



The Olinga Foundation

For Human Development



August 2013

Objectives of the Foundation:

- *To release human potential through the promotion of universal education, especially for school leavers, women and girls.*
- *To build the capacity of community-based organisations for achieving ever higher degrees of human development.*
- *To assist individuals and organisations to investigate, identify and overcome socio-cultural barriers to development.*
- *To assist communities to apply moral principles for the solution of socio-economic problems through a process of consultation, action and reflection.*

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All Children Reading Campaign

Annual Teacher Training Workshop

The Olinga Foundation for Human Development under the All Children Reading Campaign through consultative meetings with District Coordinators, District Education Officers and the District Assemblies in both Eastern and Western Regions organized the Training for Transformation project during the 1st quarter of 2013. Fifty (50) primary schools were finally selected in each of the four districts (Wassa Amenfi West, Mporhor Wassa East, Suhum/Ayensuano and Kwahu North/Afram Plains) making a total of 200 intervention schools who received 35 Literacy learner books each.

Teachers along with GES Circuit Supervisors and Desk Officers were taken through a two and half day workshop on literacy methodologies as well as moral leadership and positive teacher attitude. Teachers were also provided with teaching and learning resources in the form of poster materials and small books developed by themselves.

2013 BASELINE STUDY

A Baseline survey was conducted in each of the four TtT Programme Districts—Kwahu North /Afram Plains, Suhum/Ayensuano, Mporhor Wassa West and Wassa Amenfi West districts from the 10th



Teacher Training Workshop, 2013

to the 24th March in ten program and ten nonprogramme schools. However, the baseline study in Suhum—Ayensuano and Mporhor -Wassa East was postponed to the 8th April, 2013 due to strike action by Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) and National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) that lasted for about eleven (11) working days. The baseline study was completed for the remaining districts (Suhum—Ayensuano and Mporhor Wassa East) by 12th April, 2013.

Specific objectives of the baseline test were to test the reading skills and comprehension abilities of children, assess community involvement in the schools, assess teacher behavior such as teacher rates of absenteeism, time on task and teaching methods and understand the types and frequency of disciplinary practices of teachers. The intervention schools were randomly selected from the master list and matched with non program schools in an adjacent circuit or nearby community. The test covered 10 program and 10 non-programme schools in each of the four districts. Twenty students (10 boys and 10 girls - to ensure gender balance) were randomly picked to take part in a reading test for P4 and the same number for P6. A total of 40 students took part in the test in each school. The estimated total number of students for the baseline test was 3200 (40 students in each of the 80 schools).

The best of all ways to worship Him is to educate the children and train them in all the perfections of humankind, and no nobler deed than this can be imagined.

"As to the children; from the age of five their formal education must begin. That is, during the daytime they should be looked after in a place where there are teachers, and should learn good conduct."

.....Bahá'í Holy Writings" Bahá'í Holy Writings

The instrumentation for the baseline study included a reading and comprehension test to be completed by the learners (girls and boys at P4 and P6 levels were tested in each of the baseline schools). The study also involved an interview with classroom teachers and the Head teachers.



“Children must be taught HOW TO THINK, not what to think.”

Margaret Mead.

FROM James Quansah, Kumasi

SEVENTY FIVE head teachers and teachers in the Ayensuano District and Suhum Municipality of the Eastern region have been specially trained on how to sharpen the literacy skills of pupils they teach.

The educational authorities received the training at a three-day literacy training workshop organized for them from Wednesday, February 6, to Friday 8, this year.

The Training for Transformation (TfT) Programme, which was organized by the Olinga Foundation for Human Development and supported by USAID's "All Children Reading Campaign," benefited 55 upper primary teachers, 15 head teachers, seven assistant directors and four circuit supervisors from 50 selected primary schools.

According to Mrs. Okanta, children failed their JHS exams partly due to the fact that they were unable to read and comprehend the questions.

She said, "There is no way a teacher can perform magic at JHS to make a child read fluently at the higher level if the basics at the primary level is very poor."

The District Director of Education further urged all participants to actively get involved in the workshop and make judicious use of the training and literacy methods acquired when they return to their various schools.

Participants were taken through various practical teaching methodologies based on phonics and syllabic approaches through the use of the child's mother tongue.

On the closing day of the training, a few practice demonstration schools were selected and teachers were asked to exhibit skills acquired during the three-day workshop as a form of preliminary evaluation.

The Olinga Foundation for Human Development is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), which has operated in Ghana for the past 15 years.

It is one of the 32 finalists out of the 450 NGOs globally competing for "The All Children Reading Award" grant by USAID, World Vision and Australian Aid, which seeks to provide 48,000 children in Ghana access to literacy methods, training for teachers and literacy primers across four of Olinga's targeted districts over the next two years.

In collaboration with the Ghana Education Service and Ministry of Education, the project is being implemented at Suhum Ayensuano, Afram Plains both in the Eastern region and Wassu Amanifi West and Mpohor Wassu East in the Western region.

She added that the absence of "one-on-one connections" between the teacher and pupil prevent teachers from knowing the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils in the classroom.

However, this is left unchecked, as children are often approved for the next class without fully acquiring basic decoding skills, identifying sounds and rectifying their shortfalls in reading.

Gifty Okanta, District Director of Education (DDE) for Suhum Ayensuano, in her opening address, also stated that most JHS pupils in the Suhum Ayensuano area, from which schools were selected, cannot read due to the very weak foundation skills acquired at the basic level.

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GRAND GUIDE

No. 13

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***Gifty Okanta (middle) with Dr. Casely Hayford, (right) and participants**

75 Teachers Trained On Pupils' Skills

FROM James Quansah, Kumasi

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The “exaltation of the word of God, the advancement of the world of being and the uplift of souls” are best achieved through the education of the child -Abdu'l-Bahá

BASELINE TEST RESULTS FOR SUHUM-AYENSUANO, MPOHOR WASSA EAST, WASSA AMENFI WEST & KWAHU NORTH/AFRAM PLAINS DISTRICTS

| District | Level | P4 | | | P6 | | |
|------------------|--------------------|----------|---------------|--------------|----------|---------------|--------------|
| | Reading Competency | Literate | Semi-Literate | Non-Literate | Literate | Semi-Literate | Non-Literate |
| Mpohor-Wassa | Olinga | 14% | 24% | 62% | 33% | 32% | 35% |
| Mpohor-Wassa | Non-Program | 9% | 12% | 80% | 22% | 14% | 64% |
| Suhum Ay-ensuano | Olinga | 40% | 5% | 56% | 67% | 8% | 25% |
| Suhum Ay-ensuano | Non-Program | 43% | 9% | 48% | 60% | 10% | 34% |
| Afram Plains | Olinga | 10% | 8% | 82% | 26% | 12% | 62% |
| Afram Plains | Non-Program | 16% | 3% | 81% | 33% | 9% | 56% |
| Wassa Amenfi | Olinga | 11% | 10% | 79% | 25% | 21% | 54% |
| Wassa Amenfi | Non-Program | 6% | 8% | 86% | 23% | 16% | 60% |

Message from the Municipal Director of Education

Mrs. Gifty Okanta, during a training for teachers in Suhum lauded Olinga Foundation and World Reader for their commendable programmes introduced in basic schools under her jurisdiction. She indicated how her outfit was going to support and ensure routine monitoring was done for the success of the project.

“I expect all the participants here to ensure that the methodology by Olinga Foundation is well implemented to achieve its desired results. Personally , the main objective for every teacher at the lower primary level is to ensure that all the children can read and write properly. This is because it limits the work load for teachers in the JHS who sometimes have to spend extra time teaching students how to read and write. I expect school pupils who will benefit from this programme, see a drastic change in their performance within the next six months.”

Extend every effort to educate the children, so that from infancy they will be trained..... — Baha'i Holy Writings

Virtue of the Month (this lesson can be used during assembly at your schools, in moral education class or during in-service training with teachers.)

SERVICE

What Is Service

Service is giving to others and wanting to make a difference in the lives of others. Helping other people is one of the best ways to serve God. Having an attitude to service means looking for ways to be of help rather than waiting to be asked. The needs of others are as important to you as your own. When you are service-oriented, you anticipate people's needs and then think of ways to help them.

You do things for other people just to be helpful, not because you hope they will pay you or reward you. You do things just because you care. When you work with a spirit of service, you give a job your best effort. You don't just do the least amount possible. You make a real contribution.

Why Practice Service (Particularly in the Classroom)?

If people didn't care about serving one another, everyone would be on his own. If someone was in trouble or needed help, no one would be there to help unless she was going to be paid or had some selfish motive. Without a desire to be of service, people have to be pushed or nagged to do their part.

With an attitude of service, we create love and happiness around us. Others feel cared for. They can depend on us to be responsive when something needs to be taken care of. We do our work with heart. We give it our best. When people are service-oriented, they accomplish everything that needs to be done without anyone having to ask. People who want to be of service can change the world.

How Do You Practice It?

When you want to be service-oriented, watch other people to see what help they might need. Then do something to help. Look for little ways to make life easier or happier for others. If someone looks lost or lonely, go up and ask if you can help. Think of little ways to serve your family by doing extra chores or just doing thoughtful little things. You can do things to serve the earth by remembering to recycle, reduce the things you use, and reuse old things instead of always buying new ones. You could make a compost pile in your backyard or plant a tree where one has been cut down.

When you focus on service, there are always lots of wonderful things you can do things which will make a difference in the world. When you work, do it with a spirit of service. Give it the best you can. Do it for the sake of God. Remember that God placed us here to take care of one another and the earth.

What would an attitude of service look like if.....

- It is raining outside and your mother is coming up the road with no umbrella?
- You have a job to do for your family?
- You wonder how you can serve the world when you grow up?
- Your teacher is struggling to carry a lot of materials?

Signs of Success

Congratulations! You are being of service when you.....

- Want to make a difference in the world.
- Look for opportunities to be of service.
- Think of thoughtful things to do to help your family and friends.
- Work with enthusiasm.

Keeping trying! You Need More Practice When You.....

- Ignore people who need help.
- See something that needs doing and hope someone else does it.
- See someone who is lost and ignore them.
- Expect others to always serve you
- Do a job only for the hope of reward
- Don't think your efforts can make any difference.

AFFIRMATION

I look for opportunities to be of service. I do not wait to be asked. I am thoughtful of others. I make a difference in the worlds.

One of the most important of undertaking is the education of children, for success and prosperity depend upon service to and worship of God, the Holy, the All – Glorified. – Bahá’í Holy Writings

Schools in Suhum Applaud ACR Program

Visits to these program schools revealed activities of ACR were yielding positive results due to the fact that several teachers who were trained by Olinga foundation in skills for basic reading and writing were actually using the appropriate methodologies by employing the phonics and syllabic approach for instruction. Majority of teachers interviewed mentioned the Olinga's methodology which incorporated child centered learning, classroom management skills and moral leadership approaches had made teaching very convenient and effective for them. They considered the intervention a good one and wished it could be extended to other schools with reason that majority of their pupils could now identify words and sound them correctly without their help. In Amanhyia Presby B primary where the school could boast of four teachers who had benefitted from the TfT workshop, Ms. Agnes Mensah, Assistant head teacher noted that even though parents were unable to buy reading books for their wards the EHL book was been used as a supplement and surprisingly had built up the literacy skills of children. As aids when teaching.



She said ***“Olinga has helped us and most of the children are able to read Twi now and others are also building up the two to four letter words gradually.”*** Schadrack Sarfo, a 13 year old P5 pupil in an interview also disclosed that since he started using the EHL book, he could now read Akuapem-Twi fluently which had enabled him make an impression on his parents. He stated ***“At first I could read only English but now I can read Akuapem-Twi too and I like it because I understand it better.”***

At Amanhyia R/C Primary also in Suhum, where Olinga trained two teachers on its methodology, the assistant head teacher Mr. Nuer Joseph Tetteh made it known that Olinga's methodology and the EHL had really made teaching the Ghanaian language very simple. ***“It is very effective because initially teaching the Akuapem-Twi was difficult especially for those of us from different ethnic background. I for instance I studied Ga-Dangme in school but with the Learners book around I am able to deliver.”***



For Mr. Tetteh he had no challenges whatsoever with the Olinga methodology but only requested for more books to be published to continuously enhance pupil's literacy skills. At Sowatey D/A Primary, on the Asamankese road, the school had its vision boldly posted on head teacher's wall as “To ensure that about 90% of the school population will be able to read and write and increase the school's intake especially the girl child.” Mrs. Mercy Odamey Benewah also commented that the E-learning text messages had been of an immense motivation to her and kept her on her toes as it felt She was always been monitored. ***“I am even planning to organize a reading club because the children are now interested to read,”*** she said.

“The education of each child is compulsory.... In addition to this wide – spread education each child must be taught a profession, art or trade, so that every member of the community will be enabled to earn his own livelihood. Work done in the spirit of service is the highest form of worship.” — Bahá’í Holy Writings

Some Successes Chalked

Through the initiatives of USAID, World Vision and Aus Aid, Olinga has chalked great successes in most of its programme schools across the four districts.

During the monitoring exercise, schools across all four districts expressed gratitude when sharing their experiences with the ACR campaign. According to them, the programme has registered tremendous improvement in the reading ability of pupils.

Since the introduction of the reading campaign, pupils have been seen to have built some sort of confidence in sounding out words and further reading without any difficulties.

It was evident positive change was happening in all basic schools benefiting from the programme. Teachers had dedicated their time to make effective use of all the skills acquired during the TfT workshop in order to sharpen the literacy skills of their pupils.

“ Devote thyself to My service, do all thine acts for My sake, and thou shalt attain the goal.” BHAGVAD-GITA 12:10

On the other hand, the use of electronic device (kindle) for literacy lessons by lower primary pupils (P1-P3) was making great strides. Literacy lessons have been made more interesting and participatory for children as each pupil could now read passages from their own kindles in both English and Ghanaian language. .

This was much better as pupils are allowed to take kindles home for their own private studies which kept them occupied with something productive instead of roaming about. Hence promoting pupils’ fluency and understanding of the local language.

A picture of P1 Pupils in Suhum during a Club Meeting



Impact of Projects so Far

Through the use of the Enlightening The Hearts Learners book 1 both pupils and teachers have gained a firm grasp on teaching and learning Ghanaian language respectively. This has promoted the quality of education in ACR project schools.

Schadrack Sarfo, a P5 pupil said “ *Now I can read very well and sometimes read the Twi bible for my mother during morning devotion.* ”

An additional significant impact was due to the use of kindles, there was no more truancy in World Reader schools. Pupil absenteeism has reduced drastically due to the fact that children were always motivated to be in school because of e-reader lessons.

Continuing, was the free flow of inspiring text messages to encourage teachers to be morally focused in their delivery of service by exhibiting leadership qualities that would influence pupils positively. And also to keep teachers informed of issues and on their toes.

“ *The text messages really come in handy because they do uplift me sometimes and also educate me with some wise quotations.* ” Joseph Tetteh Nuer, Assistant head teacher of Amanhyia R/C Primary noted.

Some schools have started reading clubs as an extra curricular activity with appointed executives to enable them judiciously make good use of their kindles.

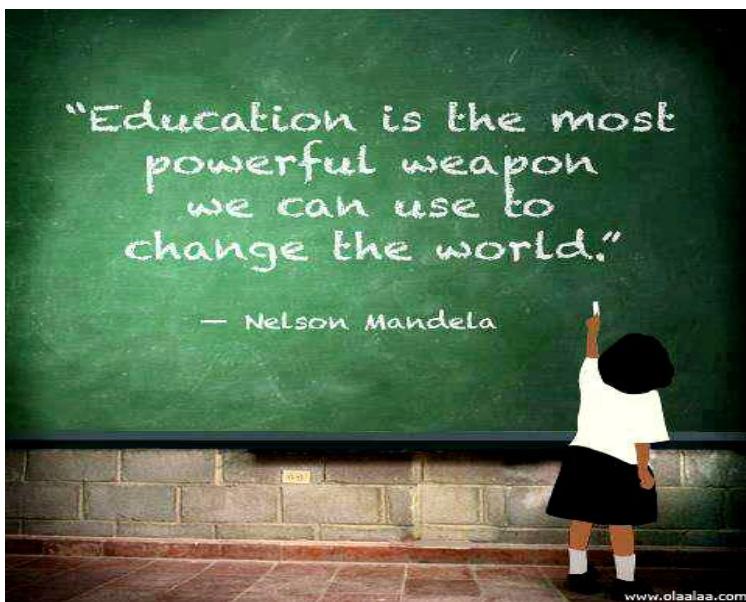


“Beautify your tongues, O people, with truthfulness, and adorn your souls with the ornament of honesty.

Boost not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Proverbs 27:1





"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world."

— Nelson Mandela

POETRY CORNER

We are always clutched together like a bunch of berries,

With our joyful hearts we make merry,

Finding ourselves sailing in a love, bound ferry,

For that is what unites us completely,

And are determined never to live separately,

Bearing in mind we are one family.

This is how God created you and I,

So that we can we can be pleasing in His eyes.

(Octet by: Marian Owusu Afriyie).

Thoughts for the month

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters roar and be troubled, be still and know that I am the Lord. The God of Jacob is our refuge. Saleh. **-Psalm 46**

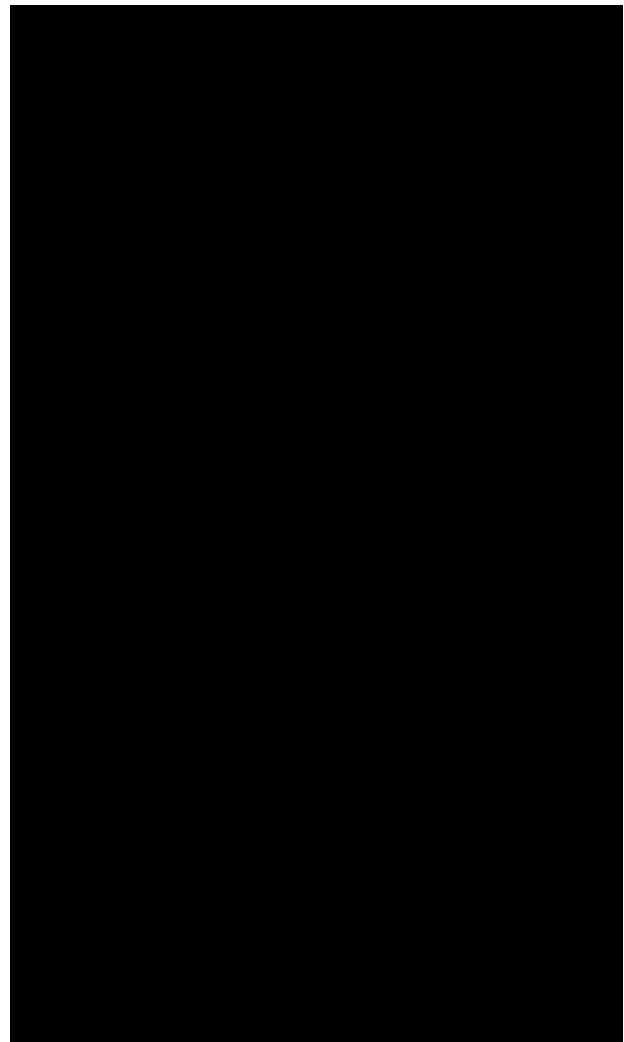
".... If thou wouldest hearken to my words, release thyself from the fetters of whatsoever cometh to pass. Nay rather, under all conditions thank thou thy loving Lord, and yield up thine affairs unto His will that worketh as He pleaseth. This verily is better for thee than all else, in either world..." -

Baha'i Holy writing

"He who finds the right path does so for himself; and he who goes astray does so to his own loss; and no one who carries a burden bears another's load."

-Al-Qur'an 17:15

Greetings from the Director (Dr. Leslie Casely- Hayford)





To:

The Olinga Foundation for Human Development owes profound gratitude to the Western and Eastern Regional Directors of Education, the District Assemblies and District Education Offices of Wasa Amenfi West and Kwahu North, the District Director's of Education, the District Education Officers, the Circuit Supervisors and Teachers who actively participate and support the programme. We would like to thank USAID, Australia Aid and World Vision for their support under the All Children Reading Campaign. We would also like to thank the Office of Social and Economic Development for supporting project activities over the past ten years.

We would also like to thank the Director General of the Ghana Education Service for recommending the programme to all Districts and Private sector organizations involved in social responsibility in Ghana. For further Information please contact:

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Training workshop for teachers in
Afram Plains.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2013/2014

Planning meeting with the District Education Offices in the four existing districts

Afram Plains/Kwahu North, Suhum/Ayensuano; Wassa Mphoh East and Wassa Amenfi

West.....September 2013

Teacher Training Workshops in 4 districtsOctober 2013

Baseline Survey.....November 2013

Evaluation for 2012.....December 2013

Monitoring/on-site Supervision and School Support.....Jan-June 2014

Production Newsletter.....April/May 2014

Refresher Training Workshops for Teachers.....Feb. 2014

Programme Evaluation.....July 2014

Preparation for the 2014/2015 program.....August/Sept. 2014