



# The Gateway

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## In this issue

### Building Project

- + Volunteers complete a two-unit classroom block in The Hills.....1

### Human Rights

- + Volunteers tour Old Fadama Slum.....2
- + Volunteers research on child prostitution in Teshie.....3

### Farming Project

- + Volunteer on our farming project.....4

### Dirty Day

- + Dirty Day at Ankaful Leprosy Camp.....5

### Medical Project

- + Medical Outreach in Winneba.....5
- + Nursing student Arian Bleker volunteers in Winneba.....6

### Social Media.....7



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**Building volunteers in The Hills has successfully completed a two-unit classroom block for Queen Esther Preparatory School - a needy school in The Hills.**

The project was started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2013 and was completed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2014 through the hard work, dedication and enthusiasm of over twenty building volunteers and staff. "There are a lot of children who need schools and classrooms to get an education. Projects Abroad is making a difference by helping these children here by providing schools," Jack Worthington from England, a building volunteer remarked.

The headmistress of the school, Madam Esther Ansah, expressed her gratitude for the additional classroom block that the volunteers have built for the school. She was happy that the school can now accommodate more children and thus, access to education for the children has been expanded.

A special dirty day activity was organized and other volunteers doing separate projects joined the building volunteers to paint the walls, windows and doors. They also drew and painted fruits, vegetables, animals, and the alphabets on the wall to make the environment child friendly.

Projects Abroad Coordinator for Akuapem Hills, Prince Bondzie, thanked the volunteers who worked on the building project for their hard work and determination. "It is through your effort that we have been able to put up a structure for the kids and on their behalf, and on behalf of Projects Abroad, I thank you."

Projects Abroad Ghana runs a non-profit building project for needy communities and schools in the Akuapem Hills and relies on the energies of volunteers who plan to make a change in Ghana through the building of schools and libraries and other structures to improve access to education in deprived communities.



## Volunteer with us!

Ghana is an exciting and popular place to spend some time on a volunteer project or work experience placement. Projects Abroad has many projects available to volunteer in Ghana, based in Accra, Cape Coast, Koforidua, Kumasi and the Akuapem Hills.

Volunteers in Ghana work on a wide range of projects including Teaching, Care, Community – including Building and IT Projects, Medical & Healthcare Projects – including Medicine, Physiotherapy, Nursing, Midwifery and Dentistry, plus Journalism, Veterinary Medicine, Sports, and Human Rights.

# Volunteers tour old Fadama slum

Volunteers from the Human Rights office embarked on a tour of the biggest slum in Ghana – the Old Fadama slums. The slum is a haven for both economic and criminal activities and our human rights project has come as an intermediary between legal issues and the people who live there.

Frederick Opoku, Executive Director of a women's empowerment local NGO based in the slum, took the volunteers around. They walked through narrow unplanned maze pathways in-between the shacks to experience first-hand how the people live their lives. People cooked on the paths, sell along the walkways, smoke and peddle illegal substances with impunity.

Gutters are filled with plastic waste and mud. They never seem to flow and they are adding up in monumental proportions by the day. Sheep and chicken share the same spaces with people in a manner that is risky to the health of both beast and human.

A volunteer was astonished by the number of animals she saw and wondered whether they are healthy or not. Frederick explained that the animals hardly get veterinary treatment and only a veterinarian can determine if the animals are healthy or not.

American volunteer Daniel Chase who had ever visited slums in Tanzania expressed his shock: "The scale of the sanitary condition and the garbage is shocking."

Frederick took the opportunity to talk about prospects in a waste management programme for the slum. He also announced a Container Clinic project which will be funded by GIZ, the German international development agency.

## Facts

### Population

- ✚ Around 80,000 men, women and children

### Economics

- ✚ Electronic waste dump and trade
- ✚ Yam trade
- ✚ Scrap trade

### Social

- ✚ Settlers are predominantly migrants from northern Ghana
- ✚ There are sub-chiefs for each northern tribe
- ✚ High crime rate
- ✚ Illegal drug use and peddling



Frederick Opoku showing the volunteers around the slum.

## Human Rights volunteers research on child prostitution

According to Ghana's law, prostitution or sex work is illegal, even for persons eighteen years or older. It is therefore a crime for anyone to engage in sex work. Adults engaged in prostitution may be least squeamish when one imagines how children, especially young girls by virtue of negative peer influence, poverty and illiteracy are sexually exploited.

Projects Abroad in partnership with the local authorities embarked on a fact finding mission in a community in Teshie that hosts one of the most popular brothels in the town.

The aim of the research is to gather accurate information on child prostitution in order to inform effective strategies and interventions

to rescue the girls involved and give them education, training and a sustainable livelihood.

The volunteers interviewed residents and people working in the area where the brothel is located. The National Commission on Civil

Education municipal director also participated in the research.

The research project has been embraced by both local and traditional authorities and the police in the municipality.



## Food of the Month



### Mashed Yam with Eggs

The local name for this cuisine is "Otor" or "Etor". Yam is boiled and mashed and mixed with palm oil to give it some taste and its yellow colour. Eggs and sometimes roasted peanuts are used for garnishing this indigenous dish. Otor is a festive food and many cultures in Ghana prepare the food on birthdays and other festivities.

We look forward to receiving volunteers who have a passion for working to realize the rights of children, women and vulnerable groups.

For more information visit our [website](#).

Join the [Human Rights Facebook Group](#) and interact with past and current volunteers

Projects Abroad Ghana offers a volunteering opportunity that is environmentally sustainable and it respects the indigenous culture of the community we work in.

In the village of Akokoa – a Projects Abroad adopted community in The Hills – we run a non-profit farming project that seeks to educate children on the essence of growing and consuming organic food as well as rearing livestock in an ethical and sustainable manner.

Volunteers, who work on the demonstration farm, take care of the farm animals and food crops. “Proceeds from the farm are given to needy households and orphanages in The Hills, free of charge,” Isaac Ohene Asare, our



farm coordinator explained.

Samuel Ashworth, from Ohio in the United States, is a recent graduate and is volunteering on the farming project and he explained why he chose the project: “I chose the farming project because I am interested in where and how to grow my food and I think it’s a lost art.” In The Hills, it’s a taboo to farm

on Wednesdays. Projects Abroad respects that culture and have found a useful option. One Wednesdays, we bring the farm to the classroom by educating the school children on the health benefits of fruits and vegetables and how they can be grown in a backyard garden.

## Weekend Trips? >>>

### Sajuna Beach Resort



Sajuna Beach Resort is a spectacular destination for a boat ride experience. The Resort is located in Kpong – a Ga-Adangme town – almost two-hour’s drive away from Accra. The resort has a swimming pool, wellness and fitness facilities and an unforgettable adventure through the natural flora sprouting along the Volta Lake on a boat. It is most ideal to travel in groups so you never get to be bored with strangers. Always make sure you keep your belongings safe all the time while you are there.

## Dirty Day at Ankaful Leprosy Camp

Volunteers in Cape Coast took a Friday off to visit the Ankaful Leprosy camp to “get dirty” in order to make the homes of the inmates clean. They packed the belongings of the inmates out of the rooms and dried them in the sun. The volunteers scrubbed, mobbed and washed. They painted the rooms green and repacked the inmates’ belongings. This is an exercise Projects Abroad in Cape Coast does on a regular basis.



Volunteers and staff with children in the camp pose for the cameras after cleaning and painting.



## Medical Outreach



Our medical team in our newest region Winneba, embarked on a medical outreach to the University Practice School. The volunteers, under the direction of our medical staff, treated ringworms, cuts, wounds and other skin infections affecting the children.

They also checked the blood pressure of the teachers of the school and advised them according. They encouraged them to do more physical activities and minimize their consumption of fatty foods.



Twenty two year old German nursing student, Arian Bleker, travels to Ghana to gain work experience at Winneba Municipal Hospital. As part of the nursing courses in Wannsee Schule, students are expected to go abroad to work in a hospital and this, Arian decided, was an opportunity to head to Africa – a continent he has longed cherished to travel to.

“I looked around. Africa interested me a lot and I chose Ghana because I looked through blogs and most people said Ghana has friendly people,” Arian recalled.

Projects Abroad runs a medical project in the town of Winneba for volunteers looking forward to learning medical practices in hospitals, as well as having the passion to help deprived communities through non-profit medical outreaches. Arian, aside from working in the hospital, went on medical outreaches with a team of volunteers and Projects Abroad medical staff to give basic medical assistance to children in the communities by treating their ringworms, wounds, cuts and other skin infections.

“The level of hygiene in German hospitals is higher than Ghanaian hospitals. I told the nurses how to make things better and they listen. I also learn a lot from them. It makes a huge difference in the end,” Arian remarked.

In Arians comparison, Projects Abroad has better equipment on the outreaches than the hospitals do and that the medical outreaches teach the children to know that it is important to treat wounds when they get them. These he believes is the difference that Projects Abroad is making in the town of Winneba.

Even as a nursing student, he won confidence from the staff in the hospital and was given a guided opportunity to perform intravenous insertions, as well as intramuscular injections aside checking vital signs,

taking blood samples and caring and dressing wounds.

“Ghana is very conservative, very religious. The people are very open and welcoming. They smile a lot. I haven’t had any bad experience while walking around.”

“I learnt how patients handle pain. I have learnt how people respond to treatments. Inserting IV lines are not done by nurses in Germany but I have been able to do that here,” Arian recounts the things he learnt.

Arian cautions future volunteers that they may have culture shocks but the biggest failure is to compare. “Just accept the situation. Help and make it better. Don’t be frustrated. Just help.”

“I love the people. They are open-hearted. I love the food – banku and the spices. I love the landscape in Winneba and the rest of Ghana. Beautiful beaches... Ghana has an adventurous nature.”

# Social Media

Our social media platforms remains a powerful tool that connects volunteers, friends and family of Projects Abroad though status updates, tweets, pictures, blogs and videos. Our Facebook groups were as active as always in providing information on volunteer experiences and that informs the expectations of volunteers who are coming to Ghana and prospective volunteers as well. Our different Facebook groups – [The Hills](#), [Koforidua](#), [Accra](#), [Cape Coast](#), [Kumasi](#) and the [Projects Abroad Human Rights Office](#) were active throughout the month of January.



## An opportunity to relive

For many of our volunteers, our social media platforms provide the opportunity to continuously relive the valuable moments they once had in Ghana and it becomes their space for expressing the heartwarming satisfaction they gained from volunteering to affect the lives of people in need.

Visit us:

