



Factsheet Vocational Training Centre Kumasi - Ghana

Country and region/town or city

Kumasi - Ghana

Project name

Vocational Training Centre

Partner(s)

Daughters of Charity - local partner

Description

In 2011 the Vebeego Foundation, together with the sisters of Daughters of Charity began construction of the Vocational Training Centre (VTC), a centre where street girls are given shelter and learn a trade.

The girls originally come from villages in the northern region of Ghana. This region is poorer and more traditional than the southern and central regions of Ghana. The girls that come from the north are one of the most vulnerable groups in the country. They come to Kumasi to find work as a 'head porter'. This job involves them carrying items for the vendors at the market (the largest market in West Africa). The girls work long days, have no permanent living or lodging accommodations and are barely able to make ends meet. If they do not find enough work, they have no money, food and/or shelter. All of which puts them at risk, among other things, of prostitution and abuse.

The Vocational Training Centre offers these girls shelter and training to become a hairdresser or clothes maker. In this way they can eventually learn to support themselves. After completing the education and after they have earned enough money, the goal is for the girls to return - often accompanied - to their village and to support themselves.

The participants in the building trips worked together with the local builders on the residential building. The girls also chipped in.

During the construction, it became apparent that the ground floor was being built 1.5 times bigger than the plans had called for. This was the result of local mismanagement and inadequate local supervision. This has resulted in a building that consists solely of a ground floor with one floor and no roof.

This is the current situation, considering that the financial donations and current situation are not adequate to finish construction of the entire building.

The building was officially opened in January 2013 and formally handed over to the sisters of the Daughters of Charity in July 2013. As of that time, 8 girls were being trained and lived at the centre. Additionally, a small farm was started with chickens and agriculture for food and for the sale of products.

Period

2011 – 2012

Number of building trips

Year 2011 – 1 building trip

Year 2012 – 1 building trip

Total of 2 building trips to this project

Number of ambassadors

A total of 31 employees actively participated in the building of this project during 2 building trips in the years 2011 and 2012.

Investment in € and time

Donation committed upon commencement = €49,163

Total donation €63,153

Due partly to the increased size of the building of the ground floor, an extra donation was granted to make the ground floor habitable and functional.

31 participants x 40 hours = 1,240 hours of volunteer work

Where do we go from here...?

We know that we have completed a building with only a ground floor. Extensive consultations have been held with the local sisters to discuss this. Partly because the construction did not go smoothly at first and ran over budget, the agreement was made that the people themselves would have to generate funds for the 2nd phase of the construction.

The Vebego Foundation is in contact with the sisters once each quarter regarding the progress and an update is sent. The project will be continued in 2013 – 2014.

The foundation has decided not to make any supplemental financial donations.

What have we learned?

In Ghana, we learned that the local management and supervision are very important and that these individuals must possess the right competencies and knowledge. At the start of the project, the sisters appeared to have building experience, but this unfortunately turned out not to be the case and the foreman engaged was not competent. However, once this was discovered the 'damage' had already been done and the decision was ultimately made to only complete construction of the ground floor. The result was a half-completed building, which is functional.

Additionally it once again became apparent that prior to the start of construction the project itself must clearly get the operations of the building in order. In this project, too, the operational costs and adequate revenues remained an area of continued concern for the sisters involved.

Want to know more?

If you would like to know more about this project, visit the website: www.vebegofoundation.nl, or contact Annette van Waning: a.vanwaning@vebego.com

