



# CAS ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Dear Reader,

The year 2014 could best be marked for CAS as a year of reflection and evaluation. Even before the Misereor evaluation team visited us, comprising Heidi Thiemann from Germany and Dr. Joe Taabazuing from Ghana (Gimpa), we were already having discussions with the staff and the Board of Advisors as how to proceed. These discussions continued in 2014 after we had received the evaluation report. We discussed how to deal and involve the present day children, the structure of CAS and the possible cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare and other stake holders.

We noticed that in future we have to be very careful as how we report on our activities. Quarterly, we issue newsletters and we report openly as what has transpired and our views towards the future. However, often the reader, who has no knowledge of the Ghanaian situation receive the information differently. Let me explain this with an example. For instance, when we report that children have absconded from the activities, then this can be explained in several ways.

1. The workers do not know the children well enough.
2. The environment, like Hopeland setting, or workshop regulations are not accepted by the children.
3. Or the response of the children and their “protectors” is different from what we expected.

But on several occasions, CAS is blamed as a project as if we do not want the children to progress. We have reflected on these reactions and in future we will report differently. In the absconding cases we will write; “the child has stopped taking part for the time being”.

Under the heading Sponsorship we will explain this further.

It has also become clear that the only way forward is the cooperation with other partners in the field. We hope of course, that donors will assist us to carry out the plans.

## **STAFF.**

In the year 2014 CAS worked with 32 members of staff, in five departments. Two departments, the sponsorship departments, have only three persons each. This is very small and at times the two teams have to assist each other. We allow staff to attend meetings and to attend follow up courses, (sandwich courses).

Several members of staff have accepted additional tasks besides their normal duties. Often their teaching periods or duties have to be carried out by others.

At the secretary's office we have a large notice board where names of staff or volunteers can be filled for certain periods. It also shows where fieldworkers are on specific days.

This year, several members of staff, especially the workshop instructors, took part in classroom periods. It has been a change of approach and in general we are happy with the results.

- Members of the awareness group got involved in advocacy work.
- Instructors became classroom teachers.
- Members of the sponsorship department did research and fieldwork as additional roles.
- Several members were trained as coaches under the Right to Play training program.
- The administration learnt a lot during the writing of applications to donors.



## **VOLUNTEERS**

This year, seven volunteers from different countries assisted us. Two are Ghanaians, Two from the Netherlands and three are Norwegians. The Ghanaian volunteers are still with us, but the others left in June.

We expected others from foreign countries, but unfortunately, because of the Ebola scare they cancelled their participation.

We also advise the volunteers to become “parents” to the children. Special tasks cannot be given because we expect that the volunteers assist the permanent staff. Often this works out well. In addition, student volunteers also receive instructions from their universities but they have to answer them privately. One member of staff is appointed as supervisor and he has weekly meetings with these student-volunteers.

## **CHILDREN**

CAS has accepted that the aim of training children to the grade two NVTI trade testing certificate is often too high for some of the children living in the street. Now we will be happy when they become functional literates as a result of various programmes and activities run in the street and at the Refuge by CAS trained staff.

In general, the children visiting us have become younger. This had and has great consequences for the training programs and especially for Hopeland centre.

The boys/girls ratio changes during the year. At times there are more girls present and at other periods more boys. It is difficult to explain why this occurs. However, it remains difficult to interest them to stay at Hopeland. Some reasons are that they have to leave their mothers, who are also in the street or their “protectors” don’t agree or peer pressure plays a role.

It was striking that a group of children with “certain” disabilities visited the Refuge during the year. Unfortunately, CAS members of staff are not trained to take care of these children. We allow them to take part but some members of staff experienced difficulties with some of them.

## **BOARD OF ADVISORS**

The Board met twice this year, during the month of May and November. In addition, several members took part in the discussions during the evaluation. The Board assisted the staff greatly in deciding how CAS should continue in the future. The advisors also had difficulties with some of the recommendations suggested in the evaluation report.

One Board member, Rev. Sister Mary Kpiebaare has been transferred by her congregation to work in Tamale. We thanked her for all her contributions. Her successor at the Centre of Hope will take her place as an Advisor.

## **FIELDWORK-FOLLOW-UP WORK-DISTRICT WORK.**

The heading suggests already that there are differences. We understand it as follows:

1. Fieldwork: workers visit the children regularly in the street and advice them on their way of life.
2. Follow-up work: Members of staff try to locate children in the street who have stopped taking part in the activities. They try to find out the reasons and often these are insignificant.
3. District work: Members of staff will work together with other partners to advice and educate “out of school” children using street corner education methods.

During the year two permanent fieldworkers and two part-time fieldworkers took part in the fieldwork as well as follow-up work.

The main problem was the fact that donors were not ready to finance these activities. The reasons are; quick or substantial results cannot be shown.

## **AWARENESS**

The awareness group completed the awareness work in universities and higher institutions. The Danish donor 100% for children financed these exercises. Much more could be done and we hope that more donors will assist us in this advocacy work.

We decided to conduct research on WORKING CHILDREN. This can be found:

1. In the street. Children are involved in all kinds of income generating activities.
2. On the beaches, in the fishing communities. Children assist their parents to fish.
3. In the sand and stone winning industries. Children assist to gather and crush stone mainly in areas where mountains are. And gather sand in special areas around Accra city especially the peripherals.
4. In the farming communities. Children assist their parents. There are of course related jobs such as transport and selling and children take part in all.

CAS has completed the first three researches and plans to conduct the fourth one on a later date. Reports are given in our newsletters.

## **RESEARCH STREETINVEST**

CAS continued hosting the research in 2014 (The research on street children who remain street connected as adults). The research team had difficulties finding a suitable place for their office. Because of lack of regular flow of electricity they moved office to a good location close to the research area in the city. Presently, the whole country suffers lack of electricity so communication only takes place effectively when the lights are on.

A general workshop took place in Accra and all workers in the various countries where the research takes place were represented.

The team was reluctant to discuss the intermediate results. They will invite all stakeholders to a discussion as soon as the report has been presented.



## **HOUSE OF REFUGE**

The literacy classes took place at the House of Refuge from Mondays to Thursdays in 2014. On Mondays and Wednesdays, classes were held in the mornings whilst it was held in the afternoons on Tuesdays and Thursdays due to sporting activities in the morning. In creating awareness on trade/careers, the children were introduced to and educated on other trades apart from the trades which were already familiar to the children.

### **New Time Table**

During the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarters of the year, we continued the Literacy classes teaching the children the following; Basic symbols of Mathematics which includes addition, subtraction and multiplication at level one and in-depth at level 2 and 3 respectively with the help of the teaching materials until the last quarter of the year where there was a change in the general time table for the House of Refuge.

It has been recommended in the new time table that the children should be taught English during the morning classes whiles they learn how to measure, calculation and Drawing during the afternoon classes.

The above subjects were taught by the instructors in the demonstration department in collaboration with the literacy instructors.

Despite the change in the time table, children who came to level one (1) were taught how to write their names before proceeding to the sounds and names of the alphabets.

During the year, we had a total of 105 children who were introduced to name writing. Out of this figure 70 managed to write their names and 35 are still learning how to write their names.

At the level two (2) and three (3) the focus on forming of words with the alphabets, grammar, and constructing of short and long sentence, how to write essays, dictation, composition and comprehension etc.

Class attendance	Boys: 2306
	Girls: 1595
Total:	3901

### **Observation**

We have observed that since the change in the time table, the children in the level (1) could not get the chance to learn and identify the mathematical symbols. This is because the morning class was only for English.

## **ENTERTAINMENT**

Entertainment is one of the major things that bring children into the House of Refuge. We try as much as possible to make it fun for the children to enjoy and also educative for them to learn from it whiles playing.

We played games like name the artist, building pyramids, music chair, dancing competition, balloon burst, on the land in the river etc.

A new game called Twister was introduced. The children really love and enjoy the game because it is educative and fun to play it also increases mental alertness.

## **REGISTRATION**

In the beginning of the year attendance to the Refuge was at its lowest ebb. But the figure improved drastically at the beginning of the raining season from April to May and improved more at the last quarter of the year. More girls were recorded during the period than boys.

The ages of children which were recorded last year were from 10 to 18 years. The total number of boys in the year was 688 and the girls were 421, this shows that more boys visited the Refuge.

Most of the children were from Kumasi in the Ashanti Region followed by Cape-Coast and Mankessim in the Central Region and the rest from other Regions like Greater Accra Eastern Region, Western Region and the three Northern Regions. Attendance from the three Northern Regions to the Refuge was the lowest.

In terms of jobs in the street, majority of the children in 2014 were porters and scrap dealers.

During festive occasion like feast days, sports and other activities most of the children who visited to participate were from Kaneshie and Konkomba.

One challenge the department sometimes faced with the children was that, when they come in the mornings, instead of them attending the class, they prefer to do laundry works and sleeping at the back of the building disturbing the main office. Various interventions were made to stop that practice but it worked very little. The department in future would need to find a permanent answer to this problem together with other departments.

## **HEALTH**

Health as usual went on smoothly in 2014 but not without its normal challenges in terms of service delivery. One of the street girls abandoned her 3 months baby at CAS and the baby was referred to Osu children's home.

Reported sick cases received effective treatment from the clinic.

Imprests received were used for drugs purchases, transport and baby care.

The clinic health education section helped the children to follow regular hygiene programme at the refuge. The total number of cases reported to the clinic was 280. Out of this, 17 were referred to the Public Hospitals.

Breakdown of referred cases were as follows:

Cholera case –	3	Mental case -	1	Pregnancy -	10
Family planning -	3				

### **CATERING**

The catering training programme as usual was implemented under the Refuge guidance and supervision for the short term sponsorship department.

The programme operated as arranged and children were taken through the various processes of catering training.

The children benefited from regular practical lessons and exposure and by the close of the period all the trainees could work on various products (biscuits) with little supervision.

For the year, a total number of six children were identified under the training ( two boys and four girls) with additional support from two of the ex-trainee girls who used the refuge catering centre for their intern-ship.

Though for preparation, more children demonstrated the interest to do catering, but their level of cooperation and willingness was not encouraging.

**Progress:** The impact of progress in terms of teaching was positive because of the steps adapted in teaching the catering trade and it was easily understood by the children.

The practical exposure received helped the girls to use lesser months to manage and demonstrate on their own.

The products at the end of the catering training benefited the programme in 2 folds.

- I. The products were sold as an income to support the catering budget for the programme.
- II. Part of the products was eaten by the children as snack in the afternoons to supplement the daily meal at the refuge for the children.

### **CHALLENGES**

More girls and boys could not be enrolled into the trade at public training centres because of the late admissions at the Refuge catering centre.

Number of boys who demonstrated interest in the catering trade was still poor.

Report on staff members:

Members of the department contributed their quota to make the department programmes and activities a success.

For the period, staff members of the department were all intact and responded positively to the rules and regulations of the department. Only one staff left the department and stopped working with CAS because she requested to join the husband in the Eastern Region. We wished her well.



**Donors: Kinder Mission Werk-Germany, Lentenfund-The Netherlands, Stivosina and Right to Play-sports, Reik elkaar de hand-goods, EOF-medical, Adeline Janssen Stichting-Education, Stichting Songzel-Education and maintenance, Private donors.**

**LONG SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

The objective to sponsor 40 children was attained at the end of the project cycle in 2014. Out of the 40 who were sponsored, 8 initially stopped but 3 returned later to continue their training in auto mechanics reducing the number of children who stopped to 5. 18 children successfully completed but were not settled yet. CAS completed the long sponsorship training cycle with 17 children still in training expected to finish by the close of February 2015.

Children who completed their training are as follows:

Auto mechanics	12	Electrical installation	1	Vocational training	1
Welding works	1	J.S.S. education	3	total 18 children	

The sponsorship team managed to visit the children in their workshops on regular intervals and provided their stipends in advanced for their living..

The three year training program experiences difficulties in recruiting more children. Not many were interested and several decided that some holidays were needed in between. They stayed away from their workshops either for a week or sometimes for a month but continued afterwards. We, but also and the workshop managers, needed a lot of patience and understanding.

The children are accommodated during their training. At Adjei-Kojo CAS owns a workshop and in the workshop are three rooms for children who are in training in Ashaiman or Adjei Kojo. At the House of Refuge is also a room available for those in training at Abosokai and Lartebikorshie. They are all suburbs in Accra. Another room was also rented at Agege in Accra.

All children who completed received a set of tools. At times we have not enough tools for one particular trade but we have surpluses for other trades. During these times we sell some so that others can be bought.

### **SHORT TERM SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

The Misereor contract allowed us to recruit 70 children for the skill training in three years. During the contract, we managed to recruit 70 children of which 41 children completed the training successfully. 10 children stopped for some time and 4 returned fully to continue. The others are still in training. (19) children expected to finish their training by the end of February 2015.

The skills include the following: barbering, boxing, motorbike mechanic, carving, sewing, screen printing, plumbing, hair-dressing, beads making and catering. Some skills have an introduction period of 6 months at the House of Refuge. The remaining 12 months take part in a workshop. At times, the child remains at the Refuge for the full period because of personal difficulties such as behaviour problems, drug addiction and indiscipline.

**Donors: Misereor, Aidworld, Paul e.v, Fam Heijden, Galen, Kunnen and Reik elkaar de Hand.**

### **DEMONSTRATION**

The members of the demonstration department train children in various skills but also produce items for sale.

Children showed interest in several skills such as general handicraft which includes calabash and bead making. In the sewing session, 85 children took part including one boy who completed successfully. New products including tablet and computer bags are regularly requested for by the public.

90 children took part in the carving and 23 in hairdressing. This number is much smaller than last year when 75 took part. Again, a trend we cannot explain.

Children who showed interest in the various skills and trades all followed classes in measurement taking. Before, this was taught individually in the various workshops. Learning how to take measurements is useful for all skills and trades training.



## **HOPELAND**

Hopeland centre experienced several challenges. Because the children are sent to Hopeland are younger, they do not want to take care of the animals. Because of these developments and also because of the high prices in feeding cost only a small number of pigs and a sheep with a lamb remained.

An average of 12 children a month is accommodated at Hopeland. Unfortunately, only few girls are interested. At the moment two girls are staying at Hopeland. The training in sewing and hairdressing has not been a success because the girls do not show much interest. However, many dresses were sewn and sold. The hairdressing instructor assisted three days a week at the House of Refuge demonstration department instead.

All children at Hopeland are there to become functional literates or have to be reformed.

Hopeland introduced a new product, mushroom growing. Another source of income is the renting of one of the old chicken-houses to a farmer in the neighbourhood.

With the assistance of Songzel, a Dutch donor, several buildings were maintained and the uncompleted library is now in use. A ceiling has still to be fixed. Another donor, Book Buddy assisted us with a cupboard and library books. Children now read books during specific hours.

The security at Hopeland has to be improved as well. The surrounding wall is too low and the public has created several footpaths either to pass through or too collect water from the dam. One of the first priorities is the raising and repairing of this wall once funding is available.

At the beginning of the year we organised a very successful football and volleyball match together with Stivosina. The youths of the neighbourhood are allowed to use the fields regularly provided they keep it clean. The cooperation is quite good.

**Donors: Lentenfund, Songzel, 100%, Bookbuddy, Stivosina.**

### **CONCLUSION**

Members of staff remain ready and flexible to adjust to the continuous changes of assisting and working with “Out of School” children. We hope donors also continue to be flexible and adjust to the need of giving these children a chance to live.

They are too vulnerable and can easily be recruited for the drug trade and prostitution or become extremists. These children need to be advised and guided.

CAS is ever ready to do so.

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