



PPRC Newsletter – Volume 16 – Dec-2020

We send you warm greetings from PPRC in Ahotokurom, Ghana. We hope this newsletter finds you in good health and that you are keeping safe. Despite everything, the year has passed by quickly, and we're surprised to find that it's only a few days to Christmas. The build-up to Ghana's elections was a distraction from our usual preparations for the Christmas festivities, but we missed the excitement, especially the Nativity Play.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our friends, supporters, benefactors, and volunteers for your commitment and dedication to the work of PPRC and especially for the support and contributions you have given in the past year. We are most grateful to all of you for your ongoing friendship.

It has been a challenging year, particularly due to COVID-19. We've had to dramatically change the way we operate, and the implications for the future of small non-profit organisations like ours are daunting. This is because we rely heavily on donations and support from friends and supporters in Europe who've been hit hard by the global pandemic. However, this crisis has taught us new ways to manage our lives and deliver our services safely. If COVID-19 is here to stay, then we have to get used to this 'new normal' and build a 'new future'.

We have updates on: Covid-19, the Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy, a new leprosy survivor, a recent success story, the farm, fencing, solar and sustainable livelihood

projects, PPRC Strategy, the Ghana elections, volunteering, and plenty of nice photos.

On behalf of the PPRC Management Team and the Board, I'd like to wish everyone a blessed and joyful Christmas, free from the virus. And as we say in the Ghanaian language: 'Afehyia Pa' which translates into 'Happy New Year'. The response is 'Afe nko mmeto yen', which means something like 'may another year come and meet us'.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Mark Mantey, CEO



Nativity Play, St. Elizabeth's 2019





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1. Covid-19 (C19) Update:

In addition to our regular work, a crucial part of our efforts over the past year has been to protect our clients and staff from C19. We moved early, and with advice from our friends in Europe and funding from Misesan Cara, we implemented strict prevention measures, including hand-hygiene, PPE, and zoning. We were ahead of the curve in Ghana. These measures have worked well so far, but we need to be vigilant and ensure that everyone sticks to the rules. Sadly, we've had to close St Elizabeth's temporarily, and lay off eight staff members. We've implemented an outreach project to maintain contact with our clients, and this is working well. The President of Ghana recently announced the establishment of a committee to look into the deployment of a safe vaccine for the country.

2. Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL):

We were recently invited to participate in a two-day meeting of the GPZL in Accra. This is a coalition of groups committed to ending Leprosy (Hansen's Disease), and membership is open to organisations and individuals who support these objectives. The meeting's focus was an in-depth review of the current Leprosy Control Programme and then developing a roadmap towards Zero Leprosy in Ghana by 2030. The meeting was attended by many senior Government and medical officials and highlighted the advantages of collaboration and cooperation. Ankaful Leprosarium and PPRC got some very positive feedback about their ability to manage complex leprosy cases.

Our primary focus at PPRC is to facilitate the reintegration and rehabilitation of leprosy survivors. From this workshop, key issues for us are early detection of leprosy cases, management of complications and disabilities, active case search, advocacy and stakeholder engagement. By the end of the meeting, a comprehensive roadmap to 'Zero Leprosy for Ghana' by 2030 had been agreed. This roadmap will challenge PPRC to review our strategies and focus on activities that align with the roadmap. We also need to find better ways to collaborate with GPZL. This mission is important and there is much work to do.

3. Ghana's 2020 Elections

Ghana went to the polls on Dec-7th Dec to elect a President and 275 parliamentary candidates. This was the 8th election of the 4th Republic since the country went back to multiparty democracy in 1992. The election was reported as peaceful, free and fair on election day. Unfortunately, there was post-election violence where six people died and pockets of protest by the opposition party members across the country, claiming a 'flawed election'. This is sad for Ghana, and unfortunately, it's now being reported that 'Ghana's 2020 elections debased Ghana's credentials as a beacon of democracy in Africa'. These are difficult times for





Ghana, but we shall overcome! Please pray for peace for 'Mother Ghana'.

4. A New Leprosy Survivor

Mr. Ebenezer Asegibase is a 32-year-old man from Kandiga in the Upper East Region, Ghana. He has a diploma in Business Studies from Bolga Technical Institute. He moved to Kumasi to study for a Higher National Diploma in Accounting at Kumasi Technical University. During his second year of studies, he developed a rash on his face, which steadily got worse. He decided to defer his studies and return to his hometown to seek treatment. He went from hospital to hospital but got no satisfaction and his health continued to deteriorate.



Finally, he met a 'good Samaritan' who sent him for medical examination. He was diagnosed with leprosy (Hansen's Disease) and was advised to go to Ankafu Leprosarium, where his diagnosis was confirmed. He is now temporarily staying at Enyinndakurom under medical supervision and is doing very well. However, we are afraid that he may become too comfortable there, so we need to challenge him about his future. We know that he has initiative, and we believe that an opportunity to

continue his education would be a good first step. We are appealing to anyone interested in assisting this young man 'to become the best that he can be'. This fits with our policy of preparing our clients for independent living wherever possible, and always encouraging independence rather than dependency.

5. Donations and New Supporters:

Even amid the global pandemic, 'God has been good to us'. This year, to date, we've received large international cash donations from nineteen different individuals. And locally, we have received donations in kind from many groups and individuals. This generosity is greatly appreciated and is not taken for granted. These donations are very encouraging, for the kindness, generosity and support of our friends and supporters, both international and local.

We were delighted to receive generous donations from two new supporters:

- Silent Children Mission, Canada, through Very Reverend Father Bonaventure Annan, the Vicar-General of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Coast
- Director of Caritas, Rev Fr Stephen Amoa Gyasi of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Coast

There are always more deserving cases than there are funds available, and it's our policy to continue searching for new sources of funding particularly to avoid over-reliance on our existing generous donors. If you'd like to make a donation, the details are as follows:

For donations in the UK, please use this link: <https://www.ahoto.org/support>

For other donations please use the Irish Friends of Ahotokurom (IFOA) account. IFOA is a registered charity and was recently granted 'Tax Exemption Status' which means that your donations will now go further.





Irish Friends of Ahotokurom - Bank Details	
Bank	Bank of Ireland
Branch Address	University of Limerick
Sort Code (NSC)	90-59-50
Account No.	6638 9119
IBAN No.	IE31 BOFI 9059
	5066 3891 19
BIC No.	IE31 BOFI
Registered Charity No.	2014 4869



6. Sustainable Livelihood - Ms. Agatha Pronk

Ms. Agatha Pronk is 37 years old and has cerebral palsy. She has nine siblings and has lost both her parents. She came to PPRC when she was just two years old and was supported by us until she completed her vocational training. She then joined our sheltered work programme and was involved in St Elizabeth's training for two years. Then she helped provide a safe and secure learning environment for our special need's children.

Agatha was one of the eight people temporarily laid off due to the closure of St Elizabeth as a result of COVID-19. She was given a once-off payment of GHS 500 to help her set up a sustainable livelihood project, in line with our policy of helping our clients move to independent living, wherever possible.



Agatha is enthusiastic about this project because she believes it can lead her to a long-term sustainable future. She has a five-year-old son, and her neighbour is very supportive in helping to care for her son. She already has a freezer and is running a small grocery business. We hope that providing a steel container store, plus once-off funds to expand her grocery business, will increase her household income and make her business sustainable. We hope to handover the container store during the Christmas period. A special 'Thank You' to all our friends and supporters who have made this project possible.

7. Policy, Strategy and the Future

We continuously strive to meet our international sponsors' expectations and standards in everything we do, especially in financial reporting, child protection, and ensuring that all donations are properly used for their intended purposes. We work hard to achieve the best possible outcomes for all of our clients within the constraints of our financial and human resources. We focus on teamwork and mutual respect for everyone involved: clients, families, staff, volunteers, donors, sponsors, DMJ, Archdiocese, etc. This is the spirit upon which our collaborative ministry is built.

Our strategic plan is now seven years old, and although many elements are still relevant, the plan needs to be overhauled to respond to current and future needs. For example, the closure of the





residential part of St Joseph's is progressing and we are increasing our emphasis on family-support outreach services. Also, with St Elizabeth's temporary closure we are doing a lot more special-needs outreach. These activities require new skills and a change of mindset. We also need to reconsider Enyinndakurom and the services and support we provide. For all of these reasons, the formulation of a new PPRC 10-year strategy, in close consultation with our key stakeholders, is urgent and important in 2021.

Another top priority for 2021 is fundraising for day-to-day operations. This is 'mission-critical', as we are over reliant on our existing donors. We hope that with a new strategic plan and sound governance structure we will be able to find new sources of funding.

One more priority for 2021 is our water project, which involves drilling a new borehole and installing a water purification plant. This was delayed because of Covid-19 but remains urgent. It will help us reduce our operational costs and our dependence on an unreliable mains supply. The good news is that we have already secured some funding. The bad news is that we still need some help to make this a reality in the first half of 2021.

and Engineering from Jiangsu University in China. His specialisation is in Economic Systems Analysis and Management. Egya was supported by PPRC, the Keely family in Ireland, and Trudy and Fr Douglas in England.

9. Solar Update

Our solar power plant has been running for 21 months and is still going strong. It has become a reference site for people interested in solar power and an excellent example of 'project sustainability'. We receive regular visitors looking for first-hand information. Recently, with funding from the Adjoa Foundation and guidance from our solar expert (Dick Keely), we installed a load-rebalance cable between St Clare's and St Joseph's. It went live on Nov-14, is working well, and our electricity bills have now been virtually eliminated.

10. Farm Update

The main aims for the farm are to:

- a. provide quality organic food for our residents
- b. increase food security and independence
- c. generate income from produce sales
- d. enclose the farm to protect our produce from local communities and their livestock



8. Success Story - Albert Henry Ntarmah:

We are happy to share the good news of Albert Henry Ntarmah (aka Egya) from Kiful Village, who has been awarded a PhD in Management Science



Ahoto Coconuts ready for the market





We sold lots of coconuts, fresh corn, pumpkins, tomatoes, okra, charcoal, pineapples, and 500+ watermelons. Much of our farm sales went to five vulnerable local women, who sold it in the local markets. We hope to have an even better year in 2021. We would like to introduce basic irrigation methods to reduce our dependence on the 'wet-season'. We expect our mango trees to start bearing fruit soon, so our mango plantation will also need to be enclosed.

We are investing time and effort to improve long-term sustainability through 'planting for food and jobs', which compliments the sustainable livelihood projects. This is working well, is good news for some of our vulnerable clients, and offers them a pathway towards independence.



Harvested Corn



Planting the Corn (Maize)



Aphoto Pineapples for the market



Flourishing Corn Field

11. Volunteers Corner:

One of the cornerstones of the work of PPRC has been the contribution of volunteers over the years. This has ranged from the building project in the late 1990s when volunteers worked with the local people to build Enyinndakurom village, to the more recent volunteers who travelled from near and far to work with the communities.

Volunteers have come from the UK, Canada, Spain, Ireland, Netherlands, France, and Ghana, giving their time and enthusiasm to help in any way they could. Other volunteers have been involved in





different ways, sharing their time and experience. A good example is the initiative between the University of Cape Coast, the University of Limerick, and the University Hospital, where different skills and possibilities are being discussed and progressed. This includes music, music therapy, nursing & midwifery, and skills-based training in Wa, Northern Ghana.

This year is different. Covid 19 has made these programmes more difficult, but it doesn't mean that involvement and commitment cannot continue. Perhaps now is an excellent time to review what can still be done remotely and what different options could work. If you're interested, please let us know what skills you can offer, e.g.:

- fundraising
- special needs
- health and safety
- end-of-life care
- data protection
- human rights
- policy writing
- law
- governance
- networking

Another possibility would be to start an alumni group for volunteers who have been to Ahotokurom. The Facebook page has possibly run its course. Please let us know if you have any opinions on this. In recent weeks, the Irish Friends of Ahotokurom have joined forces with the UK Friends of Ahotokurom, rather than having two separate sites. As well as being good to share the page, this has resulted in a presence on Instagram: www.instagram.com/friends_of_ahoto/

Any suggestions for keeping people connected would be welcome. Anyone who wishes to get involved, please email: wynette.redington@ul.ie

12. Sarah Oye, RIP:

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of one of our special needs children, Sarah Oye, in a car accident, on 17-Oct, at Ankaful Prisons. Sarah was born on 21-Feb-2005 and had attended St. Elizabeth's since she was three years old. She was usually the life and soul of the party, and she will be sorely missed. May she rest in peace.



Sarah Oye and her good friend Bernard

