

The Community Health Project in Atsiekpoe
Focused Group Discussion on Building Procedure
Atsiekpoe Community and Stepping Stones for Africa Foundation
9 July 2015

REPORT OUTLINE

Composition of stakeholders at the meeting

Purpose of Meeting

Detailed discussion during the meeting

Summary of vital points

Conclusion

COMPOSITION OF STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT AT THE MEETING.

- Community Stakeholders
 - ❖ Chief and some selected elders
 - ❖ Youth representatives
 - ❖ Members of the Community Action Group for Development
 - ❖ Women representatives
 - ❖ Some few skilled workers
- A team of Stepping Stones for Africa (Board members and intern)
- A building constructor specialized in interlocking bricks (Mr. Justice Donne)
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PURPOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was a continuation of an earlier meeting with the community and Stepping Stones for African the previous day. The meeting was to continue deliberations on the plan for the community's project of a community clinic and a housing facility for the health workers. The meeting was to look at the details with respect to the plan of the building which entails the type of building materials to be used, the costing of the building, sources of labor, land and the general issues linked to the achievement of this development project.

DETAILED DISCUSSION DURING THE MEETING

The meeting started with Mr. Justice the construction engineer explaining further a new brick concept introduced to the community in the previous meeting. He suggested the establishment of a workshop in the community to produce this brick for the construction work and encouraged the participation of both male and female in the endeavor. He pointed out that if the production can be done in the community, it will serve as a source of livelihood to participants as the concept is new to the locality. He proceeded with the details of the construction by asking the sources of labor the community will like to employ in the construction work which will begin with the preparation of the land. ***A community member suggested communal labor, since the project is community driven in the land preparation process.*** Mr. Justice proceeded to ask if there were masons in the community who can follow the plan of the building to layout it out. ***The response was yes and will equally be done voluntarily.***

In continuation on the building project Mr. Justice said the foundation trenches will be about 600 feet and 18 inches deep and asked if the land is a soft, rocky or a gravel type? ***The response was that the land is a soft one. The chief contributed by stating that the community was prepared to dig the holes themselves and later find some small token for the workers*** when they were asked how the foundation works was going to be done. ***Another contribution came in when someone suggested the workers on the project are paid half the total cost involved since that is the usual***

thing done in the community where owners of buildings have to pay for such services. He explained his point by stating that mostly if it's not done this way, the work later becomes the burden of very few committed people.

The president of Stepping Stones for Africa (Mrs. Cindy) came in at a point and suggested that the project should be made to thrive with the idea of communal labor since that could be the contribution of the community towards the building, especially the activities that require general labor. Mr. Justice added that there may be small token given out to workers at the end of their work to motivate and induce more commitment for further works.

After the foundation work was done, there will be a need for steel burners to do some steel works even though the steel works involved using this type of brick is less. ***The community agreed to do the steel works also on voluntary basis.*** Mr. Justice pointed out that there will equally be the need for carpentry works especially for the frames, the scaffold, ceiling and plumbers. ***The response from the community was that there were no plumbers in the community to help with that therefore there will be the need for experts from outside the community.***

In furtherance of the project and community development, Mr. Justice suggested bringing along two expert masons from Accra to help the local masons in doing the work. It will equally be an opportunity for the locals to learn and upgrade their skills so they can continue with the work in their absence as he stated. Mrs Cindy equally shares this view.

The chief suggested that, in terms of the carpentry works expert carpenters should be brought down as well to help with the projects. He further stated that he believes they can get most of the materials from the village for the brick molding therefore will like to know if they should start looking out for the materials or wait for the work to begin?

In response to this question Mr. Justice said the search for materials will depend on the time frame of the project therefore it will be prudent to start the search for materials when their certain on the time frame for the commencement of the project.

Mrs Cindy came in with some few comments as she stated that, they all have to be realistic with the project. She pointed out that there is much work to be done with regards to planning since they were yet to submit the plan to the district office and also raise funds for the project, and search for equipment if the community decide to use the brick concept.

She asked if there is an official community base organization with a bank account to help with the raising of funds. ***The response was that, there is a community base organization which is the youth group.*** With respect to funds Mr. Justice suggested that a picture view of the plan should be printed out and posted at very vantage points in the community so that the youth group can start raising funds locally to support the project.

SUMMARY OF VITAL POINTS

From the meeting it was agreed upon by the community to do a lot of communal labor to assist the project and this assistance are in the areas of; land preparation, foundation laying, the brick work and steel works.

The community was equally to learn the skills involved in the production of the brick, produce it for the project and make it a source of livelihood.

The community also agreed to give out the land for the project.

Community fund raising was equally agreed upon.

Printing out of the plan for the project and placing them at vantage points to raise funds was suggested.

A research into resources of the community such as the sea shells for revenue generation was also suggested.

Cindy caution that, the community should not be disappointed if the project does not start soonest but be hopeful, play their role and be committed to the cause. She believes that by the end of the year all things being equal they will start.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the meeting was a fruitful one which gave the project a much more solid sketch as the community now has the in-depth view about what exactly will be required of them and how they were going to get it done. Another meeting was schedule for the end of the month of July.