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Introduction to Ghana Health and Education Initiative (GHEI)

At GHEI we envision a future where children—free from illness and illiteracy—can realize their full potential, a future where healthy, educated young people will lead their communities out of poverty. Our health and education programs work hand-in-hand to achieve this vision. Whether preventing childhood illness or promoting learning success, we are committed to finding the most innovative solutions to the health and education needs of our communities, even if it requires challenging established limits.

Our success is firmly rooted in the idea that local capacity leads to sustainability. Therefore, we recruit, train, and employ people directly from the communities where we work. GHEI invests in our local team for the same reason we invest in the children and young people we serve: we believe that to invest in an individual is to empower a community.

Founded in 2001 by pediatrician Dr. Diana Rickard, Ghana Health and Education Initiative began formal operations in 2004 in the farming village of Humjibre. Located in the Western Region of Ghana, Humjibre is home to over 4000 people, the majority of whom are small-scale cocoa farmers. Subsistence crops such as plantain, yam and cassava are also commonly grown, but most families make a living from growing and harvesting cocoa. Tropical rainforest characterizes this remote and under-served region of Ghana. The nearest city, Kumasi, is approximately 3 hours by bus, and Ghana's capital city, Accra, lies 8 to 12 hours away. Humjibre continues to serve as the base of GHEI's operations and is home to all local staff and Program Coordinators.

As part of GHEI's team, you will face the everyday obstacles of rural Ghanaian life, challenge your skills in a resource-poor environment, and experience the unique triumphs and pitfalls of grassroots development work. Program Coordinators play an integral role in guiding the direction of GHEI's programs. Under the supervision of the Program Director, Clement Donkor, Program Coordinators monitor projects, meet with local stakeholders, write reports and grant proposals, and empower local staff. Roles vary considerably during the year as projects develop. GHEI values sustainability through establishing local leadership, employing local staff, and building community ownership. Coordinators must understand and adhere to this guiding principle. GHEI expects Program Coordinators to respect the authority of the Program Director and defer to the skills and experience of the local staff.

GHEI encourages applicants of all fields and nationalities. Past Coordinators have come from backgrounds in medicine, public health, international development, social work, philosophy, and anthropology.



Minimum Qualifications for Coordinator Positions

1. Health and Education Program Coordinators:

- Bachelor's degree, preferably a Masters in related field
- Minimum 1 year of project management experience, preferably in a developing country
- Strong preference for candidates familiar with Logic Models and program design specifics
- Knowledge of proposal writing
- Familiarity with creating budgets and tracking expenditures
- Fluency with Microsoft Excel
- Ability to live and work in a resource-poor environment with limited internet capabilities, intermittent power outages, etc
- Demonstrated cross-cultural awareness
- Excellent spoken and written English
- Excellent communication skills and ability to collaborate effectively with others in Ghana and in the US/UK
- Commitment to the highest professional standards, ethics, and values
- Flexibility and willingness to undertake a wide variety of tasks as required
- Ability to juggle multiple tasks and meet deadlines
- Ability to work independently and as part of multicultural team

2. Communications Director

- Bachelor's degree, preferably a Masters in field related to the position
- Minimum 1 year relevant work experience in nonprofit marketing/publicity, journalism, or creative writing with developing country experience preferred
- Familiarity with social networking (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube) and blogging
- Outgoing personality and willingness to take initiative
- Preference given to candidates with knowledge of web design
- Ability to live a rural, resource-poor environment with limited internet capabilities and intermittent power outages, etc
- Demonstrated cross-cultural awareness
- Excellent spoken and written English
- Excellent communication skills and ability to collaborate effectively with others in Ghana and in the US/UK
- Commitment to the highest professional standards, ethics, and values
- Flexibility and willingness to undertake a wide variety of tasks as required
- Ability to juggle multiple tasks and meet deadlines
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team



Structure of GHEI Management in Ghana

The GHEI team has expanded since its inception in 2003 and will continue evolving in concert with the development of the organization. Clement Donkor, Program Director since 2004, oversees all aspects of GHEI's operation and directly supervises both Program Coordinators and local staff. Currently, GHEI employs 3 Program Coordinators, in addition to a team of 8 full-time and 12 part-time local staff. Local volunteers (teachers, Community Health Workers or CHWs, and Peer Educators) round out the team, assisting our staff with supplemental teaching, office work, and project implementation.

Program Director– Clement Donkor

Clement Donkor has served as Program Director since 2004. Prior to his work with GHEI, he had emerged as a leader in the Humjibre community. Among his most notable achievements: initiating a community partnership with the housing NGO, Habitat for Humanity, petitioning Ghana Health Services to build Humjibre Clinic, and serving as Humjibre's local Assemblyman for 8 years. He also worked for 13 years as a local primary school teacher. Clement is fluent in Sefwi, Twi and English allowing him to successfully bridge GHEI's Western and local teams. His self-taught knowledge of development theory and practice enables a nuanced approach to needs assessment and intervention in the context of Ghanaian village life. Clement was instrumental in the creation and development of GHEI and continues to be the rock upon which GHEI stands.

As Program Director, he is responsible for the overall operation of GHEI in Humjibre, including all projects listed under the education and health program sections below. He oversees the construction and maintenance of GHEI's complex, which includes the Community Centre and office building, Community Library block, and Coordinator residences. He also directly monitors GHEI's budget and manages all financial transactions. He supervises all GHEI staff, liaises with the Western Team, and serves as GHEI's ambassador to the community. As GHEI expands and moves towards sustainability, Clement will focus increasingly on building the capacity of local leadership and networking with other local organizations to ensure that GHEI continues to thrive.



Health Program Coordinator

(next available position: November 2012-December 2014)

Our health programs focus on improving the health of youth through education interventions and material distribution. GHEI employs 2 fulltime Health Program Assistants, and the Health Program Coordinator works closely with them to plan, implement, and monitor interventions. Trained teams of CHWs help to plan and implement all health program activities in their respective communities with oversight from the Health Team Staff.

Health Team Staff

1. Health Program Coordinator: supervises the 2 Health Program Assistants, Mensah Gyapong and Agnes Obeng, and the CHWs in Humjibre, Surano, and Kojina
2. Health Program Assistant (Handwashing-specific), Aggie Obeng: manages 7 CHWs in Humjibre and supervises Handwashing Program Activities
3. Health Program Assistant (Malaria-specific), Mensah Gyapong: supervises all Malaria Program Activities. During the summer months, Mensah also serves as local Serve and Learn Coordinator, providing logistical support for Serve and Learn volunteers

Health Program Activities

- **Malaria Prevention** – In 2008, GHEI conducted malaria research in the nearby village of Surano using an innovative method of bed-net distribution. The method combines free distribution and hanging of ITNs with flip-chart education in the home and regular follow-up visits. When data findings showed a marked increase in bed-net ownership and usage in Surano, GHEI launched a similar program in Humjibre utilizing Humjibre's Community Health Workers. In 2010, GHEI secured 300 bednets from Against Malaria foundation and subsequently expanded the Malaria Program to the village of Kojina, about 2 km from Humjibre. Current program activities revolve around ongoing bednet monitoring visits by CHWs in each community—Humjibre, Soroano, and Kojina—and malaria education events like World Malaria Day.
- **Hand-washing Promotion**- With the help of a former Serve and Learn volunteer, GHEI launched a Hand-washing With Soap program in the summer of 2009 in Humjibre. Following the success of the pilot program, GHEI teamed with Ghana's Public-Private Partnership for Hand-washing and decided to focus solely on promoting hand-washing in schools. Additionally, school-appointed student handwashing monitors work with GHEI to ensure proper handwashing supplies are available and in use at each school. Thanks to the efforts of 2 former volunteers, 4 polytanks have been donated and installed at local schools in and



around Humjibre to facilitate regular handwashing. Current program activities include regular CHW monitoring visits to the schools, Student Handwashing Monitor Meetings, and education outreaches like Global Handwashing Day.

- **HIV/AIDS Prevention-** One of the longest-running health programs, the HIV/AIDS prevention program currently includes a prominent World AIDS Day celebration involving a range of activities. Past events have included voluntary counseling and testing, CHW drama performances, radio dramas, and student performances. Throughout the year, GHEI provides youth-friendly, confidential condom sales in Humjibre and many of the surrounding communities. Condoms are sold at a subsidized price by a trained Peer Educator.
- **Serve and Learn (S&L) Program** - GHEI runs 4 consecutive short-term volunteer programs every summer. Each session lasts for 2 weeks, during which time, groups of 6-8 foreign volunteers implement a specific health or education related project. Typically, 2 of the sessions focus on health, and past projects include childhood de-worming, malaria education, and hand-washing promotion.



Education Program Coordinator (next available position: March 2012-April 2014)

The GHEI Education Program fosters improved academic performance, critical thinking, and leadership skills for the youth of Humjibre. The education program serves all levels from preschool to Senior High in order to encourage school retention and promote ongoing academic success. GHEI employs a local Education Program Manager, a Lead Teacher, and a full-time Librarian, and the Education Program Coordinator works closely with them both inside and outside the classroom to develop and monitor all aspects of programming. A full-time teacher and 3 volunteer teachers round out the team.

Education Team Staff

4. Education Program Coordinator: works in partnership with Education Program Manager to supervise Librarian, Lead Teacher, National Service Volunteer, full-time teacher and part-time volunteer teachers
5. Education Program Manager: works in partnership with Education Program Coordinator to supervise GHEI's teachers and the running of YEP, Tutoring Centre, and ECL
6. Librarian: manages all aspects of the running the library including supervising Library Board, reporting to Books for Africa and other donors, and managing GHEI's computers
7. Lead Teacher: teaches classes in ECL, YEP, and Tutoring Centre, supervises Girls' Empowerment Program, assists with Scholarship Program
8. Teacher: teaches classes in YEP and Tutoring Centre, oversees volunteer teachers

Education Program Activities

- **Youth Education Program** - GHEI provides an after-school program for select Junior High students that includes supplemental classes in the core subjects and exam practice sessions. Students receive 6 contact hours per week, and classes are taught by trained GHEI teachers. The Education Program Manager supervises the day-to-day running of the program, with the Education Program Coordinator providing oversight as needed. Students enrolled in this program are required to maintain regular attendance and to complete community service projects. Each year, GHEI organizes a 1-2 day excursion for these students to Accra, Kumasi, or Cape Coast (depending on budget).
- **Early Childhood Literacy Program (ECL)** – Piloted in the spring of 2009, this after-school program targets primary school children who are struggling academically. Classes are held 3 times a week at 2 level—ECL 1 and ECL 2—and students receive instruction in phonics and English literacy in an individualized, nurturing environment. GHEI recruits 20 primary 1 students each



year for the ECL 1 class based on a reading and writing assessment The Education Program Manager works closely with the Education Program Coordinator in supervising all aspects of this program.

- **Tutoring Center** - Open from 8-9PM every weekday, this program invites all local junior high students to participate in study sessions in the core subjects. Unlike YEP, this program is open to all junior high students, with no attendance requirements. The Education Program Manager and Lead Teacher directly supervise this program with some oversight from the Education Program Coordinator.
- **Community Library** - Humjibre Community Library opened in 2004, and it recently benefited from a generous donation from the NGO Books For Africa, bringing the total inventory to almost 4,500 titles. The library operates 6 days a week in the afternoon and evening, with times set aside specifically for preschool and primary school children. The Community Library hosts a wide range of activities to promote literacy in the community, including Read-A-Thons and book clubs. The Education Program Coordinator works closely with the Librarian to manage the library, supervise the Humjibre Library Board, and maintain GHEI's partnership with Books For Africa.
- **Career Opportunity Lecture Series** – Each year (more often if possible), GHEI organizes a Career Day Event for local students, featuring speakers from a wide range of careers. The event highlights career opportunities both locally and throughout the country and invites all local schools to participate.
- **Scholarship**- GHEI provides full academic, need-based senior high scholarships to outstanding junior high students. A scholarship committee selects a number of recipients each year, based on funding. All scholarship students participate in Youth Leadership Program, which develops leadership skills through community service. Scholarship activities are managed by the Lead Teacher with oversight from the Education Program Coordinator.
- **Girls Empowerment** – This program features a 2-week summer camp for recent junior high graduates, which is designed and implemented with the assistance of Serve and Learn volunteers. Prior to the camp, GHEI holds weekly meetings with camp participants to polish their English language comprehension and expression and brainstorm topics to explore during camp sessions. Besides Girls Empowerment Camp, GHEI addresses barriers to female education by hosting a weekly Ladies Night at the Tutoring Centre and reserving 60% of its YEP and ECL class enrollments for girls, and earmarking 60% of its available scholarships for girls. The Education Program Coordinator works closely with the Lead Teacher in implementing activities for this program.



- **Serve and Learn (S&L) Program** - GHEI runs 4 consecutive short-term volunteer programs every summer. Each session lasts for 2 weeks, during which time, groups of 6-8 foreign volunteers implement a specific health or education related project. Typically, 1 or 2 of these sessions focus on education, and past projects have included Girls Empowerment Camp and Summer Read and Play.



Communications Director
(next available position: March 2012-April 2014)

This is a relatively new position with GHEI's office in Humjibre, thus continues to evolve as different needs arise in the organization. This position entails working closely with both the local Ghanaian staff and the Western Team to manage GHEI's in-country publicity and web-based marketing. Responsibilities include facilitating local stakeholder meetings, promoting GHEI's work through social media and blogging, and organizing campaigns for current and potential donors. This position requires a great deal of flexibility since responsibilities can change greatly throughout the year.

Coordinator Administrative Responsibilities (applicable to ALL Program Coordinators, including Communications Director)

Apart from their respective program responsibilities, Program Coordinators are also responsible for general administrative duties. Some of these duties include: writing monthly internal reports, bimonthly reports for the District Assembly, and annual reports. They also write reports to GHEI donors, as necessary. In addition, GHEI Coordinators often work with Clement to seek and maintain relationships with the government health and education sectors. As with all GHEI staff, the Coordinators should be available to complete routine tasks as needed by the organization, including but not limited to attending meetings with other organizations, delivering reports, running errands, and maintaining the office.

Short-term Volunteer Coordination

Program Coordinators also play a key role in coordinating GHEI's Serve and Learn volunteer programs. Every summer, GHEI hosts 4 Serve and Learn sessions—2 for health and 2 for education. Volunteers live in a separate volunteer house in Humjibre during their 2 week stay, and they work closely with local staff to complete a specific project developed and supervised by GHEI. Projects relate directly to GHEI's ongoing programming and volunteers are carefully selected by GHEI's Western Team, most of whom are former Serve and Learn volunteers in Humjibre. GHEI has both a Local Serve and Learn Coordinator and a Western Serve and Learn Coordinator. Program Coordinators play an important role in planning and implementing volunteer projects, including liaising with volunteers and recruiters in the US, planning suitable projects, writing itineraries, organizing cultural activities for the volunteers, and assisting with volunteer logistics. In addition, Program Coordinators ensure that the projects run smoothly, help the volunteers to adjust to village life, mediate problems, and write project reports and evaluations.





On the Job

New Program Coordinators will be trained by the outgoing Program Coordinator in all aspects of project management with an overlap period of 3-4 weeks. In addition, Coordinators receive a thorough GHEI orientation and village tour from Program Director, Clement Donkor. Twi and Sefwi are the predominant languages of this region of Ghana, and Program Coordinators can schedule language lessons with a local staff member. Becoming proficient in a local language is not required of Coordinators, but learning basic conversation can be extremely beneficial.

The structure of the working day may seem more variable than the typical 9a-5p schedule. Work hours can be sporadic: work may seem more relaxed at times, while at other times the work may be much more intense and demanding. Unforeseen challenges, such as power outages, also contribute to a sense of unpredictability. This flexibility can be frustrating, but it can also be an enjoyable aspect of the job; in Humjibre, every day is different.

Program Coordinators are allotted 5 weeks of vacation time for a 13-month term. Those who wish to spend more time touring the country should either arrive before their term or plan to stay beyond their term of service. Vacation time must be cleared in advance with Program Director, Clement Donkor, and may be taken at any time during a Coordinator's term EXCEPT: during a Serve and Learn project relevant to the Coordinator, during the Coordinator's training, and during overlap with the next Coordinator.



Costs to Anticipate

Program coordinators receive a local salary of 300 Ghanaian cedis (approximately \$200) per month. GHEI covers the cost of room and board, and Program Coordinators are responsible for all other expenses. The following budget provides a cost-breakdown of expenses. Please note that this does NOT include personal travel and other personal care expenses.

Sample Budget for 13-month position

Airfare - \$2,000-\$5,000 (may need to buy 2 one-way tickets)
Health insurance - minimum \$750-\$1000
Vaccinations - \$200-\$500
Malaria prophylaxis (Doxycycline ~\$400, Lariam~\$600, Malarone ~\$2,200)¹
Visa - \$80 for multiple-entry Visitor's Visa
Visa extensions – covered by GHEI
Housing – covered by GHEI
Electricity – covered by GHEI
Gas – covered by GHEI

TOTAL - \$ 6,580 (does not include malaria prophylaxis)

Note: the total is based on the higher end of ranges if ranges are given. Remember to account for personal expenses and unexpected costs.

[GHEI has 501 (c) 3 status so your expenses are tax-deductible (check with an accountant for specific details)]

¹ Full price cost, without health insurance



Living Conditions

Housing

In 2006, GHEI completed the construction of a Program Coordinator house. The house has two bedrooms, with ceiling fan and beds, and a living room with dining table and chairs. There is a kitchen and bathroom block located about 10 feet from the house, and includes a shower room and pit latrine. The kitchen includes a stove-top gas range, a refrigerator, and a full set of cooking utensils. The house has a mechanized borehole pump and well which provides water for the shower and a tap outside the kitchen/bathroom building. Coordinators use this tap for all dishwashing, cooking, and handwashing. The volunteer house located next to the Program Coordinator house has a bath-house block which includes 3 flush toilets and 3 shower facilities that Coordinator are welcome to use.

Drinking water

Purified water is sold in 500ml sachets throughout Humjibre. Coordinators typically opt to buy large bags of these sachets containing 40 bags, at a cost of 2 cedis. Alternatively, Coordinators can boil water or bring a water purifier.

Electricity

The Program Coordinator house has electricity, although many houses in the village do not. Electricity is 220V AC at 50 cycles. Stabilizers are required for sensitive devices and adapters are needed for appliances using 110V. There are two step-up transformers in the GHEI office if you wish to bring a laptop. Batteries are of poor quality in Ghana, so GHEI strongly recommends bringing a supply from home. Power outs can happen without warning and typically last no more than 1-2 days, but at times the power can be out for an undetermined length of time. In June 2007, GHEI purchased a generator that can be used for high priority business during power outs.

Food

GHEI Program Coordinators cook for themselves in the GHEI house. It is not difficult to live as a vegetarian in the village, although the Ghanaian diet does include meat and fish. There are no restaurants in Humjibre, only street vendors that offer egg sandwiches at night along with local dishes like rice and beans during the day. Humjibre has a small market selling rice, beans, tomatoes, fish, and Ghanaian spices. A larger range of foods is available in the nearby Bekwai market. Typical Western food is very scarce in Ghana. Although some familiar foods can be purchased in Accra (an 8-10 hour bus ride from Humjibre), Coordinators typically eat local fare during their stay in Humjibre.

Transportation



The main methods of transport in Ghana are shared taxis, vans ('tro-tros'), and buses. Four people typically ride in each taxi, not including the driver, and fees are inexpensive. Long distance transport is usually by bus or 'tro-tro' van. Buses are typically more expensive, but also considered safer than tro-tro travel. Fees on transportation are not usually negotiable, especially with bus transport. GHEI strongly discourages traveling at night by any means, because of the increased likelihood of vehicle accidents.



Other Considerations

Sustainability

All projects should be approached with sustainability in mind. Ideally, foreign intervention should be minimal and local empowerment should remain the focus. Also, be open to the idea that you will learn as much if not more from the people of Humjibre as they will from you.

Privacy

This is often something that Program Coordinators and foreign volunteers struggle with. Westerners are accustomed to a certain level of privacy and solitude, but for Program Coordinators in Humjibre, this is almost nonexistent. Firstly, Ghanaian culture is much more communal, and Ghanaians do not maintain the same need for 'alone time' or privacy. Secondly, foreigners attract additional attention, because they look, act, and sound so different: children often follow Coordinators around town and people shower them with attention. As the people in Humjibre become accustomed to a new person, this attention will wane.

Time

Ghanaians approach time very differently than Westerners do. Ghanaians may be hours late for a meeting without a second thought. Many Ghanaians do not wear watches or track the time as specifically as Westerners. Although Coordinators often struggle with this, especially in the beginning, they soon settle into the more relaxed pace of life and the unique opportunities it can offer.

Communication

Mail takes between 7 days and 2 weeks from Ghana to US/Europe. The nearest post office is in Bekwai, about ten minutes by taxi. Larger parcels often need to be collected from customs in Kumasi, sometimes with a small customs fee. GHEI provides a simple Nokia cell phone for both business and personal use. All cell-phones work on prepaid phone cards, and Coordinators purchase their own phone cards. Cell-phones do not incur charges for incoming calls, even if they are international. Skype works in Ghana, and it is available in Internet Cafes in Kumasi or Accra. GHEI's office includes a dial-up internet connection on 1 office computer, and this connection can be slow and unreliable. Although Coordinators may use this computer for business and personal use, they must keep in mind that all GHEI staff share that computer for internet-related business. High-speed internet cafes are located in Wiawso (1 hour by taxi), Kumasi (3 hours by bus), and Accra (8-10 hours by bus), and Coordinators often travel to these places for both personal and business-related online activity.



Personal Health

Malaria kills about 1 million people each year worldwide and most are under the age of 5. They die because they have no immunity. Neither do you. Falciparum is the worst kind of malaria because it can lead to cerebral malaria and death, and this type of malaria thrives in Ghana. Westerners protect themselves by taking prophylaxis medication (such as Malarone or Larium/Mefloquine), sleeping under ITNs, and spraying insect repellents. Ghanaians often take malaria very lightly, because many adults have contracted and survived the disease many times, so Ghanaian adults rarely die from the disease. However, Westerners have no immunity and are highly susceptible to contracting malaria and developing a life-threatening case of the disease. Coordinators must take strict precautions to prevent malaria and should treat all fevers with anti-malarial medication. Humjibre Clinic stocks consistent supply of malaria treatments.

Diarrhea may be the most common illness Coordinators experience. Taking precautions with food and drinking water in addition to frequent hand-washing and sanitation can help minimize attacks. For the most part, diarrhea episodes resolve themselves without medication. Humjibre clinic has antibiotics for severe and persistent diarrhea infections in addition to basic over-the-counter pain medicine.

Motor vehicle accidents may be more of a threat than malaria. Program Coordinators are strongly advised not to travel at night, and use good judgment in selecting modes of transport carefully (visually examine vehicle before entering). Buses are often regulated and provide the safest mode of transport.

Safety

The people of Humjibre are very protective of Program Coordinators, and most Coordinators do not encounter safety concerns in the village. Although Ghanaian cities are also relatively safe, foreigners are often perceived as 'rich' and can be an easy target for petty theft or pick-pocketing. Violent crime is rare; nevertheless, Coordinators should use normal precautions, especially in the cities.

Ghanaian society is much friendlier and more helpful than many Western societies. People happily offer assistance to strangers and often go to great lengths to assist tourists and make foreigners feel welcome.

Ghana is a politically stable country, with virtually no threat of military or political violence. For decades, Ghana has maintained stability and Ghanaians take pride in their peaceful nature and Ghana's history of peaceful transitions of power.



No Gift Policy

It is difficult to say no to a child who asks for money or pencils. However, GHEI Coordinators cannot give money and pencils to every child in the village, and giving to certain individuals leads to accusations of favoritism and creates rifts within the community. GHEI therefore maintains a strict **No Gift Policy**. The policy dictates that donations from Coordinators or volunteers should be given through GHEI. As an organization, GHEI will distribute the donations in a way that will minimize ill will. Program Coordinators are responsible for abiding by and enforcing this policy with all volunteers and visitors.

Contact Information

Visit the GHEI Website at www.ghei.org or contact GHEI's Recruitment Director Natalie Rich at natalie@ghei.com.