

SAVE OUR LIVES GHANA NIEUWS

Visit October 2016

Earlier this month board members of 'Save Our Lives - Ghana (Switzerland)' returned from their second trip this year to the namesake Children's Home in Anwiankwanta. It was good to be back if only to see the results of all the work done by one of our key sponsors - Rob Holland and his team - back in July: the family units and the basketball court have been re-painted, mosquito screens have been replaced everywhere and fantastic landscaping improvements were made around the Home and the School!!

Furthermore, we saw first-hand that the Farming Project was right on track with the newly installed irrigation facilities due to be available just before the start of the dry season. We also attended a number of classes of the now formally opened Pre-School.



Fondation Save Our Lives – Ghana (Switzerland)

Ch du Râtelier 4, Vérenaz, Genève, CH 1222, Suisse T. +41.22.752.04.76 E. bulstra@bluewin.ch Web: www.saveourlivesghana.org
Reg. Canton Geneve: CH-660-1364013-6. Bank accounts: UBS: CHF: CH03 0024 0240 1887 2501H ; Euro: CH77 0024 0240 1887 2540N ; USD: CH52 0024 0240 1887 2560P ; BIC: UBSWCHZH80A

Objectives for our visit

After reviewing the Financials and various running Projects, we focused our discussions with management this time primarily on two specific but related topics:

● Certification

Certification is an official recognition by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) that a Home like SOL-GH meets certain minimum quantitative and qualitative criteria regarding Health Care, Education and Administration. Homes that do not achieve Certification will be closed by DSW.

● Re-integration

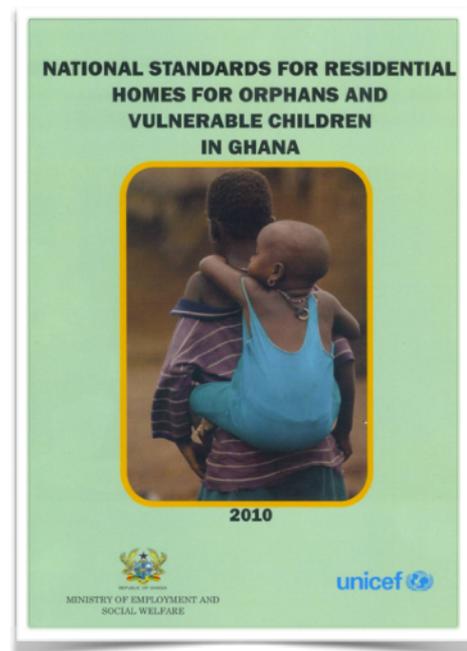
Reintegration is the process entailing children leaving the Home in order to resettle permanently with their parents or families. This process is an actual (UNICEF based) Government policy which follows from the “National Standards for Residential Homes for Orphans and Vulnerable Children” published in 2010.

The basic premise of this Re-integration policy is that the best environment for a child to grow up is a Family Environment and not an orphanage. It is the responsibility of the DSW to implement the policy (law) and SOL-GH is expected to cooperate fully.

Result of our discussions

In order to get an update on the status of Certification, the local SOL-GH management team and SOL-GH (Switzerland) met with Mr. Patrick Nawah, Director of Social Welfare for the Bekwai District. The Director explained that as a first step all Children’s Personal Files and Child Care Plans have been duly completed and evaluated.

The Director informed the meeting that he was now ready to take the next step which is to make a positive recommendation to his superiors with regard to Certification of the Home. However, at the same time he made it very clear that his conclusion is based on the condition that the Re-integration policy, as now written in the individual Child Care Plans, shall be properly implemented going forward. In other words: Certification and Re-integration are directly linked. One cannot exist without the other. No Re-integration implies no Certification and without Certification there is no Home.



Reintegration - Impact on SOL-GH of a changing demography

Results of such implementation will have a significant impact on the demography of the Home. The Home is currently responsible for a total of 72 children, of which 45 live on the premises and 27 are boarding at Senior High School elsewhere or following a Vocational or Tertiary education. Of the 45 children, DSW has identified 23 children for resettlement with their direct family or relatives (or in some cases with foster or adoptive parents) within the next 12 months. After completion of the resettlement, the Home is thus left with only 22 children living on the premises and 27 externally. It should be pointed out as part of the re-integration process family and relatives are extensively vetted and prepared prior to the return of the child. Also children themselves are well prepared for their return. Furthermore, each of these 23 children has in recent years spent time with their family, for example, during their school vacations. Social Welfare on its side will closely monitor the success of a resettlement for at least one year. The same would apply for fostering and adoption cases.



SOL-GH and SOL-GH (Switzerland) at a crossroads

Definition - Crossroads: a point at which a crucial decision must be made which will have far-reaching consequences.

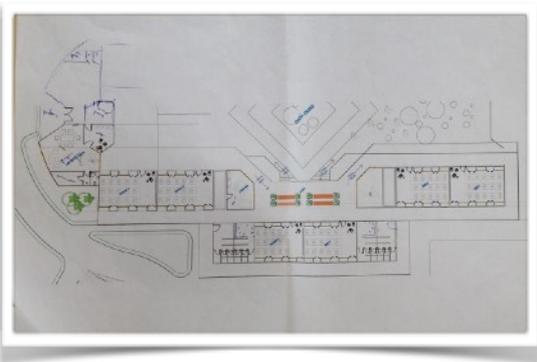
The consequences of a changed demography have been extensively discussed by us while in Anwiankwanta and have resulted in SOL-GH (Switzerland) identifying with local management two different scenarios, which in fact put the future of SOL-GH at a crossroads.



Scenario 1 – Transition

In this first scenario the detailed demography predictions do warrant a continuation of the original plans of SOL-GH to become financially self-sufficient over time. Therefore, the focus will be to further build on past efforts and continue to invest in the farm and the pre- and primary school and, importantly, emphasise its commitment to still be a Home, albeit on a smaller scale and, lastly, continue and expand its role to provide the oh-so critical education for its own and external (paying) pupils, of which there will be more than assumed before.

Under this scenario SOL-GH Switzerland would do its best to raise, in addition to funding ongoing operations, the necessary funds to construct 2 or 4 additional classrooms. And thus facilitate not only a Kindergarten and Nursery but also an entire Primary School; an expressed wish of the parent community and teaching staff.



Upon the successful completion of this process, the current Switzerland team would intend to hand over its responsibilities to its successors (yet to be identified) at the earliest per 1st January 2018.

Scenario 2 - Consolidation

In the second scenario, the outcome of the analysis of the new demography does not warrant the investment in the extension of the school or would generate too little benefit. This will be the case once the 22 kids, initially staying back in the Home, are slowly but surely finding their way into the community after completing their respective educations (including vocational and tertiary). For most of the 22 kids this will only be a few years from now.

On the other hand any new children / babies arriving in the Home will not stay long enough to complete their pre & primary school education as a result of the Government policy to resettle children as soon as possible but in any event within 2 years of their arrival.

Under this second scenario the existing pre-school (4 classrooms) would suffice. Given the sharp reduction in the number of children, SOL-GH (Switzerland) would under this scenario limit its activities to the funding of reduced operating, administrative and pre-school costs.

Our funding of SOL-GH would continue in this case until the earlier of December 2019 or the date that existing funds would be depleted. In this scenario Save Our Lives – Ghana would have at least 24 months to downsize and optimise its self-sufficiency programme and/or find new (local) sponsors as needed.

Fondation Save Our Lives – Ghana (Switzerland)

Ch du Râtelier 4, Vésenaz, Genève, CH 1222, Suisse T. +41.22.752.04.76 E. bulstra@bluewin.ch Web: www.saveourlivesghana.org
Reg. Canton Geneve: CH-660-1364013-6. Bank accounts: UBS: CHF: CH03 0024 0240 1887 2501H ; Euro: CH77 0024 0240 1887 2540N ; USD: CH52 0024 0240 1887 2560P ; BIC: UBSWCHZH80A

Kindly note that in particular the first scenario is subject to a number of conditions that need to be met before the green light is to be given by SOLGH Switzerland. A possible outcome therefore is that in case the conditions for scenario 1 cannot be met, the only option left for SOLGH is scenario 2.

Next Steps

1. The Executive Board of SOL-GH has committed to evaluate both scenarios and decide by 30th November 2016 which scenario it prefers.
2. We will next investigate the financial feasibility of their choice and review the conditions to which their choice was subject.
3. We will send you our next Newsletter once this process shall have been completed. In it we will describe the Executive Board's choice and outline its consequences, financial and otherwise.



Hopefully you find this newsletter of interest. Clearly the views in Ghana on Child Care are evolving. And although the future is certainly different from the past, Poverty, Aids and Illiteracy have not gone away; Children still need our help! We end this newsletter with a quote from Nelson Mandela who said; 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world'. We could not agree more. Your questions or suggestions are of course more than welcome. We very much appreciate your interest and kindly request your continued support.

On behalf of the members of the Swiss Board,

Robert Bulstra , Hans van Wulfften Palthe and Gerhard Kistemaker



Fondation Save Our Lives – Ghana (Switzerland)

Ch du Râtelier 4, Vésenaz, Genève, CH 1222, Suisse T. +41.22.752.04.76 E. bulstra@bluewin.ch Web: www.saveourlivesghana.org
Reg. Canton Geneve: CH-660-1364013-6. Bank accounts: UBS: CHF: CH03 0024 0240 1887 2501H ; Euro: CH77 0024 0240 1887 2540N ; USD: CH52
0024 0240 1887 2560P ; BIC: UBSWCHZH80A