



Newsletter

Supporting education, equality & development in Northern Ghana

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KYABOBO SCHOOL FOR GIRLS HAS COME TO STAY... HOORAY!



Report by Benjamin Hози, Headmaster

The performance of the pupils at the newly established Kyabobo School for Girls is amazing after such a short period of engagement. This has triggered many more parents to rush to the school to seek admission for their wards to come to the school next academic year. Kudos to my indefatigable teachers!

The girls who could not read at the start of the school can now read with some level of confidence and solve simple problems in mathematics. Many of those who were average students are now performing wonderfully.

When we started the school, most of the girls were quite timid and reserved, but have now become bold in whatever they do - both inside and outside the school. They ask challenging questions in lessons, which has made the teachers prepare well before they enter class and started a virtuous circle that we believe will bring excellent results.

Kyabobo Girls on the Radio *by Priscilla Melebor, one of our students*

Our local radio station is called Beyond FM, it gives us information to help to develop our town, region and nation - and their motto is Information for Development.

They run a club called Beyond Kiddy Club & Kyabobo girls are a part of that. The radio programme is on air from 7.30 to 9am every Saturday. During the week, we discuss and practise our topics for the weekend so that we are well prepared. At first, we could not speak well in public, but now we can. Doing the broadcast has helped us to overcome shyness and to be bold and courageous, covering different topics each week.

We have educated listeners about hygiene, performed a play about broken homes and had discussions with some parents about how we feel in the home. We also had a debate about mixed and single sex schools.

People enjoy listening to us and many call in afterwards to ask questions.



SPORTS RELIEF

This year GEP was chosen by the British High Commission in Ghana to be the beneficiary of fundraising through the Sports Relief Programme. On 1st March, a keen group of athletically dressed people met at one of the main sports stadiums in Accra. The first event was to pull a car for 100m heavily decked with Union Jacks, which was no mean feat. This was followed by a 1 mile run, where some aimed to break the world record, while others were pushing their children in prams - but we all made it round in the end. The final event was a football match against the Ministry of Sport. Neither team would have challenged the Black Stars for their place in Brazil but the competitive spirit was clear.



TEACHER TRAINING

Earlier this year, GEP ran two teacher training workshops. The first was to introduce a health education programme into 30 schools, the second was to give Kindergarten teachers some ideas for practical activities for the classroom.

Voltic Water sponsored these, enabling us to produce the manuals and train a large number of teachers.



VOLTA READS

Children entering Junior High School in Ghana tend to have a low proficiency in reading & most schools are short of reading materials. The Volta Region has decided to tackle this issue, but it is a huge & expensive project. There are 1500 primary schools & 500,000 children attending schools spread over the whole region.

Working with the government's Ghana Education Service (GES), we have selected 15 schools to be part of a pilot scheme. The girls at our Kyabobo Girls' School wrote some excellent original stories, with the best being adapted for primary age children before being collated into a loose-leaf book for use in class. GEP has printed & compiled booklets of these stories, giving the 15 schools 40 copies each of the 36 stories for this initial pilot stage

We are hugely grateful to Voltic Water who have sponsored this exciting programme, with the added support of money from the BHC's Sports Relief event. Some of the funds will also be used for training on how to teach reading effectively. The Regional Education office has now instigated a literacy half-hour every day in all schools and our materials will be used during that reading time.

This is an ambitious project and it would cost over £100,000 to provide booklets and training to all schools in our region.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

London to Paris Cycle Ride

Eleanore Longley and her friend Philippa (Billie) Rowe, both former TWGGS pupils, are cycling from London to Paris to raise money for GEP, starting on September 3rd. Eleanore is a former GEP team member and went to Ghana in 2001 with our founder Gill Norris. Please consider supporting Eleanore or Philippa at:

<https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/philipparowe2>

<https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/elslondontoparis>

Sponsored Walk

The annual sponsored walk is taking place on Saturday 30th August and will be organised by and participated in by the TWGGS Ghana 2014 team, accompanied by trip leader Matthew Breeze and several brave and willing parents. Good luck to everyone who is taking part in this ambitious 30 mile walk from Brighton Pier to Eastbourne Pier over the South Downs!

You can sponsor the team on www.justgiving.com/teamGEP2014

Visit our website now at: www.ghanaeducationproject.org.uk

SUMMARY REPORT from KYABOBO SCHOOL FOR GIRLS - by Gill Norris

As we move towards the end of our first year, now is a great time to reflect on our successes and look to the future. Over the past year, our Headteacher Benjamin Hozi has been a very strong leader for the school. He is gentle but firm and very well respected by the girls and staff. He has been very hard working both in administration and in the classroom: an excellent role model for our five younger teachers, who are all first degree holders. Even with my own presence in many classes, it has been quite a challenge to cover all subjects at the high level we have been aiming for - so we have been very grateful for the assistance of GEP manager Bob Melebor and our German volunteer.

Our original plan to take in 75 pupils mushroomed to 89 girls, including 14 with very weak reading and writing skills. To cater for the different levels, we rearranged the girls into four groups, which reduced class size but also raised the teaching. During our new literacy hour, our strong readers each took one weaker girl to work with on a one-on-one basis, with the result that several girls have made significant progress during the year.

We have a number of girls who are regularly scoring over 80% in examinations and tests. These girls are highly articulate and very lively, with some making regular appearances on local radio to run a children's programme that includes debates, quizzes and drama (see 'On Air' article on the front page).

We have a pro-active PTA led by a current parent, who have done some excellent ground work to remove trees on our sports area. We also have a strong School Management Committee (SMC) chaired by the generous Chief who donated the land for the school buildings.

Our facilities continue to grow despite rapid price inflation in Ghana (of both materials and labour costs), with accommodation for five teachers and their families already fully occupied and the next eight bungalows rapidly approaching completion – thanks largely to a single donation from a private individual in the banking sector. The roof of the science block is underway and we hope to complete this building by the end of the year, well ahead of schedule for the opening of the Senior High School in 2016.

We are eagerly awaiting the visit of the girls from Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School in October, to show them how much TWGGS has helped to achieve since the last visit and exchange cultural ideas between the two schools.



A huge thank you to the Mvule Trust for their generous donation of £10,300 to help support 90 girls through their first year of Senior High in 2016.



Thanks to AB & David, a legal company which supports GEP and is currently working on Gill Norris' residence permit.

Many thanks to the Bel UK Charity Fund for donating £500 to GEP, in support of Alice Ralph, one of the TWGGS 2014 team. Bel UK's representative Jean-Noël Darniche said "GEP is a great cause and we like the fact that youth of the age of Alice are investing so much of their energy behind it".

To earn Bel UK support, the 2014 Team participated in the Fare Share Food Collection that took place at Tesco Metro in Tunbridge Wells between 3rd and 5th July. Fare Share is a great charity to which Bel UK donate short shelf life products which are then redistributed to shelters & charities for disadvantaged people across the UK.

Thanks to Bel UK for their support and well done to the TWGGS team for participating in the Fare Share project.



To make a donation via MyDonate please visit: www.gep300.org.uk

FUNDRAISING STORIES

Tunbridge Wells Half Marathon

On Sunday 2nd March, Jez Clarke ran the Tunbridge Wells Half Marathon in aid of GEP. He finished in an amazing 1 hour 39 minutes and raised an incredible £575 for the charity! Thank you very much to everyone who sponsored and supported him in the race and congratulations to Jez for such an impressive achievement!

Racing for Ghana!

In March, Duncan Ralph, the father of one of the TWGGS 2014 team, took on the infamous 'Grizzly' race in Devon, raising over £500. The Grizzly is not called this for nothing, with an ascent of over 3,500' in 20 miles, two sections of beach, waist-deep gloopy mud and a steep path up the side of a cliff. One month later, Duncan then went on to run his first London Marathon in just under four hours, raising nearly £600 more. Well done to Duncan and thanks for all your hard work for the charity.

Auction of Promises

Thank to TWGGS PTA for allowing us to join them in the Auction of Promises on Friday 25th April, which raised an incredible £2,585 for GEP. Everything from holiday homes, stargazing evenings and pampering treatments to meal vouchers, rucksacks and Hawaiian shirts were donated and bought and an enjoyable evening was had by all.

London2Brighton Challenge '14

by Helen Horseman



On 24th May, 2,500 sturdy souls set off in torrential rain to attempt this year's London2Brighton challenge.

Hoping to complete the 100km in 20 hrs, I had intended to dress for a summer stroll, but atrocious

weather conditions forced me to be clad from head-to-toe in Gore-Tex.

Eventually completing the journey in just under 22 hours, I am pleased both to have raised over £1,600 for GEP and survived the experience!

World Book Day Cake Sale!

On 7th March the TWGGS team held a World Book Day Cake Sale. Thank you to everyone for showing your support by either baking or buying the fantastic handmade cakes. It was really hard to pick a winner but the decision was finally made! Congratulations to 7G with their amazing 'Golden Ticket' Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Cupcakes, 8G for their 'Chocolate River' Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Cake and to 9I with their amazing 'Bagend' The Hobbit Cake!



Music Quiz

The ever-popular GEP Music Quiz, organised by Rich Tribe and Julie Robinson, took place on Friday 21st March and raised £2,250. It was a great evening and thankfully the TWGGS teachers failed to take 1st Prize for the fourth time! The dessert auction was a surprisingly lucrative new feature, raising a total of £450 and stretching some stomachs to the limit. Thanks to the TWGGS 2014 team and all the helpers for their part in yet another high-spirited event.

Grosvenor & Hillbert Park Fundraising

The TWGGS Ghana Team held a stall at the Grosvenor Park Community Day on May Bank Holiday. Situated in the play area, sweets were a sell out and there were impressive queues for face-painting. There was also an array of cakes, vintage crafts & jewellery on offer.

The weather was kind and footfall through the park was good, so it was a very successful day overall, raising over £600. Many thanks to the Grosvenor Park Committee.



Jazz Night

Many thanks to Tash Smith, Catherine Millar and Issy Denman for organising the TWGGS Jazz Night and raising £275 for GEP.