

# **Annual Report** 2020

## ***Resilience in Action***

### **Did you know**

The GHEI logo was created using Adinkra symbols, originally developed by the Asantes in Ghana during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Each traditional symbol (presented on the cover) represents an aspect of life on which the organization focuses.

**Fihankra (Compound House) - Symbol of security and safety**

**Dame-Dame (Draught) - Symbol of intelligence and ingenuity**

**Nkyinkyim (Twistings) - Symbol of initiative, versatility and resilience**

<b>Contents</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>Towards 2030: GHEI and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>
<b>Introduction</b>			
<b>6</b>	Foreword by Board Chairperson and Executive Director	<b>40</b>	SDG 1 - No Poverty
<b>7</b>	Special Message from the Country Director and Assistant Country Director	<b>42</b>	SDG 2 - Zero Hunger
<b>8</b>	Who We are	<b>44</b>	SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-Being
<b>11</b>	Where We Work	<b>46</b>	SDG 4 - Quality Education
<b>12</b>	Our Programs	<b>54</b>	SDG 5 - Gender Equality
<b>14</b>	Our Team	<b>56</b>	SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation
<b>The GHEI Response to COVID-19 in Rural Ghana</b>		<b>58</b>	SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals
<b>19</b>	Safe Villages, Ghana - A Community-led solution	<b>59</b>	<b>Financials</b>
<b>22</b>	Creating Community Awareness about COVID-19	<b>60</b>	<b>In Gratitude</b>
<b>24</b>	Preventing the Spread of COVID-19	<b>62</b>	<b>Get in Touch</b>
<b>25</b>	Investigating Knowledge, Beliefs and Practices - Optimizing the Response		
<b>Adaptive Programming During COVID-19</b>			
<b>29</b>	Ensuring Learning Continuity for Rural Children		
<b>33</b>	Continuing Essential Health Services for Rural Women and their Children		
<b>36</b>	Summer Serve and Learn, Ghana		

# Foreword

## *Innovation, Adaptation during COVID-19*

In 2020, GHEI staff undertook lifesaving work that impacted thousands of people across Ghana’s Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai (BAB) Municipality. We begin this report by thanking them for their commitment and dedication.

Moreover, early in 2020, the world was brought to its knees by the COVID-19 pandemic which has taken a horrific toll on individuals, communities, with the most vulnerable disproportionately affected. The pandemic demonstrates the fragility of rural communities. It has laid bare the risks ignored for decades: inadequate health and education systems. For children and women in rural Ghana, COVID-19 has changed everything. Unprecedented in scale, it poses immediate threats to their rights to development and learning. An entire generation of children has missed out on school for months. Rural women have unique health needs and since COVID-19, they are less likely to have access to quality health services, essential medicines, and vaccines.

When the pandemic began, we knew there were barriers and challenges. But importantly, there was also an opportunity for the GHEI family to adjust and adapt. We mobilized quickly and comprehensively, leading a grassroots response to COVID-19, ensured learning continuity for school children, and continued to provide essential health services to rural women and their newborns. This annual report tells GHEI’s story of the last year. It shares how we and our partners are striding forward resiliently to create a better, healthier future for women and children in rural Ghana through sustainable community-based programs.

Finally, we are committed to a shared vision to set the world on a sustainable path for people, planet, peace, partnership and prosperity. We recognize that the pandemic has made the promise of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) more relevant and vital than ever. Unless mitigated, it risks undermining progress made on achieving the UN SDGs in Ghana, and puts an entire generation of rural communities at risk of not fulfilling their potential. While the current crisis is threatening progress towards the SDGs, it also makes their achievement all the more urgent. Therefore, building on our progress, this report presents steps taken to translate the ambitions articulated in the 2030 Agenda into tangible outcomes for our catchment communities.

*Diana Rickard*  
Dr. Diana Rickard, MD, MSHS  
Chairperson of the Board

*Jason Clevenger*  
Jason Clevenger, MS, PMP  
Executive Director

# Special Message from the Country Director and Assistant Country Director

The year 2020 was the year that tested the resilience of the organization amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. It also sought to challenge how innovative we are and brought out our ingenuity. The year tended to derail the course of our programming and offset our financing.

The pandemic called for a pragmatic response to confront what became known as “The New Normal.” Management, Staff, Interns, Fellows and our Board of Directors carved a new path to keep programs running and confront the pandemic head-on. GHEI’s COVID-19 response, the Safe Villages Project, was the result of hard and careful thought. With the use of technology and innovation, we helped to keep the disease at bay in our catchment villages whilst we found a safe way to continue our flagship Health and Education programs. Through the medium of radio, thousands of people have become aware of GHEI and hundreds more have experienced firsthand our assistance during community engagement and outreaches.

We continued to support and promote healthy pregnancy in first-time mothers and delivered healthy babies. Children were excited reading to their teacher on the phone often flanked by their proud parents and siblings. Looking back, we can only wish that things were normal again for us to revert fully to our programs yet the GHEI team has proved equal to the task.

We wish to thank our donors both individual and institutional for their unflinching support. We are all in this together, and together we play a vital role in our bid to make the world a better place for the underprivileged!

*[Signature]*  
Clement Donkor  
Country Director

*[Signature]*  
Enock Happy Nkrumah  
Assistant Country Director

# Who We Are

*Our Values. Our Strategy.*

## Investment in Children and Youth

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 interventions empower communities in the BAB Municipality to build that future by investing in their children and youth.

## Innovative Solutions

We believe that implementing high-quality programs requires integrity, hard work, and creativity, and we are committed to finding the most innovative solutions. Our programs improve children's health, learning success and create opportunities by building local capacity and providing necessary resources and support.



## An Emphasis on Girls and Young Women

Through our programs, we aim to ensure that girls and young women have the same opportunities as boys and young men. We improve educational opportunities for girls by helping them pursue their goals and ensure that girls and young women are equipped with the health knowledge, support, and counseling to navigate the obstacles they face growing up and into adulthood.

## Cultivating Local Leadership

We believe that progress in health and education is best achieved by the community itself. Therefore, we value empowering local individuals and cultivating local leadership to develop and manage all our programs. These local leaders make up most of our in-country staff and they are committed to mobilizing others in the community to increase engagement at the grassroots level.



**GHEI is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization, founded in 2004. We are based in Humjibre, a community of 6000+ inhabitants located in Ghana's Western North Region in the BAB Municipality.**

## **Our Mission**

To enable communities in the BAB Municipality of Ghana to improve their children's health, learning success and opportunities by building local capacity and providing necessary resources and support.

## **Our Vision**

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. GHEI empowers communities in the BAB Municipality of Ghana to build that future through investment in children and youth.

## **Where We Work**

**Our catchment communities include Humjibre, Soroano, Ampenkrom, Muoho and Kojina. Although our work has a positive impact on the well-being of the Municipality overall and is recognized nationally and internationally.**



# Our Programs

## Youth Education Program (YEP)

YEP provides supplemental classes to Junior High School (JHS) students, enabling them to attend Senior High School (SHS) and pursue better opportunities.

## Career Opportunity Lecture Series (COLS)

COLS addresses the professional development needs of JHS students by inviting role models and career counselors to inform them about possible career paths and set goals.

## Early Childhood Literacy (ECL)

ECL offers 12 extra classroom hours per week of individualized instruction to low performing primary school students.

## Humjibre Community Library

Built in 2007, the Humjibre Community Library has a collection of over 6500+ books with special emphasis on children's storybooks, textbooks, and African-authored books.

## Malaria Prevention

To help prevent the adverse health effects caused by malaria, GHEI provides community members and children attending SHS with Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLIN).

## Mother Mentor for Child Development (MMCD)

GHEI invests in first-time mothers by pairing them with a trusted and trained “Mother Mentor” from the community who provides individualized support, health education, and resources needed to maximize the health and development of the mother and her child.

## Promoting Safe Sex Practices

To encourage safe sexual practices and family planning, GHEI partners with community members to sell condoms at reduced price.

## Health Facility Delivery Incentive Program (HFDIP)

To reduce preventable maternal and newborn risks, GHEI created HFDIP which increases the proportion of deliveries performed in health facilities by reducing financial barriers preventing rural women from accessing care.

# Our Team

## Ghana Staff



Clement Donkor  
Co-founder, Country Director



Enock Happy Nkrumah  
Assistant Country Director



Agnes Obeng  
Health Program Administrator



Felicity Yaa Pomah  
Education Program Assistant



Alice Ofori Amanfo  
Mother Mentor



Sarah Nyarko  
Mother Mentor



Mensah Gyapong  
Health Program Administrator



Lyndsey Schoelzel  
Health Program Coordinator



Ernest Saga Badu  
Education Program Administrator



Pratik Tandon  
Communications Officer



Kwasi Dominic  
National Service Volunteer



Henrietta Dwumour  
Volunteer Mother Mentor

**Global Support Team\***



**Bright Obeng**  
Volunteer Teacher



**George Asiedu Ampem**  
Volunteer Teacher



**Joyce Ackah**  
Community Health Volunteer



**Diana Rickard, MD, MSHS**  
Co-Founder, Program Development and Quality  
Advisor, Chairperson of Board



**Jason Clevenger, MS, PMP**  
Executive Director



**Rebecca Dudovitz, MD, MSHS**  
Director of Pediatric Resident  
Education, Board Member



**Stephen Amoah**  
Education Program Intern



**Sarah Gustafson, MD**  
Education Program Development Advisor,  
Director of Medical Education, Board Secretary



**Alfred Appiah, MSc**  
Board Member



**Michael Kacka, MD**  
Treasurer, Board Member



**Christina Schuler, MIH, MSc**  
**Maternal and Child Health**  
**Program Advisor**



**Angad Berar, B.des**  
**Website Development Advisor**



**Louise Rickard, PhD**  
**Financial Secretary**



**Nigmyat Nurtaza**  
**Program Development Fellow**



**Merisa Muharemovic**  
**Program Development Fellow**

\*Outside of Ghana, GHEI relies on the volunteers on our Global Support Team to help fulfill its mission. These committed board members, advisors, fundraisers and technical specialists support the work of the Ghanaian staff through various capacity building efforts.

## The GHEI Response to COVID-19 in Rural Ghana

*Safe Villages, Ghana - A community-led solution*



In May 2020, GHEI saw the need as a grassroots organization to champion the fight against COVID-19 by allowing community members to lead the education and prevention. Communities listen well to their own and understand the language and opinions of respectable people from their community.

In concert with the efforts of local health officials and our partners in the BAB Municipality, we devised and launched the Safe Villages Project, a 12-month multi-faceted strategy that responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We mitigated the ongoing threat of COVID-19 in the 15 communities of Humjibre, Soroano, Ampenkrom, Kojina, Muoho, Atronsu, Akaasu, Bankromisa, Alata, Kofikrom, Adobewura 1, Adobewura 2, Chiraa, Dansokrom, and Dankokrom. Response activities were carried out in partnership with a local community clinic nurse, teachers, and leaders. Moreover, GHEI staff members are fluent speakers of the local dialect and have the ability to present COVID-19 information in a way that is relevant to community members, reflecting local culture and practices, and express using sentence structures and terminology that the community members are familiar with.

We moved from community to community to raise awareness of COVID-19, explained proper handwashing with soap techniques, installed handwashing

stations, provided disinfectants to taxi drivers, conducted outreach via local radio, and allayed COVID-19 related concerns and misconceptions via a telephone hotline. Moreover, we developed alternate “home-school” lessons in core subjects for pre-identified “at-need” students to support continued learning during school closures.

The response aimed to save lives and help the targeted communities prepare for the health and educational consequences that they will be confronted with as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Working with local partners to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in community schools

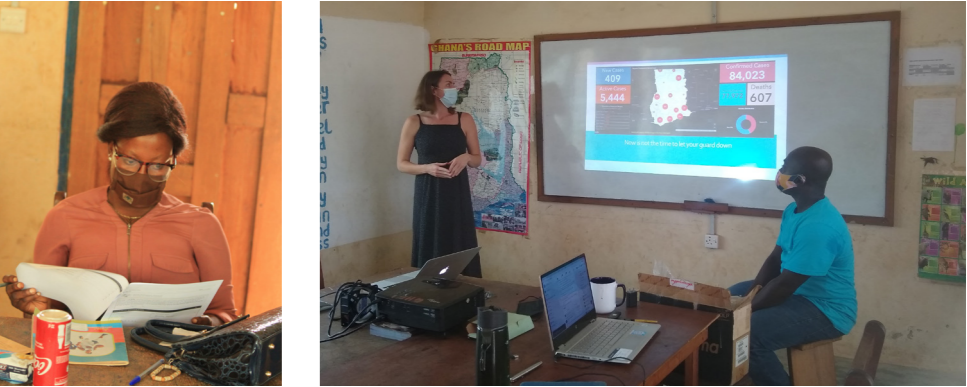
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The training on COVID-19 offered by GHEI staff provided us with much-needed information to prevent the spread of the disease in the community schools. The training also updated us on the number of cases in the BAB Municipality, deaths etc. This helped us to better understand the course of disease spread. Most importantly, through this engagement, we learned about the after-effects of COVID-19 and the role of vaccines in ending the pandemic. The information was shared and presented in a simple manner, enabling us to learn and impart this knowledge to the students in our school.

The pandemic can have dire consequences on our lives. Unfortunately, many students are not scared anymore as the number of cases has drastically reduced. It is like seeing is believing. Implementing social distancing measures inside the classroom has been challenging due to size. As we continue to fight the disease together, we look forward to GHEI increasing community participation and engaging directly with students to promote and encourage protective COVID-19 behaviors amongst all.

~

Abraham Henry Konming, Assistant Head Teacher | Martina Adanye, Teacher  
| Linda Brakoah Ahenkorah, Teacher  
Humjibre Anglican JHS



## Creating Community Awareness about COVID-19

*Ensuring real-time exchange of information, opinion and advice between GHEI staff and community members*

It is critical to communicate to community members what is known about COVID-19, what is unknown, what is being done and actions to be taken regularly. To effectively implement our response, we approached community members in a manner that is responsive, transparent, consistent, and empathetic. COVID-19 information has been shared in a way that allows individuals to learn (receive information and ask questions) and make informed decisions about how to protect themselves, their families, and communities.

**With a focus on at-risk groups, we delivered 135 public health messages in the 15 targeted communities.**

Messages were delivered in the local language through locally preferred and trusted channels of communication i.e community Public Address System (PAS) and a mobile address system to reach all community members. PAS are shared information and communication facilities for rural communities in Ghana. It is responsible for providing public information, announcements and news to community members. Most importantly, PAS serves as single-point access for both information and dialogue on issues concerning the well-being of community members.

We believe in providing life-saving information through active community dialogue and ensuring that a two-way communication channel is in place to listen to concerns and combat misinformation. **To this aim, we broadcasted radio show “Stronger, Together” (Translated locally as “Nkabom ma aho ɔden”) via a local radio station (LORD FM), which is one of the most popular radio stations in the targeted communities.** It has been an avenue for participatory communication featuring discussions on issues such as vaccines, prevention/protection, childcare, stress management, pregnancy/breastfeeding, stigmatization, and other topics of local interest. The program was motivated by community well-being, and not commercial considerations.



## Fostering access to health information on COVID-19 through community radio

“

When COVID-19 came to Ghana, many people in our communities thought it’s not real. As community radio journalists, it has been our responsibility to disseminate COVID-19 information and educate the general public about the disease in the local language. Our partnership with GHEI gave community members the mechanism to tell their own stories, share experiences and voice concerns regarding COVID-19. We were able to reach remote, marginalized, hard to reach and vulnerable communities in the Municipality.

GHEI’s involvement and the Safe Villages project played a life-saving role in making people think about the virus. For instance, the talk show on LORD FM successfully addressed stigmatization by educating community members to accept each other as “one”. Sharing Municipality-wide data regarding cases, deaths, recoveries, etc enabled people to make informed decisions and keep themselves and their families safe. Most importantly, we debunked conspiracy theories, highlighted how vaccines have helped to eradicate and control diseases - and urged everyone to get vaccinated when they become available in Ghana.

We are proud of our collaboration with GHEI to meet the information needs of rural communities during COVID-19.

~



Kontor Eric Boateng | Miclicent Agbah  
Journalists, LORD FM



## Preventing the Spread of COVID-19

### *Our Handwashing Stations in Ghana offered hope to rural communities*

GHEI's response to COVID-19 focussed on the promotion of hand hygiene as a frontline preventive measure against the virus. Thanks to our generous supporters, we've been running handwashing with soap campaigns in eight community schools since 2010. As a result, we have trained thousands of school children on proper hand hygiene practices and distributed bars of soap in schools across GHEI communities on an annual basis. The pandemic has provided a stark reminder that handwashing is a simple way to prevent the spread of any virus and ensure better health outcomes for all. But for thousands of people living in rural Ghana where access to hygiene facilities is largely poor or non-existent, this small action to prevent COVID-19 remains mostly inaccessible. Therefore to ensure access and encourage frequent handwashing with soap, **GHEI acquired and installed 23 handwashing stations. They are currently deployed in key areas where the risk of contracting COVID-19 is high, such as market areas, taxi stations, food joints, bars, etc.**

### *Supporting Healthy Rural Transportation during COVID-19*

**To promote safe and healthy transportation, we regularly provided disinfectants to 42 taxi drivers who keep the world moving between Humjibre and the nearest town, Sefwi Bekwai.** To help them carry out routine disinfection of their vehicles, our staff demonstrated proper disinfection procedures and provided guidance on physical distancing and hygiene measures that can be implemented by both drivers and commuters to ensure the safety of all travelers. Further, to encourage compliance with safety measures, create more awareness and solicit feedback, we conducted meaningful and engaging group discussions with taxi drivers, thereby enabling them to share their experiences, tell stories and voice their opinions in the context of COVID-19. Through the discussions, we focussed on understanding COVID-19 risk perceptions, debunked conspiracy theories, and provided information on the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

Many people use public transport daily between Humjibre and Sefwi Bekwai. As the COVID-19 health crisis continues to unfold in Ghana, taxi drivers are on the frontline, in direct contact with passengers, and are putting themselves at risk of contracting the disease by carrying out their everyday duties. We are proud of them as they are keeping rural communities in Ghana moving during these challenging times.



## Investigating Knowledge, Beliefs, and Practices - Optimizing the Response

### *Through a survey, we engaged in active community dialogue and ensured a two-way communication channel was in place to listen to community concerns, combat misinformation and rumors*

GHEI recognizes that an essential aspect of any response lies in monitoring and evaluation. We believe that actively listening to our surrounding communities and adjusting our programs accordingly is an integral part of our mission. To best position ourselves and address the communities' beliefs and understanding regarding COVID-19, we created a community survey.

For the past year, we have heard several different theories and misconceptions regarding COVID-19. Through our public outreach, we've had the opportunity to engage with well-informed community members and those who needed further education. To equip all community members with the most up-to-date facts regarding the pandemic, we needed a better understanding of the current beliefs, knowledge and practices. The best way to do this was to collect data on various indicators via a community survey to gauge the community's understanding, which can provide us with insights to address misconceptions and stigmatization. By completing these surveys, we have gained valuable insights into the behaviors and beliefs of those we are serving, thereby enabling us to provide them with the best information for their safety.

**We have conducted in-depth interviews with 289 community members and collected data on several indicators.**



Community members willing get a COVID-19 vaccine



Community members having a nose mask at home



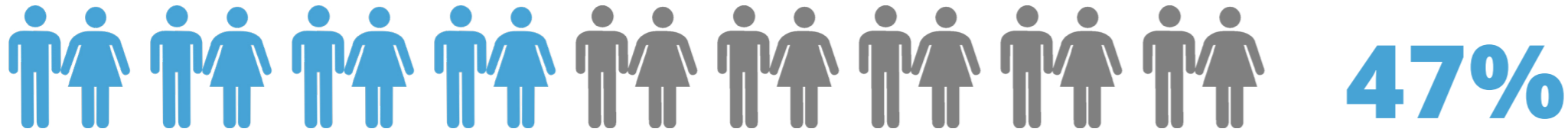
Community members using the handwashing stations in the community provided by GHEI



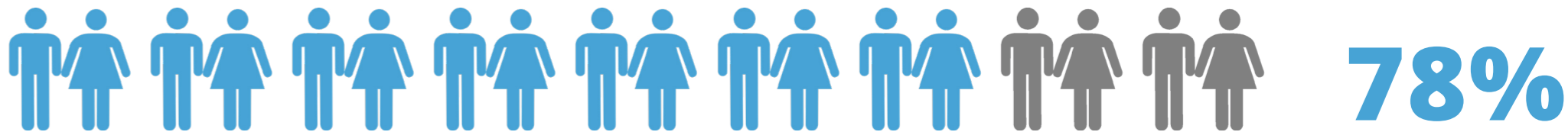
Community members knowing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19



Community members afraid to tell other members of community if they are infected with COVID-19



Community members who will avoid crowded areas



Community members who wear a nose mask in public



# Adaptive Programming During COVID-19

*The impact felt from the pandemic was not lost to GHEI, though based in a rural setting it pushed our boundaries and compelled us to adapt in a way that proved our resilience. We made necessary adjustments to our programs and ensured the safety and well-being of our staff members and program participants.*

## Ensuring Learning Continuity for Rural Children

### Youth Education Program (YEP)

YEP offers supplemental classes to JHS students in Humjibre. The classes have a significantly smaller student-to-teacher ratio than the students’ regular schools, a variety of materials and resources that are not commonly available, and focuses on fostering active learning and critical thinking skills while helping students prepare for their critical Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). BECE is the standardized exam JHS students must take to get into SHS.

To protect students and curb the spread of COVID-19, GHEI’s education team suspended YEP classes for six months. Since some of the JHS students were preparing to write BECE, new techniques for teaching and learning were immediately implemented. Homeschooling was conceived as an alternative to mitigate the effect on their BECE preparation and education at large. Students were encouraged to collect reading comprehension worksheets from the GHEI office. The worksheets were aimed at improving the ability to read, an intricate process involving several skills. Reading comprehension is important because it is what will essentially help students to learn new concepts in the future. When they can understand what they are reading, they can learn and understand new concepts about any subject or theme.

**This strategy helped 54 students to hold on to broken academic chains during COVID–19 school closures in Ghana.**



Early Childhood Literacy (ECL)

Low-performing primary school students are often not seen as worthy investments and begin to be neglected by their teachers and parents. ECL provides these students with extra hours of learning, incorporating engaging methods that include a word wall and culturally adapted phonics to build literacy skills.

COVID-19 disrupted Primary Education in Ghana. For months, primarily school children stayed home without any teaching and learning support. Students in rural communities were stagnant with no access to learning materials, the internet, or virtual teaching methods.

In this suddenly new “home school environment” we designed and deployed alternative education methods for at-need primary school students. Our teachers called and engaged individual pupils on the phone and taught comprehension, letter identification, pronunciations, etc. Mobile phones helped to connect and interact with students, facilitated learning, and made sure that the risk of learning loss was minimal.

For these students, the parents informed us that the highlight of their day was the phone call from the GHEI teacher. Moreover, parents were extremely supportive and understanding towards ensuring their children could communicate with their teacher and study at home easily.

**During school closures, we provided 2,067 hours of lessons via mobile phone to 24 at-need primary school children. Further, 20 textbooks and sight words resources were also provided to the students.**

Humjibre Community Library

To give our community, and in particular students, the opportunity to learn and improve their literacy in preparation for obtaining a higher education, GHEI constructed a library in Humjibre in 2007. It has a collection of books on wide-ranging topics, however, there is a special emphasis on children’s books, school textbooks, and books authored by African Writers. The Humjibre Community Library is managed by a local Board of Trustees.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in Ghana and subsequent “social distancing protocols” forced GHEI to close the library. The choice was difficult, but clear. However, this closure was an opportunity for us to reinvent the services. To this aim, the education team innovatively cataloged 6700 books, labeled and painted the walls and the shelves for a beautiful and clean look.

Empowering students to pursue their career goals

*In March 2021, we hosted Jemillah and many more students from community schools for the annual Career Opportunity Lecture Series (COLS). The event was modified to repeat for three days and focussed on a small gathering of students, ensuring a safe environment for all participants. Our goal was to inform the students about possible career paths, encourage them to set goals and continue their education to realize their professional aspirations.*

“

I am glad to attend GHEI’s Career Opportunity Lecture Series which has given me proper guidance about possible career paths and necessary skills required to stand out in the job market. I aspire to become a nurse and the lectures made me aware of the specific subjects I will have to study in school to achieve my goal. I am grateful to GHEI’s staff and supporters to have allowed me and other students to empower ourselves and make the best decisions!

~

Jemillah  
COLS Participant and JHS Student



Home learning in times of COVID-19: Experiences of a Parent

“

During the lockdown last year, schools in Humjibre were closed for months and due to this many students in the community were not learning. Stephen’s performance in school had been low for a few years. To build his literacy skills, he was enrolled in GHEI’s ECL Programme. Initially, during school closure and suspension of ECL classes, I was worried since he was not learning. However, I was very happy to see that ECL classes were held using a mobile phone. Stephen adjusted well to this new form of teaching and would eagerly look forward to the classes. I was interested in ensuring that my child continued to learn properly. I regularly called the teachers to understand how the classes were going and what I can do to support the classes as a parent. While going to work, I willingly left my mobile phone at home so that Stephen can continue to keep learning.

After successfully graduating from the program, Stephen’s school performance has improved. I am grateful to the teachers and supporters for helping my child. Education is important and I don’t have anything else to give to Stephen except education. GHEI’s home learning intervention during COVID-19 is inspiring. In case there is another school closure, my wife and I have decided to provide a home tutor and ensure Stephen continues to succeed.

~

Samuel Akwabeng  
Parent of Stephen Akwabeng Bonney



Continuing Essential Health Services for Rural Women and their Children

Mother Mentor for Child Development (MMCD)

To thrive, young children need cognitive stimulation, good nutrition, and an absence of recurrent infections. However, stunting, malaria, diarrheal infections, and financial burdens often lead to poor health outcomes in mothers and young children, prohibiting the full cognitive development of children. Pregnant women face many barriers that prevent them from having a healthy pregnancy. To overcome these barriers and give first-time mothers the tools they need to have a healthy pregnancy and baby, our MMCD program pairs first-time pregnant women with trusted mothers in Humjibre who serve as “Mother Mentors.” The mentors work with the participating mothers and their families from pregnancy through the first two years of the child’s life to maximize its health and development.

During the height of the pandemic in Ghana, the mother mentors suspended household visits and transitioned MMCD to virtual visits via phone calls. Through these visits, the mentors provided flipchart education focussing on topics such as Nutrition, Sanitation & Hygiene, Safe Pregnancy, etc.

We continued to deliver food vouchers, financial incentive packages, bed nets, and sanitation and hygiene supplies safely. When deemed safe to resume in-person visits we did so with new protocols in place. The health team and program participants were equipped with proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and national COVID-19 safety protocols were followed. Further, we took special care to ensure adequate supplies of soap were available to each of our 25 participants and their families along with preventative education on COVID-19.

Health Facility Delivery Incentive Program (HFDIP)

In collaboration with pediatric residents from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), GHEI staff and Community Health Workers designed HFDIP to raise women’s awareness of the benefits of delivering in a health facility, increase their decision-making power, and reduce financial barriers by giving pre and post-delivery packages.

In rural Ghana, health facilities can be difficult to reach and without proper transportation, pregnant women may be forced to deliver at home. Even if expecting mothers do ultimately reach a healthcare facility, they often find it under-equipped, with limited healthcare workers, and no emotional support.

Often they are unable to afford critical supplies (e.g. disinfectants) making home delivery their only option. Unfortunately, when a mother chooses to deliver her baby outside of health facilities, she puts her own life and that of her newborn in danger, particularly if complications arise.

Pregnant women who are in their sixth to the ninth month of pregnancy attend distribution days hosted by GHEI’s health team to answer questions about their past and intended delivery locations and receive pre-delivery packages of items commonly needed at health facilities during childbirth. After delivery, women return to GHEI to collect a post-delivery incentive package and answer questions about their delivery location and experience.

**Pre-Delivery Package**

The pre-delivery package includes 2 antiseptics, 2 bottles of bleach and 4 cakes of soap.

**Post-Delivery Package**

The post-delivery package includes 2 baby blankets and 4 baby diapers.

Between March-May 2020, the distribution of incentive packages was suspended to ensure the safety of staff and program participants. We restarted the distribution of pre and post-delivery packages in June 2020 whilst adhering to COVID-19 national safety protocols.

**In 2020, we provided pre-delivery packages to 54 women in the village of Ampenkrom and 46 women received post delivery packages.**

**Ensuring safe delivery for expectant mothers during COVID-19**

*Martha Donkor from Ampenkrom community in rural Ghana chose to deliver her baby conveniently and confidently at the health facility.*

“

I was scared to deliver my child at a health facility during COVID-19. I was afraid of getting infected. However, GHEI supported me by providing essential items such as antiseptics, soap and bleach that are needed to deliver at health facilities. They also gave necessary guidance that helped me prepare to bring my child safely into this world.

~

Martha Donkor  
HFDIP Participant





# Summer Serve & Learn, Ghana

Est. 2004

## Summer Serve and Learn, Ghana (SSL)

Established in 2004, the SSL program gives participants unparalleled access to our catchment communities and a unique chance to do hands-on development work through transformative sessions. It is an opportunity to help people and learn while exploring and enjoying local experiences.

## Community Health Evaluation (CHE)

Participants in this session become a part of a thorough and in-depth evaluation of community health, concentrating on achieving a better understanding of current and emerging health needs of rural communities. GHEI's health programs are informed by CHE surveys which involve collecting data from households in our communities.

## Girls Empowerment Camp (GEC)

GEC participants conduct an exhaustive empowerment camp for teenage girls and design an engaging curriculum for essential themes such as sexual and reproductive health, money management, leadership, etc. The session aims to motivate teenage girls in realizing their full potential. Through interactive group sessions and one on one mentorship, GEC contributes towards a renewed sense of awareness and many of the girls later credit the camp for their achievements.



Summer Serve  
& Learn, Ghana  
Est. 2004

# BY THE NUMBERS

# 18

Years in Existence

# 200+

Number of Participants

# 500+

Number of Volunteer Hours Devoted

# 54

Number of Sessions

# Towards 2030: GHEI and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

*Our work on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*



Since its inception, GHEI has promoted sustainable development and improved the well-being of people living in rural Ghana. Fundamentally, every aspect of our work aligns with and supports progress towards the UN SDGs, and their aim to end poverty, ensure peace, prosperity and opportunity for all on a healthy planet. To end poverty in all its forms (SDG 1), we address the causes of poverty by ensuring access to quality education (SDG 4), water, sanitation and hygiene (SDG 6), good health and well-being (SDG 3), improved and adequate nutrition (SDG 2), and creating partnerships with individuals and organizations for capacity building, program design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (SDG 17). As an NGO, we understand that GHEI plays a critical role in SDG realization: we create awareness and mobilize; build local capacity; design and implement programs; collect data; provide technical expertise and support

the Government of Ghana in upholding their commitments.

This year marks the start of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs by 2030. It is a critical period to accelerate our responses to the world’s most pressing challenges - from increasing opportunities for underprivileged children to improving the well-being of rural families and truly empowering women and girls. The precipitous spread of COVID-19 has turned a public health emergency into one of the worst international crises of our lifetimes, changing the world as we know it and highlighting the urgent need to support capacities of health and education systems in countries such as Ghana which are at great risk. In these turbulent times, we are committed to finding innovative and transformative pathways to decisively tackle and win the fight against poverty.

In this context, we present GHEI’s commitments that reflect our work across the above-mentioned SDGs, as well as descriptions to demonstrate results<sup>1</sup> that are delivering on the SDGs. Our commitments are anchored in GHEI’s mission and vision where children—free from illness and illiteracy—can realize their full potential, and are fulfilled through our programs and cross-cutting priorities.

1. Program activities and data presented in relation to SDGs in the subsequent pages are lifetime.

# 1 NO POVERTY



Using the power of evidence to address poverty and drive sustainable change to achieve SDG-1

GHEI prides itself in building evidence-based programs. Our health and education programs are rooted in rigorous data collection and the data is regularly reviewed to ensure quality. From monitoring a child's growth and development, to understanding significant barriers to women's health, to the tracking of students who pass their exams, we are ensuring that the services we provide are truly needed and ultimately the ones that enable our communities to thrive. For example, in the final phase of MMCD, a child is assessed every six months in their development using the Brigance Parent-Child Interactions Scale (BPCIS) and Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS).

The BPCIS is a surveillance tool designed to identify positive versus problematic parent-child interactions—well before delays emerge. The tool is clustered into two main factors - (1) Nonverbal (fine motor, gross motor, self-help, and social-emotional) and (2) Communication (receptive and expressive language). It helps to answer questions such as: Are parents talking a lot with their children? Are parents responding to children's attempts at communication in an encouraging way? Are parents teaching new words? Are parents sharing books?

PEDS is an evidence-based method for detecting and addressing development and behavioral problems in children aged from birth to 8 years. In MMCD the first assessment is done at age 6 months and the last one at 24 months. The majority of parents cannot read or write and therefore GHEI staff answer the PEDS questionnaire together with the parents. During the biyearly monitoring sessions, a staff member visits the families and their children twice to confirm the quality assurance of the sessions offered by the mother mentors, and to see if the participants have any open questions or concerns.

# 141

BPCIS and PEDS Questionnaire sessions have been held with MMCD participants



*Through SSL, CHE surveys have been used to collect baseline data i.e. data gathered before a program is implemented. In 2015, CHE was conducted in order to assess the problems that existed within the community pertaining to maternal and child health.*

*This information collected was the basis for MMCD*





Increase access to proper nutrition and education for women and their babies to support SDG 2 - Zero Hunger

Nutritious diet is vital for a child to grow and reach maximum potential. Children who do not receive adequate nutrition within the first 1,000 days of life can suffer from irreversible long-term developmental delays.

To combat this, MMCD participants are given food vouchers to ensure they are meeting their caloric needs. We track the weight of participating mothers and their babies to make sure neither wasting nor stunting is occurring. If either of these cases occurs we address them immediately. Locally relevant education is given to the mother over three years on the importance of a well-balanced and varied diet. Alongside, we also emphasize the importance of breastfeeding and complementary feeding techniques.

85% of our participants exclusively breastfeed their children until they are six months old



97% of all MMCD program participants have received an extra 900kcal per day while pregnant





**Provide education and resources for healthy living to achieve SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-Being for all**

Good health and well-being are the core values of GHEI's health programs.

The MMCD program pairs first-time mothers with mentors from within the community. The mentors then educate expecting mothers from pregnancy through the first 1,000 days of their child's life. To ensure that the mother and her child are reaching their full potential, the mentors provide well-rounded education on various healthy living components of health including nutrition in pregnancy, breastfeeding and infant nutrition, reducing common infections for pregnant women and young children, and child development. During the weekly house visits in the third phase of MMCD (when the child is 6 - 24 months), the mentors deliver cognitive stimulation and development activities and education, in addition to the ongoing health component. This phase aims to ensure appropriate development of the children by encouraging parents to interact with their children through talking, listening, reading, teaching and verbal soothing. Mothers are taught how to tell stories, how to interact and how they can best stimulate their children.

Each mother and child pair are signed up for Ghana's national health insurance program and GHEI ensures that their membership is active throughout their enrollment. We provide community members, and student's going to SHS with an LLIN at a reduced price to prevent the adverse effects caused by malaria. Condoms are distributed and sold throughout the community at a reduced cost to encourage safe sexual and reproductive practices as well as family planning. Further, to reduce preventable maternal and newborn risks, HFDIP increases the proportion of deliveries performed in health facilities by reducing existing financial barriers preventing women from accessing care, and raises their awareness.

**1,789** bed nets have been distributed to community members



**9,495** condoms have been sold to community members, out of which 6,149 have been given for free



**140** educational hours (average) are given to each mother during the course of her enrollment in MMCD.





**Enable and encourage  
JHS students to develop  
critical thinking,  
leadership skills and  
achieve educational  
success to support SDG  
4 - Quality Education**

We are passionate about unlocking a child’s potential! Our programs encourage educational attainment among young children in our communities. Since 2003, our education programs have helped children achieve their literacy goals, enabled them to think critically and fostered leadership skills. Educational attainment among youth is critical to alleviating poverty.

YEP is an important tool and plays a significant role in designing the future of students as successful persons. It lessens the challenges they will face and prepares them for the time after SHS. Through YEP they gain more knowledge that opens more opportunities, allowing them to achieve better possibilities for career and personal growth. Since its establishment, the program has empowered 244 students including Alfred Appiah (Board Member), Ernest Saga Badu and Felicity Yaa Pomah (Education Program Administrator and Assistant).

**YEP and Beyond: A Journey of Empowerment**  
**(Number of YEP Graduates Currently Continuing their Education)**

**84** are enrolled in SHS, University, Nurses College, Vocational Training and Teachers College



**80** have completed a post SHS academic program





Enable primary 1 children with below average literacy skills to improve their literacy and critical thinking skills

The ECL program is changing what a learning experience can be for primary school children. We realize that low-performing children should not be neglected by their teachers and parents because they have the potential of achieving academic success. To that end, the program creates a solid and broad foundation for the lifelong learning and wellbeing of children who may have had to drop out of school due to below average performance. To measure the foundation of literacy acquisition in ECL students, we administer the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) individually to all the students participating in the program. EGRA provides a battery of assessments of basic reading skills for developing countries to monitor the status of early reading in primary school children.

EGRA assessments of ECL cohorts highlight the success and importance of our intervention. Baseline, mid-term and final results show an extraordinary leap in the acquisition of basic literacy skills, knowledge and abilities required for school promotion and overall life achievements!

Average Correct Letters per Minute							
Cohorts	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19
Baseline	1.4	3.6	2.25	0	0	6	4
Mid-Term	11	13	17.8	37	34	21	16
Final	44	55	64	61	59	62	36

Average Correct Words per Minute

Cohorts	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19
Baseline	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mid-Term	0	0.36	0.83	8	3	5	3
Final	26	28	17	21	20	34	23

Average Correct Sounds per Minute

Cohorts	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19
Baseline	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mid-Term	2.6	1.9	0	22	13	10	0
Final	34	32	37	49	34	49	25



4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Provide a rich text environment where children and youth can have access to resources and literature to expand their knowledge and improve their levels of literacy

GHEI's Reading Club is an opportunity for JHS students to engage with various books in a supportive atmosphere. Students gather at the Humjibre Community Library to read selected titles from the Junior African Writers Series or African Writer Series, answer comprehension questions, and discuss issues based on materials. The Reading Club is open to all JHS students in Humjibre.

The Soroano Book Box Project aims to improve literacy in the Soroano community by providing culturally appropriate and educational books to primary school students. **The project includes more than 300 books for students.**

981 average users per month visit Humjibre Community Library\*



436 reading club sessions have been held at Humjibre Community Library since 2011



46% Girls Library Attendance (annual)\*



\*For 2019 calendar year



Ensure access to quality  
Health and Education  
Resources for her  
Success (HERS)

Our education programs are revolutionizing how education is delivered to girls. To lower the education gap and achievements between boys and girls, **60% of students enrolled in ECL and YEP programs are female.** Moreover, GEC is held annually each summer and provides holistic and targeted mentoring support to 40 teenage girls covering topics such as Gender-based violence, Safe Sex, Money Management, Self Esteem and Leadership.

Our Health Programs begin with an individual young woman in rural Ghana. We believe that getting pregnant shouldn't be a dangerous thing for her and her family. Through community-based health interventions, we are making sure that becoming a mother is a special time full of happiness and excitement. Since our inception, we have improved health outcomes in hundreds of young women living in rural Ghana by providing them medical support and care, thereby ensuring safe deliveries and protection from diseases.

Through HERS we are supporting girls and young women from poor households in rural Ghana. HERS gives girls and young women the chance to learn, thrive and lead change within their communities. It multiplies the number of girls achieving education at different levels, improves access to good health care services, increases awareness and accelerates their path to better livelihoods and leadership.

**62** mothers have benefited from GHEI's MMCD program



**100%** BECE passage rate for girls enrolled in YEP program



**601** women have received a pre-delivery package via HFDIP



## 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



**Promote and enhance water, sanitation, and hygiene practices within the community by providing education and essential materials to families that lack resources**

Clean water and proper sanitation and hygiene practices are important to reduce unnecessary morbidity and mortality within our communities. Pregnant women and newborns face threats from diseases and infections such as diarrhea due to poor hygiene and sanitation standards in their households. Since its inception, GHEI has been continually emphasizing the importance of sanitation and hygiene to pregnant mothers and their family members. Further, we recognize that WASH practices are vital towards reducing disease prevalence and promoting overall health of our communities.

We provide every participant in the MMCD program with a handwashing station. This station includes a reoccurring supply of soap in addition to education on proper handwashing techniques and an emphasis on the importance of adhering to all hygienic practices. Further, we ensure that participants have a working latrine. If not, we construct a new one for the participant and her family to use. We educate mothers on how to properly dispose of used diapers, the importance of consuming clean drinking water, and the adverse long-term effects of improper hygiene practices. Schools within the community are provided with handwashing stations and annual education regarding safe hygiene practices. Indicators regarding the frequency of diarrheal diseases are tracked, and followed up with additional investigation and education if needed.

**44** toilets for MMCD participants have been built to date



**62** MMCD participants have received a handwashing station





Creating partnerships with individuals and organizations for capacity building, program design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation

We are proud to work with partner organizations and individuals from around the world to support our health and education work in rural Ghana.

Through the Summer, Serve and Learn, Ghana program, we offer participants the opportunity to be immersed in a rural Ghanaian community and work alongside local staff members in support of our year-round health and education programs. Our generous partnership with the Books for Africa Library project has enhanced the benefits of the Humjibre Community Library through training and donations of locally published books. The partnership with UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine enables our high-impact health programming to create a healthy future for our communities and exposes UCLA students and pediatric residents to the rigors of community-based health interventions and participatory research. Our enduring partnerships with Altrusa International Foundation and One Day’s Wages have delivered a profound impact in rural Ghana during COVID-19.

Finally, the engagement and synergies with the BAB Municipal Department of Social Welfare, Education and Health Directorate have increased the effectiveness and sustainability of our efforts.

# Financials

A donation for GHEI, in full, truly makes a difference. We recognize that our donors and partners donate to make Ghana a better place. For this reason, 100% of GHEI's operational costs in Ghana go directly towards supporting our programs and benefitting the communities we serve. This gives us the means to make the biggest impact possible. Our donors, in turn, are able to see their donation make a tangible impact in Ghana.

2019-20 Fiscal Year*		
Revenue	312,851 GHS	\$56,882
Operating Expenses	229,251 GHS	\$41,682

\*Source - Short Form Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, Form 990-EZ 2019

# In Gratitude

To Our Donors and Partners,

At a time when we are all experiencing the pandemic, generosity is what brings people together. Thank you for coming together with GHEI in ensuring that rural communities in Ghana are healthier, safer and stronger. Last year, you created a massive wave of generosity that has touched the lives of people living in rural Ghana and it will continue to last beyond 2020. By supporting GHEI, you used your individual power of generosity to improve the lives of vulnerable people during COVID-19.

Your contributions will go a long way in ensuring the well-being of rural communities and build their capacity to face future crises. We will make you proud!

## Partner Organizations

- Altrusa International Foundation
  - BAB Municipal Department of Social Welfare
  - BAB Municipal Education Directorate
  - BAB Municipal Health Directorate
  - Books for Africa Library Project
  - German Rotary Club
  - GIVN Water
- One Day’s Wages
  - Project Peanut Butter
  - UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine
  - Zongo Story Project

## Individual Donors

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- Trudy Singzon
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- Yves & Danièle Balit

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