

A centre of excellence for sustainable social enterprises and circular economy in Ghana

Thematic areas: Vocational training as well as promotion of social entrepreneurship and the circular economy, especially in the areas of agro-food, sustainable infrastructure and renewable energies, crafts, tourism and business/project management.

Summary

Goal: Completion and operation of a competence centre for vocational training, social entrepreneurship and circular economy under the umbrella of sustainability. The centre is to cultivate a climate-neutral lifestyle with all the knowledge necessary for this and to develop and teach corresponding training programmes. The focus is on promoting social entrepreneurship to help the local population create alternative and sustainable sources of income. In addition, the centre will serve national and international stakeholders as a reference point for sustainable living, where transdisciplinary knowledge can be shared and expanded.

Applicant organisation: The Obrobibini Peace Complex (OPC) follows a holistic approach that includes a diversified form of organic agriculture, food processing (shelf life, value addition), herbal medicine, natural sanitation, proper waste management and renewable energy. Our young team has many years of experience with these topics and is experienced in the local implementation of projects. We are also very well networked nationally and internationally. We have concrete progress to show from our transparent and entirely voluntary work.

Target group, methods and expected results: The target group is primarily the young population of Ghana. This population group, which is on average well to very well educated, often lacks certain core skills to gain a foothold in the world of work. Through targeted further education as well as teaching subjects that are not covered in public schools, we want to help the local population to create alternative and sustainable sources of income for themselves. The model for this is the dual vocational training system in Switzerland. There will also be adapted teaching modules for children and adult education at the centre. Workshops with local decision-makers will ensure that we influence public discourse and policy.

Sustainability: We promote knowledge transfer and ownership through continuous involvement of local people. In this way, we strengthen the local community and build capacity. Through the development of concrete social enterprises, we generate sustainable profits, which we reinvest in the project and in the development of more and more beneficiaries.

Innovation: The project addresses the problem of lack of jobs in the country in a progressive and holistic way. By combining local knowledge with targeted training in certain core skills along the lines of dual vocational training, we create unique conditions for locals to gain a foothold in the world of work. It also increases the chances that project results will be replicated in other areas of the Global South.

General information about the project

Project duration: 24 months (01.01.2021 to 31.12.2022) for Phase I, Phase II as of 2023

Costs: CHF 400,000 for Phase I

Project leader: Dr Christian Andres ([ETH](#)), Swiss agricultural scientist with extensive practical experience and many publications (see CV). Lives in Ghana and coordinates the project on site.

Website: <https://obrobibini.org>

The project at a glance (see also map on page 4 and legend on page 5)

i. History and current status

The project started in 2017 with the purchase of two hectares of land in Busua (Ahanta West District, Western Ghana (Figure 1), which was completed at the end of 2018 (perpetual usufruct, including land registration). The land has effectively been purchased and belongs to Dr Christian Andres, who makes it available to the OPC association free of charge for the project. From 2018 we are working on the diversification of agriculture, and from 2019 we will develop the infrastructure. Among other things, we have built the access road, drilled a deep well and constructed almost all the buildings of the organic farm (including a meeting platform (three-storey, incl. staff kitchen, storage room and dormitory), a residential building, the food centre, the mushroom farm (three buildings) and a composting toilet), supplied it with off-grid solar power and equipped it with sanitary facilities. The installation of a water filtration system in 2020 was a highlight, so we now have running drinking water directly from the tap, completely without plastic pollution.

In 2020, we started developing the commercial section by building a mill for sustainable palm oil and a downstream biogas plant. Once the land is connected to the grid (process underway since H2 2020 and should be completed in H1 2021), we will produce up to 1,000 litres of sustainable palm oil per day. In the second social enterprise, the production of oyster mushrooms (piloted in 2019, launched commercially in 2020), we will supply private and institutional customers (including Shoprite, the largest supermarket in the country) with up to 15kg of fresh mushrooms per day from 2021. Our farm has been certified organic by the local label PGS (Participatory Guarantee System) since 2020.

With the completion of the workshop, we had a solid basis in 2020 to also move forward with the development of the arrival area. Besides the administration building (incl. reception), we have started building the foundation and the staircase for the guest house. We need this so that we always have enough pressurised water for agricultural production and other work in the centre.

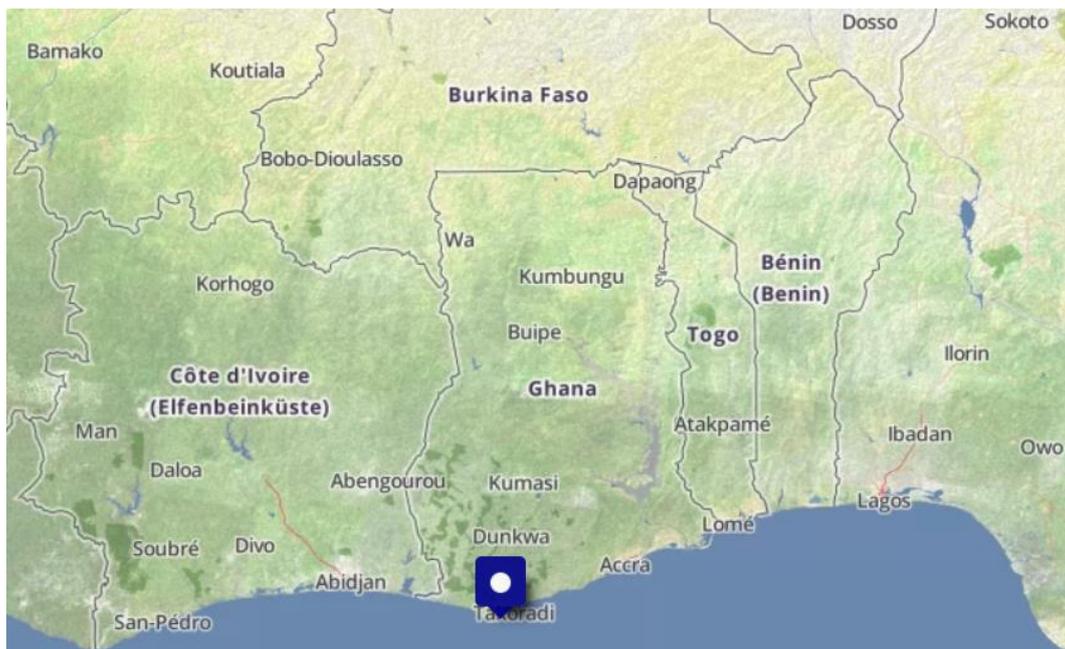


Figure 1: Location Busua in Ahanta West District, Western Region, Ghana

ii. Phase I - Completion of infrastructure, commercialisation of social enterprises and development of first curricula (2021 - 2022)

At the moment, we are in the final phase of the predominantly infrastructure development focused period. The map on page 3 gives a comprehensive overview of the project with the current status and the planned developments until the complete completion of the infrastructure (planned for the end of 2022). In addition to infrastructure development, we will also gain important experience in the commercialisation of the social enterprises during this phase, as well as develop the first curricula.

iii. Phase II - Operation of the centre, incubator social enterprise, final development of curricula and training (2023 - Open End)

From 2023 onwards, the focus of our activities will be on the operation of the centre, the development of an incubator for social enterprises and the finalisation of the curricula and related training activities. We plan to offer primary, secondary and tertiary education, focusing on complementary knowledge to the public education system ("evening and holiday schools").

Further information

Comprehensive documentation on the project with derivation, objectives, measures, non-monetary means, impact and benefits, risks, evaluation and reporting measures as well as the special eligibility for funding can be found in the appendix.

Site plan Vocational Training Center, Busua



-  Building completed
-  Building under construction
-  Building planned 2021
-  Building planned 2022
-  Clearance completed

Legend to site plan

(a)	Workshop		
(b)	Mill for sustainable palm oil		
(c)	Biogas plant		
(d)	Incubation house (mushroom farm)		
(e)	Fruiting house (mushroom farm)		
(f)	Composting platform (mushroom farm)		
(g)	Living house farm		
(h)	Meeting platform, staff kitchen, store room, sleeping room		
(i)	Food centre (processing, workshops, canteen, restaurant, catering)		
(j)	Compost toilet		
(k)	Gardenhouse		
1	Gate house	One room, 1-storey building, 1-4 people	5'000.- CHF
2	Guest house (part I)	Staircase with watertank	5'000.- CHF
3	Administration (incl. reception)	Four rooms, 2-storey building, 3-4 people	20'000.- CHF
4	School	Two classrooms, 1-storey building, 30 people per classroom	20'000.- CHF
5	Herbal clinic	Reception and treatment room, 1-storey building, 4-5 people	15'000.- CHF
6	Weighbridge	To weigh vehicles delivering sustainable palm oil fruits	25'000.- CHF
7	Car park (reception/accommodation)	Canopy, four lots	5'000.- CHF
8	Storage	One room, 1-storey building, 1-2 people	7'500.- CHF
9	Store	One room, 1-storey building, max. 10 people	12'500.- CHF
10	Soap factory	Covered space (lower walls), 1-storey building, 5 people	20'000.- CHF
11	Packaging	One room, 1-storey building, 3 people	10'000.- CHF
12	Guest house (part II)	Six self-contained rooms, 3-storey building and rooftop bar, 10-30 people	62'500.- CHF
13	Conference centre	Max. 100 people, 1-storey building (one big room)	40'000.- CHF
14	Car park (official/education)	Canopy, six lots	5'000.- CHF
15	Living house commercial	Six rooms, 2-storey building, 6-12 people	15'000.- CHF
16	Living house reception/accommodation	Six rooms, 2-storey building, 6-12 people	15'000.- CHF

Timetable and milestones

The project duration of Phase I extends over two years from 01.01.2021 to 31.12.2022. Table 1 and Table 2 show the work plan with activities, timetable and milestones of the project.

Table 1: Work plan with activities, schedule and milestones for the project. The colours show planned stays of the project leader in Ghana (grey) and Switzerland (dark grey).

Number	Activities	2021 I			2021 II			2021 III			2021 IV			2022 I			2022 II			2022 III			2022 IV		
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	Coordination /Project mgt.	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1.	Expansion of the commercial department																								
2.	Expansion organic farm																								
3.	Expansion of administration block																								
4.	expansion of the pedagogical department																								
5.	Development of state electricity grid																								
6.	Improvement of road network																								
	Training workshops																								
	Partnerships/Cooperation																								

Table 2: Explanation of the main milestones of the project with expected completion dates

Milestone	Main deliverable	Expected completion [months after start]
1	Completion Organic Farm	6 (30.06.2021)
2	Completion Commercial Department	12 (31.12.2021)
3	Completion Administration Block	24 (31.12.2022)
4	Completion of the Pedagogical Department	24 (31.12.2022)
5	Training of 1'000 community members in the thematic areas of the project.	24 (31.12.2022)

Applicant organisation

i. Organisational description

Obrobibini Peace Complex (OPC) is a non-profit, tax-exempt association based in Zurich, Switzerland. Founded in 2018, we have already made considerable progress and impact despite the young age of our organisation (see section "History and current status"). Currently, the association has 40 members. Figure 2 shows some of the members of OPC Switzerland at the General Assembly 2021 (online via Zoom).

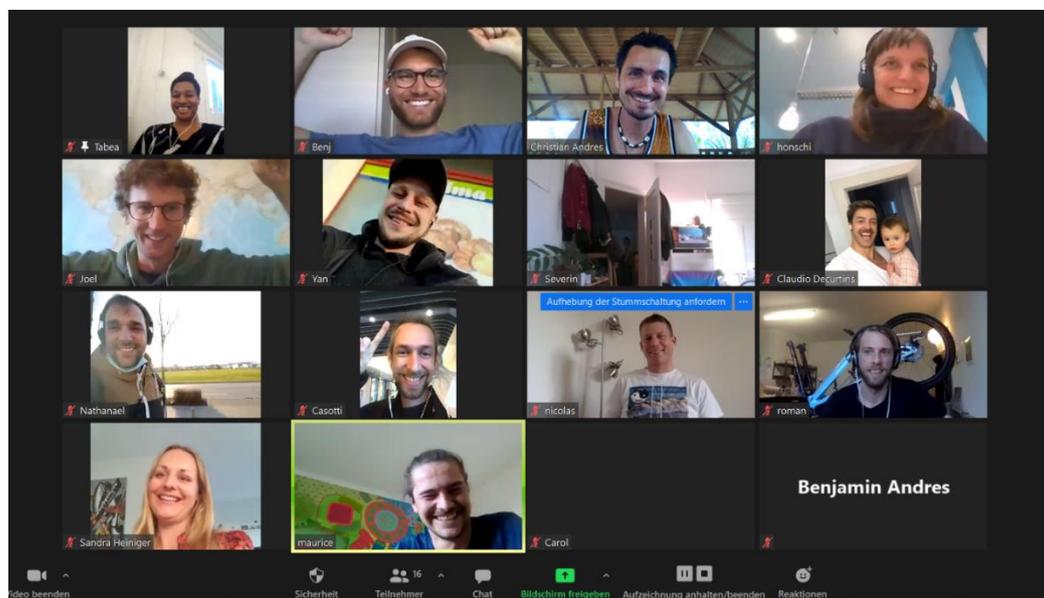


Figure 2: Members of OPC Switzerland at the General Assembly 2021 (online via Zoom)

The subsidiary association of the same name was also founded in Ghana in 2018. OPC Ghana currently employs 10 permanent staff as well as 15 to 25 craftsmen and agricultural labourers, depending on the project. Figure 3 shows the board of OPC Ghana (left) and a snapshot of the extended team with managers, workers, volunteers and students (right). We have other experts in healthy nutrition, herbal medicine, teaching and communication. This broad expertise enables us to solve complex problems from the field. Learn more about our team on our website (<https://obrobibini.org>).



Figure 3: Board of OPC Ghana, from left: Israel Tay Nii Ashitey, Dr Christian Andres and Moses Awiagah (left); extended team with managers, workers, volunteers and students (right).

ii. Competence

The project coordinator, Dr Christian Andres (President of OPC Switzerland and Co-Managing Director of OPC Ghana), has over a decade of experience and expertise in the project's thematic areas (see CV) and lives at least two thirds of the year in Ghana on the piece of land where the training centre is being built. Thus, he is intensively involved and implements the project directly on site. In the course of his professional research work on organic agriculture (permaculture) in Ghana, he has directly experienced many of the problems mentioned, which inspired him to do something about them. He has demonstrated efficiency and transparency in the use of funds in his research projects. His strengths include project management and networking. Other board members and founding members of OPC Ghana are Ghanaians Israel Ashitey (Co-Managing Director), an expert in human resources and logistics, and Moses Awiagah (Executive Secretary), an expert in agriculture.

iii. Project organisation

The association, including fundraising and accounting, is run from Switzerland. After working out an annual plan, the project is divided into smaller projects and implemented. When the project leader is not on site, the local board works out monthly work plans and budgets in constant exchange with the project leader. After agreement with the board in Switzerland, a tranche of money is transferred, the use of which is then reported on again at the end of the month (incl. receipts) and a new budget is proposed. Activity reports reach us weekly so that we can make any necessary adjustments quickly.

Costs

The total project budget is CHF 614,000, of which CHF 214,000 are own contributions and CHF 400,000 are actual expenses. Table 3 shows a budget overview. On page 7 of the appendix you will find a detailed budget of the project.

Table 3: Budget overview of the project

BUDGET POSTS	YEAR			TOTAL
	2017-20	2021	2022	Total
Local staff	0	35'000	35'000	70'000
International staff	80'000	20'000	20'000	120'000
Land	27'500	0	0	27'500
Miscellaneous expenses (cars, tractor, machinery, containers, transport)	66'500	0	0	66'500
Construction projects (materials)	0	192'500	117'500	310'000
Training workshops	0	5'000	5'000	10'000
Transport	0	5'000	5'000	10'000
TOTAL	174'000	257'500	182'500	614'000
TOTAL	0	237'500	162'500	400'000

Effective expenses (EE)
Own contribution (OC)
EE & OC

Funding

i. Financing plan

Table 4 shows the financing plan; in each of the last two years we have been able to generate around CHF 80,000 in income through donations and collections (crowdfunding, private patrons and public relations) with a diversified fundraising strategy. In addition, the importance of institutional donors and specific project-linked contributions has steadily increased over the last two years (see last annual financial statement in the appendix). We currently have 60,000 CHF in liquid funds and have secured a fixed income of about 20,000 CHF for 2021 through membership fees and patrons. In addition, we are budgeting for another 25,000 CHF each from donations and collections and 50,000 from contributions from institutional donors. Corresponding activities (e.g. crowdfunding as part of GlobalGiving's Climate Action Campaign) and concrete talks with foundations have already been underway since spring 2021. In addition, we expect amounts of CHF 7,500 and CHF 10,000 in 2021 and 2022 from the start-up of the centre. This means that around 276,500 CHF or 69% of the budget would already be covered. We are looking for the remaining 132,500 CHF from funding foundations in Switzerland.

Table 4: Financing plan of the project

	Year			
	2017-2020	2021	2022	Total
Equity	CHF			
Contributions in kind	94'000	0	0	94'000
Own contribution (work)	80'000	20'000	20'000	120'000
Total equity	214'000			
Debt capital	CHF			
Cash and cash equivalents	60'000			60'000
Membership and patronage contributions (secured)		20'000	20'000	40'000
Member and patron contributions (budgeted)		25'000	25'000	50'000
Institutional donors (budgeted)		50'000	50'000	100'000
Income from operation of the centre (budgeted)		7'500	10'000	17'500
Institutional donors		75'000	57'500	132'500
Total borrowed capital	400'000			
Financing amount (equity + debt)	614'000			

ii. Support opportunities for grantmaking foundations

A possible grant can be used to finance different budget items. Depending on the preferences of your foundation, we may use your contribution for local staff, for materials for expansion, or for workshops to train the target group. Specific projects in the infrastructure sector can be seen in the legend to the map on page 5. There is also the possibility to actively participate on site and thus experience the project at close quarters. Please feel free to contact us if you see further opportunities for funding on your part.

Contact

i. Project Manager

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ii. Account

Name: Obrobibini Peace Complex
Account: 15-001815-6
IBAN: CH57 0900 0000 1500 1815 6
BIC: POFICHBEXXX

Attachments

- Further information on the project
- Accreditation by the Tax Office of the Canton of Zurich
- Curriculum vitae of the project manager
- Last annual financial statement