



CHEERFUL HEARTS FOUNDATION

GOMOA NYANYANO CHILD LABOUR PROJECT

1. Organization's History:

Cheerful Hearts foundation (CHF) was co-founded in 2008, by Eric Opoku Agyemang and Bright Fiatsi, as a result of personal experience with difficulty to achieve the education they craved so badly, because the benefits of being educated would be incomparable to the alternative illiteracy. Overcoming undue hardship and surmounting the odds, Eric and Bright determined to create educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor, and Cheerful Hearts has been achieving the mandate, paying forward and weaving dreams for other young people who deserve the right to education in the poorest communities of Ghana.

Cheerful Hearts Foundation was registered as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) on June 19th, 2009, and operates in two important areas of education and health, with an increasing element of growth in the area of human-rights.

We, at Cheerful Hearts Foundation, predominantly research and manage our projects as a hands-on team, with overseas intern and volunteer-participants adding incredible value to the quality of impact that we make in our communities. Our foreign interns and volunteers also gain a range of unique perspectives to their specialties, through their exposure to our work in rural health services and in the schools. This exchange lends enrichment to the organization and everyone related to our work, and the impact of CHF in the country and our special communities, is significant.

2. Organizational Goals and Objectives (short-term and/or long-term):

Vision: The Vision of Cheerful Hearts Foundation is to see healthy, educated and empowered rural communities of Ghana. We want to blend the demarcation line between the rural poor and urban rich. With education as our mandate, the vision is clear.

Mission: To collaborate with the rural dwellers and stakeholders, to advance the educational standards for their children, and improve health services toward better living conditions for the children, men and women in the indigenous communities in Ghana.

Our Objectives are:

- To empower children, youth, men, and women in rural communities through education, job training, and health awareness programs.
- To improve existing rural health facilities and make health support systems available to the rural communities of Ghana.

The odds against longevity for the indigenous members of our rural communities are staggering. Members of these communities are eager to get a hand-up so that they can

reach upward and provide for themselves. Opportunities that empower their children and families are critical for their success, and CHF is faced with a litany of issues beyond our focus areas of education and health. We believe that our success in bringing the components of good health and education to the poor communities will lead to the achievement of sustainable development overall.

3. Programs and Services

As indicated, the primary areas of CHF focus are: education and health, with most projects involving the indigenous community of the Awutu Senya District, in the central region of Ghana.

We leverage the talents of our overseas volunteers and match them with our teams to work in local schools and health care institutions. We conduct health education seminars in rural communities (focused mainly on HIV/AIDS & Malaria awareness and prevention, Sanitation), human rights advocacy projects, and we award scholarships for children to attend school. In terms of the adult members of the communities, we empower women and girls about reproductive issues, and are working with the local community leaders to eradicate child labour and trafficking in the Awutu Senya District.

4. Organizational Structure (board, staff, volunteers):

Cheerful Hearts Foundation is made up of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals. Members of our team engage in research and field operations, program implementation, and community awareness projects. Cheerful Hearts Foundation consists of a Board of Directors, an Executive Director (Programs Director), Finance and Administrative Director, Administrative Secretary, Project Coordinators and Field Facilitators (Project Assistants). Cheerful Hearts Foundation is supported by a Board of Directors. This board advises the foundation on the implementation of projects, and formulates policies for the organisation. The field teams is directly responsible to the Board of Directors, and are required to submit costs of projects, proposals, and updates on a regular basis, as well as at General Meetings.

Cheerful Hearts Foundation also receives various interns and volunteers from abroad. In addition to the regular staff, we have a dedicated Fundraising and Development executive, and a monitoring and evaluation specialist, to ensure that our growth and sustainability are measurable, impactful, and fundable. Senior positions all report to the Executive Director.

5. Description of Program/Project:

The child labor and trafficking rescue project has been long overdue, as poor children in the Gomoa Nyanyano communities continue to apprentice in fishing, mostly with little to no pay, and endangering lives of those who are not agile in swimming. Awareness sessions are held with leaders of the communities, chiefs, district commissioners, and especially the mothers of the children, to educate them about the value of their children's education as a long-term investment in their communities. The promise of scholarship toward basic education and healthcare support to child labour victims requires CHF to reach out to donors and collaborators. Currently, we are planning to assist 150 children ranging in ages from 6-18, all of who are either illiterate, or have had to quit school due to lack of funds.

6. Description of Need

Child Labour is a major issue in many parts of the world, including West Africa. It is estimated that there are 200 million children engaged in forced labour throughout the world, and it is one of the greatest obstacles that poor children face in today's society.

Child labour prevents millions of children and their families from receiving an education. It is a form of slavery that binds these families to the clutches of poverty. Some of the children we are interested in assisting are forced to work, even by their own family members who feel that the little bit of income they would bring in, is needed to alleviate their dire circumstances.

One of the areas in Ghana with a widespread instance of child labor is Nyanyano, located in the Awutu Senya District, in the central region of Ghana.

Nyanyano is a fishing village located approximately 25 miles from the capital of Accra, with a population of between 2000 and 3000 people. Fishing forms the main source of income for the majority of the community, with much of the economy based around this industry.

Cheerful Hearts Foundation proposes a project that will reduce the level of child labour in the community. This project will work with and contribute to the empowerment of the indigenous people, while raising awareness regarding the importance of education, and thus, reducing the rate of child labour altogether. Free community education classes will form the basis for this project, while being enhanced by child sponsorship for child labour victims who genuinely need help. Support from the chief and elders of Nyanyano have been critical for the formation of this project, and will further guarantee community support.

Research conducted by Cheerful Hearts Foundation has shown that many children in Nyanyano are working in some form or other related to the fishing industry. Their ages range from 7 years old, to 14 years old. The girls are involved in collecting and selling the fish, while the boys' responsibilities include going out on the boats, pulling in and mending the nets, as well as sorting the fish. Many reported that they have been injured on the boats, while several reported instances of bullying and abuse at the hands of the fishermen. These children rarely receive a wage, but are often paid in fish, which they then attempt to sell in the market for money to take home, or go back to the family. While school intake has increased over the years, there remains a significant percent of the child population that is still involved in child labour. Some are involved because of their circumstances, while some are encouraged by their parents. Most of the children wish to go to school if they had the opportunity.

We discovered that one of the main reasons for the high rate of children involved in labour is the lack of awareness and education for the entire community. Many community members do not see the benefits of education, while others judge that it is better for children to work in a trade from a young age, rather than 'waste their time' in school. Although most of the fishermen agree that it is not good for the children to be working on the boats or on the shore, when confronted with the issue of child labour, many also believe that it is far cheaper to employ them and "pay them a little something," than encourage them to go to school.

7. Specific Activities

Cheerful Hearts Foundation plans to run several inter-related activities that would cumulatively achieve the goals and objectives of the rescue of child labourers. The list includes: Parent Education Sessions, Fishermen Education Sessions, Community Leaders Meetings, Child Sponsorships, and school education programs in the surrounding schools.

Parents and Fishermen Education Sessions

These education sessions form the main activities of the project. Both groups have expressed a desire to increase their education, and in order for this project to be successful, both interest groups need to be a part of the project.

These classes will be implemented through 2012, apart from a 10 week period between June and August, which is the peak season for fishing in the community. The classes will be free to join, and will be held every weekly at the local school, for approximately 2 hours. The fishermen will come at a different time than the parents, and all will be supplied basic stationary throughout the year.

During these classes, several different areas will be covered including; basic literacy in both English and the native language, Twi, as well as workshops on the importance of basic education for their children, child rights, financial management, and community pride. It is hoped that by joining with the community members in this way, they will be empowered to tackle these issues themselves, bringing change to the community. They will also have a greater understanding of the need of their children to attend school, while advancing basic literacy rates in the community.

Community Leaders Meetings

As in most indigenous cultures, there is great respect shown to the chief and traditional elders of the community, whose support and inclusion play an important part in the success of the project. Cheerful Hearts Foundation has developed solid relationships with the chiefs and other relevant leaders of the Nyanyano community, all of who are ready to contribute the morale and energies needed to empower all members of their indigenous community.

The meetings with community leaders will be ongoing through the entire year of project implementation. Attendees will include the village chief and elders, Chief Fishermen, the Queen Mother, religious and traditional leaders, and the local indigenous council, for open discussion and dialogues to occur amongst CHF and the village leaders, and also serve as a floor to discuss about child labour and other relevant issues. While these larger meetings will occur every three months, CHF has committed to smaller biweekly session as an open forum to ensure that objectives of the project stay on track and enable members of the indigenous community to take ownership of programs and support special interest groups. As has been stated, the village leaders have significant influence in the community and their support is critical to making significant inroads to reducing child labour at Nyanyano.

School Education Programs

Cheerful Hearts also plans to conduct education awareness programs in existing schools in the Nyanyano community to ensure the children already enrolled stay in school. The purpose of this program is 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. The program will be run twice a month, and be run by Cheerful Hearts Foundation members. The areas covered will be '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. This will be followed by quiz competitions in the school.

Child Sponsorship

This activity for the project focuses on removing some of the financial difficulties associated with receiving an education. While there are some children engaged in child

labour with a certain degree of choice, others are forced to as a result of their unfortunate circumstances which are usually prompted by death or illness in the family. Scholarships from CHF eliminate the financial constraints associated with the child's education.

This project will fund a total of 100 children to attend school. This will cover school fees, stationary, textbooks, and uniform. The children that will be selected will be those in real need of assistance. This is based on research conducted by Cheerful Hearts Foundations and with consultation with the Chief and Elders of Nyanyano.

The CHF Child Labor & Trafficking Elimination project is designed to be an educational investment that incrementally also leads to sustainable development of their communities. The students will serve as a role model for other children, and to the entire village. This activity relates directly to the objectives and the main goal of the project. However, it is no more or important than the other activities, and they all work together and complement each other, to significantly reduce the number of children involved in child labour.

8. Objectives and Goals for this Request

Cheerful Hearts Foundation wants to stop child labour in the community of Nyanyano before the problem takes systemic hold. While we are keen on treating the core issues, we are also being diagnostic in our approach, to bring awareness to the entire community. By stressing the importance of education as an investment in the future of all their children, as well as a means of reducing poverty in the community, we are ensuring that all members of the community receive our support so that the collaboration would benefit all families.

The chief and elders of the community have recently passed laws in the community that prohibit children working on the boats, but these laws are rarely implemented, and until there is greater education and awareness in the community, these laws seem to be purely symbolic. Many of the parents and fishermen have never received any formal education, which is a barrier to the level of cooperation by the parents.

The children do have a desire to go to school, and if the opportunity arose, they would be more than willing. There are often injuries on the boat, some get beaten or physically abused, and the hours can sometimes be long. The children do not like their work on the boats or on the shore, and are often jealous of their friends who do go to school. They feel they have to work on the boats though because of family pressure or lack of other realistic opportunities.

The following objectives are some of the reasons for creating the child labour and trafficking project:

- Increase the awareness in the community regarding issues such as child labour, and the importance of education.
- Contribute to empowering both the men and the women in the community, by providing them with basic literacy skills and greater skills in managing their finances.
- Enable families under financial pressure to meet the needs of their children's education.
- Build community participation and support regarding issues such as child labour.

9. Evaluation

At the completion of this project, we expect to see a greatly reduced number of children working in the fishing industry. Furthermore, there will be a greater understanding of the importance of education and the effects of child labour, as well as a greater level of basic literacy in the community. More children will have access to education, and there will be greater support in this indigenous community as parents come to appreciate the value of education, and hope for a better future, once they permit CHF to work with them.

Through the course of the year, program assessments will be ongoing to evaluate specific activities for their effectiveness and/or needs for improvement. These will be run by community elders as well as Cheerful Hearts Members, and will involve those students being sponsored (as well as their teachers) and parents and fishermen involved in the classes. Tests will also be conducted throughout the educational classes for the parents and fishermen, to determine if the level of education has improved, and if basic literacy skills have been acquired. A summary of the school attendances and grades for those that have been sponsored will also be looked at. Finally, there will be coordinated research by those involved in this project, to determine if the amount of children involved in child labour has been reduced, and if so, by how much.

10. Other

Cheerful Hearts Foundation has partnership with the local District Assembly, Social Welfare Department, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. We collaborate with main stakeholders in order to achieve greater success in our project implementation. We also collaborate with the traditional heads and opinions leaders of the rural communities and they add value every step of the way to ensure that dialogues are on track to approach solutions to problems that directly affect members of their communities.

Cheerful Hearts Foundation has selected its Board of Directors based on their experiences in our main areas of operations and their varied backgrounds add a rich perspective to our collective approach to achieving impact. Among this august group are: District Director of Social welfare, Deputy District Director of Education, District Director of Health, Head of Revenue Department, Value-Added-Tax (VAT), and the Chief of Gomoa Nyanyano. The CHF board is highly committed to all matters that affect Nyanyano particularly, and the rural communities of Ghana, in general.

Cheerful Hearts Foundation continues to receive excellent feedback from our overseas volunteers whose lives have changed as a result of having worked on our projects. Many of our former volunteers stay in touch long after they return to their countries of origins, and they make every effort to motivate us to keep their projects alive. We strive to stretch every dollar and make efficient use of all resources and the investment always pays off.

Finally, since the establishment of CHF in 2008, we have never applied for, nor received, any external funding. Rather, most of our financial contributions come from our own members (Directors and Board) including previous volunteers on our projects. We have made a very positive impact on the communities we serve, even with the little resources available to us, due to our genuine and sincere desire to support the community. Therefore we believe that with additional external financial support, we will be able to accomplish much more and make a greater impact in the community.

Budget Information

PROGRAM - CHILD LABOR OPERATIONS	Unit Cost	Quantity	TOTAL	Details
Campaign Supplies	7.00	250	1,750.00	Includes T-Shirts for community, volunteers, and stakeholders
Tuition Fees/ Extra class fees - 100 children	250.00	100	25,000.00	\$250 per child x 100 children (Includes extra classes fees)
School Uniforms - 100 children	40.00	100	4,000.00	Two uniforms per child@ \$40 per child x 100 children
Books & School supplies for 100 children	50.00	100	5,000.00	\$50 per child x 100 children
Community Leaders Meeting/Orientation	300.00	12	3,600.00	\$300 per session x 12 weeks per year (Once Monthly)
Renting of venue and organising of Adult Education for Fishermen	80.00	26	2,080.00	Sessions for 26 weeks with fishermen groups (Renting of venue)
Renting of venue and organising of Adult Education for parents (Mainly women)	80.00	26	2,080.00	Sessions for 26 weeks with parents
Adult Education - Training Supplies	5.00	500	2,500.00	\$5 each for supplies x 500 attendants (both parents and fishermen)
2 Tutors Stipends - Adult Education	140.00	26	3,640.00	2 tutors at \$70 per session x 26 weeks
Refreshments & Snacks for all events	250.00	12	3,000.00	All Sessions with children, parents, community leaders for the year
Fuel and Transport	100.00	26	2,600.00	\$100 per week, x 26 weeks
Allowance for two (2) project assistants in the community	400.00	12	4,800.00	\$200 per head for 12 months
Miscellaneous	50.00	12	600.00	
TOTAL PROGRAM COST - CHILD LABOUR			60,650.00	