



# PPRC Newsletter – Volume 18 – Dec-2021

We send you warm greetings from PPRC in Ahotokurom, Ghana. We hope you are keeping safe and well, and we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

2021 has been a challenging year for us, with Covid-related restrictions and temporary layoffs for some of our team. St. Elizabeth's Special Needs Day-Care was closed for almost a year, which wasn't easy for our clients and their families. It has reopened on a controlled basis, and we have also started to admit new clients into St. Clare's Nursing Home.

Thankfully, no Covid-19 cases were detected on the compound due to strict adherence to our 'Infection Prevention Measures' and the fact that all our staff are vaccinated. We must now remain extra vigilant because of the new Omicron variant.

We feel that once again, we're making good progress, due in large part to the solid support from our staff and our many supporters, volunteers, and interns. Our clients are safe and happy, which is very important to us, as it's our policy to treat all our clients and staff with dignity and respect!

However, we face many serious challenges in 2022, in addition to covid-19. Money is scarce, and there are always more needy cases than resources available. We don't have enough qualified staff, making it difficult to meet all our goals. We also need to raise funds to repair St. Elizabeth's roof, and we want to encourage the parents of our St. Elizabeth's clients to contribute to service fees & transportation.

I would like to thank all our supporters, friends, and benefactors – local and international. We could not survive without your support. I'd also like to thank our staff, volunteers and intern students, Senior Management Team, and Board of Directors. We are most grateful for your ongoing help and assistance.

We will strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for all our clients within our financial and human resources constraints.

We have updates on St. Elizabeth's, St. Clare's, St. Joseph's, Enyinndakurom, the Quads, Covid-19, volunteers, fundraising, the farm, other projects, and plenty of lovely photos.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Mark Mantey, CEO



Nativity Play 8-Dec-21





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### **1. COVID-19 Update**

It has been a tough year, dealing with the challenges and restrictions brought to us by Covid-19. Every day, we thank God for giving us the strength to deal with these challenges, and we face each day with a happy, healthy heart.

We are delighted to report that all our residents at St. Clare's are now fully vaccinated, as is everyone working in our compound. Even with the vaccinations, we will continue our prevention measures as they have worked well. This is a step in the right direction towards a brighter future.

### **2. St. Elizabeth's Beach Day**

A trip was planned for the children of St. Elizabeth's, so we decided to take them to Coconut Grove in Elmina. The location is very suitable because it allows the children to enjoy the beach, a park, and a shallow swimming pool.

The morning of our field trip was filled with excitement and eagerness to get going. We started with a dance party to settle the children and release some built-up energy. Some of the children's favourite music was played, and we all danced together. They brought their best beach attire for the day.

We arrived at Coconut Grove after a short bus journey, and we assigned our staff and volunteers to their children for the day. Some of the kids were instant water babies, and others were naturally more cautious.

Nonetheless, we got everyone safely in and out of the pool. It was a joy to watch as some of the children appeared almost ready to burst with happiness. It was a very successful trip thanks to our staff and volunteers, who were all under the watchful eye of Sr. Pat. We will not hesitate to try organising a trip like this again.



Nativity Angels waiting in the wings



### **3. Sheltered Work Program**

New schedules were created and implemented, by three volunteers, for the older boys working in the compound. Josh monitored the situation, and things went well. The boys adjusted to the revised schedules and were pleased with the change of pace. Also, Sebastian worked closely with Dr. Mantey to arrange meetings with the boys' parents. The parent-centre relationship is vital, and we are happy to have resumed this journey

### **4. Sustainable Livelihood Project**

Mohammad, one of our older boys, has secured a full-time painting job. He's been working hard at St. Anne's Catholic School near Elmina and has more jobs lined up. We are delighted with this outcome. Mohammad is a good worker, deserves the opportunity, and is very happy with his new occupation.

### **5. St. Elizabeth's Nativity Play**

Major preparations were underway for many weeks as the season's highlight rapidly approached. Everyone had a great time on Dec-8th, and the play went off without a hitch.



Audience – Outdoors + Socially Distanced



Santa made a special appearance



Nativity Team

### **6. Client Protection Policy**

We are putting effort into clarifying and solidifying our client protection policies. We are also re-training our staff to ensure the best possible outcomes for all our clients.



Nativity Players

### **7. St. Joseph's New Beginnings**

St. Joseph's, as we know it, is undergoing big changes. We are preparing to transition Family Support to operate exclusively on an outreach basis. The residential aspect of our service will soon permanently cease. We are working diligently on a graduation plan for our two remaining residents, the twins, Michael and Miguel Akyerem. They are 18 years of age and recently completed Junior High School at St. Anne's Catholic School, Elmina.

### **8. Quads' New House in Moree Village**

The new house is coming along nicely. The blockwork is finished, and we are putting on the roof. The project is 90% funded by the Daughters of Mary & Joseph (DMJ). Sr. Gladys is the project manager with assistance from Dr. Mantey. The Quads are excited about this new development. We hope that

the house will be fully completed by the end of Dec-2021.

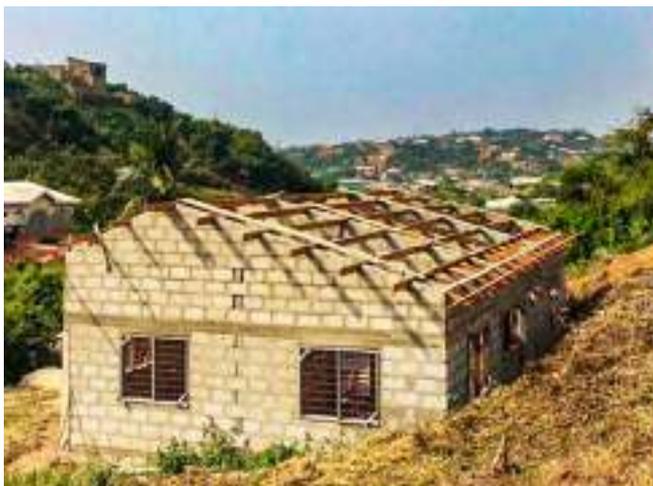


Michael & Miguel Akyerem – The Twins



Work in Progress – Front Elevation





Quad's New House in Moree Village

### **9. Farm Update**

Joe and his team are working on the farm every day. They start early and work as a team to ensure the work is done before the sun gets too hot.

We were delighted with our yield of tomatoes, watermelons, and maize. Also, the rows and rows of pepper plants are coming along very well.

Unfortunately, the Okra didn't do as well as expected because we didn't get the rains at the right time. Still, Joe and his team are delighted with the harvest and expect more to come.

### **10. Solar Power**

It's 33 months since the start-up of our solar power plant. We've generated 54,000 kWh, and our electricity costs are down more than 90%. In Nov-2020, we installed a 400-meter cable between St. Clare's and St. Joseph's to rebalance power usage and help us increase our savings.

We've run into a problem with ECG (Electricity Company Ghana) who want

to replace our existing analogue meters with new digital meters. We believe that these will not work as 'net-meters' and will seriously reduce the savings from our solar plant. Negotiations with ECG are ongoing.

### **11: Borehole Project:**

The plan is to install a new borehole with extraction, storage, distribution, and point-of-use water purification systems.

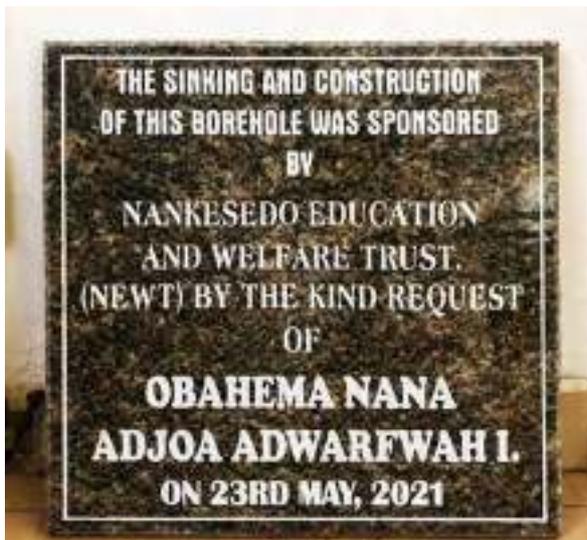
We'd like to have our own independent water supply, with the benefits of reliable, clean (potable) water and much reduced ongoing operating costs – GHS14,000 / €2,000 per year.

Mr. Appiah, our local water expert, surveyed our campus and identified a suitable borehole location.



Mr. Appiah identifying the borehole site

The Nankesedo Education & Welfare Trust (NEWT), Ghana, provided funding to drill the new borehole (see plaque below), and the Adjoa Foundation, Netherlands, also provided significant funding. We are still fundraising to complete the project.



NEWT Plaque

### **12. Other 2021 Projects**

We completed extensive road maintenance and repairs in Ahoto. We also significantly upgraded some of our main buildings, including roofs, walls, and gutters. Many of our facilities are more than 30 years old, and it was evident that some of them needed urgent attention. We were delighted to receive funding from the Adjoa Foundation to do this work.

### **13. Fundraising and Donations**

We continue to search for new funding sources to avoid over-reliance on our existing generous donors. There are always more deserving cases than there are funds available. If you'd like to donate in the UK, please use this link: <https://www.ahoto.org/support>.

For other donations, please use the Irish Friends of Ahotokurom (IFOA) account (see details below). IFOA is a registered charity with 'Tax Exemption Status,' which means your donations go even 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

### **14. Volunteers Corner:**

We were delighted to finally have volunteers back with us after a year's absence. The extra help enabled us to make good progress on many of the projects we've been planning for the past year.

A special mention must be given to the energy that the volunteers & interns have brought to PPRC. The joy that the St. Clare's residents show as they visit and sit and chat with them is fantastic. Strong bonds have been formed.

Let's also not forget the bonds that have been formed with the children of St. Elizabeth's. They scream with joy as they see the volunteers crossing the compound and hurry over to greet them.

The first to arrive were the three Irish ladies who showed up in early September. Laura, who has a background in education, has been a significant asset to our St. Elizabeth's team. She has had great success creating and implementing an education program for some of our older students. Anastasia and Emanuel





were delighted to have her here with them. Laura trained their teacher, Ebenezer, in her teaching strategies, so he can continue this work after she leaves.



Volunteers meeting the Chief of Abee

Laura and Ebenezer completed a home visit with Emanuel. They reported that it was very successful, with a positive relationship established with his mother.

Our next Irish volunteer, Sadhbh, worked exceptionally well with the residents in St. Clare's. She assisted many of our clients with their hospital visits and acted as the liaison between PPRC and the doctors. Her background in podiatry and social practice was a significant asset.

Niamh, the third Irish volunteer, has a background in sustainability and worked on ways for PPRC to become more environmentally aware. She designed and started implementing a sustainability plan for the centre. Invasive species and waste disposal issues are the top priorities. Niamh also assisted in the office and worked with

the other girls in St. Elizabeth's as we can never have enough help there.

From The Sisters of St. Joseph of Philadelphia, USA, Lisa started her year-long visit here with us recently. She specialises in IT and has big plans for us. She has fitted into the team exceptionally well.

Lisa's congregation is donating four laptops to be used in St. Elizabeth's, St. Clare's, Enyinnda Training Centre, and the main office. There's also another donation of a Samsung tablet. Lisa has been using this with the children in St. Elizabeth's, who have responded very positively to the educational applications.



Irish Volunteers at the Zimbabwe Match





Lisa also brought percussion instruments to St. Elizabeth's. The children are delighted with these, and Lisa runs music lessons each morning. Lisa's patience and kindness have been remarkable during her time in St. Elizabeth's, and we are looking forward to the impact she will have over the next year.

Three volunteers arrived from England several weeks after the Irish girls, and they quickly got engaged with the tasks we had waiting for them. Josh, Sebastian, and Sophie worked closely with our 'Sheltered Work Program' and were a great addition to the team.

You'll be glad to hear that it's not 'all work and no play' for our volunteers and interns. On Oct-9th, some of them attended an international soccer match in Cape Coast – Zimbabwe vs. Ghana. We're happy to report that Ghana won 3-1. On Nov-30th, we had a local football match between a team from Ahoto, including many volunteers, and a team from Kiful. Thankfully, Ahoto won the game.



Ticket for the Zimbabwe Match

**15. Winneba Student Interns**

Recently, seven Winneba students began their placements with PPRC. Their chosen courses are Community Based Rehabilitation and Disability Studies. They'll be with us for four months, and we are delighted to have them.

The students are residing at St. Joseph's and will be assisting in our outreach programs – working with the local communities in Kiful and Ntranoa on advocacy and fostering disability awareness.



Ahoto Team that beat the Kiful Team

Their outreach work also includes Enyinndakurom village. They had discussions with the people in Enyinnda and gave them several different options.

The people of Enyinnda conferred and concluded that they'd like help for their children with school studies and for the Homework Club to continue.

The Winneba students are also assisting in St. Elizabeth's, St. Clare's, and the Sheltered Work program.

