

ANNUAL REPORT

SSFA ACTIVITIES, 2018

Introduction

Established as a foundation in the Netherlands in 2006, Stepping Stones for Africa (SSFA) is a charity organization focused on grassroots development in West Africa. We work together with community-based associations to achieve their development objectives. To be more effective in the Ghanaian context, in August 2016 Stepping Stones for Africa was formally registered as an NGO in Ghana.

Our vision: empowering communities

In West Africa, we see many communities lacking necessities like healthcare, clean water or sustainable ways of making a living. Despite being mostly well organized socially, these communities are often not capable of making significant changes by themselves to improve the quality of life.

Our vision is to empower these communities to lead their development and improve the living conditions of their inhabitants, through small-scale projects that are initiated and sustained by the community itself or its leaders, and not imposed by others. SSFA wants to provide capacity building to fuel these community-initiated projects and make them a success.

Our mission: providing stepping stones

Our mission is to provide stepping stones such as guidance, expertise, inspiration and funding for development initiatives by communities in West Africa. We want to empower communities to lead their development and reach their goals through participatory approaches, and thereby significantly improve the quality of life of its inhabitants, while respecting the environment.

Administration Ghana branch

The priorities for 2018, was based on the SSFA midterm strategy of 2016-19. The main focus of activities was Atsiekpoe Battor in the North Tongu District and Liati Wote in the Afadzato South District. The two communities are in the Volta region. For Atsiekpoe, the focus was to complete the super structure of the clinic for which the making of the bricks were completed in 2017. The intention for Liati Wote was to complete the needs assessment and prioritization process.

In May, Mr Wisdom Kpegba was brought on board to work on the renewal of our registration with the Registrar General and the Department of Social Welfare. His role was to help the foundation in auditing our accounts, annual reports and renewal of licence in Ghana. Accordingly, ASKE Synergy Consult, a registered accounting firm was engaged as the official external auditor for the foundation in Ghana. The 2016 and 2017 accounts were successfully audited, and our licence renewed in Ghana.

Projects

The Atsiekpoe Green Clinic

On May 1, materials for making the door and window frames were bought and delivered at Atsiekpoe. Within a month, the wood was treated, and all the door and window frames made at low cost by two carpenters from the community. The local steel benders also gave their services at a low cost.

The building of the walls began on May 30, 2018. The community engaged in voluntary work fetching water and sand. In course of building the walls the masons advised we convert part of the front veranda into a room as the veranda is quite long and broad. In addition, part of the waiting hall could also be converted into a room. This advice was discussed with the project committee and it was accepted as we do not have many rooms but large spaces in the original plan. So, we now have two extra rooms that could be utilised as recovery rooms for patients. On July 17, 2018, the walls of the Green Clinic were completed. On September 18, 2018, the District Engineer and his inspection team visited the project site to inspect work done and accordingly approved the work. They also commended the introduction of a new building technology, with the interlocking bricks, into the area. As part of their support and appreciation of the community initiative, the Battor District Assembly waived half the cost of the building permit.

Direct Project Costs up to Date

NO.	PHASE DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST (GHC)
1.	Foundation	25,140.00
2.	Bricks Machine and bricks making	30,117.50
3.	Raising walls and fixing doors/window frames	20,737.50*
4.	Cost of materials for roofing frame	13,550.00*
	TOTAL	89,545.00

*Project cost for 2018

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The mason laying the first course of bricks



Front view of the clinic

INSPIRING STEPS TO MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE

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The District Engineer (holding the sheet of paper) on inspection.



Stakeholders from the Vome Electoral Area, District Assembly and Health Directorate

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Fundraising

SSFA engaged in a three-pronged tactics to raise funds for its activities:

- SSFA used internet crowdfunding in The Netherlands. It also used its website and social media (Facebook) solicited funds from philanthropists and voluntary organizations.
- SSFA raised funds among travellers of our affiliate partner, Jolinaiko Eco Tours, locally.
- SSFA worked closely with and encouraged the Atsiekpoe community to raise their own funds towards the project besides doing community labour. A mini harvest was held on September 15. The annual major fund raising is planned for December 29, 2018 to raise an amount of twenty thousand Ghana cedis (GHC20,000) for the roofing sheets to complete the superstructure.

Community Engagement

Atsiekpoe Community

As the main project site currently, SSFA engages with the Atsiekpoe community on a continues basis to monitor, evaluate, resolve project related conflicts and re-strategize on how to accomplish our goals. We spearheaded the reconstitution of the project committee as most of the previous committee had either travelled or relocated elsewhere.

Green Clinic Stakeholder Meeting

SSFA organized a stakeholder meeting for all the leaders of the communities in the Vome Electoral Area on Wednesday, November 21, 2018 at the Vome Schools Compound. The aim of the meeting was to introduce the clinic project to the other communities and get them involved. All the 11 chiefs in the area attended the meeting with their elders, queen mothers, women representatives and opinion leaders. There were two officials each from the Battor District Assembly and District Health Directorate. A total of 48 people excluding officials from SSFA attended the meeting. At the end of the meeting, the people agreed to come together to complete the project on time so that they can start to tackle other common problems facing them for example the absence of good drinking water due to the pollution of the Volta river from which they directly drink.

Action Points from the meeting:

1. Formation of a joint Community Health Management Committee.
2. Fundraising event involving all communities in the shortest possible time.



Clinic Stakeholder Meeting with communities in the Vome Electoral Area

Towards roofing the building

With the building completed, our next agenda is to get it roofed before the rains start again next year. We have bought all the wood and nails needed for the roofing framework and ceiling joints. Our next target is to raise funds for the cost of the roofing sheets and carpentry costs. The people of Atsiekpoe have already fixed December 29, 2018 for the annual fundraising for the clinic.

Liati Wote

Social Mapping in Liati Wote

On August 3, 2017, SSFA organized another community engagement. This was the third stage in the process of identifying the prime area of concern facing the Liati Wote community and to find ways of resolving it. The purpose of this community engagement was to undertake needs assessment and prioritization to ensure effective planning and implementation of community development projects. Tourism development and management was identified as the prime area of concern. Accordingly, an eight-member committee was appointed to review the needs of the community in relation to the tourism constitution to aid a proper needs prioritization and development project selection. This process was stalled as a result of disagreements on how to proceed with the social mapping process. Several interventions by SSFA to resolve issues failed. As

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a result, the board decided to freeze all actions on Liati Wote until the issues are resolved by the community.



Drawing the Liati Wote community social map for development

Krobo Dipo Rites and Reproductive Health Education for the Initiates

SSFA attended the 2018 Dipo rites festival of the people of Krobo Odumase in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The dipo rite is an initiation ceremony for young girls ushering them into womanhood. It was apparent that no reproductive health education is being given to the girls although they are likely to be sexually active following the Dipo ritual. SSFA therefore made a proposal to the chiefs and elders for collaboration to involve SSFA to begin offering reproductive health education to the initiates. Talks are still going on concerning the modalities for the collaboration and how to make it more beneficial to the wider group of the Krobo land.

Internship

We had one intern, Lena Sene Hemmink, a student in International Development Management at Van Hall Larenstein, University of applied sciences in Velp, The Netherlands.

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