you can find the link to the article on our homepage.

Aus dem Waisenhaus wird ein Bildungszentrum

Entwicklungshilfe Trio besucht Projekt „Home For Hope“, das sich seit der Gründung stetig weiterentwickelt.



Aus dem Waisenhaus hat sich innerhalb von zehn Jahren zu einem Kinder- und Bildungszentrum entwickelt. Die Kinder sind hier in einem liebevollen Umfeld erzogen und lernen die Grundschulkenntnisse, die für die berufliche Zukunft notwendig sind. Die Kinder sind hier in einem liebevollen Umfeld erzogen und lernen die Grundschulkenntnisse, die für die berufliche Zukunft notwendig sind.

the impressions of the inconceivable treatment of the slaves by the colonial ruler is something one cannot forget.

Together with John, as every year, we have given a lot of thought about the independence of the project. The former orphanage, just like the school, is to become independent from us and German donations in the long run - because only this is development



cooperation at eye level. We have come to the conclusion that a suitable source of income for the former orphanage would be the cultivation of fruit and vegetables that would then be sold at the local market. For this we still need a small Piece of land and seeds, the cultivation and harvesting would be taken care of by our

project staff and the young the kids who live in the project permanently and are above 18 years. Another idea is to set up a small bakery where bread could be baked and then sold. Nancy, one of the older kids we have been supporting for years in her education, will soon finish her training as a cook and could run the bakery. This is only an idea so far, but we think it would be a great thing if one of the older kids we have been supporting for such a long time came back to the project, in order to bring in her own expertise and work force.

This brings us to the next big topic of this year's trip: The older kids, whom we have been supporting in their educational path for years. More and more of those young adults who permanently live in the project, and whom we have known for 10 years, are graduating from Highschool and for each of them we find an individual further educational path. Three youngsters have now completed their apprenticeship:

These are Desmond, Felicity and Rachel. They are now looking for a job and we supported them with their resumes to help them find jobs faster. This is not so easy in the current economic situation, in Ghana - but the three are very motivated to finally have a first real job and to stand on their own two feet. Should this happen, we can pat ourselves on the back: These would be the first "children" from the former orphanage who fully embody the vision of our foundation, in other words who, after 10 years of our support, are living an independent future.

Then there are currently nine other youngsters who have either recently graduated from Highschool or will do so soon. We will also finance their further education as long as we see fit. Many of them want to do an apprenticeship, and if everything works out the way we imagine, we will even send the first "Home for Hope" child to university! Samuel, the superbrain among our youngsters, wants to study business administration - and we think that's a great perspective!

The Future

As mentioned in the text, we still have some concrete plans - for the school it is a new school bus, a sick and dormitory ward, and the expansion of the school up to the Senior High School. We also want to make the former orphanage and the school self-sufficient. And then in the future it will be more and more important to finance the further education of the kids - so that they can live independent futures. And for all this we need you, because it is only with your support that we can improve the future prospects of children in Ghana!

Yours

Larsa Zell
Carolin Hoff

"We may have different religions, different languages, different colored skin, but we all belong to one human race."

"Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development."

Kofi Annan, former Ghanaian UN secretary and nobel peace prize winner

What are our plans for the future?

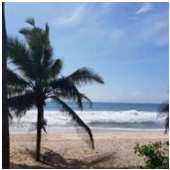


- ICT centre and library
- Installation of running water
- Extension of the school up to Senior Highschool
- Further support of education of older kids
- Accomplish independence of the project

What could not be missed, of course, was the annual visit to the to the market in Agona Swedru, in order to buy basic food, relevant hygiene products and medicines for the children who live permanently in the project. It must be said that Ghana is currently in a massive economic crisis. Inflation, which has been creeping up over the past few years, has spiraled out of control in recent months. The food prices have risen tenfold, and in peaceful Ghana it is rumbling - President Akufo-Addo will have a hard time calming down the situation and the people as long as the Ghanaian cedi continues to fall and the people accuse him of corruption.



However, since we always withdraw your donations in in Euro and only exchange it in Ghana into Cedi, we have had the weak Cedi and the strong Euro and therefore fortunately did not have to fight so much with the inflation. So we were able to buy ten 100-kg bags of rice, five bags of beans, liters of oil, a large box of spices, a large box of medicines and hygiene products. Of those the kids will be able to live for the next months. This time we had as usual two days of vacation and networking on the beach - as Gomoa Tarkwa is only about one



hour from the coast, the Ghanaian beaches are incredibly beautiful and we have become friends with some hotel owners, at least one night on the beach is a must for us. For those who are interested in the history of slavery and Colonialism: Ghana was one of the big slave transfer points, especially of the cruel colonial powers Netherlands and England. Therefore there are still many well preserved former "slave castles" on the Ghanaian coast, which today serve as museums and memorials. In the village of Senya Beraku we were able to see a former Dutch slave castle and

