

CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023



Giving kids a brighter future

<https://childrenofthelightghana.org>

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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 that brings 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, on Saturdays, and during school holidays. Additionally, a hot meal is served during 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.

As of the end of March 2023, we had invested in a 10,000 Litre polytank for rainwater collection, and construction of the platform for it was underway. Our borehole is now primarily used for construction purposes since the removal of minerals proved to be too expensive.

The 1.316 acres of land owned by the organisation has undergone significant changes. A large area has been cleared and grassed, with numerous trees, including fruit trees, being planted. The field has been restored to its previous state following the incident of the fallen tree last year. Additionally, we have designated areas on the land for gardens and vegetable farming. Our composting areas continue to be of great benefit for the garden, showing the children how organic waste breaks down into fertile, rich black soil when properly separated. We frequently collect substantial amounts of organic waste from the fruit and vegetable sellers in the village.



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.



The branch of CotL that opened in October 2021 continues to thrive. We are now providing quality education to six groups of children, meeting them on different days and times of the week. Two groups of Fulani children are also part of these groups. Our Director and another staff member have made numerous visits to support the full-time staff member working there. Additionally, the branch actively participates in special programs, including World Water Day, Mathematics Competition and World Cleanup day. Furthermore, they also engage in the annual tradition of giving colourful parcels to the elderly.

Alongside our work at the center, CotL continued its street program, meeting 20 to 40 street children in Accra twice a month. However, as we are now working with many more children in Northern Ghana, the street program was discontinued in February 2023.



1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Weekly classes were ongoing at the Children of the Light Learning centre in Kitase and at our branch in Northern Ghana.

Special Programs throughout the year

APRIL 2022

Easter Saturday - 16th April

The Easter Activities this year included the Easter message and crafts.

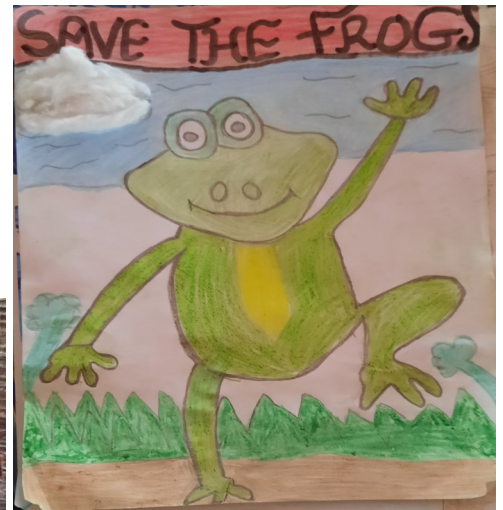


Earth Day - 22nd April

We held a session of tree planting at the Learning Centre in Kitase and in Dibisi, where our branch is located in Northern Ghana.

Save the Frogs Day - 30th April

The children learnt about these wonderful amphibians and made cool frog posters.



MAY 2022

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



JUNE 2022

'Annual Reading Month' – Theme: I love to READ! Throughout the month, the children attending classes at the Learning Centre in Kitase read as many books as possible. They were grouped according to their reading levels, and all the pages they read were recorded.



JULY 2022

An 'Awards Banquet' for the month of reading was held on 2nd July at the Learning Centre. All enjoyed a delicious meal, The winners received great prizes and all participants took home a gift pack.



Also in July, we held a 'Mathematics Competition' at our branch in Northern Ghana. This was the second time we had organised this competition in the North. The children performed incredibly well due to an immense amount of preparation prior to the event.



AUGUST 2022

We held a 'Mathematics Competition' at the Learning Centre in Kitase and on 7th August we celebrated our 17th Anniversary with cake and drinks.



SEPTEMBER 2022

It was 'World Cleanup Day' on 17th September. We joined this global event and collected plastic waste in Kitase, E/R & Dibisi, NE/R. A lot of what was collected was sent on for recycling. All the children enjoyed a hot meal after the event.



On 24th September, a 'Folktale, Recycling Competition, Art display, and Art Workshop' event took place at the Learning Centre. On that day, we had a delightful visit from Surama King, the Project Coordinator of Tema International school, and 20 students who helped set up amazing workshops.



OCTOBER 2022



We held a ‘Sports Day’ in October on the Children of the Light field and we also celebrated ‘One-Year Anniversary’ at our branch in Northern Ghana. At both events, the children enjoyed a refreshment.



NOVEMBER 2022

This month we held a Career Day: The children had fun dressing up in a variety of clothing to represent a profession. We had a guest speaker, CEO Miriam Koranteng, from Enquiry Agency in Accra, come along and share with the children the different career paths that they can one day pursue.



In November, we also held a Water Sachet Competition, and the two students who collected the most sachets received water sachet school bags we received from

Trashy Bays in Accra.

DECEMBER 2022

We held a Christmas performance on Sunday, 24th December. The children presented the story of Jesus’ birth, and we even had a little baby to represent Jesus. The children enjoyed a meal, drinks, and each went home with a Christmas gift.



Once again we distributed colourful hygiene to the elderly in Kitase, E/R and also in Dibisi, NE/R, totally 200 parcels given. Additionally, we provided hygiene parcels and flip-flops to the children we were working with on the street.

On Saturday, 31st December we held a ‘Last Day Party’.



JANUARY 2023

The centre closed for 2 weeks in January. Classes resumed in the 3rd week of January.

FEBRUARY 2023

The children prepared projects on prominent Black people for 'Black History Month.'

MARCH 2023

We sent a humble support to Turkey's earthquake victims: 100 colourful hygiene parcels inside an upcycled shopping bag, each printed with 'There is always hope.'



'World Water Day' was held on Wednesday, 22nd March. CotL organised a cleanup event near water bodies in Kitase, E/R and in Dibisi, NE/R.

JOURNEYS TO OUR NORTHERN GHANA BRANCH: April 2022 to March 2023

- In May 2022, for two weeks, Patience (CotL staff) and Jeanette (CotL Founder) set off on a journey to CotL's branch in Dibisi, North East Region. They carried numerous items including the Unite to Light solar lights that CotL received from Tema International School (TIS) - CAS Project.
- In July 2022, for two weeks, Jeanette headed North once again. This time she travelled alone, meeting up with the team in the North to assist in two Mathematics Competitions.
- January 2023, for two weeks, Jeanette and her son Kwadjo visited Dibisi, NE/R, in January. During this visit the plan was developed for the full-time teaching position for Silas Azong (CotL staff)

A JOURNEY FROM OUR NORTHERN GHANA BRANCH TO OUR LEARNING CENTRE IN THE EASTERN REGION: April 2022 to March 2023

- In October 2022, for two weeks, Silas Azong, visited the Learning Centre in Kitase for training.



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 four:

- Director/teacher (full-time)
- Three full-time teachers
- Two cooks (part-time) one prepares meals for the Saturday classes 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 close to 50 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 healthy snacks and meals to all the children we work with.
- Our first branch of CotL continues to thrive and we are now working with six groups of children.
- We have been able to continue a bi-monthly programs that are helping a large group of street children
- The teens program continues to empower those who attend
- We had a flow of volunteers throughout the year
- Through a donation we now have a seven seater vehicle that can be used for long trips
- Through a donation of 600 solar lights and 48 we have been able to provide lights to many living without electricity
- Through a donation we now have all the doors at the Learning Centre and have invested in a 10,000 Litre polytank
- 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.
- Road access to the centre has vastly improved



CHALLENGES

- The solar batteries at the Learning Centre need upgrading because the lights go off once the sun goes down. Due to the weak batteries, the photocopy machine, fans, iron, and electric jug cannot be used.
- The entire center needs to be fenced with a wall to secure the land, ensure the safety of those who live there, and prevent thieves from stealing our farm produce.
- We only have only one laptop, which is used for all administrative tasks. A second laptop is needed for the CotL staff to assist in preparing lessons for the students.



Planning Ahead

- Build up our monthly donor support to help us with the monthly operational costs, special programs and our ongoing work in Northern Ghana.
- Complete the entire Learning Centre in the Eastern Region



1. To upgrade the solar batteries for the photocopier machine to be used and lights and gadgets to be used through the night.

2. Complete two concrete platforms that have been constructed to hold larger polytanks for water storage

3. Completely secure the grounds with a fence wall

4. Complete the landscaping work on the grounds and grow more fruit trees, vegetables and flowers

5. Purchase additional classroom furniture and IT equipment

- Build a library and living quarters at our branch in Northern Ghana



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- HOSANNA TRUST FOUNDATION, NEW ZEALAND
- THE HAZEL DICK TRUST, NEW ZEALAND
- TEMA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - CAS PROJECTS, GHANA
- WOFORO, USA
- TOP CHOCO, GHANA
- GEODRILL GHANA LIMITED, GHANA
- ADMINTELECOM GHANA LIMITED
- PFC AUDITING SERVICES, GHANA
- BEADS FOR A REASON, GHANA
- ASANTEWAS CREATIONS, NEW ZEALAND
- AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, GHANA
- GHANACENTRIC, GHANA
- GLOBAL GIRLS RESCUE, USA
- LYNAMPS PLASTIC, GHANA
- ENQUIRY AGENCY, GHANA
- SHOPRITE, GHANA
- SHILLON VISA, GHANA
- HOMELAND GHANA, UK
- PLASTIC PUNCH, GHANA
- REUSABLE BAGS, GHANA
- FAYTEX, GHANA
- GRACIE GRACE READS, GHANA
- TRASHY BAGS, GHANA
- EXTRA MILE WEST AFRICA, GHANA
- AND ALL INDIVIDUAL COTL SUPPPORTERS



THANK YOU, MAY GOD RICHLY BLESS YOU!



Message from the Founder

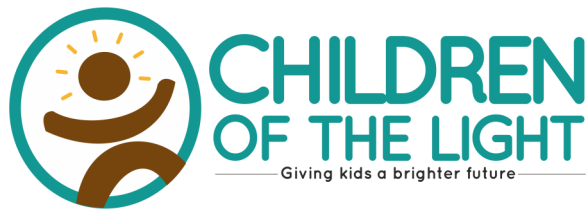
It has been another wonderful year for CotL and this is all thanks to our precious donors, staff and volunteers. It is through their kindness and commitment to us that we are able to continue serving the many children we work with.

May God richly bless them all.

Jeanette Brown Opoku



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