



**Cheerful Hearts Foundation**

## **August 2012 Stop Child Labour Project Report**

Our main focus thus far on the Child Labour Project has been in Nyanyano and Fetteh. Over the past year we have successfully engaged with the local communities to raise awareness on the importance of education and the issues of child labour. Moreover we have successfully rescued 30 children from the toil of day to day labour to ensure they now have the opportunity to receive an education. However, as our activities have increased so has our knowledge on the prevalence of child labour in the area. We have recently expanded "Stop Child Labour Now" to the community of Senya Breku where there are more child labourers than in any of the other fishing communities in the Awutu Senya District. In the month of July we began interviewing child labourers in Senya Breku to find out about their personal situations, working conditions, why they were not in school and whether they would return to school if given a chance. By September Cheerful Hearts Foundation is looking to sponsor at least 20 of the most desperate and needy children, ensuring they can pursue an education and have a brighter future. One of the children we are looking to sponsor is 13 year old Evans (pictured below). He has worked on the fishing boats for "as long as he can remember", although he did previously attend school on and off - achieving class 3. However a number of years ago his mother moved and resultantly he was unable to pay his fees. He has since been living with his boss in the town, although he did confess to us that he usually sleeps on the beach. Throughout his time of working for the fisherman he has told us that he has often been bullied by his boss as well as been injured on numerous occasions. Evans is just one of the children we are looking to sponsor – the Stop Child Labour Project aims to rescue 100 children and you can help us reach this amount.

In the coming months we are also working to ensure that our long term initiatives – namely the Child Labour education sessions, community durbars and parent and fishermen education sessions – can be implemented in both Fetteh and Senya Breku. The reason why Cheerful Hearts Foundation sponsors children is to stop the suffering of those currently worse affected by child labour and to give them the opportunity for a brighter future. However in the long run we are working to help stop some of the underlying causes of child labour issue – we want to raise awareness on the importance of education in the communities, we want to ensure that parents know why it is important to encourage their children in schooling and we want the fisherman to encourage the children they employ to get pursue an education. It is with your help that we are hoping to stop the long term trends contributing to child labour in the Awutu Senya District.



**Evans and the project director after being interviewed**

## **Child Labour Education Sessions**

Throughout the month of July, Cheerful Hearts Foundation has toured Child Labour Education Sessions around schools in Nyanyano to raise awareness on the importance of education and the dangers of child labour. One of the factors we have found to be contributing to Child Labour is that the children who often find themselves working for the fishermen do so after becoming disillusioned with education. Although most of the children we speak to usually want to go back to school, many say that one of the reasons they initially started working was because they did not understand why education was important. Cheerful Hearts held the talks at Franklin Memorial School, Sea Breeze Preparatory School, Ebenezer preparatory school and Premier International School to ensure the children already enrolled, stay in school. We wanted to empower the children and to show them the role and responsibility that they can have in their community, and in the area of child labour. Many of the school children said that they knew of children involved in child labour and we encouraged them to spread the word of why it is important to pursue an education. The topics we covered included 'what is child labour, what are the effects of child labour, why we need to end child labour and what is the role of the school child in ending child labour.' We hoped that such sessions especially struck a chord with those children currently considering leaving school in order to earn money through work.



**Some sessions of the Child Labour Educational talks in schools by the Cheerful Hearts Foundation**

## Rescued Child Labourer's Excursion to Accra

On Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2012, the Cheerful Hearts team took 18 rescued children on their first tour of Accra, Ghana. We organized the children to be picked up from the communities of Nyanyano and Fetteh early in the morning before a whole day of touring the nation's capital. Stops included the National Theatre, Independence Square, and the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park, serving as a great educational field trip and a fun day with the kids!

For many of the children this was the first time they had travelled anywhere outside of their own small towns. Indeed it was evident from their wide eyed expressions throughout the day that this was a completely new experience for them. Their behaviour was superb and a great time was had not only by the children but also the Cheerful Hearts Foundation team. The trip helped to broaden the horizons of the children – helping to demonstrate what opportunities were available to them if they took full advantage of the education they are now being given a chance to pursue.



**Educational excursion trip to the Capital of Ghana with some of the rescued children – kids very excited**

## Stop Child Labour Day

To mark World Child Labour Day, Cheerful Hearts Foundation organized a talk on “Child Labour” with all the rescued children and their colleagues from school. All the children were educated on the menace of child labour, and advised on the roles they need to play as children to help stop child labour. Being a fishing community, most of the children that are now in school were once involved in fishing activities and have experiences to share hence they were given the opportunity to interact with the staff of Cheerful Hearts Foundation and share their experiences. The children also used the opportunity to share with some challenges they still face at home which sometimes gets them involved in hard labour in one way or the other. The children were advised on the roles they have to play as children to ensure that their parents are happy with them and continue to sponsor their education.

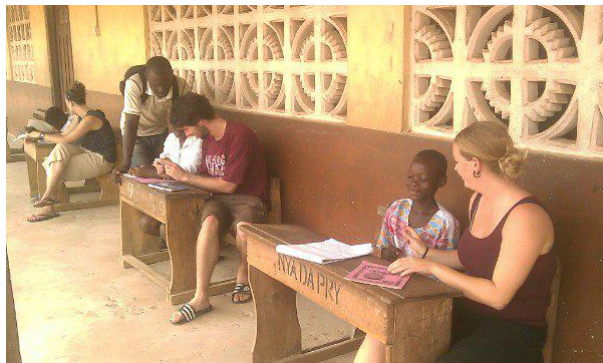


**One of the kids shares his experience when he was a child labourer and advised all pupils present.**



## One on one tutoring

Throughout the month of August Cheerful Hearts Foundation has been providing free vacation classes for children in Nyanyano. As part of the classes volunteers from Cheerful Hearts Foundation have been providing one on one tutoring for a number of the rescued child labourers we sponsor. Many of the children Cheerful Hearts Foundation sponsor have never been educated in any form and when put in a class they are not always prepared for the study level. After previously having to work in the fishing industry, many of the children often find it difficult to settle back into a schooling environment and we are providing the classes to make the transition easier and to help them catch up with their schoolmates. Through the tutoring we hope to ensure they are provided with the guidance needed to help them cope with their school work - moving them one step closer towards fulfilling their dreams and ambitions.



## Video Launch

Cheerful Hearts Foundation has recently launched a video to help raise awareness on the child labour issue as well as detailing how we are trying to combat the phenomenon. We hope the video will help our donors and supporters gain a clearer picture of the trauma and hardships the children we support are going through. You can find the video on youtube via the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lx46QWuURdc> . We encourage all of those interested in the project to take the time to have a watch and share the video with friends, family and those who you think might be interested in making a difference. The further our message is spread, the more likely it is that people will support us and ultimately this will mean the more children we can rescue and give hope for a brighter future.



Watch out for the next update on this project soon. We greatly appreciate your support for Cheerful Hearts Foundation and the rescued Child labourers. Many thanks!

Cheerful Hearts Foundation rescue team