

# **CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT ANNUAL REPORT**

**1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022**



**Giving kids a brighter future**

**<https://childrenofthelightghana.org>**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission of Children of the Light (CotL) .....	3
Description of CotL .....	3
Our Vision .....	3
Our Achievements .....	4
CotL's Activities .....	5
The Team .....	11
Successes .....	12
Challenges .....	12
Planning Ahead .....	13
Acknowledgement .....	14
Message from the Founder.....	15
Contact .....	15



# Mission Statement

**Children of the Light (CotL) impacts young lives by providing creative, holistic, child-centred education in order to build lives that influence society.**

## Description of CotL

CotL is a dynamic organisation bringing education to life for numerous children and teenagers aged 5 to 17 years in Ghana, West Africa. It's educational program is unique in that it nurtures children in all areas of learning: Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, Environmental issues. Visual and Performing Arts. CotL meets with the children after-school, Saturdays and during the school holidays. A hot meal is served during the Saturday classes.



The children enjoy a lively educational experience which is conducted in a safe and non-threatening environment.

## Our Vision

- 1) To have a fully equipped, easily accessible learning centre that provides quality education to many children in Ghana.
- 2) To become an educational training resource provider in Ghana and create CotL branches of the organisation.



# Our Achievements

Through donations, CotL has built a Learning Centre in Ghana's Eastern region which was officially opened in August 2019. Although the centre is not fully complete, we have come a long way since construction started in 2009. A large playing field has been created and a variety of trees have been planted on the property. The construction of the front wall is also complete and in addition to the main building a storage room and additional washroom have been built.



Many of our past students have ventured onto higher education and careers and our current students continue to benefit with the program, acquiring a vast amount of knowledge and skills.

In October 2021, we opened our first branch of CotL in a remote village in Northern Ghana. We were given the use of a small building that needed repairs. The building consisted of two small rooms and a verandah. We restored the small building and filled one room with books, teaching resources and art and craft supplies. The second room is used for storage of our kitchen equipment. The small centre was officially opened on the 30th October 2021 by one of our senior staff and the village chief. It was a grand occasion, as this is the first library in the area. Classes at the branch are held every Saturday in the classrooms of the nearby public school. Over 100 children attend these classes. The branch has also taken part in our special programs. At this stage they have had a Mathematics Competition and participated in 'World Water Day', by cleaning the village and riverbank of plastic waste.





# Activities

## 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

### APRIL

#### 3 April (Easter Saturday)

The older students presented a short play to the younger students portraying the death and resurrection of Christ. All made Easter cards.



Throughout the month of April, the teachers helped the children create beautiful wildlife collages. The completed work was mounted on the bulletin boards inside the centre.



#### 22 April (Earth Day)

Tree seedlings were planted to celebrate 'Earth Day'.

#### 24 April (Save the Frogs Day)

The children learned the importance of frogs and their contribution to the ecosystem on 'Save the Frogs Day'. Posters and individual frog pictures were made.



#### 17 April to 3 May - Vacation Classes

The children participated in a variety of activities during this time, including road safety lessons.





## MAY

### **8 May**

The children prepared Mother's Day cards to give to their mother on Mother's Day.

### **29 May**

We held a Mathematics Competition. It comprised of algebra, measurements and speed drills for the older students and number recognition, addition and subtraction facts for the younger students. The competition was extremely competitive as all contestants were eager to win. The winners received great prizes which included solar lights from Tema International School—CAS Project, and all participants received a gift pack.



## JUNE

CotL's annual reading month took place in June the theme for 2021 was 'Brighten Your Mind—Read'

During this time we had a visit from teen author, L'amour Ansah and the After My kind team. L'amour is the author of the Effie series. This delightful collection is aimed to educate children about African Heritage and Culture.

We also had a visit from Grace Dorcas Annan. Grace came to read her beautiful book, 'Thick, Tall, Trees'. The book is dedicated to the magnificent Atewa Forest.

### **8 June (Green Ghana Day)**

We had an awesome visit from Azumah Nelson, Ghana's former Professional Boxer, Dave Harper, CEO of Geodrill, and Ama K. Abebrese, Ghanaian British Actress, who came to plant trees. This special occasion was in connection with Ghana's 2021 Green Ghana Project, to plant 5 million trees as a way of combating Climate Change.





# JULY

## **3 July**

An awards banquet was held to celebrate the month of reading. There were fabulous prizes, and all participants received a gift bag. Thank you to Shoprite, Accra Mall, a delicious meal was served and Claire Ansah from After My Kind for being the guest speaker.



## **17 and 18 July**

We took a different turn and organized a Mathematics Competition in two villages, Dibisi and Bulbia in the North East Region. A lot of work went into preparing the children prior to the big day. It was a great event. Great prizes were won which included the Unite to Light solar lights, donated by the Tema International School—CAS Project. Thank you to Shoprite, Top Choco and individual supporters. All 850 participants received school supplies and a chocolate treat.



# AUGUST

## **7 August**

We celebrated our 16th Anniversary. A cake and drinks were shared with the children to mark this grand occasion.



## **7 August to 5 September - Vacation Classes**

During this time, there was a focus on anti-bullying. The children also participated in a crochet workshop. This was led by Bernice Holale, a volunteer. There was also a session in which the children learned about road safety.





## SEPTEMBER

### 4 September

We held our annual Recycling Competition and Folktale Performance. To add to the fun the children enjoyed an awesome Art Workshop by Sarah King from Emefa Art Workshop. The children had a great time.



### 18 September (World Cleanup Day)

Every year in September, a Saturday is set aside to cleanup. We as an organisation do our best to take part in this global event. This year we had a great turnout, and a lot of plastic waste was picked from the Aburi Mountain. The plastic was sent on for recycling.

Let's put a stop to littering!

## OCTOBER

### 30 October

While the regular classes continued at our centre in the Eastern Region, there were numerous calls and messages preparing towards the opening our first branch in Dibisi, North East Region. The opening was a joyous occasion as CotL staff Patience Akunduo, and the Dibisi Chief, Chief Kpanaba cut the ribbon. This is the first and only library for miles and miles. The plan for the future is to build, but for now children will enjoy all that CotL has to offer.



## NOVEMBER

Regular classes took place. Now in two places Kitase, Eastern Region and Dibisi, North East Region.





## DECEMBER

### Colourful Hygiene Parcels to the Elderly

Every December we give out colourful parcels containing a washcloth and soap to the elderly. This year we not only gave to the elderly in Kitase, Eastern Region, we also shared with the aged in Dibisi, North East Region. In all the children gave out 200 parcels.



### 24 December

A Christmas party was held at the centre in Kitase for 125 children. This entire event was sponsored by Maiden En Agape, an NPO based in Accra. Delicious meals were eaten throughout the day, there was a short Christmas nativity performance, and all received a Christmas gift to take home.

Back in November, we were given a large donation of durable cups, bowls, and plates from CAS Projects at Tema International School. We decided to send this entire donation to our branch in the North East Region. With this acquisition, we thought to organise a Christmas Party for the children that attend our classes in the north. With a casual word out we received sponsorship from a dear friend of CotL, over 200 children plus the elderly enjoyed a delicious meal.

### 31 December

A last day party was held and visitors from Global Girls Rescue, an NPO based in the US joined the event. Global Girls Rescue talked with the girls about personal hygiene and other teenage topics. They donated drinks towards the party. A dance competition took place in the afternoon.





## JANUARY

The centre closed for 2 weeks in January

## FEBRUARY

Regular classes took place.

## MARCH

### **6 March (Independence Day)**

During this time the children each made a small Ghana flag.



### **22 March (World Water Day)**

To observe 'World Water Day' the children and staff cleaned the stream of plastic waste. After the clean-up, a hot meal was enjoyed. Later, a PowerPoint on water and ways to play a part in keeping our water bodies clean was presented. To end the day there was a quiz on water. The winners received t-shirts. Our branch in the North East, also took part in the clean-up exercise. They cleaned the village and riverbank of plastic waste and also enjoyed a cooked meal after the event.

## TEENAGE PROGRAM

A monthly Teens Program took place throughout the year this was led by Board Member, Paulett Opoku and Staff Member, Sarah Moxon. A number of topics were discussed including 'Teenage Pregnancy' and 'Alcohol and Drug Abuse'.



## STEET PROGRAM

Alongside the work at the centres, CotL visits a group of 20 to 40 street children in Accra twice a month. These visits include sharing a healthy meal, story time, crafts, literacy and numeracy lessons in which the children have the chance to draw and write.





# The Team

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

CotL is managed by a Board of Directors/ Management Committee. The Management Committee meets at least three times a year to discuss and make decisions on pertinent issues.

## STAFF

CotL has a staff of seven:

- Director/teacher (full-time)
- Four teachers (two full-time and two part-time)
- Two cooks (part-time) one prepares meals for the Saturday and special programs and the second prepares the refreshment at CotL's branch.



## VOLUNTEERS

We were fortunate during our calendar year to complement staffing with the help of some wonderful volunteers. All our volunteers are required to fill and application form and read and sign our 'Child Protection Code of Conduct'. Volunteers are an immense support in all areas of the organisation.



## CHILDREN

This year we had 70 children including teenagers registered in our program in Kitase, Eastern Region and we worked with over 100 children at our branch in the North East Region. On each visit to the street children we worked with close to 40 children.



# SUCSESSES

- The on-going programs continue to be enjoyable and beneficial to those involved
- We continue to serve a hot meal at the Saturday classes
- We have opened the 1st branch of CotL in a remote village in Northern Ghana
- We had a flow of volunteers throughout the year
- Through a donation of 550 solar lights and 48 solar power banks we have been able to provide lights and chargers to many living without electricity
- Through a donation of 330 upcycled shoulder bags we have been able to provide many children with a school bag
- We continue a bi-monthly program that is helping a large group of street children
- The teens program continues to empower those who attend
- Our composting area continues to be of great benefit for the garden and continues to show the children how organic waste breaks down to fertile rich black soil when separated.



# CHALLENGES

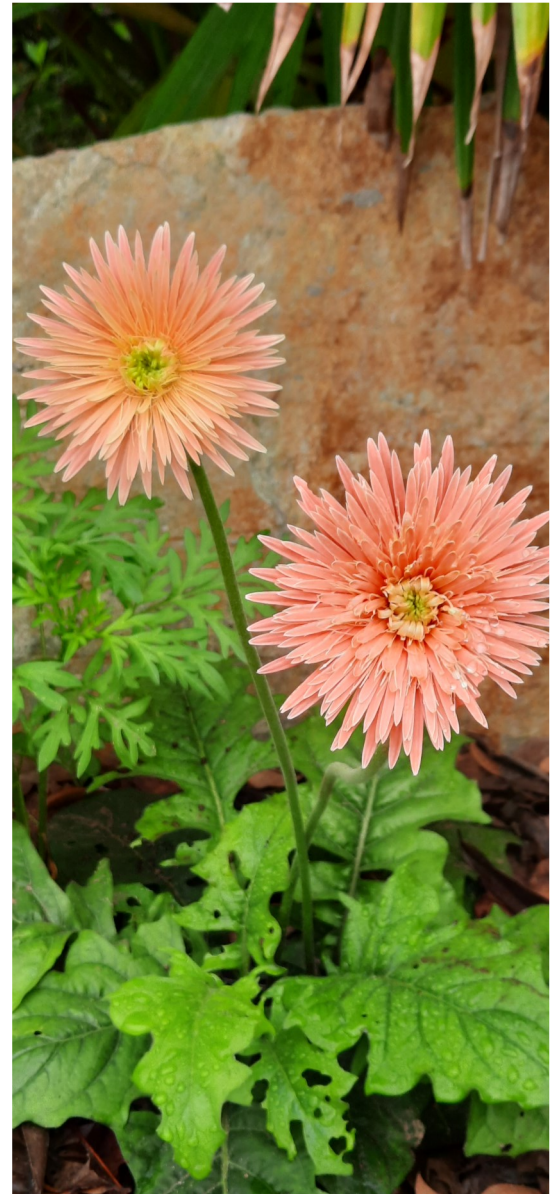
- In November 2021 we had a heavy storm, the solar was damaged, a polytank crashed down from the water tower, parts of the ceiling came down on the verandah and our tallest tree at the bottom of the land fell onto the lower sports area. The top of another large tree broke through the fall. It took months for all to be cleared for the children to have access to play sports again.
- Road access to the centre continues to be a challenge, however the bridge close to the land has been constructed. The major task was completed by a church in the area.
- Near the end of 2021, we noticed the borehole water was changing colour after going through filters. Through testing, we learned that extra filters would be needed.
- The primary vehicle for CotL is an old 2010 Toyota pickup that can no longer go on long journeys.





# Planning Ahead

- Build up our monthly donor support to help us with the monthly operational costs, special programs and our bi-monthly visits to the street children.
- Complete the entire Learning Centre (Headquarters of CotL) in the Eastern Region
  - 1. To have a fixed and stable solution to our on-going electrical issues*
  - 2. Add an additional filtering system to our water supply*
  - 3. Secure the grounds with a fence and gate*
  - 4. Complete the landscaping work on the grounds and grow more fruit trees, vegetables and flowers*
  - 5. Purchase additional classroom furniture and IT equipment*
- Upgrade the primary vehicle
- Purchase a bus for transporting the children
- Build a library and living quarters at our branch in Northern Ghana



# Acknowledgment

- THE HAZEL DICK TRUST, NEW ZEALAND
- HOSANNA TRUST FOUNDATION, NEW ZEALAND
- TEMA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - CAS PROJECTS, GHANA
- TEMA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - UNITE TO LIGHT, GHANA
- GEODRILL GHANA LIMITED, GHANA
- TOP CHOCO, GHANA
- PFC AUDITING SERVICES LIMITED, GHANA
- SHOPRITE, GHANA
- WHERE THE WIND TAKES ME, GHANA
- BEADS FOR A REASON, GHANA
- WOMEN OF ALEXANDER, GHANA
- EXTRA MILE WEST AFRICA, GHANA
- ENQUIRY AGENCY, GHANA
- AFTER MY KIND, GHANA
- A ROCHA, GHANA
- MAIDEN EN AGAPE, GHANA
- MEDITRAIN, NEW ZEALAND
- REUSABLE BAGS, GHANA
- GRACIE GRACE READS, GHANA
- GLOBAL GIRLS RESCUE, USA
- RAINCOAT, GHANA
- AND ALL INDIVIDUAL COTL SUPPPORTERS





# Message from the Founder

It has been a wonderful year for CotL and this is all thanks to our precious donors, staff and volunteers. It is through their kindness and commitment to us that we are able to continue serving the many children we work with. May God richly bless them all.

*Jeanette Brown Opoku*



## Contact



**P.O. Box BR 143,  
Aburi, Eastern Region,  
Ghana, West Africa.**

**[info@childrenofthelightghana.org](mailto:info@childrenofthelightghana.org)**

**<https://childrenofthelightghana.org>**

**+233 24 205 5897/24 991 3887**

