

NEWSLETTER

Hello Our Dear Friends and Benefactors!

In these trying and challenging times I hope that we are all keeping well and safe. It has truly been a difficult year, however, in spite of these uncertain times you, our friends and benefactors, continued to support our efforts to give children and young people in Ghana the opportunity to realize their potential.

It has been thirteen years since MerryKids' inception and to remain a viable non-profit organization it is the right time to think and plan strategically for the future. As our benefactors we believe that it is only appropriate that we invite you to think with us about how we move forward into the future. We, therefore, have the pleasure of presenting you with a summary of our 5 year Business/Strategic Plan—2020-2025.

This year's Newsletter is a big read, but we hope that you will take some time to think and plan the future of MerryKids Foundation with us.

We appreciate your comments and ideas to guide us move the Foundation in to the next 5 years.

THE FUTURE

Our primary focus on creating opportunities for children to access basic education changed when we felt it was the right thing to do to support children and young people from Primary through to Secondary School and University depending on their skills, abilities and choice.

Since MKF's inception over ten years ago we have reviewed our policies and evaluated our activities and drawn up a five-year developmental plan that would keep MKF viable into the next five years.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS (2020-2025):

Our vision

- To equip, empower and create in children and young people a future workforce that would turn the nation's communities into a feasible and vibrant economic force.
- To release well equipped graduates to contribute to the development of their communities and country.

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December 2020

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Our Mission

- Financially contribute to the enhancement of the skills and abilities of underprivileged children and young people to become profitable personnel in the economic development of their communities and country.

Our Aims

- To alleviate the pressures and barriers of poverty and to develop the skills and abilities of underprivileged children and young people in order for them to reach their full potential.
- To give children and young people the opportunity (through basic, secondary and tertiary) to contribute to the communities they belong to and beyond.

Our Objective

- Provide financial as well as educational resources to enable children and young people continue to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities from primary school, through to secondary and higher education.

MKF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Board of Trustees - London UK	Board of Trustees - Ghana
Esther Donkor Mrs Salome Ahenkorah Mrs Audrey Agyeman-Badu Mr Frank Amoah	Mrs Augusta Cameron (Executive Secretary) Mr Dave Cameron Justice Mrs Henrietta Abban Ms Justina Tete-Donkor Mr Blessed Ayisi Ms Barbara Acheampong
Fieldwork Co-Ordinator (Ghana): Mr Kwakye	

Over the past 10 years planning and decision making have been agreed between the London Trustees and Mrs Augusta Cameron, who works closely with the Fieldwork Co-ordinator to implement MKF's vision, mission and overall activities.

For the next 5 years Trustees in the UK will hold quarterly meetings to lead the development and implementation of the overall MKF strategy. In addition, MKF will recruit the services of a Projects Administrator and a Fieldwork Co-ordinator to assist Mrs Cameron in planning, developing and implementing MKF's vision, mission and activities.

THE OPERATIONAL TEAM (OT)

Currently include:

Esther Donkor (London)
Mrs Augusta Cameron (Ghana)
Mr Kwakye (Fieldwork Co-Ordinator - Ghana)

We plan to appoint a sessional Projects Administrator to join the Team.

Roles, Responsibilities and Duties:

The Operational Team is a functional **role** and is accountable to the Trustees, Partners, Donors and other stakeholders.

Roles

The Team will:

- Ensure that the Foundation's activities support our beliefs, core values, objectives and vision.
- Establish the fundamental values, ethical principles and strategic direction in which MKF will operate.
- Manage the Foundation's funding and related activities, and will monitor, evaluate all areas of the Foundation's performance.
- Comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements and will seek guidance where necessary.
- Manage the financial and other resources of the Foundation.

Responsibilities

The Operational Team has responsibility for recruiting volunteers and fieldworkers to carry out specific tasks, including:

- Develop and review policies.
- Plan the activities of MKF.
- Create opportunities for interested groups and individuals to participate in the activities of MKF.
- Organize fundraising events.
- Provide financial forecasts and reports.
- Host and attend fundraising events.
- Fundraise by encouraging contributions and sponsorship.
- Contribute to a strong public image of MKF.
- Prepare regular progress reports to stakeholders and the public.
- Plan and convene Board of Trustees meetings.
- Identify children and young people in need of MKF funding across the Akuapem North District.

Duties of the Operational Team include:

- Review, identify and establish criteria for accessing the financial support within the Okere Akuapem North District of Ghana.
- Directly provide monetary as well as other educational resources to the children and young people who meet the criteria.
- Explore, design and deliver a sustainable social network as role models to guide recipients into maximizing their potentials, as well as guiding them into securing employment.

PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

Our Partners and Sponsors have no functional role. The commitment is voluntary and there is no obligation to MKF. Individually, they make monthly and/or yearly financial donations to fund our activities in Ghana.

2019-2020

INCOME: £8,325

EXPENDITURE: £5,702

Source of Income: Our main source of income is from Donors and Gift Aid claims. It is important for MKF to explore other sources of income to ensure that we are able to achieve our 5-year strategic plan.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES and FUNDING

Projects/Activities

MKF operates in 12 schools in 9 villages within the Okere Akuapem North District.

Primary Schools: 4 pupils

Adukrom Methodist
Aseseeso Presbyterian
Asenema M/A

Junior High School: 20 pupils

Adukrom Presbyterian Resettlement
Adukrom Bethel Presbyterian,
Abiriw Presbyterian
Akuni D/A
Abonse Presbyterian
Asenema M/A
Mintakrom M/A,
Okrakwadwo M/A,
Apirede Methodist.

University: 7 Undergraduates

University of Ghana - Legon - Accra
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology (KNUST) - Kumasi
Koforidua Technical University (Koforidua)
Ghana Technology University (Accra)

New Entrants: 3 Senior High School graduates

University of Cape Coast
Ghana Technology University
University of Ghana

CURRENT SPENDING

Primary and Junior High School:

School resources not provided by the government; include:

- Exercise books, Pens, Pencils, Maths Set, Poster colour, Drawing Boards
- Fees and transport for Special Needs pupil
- School Clothing: uniforms and shoes

University:

- Fees
- Accommodation
- Hall Dues
- JCR Dues
- LSU Dues
- Department Dues
- Books
- Printed Articles
- Subsistence

Other Expenditure:

- Processing applications for new University entrants.
- Fieldwork co-ordinator allowance.
- Transportation costs.

IMPLEMENTING THE 5-YEAR PLAN

Target Group:

Underprivileged children and young people; including orphans in the Okere Akuapem North District in Ghana.

Selection Criteria:

Resume the recruitment of Primary School candidates: Identify a maximum of 5 high achieving children in Year 6 Primary School through to Junior High School.

With the Ghana Government offering free Secondary School education, consideration is being given to offer one off financial assistance to MKF beneficiaries starting Secondary School. Funding will continue to beneficiaries who qualify for University placement. Continued funding will depend on maintaining a high academic achievement.

New expenditure:

Staffing costs: Projects Administrator & Fieldwork Co-ordinator

Identify successful candidates from previous JHS - SHS to process for University placements.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In our effort to ensure our viability and achieve our aims and objectives we have designed the following procedures to monitor and evaluate our activities:

- Feedback from parents on support offered to their children if any impact has been made?
- Feedback from the direct beneficiaries if support was geared towards assessed needs?
- Periodical Questionnaires for Teachers and Field Worker to complete to evidence the difference MKF's support has made in the life of beneficiaries.
- Video interviews of beneficiaries and their families to ascertain benefits derived from support received from MKF as well as sharing ideas on future needs.
- Record of course and exams reports evidencing continuous high academic performance and/or vocational skills acquisition.
- Number of recipients securing employment opportunities.

Analysis of MKF's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

A **SWOT** analysis will create opportunities for MKF to grow as a viable charitable organization and continue to support children and young people access primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Strengths

As citizens of the Akuapem North District and with our knowledge of the challenges intrinsic in this deprived community MKF was very successful from the onset to gain the trust and confidence of the local Education Authority, the Church and Headteachers within the District who continue to support our activities to date.

As much as our initial aim was to increase the percentage of children accessing basic education, our decision in 2014 to focus on the quality of education rather than the number of beneficiaries, yielded much success. MKF has been successful in providing funding to children from primary school through to University. In addition, flexibility in implementing MKF policies to fit the local as well as changes in Government policies on Education increased MKF successes. Flexibility in implementing policies as well as monitoring and evaluating activities allowed for adjustments in procedures and financial management.

Our dedicated Donors have consistently made generous financial contributions, which have enabled MKF to meet our aims and objectives. Yearly reviews and feedback from our beneficiaries, families and Headteachers have been useful in reviewing our activities to meet the needs of children and young people we sponsor.

Weaknesses

Our weaknesses lie in our inability to directly influence and improve the standard of learning to a level where more of MKF beneficiaries qualify for tertiary education.

We also have, to date, been unable to identify the resources to design a robust fundraising programme to boost our income.

Opportunities

The opportunities available to us are the continuous financial support from Donors and the support from local partners to enable MKF plan strategically for the future and organize our activities in order to successfully alleviate poverty and create better futures for children and young people in the Okere Akuapem North District. MKF has the privilege of two beneficiaries graduating in June/July 2021, when they will be in a position to give something back to their community and to support MKF activities.

Threats

The main threat for MKF is the inability to generate adequate funds needed to fully implement the 5-year strategic plan. The outbreak of the Corona virus and lockdown resulting in unemployment has the potential to adversely affect MKF income.

Any change in the Ghana Government's policy on free Senior High School education will mean revising our policies and reviewing expenditure on MKF activities.

As always, our policies are flexible to allow for adjustments due to any external circumstances and to ensure minimum disruption in delivery of MKF objectives.

Please Sponsor a Young person

There are opportunities to sponsor individual students if interested. Your financial support, as well as guidance, encouragement and motivation would be of immense help to our young people. You will have direct contact with the student to check on their progress in addition to MKF's yearly reports.

Board of Trustees:

United Kingdom:

Esther Tete-Donkor
Mrs Salome Ahenkorah
Mrs Audrey Agyemang-Badu
Mr Frank Amoah



University of Ghana—Legon

Board of Trustees:

Ghana:

Justice (Mrs) Henrietta Abban
Mr Dave Cameron
Miss Justina Tete-Donkor
Mrs Augusta Cameron
Mr Blessed Rexford Ayisi
Miss Barbara Acheampong

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www.merrykidsfoundation.org



As a charitable organization, we rely on donations from sponsors, partners, friends and well wishers who share in our vision to promote the welfare of children through education. **Please help us to educate a child by completing the enclosed form and send it with your donation to: MERRYKIDS FOUNDATION, 2 NEVIS CLOSE, RISE PARK, ROMFORD, RM1 4LS.** Contact us by phone if you would like to make donations on-line.

Please complete this form with your cheque or postal order made payable to "MERRYKIDS FOUNDATION"

Why not Gift Aid your donations!!!!

I am a UK tax payer and would like all donations I have made to MERRYKIDS FOUNDATION since 14 July 2009 and all donations I make from that date of this declaration, and until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations. You must live and work in the UK, pay an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax MERRYKIDS FOUNDATION reclaims on your donations in the appropriate year.

Please tick and sign below if you pay tax on your earnings in the United Kingdom and would like MKF to claim on your donations.

Print Name: Signature:

Address: Post Code:

Tel. Nos:

Date:..... Amount: Cash: Cheque

THANK YOU

Registered in the UK under Charity No: 1130562
Registered in Ghana as a Company Limited by Guarantee