

A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

CHILDREN OF THE STREET

ACCRA- GHANA

Introduction:

In 1992, CAS started its journey to get to know the children who were living on the streets of Accra- Ghana. It has been a real journey because we discovered that different kinds of children are living there and their character and mentality changes according to the circumstances prevailing.

Children in the street are human beings who adapt themselves. The children of 1992 are completely different from the children of today.

These changes are described in this story. CAS as an organisation had to adapt its approach on several occasions to remain effective.

The Rights of the child feature in all our approaches.

The first letters were written on typewriters; later, a desktop computer was used. This was replaced by laptops. This particular story has been adapted so that it can be read on an Ereader or a tablet.

CAS was among the earlier organisations who used a mobile phone. The first mobile phones were very large. Presently, these phones are very cheap and also used by street children. This illustrates that times are changing. Children communicate using these phones. Several are abreast with the use of computers. They have pages on face book and often use the chat programs.

The lives of the street children also changes constantly. For instance, the food sold in the markets some years ago was very expensive and the children could not afford to buy it. Nowadays cookies and cakes are sold often bought by the children themselves which are affordable for them. Of course these are not replacing meals but the children have something to eat.

We discovered that the borderlines between Urban poor children, those born on the streets and the migrant children cannot be easily discerned. A street girl with a baby who lives in a kiosk could be a migrant child or an urban poor child. The mother is not born on the street but her baby is although they live in a kiosk.

The question is: "does it matter". It is definitely a person who is deprived of many things.

It has become clear to CAS that the main reason why children are on the street is because of family breakdown. Many additional reasons could be related to this main reason. Therefore, we encourage churches and the organisation to spend more time on family counselling. Churches should have more attention to families who are in difficulty.

We also call on the media to use their means to strengthen family lives. The media could educate the young people on these issues and we are sure that eventually the number of street children will decrease.

The issue asked for a collective and holistic approach. We, workers of CAS will support all efforts.


 Bro. Jos van Dinther
 (Director CAS)

We have passed the first quarter of the year, so it is time to give you an update about CAS. This year we have a number of new activities, which are in effect Experiments, namely:

- The street corner education programme,
- Sports training programme in collaboration with the British Council.
- The Play Up programme,
- Computer centre for street children.

We would like to start by giving you more information about the continuous data collection. Street children, who visit the House of Refuge regularly, are registered. This registration started in 1993 and at this moment we have 2385 boys and 812 girls registered. 294 boys and 192 girls are or have been in sponsorship. In this new House of Refuge, at Lartebiokorshie, we are experiencing a change in the number and kind of children who visit us daily. The number of boys is steadily increasing contrary to the number of girls, which is decreasing. The age group has also changed. Younger children are coming. Our approach to our programmes has to change because of this. We have also tried to find out why the girls do not want to come. One of the reasons is related to their way of movement in town. Girls always move in groups for protection and companionship. These groups have a leader. We are still studying the hierarchy of these groups and we hope to be able to report on this later. The leadership has to agree that the girls



visit the Refuge and that the girls can go to a workshop to learn a trade. We are discussing how best we can improve the House of Refuge to make it more attractive for girls. To make the statistics complete, we add the result of the continuous headcount of street children in the city.



Total number of Street children counted – May 2001	=	17,290
Number of boys	=	9,794
Number of girls	=	7,496
Number of boys registered	=	2,387
Number of girls registered	=	779

Number of boys on sponsorship	=	294
Number of girls on sponsorship	=	192

SPONSORSHIP

During this period, May- June a number of street children will complete their three-year training. We have 180 children in the scheme, but quite a number are in the preparation stage. This preparation is done at the House of Refuge, but also at Hopeland training centre. Daily children follow classes and are involved in other activities organised for them. It is difficult to say how long this preparation lasts. It all depends on the children themselves. Some are determined to leave the street, others have not yet decided. It is difficult to interest the very young children in education. Sports, games, videos and the computers

are their main interest. Most of our staff have learnt to be very patient and give the children time to decide.

The children who were at Hopeland will all start their training in various workshops and “new children” will take their place. Shortly, we intend to send 16 children to Hopeland. We do it in stages because it involves many things.

It is also interesting that a number of older children we know are visiting the Refuge again. One or two express regret that they did not go for training during the time it was offered to them. Some want still to go but we are hesitant.

They are too old to go to formal education and we doubt whether they will be able to persevere in a workshop.

STREET CORNER EDUCATION.

The above-mentioned statistics of CAS show that most of the children are in the streets. Therefore Fieldwork remains our main activity. Most street children do not visit the House of Refuge and we want to educate them as well. Some years ago we decided to expand the educational activities and prepare for education in the streets. This is a very difficult exercise, moreover nobody can tell us how to do it. The plan is to advise and educate street children in the streets when they are resting



in the places where they rest accepting the noise and hustle and bustle of the streets. Can it be done?

First of all, we have to believe it ourselves. We should be convinced that it could be done. We need time to plan and prove it. We have started with health education. Margaretha Ubels, a nurse who worked for CAS as a volunteer has studied the existing programmes of NGOs, Ministries and organisations. She drafted some lessons and made teaching aids. We met with our sister NGOs and gathered more ideas. The lessons were tested at Hopeland training centre and in the House of Refuge. The field staff went through some training sessions, and now we have moved to the streets.

Better said, not to the real street as yet. The field staff are experimenting in the Mini refuges and meeting points we have established. The results are encouraging, but a lot has still to be done. The teaching takes place in selected areas of town, at Nkrumah Circle, at Kaneshie, Agbogbloshie, Darkuman, Ashaiman and Nungua.

Bro. Patrick, our follow-up coordinator is following training sessions with CARE International. CARE wants to introduce savings schemes for deprived groups.

We are happy to join them because this plan has been with us right from the beginning of CAS. We hope that this kind of training can be added to the street corner education programme so that many groups can benefit from it. In our next newsletter we will explain more about this CARE programme. An additional wish is to prepare literacy lessons in a similar manner to be given at the street corners as well. We realise that it will take years before this street corner education programme will get a definite shape and place as one of our main activities.

SPORTS AND PLAY-UP PROGRAMME.

Sports has been one of the activities of CAS because many children are interested in it. Besides the indoor games, the children play table tennis, basketball, volleyball and soccer. Many can be done in the courtyard except soccer, which is done at the school sports field behind the refuge. At Hopeland, these sports activities can be done at the farm.

CAS has a sports committee, which organises matches with other schools and organisations. Every day a group of children are in training. Although a lot is done, we still want to improve the activity further so that more children can benefit from it in the future.

In conjunction with VSO and the British Council, who have a sports programme in place, a VSO volunteer has been recruited

to continue and improve the programme with the British Council and CAS. Melvin van der Pauw another ex-volunteer at CAS is taking up this task. He has arrived and this week he will start his work. We are assisting him to find suitable accommodation, which allows him to travel between the various workplaces.

The Play-up programme has also started. Gaby and Marieke from “Stichting Spelendewijs” have arrived and will stay for eight months.

They will work at two places, in CapeCoast, at an orphanage and at CAS. Gaby and Marieke will teach the children some improvised drama; improve their music and art. We have located good accommodation for them not far from CAS’ Refuge. They are now learning how to live in Ghana and have experienced a number of interesting problems already. They have their own web site: www.spelendewijs.nl and we will keep you informed.

LIBRARY AND COMPUTER CENTRE.

CAS had a small library, which was established with the assistance of some volunteers. Children showed interest in reading. We placed some old computers in the library on which the children could learn how to write letters as well as play games. Some education games were added and the interest increased. It increased to such an extent that the library became too small. We were fortunate that “Wings of Support” a charity from KLM were willing to support CAS in expanding this library. This building has been completed and now we have a library as well as a room for the computers. At the same time, Stichting Street Child, a Dutch fundraising organisation bought a number of second hand computers for CAS. They have now been installed for the library, for the departments and some members of the Board of Advisors. We are very grateful for this support. Street children are now able to learn how to use computers.

We also received for the first time a support from the Ghanaian government. The Ministry of Women Affairs donated, with support from the Chinese Embassy, 10 sewing machines to CAS. The Minister made it clear during the ceremony that she is very concerned about the plight of the children especially the girls. The sewing machines will be given to girls who have completed their training in sewing.

We received a number of different donations and we are grateful to all who are concerned and help us to organise programmes for street children. Thank you very much.

DEMONSTRATION DEPARTMENT.

Members of the department take part in exhibitions and bazaars. The main aim is to show to the public what the children can produce and to create awareness.

Some of the instructors are ex street children. They have been trained and now in turn try to involve and interest other children. The instructors work together with the teachers and head of department. It is encouraging to see that many children take part but we think more could be involved. The department is fortunate that they receive many orders for their products and at times they have to work overtime to meet the deadline. We also observe that the quality of the products has improved. Still we are discussing how more children could be involved and whether the children could sell their own products.

All this requires skill. As part of the capacity building we are searching for training programmes for these instructors. Of course, we do not want to close the trade activity during the training otherwise the children will lose interest.

Another tool to create awareness is videos. Two Dutch girls have just completed a video on CAS as part of their project work. They have taken all the video material to The Netherlands where they have edited it. They have just informed us that the video is ready and we hope to receive it soon. Some of the copies have been sent to our fundraisers in England, Germany and The Netherlands and we hope it will be helpful to raise more funds. Thank you Pleunie and Aukje.

STATEMENTS AND POLICIES OF CAS.

Last month, we published a small booklet with our statements and policies on street children. These statements and policies have been made over the years and it became necessary to publish them to make it clear what we are about. But this is not the end. We have asked all members of staff as well as the members of the Board of Advisors to study these policies. The policies should be clearly understood by all. We all have to agree with them. After the discussions we will rewrite them. The Ministry of Manpower, Development and Employment are re-discussing the draft policy on street children. As an active NGO working in this field we are involved and have a great interest in it. We hope a realistic policy will emerge.

MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ADVISORS.

Dr. Bonsu Bruce has been a member of the Board as a representative of the Health sector. She has now retired from active duty and is working in a private clinic. Since she is not directly working for the Ministry of Health she also has expressed the wish to stop as a Member of the Board. We have accepted this wish and have thanked her on your behalf for all that she has done for the street children. Doctor many thanks.



It is quite some time ago that we have reported to you. The reasons are that we have written some reports on our activities, which were necessary for the donors and for fundraising. Parts of these reports will appear in this newsletter.

In 1999 the “Exodus” report was published. In this report you can read why children leave their home and why they are in the streets. The report explains the reasons why more and more children become street children. We are almost in the year 2002 and we are sorry to let you know that these predictions mentioned in the Exodus report have come true. Our workers report that more and more especially young children appear on the streets. The continuous headcount shows this increase. We have therefore decided to expand our work in the streets. We intend to establish more Mini Refuges and “Meeting-points”.

Accra city is a large city. We have selected certain working areas, which can change monthly. In each working area we want to establish either a “Meeting-point” or a Mini refuge. Workers will visit these places and the street children in that particular area can pay a visit. We of course will make use of the opportunity to educate the children. In this way we hope to reach many more children. We want to advise them on health issues, general behaviour and teach them a bit of English and Mathematics. This Street Corner education will become our main approach during the coming years. Our intention is to be with the street children, advise and educate them.

We are convinced that education is one of the solutions for the street children’s problem. People confront us with this question, “can you give us any solution”? There is no instant solution to this problem, which has grown over the years.

The Urbanization process has started some years ago in

Ghana. We think that, now that this movement to the towns and cities has started, nobody will be able to stop or refers it. We still meet persons who say, "all those street children have to go back to the places where they are coming from" forgetting that they themselves also originate from rural areas. No, this is not the solution. We at CAS want to "equip" (educate) them before they go back, if they want to go back to their hometowns.

This education should be seen in the no space very broad understanding of the word. Advising street children on how to take care of themselves is education. For this purpose we do not need a classroom, a blackboard or school benches.

30% of children are in the street because of a direct result of poverty. 70% in the street because of family problem related issues. Therefore, we propose that family counsel groups are set-up by the various churches in the country in all districts. This does not cost any thing extra. It simply means that when you are concerned about the plight of street children you can also prevent more children from coming in the streets by assisting those families who cannot manage.

We also know that many children cannot attend school because the parents cannot afford the costs. In Ghana the basic education is free, but the schools still insist that the children come in uniform and have shoes on their feet and in addition supply item A, B and C. We wonder why? We do not want to



young mothers
with babies

start the debate whether the children who go to school have or have not to wear a uniform, but we simply say. Let each school have its normal intake and in addition, each school has to take care of 15 to 20 children from families who cannot afford it. Many more children will have the opportunity to go school and fewer children will opt for the streets.

Education can take different forms. In the Refuge children learn how to behave and to listen to the staff. In the streets they discover soon enough the hierarchy, which exists. The street children have to listen to many authorities while in the streets. To name a few: the AMA town authorities, the opinion leaders, and the leaders of the drivers unions, the security personnel, the gang leaders and traders that they work for. They have to listen to those in authority. If they refuse, they are punished. We do not punish them but let them understand that their bad behaviour is not accepted. To be able to work and be with street children you need to have a lot of patience. Education can also be formal education in schools or in workshops. Since we are dealing with children of different ages we have children in Kindergarten schools, primary, JSS, SSS, vocational and technical schools as well in polytechnics etc. However, most of the children who want to be educated follow the apprenticeship training in existing workshops.

Fieldwork

Street children often operate and find protection by fellow street children of their own tribe or group that they regularly identify with. Children as young as five years, can be found on the streets. However, there are also many young street mothers with their babies and families who are on the streets. In Accra, many young boys and girls are working in the streets, but CAS' fieldworkers cannot assist all. We have set the age limit to 18 years of age.

During the rainy season, occasions like the Easter and Christmas holidays many children who sleep in the open find it difficult to remain in Accra. Several go "home" to assist in the farming and to have a re-union with relatives in celebrating the occasion. This reduces the number considerably during these periods.

Fieldworkers are reporting that the child prostitution of female as well as male is increasing. Homo-sexuality is a reality. We are still searching for an NGO or NGOs who can assist us to do a good research in child prostitution. Some years ago we failed to start the research, but we think it is very necessary to obtain the facts. Young boys and girls are attracted to the prostitution

because it is an easy way of getting some money to eat. Since the number of street children has increased dramatically, not all of them find a job to earn their daily living.

STREETCORNER EDUCATION

Years ago, the idea was born to educate the children on the street. For this a structured approach is needed. If we allow each worker to educate children using his/her own method, the children will be confused and possibly will not receive the correct information. It became necessary to employ some persons who could help CAS to make a simple "course" which could be used by all workers regardless of their background or position at CAS.

In fact two different courses were needed, one for health education and another covering the subjects, English, simple accounting and general behaviour.

The health education initially included the following topics: Personal Hygiene, Nutrition, the Human Body, and HIV/AIDS. Others were added at a later stage.

For every topic relevant information on street life is added plus resource information about the topic itself.

In 1998, through the Salvation Army Church, CAS asked Dr. Arnarfi of the Institute of Statistical Social & Economic Research (ISSER), University of Legon, to conduct the research on "Street Children in Accra", Sexual behavioural factors and HIV/AIDS. The results of this research were an eye opener to us all. The Salvation Army Church as well as CAS understood what had to be done. CAS decided not to get involved in the problems of drug addiction and prostitution, but to educate the Street Children on general health problems and diseases. Contrary to the general opinion, street children have indeed heard about and come in contact with many health problems, but do not know the details. Some are even misinformed and are wrongly educated of what to do when they fall ill.

CAS has been fortunate to employ an ex-volunteer, Margaretha Ubels, a trained nurse who was ready to work with us again to create a "Health Course". We estimate that a two-year period could be sufficient, but this has proved to be a too short a period.

FINDINGS. The main findings are:

1. The teachers and persons involved have knowledge on health issues but this knowledge is not translated to the situation on the street.
2. No other programmes are suitable for street children.
3. The coordination at CAS regarding health education can be improved.

AIM. The aim is to focus on the behaviour of the street children,

and to prepare a course for persons who are not trained teachers. The method for health education is: Creating awareness, passing on knowledge and changing behaviour.

For this, facilitators need knowledge of street life and health, and skills in facilitating the use of methods that initiate behaviour change.

Eight meeting places were selected and education will take place at these places.

Kaneshie, Railways, Nkrumah Circle, Ashaiman, Darkuman, Agbogbloshie, Nungua, Konkomba.

PARTICIPATION. A participatory approach has been used involving all the children from the very young to those older than 18 years. Focus on children younger than 18 years is CAS target group.

On the streets, we experienced different problems. Older boys tend to dominate and it is difficult to approach the younger ones directly. It is vital that the workers have a good contact with the public around the "Meeting Point". In general, the worker should have a good knowledge of the hierarchy on the streets and know how to handle street adults who lack knowledge on health but are eager to learn.

Two Comboni Lay missionaries Terry and Conny Nelsen, have arrived to assist us in the research on Literacy education for street children. They are very welcome. We will keep you informed about the developments.

SPONSORSHIP.

The CAS Sponsorship Scheme was incorporated into the CAS programmes for street children in 1994. This was in response to questions constantly received from street children visiting the House of Refuge. They wanted to know what CAS could do for them after all the counselling work. Several street children wanted to leave the streets and learn a trade, which could be useful for their future.

CAS agreed to assist them to learn a trade or to 'return' to school, provided they took the initiative. With this idea, CAS decided to offer sponsorship to any child who wants to receive some kind of educational training. The problem for CAS is that street children have different ages and educational background. We had to be open to train them at all levels, from Kindergarten to university.

PREPARATION

The children have to be prepared. It is not enough for the child

to say, “I want to leave the Street”. Many do not know what they want to learn or are prepared to sacrifice their freedom for it.

During this period of preparation, children must have shown their ability to cope with the changes in their life style as well as their interest in learning over a period of at least 9 months or more. During this time, an intensive Social Survey will be completed by the social workers that are assisted by other members of staff. Parents or relatives will be visited and permission obtained for the sponsorship to go forward.

These visits can result in an improvement in the relationship of the child with members of the family. In some instances they have agreed to share some of the costs of the training or living. During the preparation period, the child has to follow the literacy classes and take part in the demonstration lessons.

The objectives are:

- a) Allow the child to have sufficient time to come to a good decision.
- b) Get used to changes in his/her life. And for the staff,
- c) To have sufficient time to study the child and guide him/her.

This preparation for every child is different. Some are ready within a year others try it and give up only to reappear at a later stage. If the staff is not yet convinced that a particular child is ready, (s)he will be asked to live at the farm (Hopeland training center), where staff can pay more attention to them.

At the farm, the children take care of the animals and this has proven to be a very good “tool” to help the child to quite down and make up his/her mind for their future. At Hopeland the children live in dormitories and are no longer in the streets.

Conclusion:

- Street children who wish to leave the streets have to take the initiative.
- All children have to be prepared.
- Some children will pass through Hopeland training center.
- Parent or relatives are contacted.
- A social survey report is written

The average period for the sponsorship is three years. This is for formal as well as informal education. The reason is that many street children are between 14 and 16 years of age before they take a decision to leave the streets. To learn a trade is the only possibility.

For the past 7 years, children who have followed training in formal institutions (20%) are lesser in percentage as compared to those receiving training in workshops (80%).

It takes many years to learn a trade well. A lot of practical training has to be included in the training programme. During this period, they can sit for the Grade Two or One-trade tests, which are conducted by the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI).

With one of these certificates the child (young person) can apply for a job. It is a document showing that (s) he has gone through training. CAS insists that the training in trades is done well. Those who are able are encouraged to sit for the written exams.

Many children who sat for the NVTI exams have completed successfully apart from some few girls who were given the chance to write for proficiency exams in dressmaking, they fared badly. The reason they gave is that they are not used to working under pressure.

The children who are performing well are given the opportunity to continue after the three years. Often donors agree to this based on re-negotiation.

CONTINUATION

As mentioned before, the children who are performing well are encouraged to continue their training. Those in primary, junior secondary or senior secondary education are assessed based on their terminal performance and the results of their final certificate exams.

NUMBERS.

Since the beginning of the scheme, CAS has helped to place over 500 street children in training (June 2001). Out of this figure, 125 children have successfully completed. 68 children have been settled and are practicing their trade. It is still difficult for us to monitor them or locate them since many change their jobs often at times.

It is difficult to assess what happened with the remaining 57 children because CAS has lost contact with them.

Based on this, CAS is trying to conduct a research into settled children to find out the real facts. This research will start in January 2002.

FOLLOW-UP

Workers are assigned to the various places and every fortnight they visit the children to assess them. Records are kept and difficulties reported. This exercise is time consuming and



difficult. Often it has to be done during the weekends. At times the normal work cannot be done and the worker has to travel to solve problems between the child and the landlord or person in charge. More time is spent on children who have absconded to find out the real problems.

At times, children report directly to the office when they do not receive their pocket money or correct amount. A system of issuing receipts is in place but not always understood by the children.

A follow-up coordinator now coordinates this follow-up work. He assists the worker in their task.

WHY IS CAS NOT EDUCATING THE CHILDREN?

CAS introduces the children to various trades in the demonstration department. The children are not trained in the trades. There are a number of reasons why this have been decided, namely:

- Vocational training is very costly. For every five students a teacher/instructor is needed.
- CAS deals with children on all levels who have interest in

various trades.

- Only the lucky few can be trained.
- Many schools and workshop are able to enroll many more children.
- Street children are automatically integrated in the wider society.

CAS pays the child feeding allowance every month as well as transport allowances to go to work and return to his living quarters. The child also benefits from other facilities like accommodation and medical care.

After a long working relationship with the children in sponsorship, we have learnt that the children can also play a role to make this package of assistance very workable. The contribution of the child can include the following:

1. (S)he assists in buying (obtaining) all the logistics.
2. (S)he finds a job during the holiday periods.
3. The child pays the expenses for visiting the relatives.
4. Informs CAS about the progress of training.
5. Assist CAS' staff when visiting the House of Refuge.
6. Cooperates with his/her supervisor and trade instructor.

CAS has learned the following from the children:

1. Children should be well prepared.
2. The literacy classes given at the House of Refuge and Hopeland are very important.
3. Children should not be grouped in large groups during training.
4. Trainers should not treat the children in any special way.

During sponsorship, it is important that the social worker together with the child take a look at what the child wants after sponsorship. They can look at what the child is capable of and if what (s)he wants is achievable. Besides this it is also worth working on the contact between the child and his relatives/family.

After sponsorship the child is responsible for his own action. However CAS would continue to monitor their activities and advice where necessary until he/she becomes self-sustainable. This means that the child has to look after his own medical costs.

CONCLUSION.

CAS assists street children to leave the streets. We have chosen to do this job and do it well. In the past, we have tried to prevent children to come to the street and we have tried to reunite children with their families, but we did not succeed.

Street children have to be assisted as they are and be “equipped” to leave the streets. As soon as they have learnt a trade or have received another kind of education, they can return to the region where they come from or hopefully return to their families and be of help to them.

It is an enormous task, which can only be solved if many NGOs and other organizations work together each specializing in a particular aspect of this problem. We at CAS are ready to cooperate.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS.

1. At the beginning of November CAS staff met in a general staff meeting to evaluate the past year and to plan ahead for the year 2002. In the middle of this booklet you see the layout of the structure of CAS. The six departments have different responsibilities and activities. In addition, a new education committee is established which will be in-charge of all activities which do not have a definite structure as yet. The research programmes will be monitored by them the are:

- Research in Health education – health education
- Street corner education – literacy
- Follow-up – children who completed their training.
- Research in vocational training – what should we offer to the children who follow apprenticeship training.

2. Festival Mundial. As reported some time ago, CAS' children were invited to travel to Holland and attend Festival Mundial. We failed to go because of several reasons. Some members of the organisation committee visited us recently and we are discussing how we could be part of the coming festival in 2002. We keep you informed about subsequent developments.

3. One of our dedicated supporters and fundraisers died some months ago. It is Mr. Jos Jansen of Stichting Street Child the organisation he established. We wish his wife and children and fellow organisers our sincere sympathy. May he rest in Peace.

Also one of our children who just completed his training got electrocuted and died while setting up his own working place. Children and staff contributed and some travelled to his hometown to pay the last respect to the family. And one of the girls who finished her training in catering died after a short illness. May they rest in Peace.

4. Another dedicated and faithful supported, Fr. Rini v/d Oord unfortunately had a stroke and his hospitalised. We wish him a speedy recovery.

5. "Play Up". The Play-up programme has been completed. Marieke and Gaby stayed with us for 8 months and their education was very successful. A special day, during which the children could play games, was organised by them. They said good-bye to the children and staff. "Play Uppers" thanks a lot.

6. On the 21st of November, we heard on the World News that a boy from Sierra Leone spoke before the Security Council. We were not pleased with this. Persons who have to protect children use a child, place the text he has to say in his mouth for their



own purposes and emotions. What good is this? We tried to send an email of protest, but unfortunately, we did not know the correct email address. Therefore we want to protest by means of this newsletter. Children should not be used for this purpose. It is against the rights of children.

We see this kind of exposure more and more. We call it the "Zoo Syndrome". These persons think they are protecting and defending the rights of children, but instead use them.

If you agree with our protest, please send it to all people who think they should make use of innocent children for advertising their programme. We at CAS are disgusted by it.

NEWSLETTER NO. 28 APRIL 2002 RESEARCH FOR THE FUTURE

In this newsletter we inform you about the latest developments

in the research in Literacy education, experiences of the nurse and a volunteer, experiences to establish a mini refuge and technical training.

Unfortunately at the end of 2001 we lost one of our dedicated fieldworkers at the age of 28 years. George paid a tribute to her.

TRIBUTE TO ROSE FROM STAFF AND CHILDREN OF CATHOLIC ACTION FOR STREET CHILDREN.

Mrs. Rose Bediako – known to us at CAS including the street children as Arkorful or Sister Rose is gone without completing her mission with us. She forgot to say Bye-bye to us. She joined CAS as a crèche minder and later changed to become a Fieldworker. A duty she discharged with joy and excellence. CAS never knew her reported sickness would take her life so soon. It was a blow to us when the news got to us. Though her departure was a blow to the family and her husband, we at CAS are equally at pain.

As I present this tribute in honor of her departed soul, our hearts are heavy. Our flowing tears for her departure will continue for days on end. The children see her death as a dream. They still doubt her departure. Her absence is going to cause us a lot. The vacuum created would be difficult to fill by any replacement. When it comes to preparing street children for school Rose is second to none. To us we see her as the ever smiling type even when at fault. She never refused extra job if even at the expense of her tiredness: To her humility and commitment are the two strong words that she eats and sleeps with.

To the children, she was a real mother and counsellor. Day and night she had to travel to the street of Accra to work with the children. Her words always bring to the children Hope and this gives them encouragement to stay off the street to learn for their future.

CAS is forever going to miss Rose especially in situations where everybody says No and she says Yes. Rose is gone but she is still with us. Again to the family and her husband, they are not alone in their moment of grief. There are others who are equally mourning and we at CAS are no exception. Her stewardship on earth is for the lord to judge. We living with her everyday saw it as perfect and excellent but who are we to give verdict.

We say final good bye and hope to meet one day somewhere. Rose Arkorful Bediako we say Damirifa Dua, Damirifa Dua, Damirifa Dua to your soul. May she rest in perfect peace till the judgement day. Thank you.

Interview of Terrence Robert Nelsen a Comboni lay-missionary who together with his wife Constance is working with CAS.

Terry and wife Connie both Comboni lay-missionaries from Minnesota, U.S.A have been married for 34 years and blessed with 2 children. Terry a veteran educationist, with over 30 years experience as a teacher and headmaster with a Senior Secondary School in the U.S.A. and his wife, Connie a psychiatric nurse by profession. They first came to Ghana in 1997 and spent two years in the Volta Region. They were involved in a number of projects there. They completed their programme in 2000. In 2001 they decided to come back to Ghana and assist CAS.

Here are the excerpts of the interview granted to him to find out what they did in the Volta Region and what they are doing in CAS.

- What were you doing in the Volta Region?
We were involved in a number of projects including teaching students with difficulties in walking at St. Theresa's and St. Agnes vocational schools at Bator. We assisted the operating theatre and O.P.D departments. Assisting the hospital to acquire an ambulance and 55 children to undergo various forms of operations. We also initiated a feeding programme for the WEME local hospital. Finally, we contributed to a well improvement project and dugout 29 wells.
- What do you do in CAS and what have you done so far?
Presently, I am assisting the project to develop a curriculum for the literacy programme to be used at the House of Refuge and in the streets.
- Are you doing it alone?
No, at the moment, I have developed a questionnaire with the help of the teachers of CAS.
- How did you structure the questionnaire?
The questionnaire was structured to be administered on the Principals and Headmasters of schools where CAS children are, the children in the schools as well as workshop instructors and their apprentices.
- Which schools have you visited so far?
We have already been to schools like Boateng Girls vocational at Nsawam, Prampram Girls Vocational Training institutes and Swedru Vocation Training centre.
- Are there more schools you want to visit?
No, we visited the schools in January and February and are now on the workshops to interview the instructors and apprentices.
- What is the rationale behind visiting the schools and

workshops?

First to find out what the schools curriculum have for education, so that it could be tailored to suit the children of CAS and also what level of Maths and English required to complete their training. Their expectations, problems and what they want to do after completing the training.

- You mentioned earlier on that you were visiting the schools and workshops with some staff of CAS. What has been your experiences working with the staff of CAS?

They are wonderful people to work with, very cooperative and time conscious. I feel great working with them.

- What role is your wife playing?

Like I mentioned earlier on, she is a psychiatric nurse and is assisting S. AID to take care of the babies at the crèches.

- When do you hope to complete your programme with CAS?

We hope to end our programme in April 2003. Thank you.

Interview of Eunice A. Dei a nurse from The Salvation Army Church working daily at CAS' clinic. Eunice is also involved in teaching Health Education of some very important and selected topics. She visits Hopeland Training Centre once a week to attend to the children there. We granted her an interview to find out some of the cases she has been treated, to know which cases are referred either to the hospital or clinic, including STD/HIV cases.

- What are some of the difficulties you have been encountering in the discharge of your duties?

In the first place, whenever I prescribe the amount of medicine the patient has to take, they do not take the medicine correctly and that at times worsen the situation. Secondly, they have to eat before they can take the drugs, but often they have no food in their stomach and that is not good. Once a week I travel to Hopeland, the result is that the clinic has to be closed in the House of refuge.

- What are the most common sicknesses you have to treat?

Malaria is on top of the list, secondly the children have several types of skin diseases. Because of the environment they come from, several have wounds, eye and ear problems, toothache and even Bilharzias. Those who have Bilharzias were infected at the village where they came from. It takes a long time before the patient experiences the effects.

- When are the visiting hours?

Normally the peak periods are from 12.00 noon because during that time most of the street children visit the House of Refuge.



- What are some of the cases you have been referring to hospitals?
Cases, which are referred are Toothache or other dental cases, hernia, Bilharzias, eye problems to mention a few.
- Where do you refer them specifically?
Often to specialists like Ophthalmologist (eye specialist), Dental clinics, Polyclinics and Salvation Army clinic.
- Could you please tell us of some of the S.T.D cases that you come across?
The children do not complain often about these cases. At the moment there are only two cases and they have received the correct treatment.
- What type of S.T.D's do they report?
Boys as well as girls often complain of pains after urinating and itching private parts, than I refer them to the Polyclinic. This year we have had 10 cases.
- Do you meet children who have HIV or AIDS?
No, street children who have AIDS do not report to the clinic. During the past 9 years, only two cases have been reported at the House of Refuge. They do not report because they know we are

not a hospital and often these children are advised to go home.

Thank you.

Interview of Carlijn Brenninkmeijer a Dutch volunteer.
Carlijn Brenninkmeijer, a Professional Teacher who has been working with CAS for some couple of months. She has been working with the Demonstration and Literacy Departments. We questioned her to find out her experiences working with the kids and staff, the exact role she has been performing here, her hobbies and what she does during weekends.

- What prompted you to come to Ghana and work for CAS?
After my graduation in Holland, I travelled to South Africa. While there I had a lot of experiences and decided to come back and work for an AID organisation, but that was not possible. So I opted to do volunteer work but that was also not easy. Finally, I came to Ghana to assist CAS.
- It is not easy coming to Ghana without the support of an organisation. How did you manage to get here?
After realising that I was going to do volunteer work, I decided to solicit for funding to support my work in Ghana. A Service Club, individuals and friends agreed on a sponsoring plan by receiving stories about the project in return.
- You have been working with literacy and Demonstration Departments. Could you please tell us the exact role you are performing?
I am assisting in the classroom trying to teach illiterate children. I develop educational materials to make lessons more attractive. I also try to assist individual children who need more attention as far as literacy is concerned. With the Demonstration Department, I assist the children in making postcards, to be sold at Trade-fairs, exhibitions and bazaars. Finally, I also assist the children to make small stories out of pictures they draw. These are very typical of street children, experiences on the street or visiting families and hometowns.
- What has been your experience working with staff and kids alike?

First, the staff, it has been very interesting working with them, but CAS has a hierarchy and it takes a long time for one to understand the system very well. Even though it's clear on paper, in practice it is very difficult to follow it.

It is also very interesting working with the children, but at times it

is not easy. The problem of language barrier when the staff is not around. It takes a lot of patience to deal with them, because of the environment they have come from. You have to understand them before you can work effectively with them.

- I understand you have written a proposal to an organisation in Holland. What are your reasons for writing this proposal?

I tried to raise money to develop educational materials especially materials that could be used to suit their environment.

- Do you feel home-sick? Not at all.
- How do you spend your weekends?

I run at the beach during weekends. Meet some new friends, write letters to friends back home. I also like to read books. Occasionally, I go out to do something western, like visiting restaurants with European dishes etc.

- Any hobbies?

Yes, I play squash twice a week, run at the beach and make post cards. Thank you.

MINI REFUGES.

Children who live and work in the streets of Accra are reached by CAS, irrespective of where they are. Some of the communities where street-children have dominated are far from CAS' Main Refuge. Some are as far as 10 miles away from the Main Refuge. As a result, children living and working around these places cannot afford to visit the Main Refuge, even though they have shown much interest in our programs.

CAS therefore has the policy to set up Mini Refuges in some of the communities, where children could visit and meet our social workers.

Since the introduction of the Mini Refuges, we have registered over 300 children and have assisted them in many ways. Those with health problems are referred to our clinic and for pregnancy-and abortion cases we refer them to StreetGirlsAid. Children who visit the Mini Refuge regularly for 4 to 5 months are advised to follow the sponsorship program to trades of their choice after thorough guidance.

Everyday, close to 25 children visit one Mini Refuge our statistics show. But only up to 10 children could be accommodated at the time due to the size of the place. The

place is described as a wooden kiosk or a room of about 3 by 4 meters. Facilities are not yet sufficient, and periodically few problems develop. One of the problems is finding a suitable location and getting electricity connected. Nevertheless, we have few attractive games, which are liked by children.

At the moment, we have 3 Mini Refuges located at Odorkor (4 miles from Main Refuge), Ashaiman (at 10 miles) and at Agobogbloshie (at 4 miles).

The fieldworkers at CAS report every forth-night, and through this, CAS gets information about street-children in close and far communities of Accra. We know about the number of children who are interested in the program and the type of jobs that they do. The Mini Refuges are helpful to CAS and if CAS could get enough staff and support, we could extend the number to 10 Mini Refuges or more.

We are developing street corner literacy and health education, so when we have more staff (facilitators), they will teach not only in the street corner but in the Mini Refuges as well.

RESPECT FOR TECHNICIANS.

In 1995, CAS started the sponsorship scheme. Street Children are prepared and introduced in various trades and send to workshops or schools to learn the trade chosen by them. Often the children are too advanced in age to follow regular education. Thus the majority follows apprenticeship training.

CAS workers select suitable workshops where these trades can be learnt practically. The minimum learning period is three years. During these years we hope that the apprentice has an opportunity to sit for an exam-trade test.

CAS as an NGO working with and for street children and involved in apprenticeship training, experiences many obstacles. One of these is the lack of respect many people have for technicians. Often a child is asked to follow vocational or technical education when the child fails to go to secondary school or follow higher education. In order words, some people see vocational/technical education as a dumping ground for those who cannot “make it”. This is very unfortunate and in a way surprising. It shows somehow that society is misinformed about this training.

Builders, Architect and Engineers, to name a few, are not left behind from the brain drain. Nowadays street children learn electronics and computer science. Often persons learning these trades need to have a fair amount of practical intelligence in

order to be successful. They should have the correct talents.

There are even persons who suggest that vocational/technical training can be completed in 3 or 6 months time. This is unbelievable and insulting to the technicians. Persons learning a trade need to have a lot of practical experience before s(he) can be a master in the trade. An education of 10 to 12 years is therefore not an exception. Therefore, those who learn the trade for a period of three years are learners of the first category.

We can only conclude that those who have no respect, have no knowledge of technicians and should refrain from talking about it. We know that:-



A nation who respects its technicians will have a prosperous future.

NEWSLETTER NO. 29 DECEMBER 2002 10 YEARS -CAS
April 1992-April 2002

It is quite some time ago that you have heard from us. The reason is we are preparing for CAS' 10 years existence, which

takes place in April 2003. You might say, “that is still far away”. For us it is very close. As part of this anniversary we decided, a year ago, to gather all our findings on street children and activities. We also plan to complete all the researches still pending, and finalize the reports. We will publish all this information in a book called “The Ghanaian Street Child”.

This is easier said than done. CAS has a small editorial board of four members and they took it upon themselves to read through the past reports, social survey reports and data on the computers in order to analyze these findings. During the past 10 years we have faithfully kept records of children who visited the House of Refuge and the children who were in the sponsorship scheme. CAS registered 3600 children.

Most of the findings were no revelations to the members of staff who have been with CAS from the beginning, but it were revelations to new members of staff, to volunteers and students and some members of the Board of Advisors.

It was indeed interesting to notice that it took time for them to accept the realities. The facts are real, we cannot change them, we cannot say “but you should understand them differently”.

We do hope that you will accept these findings as they are.

Three different researches were still in progress:

1. On Health education
2. On literacy and street corner education
3. On vocational/technical education and local industry.

Some of the findings are very interesting and confirm the path CAS has chosen for the coming years.

The book is divided into three parts:

Part one explains the findings and background on street children in Ghana. Part two explains CAS' activities and the third part explains the future.

We have tried to formulate some policies, which could be adopted for the benefit of street children. We are aware that these policies could have been written in a different language that is to say in a diplomatic language, but this hopefully does not change the context.

We are still far away from the day that the society accepts street children as they are and that the society will accept responsibilities for them. But during the ten years of pioneering, we see indeed hopeful signs in this direction.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this book “The Ghanaian Street Child”, please let us know.

STREET CHILDREN

During the ten years of CAS we have received many children in the House of Refuge. First in James Town later at Larbiokorshie. Children were curious at first and later returned to take part in the activities. Several were afraid to enter and had to be led by others. Others came to disturb and cause problems. Some were on drugs or very angry. The older (15 and above) were in the majority during the first years of existence. Many were not interested to learn and it was difficult for the workers to advise them. There was a period that we accepted street mothers and their babies in the House of Refuge. The result was that at times more babies than children were making noise in the Refuge. It was a necessity that CAS started the baby care program at the Konkomba market in 1995.

During another period we allowed professional prostitutes to visit the Refuge. The reason behind it, these professional prostitutes could bring us in contact with the younger girls involved in the sex trade. The street children themselves asked us not to allow "those women" to enter the Refuge. They differentiated "those prostitutes" from those involved in the sex trade.

The older children (Youth) created a lot of problems for the workers during the last months we were in the first House of Refuge at Jamestown. This made us decide to employ permanent security personnel for the new Refuge. We also limited the permission to enter below 18 years of age. This has been a difficult decision for us, because many young people need our assistance as well. These youngmen and women are too old to start formal education or to follow the apprenticeship system. This group of young people who does not know what to do is growing in number. We are very worried about this and we hope something can be done to change this situation.

Because of their absence in the House of Refuge, the atmosphere has changed. Younger children appear to be our visitors. More boys than girls, but the population of girls are increasing. As a result, we had to change the approach. Many young children are not interested in education. They like to be free, play games, watch videos and wrestle with each other.

Activities at the Refuge increased. Fortunately there is still a large group who has decided to leave the streets and learn a trade. However, at the moment there are many children who do not show any interest in activities at all. They sit and talk, cook the food they can get and hang around.

The staff had already a few meetings to discuss as to how to adapt us to this new situation.

The changes confirm that we still have to learn a lot from the street children. It also confirms that one approach is not a

solution at the very end.

STRUCTURE

The structure of CAS has changed over the years. CAS started as an organization, which listened to the children and tried to do many things at the same time. A worker could one day be a nurse, the next day a fieldworker or a worker at the Refuge. At times the staff working at the administration had to take care of the children because of lack of workers. Because of the learning



process and requests from the children, we tried to do everything. We worked during the day and some worked at night. We worked 7 days a week.

This approach could not be maintained. We became street men and women among the street children. We did not have a clear approach. This made us to sit down and reflect. An evaluation followed and we decided to make choices.

1. To work during the day only.
2. To take one day off during weekends.
3. All members of staff are encouraged to take holidays.
4. We created departments and each department discusses their own program.

These decisions were made after five years operating as an NGO. At times it were difficult decisions, because we taught we had to do everything.

S.AID was formed and they cater for street girls in difficulties. They also took over the management of the Baby Care program. The Salvation Army Church offered to take care of all problems associated with health. We were happy with these developments and we taught our donors too.

After all, this is what donors encouraged us to do, to form a network and work together. To our surprise, some donors did not like these developments. Their philosophy is, once you have started a program you remain in charge i.e. the Baby Care program. It was not easy, but now most donors have accepted that three independent NGO's are working together, each with its own speciality.

DEPARTMENTS

Forming departments is one thing. To let them function well is another. Staff had to be trained, to manage the finances, to take care of the members of staff, to carry out the plans for the departments, to keep proper records and write reports.

Capacity building was a priority. Staff followed several workshops, often-expensive workshops. There are many institutions, which offer these workshops, why they have to be so expensive is a question to us. CAS as a charity cannot afford to take part in many workshops.

Many members of staff learned a lot from these periods and now we say, "put it into practice". Still there were problems. Some members of staff moved from one department to another or were involved in one of the researches. The reasons were the job descriptions are not detailed enough.

Because of the researches, another temporary body had to be instituted. We called it "The Education Committee". The task of the committee was to assist workers and volunteers involved in research work and monitor the activities. It was difficult to give them a clear task because nobody knew the work involved. After a number years and empowered with some experience we could re-commission the Education Committee and give them a clear mandate.

During the past year (2002), they together with the staff involved have concluded their work and the committee has been dissolved.

NEW STRUCTURE

We have drawn up a new structure. Members of staff know to which department they belong to and what work is expected of them.

Our coming tasks are:

- To re-define the job descriptions
- To work out the findings of the researches.
- To re-structure some departments.
- To document our chosen path.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

It has been very difficult for CAS as well as for S.AID to come to good job descriptions for all workers. We tried to adapt job descriptions from other firms and organizations, but none were suitable. First of all we had to give titles to our workers. The work we do cannot be compared with other jobs. Yes, even the job of security personnel is not the same as for other firms. Our security personnel are supposed to guard our property but should also guard and advise the children. At times, these security personnel have more contact with the children than other members of staff. A better title for them is security/social worker.

Other examples are the instructors. Many of them are ex-street children but are now members of staff. They know their respective trades and know how to instruct others, but they are not trained teachers. In addition, they should have the ability to invite children to take part and guide other children. They have to learn this skill on the job.

Some years ago we spent a considerable time in writing new job descriptions. They are in use at the moment, but because of the changes and developments we have to re-examine and re-write them.

RESEARCHES

The researches are completed. The findings have still to be analyzed. The results will be used to prepare the future work-plans.

Street children who come in contact with our workers and express the wish to leave the streets are assisted. They pass through five phases.

1. In the streets they meet the fieldworkers regularly and show interest in education are advised to visit the Meeting points and Mini refuges. At Meeting points, children receive instructions and can ask questions. At the Mini refuges they can relax, play games and follow lessons in health, life skills and literacy.

We call this "Street Corner Education". The children learn how to

take care of themselves, learn how to save their money and are advised how to behave. When interested, they can visit the Main House of Refuge at Lartebiokorshie.

2. In the House of Refuge the children are invited to take part in literacy classes, demonstration classes and other educational activities. All these activities are described in the book "The Ghanaian Street Child. Here the children are prepared to go to school or become an apprentice.

3. After the child has made a definite decision to leave the street, a social survey is conducted on the background of the child. The child gets the opportunity to leave the street and live at Hopeland Training Center in Ashaiman. This is the first step a street child takes to leave the street. Six to nine months are needed to prepare the child for formal education or the apprenticeship system.

4. When successful, the child is placed in the sponsorship scheme. S(he) attends a school or a workshop of their own choice. The sponsorship is for a period of three years. A follow-up team assists the child during this period.

5. The fifth phase is the final phase. Children who have learnt a trade are assisted to find a job or to establish their own business. It is very important period because it determines the future of the child and confirms the efforts made were worthwhile.

RE-STRUCTURE DEPARTMENTS.

As explained before, departments were made and staff trained. This training process is a continuous process. Not all departments have the same structure. A department with a small number of members with a clear task can be managed easier than a department with many members who have a variety of jobs. For instance, a fieldworker could be in charge of a Mini Refuge and be involved in street corner education. Or a teacher has been asked to teach at the Main Refuge and at Hopeland Training Center. In addition this teacher could be involved in the street corner education. For the year 2003, we want to streamline these problems. We want to come out with a good monitor system and have a common approach to educate the children.

PUBLICATIONS.

The publication of our findings, "The Ghanaian Street Child", is an explanation of what we know this moment. And it is enough for CAS to decide about the future. We know, all the work we do is a drop in the ocean. But we have changed the ocean (Mother Theresa).

Many other NGO's and organizations have started since 1993. We hope they will benefit from these findings. We are aware that soon we will have to update these findings. For instance, in January 2002 we did not know that a group of street children are not interested in any activity. This is a new development we never experienced before. This illustrates that there are regular changes, the children change, the society changes and the environment changes. We have to adapt our approach accordingly. A radical solution to the problem of street children does not exist. This problem developed over many years, to find solutions will also take many years.

PEOPLE.

We met people who have supported us from the very beginning. People who have approved our approach. People who stop us in traffic and tell us "well done".

People who have accused us of misappropriating money. People who tell us, CAS is too dominant. People who tell us we are too aggressive. People who tell us we violate the Christian teaching.

We met people who visit us at the House of Refuge and offer assistance. People who have defended us during meetings. People who give us part of their monthly salary.

We also met people who accused us of kidnapping their child. People who tell us we do not understand the culture and society at large. People who tell us we do not have a professional approach.

People who organized fundraising rally behind street children. Unknown people who give us financial support. People who acknowledge the problem of street children.

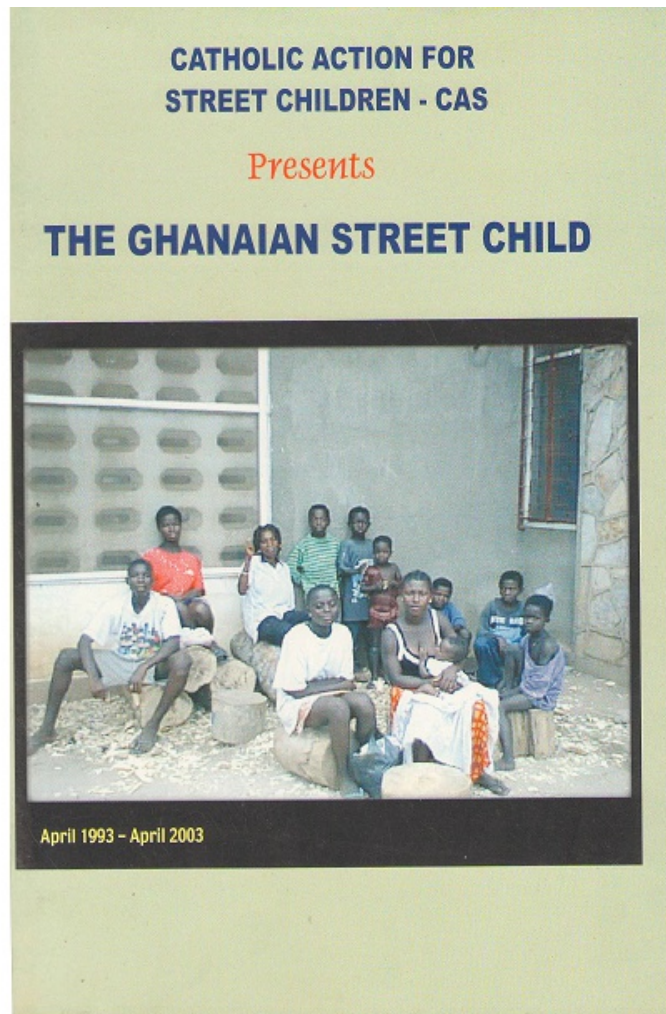
We met others who fundraised in our name and kept the money. People who published our findings as if they conducted the research. People who gave us money for the project and claimed CAS as their own. People who told us to shut up or else....

We met people who wanted to foster or adopt a child. People who are training street children quietly. People who supported us with letters, postcards and e-mails.

After ten years, we are still determined as ever to continue this work. We are grateful for the children who have expressed their thanks in various ways. Some are married and have a bright future. Some continued their studies after the basic three years.

POLICIES

There have been several attempts to formulate policies on street



children. We who are in the field have also made such an attempt. We have published them in the book "The Ghanaian Street Child". It has not been easy to formulate them. We have used our own definition of a street child. This definition is in line with the definition used by UNICEF. Children living on and off the streets. Children who have a "Home" to go to and the children who have no home. Both groups of children are in the streets of Accra and other cities and towns. These also include abandoned children, handicapped children and working children. These groups are not the same and should be assisted on different levels. We hope that eventually, street children will be accepted and good policies adapted to assist them.

NEWSLETTER NO. 30 APRIL 2003 CAS' TENTH ANNIVERSARY

This month, CAS exists ten years. In order to mark this anniversary we have planned (during the coming year April 2003-2004) various activities. The main aim is to create special awareness of street children in Ghana.

We have started by taking part in an exhibition in NOVOTEL

hotel in Accra. Several artists as well as CAS street children, showed their products and presented them for sale. The proceeds were given to CAS. Suntrade Ltd and Nikolic Design Ltd. took the initiative in organising this event, and we are very grateful to them.

The second event was organised by AFS Intercultural Exchange Programs. They invited sixteen students and three teachers from Aarhus Friskole Music School from Denmark, to come to Ghana and make music with students of Rev. John Teye Memorial School and the street children of CAS. The students and street children practiced playing instruments and dances for several days, all in preparation of a concert, which they organised at Christ the King hall in Accra. This concert was very well organised and the following groups took part:

- Ebenezer Methodist General Choir- Winneba
- Christ the King Angelic Choir - Cantonments
- Rev. John Teye Band - Achimota
- Aarhus Friskole – Denmark
- Psalmist Jazz Quartet – Accra
- Morning star school – Cantonments
- AFS volunteers – Accra
- Presbyterian Boys Secondary school - Legon

Unfortunately, the publication of this event started very late and therefore not so many people enjoyed the performances. But CAS is very grateful to AFS for organising it.

On the 14th of May we will launch our book “The Ghanaian Street Child” in the British Council hall in Accra. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, this book contains all the information we have on street children, which we gathered during the years.

Persons and organisations that want information on street children of Ghana can find it in this book. We have asked our fundraisers in Poland, Germany, The Netherlands and England to sell this book for us. Street Child Africa UK will also assist us to upgrade our website. Some information from this book will be placed on the Internet so that we do not have to answer the many emails from students from all over the world about information on the street children.

To mark this anniversary, CAS has asked Saki Publishers to print “T” shirts, Pens, cups and stickers. They are all available at CAS’ office.

On the 15th of May to the 30th of May, CAS will have an exhibition in the National Museum of Accra. We will show products made by the street children, show photographs and give general information on the children.



Creating awareness means spreading information by means of articles in magazines and newspapers, showing videos and photographs. We have asked the assistance of some foreign and Ghanaian journalists to do this in a professional way. Although, CAS has been shown on T.V. and interviews were given on FM radio stations, many people have never heard of CAS or street children. It is therefore important that the news will appear at regular intervals in various forms.

Our main aim this year is to target the youth in schools and youth clubs. These young persons should be informed about their mates who are not so fortunate and live in the streets.

Other activities will be organised during the year and we will keep you informed.

RESULTS ON TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

At the end of last year we concluded a research on technical and vocational education and job opportunities. Students from the university of Ghana and Accra Polytechnic assisted our staff. We wanted to know how “our” children have been trained during the past years in schools and workshops. We also wanted to

know whether the trades they learnt are trades in which they could find jobs.

Students and staff visited schools and workshops in which street children have been and are trained. We also visited other workshops, which offer different trades. These workshops include trades in woodwork, metal work, repair workshops, concreting and block making, paper and batik, sewing centres, electrical workshops and computer centres. We also visited hotels and catering centres.

In addition, they interviewed persons from the trade union, ministries and labour offices.

The results are interesting and confirm our expectations. Street children can choose the trade they want to learn but unfortunately several of the trades are no longer marketable. Particularly, traditional trades do not have sufficient job opportunities any longer. Therefore we have to give the children new ideas and introduce them in it.

Small trades such as soap making, basket weaving, Tie and dye making etc. are trades, which can be done to get additional income, but do not provide enough income.

We have published some of these findings in the book "The Ghanaian Street Child". Some other information will be used to prepare the children better for apprenticeship training.

Although most of the children are satisfied with the preparation and training in trades, some of them cannot cope with it. Our system is very basic and an average street child can follow it. Unfortunately, some children need more attention.

Because of the past experiences or birth handicaps, some children show signs of misbehaviour and mental disorders. These children need special attention. Although we witness these symptoms, we do not know the facts and do not know what is needed to help them. Therefore, we have plans to investigate more, before action can be taken. We will keep you informed about the developments.

VOLUNTEERS.

During the past ten years, 112 volunteers and religious from various countries assisted CAS staff in carrying out the activities. They came from Germany, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Ghana, U.S.A., Switzerland, France, England, Liberia, Denmark, and Norway. Most of them stayed for a period of 6 months but some stayed longer. It is often a tremendous experience for the

volunteer, which at times changes their future life. The children react positively when volunteers take part in the activities. Language could be a problem, but should not be a hindrance to have good contact with the children. Showing examples, playing games and being a father or mother to them is very important.

STREET CORNER EDUCATION

Street corner education is done in the streets of the city at meeting points and in Mini Refuges. The education includes, literacy, health education and life skill training.

CAS experimented for years at street corners in Accra. The teachers or facilitators should be very inventive. Every situation is different. At times adults interfere and prevent the children to take part. At times, there is too much noise or the weather is not suitable. But the results of all these experiments reveal that street corner education is indeed possible. It is a means to reach the children and get them involved. It is a means to inform the children about the dangers they meet. Children can be advised how to behave and life skill training can start in the streets. Of course, additional educational programs should follow for those children who are interested in education and leave the streets.

The facilitators should work in close collaborating with the field-workers. The field-workers are daily in the streets and know the children. The facilitators educate them.

There are various opinions about Peer to Peer education. Street children form a fluid population. The facilitators might be lucky if they meet the same children on successive occasions. Some will indeed hear what they have learnt from others, but how this information is passed on is not sure.

The mini research we conducted on HIV and AIDS revealed that street children hear a lot but they receive the information in bits and pieces. The results of this research are explained in the book, "The Ghanaian Street Child".

Therefore continuous teaching should be done to achieve good results.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

Street children are from all regions of Ghana and speak many different languages. Some of them speak or can understand the main southern languages such as Twi or Ewe, but many of them only communicate in their own dialect.

One of the main problems for workers in street children NGOs

are the languages. Many children cannot be reached because the language barrier prevents it. At CAS we often operate with interpreters. At times adults are asked to assist, in some occasions, children assist children. Especially when detailed information is needed about the back-ground of children it is important that the interviewer understand the child and vice versa. CAS has employed workers from various tribes, but there are still problems.

The research on technical and vocational education has shown that street children do not have a chance to get a job if they do not speak English. Therefore, CAS' workers are trying to educate street children in the English language.

In addition, volunteer teachers are recruited to educate children privately. CAS is very grateful to all the expatriate and Ghanaian volunteer teachers who are ready to assist. At times, three to four children are educated together. Sometimes this is done individually. Even in the classroom, the children are educated on individual basis.

It is a good educational approach, but very costly when all teachers have to be paid. The individual approach is necessary in the preparation of the children who want to learn a trade either in a school or workshop. A good preparation ensures that the child succeeds.

This preparation is not part of our sponsorship scheme. Since it is done on individual basis the time needed varies. At times, this preparation takes more than a year, at times even longer. But it is the most essential element of CAS' approach and success. We still have to improve our skills to convince the donors of this.

NEWSLETTER NO. 31 DECEMBER 2003
PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF STREET CHILDREN.

In 2003 many different activities took place, activities organized on the ten-year anniversary of CAS. It is about these activities we want to inform you.

1. Mini refuges. CAS operates mini refuges in various parts of Accra and Ashaiman. These are rented rooms where street children can gather. In these mini refuges street children can rest, play games and follow some lessons in street corner education. With the assistance from the Royal Dutch Embassy two new mini refuges have been established. These are in addition to the many meeting points and the two mini refuges, which were already in operation. Although the mini refuges are places where street children can come together, we also have plans to intensify the income generating activities in these

places. At Madina mini refuge a sewing centre has been established. In the near future we hope to add other activities so that these income-generating activities can assist us financially in the running of the fieldwork department.

2. Publishing the book "The Ghanaian Street Child".

On the 14th of May 2003 we launched the above, mentioned book at the British Council Hall in Accra. The Archbishop Dominic Andoh as well as the Minister of Girl Child and basic education honoured the occasion. The book was officially launched and auctioned. Quite a number of invited guests were present. Since this occasion, many books have been sold and presented to our donors and well-wishers. Some bookshops in Accra, such as the university bookshop, the Catholic and Methodist bookshops are selling our book. The book is meant to spread the information and also create the awareness on street children as well as an income for CAS. We will continue compiling information on these children so that we remain up to date.



CAS' secretaries

3. Exhibition National Museum.

A day after we launched the book we opened an exhibition on street children in the National Museum of Accra. The exhibition showed photographs, a collection of artefacts, which were made

by the children and information on these children, which was pasted on large boards.

This exhibition was open for two weeks. CAS used this particular method of creating awareness during the past ten years. In future, other methods will be used. Of course the selling of the products made by the street children will continue but the advocacy of these children will be carried-out differently. We are in discussion with other partners about this issue.

4. To Germany.

Our Sister organization Street Girls Aid (S.AID) is in need of a permanent house of Refuge. The rent of the present accommodation expires soon. We are therefore assisting them to acquire a new place. As part of the fundraising, Misereor invited three workers from S.AID and one from CAS to take part in a walk organized for this purpose. Mr. George Afum Ansah, the deputy director of CAS accompanied the members of staff of S.AID to Germany. It has been a nice experience for them especially the walk. The young German children, who walked with them, encouraged our inexperienced walkers to continue to the end. S.AID continues with the fundraising because more money is needed to buy this new house.

5. Picture book

One of the volunteers of CAS, Evelien Vehof worked on a special project during her stay. She made photographs of street children as well children in better circumstances. She also asked these children to tell their stories.

A nice pictures book was published on the 2nd of September during a photo exhibition at the Golden Tulip Hotel.

6. Candle making –Wings of Support.

The candle making has been one of the demonstration trades at both our house of refuge and the Hopeland Training Centre at Ashaiman. Recently, we decided to expand it and make income generating, so that some ex-street children could be employed and also proceeds could be used to support our programs; this has become necessary as a result of the dwindling donor support.

There was the need to inject some more capital into it, and therefore we contacted the Wings of Support for assistance. Wings of Support, is a foundation made up of the crew of the Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM). This Foundation has assisted us in the past to establish a library at the refuge at Lartebiokorshie in Accra.

Once again, Wings accepted and approved our proposal and the project, which comprises of, the expansion/renovation of the existing buildings and the procurement of more machinery,



furniture and bulk purchase of Wax production among others. The project has been successfully executed and handed over by the contractor in the October 2003.

7. Videos and Radio/ TV broadcasts.

The ten years anniversary celebrations as well as publicity for a Forum, which CAS organized together with the Consortium for Street Children UK, created an opportunity to raise more awareness on the rights of these children. As a means, different organizations and TV broadcasting stations made videos. Some of these stations have shown these videos on TV and live broadcast on radio programs could be heard on the radio. We were trying to get a message across, but we doubt that we have achieved it. Most interviewers had their preconceived ideas about street children and were not interested in our story. We are therefore thinking about another strategy to continue with the advocacy.

8. Civil Society Forum on the Rights and Protection of Street Children.

As mentioned above, this forum has been organized in Accra between the 21/24 of October 2003. Participants were invited from other West African countries namely the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Liberia and Cameroon; unfortunately, Cameroon failed to turn up.

On the local scene, organisations such as street Academy, Neglect Foundation – Kumasi, Youth Development Foundation – Kumasi; Mercy Foundation – Takoradi; Youth Alive Tamale and Don Bosco - Ashaiman. Others were Street Girls Aid, Maamobi – Accra and CAS, which hosted the organisation.

There were also other personalities who were also invited as a resource person. They included Alois of Udugu Society from Kenya, Jeroo Bilimoria of child Help International – Netherlands, Professor Nana Araba Apt Van Ham of the Centre for social policy studies (C.S.P.S) University of Ghana – Legon, Professor J.K Arnarfi, Director Institute for Social, statistical and Economic Research (ISSER) also at Legon. Alexis Derry of the Assemblies of God Street children Project (AGRES) Accra, Mrs Kutuatsi, the Deputy Director of Department of Social Welfare Ghana Mr.S.N Wailer. The Greater Accra Director, Department of social Welfare Ghana among others.

Observers were from G.NC.C; WAJU, Red Cross Society of Ghana, Plan international Ghana, Coalition on the Right of the child – Netherlands Embassy, Accra the rest were “Ricerca e coopreazion” of Italy, Fan Milk Ghana and Women Development Agency – Accra.

Some important personalities were present both at the opening and closing ceremonies:

Rev Fr. Anthony Asare, Chairman of CAS Board. Dr. Susu Kwawukume of the Trust Hospital and members of CAS Board. Mr. Daniel Darfour, an Accountant of Morrison and Associates official Auditors of CAS and Mr. Dzakpasu, the country Director of the international Labour Organisation.

The President of the Republic of Ghana nominated the Hon. Minister of manpower and development Yaw Barimah to represent him and the Minister for Women and children's Affair Mrs. Gladys Asmah and her Deputy Mr. Kofi Adusei were also present.

The forum officially opened by Fr. Patrick Shanahan, the executive Director of Street child Africa and also a trustee of the Consortium for Street Child Africa followed by an introductory speech by the Director of CAS.

Among some of the activities, which were lined up for the four-day forum, was Fieldwork familiarization tour where participants had a joint fieldwork visit by fieldworker of CAS/SAID. They visited some of the areas in the metropolis where fieldwork is done.

Participants also visited CAS House of Refuge to familiarize themselves with what pertains at CAS.

The main discussions centred on the following topics:

- Street Children's access to Education.
- Street Children's access to Health.
- Re-integration issues concerning Street Children.
- Street Children and Appropriate Skills Development/Income Generation.
- Street Children in Conflict Zones.

A full report will be published soon. CAS and The Consortium of Street Children, UK are very grateful to Emma Ampofo who assisted CAS' staff tremendously in the administration.

9. DSL INTERNET CAFE

In the beginning of this year, we decided to embark on an ambitious project, to hook the CAS House of Refuge onto the Internet and also link all the computers on the network. By May this year the project started, linking the library and the main building. This project enables the various departments to share documents and also circulate copies of documents to various departments or sections of the organization.

The street children will benefit from a lot of educational programs as a result of the project. Above all it will improve the communication and correspondence.

The type of Internet being used currently is called the Dial-up, which is the situation where one has to dial a telephone number, and anytime we want to log on to the net. Irrespective of this improvement, we have had a lot of problems with this system. It has always being difficult to get through the telephone lines, however this is a general problem with the dial-up system in Ghana. As a result of this problem we proposed to change the system to a more efficient one called the DSL, which is also more expensive option. A proposal was sent to the Dutch Embassy in Accra for a support under the Small Grants Development Program. This proposal has been approved and very soon we would start the implementation. We once again are very grateful to the Royal Dutch Embassy in Accra. We hope to complete the project early next year.

10. Planning 2004

The planning meetings for 2004 started after the Forum ended. We have completed ten years during which we have achieved a lot. It is now time for CAS to plan for years ahead.

We are trying to come to a five-year plan, which can be used as a common vision. As a start Bro Jos has written down his vision and this letter has been presented to all members of staff.

During the second stage, management of CAS held a series of

meetings with the six departments separately. Reports have been written. The various departments have to meet again without the management and discuss the practical implications of the proposals. At a later stage, early December a joint staff meeting will be organised to listen to the various plans of the departments. Also the budget will be discussed. Eventually we all should agree to work towards for a common goal in the coming five years. Our donors will be informed about these plans.

11. DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY MATERIALS

During the month of October, a Dutch volunteer called Carlijn Brenningmeijer came back to CAS. Her main objectives are as follows:

1. Visit the field to see how street corner facilitators are teaching the children.
2. To assess how street corner facilitators and other teachers handle teaching materials in the classroom at House of Refuge and Hopeland.
3. To organize training for street corner facilitators and the other teachers at House of Refuge and Hopeland. To follow up to the street, the classroom and Hopeland to see how the training acquired is used.
4. Assist street corner facilitators in designing a logbook (recording system) for development of literacy on the street.

She is scheduled to go back to Holland by the end of the year and hope to come back to Ghana specifically CAS to see the extent of development of literacy in CAS by October 2004. We hope to develop a suitable literacy course for street children.

12. Sponsorship Scheme.

In 1995 we started the sponsorship scheme. The costs per child per year were calculated according to the expenses made. These costs are for daily living expenses and for the costs of educating a child. We arrived at \$ 852.00. We maintained these figures for the past eight years although we knew it was not sufficient. Before a child can go on sponsorship it has to be prepared. This preparation is for each child differently. They needed a preparation time before they entered the streets. Some lived in the streets for a number of years. Now they need time to leave the streets. They changed their live style while in the streets. This life style is often not according to the standard rules as society expects. In other words, it can take years before

a child is ready to leave the streets. All this time, CAS spends money on that child, either during the fieldwork activities or in the House of Refuge. For the past years these costs we have not reflected in the sponsorship costs. We are of the opinion that these costs should be added because this preparation is the most important period of the sponsorship time.

Our research has also revealed that children should be visited regularly during their training. We have not done that sufficiently during the past years with the result that some children failed because of lack of attention from our side. Of course, this follow-up cannot be done free of charge. Therefore we have come to an amount of 1000 Euros per child per year.

Preparation	=	€ 138	Daily living	=	€ 51
Tools	=	€ 167	Administration	=	€ 100
Closing costs	=	€ 85			
Total	=	€ 1000			

13. Fundraisers-donors

At the end of this year we want to thank our donors and benefactors sincerely for their support. CAS will try to organize income-generating activities themselves. We know it is necessary for the future, however we are also aware that the focus of attention could shift. Let us hope not too much to the money aspect. CAS is first of all for the street children, who are in need of our attention and protection. Our task is in the field. We hope there will be others who will support us in all these activities. We like to thank our donors and our fundraisers in the various countries:

- Equal Opportunity Foundation -Holland
- Stichting Street Child -Holland
- Paul e.V. - Germany



- Street Child Africa
- Africa Corner

- UK
- Poland

NEWSLETTER NO. 32 April 2004
CLOSING OF THE ANNIVERSARY YEAR-CAS

CAS closes the anniversary year of the tenth year existence. As part of the celebrations CAS, together with the Consortium for Street Children UK, organized an international forum on street children in October 2003. We have just received a very beautiful report, which not only describes what took place, but also describes the situation of Ghanaian street children today and what could be done to assist them.

We are sorry that we are not able to present all of you with this report, but instead we will highlight the important points mentioned concerning “our Children” in Ghana.

Acknowledgements:

The Consortium, CAS and Street Child Africa, wishes to thank the donors who made this forum possible: Comic Relief UK, Plan Netherlands, Commonwealth Foundation UK, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) of the British High Commission and Plan Ghana, Taysec Gh. Ltd., Bogoso Goldfields Ltd, Ashanti Goldfields Co. Ltd, Barclays Bank Gh. Ltd, Ricerca e Cooperazione, Newmont Mining Co. Ltd, Scancom Gh Ltd., Vanguard Assurance, PHC Motors all in Ghana.

We also extend our appreciation to The Honourable Ministers for Manpower Development & Employment and Women & Children's Affairs and their representatives for taking the time to visit CAS and join us at the forum.

We wish to thank the participants from Anglophone West Africa: The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria. Special thanks to Child Helpline International and Undugu Society of Kenya for their presentations. And special thanks to Emma Ampofo who assisted the management of CAS in arranging and organizing this forum.

Fr. Patrick Shanahan, the Executive Director of Street Child Africa and Trustee of the Consortium presented some background information on the situation of children in Africa, in the Foreword of the report. He concluded:

The commitment of all the forum participants was immense and it is this unerring determination that inspires great hope in spite of the daunting task. With African politics still predominantly rural in origin and focus, those who work for development in Africa countries can no longer afford to ignore the hopes and aspirations of this young urban majority. The children we engage

with have become the most important group on the continent.

Objectives:

The key objectives of the forum are:

- To review the situation of street children in the West Africa Region through country reports and situation analyses prepared and circulated by delegates before the forum;
- To provide opportunities for networking and sharing of experiences among organizations working with street children, and to strengthen dialogue and partnerships between CSOs and governments;
- To identify specific human rights abuses of street children through focused working group sessions on issues affecting the rights of street-living and street working children that are prevalent in each region, and to exchange examples of good practice in order to address these violations;
- To formulate a joint statement of action-oriented recommendations providing practical strategies to (further) promote and protect the rights of street children in each region, with a focus on accelerated implementation of social development and poverty alleviation programme targeting the specific needs of street children.

Opening Remarks:

The official opening of the conference was presided over by the Minister for Manpower Development and Employment, Hon Yaw Barima. In a statement read on his behalf by the Minister HE President John Agyekum Kufuor, it was observed that the horrendous situation of street children is of major concern to governments of the sub-region. He remarked that the statistics provided by CAS in the book "The Ghanaian Street Child", painted a grim picture for the entire sub-region.

President Kufuor therefore praised the regional dimensions of the forum and expressed hope that it would give rise to more effective interventions for street children and to recommendations that governments of the sub-region could make use of when reviewing their child-focused policies.

He pointed out that Ghana had adhered to its international obligations, to address the problem of street children through wealth generation programmes geared at making rural communities more attractive. He also asked NGOs and other organisations to support government programmes and pay special attention to the issues of reconciliation and reintegration.

Bro. Jos welcomed all participants and explained how CAS came to be established. He said, in order to make headway in dealing with the complexity of street children's issues, the

children must be made to feel that they are accepted as they are and their rights accepted. He expressed concern about the apparent lack of sensitivity in addressing the issue of reintegration, especially in light of the fact that some 86% of street children are on the streets as a result of family breakdown.

Note: CAS will officially present the Report of the forum to the Ministers dealing with children affairs and other relevant bodies.

ON THE STREETS OF ACCRA.

To open the forum, participants undertook a full day's field study and visited CAS' administrative headquarters, their House of Refuge and 4 street areas within the Accra/ Tema Metropolis.

Feedback from field study – participants upon completing the field study were asked to provide feedback and comments, below are some of the main points drawn from field study evaluations.

- The children have the freedom of choice in determining their future;
- The children have setup "Susu" saving schemes.
- Boys in some areas form associations for the resolution of minor conflicts; more serious problems are referred to older people in the streets;
- The children have a strict code of ethics, which attracts penalties if flouted;
- Street children are taught to be independent through outreach programmes and street corner education programmes;
- Networking helps to make street interventions more effective, as was evidenced from CAS and SAID's collaboration with other agencies in the field;
- Working with street children is a long-term commitment that requires systematic programming;
- The level of professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm exhibited by the fieldworkers, combined with their obvious concern for the children and local knowledge, was admirable and very inspiring;
- Interaction with the children shows that contrary to general public perception of them as criminals, they are intelligent and determined individuals who have refused to succumb to poverty. They demonstrate a strong vision and aim to survive and in many cases to also support their families and siblings – all they lack was the opportunities needed to help fulfil this.

Ghana Country Report Recommendations:

Some of the recommendations from research conducted on street children require little or no money. Others need significant investments by the Ghanaian government and the donor

community. But if we fail to act now, the long-term cost will be even greater. NGOs are providing assistance and training to some of today's street children, but the majority are being left to fend for themselves. While some will find their way, others are likely to spend a formative period of their lives on the margins of society. Some will fall completely outside those margins, and no-one can yet measure the social repercussions of this. What is needed above all is political recognition of the growing street children phenomenon. The majority are on the streets through no fault of theirs, but the phenomenon is becoming so acute that NGOs are unable to cope with the sheer numbers. Accra is not the only city that is rapidly becoming overwhelmed by the exodus, and yet more children are coming, lured on by the survival of those already on the streets. Therefore, while Vision 2020 is a laudable goal, it remains meaningless to the street children of today.... And tomorrow.

FIVE KEY/ THEMATIC ISSUES IN RELATION TO STREET CHILDREN WERE DISCUSSED.

Street Children's Access to Education. The objectives of this session were:

- To explore the reasons why some children drop out of school to take to street life.
- To identify good practices of work with str, ch. in providing access to basic education, (both formal/non-formal education and life skills).
- To identify obstacles and gaps on projects providing education (by looking at the training of street educators and the methodologies of street education).
- To find ways of involving the educational sector in structuring educational programmes for street children.
- To look at current challenges/issues surrounding education policies for street children and suggest recommendations for improved policies and practices, providing where possible examples of good practices of work in this area on the West Africa region.

Street children and Health. The objectives of this session were:

- To identify the particular health problems faced by street children, looking particular at HIV/AIDS (children orphaned and made homeless by AIDS); malnutrition, malaria and other common diseases, drug and solvent abuse affecting street children in the region.
- To list examples of good practices of work with street children in the area of health, obstacles and gaps faced by organisations providing healthcare to street children.
- To critically examine how best to involve professionals in the health sector to ensure that street children receive all-round

good medical care.

Street children and Appropriate Skills Development/ Income Generation.

The objectives of this session were:

- To identify good practices of work with street children in the area of appropriate skills development and income generation (methodologies of projects that result in income generation, credit and saving schemes, etc.
- To list the key challenges/gaps within this programming area.
- To come up with specific recommendations and potential implementing actors.

Street children and Reintegration Issues.

The objectives of this session were:

- To identify current policies on the reintegration of street children into communities/families in the region undertaken by NGOs, INGOs, Governments and UN agencies.
- To give examples of the successes, failures, and gaps relating to these policies on reintegration.
- To explore and list alternatives for street children who cannot be reintegrated, providing solutions and recommendations on this issue.

Street children in Conflict Zones. The objectives of this session were:

- To explore the direct links between street children and conflict (recruitment of street children as child soldiers, demobilisation of these children once conflict has stopped, etc) and the indirect links between street children and conflict (children orphaned by war and left without a family and home, violence endured by street children during war and the displacement of children).
- To look at what happens to existing street children as a result of conflicts and attempt to identify good practices of work with them.
- To look at gaps and obstacles facing organisations working in this area
- To examine the capacity of NGOs, working with governments, to disarm and reintegrate these children into mainstream society.

RESOLUTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS ON PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF STREET CHILDREN.

Preamble:

The delegates of five West African Anglophone countries present at the Civil Society Forum on Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Street Children held in Accra, Ghana from October 21-24, 2003, recognising that-

- Street Children have the right to be in the streets and be protected.
- Nearly half of Africa lives in towns and cities.
- Half of Africa is under age of 16 years.
- The problems of Street Children are many and very complex.
- The Street Children problem is a social problem and not only an economic problem.
- The problems of people living in the streets have arisen as a result of the disintegration of our once enviable extended family system.
- In West Africa many Street Children are on the streets and cannot be re-integrated because of family breakdown; several are born in the streets.
- The majority live in absolute poverty due to declining economic fortunes and political instability.
- Urbanisation and rural urban migration continue at a rate as a desperate survival strategy measure for the poor.
- Our children of today are our assets for the future.

And having undertaken comprehensive field studies of the situation of street children in Accra, Ghana as an epitome of our local situation and having observed some models of good practices and intervention mechanisms to assist street children and having deliberated and shared experiences on our local situations and peculiar needs, have identified the commonalities in our socio-economic, cultural and political situations especially as they impact on the promotion and protection of the rights of street children.

In particular, we acknowledge that the rights of street children could be better protected under the prevailing circumstances because our countries are signatories to the major international initiatives directed towards improving the rights of children.

Furthermore, we acknowledge that our countries have or are in the process of domesticating the CRC and the ACRWC while there are other local legislations and or policies, which are directed at promoting and protecting the rights of children generally and the rights of street children in particular.

Recognising however that international instruments and local laws are not fully implemented due to a myriad of reasons such as political will and or weak implementation mechanisms

and structures, this forum focussed on five critical themes affecting street children.

After exhaustive deliberations, the delegates resolve and recommend the following:

Education: We urge Governments to strengthen the policy on the 6-3-3-4 systems, through the provision of quality teachers and equipment specifically targeting vulnerable children.

Education to street children should be free, accessible, appropriate and of high quality. Remove all obstacles (such as invisible fees & cultural beliefs and practices) that deny street children access to education.

Governments should allocate adequate resources to schools in rural areas. Teachers should be paid incentives to entice them to accept postings to rural areas.

Conclusion: The delegates to the forum request that:

1. Relevant government ministries should accommodate street children in their educational programmes.

2. International bodies such as ECOWAS, UNESCO, UNICEF should lobby governments and provide materials and financial support.

Health: Systems and structures be put in place to ensure that street children have access to free/affordable health services.

Lobby Governments and other stakeholders for street-children-friendly application of health policies. Psychosocial



counselling and rehabilitation.

NGOs should protect the children and assist them. Health personnel should be trained to deal with street children.

Conclusion: The delegates to the forum request that:

1. NGOs working with and for street children should ensure health lessons for street children. These lessons should be very informative.

2. International bodies should lobby for requisite support to be extended to NGOs and Government agencies in running health programmes.

3. Relevant Government ministries should ensure health care for street children. The service should be accessible and free.

Appropriate Skills Development and Income Generation:

Basic literacy & numeracy skills should be made an integral part of skills-training programmes.

A thorough market survey should be conducted to identify appropriate skills suitable for the economy.

Govt should introduce policies, which encourage both private sector and NGOs to operate street child friendly micro-credit schemes on completion of their training.

Workable and feasible policies should be put in place.

Conclusion: The delegates to the forum request that:

1. NGOs working with and for street children should look at appropriate skills for street children in more holistic way and should be innovative in the implementation. They should also ensure that trades are marketable.

2. Private bodies or industries should be encouraged to develop more interest in street children issues.

3. Relevant Government ministries should provide appropriate technology needed for successful implementation of skills training and encourage industry to work with and assist street children with jobs.

Reintegration of street children:

Adequate preparation of the street worker is crucial to building a relationship with street children. Regular and continuous presence of the organization's staff on the street helps build trust and confidence.

There should be collaboration and partnering amongst all service providers working with street children.

Education on these issues should be in print and electronic



media. Re-integration into families should be encouraged where necessary but should not be over-stretched.

Conclusion: The delegates to the forum request that:

1. NGOs working with and for street children should ensure that programmes are well planned for sustainable future.
2. International bodies should lobby for support in helping NGOs to achieve results.

Street children in Conflict Zones.

Pressure must be brought to bear against all warring factions that recruit street children. Furthermore the rewards of child soldiering should be deglamourised so as to deceive or entice children.

Establishment of support structures for children separated from family friends and community by war.

More rehabilitation programmes psychosocial counselling, anger-management, and a database to track ex child soldiers who are on the street.

Improved communication management on DDRR packages, and existing programmes should be modified to

become more street child friendly.

Conclusion: The delegates to the forum request that:

1. International bodies should lobby against child conscription and be more supportive to the victims.
2. Relevant Government ministries should be seen to play the leading role in programmes designed to rehabilitate children in conflict zones.

These are parts of the 49 pages report

Other news:

- CAS has prepared a plan for the coming five years.
- Mr. Charles Baffoe attended in March a similar forum in Egypt.
- We have harvested the first fish from the fishpond at Hopeland.

NEWSLETTER NO. 33 JUNE 2004 IMPROVEMENTS IN APPROACH

The rainy season has started in Accra with great consequences for the street children. As you are aware, most of the street children sleep on verandas or on markets and lorry parks. During the rainy season, when it rains, the children have to stand against walls of buildings and cannot sleep. During the day, when they visit the House of Refuge many children sleep on mats or on benches and do not take part in the activities of the house.

Many Children:

There has been a tremendous increase in attendance of new children visiting the House of Refuge. The increase has come about as a result of intensification of fieldwork activities in our operational areas. Majority of these children are operating in areas like Circle, Kaneshie and C.M.B.

According to CAS registration, over two hundred new children have visited us during the last two months. Their ages range between 10 and 18 years. Some of the work they do on the street include driver mate, carrying of goods and hawking. Some sell small items such as polythene bags, biscuits or plantain chips. At the House of Refuge, facilitators and social workers are encouraging them to go through the demonstration and educational programs. They are also educated on the rules and regulation governing the center. In a related development, 40 children are prepared for Hopeland training center. At Hopeland they will stay for a period of six months.

The Departments:

CAS is still improving the structure and setup of the various departments. This process started in 1999 and we envisage that it will take four to five years more to complete.

Each department has a head and an assistant head as well as an officer who keep the finances. The assistant head can do this at times.

The Heads of departments report monthly to the management of CAS. This reporting is mostly done via the computers, which are on a network. This method saves printing and paper. The Heads are advised to use a particular format, which shows the staff involved, as well as the children who took part in the activities. This sounds easier than it is in reality. For instance, the Heads have to write the names of the children similarly. But the problem is that the children do not always use the same name. Therefore the assistance of the secretary is needed. She keeps the daily registration of the children and the department heads should use these names appropriately.

Another problem occurs when one worker records the child as a new visitor while the child has visited CAS before. On several occasion we meet children bearing the same name. Then only the hometown can explain the difference. Our database has 3818 names of street children after the ghost names were removed.

The fieldwork department issues invitation cards to new street children they meet in the streets. We have reported these numbers in the book "The Ghanaian Street Child". It stands at 20,000 children and these figures covers the period of June 1999- June 2004. We could continue with this method, but we are aware it does not give an accurate picture of the number of street children in the streets. Therefore we have started a new method, which begins this June 2004 and ends in December 2004. We will report on it in our December issue.

The fieldwork department also tries to improve the street corner education program. This education takes place at meeting points and at the mini refuges. Difficulties have arisen in the mini refuges at Madina and at Ashaiman.

At Madina the street children are not constant and it becomes difficult to meet the children during the day. At Ashaiman a new market has been opened which is close to the mini refuge. We hope that eventually more street children will visit the Ashaiman mini refuge. The fieldwork staff have to pay more attention to these areas to improve the activities.

The education department uses the newly developed teaching aids. These are based on the Montessori system. We had to

develop our own system because the existing methods are not suitable for street children. The course is not complete as yet, but two thirds is ready. Recently we employed a new teacher for Hopeland. The former teacher became a pastor in his church and could not combine the two jobs. This new teacher has to learn how to use the teaching aids. He also has to get used to the street children.

The demonstration department received many orders of items such as candles, ceramic items and carvings. We have employed another ex-street child as a carver so that the items can be made in time.

Fortunately many street children still want to leave the streets and learn a trade. Our approach and preparation are time consuming. We are aware of this, but our experience proves that it is the only way to succeed. Children who are prepared at the House of Refuge are first invited to go to Hopeland Training Center. At the moment 22 children are at the center.

They stay for a period of six months before going to school or workshop and "new" children should be ready to move to Hopeland. In practice it does not work that smoothly. Either we send the children too early with the result that Hopeland staff has a lot of problems with the children, or we send them too late.

Although donors have given us the promise to sponsor a certain number of children it is not easy to reach the number of children in time. For us it is not such a problem, but of course the donor want to see that the money is used. We on the other hand can only start preparing the children when we are sure of the financial support.

Job Descriptions:

In order to improve the work at the departments we have improved the job descriptions for all members of staff. Jobs available in street-children NGOs are different from those in other social welfare organizations for instance. Therefore these jobs have to be well described. We have also re-examined the "Personnel Guide" which we developed some years ago. The present circumstances have compelled us to add clauses on sicknesses and death as well as redeployment and resignation. We hope that all members of staff will understand that the NGO as an organization has to be protected as well.

Next month we will evaluate the first six months of the year. The above, mentioned documents would be examined as well. The main aim is that the departments will have the courage to evaluate themselves. Plans were made at the beginning of the



year, how many of these plans are being carried out and are they operating according to the budget.

We have signed a contract with a consultant firm to train the heads and assistant heads in a different bookkeeping system, which can be kept on the computers. At the end of this month the training will start. We hope that the updating of the computers will be ready by that time. Some of the parts had to be ordered abroad and this takes time.

Website:

SCA is assisting CAS in updating the Website. The site gets a different layout showing information on street children and the activities of the six departments.

It has also links to our partner organizations as well as donors who are supporting street children.

<http://www.btinternet.com/~CAS/>

INTERNET CAFÉ:

We reported earlier that with the support of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Accra, we were changing from the dial-

up Internet connection to a DSL type. The project was supposed to be implemented between the first of November 2003 and November 2004. However the project has since been completed ahead on schedule, and the final report has been approved in the first week of June 2004.

Currently as a result of this project, CAS is hooked to the Internet for 24 hours. Staff and children are now benefiting from this project. Some of benefits are; sharing of documents through computers, improvement in communication and access to a lot of information and street children who visit our center can now have access to the Internet. As a result of this, some street children are learning how to receive and/send emails. We believe with this project in place, there is going to be a massive improvement in terms of efficiency in communication and in our general operations.

Very soon we will start linking up children who visit us to the street children somewhere else; for instance in Kenya. We have plans to somehow generate some income from the Internet Café in order to sustain its operation and also get some funds for the Education Department of CAS. There is therefore the need to acquire more computers.

In addition to the DSL Internet connection, we also benefited from a used Motorbike for the street corner education program. There has been a lot of improvement in the monitoring of the program due the purchase of the Motorbike. The street corner education Coordinator can now move easily to monitor teaching which is carried on at various points in Accra and Ashaiman in the Greater-Accra region of Ghana.

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT:

Over the years we have realized the impact sports have played and continues to play in the realization of our over-all objectives; thus empower the street children to be able to re-integrate into the mainstream society. As a result, sports have featured prominently in our programs, because it attracts the children to the center in the first place.

Last year, we decided to develop the sports sector by improving the Volleyball/basketball courts and soccer pitch at the main refuge at Lartebiokorshie and the Hopeland center at Ashaiman near Tema all in the Greater-Accra region of Ghana. The development agenda also included acquiring sports kits likes jerseys, footballs, basket/volleyballs, ping-pong sets, soccer boots, training shoes among others. The project is about 80% completed and it is visible at the center with some neat

basketball posts, volleyball posts with new nets at the refuge. We are very grateful to the donors; Foundation of African sports development, Wild Geese and Equal Opportunity Fund.

Walk the Walk:

A workshop was organized by Street Child Africa in conjunction with Daughters of Charity in Kumasi to introduce participants to new approaches in doing street work and also to train street workers to be trainers. It was under the theme “walk the walk”: An introduction to street work. The workshop consisted of four areas. The first part dealt with the topic; thinking about doing street work. This focused on the individual or organization that wants to do street work. In her presentation, the course facilitator Denise McEvoy said before one starts to do street work, some basic questions should be answered such as why you want to do it, the need to do it, the target group, who else is doing it, where the children come from, how many are they and what locations they can be found.

Some of the participants were trained in how to become trainers themselves. The workshop was beneficial for experienced as well as new staff.

We report briefly on: INTERACTIVE THEATRE:

Theater for a change in collaboration with Action-Aid Ghana and British Council organized a 6 months workshop for some NGOs in Ghana including CAS. The main aim was to train and build the capacity of trainees to educate the youth around HIV/AIDS through interactive theatre performances.

The workshop really helped the trainees to acquire knowledge, skills and facts around HIV/AIDS in Ghana and other countries. Through the project they have been able to impact this into other people for the growth and sustainability of the project. We have finally examined that people need to change their behavior towards HIV/AIDS and this can be curb with another technique of allowing people to exhibit their behaviors in public for other people to learn.

We have planned to integrate this program into the activities in CAS to sustain it and educate the street children through the theatre performances. The first phase has been completed and hopes to begin the second phase in September. It has been a great chance and experience for the staff of CAS who took part.

- Donation Parish in Veghel. We received a donation of clothing from the Parish of the town where bro. Jos was born. The donation was very well taken care of and we are very

grateful to them.

- Videos. A few organizations visited CAS and made videos of the activities of CAS. We are happy that the makers were all satisfied with the results. We hope that the footage will improve the rights of street children.

NEWSLETTER NO. 34 DECEMBER 2004
STREET CHILDREN AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES
STREET CHILDREN AND CHILD TRAFFICKING
STREET CHILDREN AND HIV/AIDS.

This is a special issue of CAS' newsletter. We want to high light the above mentioned issues, issues which are very popular at the moment. We are often confronted with reports and other publications of children who are used as child laborers, children who are trafficked and children who have AIDS. We have always accepted these reports as truthful and no questions have been asked about their authenticity.

Therefore, in this issue we want to report on these issues and write about the opinions of our members of staff, about the opinions of the street children and some members of the Board of Advisors. To make it clear, our report concentrates on street children, children who are not supported by anyone and are below the age of 19 years of age. We do not write about children



in general because we have not investigated these issues on a larger scale.

STREET CHILDREN AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES/CHILD LABOUR.

Members of staff:

CAS has 53 members of staff. Most of them are already more than ten years working with and for street children. Majority of them work on daily basis with the street children in Accra or Ashaiman.

Since 1995, street children have been given the opportunity to learn trades, either in schools or in workshops. Still, we wonder whether we offer the correct trades to the children or give the correct advice to them. During the nine years that CAS has been supporting street children in terms of sponsorship we have cooperated with many workshop managers and tradesmen who have trained “our” children. These workshops are situated within the Accra metropolis and other nearby towns.

The trades which street children choose to learn are all good provided the child is capable to start something on his/her own on completion of the training. Not all children are capable. During the preparation period we discovered that. Those who cannot work on their own have to choose trades which are marketable. Unfortunately, Ghana has a high unemployment rate. Marketable trades at the moment are those in the aluminum, electronic and information technology, the transport and tourism industries and even in the agric sector, in particular animal husbandry.

The employment age is 16 years for light labor and 18 for normal jobs. Street children who are too young and still want to work are often used as cleaners and errand boys/girls. Fortunately, many employers are willing to help poor children.

In order to find jobs it is important that the child speaks English. It is also advisable that they can read and write.

Most of the masters we know do treat the children well, however, we have to continue creating the awareness about street children. The program depends on effective follow up. When our workers visit the children regularly the masters know that we care.

Some of the children go to school and follow either basic education or continue on the level they dropped out. When they are too old to follow primary education we should be careful in placing them in these schools. They could be stigmatized by the

other children. Some of the children have performed very well and are now continuing their education at higher levels. Some of them are very brilliant and should be encouraged to continue.

The problem at the moment is that higher education has become very expensive and CAS as a NGO (charity) cannot afford sending children to these schools.

We at CAS have not met any street child who was forced to work. However, we know there are children who are used and do child labor but they are not in the streets of the city.

Opinion of street children.

Opinion of some Members of the Board of Advisors.

Conclusion:

STREET CHILDREN AND TRAFFICKING.

It is important to understand what is meant by the words; trafficking and slavery. Both acts are criminal.

By Trafficking we understand that the child is sold to somebody who exploit and abuse the child.

Children who are Slaves are in fact “prisoners” and have to work for others.

With this in mind we have to say that we met only a few street children who complain that they have been sold or that they were forced to work for someone.

In Ghana, and also elsewhere it is the practice that children are given to employers to learn something. This is a common practice in the agric/fishing industry. At times children are also given to workshop managers who use them as cheap labor. At times children are forced to sell items for somebody and have to hand over the proceeds. We are of the opinion that the above mentioned terms are too heavy to be used in describing these practices.

Often, not to say always, the parents are aware where the children are and what they do. Often the children are allowed to go home to visit the parents, always the children are fed.

However, we meet a number of street children who do like to learn and have run away from their “employer”. These children cannot go back to their parents because they will return them to their workplace.



In our Exodus report we also used the term slavery. Now, however, we realize that this term is wrongly used.

REPORTS FROM STREET CHILDREN.

From Yaw Dadzie 16 years from Abura Dunkwa in the central region of the republic of Ghana. He lost his parents through a motor accident when he was nine years old. Unfortunately, the grandmother who was catering for him also passed away when he fourteen years. Life back home was very difficult to grapple with. He was later sent to live with an uncle at Mankessim. While at Mankessim, he met friends who mooted the idea of traveling together to Accra to work and support themselves. On reaching Accra, they were using Agbogbloshie as their place of abode. According to him, two months after their arrival in Accra, they bumped into a man who offered to assist them to get more

money and promised to send them to Togo and work. Yaw went further to say that on reaching the Aflao border, they were apprehended by plain cloth Policemen and according to them the man is among a syndicate who has been trafficking children across the frontiers to be sold into slavery and has been on police wanted list for two years. Subsequently, they were sent down to Accra and were handed over to the Department of social welfare who kept them at the Osu remand home and re-unite them back with their families.

Awudu Issaka, 16 years from Takyiman in the Brong Ahafo region of the republic of Ghana was a victim of child trafficking. According to him he was lured to Accra by a man called Alhadji to assist him to get a job. On reaching Accra, the man asked him to travel with him to Lome to see a business partner. While in Lome, he overheard the man telling his so called business partner in Hausa dialect that the boy would be sold at a higher price in Nigeria and would travel early the next morning to transact business. According to Issaka not only has he heard from them that they are going to sell him than he quickly told the Alhadji that he would like to visit the gents and bolted away. Fortunately for him, he met two ladies who were speaking Akan and decided to tell them of his problem, subsequently, they reported the case to the Togolese security personnel who effected their arrest. The two men denied vehemently of the charges preferred against them by the boy. According to him, he was sent back to Accra by the two ladies who arranged for a public transport at circle Neoplan station where he was conveyed back to Takyiman to join his family.

Opinion of some Members of the Board of Advisors.

Conclusion:

STREET CHILDREN AND HIV/AIDS.

The street children we are dealing with are below the age of 19.

SICKNESSES	TREATED AT CAS CLINIC-2004												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
ABDOMINAL PAIN	1		1	2	3	1	3	1	2				14
ANAEMIA	1					1							2
APOLLO						1							1
ASTHMA	1	2	1	1									5
BILHARZIA			1	1		1							3
BOIL		1			1	3		2	1				8
CHICKEN POX		1											1
COUCH	9	5	6	2	4	5	5		6				42
DIARRHEA	1		2		2		5	7	2				19
EAR PAIN			1	1		2	2	2					8
EYE PROBLEMS				4		3	1	1					9
HEADACHE						1							1
HERNIA	1												1
MALARIA	14	6	10	4	3	15	6	13	6				77
NECK PAIN		2											2
PAINFULL LEGS	1	1				3	2	1	1				9
PNEUNOMIA		1											1
PREGNANCY	2		1										3
RING WORM							2						2
SKIN RASHES	3		3		4	8	5	5	6				34
TINEA				3									3
TOOTHACHE					1								1
WAIST PAIN				3									3
WORMS	12			2				3					17
WOUND	8	8	9	5	3	12	11	11	9				76
STD					2	2	1	2					7
ABORTION					1								1
SPRAIN									1				1
TOTAL	54	27	35	28	24	58	43	48	34	0	0	0	351

It is internationally agreed that we talk about children when somebody is not older than 18 years.

CAS operates a clinic at the House of Refuge. Records are kept and reports written. During the eleven years of operation, no street child has reported or been diagnosed with the sickness HIV or AIDS. Even there are very few who have STDs. This is understandable because most of the children we know are very young. Even when they have the sickness it only appears after a number of years. Unfortunately, three young persons died, but all of them were in their twenties.

Youngsters who are sick at times go home to be with their families during the last years of their lives. This explains why we do not meet street children who have HIV or AIDS.

There are some clinics in Accra who assist persons who have AIDS. We direct sick street persons to them.

However, many street children are involved in child prostitution. These are boys and girls who offer themselves for sex in return for a fee. Many, means over 80% of the children. This is a disturbing development. Homosexuality is very common between the ages of 12 to 18.

Because of these developments, we have intensified our street corner education especially the health education. Most of this education takes place in the streets and there the impact is very difficult to measure, but we are convinced that some learn how to take care of themselves. We know this by observing the reactions of the children during the training sessions.

There are different NGOs who are involved in health education in the streets. They do not teach all the same message and this at times confuses children. We think that it is important that these NGOs come to an agreement as to how to educate street children and street persons.

The children:

Agnes Anim 16years is also a victim of child prostitution. According to her, she comes from Bekwai in the Ashanti region of the republic of Ghana. Agnes came down to Accra with an auntie in 2002 to work to support themselves and the family back home. According to her, the initial intention was to sell oranges but after some few months in that business they

decided to switch to prostitution, since the prostitution was fetching them a whole lot of money. Agnes mentioned that they operate around circle and earn between 80000-120000 cedis per night, but had to pay between 30000- 40000 for using a make-shift brothel. When quizzed as to whether she uses condom to protect herself from contracting STD/HIV she replied in the negative. According to her, initially, she was operating without the use of any condom but with the health education lessons she received from some teachers who have been coming to circle, she decided to use condoms to protect herself from contracting the deadly virus and other sexually transmitted diseases. She went on further to say that, the money she earns from the prostitution business is used to buy some few belongings and also to remit other relations back home.

According to Fatimatu Alimatu, she is 16 years old and comes from Agona Swedru in the central region of the republic of Ghana. She came to Accra in about two years ago, precisely 2002 with a friend from the same town. On reaching Accra, they were using CMB, as their place of abode. Initially, they decided to sell iced water to support them but realized that was not fetching them enough money to cater for their needs. According to her some of the girls who sell iced water are always in nice clothing and spend lavishly and did not understand why, one of them revealed the secret behind their business. According to them, some of the girls sell iced water during the day practice prostitution during the evenings and can do same to enable her earn enough money if only she is prepared to that which she replied in the affirmative. According to her that same evening, she was introduced into the business and according to her she earns between 80000-120000 per night and see the business to be more lucrative than learning a skill to support themselves in future.

NEWSLETTER NO. 35 MAY 2005 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Children of special need.

After 12 years of interacting with street children, CAS comes now in contact with street children of the second generation, those born in the streets. Unfortunately, these children often do not know their father and have come in contact with the various problems of the streets such as; crime, prostitution, drug addiction, etc.

Often, these children are not disciplined. They have behavioural problems. Majority is between the ages of 7 to 14 years. We at CAS do not know how to deal with these children as yet. We therefore have decided to conduct a research on these children. We call them "children with special need". This research will be conducted over a period of two years. After the research, CAS



will decide on how to proceed with these children. Hopeland training centre will be used for this research. Children who need to have special attention will be invited to go to Hopeland. A program will be made for them which will be more extended than the program for those who are preparing to go on sponsorship. CAS has employed two more social workers who have strengthened the staff at Hopeland.

Marketing:

In order to become more interdependent of donor support, CAS has decided to make two departments more self reliant. The aim is to increase the production of the farm as well as that of the demonstration department, to make Hopeland training centre and the demonstration department more self reliant.

In reality it means that CAS has to make a better choice of products or animals it produces in the farm and for the demonstration department, to decide which products are marketable.

CAS has a reasonable good foreign market. Products which are produced by the children are bought and sold by so called "third world shops". Unfortunately, the local market is not explored sufficiently. Therefore, the members of the demonstration

department want to learn more about production and marketing so that the ceramics and candle making workshops become income generating. However, the sale of “Easter Candles” was a big success and many orders have been received already for the coming season.

Marketable trades.

The research conducted during the ten years existence of CAS on the sponsorship program revealed that CAS has to give better advice to children who want to learn a trade. Traditional trades, such as carpentry, masonry, hair-dressing and sewing are not marketable any longer. The reasons are: changes in building methods, availability of electricity and un-employment in Ghana.

New trades have to be introduced to the street children. They include; aluminium frame constructions, cosmetology, electronics, computer science, and catering among others. Therefore, CAS organises excursions to various workshops and factories. CAS also wants to capture various trades on video, so that they could be shown to street children who visit the house of refuge.

Health education.

During the past twelve years, CAS has conducted many health education classes, in the streets, at the House of Refuge as well as in Hopeland training centre. A special course has been designed for that purpose. This course will be printed so that more people can benefit from it. Although this education takes place often, street children learn the content but the matter does not penetrate.

For instance, many know about the dangers of HIV and AIDS, but still get involved in the sex trade. Young girls as well as boys practice it.

We at CAS are alarmed by the growing number of children who are becoming involved. Again, we are not sure as to how to tackle this problem. Simple teaching does not change their behaviour. In the past we have tried the peer to peer education. Unfortunately, it was not very successful. Street children are a so called “Fluid” population. Street children are not stationary, they move from place to place from town to town. Of course, they will pass on their knowledge, but this individual approach is not very effective.

Literacy training:

During the past three years CAS has developed teaching materials for the literacy training which takes place in the streets, at the House of Refuge and at Hopeland Training Centre. The course has been tested and teachers have been

trained. At least two years more are needed to improve this course and to multiply the materials. We also have plans to add lessons in arithmetic and mathematics because several children who have been trained and are now working in a trade, still experience difficulties in measuring and counting.

Internet connection.

CAS has now a number of Pentium three computers for the children in the library as well as in Hopeland training Centre.

The computers are on a network and can be connected to the Internet. During classes children are taught using an adapted Montessori method.

The children are able to continue with these lessons on the computers, using educational games which are in line with the teaching method.

In this way children learn how to read and write in the English Language and learn how to calculate. Unfortunately, many teachers should be available during the manual classes as well as during the computer lessons. In fact street children receive more or less individual training at CAS.

We have plans to bring street children in contact with other children using the Internet. First, we will prepare letters, drawings and photographs before contacting others. Street children need more training in English before attempting direct contact. At a later stage we could try the chatting method.

Also the departments are joined on the network. Exchange of reports and financial statements can now be done easier.

Some stories from the street:

New children were introduced to fieldworkers by children who already know about CAS. This greatly helps the fieldworker as the old children go further to tell the new ones about the activities of CAS. They sometimes even pay their transportation to bring the new ones to the House of Refuge. A number of girls are also met but all they are interested in is hawking. Fieldworkers will continue to interact with them to win their confidence and introduce them to the House of Refuge.

Some smaller street children face problems in the street. Bigger boys have been preventing them carrying loads at that particular place. According to them this has gone on for a long time and that they no longer wanted to be treated that way. They felt since they are all on the streets they all have the right to work. Upon intervention from the fieldworker responsible for the area, the bigger boys agreed that the little ones work but on condition

that they give them tips at the end of the day.

One significant feature is that the children are often at the entrance of the mini refuge before fieldworkers get there.

Most of the children are interested in the games and there have been times when they fight over a particular game. This at times makes the fieldworker to take the game away to bring peace.

A number of girls from C.M.B have also been introduced to the House of Refuge. The social worker at the House of Refuge has been informed accordingly, as most of them are involved in commercial sex to earn a living.

Reports from Ashaiman indicates that the mini refuge is being well patronized by the children. One boy, the fieldworker met, narrated how he had to leave home and come to the streets because of maltreatment from the step mother. According to him, his father divorced his mother about two years ago and remarried. Since that time he had not known any peace because the woman continuously harassed him.

A fieldworker reports that she has come into contact with a large number of boys at a place called Tulaku. The place is an area where people send their livestock for slaughter.

The boys there assist in carrying the carcass and run errands for people who come to transact business. Upon interacting with them, it came out that they all live and work on the streets without any parental control.

At Agboghloshie mini refuge, during the lessons we took them through life skills, literacy and health education. On life skills we handled them on topics like money management, comparing pictures and listening well. With the issue of literacy we used materials like phoenix flickers, letter box alphabet box, blend dominoes and picture word game.

During the past months, CAS lost two members of staff and one member of the Board of Advisors. May they rest in peace.

OBITUARY-- ADJETEY ANNANG-WORKED FOR CAS FROM 1999-2005

Adjetey was employed in 1999 as an Assistant Security officer. Though employed as a security officer he also had an additional responsibility as a messenger, who usually goes to the bank to cash our cheques. He was very humble and thus won the admiration of both staff and children of the organization.



Unfortunately, Adjete could not survive a serious ailment, which attacked him around the latter part of the year 2004 and thus died on the 9th of January 2005.
May his soul rest in peace. Adjete Annang -9th Jan. 05

JEMIMA SOSUH (MRS) WORKED FOR CAS FROM 1994-2005

Jemima was one of the oldest among CAS' staff. She started working for CAS as a Field Worker and through "on the job training" became one of the dependable three secretaries of the organization. After almost one year of protracted a sickness, Jim departed on the 9th of January 2005, the same day as Adjete. Jim died at the age of 34. She left behind a husband and three children.

CAS would miss the services of Jemima as long as we continue to exist as an organization. 9th January 2005 would forever remain a sad day for us after losing two members of staff. May her soul rest in peace.
Jemima Sosuh -9th Jan. 05

OBITUARY

Mr. John Ayevor as we all called him at CAS has been one of the longest and oldest members of the Board of Advisors (1993-2005).

As Development Coordinator of the Archdiocese, he was always interested in the developments with street children. Even though of late he has not been regular to attend the meetings because of his sickness, he contacted us regularly. May the



good Lord reward him.

NEWSLETTER NO. 36 OCTOBER 2005 RE-STRUCTURING CAS

CAS has completed more than 12½. Yes, therefore this is the copper jubilee of CAS. You might wonder why the theme “Re-structuring CAS has been chosen for this newsletter?

Although we are 12½ years young, and have been working for and with street children for this period we have reached a stage where the structure and set-up of CAS has to be changed due to the different focus group we meet these days.

In newsletter 35 we explained already that we meet different type of street children. Initially, most street children came from the rural areas of Ghana and beyond, to search for better future. All of them were disappointed and landed into a life of survival. The average age of these children was 14 years. After a few years in the streets, they discovered that they could not stay there forever and the lucky few managed to acquire a job which gave them an income to cater for their daily bread.

Another smaller group came in contact with Street Girls Aid or

CAS and were offered the opportunity to learn a trade. These children were prepared to go to a school or workshop and so enjoyed support from the sponsorship program. But times have changed and so have the street children.

Sometime back, we observed that more and more children could not follow our preparation programs and dropped-out and returned to the streets. We examined this phenomenon and have come to the conclusion that in fact we do not know much about these “new” street children. We observed that the age group has changed. Most of them are not up to 14 years. We observed that their behavior is different. We reported to you previously about these observations.

This made us decide to start a research into children who need to have more attention and a different approach. This research started two years ago. The conclusions of this pilot research have prompted us to re-examine CAS’ set-up and approach.

As most of you know, CAS has six departments which work together to assist the children in various stages of their preparation. Some of these departments have tried to become income generating. Especially Hopeland farm, but also the Demonstration department tried to produce products which could be sold. Because of the involvement of the children this proved to be too difficult. These experiments were carried-out over a period of ten years and our conclusion is that it is not possible to make profits when working for and with children.

From the onset CAS is and will remain “a service provider”. We try to give social services to the street children and concentrate on them.

This approach has prompted us to re-structure CAS. When we want to remain a “service provider” with the main focus being the children, then all activities should be geared toward that.

Child focused means each department has to re-examine the approach. As we mentioned before, we do not know much about these “new” street children. We do not know how they live in town, who their parents are, why they behave the way they do, why they do not have little patience in learning, why they do not listen to anybody, etc.

FIELDWORK.

CAS main activity is the work we do on the streets. Majority of street children are met in the streets. During the past years we have conducted experiments on “Street Corner Education” classes which are given at meeting points and mini refuges. It is now time for us to examine the impact. These lessons are part

of the preparation of the street children.

Running Mini Refuges is quite expensive. Do street children want to visit these refuges? We have observed that often children of poor families are our clients at these mini refuges. Street children are busy doing minor jobs to earn some money for their daily food. Several attempts have been made to develop their interest as well and this proved to be partly successful. Most street corner lessons are however given at the meetings points. The workers go to the children and educate them there. Therefore, should we gradually phase-out the use of these Mini Refuges?

HOUSE OF REFUGE.

The main preparation is done at the House of Refuge. Individual children need to have personal attention. They have to learn how to write, read, and speak a little bit of English. Fortunately, we receive a lot of assistance from part time workers as well as from volunteers and students. But it remains necessary that the teaching staff remains in-charge. This group of workers is very small. Only four teachers are involved. One is a music teacher, another the sports coach and the remaining two are the teachers. When one is on leave or sick we notice that the programs continue but not as it should be. We have to examine the possibility of making street corner facilitators work hand in hand with the teaching staff at the House of Refuge. After all, the teaching should be a continuation, from field to Refuge, from Refuge to Hopeland, from Hopeland to another training centre.

The “development of teaching materials” has gone into its final stage. Two more years are needed to complete them. The literacy materials are almost completed. What remains is the materials for the teaching of numeracy and arithmetic. Computer educational games are excellent additions to the teaching program.

The main requirement is that the computers are in a good condition. We hope to have, at the end of this year, enough Pentium three computers in the House of Refuge as well as at Hopeland for this program. We are experiencing a lot of problems with the supply of electricity. Most often power-supplies or hard disks get damaged because of the power fluctuations. Therefore, more protection equipment is needed but this is very expensive.

Much more attention should be paid to the children while at the House of Refuge. Before a child will be invited to stay at Hopeland, staff should be sure what process this child will go through and how long CAS will take care of this child.

We also have to keep in mind that once the decision has been taken that a child can go to Hopeland, the preparation costs will

increase.

PREPARATION COMMITTEE.

About a year ago we re-organized the “preparation committee”. The members are from various departments and are persons who keep records on the children. Indeed, this committee has understood their tasks. Therefore we have plans to involve them in the various stages of preparation. They should know what happens once the child has left their department and has been passed-on to the other. Often the staff at Hopeland discovers the real problems of children, but then it can be too late.

It is therefore very important that good social survey reports are written about these children. Not only the basic information is needed but the in-depth back ground of them. We have to obtain information on their living condition while on the streets. We have to be sure why they are on the streets.

Social workers who are responsible for these social survey reports need to be assisted by other members of staff to obtain all this information. When two persons are involved in writing these reports we can be surer that they are complete.

Because daily we are with the street children, many members of staff are able to identify the problems of the individual children. Even the administrative staff knows them. The “preparation committee” should make use of this knowledge. So that it becomes a collective approach. All staff are collectively responsible for the well being of the children, not only the ones who are carrying out an activity.

At the House of Refuge children are introduced into several different kinds of trades. Several of the instructors are ex-street children themselves. They have a good relationship with the “new children”, but they have to be assisted in organizing and training of the children. House of Refuge staff, including the volunteers and students, have to re-examine the timetable and activity schedule at the Refuge.

HOPELAND.

Hopeland training centre will experience most of the changes. This centre will have three different activities:

1. Running of the centre and farm activities.
2. Income generating workshop – part of Demonstration department.
3. Taking care and preparing of children at the centre.

1. Since it is difficult to become self-reliant or make profit while keeping animals, we have decided to change it into a demonstration farm. Animals will be kept but in smaller numbers. Different activities will be organized such as dry season gardening on a small scale, tree planting and care, rearing small animals such as grass-cutters, rabbits and snails. These changes will ensure that no extra financial support is needed to allow children to learn how to take care of animals.

2. Many investments have been made for the income generating workshops. Now the time has come to produce and have income. The Demonstration department, together with the management of Hopeland has to re-structure the running of these workshops. Fortunately, the foreign market of our products is improving very well. Efforts are underway to learn how to sell into the local market. We have asked for some expert advice. Members of the department have to learn this aspect of the trade and we will make time available for it.



3. Taking care and preparing the children will be a separate activity. This means, the team working with the children will be responsible for it. They have to choose a leader and make decisions on regulations of the children, their accommodation and feeding, their teaching and other activities. Also they have to budget the costs involved in money and in kind.

The program managers of CAS will assist the various groups to come to good programs and regulations which are understood by all members of staff.

CHANGES.

All these changes proposed, have to be implemented before the end of the year so that in January 2006 CAS can take off in a different setting. This will require the understanding and cooperation of all. We are sure that several members of staff have become workers with a certain routine during the past 12½ years and it will be difficult to accept changes, but these changes are necessary because of the realities on the ground. Let us hope we will succeed.

NEWSLETTER NO. 37 DECEMBER 2005 PLANNING FOR 2006

A few months ago you have received our newsletter – Re-structuring CAS.

Today we want to give you an update and report on the plans for 2006. We have asked each department to discuss their plans. We in turn have asked them how these plans can become a reality.

CAS has three main objectives for 2006 namely:

1. To understand the street children better and obtain more information on their living conditions and experiences.
2. To discover how best these children can be prepared for a better future.
3. To remain a service provider for the street children.

Last year, CAS discussed a five year planning program. This plan for 2006 is the bases for the activities for the year 2006.

FIELDWORK:

The main focus of CAS remains in the streets. Most of the street children can be met there and we want to be available to them. During the past years we have met many street children who have migrated from the rural areas of Ghana and surrounding countries. Therefore personnel operating in the streets concluded that all children are having a similar background.

The second generation of street children, those who are born in the streets are welcome at CAS as well, but we now realize that we do not know enough about the background of these children.

What do I experience when I am born in the street? Who is the parent? Who should I listen to? Who are my friends? How do I survive?

These street children have at a very early age come in contact with crime, drug addiction and prostitution. They do not know anything about their traditional culture. They only know the culture of the streets. Do we at CAS know enough about the culture of the streets? We observe that many street children patronize their freedom. They do not want to be told what to do. They have learnt how to survive. This explains why often the children disappear and return to the environment they know, the streets.

What do we know about the hierarchy in the street?
Street children have to listen to many different people in authority:

- o Officers of the Accra metropolitan assembly – AMA
- o Officers of the GPRTU- transport
- o Persons who control the markets (tax collectors)
- o Queen Mothers (those in charge of markets)
- o Officers of the Potters associations

Often, they belong to groups and the Gang-leaders are in charge.

Those who operate and sleep in particular areas have to listen to the area-leaders. At times they live in groups of the same ethnic background, then the senior tribe leader is in charge. Or children from the same village stay together. It is not always necessary that they are from the same ethnic background, sometimes, they are organized groups who work together and one is in charge.

Girls who are involved in the sex trade are often “controlled” by pimps, but also boys form groups who have homosexual acts together. This is an agreement among themselves.

Street families often have come to Accra to sell certain items usually food items. However, at times the women are also involved in prostitution. Children of these families have little freedom and often do not attend school.

In order to learn more about their conditions and life style we at CAS have decided to concentrate our activities in the streets and at the House of Refuge.

As part of this restructuring for 2006, CAS as an organization has decided to re-examine its working systems in order to stay focus with our view and mission as service provider with the main attention being the children.

PURPOSE

- a) For this new approach a research has to be organized to seek an in-depth background of street children).
 To know more about those born in the streets.
 And know how Street families live in the streets.
- b) Observe the living condition of these children while living in the street. To get to know their parent(s).
- c) To know more about the Hierarchical structure of the street.
- d) To learn more about their behavior. Why they do not have patience for learning and why they do not listen to any body.

Strategies/Methodology

- Interaction with Children
- Daily visitation to the street
- Traveling to locate families
- Interaction with significant others e.g. market traders,
- Street care giver, street father/mothers
- Street colleague
- Use of anthropology students to help study the background of these children.
- Evaluate the impact of activities through a designed format.

The facilitators of Street Corner Education every day meet different children in the streets. Therefore it is extremely difficult to measure the impact of this activity. We are sure that this exercise is beneficial to the children in general but it could be more beneficial if the individual child could be monitored. This can be done at the House of Refuge, but then more hands are needed. In order to achieve this, we have asked field facilitators to assist the staff at the education department. Extra lessons could be given in the afternoons or individual children could be assisted to learn how to write or read.

MINI REFUGES:

The rent of the Mini refuges has not yet expired. Therefore we should make good use of these rooms and determine whether they should be closed at the end of the period.

Each Mini Refuge is different, the environment as well as the use of the refuge is not the same. During the coming period

more efforts will be made to interest street children to visit them.

HOUSE OF REFUGE:

The House of Refuge is the central place from which all activities should be coordinated. Fieldworkers have to report at the Refuge, the Education and Demonstration department as well as the Sponsorship Department are organized from this centre.

The monitoring system has to be improved, the general timetable will be reviewed, and the activity list examined. For all the children who are following a program for the preparation, a format should be designed to monitor their progress.

The department intends to organize group work discussions of all members of staff and volunteers involved. More teaching periods will be organized which includes all subjects. Also other innovative programs could be organized.

The security of the House of Refuge not only includes guarding the property but also advise the children. A new duty rooster has to be made so that the House of Refuge is secure at night but also during the day, this includes the cleaning of the compound and pavement in front of the House of Refuge.

The welfare of the children is important. The health education periods and service at the clinic should continue during the year. Children should be taught how to take their bath and wash their clothing and be told where to go to toilet. These are elementary issues, but street children have never been introduced to them.

DEMONSTRATION DEPARTMENT:

The Demonstration department wants to employ additional instructors for candle-making, weaving and woodcarving, so that the weaving can take off and that the candle-making- and woodcarving-workshop can produce more products.

Equipment and furniture of the candle-making- and ceramic-workshops at Hopeland Training Centre and House of Refuge should be shared. The storage of finished products has to be improved.

Efforts are underway to learn more about marketing especially the local market. CAS sells many of the items made by street children abroad, only a few items are sold locally.

EDUCATION PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The Education department is organizing many activities. However, there are only six members of staff working in this department. Cooperation with other members of staff is therefore essential. As described above, the street corner facilitators will assist the staff in the educational aspects. Often volunteers are assisting as well.

A good timetable, which is respected by all, is a good guide for these activities. This timetable which also includes activities of other departments is essential for a good running of the House of Refuge.

The department wants to improve the computer education, do some Vocational and career counseling, Refurbish the library, start a Pen pal project and continue with:

1. Literacy at three levels.
2. Drama classes, rehearsals and performances
3. Sports at the House of Refuge and Hopeland
4. Music and cultural performance
5. Friday performances
6. Excursions

FAN MILK REPORT AND PLANS

Introduction

Fan milk company ltd / CAS literacy program has been a joint collaboration efforts to assist vendors of Fan milk company ltd to read and write. Three months after a successful commencement of the program another component of the syllabus, which deals with general knowledge, was introduced. This was done in response to urgent need at the time consultation with the then Fan milk company coordinator for the program.

The program since it's commencement in early 1995 has chalked a modest success, been confronted with challenges, and now looks to the future with hope. Many activities were carried out during the period under review. Our report this year will review present literacy activities at the various depots, the number of depots presently, teachers and Fan-Milk management's demands.

DEPOT ACTIVITIES

Though literacy program at the various depots go on as usual the morale boosting keep changing because depot supervisors change from one depot to another thus changing support we get on individual perception of the program. This was supposed to be addressed by fan management because we have during a

number of meetings emphasized our stand on this.

TEACHERS

At the moment we have six teachers and a coordinator from CAS. The teachers are: Ebenezer Duncan, Stephen Agbeve, Joseph Adotey Acquaye, Abraham Fosu, Richard Manyada, Edward Aklamati and John Fosu.

Classes are given at Circle depot, Abossey Okai, at Teshie Depot and at Nungua depot, at Tema depot, Lapas depot, and at Madina depot.

DEPOTS

The numbers of depots for the past five or six years have been reduced to from eight to six. Nima and Kaneshie depot are not on the list any-longer perhaps due to accommodation problems.

MANAGEMENT DEMANDS

A part from the usual literacy class for the vendors there are other subjects that fan managements felt should be given extra attention. These subjects include Marketing techniques and



personal hygiene. Our present syllabus contains these subjects and are used at the depots. But management is of the opinion that emphasis on these should be stressed to meet in total the requirement of the company in line with their literacy program for the vendors.

SPONSORSHIP:

Before a street child can go on sponsorship or be assisted in a different way, a complete social survey report should be written and be verified. This cannot be obtained by the social workers alone. Field staff and others have to assist. Also, the child has to be supervised during his or her training period.

When say 200 street children receive training in various schools or workshops, this supervision can only be done successfully when there are sufficient supervisors. The sponsorship department therefore needs assistance from other members of staff to fulfill this task. Every fortnight a child in training should be visited.

Street children who are in need of more attention will be assisted at the House of Refuge and some of them will be invited to go to Hopeland training centre.

Some of the children could be prepared for sponsorship at the House of Refuge. This approach is a big challenge for the department, could it be done? For sure a lot of cooperation is needed from members of staff of the various departments.

Children are always enthusiastic and ready to go for training. When they are delayed because staff thinks they are not ready as yet, they are very disappointed and at times return to the streets. We the staff know that no promises should be made to the children to avoid these disappointments. The “preparation committee”, representatives of various departments who follow the progress of the individual children and decide on the child’s future, play a crucial role in this matter. Each member of this committee should understand the responsibility.

Schools and workshops should be reselected. CAS works together with approximately 30 schools and 60 workshops. Several of these workshops belong to associations. CAS will approach these associations to obtain their cooperation. By involving the associations, CAS hopes to improve the quality and dedication of the trainers.

Another plan is to upgrade the Lashibi project to a commercial status as well as a training centre and demonstration centre for children. This workshop owned by CAS, could train many more children in various trades.

HOPELAND:

All Staff both at the refuge and the farm should be able to understand and identify individual children who need more attention.

All staff should learn more about the children. Team of professionals to handle/manage children's welfare

Since children are much younger, there would be the need to reschedule for us to give 24hrs attention at Hopeland. This means more social workers would be needed.

The reality is that, much younger children will be at Hopeland, so we have to decide what to do for them.

Three activities will be organized at Hopeland.

1. Farm activities will become a demonstration farm
2. Income generating workshop will be managed by the Demonstration department.
3. Taking care of street children.

1. During the years the farm could not generate income to sustain its self due to the constant increase of agricultural inputs like costs of feed for the animals. The maintenance costs were also very high. The plan to cultivate vegetables throughout the year could not be materialized as well because of lack of rain, even the dam dried up.

In order to allow children come in contact with animals, we have decided to change the farm into demonstration farm. Two farm workers will be employed to take care of the farm.

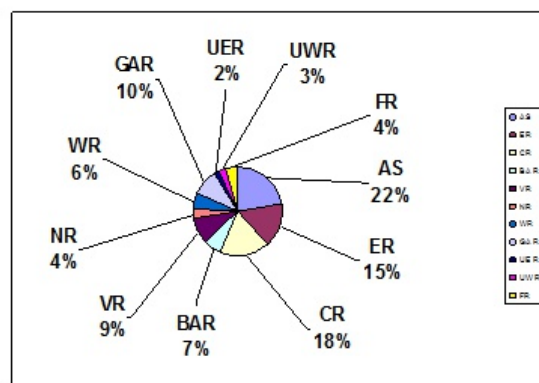
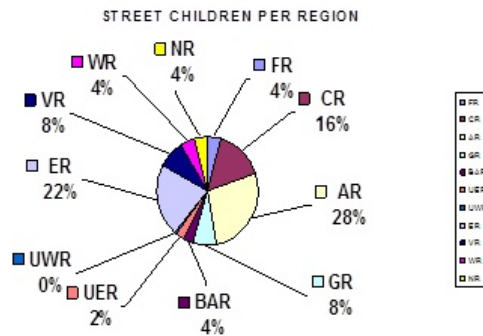
2. Income generating workshop could improve their production. Since the demonstration department does the marketing and introduction of the trade, these workshops could be best managed by them. The Manager of Hopeland still could control the activities on their behalf. A good collaboration between the Heads of the Demonstration department and Hopeland Centre is needed.

3. The welfare of the children lodging at Hopeland will be the main priority. Members of staff assigned for this task should operate as a team. They will be assisted by one of the program managers of CAS.

The preparation committee, the members of staff selecting the children should work hand in hand with this team.

To summarize:

- Limit farm activities-change it into a demonstration farm.
- Buildings which will not be used for the animals will be changed for the use of children.
- Income generating workshops will be part of demonstration department. Production has to increase.
- All children who will be sent to Hopeland will receive more attention.
- Staff working with the children will be directly in charge. They will decide about the program, accommodation, use of materials, feeding and educational program.



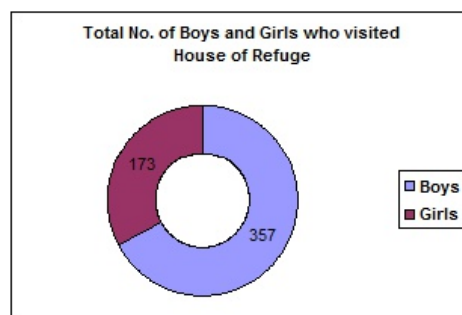
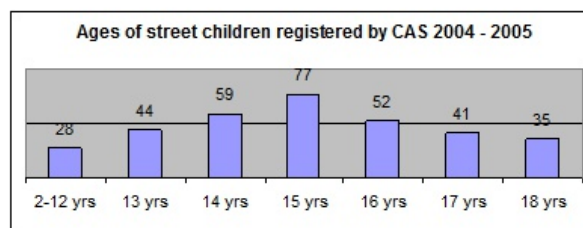
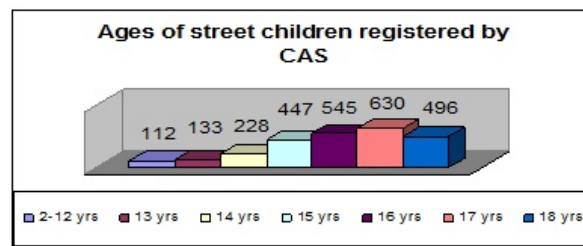
Finally we want to give you some statistics. We are comparing some statistics published in the book "The Ghanaian Street Child" and the present statistics.

Street children per Region. Records of ten years (see above) compared
With records of 2004-2005 (see below)

NR=Northern Region, WR=Western R. GAR=Greater Accra R.

UER=Upper East R. UWR=Upper West R. FR=Foreigners
 AS=Ashanti R. ER=Eastern R. CR=Central R. BAR= Brong
 Ahafo R.
 VR=Volta R.

CAS is trying to adjust its approach and activities towards the new target group of street children -2006. As you can understand this is not an easy task because we have to leave the past and think of the future.
 Street children have lost this ability to think about the future.





Maybe it is a blessing for them. We the staff of CAS have to plan for it. In fact we are already a bit too late because we are trying to cope with the problems of the street children of today.

INTERNET WEB-PAGES.

With the assistance of Street Child Africa UK we have updated CAS' internet pages. During the past years we have conducted several researches and published the reports. The previous reports "The Exodus Report" is from 1999 and "The Ghanaian Street Child" is from 2003.

These reports describe the situation during the years 1999 and 2003 and before. Many things have changed since; such as the type of Street Children we are dealing with, the developments in the cities, and the changes in the educational and political fields. Also the economical situation in Ghana has changed. Therefore we are of the opinion that these reports are part of the history. Students are still using these reports for their studies, but we want to advise them that they always have to quote the dates these reports have been written because they do not give an accurate explanation of the current situation.

RESEARCH

The research on street children who need more attention started

two years ago. It was confined to Hopeland Training Center. Staff at Hopeland prepares the children for the final stage, before children are placed in workshops or schools. Several of the children could not cope with this preparation and either remained longer at Hopeland or returned to the streets (Main Refuge). This made us realize that our approach did not suit the children we were preparing. As a result, more staff were employed for Hopeland and some staff from the Fieldwork were asked to stay at the House of Refuge.

The data (Social Survey reports) we wrote on the children were not complete. Simply stating that, a child grew up in the streets is not enough. Of course we see the results at the House of Refuge and at Hopeland, but that is only part of the story. Many street children who were born or are living in the streets show behavioral problems and have learning difficulties. Some of them are also psychologically not well balanced. What we want to find out is, what do these children experience in the streets. Why do many get involved in prostitution or use drugs? Before we can prepare our action plans we have to know the background thoroughly.

MAPPING.

We have asked the fieldwork department to re-map the city. This means we have to verify the information we have about the various parts in town where the street children sleep and work. We want to know everything about the environment the children come from or live in.

We have divided the city into sectors and each sector has been sub-divided into zones. Members of the fieldwork department will visit these zones during the day and at night and will record their findings. They will record which activities take place in each zone. Which particular leaders are in the various zones. Whether there are churches, cinemas or markets. And witness how street children or street families live in the zones.

SOCIAL POVERTY.

In our book, "The Ghanaian Street Child" we explained that 86% of the street children are in the streets because of family problems. Of course many of these problems could be related to Economic poverty, but we think this is not wholly correct. It can only be related to Social poverty. Many children are not properly cared for (neglect), some are maltreated others are abused. This has nothing to do with economic poverty but shows lack of love for the children. On the other hand, we meet parents who live in very poor environment but take proper care of their children.

CULTURE/ ROOT. CULTURAL POVERTY.

Street girls who have come from the rural areas become pregnant often unexpectedly. Often, the father does not want to take responsibility and the child grow-up without fatherly care. The children grow up in the streets. All persons living in the streets try to survive. This means that it will be difficult to take care of others. As soon as the children become 5-6 years they are more or less on their own. In the streets they meet violence, crime and other activities which are not healthy for a child upbringing. The children do not learn to listen to anybody.

The only culture they know is the culture of the streets. Their roots are in the streets. We at CAS know a bit of the culture of the streets, but we do not know everything. There exists a hierarchy, there are many persons in authority and many illegal activities take place. Still the question remains, how does a street child survive in this environment? What does (S)he experience every day? We hope to complete this Mapping exercise by the middle of the year. We will update you about the developments.

DEPARTMENTS – MONITORING

The Heads and assistants of the six departments are in charge of the various activities; they manage the finances and equipment and are in charge of the personnel. Some activities interchange. Some personnel operate in different departments. A good coordination is therefore essential. Two members of staff are coordinators and they visit the departments at regular intervals to monitor the activities. They are also in charge of the special activities such as the research, development of teaching materials and printing of health course. These coordinators assist the Heads to organize the activities well. They could be seen as intruders but then their tasks are not understood.

DEVELOPMENT TEACHING MATERIALS.

The development of teaching materials is in the final year. Materials for literacy classes have been prepared and used at different locations; in the streets, at the House of Refuge and at Hopeland. Some of the materials have to be improved and increased but the majority is ready. Also the health course is ready and it is being used. The printing press is printing the teaching materials so that more persons can use it.

More work has to be done with the teaching materials for arithmetic and numeracy. Children who follow training in workshops experience difficulties in measuring and calculation. The teachers are assessing what is needed to improve the teaching of these subjects. Simple tools such as beads for counting are needed.

Several organizations have already shown interest in these

materials and methods of teaching. But we need more time to complete them.

COMPUTERS – PEN PAL PROJECT

With the assistance of some donors we managed to upgrade the computers to Pentium three computers. Several games are installed and the children learn how to play them. They also learn how to write letters and assess the internet. The classes are divided between girls and boys. The girls are more careful and slower in operating the computers and therefore special time is given to them. Only those who attend literacy classes in the morning are allowed to play. Although, we have ten computers for the children we have difficulties in controlling too many boys who want to be in the computer-room at the same time. The room is not so large but we will try to rearrange it so that more computers can be installed and used. Also, additional time has to be allocated for the computer classes.

The children have just started with a kind of pen-pal activity. Contact has been made with a museum and a school in Holland.

Children try to communicate using the internet. Drawing, photographs and text will be exchanged. Both groups have the disadvantage that English is not their first language. This activity could indeed improve the dialogue between South and North.

HOPELAND TRAINING CENTER.

CAS has leased 10 acres of land at Ashaiman. It has been leased from the Tema Development Corporation.

This plot is situated in a farming area close to a village called Adjei Kojo. The village is extending its borders rapidly and many new buildings have been built close to Hopeland Training center. Some buildings have been erected one meter from the fence.

Therefore we have to demarcate the plot and build a proper fence to ensure that nobody encroach upon our land. Although, it is a farming area the developments suggest that soon Hopeland will be enclosed by other buildings. We have asked our contractor to start with the fence immediately because some persons tried to start building on our land. The fence will be quite long and therefore very expensive. We have decided to build it 120 cm high all around the premises. This means that holes have to be made near the dam to allow water to enter the compound and to leave it. It all depends on the building activities whether the water will still flow into the dam or not.

VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS.

CAS receives many applications for volunteer placement. These

applications come from all over the world. At the moment, we have volunteers from Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium and Norway.

We ask volunteers to stay for at least six months. It takes time for a volunteer to learn to live in Ghana. Also the children need time to trust the volunteer. They also have to learn how staff organizes the activities so that they can take part in it. Students, often come for fieldwork practice. After or during the period they write their fieldwork reports and report to the school they come from. Soon we will receive some students from the U.S.A. but the majority comes from the University of Ghana, Legon.

STREET GIRLS AID.

We congratulate S.AID with their new House of Refuge they have opened at Achimota. Many street girls can now be assisted by them. Congrats!

NEWSLETTER NO. 39 JUNE 2006

WHO ARE STREET CHILDREN? WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Those who have known CAS for many years must have noticed that the heading of this newsletter is similar to the first newsletter published in 1994. The reason is that after 14 years of operation, CAS wants to publish and make known to any person concerned about street children their findings and conclusions. We, together with members of staff of Street Girls Aid are of the opinion that it is time that the issue of street children in Ghana will be addressed in a mature way by those in



authority and NGOs established for them.

STREET CHILDREN IN GHANA.

The above NGO has been working with and for street children for the past 14 years. During this period, CAS has conducted several surveys on street children in order to know the street children, their background and reasons of being in the streets.

The following reports have been published:

1. Some Mothers and Babies at the Konkomba market - 1995
2. The Exodus report – 1999
3. The Ghanaian Street Child – 2003

CAS' definition of a street child is a child who lives and works in the street and is not supported by anyone.

During the first 12 years of existence CAS met many children who migrated from the rural areas of all regions, to the towns and cities for various reasons.

The researches revealed that, 86% of the children have left home because of family problems. This could be divorce of parents, parents living apart, too many children in the family, but unfortunately also, violence at home included sexual harassment also played major roles.

Fortunately, CAS has not met many children who are orphans or have been sold by their parents. Also not many have lost their parents because of AIDS. Only a small group of street children gets involved in crime.

Therefore, CAS' conclusion is that the street children problem is mainly a social problem and should be addressed as such.

CAS also discovered that, many street children have never attended school while some have dropped out of school for several reasons. There are many children who are in need of attention in the area of special education. They do not fit into the existing educational structure in the system.

During the past two years, CAS came into contact with the second generation of street children, those born on the streets of parents who are street children themselves. These children have never learnt how to obey or listen. They have come in contact with crime, abuse, prostitution and drug addiction at a very young age.

Because of their peculiar way of behaviour they cannot be placed in any existing schools and these children are too young

to follow the apprenticeship training.

They do not belong to any culture. They only know the culture of the streets. These children cannot be sent “Home”, because their home is the street.

In order to address the problems of street children, it should be addressed at various levels namely:

1. Prevent more children coming to the streets by establishing “Parents Counselling groups everywhere. Assist and educate families who have difficulties bringing up their children.
2. Educate parents how to take care of their children. This can be done using the existing media.
3. Existing schools should offer opportunities to children who cannot afford to go to school and those who need more attention.
4. Offer those children who have come from the rural areas to the towns and cities and opportunity to learn. This education can take place in the streets, at community centres and other public places. This education can be done by any persons who have interest in the children. Those who are able to enter formal education should be offered a place at any existing school.
5. Those who have been born in the streets should be accepted and assisted. Their mothers should be assisted to build up a decent life. They should be assisted to educate their children.
6. Most importantly, they should be accepted as fellow Ghanaians who have the right to decide where to live, a right to food and a right to gain employment.

CAS wants to know more about street children who are born in the streets. We know that these children behave differently from those who have come from the rural areas. As a first step, we conducted an exercise called “Re-mapping the City”. This mapping has been carried-out in several areas of the city. Not all areas have been completed. The basic aim was to establish the environment street children life and work in, to know which authority they have to listen to, and to know where they come from. Here is some of the information.

AGBOGBLOSHIE/ KONKOMBA AREA.

These are two different areas divided by a road. Many activities take place at the Agbogbloshie and Konkomba area. This is a large market where many persons sell and buy goods.

But there are also many hawkers, persons who sell items on the road. It is a slum area with churches, bars, video centres and clinics. A lot of gambling and commercial sex takes place at night. Many Kayayei's live there. Some practice the traditional faith others are Muslims and Christians.

Street children, who stay there, come from all regions of the country. It is multi ethnic area where many different languages are spoken.

From the central lorry station Troto's move to other parts in Accra. You can see many wooden shacks in which people live. Drug addiction is high in the area.

At the far edge of Agbogbloshie is the New Hawkers market. Konkomba is a flood prone area. Often at time, the area is called Sodom and Gomorah but in fact this is only a small part of Konkomba in the northern session.

ASHAIMAN.

Ashaiman town is closer to Tema than to Accra. In this area many labourers of Tema harbour are living. It has two markets, the old and the new market, but also many shops in which you can buy a variety of goods and automobile parts as well as biscuits.

From the lorry park you can travel to other parts of the country. The markets as well as the lorry parks attract many porters, boys as well as girls. Also many hawkers operate in Ashaiman. Four different clinics, as well as night clubs and drinking bars can be found in different part of the town.

Most street children can be met at the old market, behind the market and the main lorry station. Another popular area for them is Tulaku, a well known area in town.

Gambling, drinking and commercial sex are common night activities.

Several authorities in Ashaiman were interviewed and they told us that the street children are from different regions, Christians as well as Muslims. Several are child sex workers, girls as well as boys. Many urban poor children also operate in the town. A number of foreigners are from Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Togo.

KWAME NKRUMAH CIRCLE – popularly known as circle.

At Circle, many different lorry parks can be found. From there you can move to all parts of the country. There are also

restaurants, offices and shops. The lorry parks attract many hawkers and porters. At night gambling, drinking and commercial sex is practiced. There are two clinics some videos centres and one common bath house as well as bars and a police station.

Street children from different parts of the country operate at Circle. Several are part of groups based on ethnicity, age or are social groups.

At Circle many commercial sex-workers are operating. On the eastern part, porters from Togo, Cote D'Ivoire and Mali are working. Only a few urban poor children can be found in the area. The Police told us that most of the cases reported to them involve young people from 23 years and above.

KANESHIE.

At Kaneshie, where the biggest market of Accra is located. This market attracts many people. At the eastern part of Kaneshie an entirely different situation can be found. Many offices and shops are located as well as two clinics and a pharmacy. At Kaneshie many boys from the northern part of Ghana can be found and some of them are from Togo and Cote D'Ivoire. Because it is an area belonging to the GA tribe, it is customary to close down the fish market on Tuesdays.

Street children often visit a popular house called "Nzema house". The owner assists many. Street children at Kaneshie move in groups which has a leader. The members all pay to the leader a part of the income. Many children come from the Central, and Western regions. Most of them are illiterates. Although, there is a large market, hawking also takes place.

Another popular place is near Frytol store and the overhead bridge which runs over the main road.

MADINA.

Madina is sub town of Accra. It is very old and covers a large area. The town has many stores, supermarkets, pharmacies, offices, internet cafés and bars. Madina has several transport stations. It also has some private clinics and a police station and many different kind of churches and mosques.

At the main market, porters and hawkers operate. Most of the street children can be seen at the market which is located at the old road.

In the town many different tribes live together with few foreigners. The urban poor children are often from Nima and Mamobi.

ODORKOR.

Odorkor is another sub town at the outskirts of Accra. From the lorry station at Odorkor you can move to other parts of Accra. Most street children come from Mankessim, Swedru and Bawjiase. Few are from other parts of the country. Again foreigners can be found at Odorkor from Togo and Nigeria. In this part of Accra many urban poor children are in the streets. Young girls are involved in commercial sex.

These are of a few impressions of some parts of the city. A city which grows daily, a city in which street children try to survive.

NEWSLETTER NO. 40 DECEMBER 2006 MAPPING

We have reached the end of 2006. We still want to report on CAS and what has expired during the past months. In all, it has been a good year, but also a difficult year because we had to re-examine our approach and adapt it. Some of the changes are still in progress, others have been completed.

Results of the Street Mapping Exercise

Street Work, often refer to as fieldwork, forms one of the integral part of CAS' work. Street Mapping forms part of the exercise carried out in the street over a period of time to gather and update information for future work.

This led to the need to carry out research to know more about the children born on the street, street families, support system available, living conditions of the environment where the children live and other information necessary for street work.

More so, CAS data and statistics gathered over a period of time shows the need to review some of the activities and programmes in the Fieldwork Department to enable the department updates its existing information and work towards achieving the objectives of Department.

The research mainly concentrated on selected fieldwork areas. The main purpose was to gather current information and statistics of the situation. The General information collected are the history of the area, landmarks, children playing and sleeping areas, clinics, common morning, afternoon and evening activities. Whiles Specific information gathered focused on the names of some key authorities, Non-Governmental Organization's (NGO), headcount of different groups of people, occupation, ages, street mothers, children born on the street, hierarchy, religion and tribe of groups of people leaving in the area.

The areas were divided into four (4) zones or sections. Each

covers a boundary with important landmarks. Workers were grouped and assigned to run a rotation schedule in different areas over a period of time.

At the end of the exercise the following information and statistic were gathered. We found out that presently, approximately 21,000 street children live in the streets of the city. There are 7,500 street mothers below 20 years of age and 14,500 urban children are in the streets as well.

Children work as scrap dealers, 'loading boys'(porter), beggars, plastic bag sellers, pure iced water sellers, chopbar attendants, shoeshine boys, drivers mates, child sex workers, aiding a disabled, carry loads (porter), truck pushers, porters, cleaners, rubbish carriers etc

Children normally sleep in rented wooden structures, in-front of shops or stores, inside some of the markets, on tables in the markets, in tents, in kiosk, on pavement of lorry stations, in broken down vehicles, in nearby schools, opening spaces in front of some government offices and some common named places in all the areas visited.

Children gather at different meeting points to work and play.

All the children met during the exercise come from all the ten (10) regions in Ghana with some areas having larger number of children from particular region.

Drug usage and prostitution are very high in some of the areas visited during the exercise.

Children are between 0 – 18 years with increasing number of 'second generation children' – (children born on the street)

Some Non-governmental Organization (NGO's) provides health and other services to the children and people working and living in the area.

Research on Children

What we have observed is that the number of young children between the ages of 7 – 16 years, who visit CAS is increasing. Majority of this group of children are born on the street and referred to as 'Second generation of Street Children'.

This group of children forms the majority of children who visit our drop-in-centre daily and have been a major concern to CAS as an organization because we do not know enough about the background. They are either 'too old' to attend a formal school or 'too young' to learn a trade or enrolled in any apprenticeship training. More so, the majority of them show symptoms of behavioural and learning problems hence the need to pay more attention to all aspects of their lives.

All these call for extensive social investigation into their background and life on the street. In order to learn more about this group of children, CAS have decided to concentrate more on conducting social investigation into the background of children both on the street and in the drop-in-centre. Time will be spent on knowing more about their living condition on the street, street families, why they behave in the way they do etc.

Information will be collected through constant interaction with the children and significant others such as market women, street parents or guardians, customers, government officials, tax collectors, male and female area leaders, sellers, street colleagues and friends. Workers will also travel to locate families and guardians as part of the social survey.

We believe, all the above will help us understand the problem of the children and pay more attention to their needs. It will also help in preparing of children for the future.

Printing of teaching manuals



As some of you might be aware, we started a research into the health conditions of street children between the year 2000 and 2003. Our aim was to develop a comprehensive course for health education that would suit our kind of teaching. The course was also meant to train the staff of CAS and other organizations to carry out the education. After the three year period of research, we came out with a document to be used as syllabus for teaching the children personal hygiene, nutrition, HIV/aids and human body, substance abuse.

Also included in the syllabus are bilharzias, self-medication and basic knowledge in the functions of various human body parts.

With the assistance of Misereor- Germany, we have been able to print a quantity of the syllabus, manuals for teaching, which CAS and the other partner organizations would be using to do the teaching in the coming years. There are about 10 partner-organizations which are initially going to benefit from the printing. We want to try the few copies so far printed and hopefully we would be printing more so that other organizations which would be interested would take advantage so that more children can benefit from this. But this can only be done if donors would continue to assist us.

We think that this health syllabus would be useful to the children attending the regular schools under the Ghana Education Service and other religious based schools in Ghana and other countries in our sub-region.

Report on Agbogbloshie mini refuge

This mini refuge has been in existence over the past years and located in the center of the Agbogbloshie market. This particular mini refuge serves street children from C.M.B, Railways, Konkonba, and Obronni shower.

Children that patronized this mini refuge has been categorized into two kinds namely the typical street children and the urban poor children. Majority of the children that comes to the mini refuge are the typical street children and the minority are the urban poor children. Among the urban poor children we have those whose parents are on the street themselves and children who are not in school and have come to the street to do some job and get some money and later in the evening go back home. Attendance has been very encouraging and it's only that the number keeps fluctuating every now and then. Most at times the children come in their numbers and some few times very few. The fieldwork department has decided to let go the other two mini refuges at Ashaiman and Odorkor and keep the Agbogbloshie mini refuge the coming year. This is due to the fact that, there are a lot of typical street children who visit this

mini refuge. Besides, the location of the mini refuge is very accessible to the children and very near to Konkomba, C.M.B, Railways, Obroni shower and the Agbogbloshie market itself where there are a lot of typical street children.

Use of the computer room

At CAS we have one computer room equipped with 13 computers. 8 of them are connected to the internet. The education department is in charge of the computer room. 2 teachers at times with assistance of a volunteer introduce the children in computing. We have two sessions per day, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon. The children like the lessons very much so we had to put a system in place to cope with the high number of interested children. One lesson lasts one hour and is divided into two periods. The first 30min the children have to do some educative exercises and games, the next half hour they can choose their own games. This restriction turned out to be necessary because most of them liked to skip the educative part and go directly to the fun games. We have a wide variety of educative games: starting with the alphabet to spelling games with different levels, English grammar and reading activities as well as mathematics from counting to the various types of calculation. At a certain point we realized that we would also need some activities for children who are still illiterate and who have no idea how to use the mouse etc. So we started an internet research and found a number of free games without reading and writing activities but still improving logical thinking. So children can now do various types of jigsaw puzzles, memory games and drawing activities. For fun games we have for example some easy fantasy games like Jasper, Prince and Mario. We don't allow games based on shooting and cruel fighting because we don't want them to engage in such activities.

What do we use the internet for? We have some nice online activities for the children like listening to English songs or to a story. The older students can have their own e-mail address to get in contact "with the world". Volunteers or other visitors are often so friendly to give out their address so the children can write to them. They also learn to search the internet for a special topic.

- Living values workshop.

A Swiss organisation, Living Values organised a 4 day workshop for street children and staff. 10 children from Hopeland and three members of staff of CAS attended. In total 40 persons took part. The main aim is to improve the lives of street children through living value education. To reduce, if not eradicate the many violent and negative behaviours associated with street children.

The method adopted was the participatory approach using role-

play. It was a child centred program guiding and supporting learners to identify their personal and national values. The organisers assisted both educators and learners to explore values, experience values and express values. We hope more workshops can be organised also at the House of Refuge.



OBITUARY

Unfortunately we also have to report that CAS lost one of its teachers (sports). Geoffrey Aryeetey drowned while swimming in the sea. Geoffrey has been with us for several years as a sport teacher, but he also assisted in the classroom during literacy classes and during the Friday entertainment. May his soul rest in peace!

NEWSLETTER NO. 41 APRIL 2007

PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

The Heads of Departments meet by-monthly to discuss the progress of the various activities and solve problems which occur because of the nature of the job.

These meetings improve the communication between the departments. Some activities are joint exercises which are not restricted to a few members of staff. For instance, the preparation of children starts in the field, continues at the House of Refuge and Hopeland training centre.

The teaching is also done at all these departments. However, each Head is responsible for the activities within the department, the finances and its members.

During the meetings general topics are also included such as, research, contact with donors and evaluation.

CAS is preparing a general evaluation. The preparation is first done by Management, they present the proposal at the Heads of Departments meeting, and they in turn present it to the Board of Advisors.

This process ensures that all members of staff are informed and are involved in the decision taking.

In this issue you can read about: Development of teaching materials, Improvements at Hopeland training centre, The General Evaluation, The Baby Care program run by S.AID.

DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING MATERIALS.

Some years back, we started a project called “Development of Teaching Materials”. In fact, it started during the time we were still at the old House of Refuge, but of late we have completed most of it. Why has it taken such a long time to develop materials for teaching? The answer is simple. The process was very slow:



1. Ideas had to be put on the table.
2. Research had to be conducted of what was available in the market.
3. Production started.
4. Products were tested in the field.
5. The products were evaluated.
6. The products were manufactured in its final state.
7. Products were multiplied.

CAS did not know which teaching material was suitable for street children. We had to find out which materials could be understood by them. We also had to find out whether this material could be used at all places where the teaching takes place.

Street children are invited to attend training sessions while in the streets. We call this program street corner education. The children are taught where they are. There is a lot of noise, there are no benches or black-board and the children are restless. We started this program years ago. Many sceptics told us that it was a waste of time trying it, but we know now that it can be done when there is consistency in the program.

Fan-milk vendors also benefit from these teaching methods. In 1995 Fan-milk, a Danish firm which manufacture iced cream and other milk products, invited CAS to teach the vendors some literacy. We agreed, because street vendors are often ex-street youth who are now in employment.

Part time teachers teach at the Fan-milk depots which are located in many parts and suburbs in the City.

The materials are also used at the House of Refuge and at Hopeland training centre. Many sets of materials had to be made and made strong enough to be moved and used at various locations. Workers of CAS make use of the local transport, mini buses (trotros). The materials have to be packed and carried, therefore it should not be too heavy.

After years of working on these materials, CAS now has good teaching materials. This could not have been done without the dedication of Margaretha Ubels, Carlijn Brenninkmeijer, our teachers and the support of fundraisers and donors. We want to thank them all. We ensure them that it has been a worthwhile exercise.

Equal Opportunity Fund-The Netherlands, ICCO, Jobena organization, Stichting Anoniem, Stichting Medemens, Swedish Caritas, An organisation via Stichting Porticus, Lions club, Misereor, Net4kids, Unanimous Private donors, Vereeniging tot Weldadigheid van den Heiligsten Verlosser, Wild Geese, Wings

of support.

IMPROVEMENTS AT HOPELAND TRAINING CENTRE.

Hopeland is a place outside the city centre where street children could have peace of mind devoid of noise and city life to go through preparation and be trained in many fields for a better future.

As explained previously, CAS has decided to pay more attention to the preparation of children instead of running Hopeland as an income generating venture. We have reduced the livestock, thus the farm now has only a few birds (500), pigs and ducks.

We intend introducing other animals like grass cutter and rabbits which will not cost so much to feed because they can eat grass which is in abundance in and around the farm. This is to ensure that the children still have the opportunity to be in touch with the animals and to learn farming techniques.

Presently, there are three different activities that take place at the centre.

1. Running of the farm as a demonstration farm involving animals, birds and vegetable farming.
2. Welfare of children: Organised and managed by a team of social workers supported by Hopeland management.
3. Income generating workshops which comprises candle making, and ceramics supervised by Hopeland staff on behalf of demonstration department.

The children take active part in all these activities. Apart from these physical activities classes are held on daily basis where the children are taught English, Life skills, simple calculation, and health issues.

More concentration in the welfare and care of the children has prompted CAS management to engage more hands. Thus social workers have been employed one of whom stays over night with the children.

The reductions of birds and animals here have left a number of structures vacant. In 2007, a decision was taken to refurbish all structures some of which are to be used for other purposes. For now all buildings have been given a facelift; and a wall constructed (fence) has been built to secure our local land which we acquired from Tema development corporation; this had become necessary due to the indiscriminate encroachment of people's lands around the area.

As at now the following buildings have been renovated and put to use.

The administrative block contains offices and a staff common room, Two dormitories for boys and girls, A computer centre/two class rooms, Two kitchens for the children, One candle workshop, One ceramic workshop, 3 chicken houses, One recreation hall, A duck house, and one bungalow for the assistant manager.

It is our intention to introduce other activities that will interest the children and encourage them to go through their preparation in an enjoyable atmosphere.

GENERAL EVALUATION CAS PROJECT

CAS evaluated its activities in 1996 and 1999. As a result of these evaluations, CAS re-organized and formed six departments; Fieldwork, House of Refuge, Education, Demonstration, Hopeland and Sponsorship. Since 1999 we have tried to strengthen the performances of the departments, while continuing working with and for the street children.

We have never evaluated the impact of our work. Why are we doing the work we are doing.

At times, donors tell us that it is more and more difficult to raise money for the project and our reply is; we are willing to do the work for the children as long as society thinks it is necessary. The question is did we manage to bring this message across?

Creating awareness entails; writing newsletters, giving talks on street children, making videos which can be shown on TV, writing articles for news papers and magazines, being interviewed etc. We have done all these, but what did we achieve?

We also have had a lot of contact with the planning office of the AMA Accra Metropolitan Assembly. Some years ago, these meetings were held monthly to plan together what could be done for the street babies and street children. Government ministers were invited and visited CAS, to such an extent that we thought the government is well informed.

CAS is a member of various coalitions, some working for street children others for urban poor and some on specific services such as health.

We would like to evaluate the impact of this only to determine what should be done next.

Together with CORDAID and the evaluator who assisted us in the past, we are preparing a new evaluation which will take place at the last quarter of this year.

BABY CARE PROJECT RUN BY S.AID

The Baby care project was established in 1995. The project started with an initial “three in one” crèches near the Komkomba market in Accra.

Under the management of our sister organization, Street Girls’ Aid, the crèche grew to become four sets of crèches with a total population of 750 babies of teenage street mothers and kayayes and still the numbers continue to increase.

At the moment, it has become difficult to run the project due to the fact that the main donors are reducing the quantum of the funding, whilst at the same time it has become difficult to raise funds. All these are going on amid interferences also from the Accra Metropolitan authorities as well as the clean up of the city and cleansing of the streets of hawkers. Already the original “three in one” crèches at the Kokomba market have been closed down.

There was also another legal tussle between SAID and one owner of land, who used to run a school on the parcel of land where the Railways 1 crèche was built. The man claims that the SAID did not honour her part of the agreement among other things.

At the moment, the issue had been resolved and the said crèche has been released to him. The babies have been re-distributed among the other crèches.

In the face of the above problems, we need to take a second look at the operations of the crèches. Among options available are; a. The reduction of the intake into the crèches, And b. Handing-over the management of some crèches to other organizations to manage among many other options we would be considering.

NEWSLETTER NO. 42 DECEMBER 2007 EVALUATION OF CHARITY- CAS.

Members of staff were busy with the evaluation during the entire year 2007. Discussions took place at departmental level. Topics on the agenda were:

- Personnel guide
- Work contract of employees and employer
- Management of activities and financial management.
- Functioning of Preparation Committee, change in target group
- Future of CAS
- Contacts with local authorities

These topics were discussed at monthly departmental meeting, and the results were re-discussed at Heads of Department



meeting.

The Board of Advisors also spent a day with the members of staff to listen and discuss problems related to the arrangements with the employment, the contract and authority of the Heads of Departments. This day has been appreciated by all because it was an opportunity to know each-other better.

These meetings were part of the preparation of the internal evaluation. Through this, we arrived at The “Terms of Reference” (ToR). This ToR describes how the evaluation would be carried out practically, but also included the following:

INTRODUCTION AND TEXT (BACKGROUND)

The issue of street children has assumed certain dimension in the Ghanaian society after fifteen years of work with the Ghanaian Street Child.

Today, the street of Accra is engulfed with a population of about 21,000 younger children who live and work in the streets of the capital. Quite a good number are termed the second generation products.

CAS initial intervention for street children was based on a total population of about 4,000 and what the system presented to us influenced CAS approach to work.

Presently, CAS runs six (6) departments as a way of working with the street child with a clear cut integrated activities to meet the needs of children.

The problem of street children as compared to what is being witnessed today presents to us as an organization a real challenge to handle; hence, the need to look again at our approach in terms of programs and activities. The question we are asking is where did we fail, where did we succeed? Hence the need to evaluate our work with the children.

PARTNERS

We involved CAS' sister charities, the Press, government ministries and Town authorities.

Reasons why evaluation is needed: To help us to examine whether our approach are the best and measurable within the context of street work.

2. Objectives of the Evaluation

Purpose: For policy development in our future work with the target groups (the children) and stake holders and the government.

- i. To gain more insight into whether we are doing right in terms of our work approach.
- ii. To assess capacities of donors in terms of interest, sustainability and role.
- iii. To redesign our intervention approach because of the new category of children we are meeting daily in the streets.

4. Methodology and approach

The evaluation methodology will look at references like:

- i. Existing documents
- ii. Desk study reports
- iii. Selection of cases
- iv. Administering of questionnaires, interviews with target groups, individual partners, staff etc.
- v. Field Observations and participation

Levels of intervention to be evaluated

- i. Evaluation would need to look at activities like;
 - a. The target groups – the real beneficiaries (children 5 – 18 years)
 - b. Department activities with respect to fieldwork with street

children

ii. Advocacy work and lobbying of government policies and social problems.

CORDAID, the donor for the Evaluation had to agree on this ToR as well as on the reasons of executing the evaluation.

CAS organized two evaluations before in 1996 and 1999.

*Embedded evaluation-Cambridge Partnership for Organisational Transformation, 26, Benian's Court, Storey's Way, Cambridge CB3 0DN UK 1996

This one became necessary because after 14 years of operating a fresh start had to be made. The target group street children changed tremendously and CAS felt that the Charity was working too much in isolation.

Target group:

Why did the target group change? In 1995, CAS started the baby care program. Mothers of babies and children up to 5 years were assisted to take care of their children. In the year 2000, these children reached the age of 10 and above. CAS and SAID' hope was that the mothers could educate their children but unfortunately many could or did not. These children appeared on the streets as second generation street children. These children do not belong to any culture except the culture of the street. They do not want to leave the streets, because it is their home. They have not learnt the basic rules of live, because nobody taught them.

CAS principle is not to assist Urban Poor Children. Often they have relatives who can take care of them. But now the gap between the street child and urban poor child has been narrowed.

It is clear that proper social surveys have to be conducted before a decision is made to assist the child.

Isolation:

CAS has been fortunate to have had very good public relations with government ministers, with AMA officials including the Mayor. CAS attended many major workshops which had the sole aim to consider the plight of street children. However, CAS did not want to be associated with political parties. Street children are not a political issue. Because of this, CAS became more and more isolated.

CAS is member of various coalitions and at times coordinates these coalitions, but unfortunately, these members are in the

same position as CAS. NGOs are seen as organizations which have the power of money. Many do not understand that some of these NGOs are Charities who have to beg for money as everyone else.

The issue of street children is not yet an issue of the society.

SISTER CHARITIES:

Charities such as Street Girls Aid, Salvation Army, Centre of Hope, Sisters of Charity, Salesians of Don Bosco, and AGREDS LIFELINE, try to achieve the same aim. They all work for and are with persons of the streets. Therefore we wanted to know from them their experiences.

The PRESS:

One of the key players could be the Press. The Press in all its forms could educate the public on the plight of street children in Ghana. We mentioned Ghana because it is of no use to mention street children problems of other countries. Interventions can only be successful when constructed on the situations in the street. Education is a very important tool. The Press, when interested, could educate the public on these issues.

PERSONS IN AUTHORITY:

CAS has been working with many persons in high authority. Monthly meetings were organized with the town authority. Ministers were all aware of the aims of Charities. However, these persons are often transferred after a short stay. Also, almost all are carrying out their work according to the wishes of the ruling political parties. Still CAS is of the opinion that the plight of street children can only change when certain policies are changed. CAS invited several key persons to the evaluation meeting.

THE ACTUAL EVALUATION.

The actual evaluation was done by the members of staff of CAS. They were guided by Mette Jacobsgaard.

Mette knows CAS well because she also assisted us in 1996 and 1999. But of course, Mette had to be brought up to date with today's developments.

She spent one week visiting departments and interviewing persons. One week is rather short because CAS operates in the streets, at the House of Refuge at Hopeland and children are in workshops and schools.

Still many members of staff had the opportunity to meet her and told her their experiences.

The second week took place at a hotel in Accra, the Holiday hotel. CAS rented a conference room for one week. The room was rather small, but still most of the meetings could take place

there. At times we moved to the veranda and garden.

The first day at the hotel, the sister Charities took part in the discussions. It became clear that they experience the same problems when dealing with persons in authority. The ideal response is not yet possible because persons in authority have also communication difficulties. We expect that ministers know what the town authorities have decided or that officers in the field work independently or with the authority of their bosses. We Charities have to constantly re-introduce ourselves to them.

The second day, the press was invited. We invited the managers of TV and radio stations as well as the written press. Some of them attended and we were all happy with the response. They advised us on several issues and some promised to assist us in the future.

The third day had been set aside for the authorities, both governments as well as town authorities. The Director and assistant of the ministry of woman and children affairs attended as well as an officer of the head office of the AMA (Accra Metropolitan assembly). We discussed again the communication issues but also current affairs such as the demolition of kiosks in the city by the AMA to clean the city for the African Cup of Nations event. It was indeed an interesting discussion.

On the forth day the Heads and Assistants of the departments as well as other members of staff and volunteers attended. CAS members of staff reflected on what they had learnt. The discussions were free and frank. Members were not disturbed by the children and could concentrate on the discussions.

The last day was organized at the House of refuge at CAS. All members of staff were invited and it was a debriefing session. We also made use of the opportunity to thank Mette for all the work done.

A week later we received the draft report and we asked the various departments to read it and give their comments.

Many comments were gathered, but some of them concentrated too much on practical arrangement for the department. The Heads of departments met and we selected those comments which were relevant for the evaluation report.

These in turn were sent to Mette who tried to accommodate them into the report.

HERE WE SHARE SOME OBSERVATIONS OF THE FINAL REPORT.

The structure with departments seems relevant in the context of CAS work. It is however absolutely essential that communication and reporting between the departments is of such quality that it can feed into enhancement of the work of CAS. There is a risk that information held by one department may not be seen as relevant for another department although all departments should be moving in the same direction, that of supporting the children.

It was very nice to see that CAS has been able to maintain the majority of the old and experienced staff, most of whom have been with the organisation since the beginning. This shows dedication and commitment to the cause and when asked about their motivation for working with CAS it was clearly the plight of the children that kept the staff there. Some also mentioned that CAS is like a family, which shows comfort and trust in the organisation.

The biggest outgoing expense for CAS is salaries and salaries are notoriously difficult to raise funds for. At the same time, CAS would not exist if it were not for the staff and in particular for the fieldworkers.

The capacity of CAS lies with the staff and their commitment and ability to carry out the work. Dealing with street children can be hard and stressful work and at times also discouraging. This is so in particular for the field staff who meet the children on the street and need to stay neutral and not get emotionally involved. There are times when this may be difficult and the fieldworkers want to attract children to come off the street by promoting the possibility of sponsorship. However, CAS's message remains very clear; the work is in the street and the child will need to make his or her own decisions with respect to visiting the refuge and from there possibly continue the path off the street.

THE FUTURE

CAS is continuously challenged and has proven their capacity to move with the times and the changes in the street. My hope is that CAS will look at the recommendations and observations in this report as an opportunity to look ahead, try new ways and "think out of the box" in order not to stay complacent and go stale.

The size of greater Accra is increasing and so will the number of street children including areas where they may be found. New shopping centres are coming up and it is quite possible that CAS will find children living around these areas where begging and "guarding cars" could be new activities as seen in other parts of Africa. The question is whether CAS will want to, and indeed has the capacity to spread into wider Accra. As earlier mentioned, the majority of the children who visit the refuge are

those who work and sleep in an area relatively near CAS. Is CAS willing to accept that they can only assist a limited number of children and choose their operational area accordingly? Or will CAS want to increase its activities by additional staff?

As noted above under impact, clearly there will be a downward limit to the intensity of interaction beyond which it has no meaning. Even though some children may take to a social worker at the first point of interaction, others will need several days, months or even years of interaction to generate enough of a relationship where meaningful counselling can take place.

I recommend that CAS concentrate their efforts in areas closer to the refuge with more intense fieldwork and if it is found useful covers a few additional areas further away "on a research basis" in order to keep abreast with the changes in the street. However, the ultimate decision about changing the mode of fieldwork lies with CAS.

CAS is now facing the fact that they have to start from scratch with the 2nd generation street children and there is increased attention to these kids in the street. As I have already mentioned, CAS is unique and has a wealth of experience and successes which they need to make use of and build on. CAS was able to build their existing approach on the basis of careful and continuous interaction, in the same way, CAS now needs to think anew as the needs of the 2nd generation street children may be quite different. The only way to find out is to interact, listen and observe.

CAS has a clear message and a lot of success to back their message. CAS should therefore not be shy to put forward this message. This is important not only maintain the working ethos and clarity within the organisation but also to the external relations and in particular the donors. The focus is in the street and CAS is run by events in the city. The fieldworkers are therefore the key to CAS' work and ethos. This also means that the whole operation depends on the fieldworkers who feed information into the organisation and invite children to the refuge. What follows is that CAS' biggest expenditure is necessarily on salaries.

The paradox is that salaries are the most difficult to raise funds for as it is difficult to get donors to understand that much time is needed for preparation of children from the first point of contact to the time when the child eventually maybe visit the refuge. Having said that, it is not impossible to put this message across, in particular when supported by real stories.

Relationships with donors, government and the press will have



to be continuously cultivated. CAS has the knowledge and data to provide the real picture of the street and should use this knowledge to motivate those with the power to act at a national level to deal with the social problems of street children.

I believe that there is untapped potential for CAS both in terms of the resourcefulness of the staff as well as funding and it is my hope that CAS by making investments in the staff, mainly through training will be able to tap into this potential.

Mette Jacobsgaard.
6th December 2007.

Many thanks to CORDAID who made it possible.
Finally we want to give you some other news.

With the assistance of the Royal Dutch Embassy meetings were held between the National Health Insurance Scheme and Heads of Charities.

The aim was to make it possible to register street children into the Scheme. The Charities act as "Parents-Guardians". The

Scheme managers agreed, but the Charities have to fulfil certain conditions. On the 18th of December we were able to sign agreements between the two parties. The Charities are very happy with this development and are grateful to the Dutch Embassy for their assistance.

NEWSLETTER NO. 43 APRIL 2008
CREATING A DATABASE ON STREET CHILDREN.

Of late CAS takes part in discussions about setting up a new database on street children. These meetings are organized by an Italian NGO Ricerca Cooperazione (RC) and the Department of Social Welfare.

RC is an international Non-Governmental and non-profit making organization. (Italian).

This is a very laudable idea because they want to involve the district assemblies who in fact are responsible for the welfare of street children in their districts.

Because of this, we want to write about our own experiences at CAS in setting up and managing a database.

CAS started keeping records even before the charity was official recognize. Why did it start so early?

The founders of CAS wanted to do “something” for the many children who were living in the street. However, their superiors asked them, “who are street children, and where do they come from? Why do these children not go to school? We could not

MENSAH THERESA	G	TAMALE	NR	ADEDENKPO	19	26/05/1995
KWAMENA PENYIN	B	SALT POND	CR	KANESHIE	18	27/05/1995
NANEWODO ANTHONY	B	AKATSI	VR	AGEGE	18	28/05/1995
LARYEA ABRAHAM	B	AKIM ABREM	ER	LABADI	14	01/06/1995
NTIMPATRICK	B	KONONGO	AR	ZONGO	18	01/06/1995
NYANTACHI ISAAC	B	OBUASI	CR	CMB	15	13/05/2002
YABA RICHARD	B	BOLGATANGA	UER	KANTAMANTO	11	17/03/1995
HLOTSE HENRY	B	AKATSI	VR	KANTAMANTO	18	06/02/1995
AHMED MUSA	B	TAMALE	NR	ADEDENKPO	18	19/05/1995
BOAKYE EMMANUEL	B	KRONU AFRAHCHO	AR	RUSSIA	16	06/01/1995
KOFI KWAAKYE PRINCE	B	AKIMODA	ER	KANESHIE	17	18/05/1995
MOHAMADU AMINA	G	OBO KWAHU	AR	KANTAMANTO	16	22/06/1995
ABENA GIFTY	G	NINGO	GAR	RAILWAYS	15	22/06/1995

give them any answer and nobody else could give proper data at that time.

We had to prove that it was necessary to do “something” for these children.

REASONS FOR SETTING UP A DATABASE.

The reasons for setting up a database should be known. You can simply set up a database to know the numbers or to know where they come from. You can also record reasons why they are in the streets.

But this is not enough. If for instance, you want to improve their health status, you have to keep a database on the sicknesses they encounter, the methods they use to cure them, and how they prevent becoming sick again. This database will show specific information.

Another example could be that you have decided to educate them. This database will show background information on which schools they attended, why they dropped-out of school and their interest in which trade they want to learn.

CAS database started at the end of 1992. We wanted to give answers to our superiors. The initial database therefore only included numbers, ages and hometowns.

We made many mistakes:

1. Not all officers who collected information were serious and presented numbers which were based on guessing.
2. Names of children were not authentic. Street children want to protect themselves. One day they used this name, the other day another.
3. It became necessary that all officers involved used the same methods, such as surname first, include the age, do not rely on what the child says but persist on finding out his real age.

Soon we discovered that children with the same name appeared in the database, at times, not less than five times. How was this possible? Did the children move that much within the city? It is indeed possible that children use the same name. We decided to add their hometowns so that we could identify them.

But this created another problem. Street children come from all regions of Ghana and several come from other countries. They will tell you that they come from main towns in the region but in fact they come from small villages. For instance; if a child comes from the Ashanti region s(he) will tell you that s(he) comes from

Kumasi. Is it important to know the exact place of birth?

Yes it is when you really want to do “something” for the child. The parents are still responsible for them. They have to give you permission to become a guardian or a sponsor.

As usual, all is well when there are no problems, but when something happens you as a guardian can be held responsible.

CAS has learnt its lessons on these issues the hard way. We are now strictly sponsors of street children.

Our explanation so far shows that it is very difficult to obtain credible information from street children. It is essential that data collected will be verified a second time. It is also important that the administrator is a serious and courageous person who does not accept any information outright. S(he) has to clean the database from time to time.

Double entries have to be deleted. Children with the same names should be questioned again, etc.

Keeping a database means from time to time a specific census has to be conducted. CAS conducted a number of them.

Together with our sister charity Street Girls Aid we conducted 3 headcounts.

Officers we assigned to specific areas in town and stayed there for a few weeks. We wanted records on street children and not records of urban poor children. All officers involved have to know the difference between an urban poor child and a street child. If one of the officers is not serious about this, the database is not credible any longer. In other words only persons who work with street children can do the data collection. They could be guided by professional administrators who know the computer programs.

Another specific research was conducted on the many street mothers who were living in the Konkomba slum area. This particular research was necessary because we had plans to start a baby care program. Mothers and Babies were counted. We recorded their living conditions and the reasons why they were at Konkomba. It is interesting to know that the mothers come from all regions of Ghana.

Although, majority comes from the Northern sector of the country it is essential to know more about the tribes they come from. Cultural practices are often the reasons for leaving the tribe and live in Accra.

After a period of time, CAS had a lot of information on street



children, but all the information came from the children themselves. We had to verify this information. In 1999, we organized a follow-up. Some members of staff and a journalist visited four selected regions and met parents, teachers and relatives of street children. They met traditional rulers and opinion leaders of certain areas.

The information received was more alarming than we already knew.

Many more children from the rural areas were planning to travel to the towns and cities. All this information was published in the Exodus Report. (see: www.cas-ghana.com)

Also the health status of street children was examined. This research was organized by the Salvation Army Church and members of the statistical office at Gimpa.

Other specific researches followed. We now know that all these researches are “moment pictures” which are helpful to start new initiative but lose their values soon after. Future activities should not be based on old information gathered years ago.

CAS can give many examples: The situation at Konkomba has changed tremendously. Soon the slum will stop to exist. The town authorities have plans to clean the area.

The type of street children has also changed. Many street children are born in the streets today. The movement of street children, which was recorded in 1999, is different in 2008.

Today more charities are showing concern for street children and children move from one charity to the other. Some children visit because food is provided, other visit because they could be chosen to go on sponsorship.

Because CAS workers are in the streets over the last 15 years, they have witnessed many changes in the environment of street children. CAS conducted a street mapping exercise last year. This has not been an easy exercise and all workers were involved. Our plan is to keep the information gathered, up to date. Again we have to ask ourselves, what is important to know? Which data helps us to organize our activities? Working together with the District Assemblies is necessary to achieve more.

The question is; what can District Assemblies do for street children? Assemblies are responsible for the well being of all citizens living in the district. They will not be able to have specific activities for street children but have to control where they sleep and operate.

The database needed by the assemblies only requires basic information on street children. Of course the organizers could think ahead and decide to gather more information so that eventually specific activities could be organized by other organizations. For instance information on their educational background could be gathered.

CAS "cleaned" database has 4500 children recorded. If all records were accepted, the database records could have been more than 7000. These records are from street children who have visited the House of Refuge. It does not include the Headcounts because too little is known from the children who are only met once. The latest headcount from November 2007 recorded 21000 children. Street Girls Aid conducted at the same time a headcount on street mothers and street babies. The number is more than 13000.

What do these figures show us? Headcounts, even when conducted very carefully are still guess figures. During the headcount there was no time to verify. CAS therefore, relies on the information gathered from children who visit the house of

refuge.

Children, who opt to leave the street and are chosen to go on sponsorship, a social survey is conducted. This information explains why children leave home, what they have experienced and why they are in the streets. This information is confidential but it is very important to us. CAS activities are constantly re-directed and new activities are as a result of the constant changes taken place in their environment.

CAS knows a lot about the “old” type of street children, but has to admit that it does not know much about the present day street child.

Board of Advisors

The Board of Advisors during the last meeting, decided among other things, that CAS should return to its old approach the so called “Only One Chance” approach. What does this imply?

In 1995, CAS decided to give street children only one chance to leave the streets. The staff of CAS was required to conduct serious investigations into the background of the child and prepare the child very well before deciding to send him/her on sponsorship. This rule relaxed during the years and several children were processed several times. Every-time the child failed or did we fail? We have to be sure that the child is serious of leaving the street and serious on the educational program. The preparation should also be serious. Working on trial and errors is not a good approach. This way, valuable resources are wasted. All street children get a chance, but it is not good to give some children false hopes. At the first glance it looks as if it is a very hard rule, but it only emphasizes the seriousness of the work we want to carry out.

Other news:

1. The Special Attention Program (SAP) has started. They have rented another building, have employed more staff and have designed a timetable. The SAP program is meant for street children who show learning disabilities. We will explain more in the next newsletter.

2. Several groups and individuals who are working in the villages have contacted us and ask for cooperation. Their aim is to keep the children in the rural areas. Of course we are willing to cooperate with them. These organizations provide us with information on the circumstances children have to endure while in the village.

3. The National Health Insurance Scheme and street children.

The idea of registering street children into the Mutual Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS), Government of Ghana's health insurance grew out of years of trying to make medical health care accessible and affordable to street children and to help reduce huge medical bills incurred by CAS on children referred to hospitals or clinics for medical attention.

This issue was explored further by CAS, the Dutch Embassy and in partnership with other charities, a round table discussion was held on two occasions with the idea of signing a 'Memorandum of Cooperation' (M.O.U) with the ten (10) Mutual Health Insurance schemes in the Greater Accra region. The schemes include, Kpeshie, Osu Klottey, Dangme West, Ashiedu Keteke, Ablekuma Sub-Metro, Ayawaso, Okaikoi, Tema, Ga and Dangme East.

As part of the M.O.U, children's registration into the scheme will be spread among the ten schemes and be allowed to attend any hospital no matter their registration center. CAS provided the detail information on the children attached with passport photographs and two (2) Ghana Cedis per child to be registered into the scheme.

Currently, we have signed an M.O.U with four of the schemes namely Osu Klottey, Kpeshie, Dangme West and Tema. Out of



these, we have registered thirty-four (34) street children with Tema and Kpeshie Mutual Health Insurance schemes.

Some of the children who are beneficiaries of the scheme have started using the registered cards we got from the Kpeshie Mutual Health Insurance Scheme.

However, plans are still underway to signed an agreement with the remaining scheme centers and continue registering more children to enable them benefit from the health insurance scheme.

Finally, we want to extend our sincere appreciation to the team in the Netherlands Embassy, The National Health Insurance Scheme Managers especially the Kpeshie Mutual Health Insurance Scheme for providing the cards to the children in less than two weeks and all others who have made this possible.

NEWSLETTER NO. 44 JUNE 2008 FACING REALITIES.

We will limit the topics to SAP, Lashibi workshop and Donor assistance. We want to explain more about our experiences with the Special Attention Project (SAP) and the demonstration workshop at Lashibi now Adjei Kodjo.

As we have explained before. CAS prepares street children who want to leave the streets to go to school or learn a trade in a workshop. The preparation period takes a lot of time, but it depends on the response and ability of the individual child.

CAS has developed teaching aids which can be used by the workers to educate the children. These teaching aids are used in the streets during the street corner education periods but also in the classroom at the Refuge and at Hopeland training centre. The education department is responsible for its coordination.

In the streets the aids are used to teach the children life skills. Children receive advice as how to behave, what to do when sick, how to prevent sicknesses. They are also advised not to use drugs and abstain from prostitution. The educational tools can be used independently. The lessons are not to be followed in a certain order. We are not sure of what we achieve by this daily exercise, because the impact is difficult to measure. The fact that so many children want to leave the streets and come to the Refuge is for us a proof that we are successful.

In the Refuge the process continues. Every morning literacy lessons are conducted. The children are divided according to their level and each group receives lessons from a teacher. Students who have come to do their fieldwork practice as well

as volunteers sit among the children and assist them individually. The children therefore receive somehow individual training.

The first level is for those who have never gone to school. The teacher uses slates and chalk.

Children look at pictures and the teacher ask them to write down what they see. At the second level children try to form words with magnetic letters or combine small pictures with words on cards. The third level is already more advanced. They try to read and write in notebooks and solve mathematical problems.

Often visitors ask us why we do not separate the various levels? This cannot be done because most street children are not like normal students. They talk during the lessons, they walk out whenever they want to, they are curious and look around what others are doing.

We have learnt a lot from them. Many street children are brought up in an unusual way. They have not been taught basic rules. They behave differently. Although several are very bright, they do not fit into a normal school setting. I am sure that when some are placed in a normal classroom, the teacher will abscond and the child will remain. I am also convinced that many children cannot go to school any time.

These children are between the ages of 8 to 14. They either live in the streets for many years or have been born in the streets. The mother, if present, is also trying to survive. She has no time to look after her child or children. At a very early age these children look after themselves. They do not learn any cultural practices but know the culture of the streets.

What is the culture of the streets? CAS has tried to study it for many years. We know that it is a very hard world out there. Crime, drug addiction and prostitution are normal activities. Surviving means you have to fight for your own rights.

As an example I want to explain our experiences with a group of young girls we know. They are 8 in the group. Their ages are from 10 to 18. Several have followed classes regularly. Some have moved to the next step and lived at Hopeland training centre. They did not go on sponsorship because they absconded from Hopeland and are now back in the streets. These girls still come to the Refuge from time to time, but they themselves decided what to do during the day. They dress as they like and are often in miniskirts and do not listen to our advice. The gang leader decides what is good for them.

We have to accept this behavior. We have to accept that they



cannot go to school but that they can learn a trade if they want to.

CAS has a preparation committee. Members are from the six departments as well as a representative from SAP. This committee assesses the children, and gives advice to the heads how to prepare the child and what s(he) want to do in the future.

Some children are able to follow education in a school when they have learnt how to behave. Many could learn trades in workshops when they are prepared to listen to their masters. Some could be prepared to learn jobs as laundry women, truck-pushers, footballers, car washers, sign writers, cleaners etc. This is another form of sponsorship.

The committee writes a complete social survey report stating the background of the child but also the wishes of the job they want to learn. The heads and the staff in the department prepares the child for his/her future.

CAS is ready to assist all children who wish to leave the streets. However, we should be very cautious not to promise the child too much.

In Ghana, there is a beautiful system that children can be trained in workshop for a fee. Managers of small enterprises take children as apprentices. The fee the parents have to pay is often paid in kind. It includes a crate of beer a bottle of schnapps, a goat or a sheep. The inflation rate has no influence on them, we have to provide them anyway. CAS also pays workshop agreements in kind. At the end of the training another fee has to be paid. This system is very good if controlled. Some workshop managers do not treat the children well. If a license system could be setup which gives the manager permission to train children, then this could serve as a control measure.

We know that persons who are fighting against child trafficking do not like these arrangements. But we know that it is the only solution for the many street children who cannot go to school.

SAP

What is the task of SAP, the special attention project? Children who have learning difficulties or problems with their behavior or emotions could be assisted by the staff of SAP to overcome their problem and still progress.

The project started in February 2008. A building has been rented and staff has been employed. Social workers as well as teachers are now available for the children who have these difficulties.

The staff at CAS and the staff of SAP have to learn to select the children who need more attention. This could be children who are slow in learning or those who have other specific problems in learning. It could also be children who are very bright but have to be taught how to behave.

SAP is an independent project. We at CAS do not want that it is another department because we want to remain available for all street children and not only for this special group.

The staff at SAP evaluates the progress of the children on weekly basis. They look after their welfare, teach them to take their bath, do their laundry and feed them. Children will stay with SAP for a period of time and eventually we hope that they become part of the sponsorship program of CAS. The sponsorship could be for any job.

SAP has its own Board of Advisors who meets every two months. A new project should be guided, especially at its beginning.

Both staff have to learn to the wishes of the children. Some

children attend SAP because of the food. Others come back to CAS because of the entertainment. Eventually, we hope that all children who attend SAP have gone there to prepare for their future.

LASHIBI/ADJEI KODJO DEMONSTRATION WORKSHOP

SPONSORSHIP DEPARTMENT

Aims to educate and train the children so that they can find employment and build a life off the streets.

CAS runs a Sponsorship Scheme for those children who have shown real interest and motivation in learning a trade or furthering their schooling. Children must have shown their ability to cope with the change of lifestyle. A suitable school or



workshop will be found. Around 20% of those sponsored attend school and 80% learn a trade. The scheme started in 1995. About 900 children have so far come out successfully from the scheme.

SETTLEMENT

The System whereby, Children are assisted to re-integrate into main stream society is called settlement. The settlement could be by supplying them with more tools or an amount of money to start up something on their own or help them to seek employment. CAS as an organization has employed several of ex-street children.

We have encountered situations where, children would just squander the settlement money and come back to us for further assistance. Probably, these children needed some well equipped workshop to polish –up and or do some kind of

attachment with guidance, before they are left on their own.

HISTORY OF LASHIBI PROJECT

The project started as a pilot one in the year 2002 by the Sponsorship Department of CAS at Lashibi. Lashibi is near Ashaiman in the Tema Municipality in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. The purpose was to have a center of excellence where some of our boys would have the opportunity to practice their skills for some time before they work independently. The workshop was established on the compound of a family. The lease contract for the land was first signed for 3 years. The workshop started with three trades; namely-Auto mechanicals, Auto bodyworks and electronics. The project started as a pilot one. After the expiry of the tenancy, we renewed it for three years which ended in September, 2007. We had to renew again for a year to enable us secure a permanent site where we could build a new structure for them.

On the whole, CAS as an organization and sponsorship department in particular has decided to continue with the project and even go further to expand by including some more trades.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

1. To be used as a demonstration grounds for children in preparation. Street children should see examples of different trades. Therefore children go on excursions to workshops. This workshop is a good example for them.
2. To serve as an avenue for income generation for ex-street children. At times it is difficult to find permanent jobs. Those who have been trained could start their placement at this workshop and move to other places later.
3. To serve as an upgrading centre for trained ex-street children. Most children have only been trained for three years or less. Practical training at the workshop will help them to get more experiences.
4. To serve as a commercial centre in the long term. This workshop eventually will be income generating. More street children could benefit from this.
5. To generate employment for ex-street children and youth. The young workers could be given a certificate after a number of years which could be useful for further employment.

ADJEI KODJO PERMANENT SITE FOR THE WORKSHOP

One of our main donors/partners Street Child Africa in U.K approved our application for funds to build a permanent structure for this project. The package also included new tools/equipment for the proposed workshop. After almost half a year we got a piece of land in Adjei Kodjo, near Ashaiman in the Greater- Accra region of Ghana. It is close to Hopeland training centre. While we were looking for a plot to purchase, all the tools and equipment were bought and stored.

The construction started in December 2007 and currently the

first phase is completed, the children have started using the shop. The construction is carried out in three phases. The first phase has now been completed. The project also includes accommodation 12 boys, store rooms and offices if all phases are completed.

The actual cost for the project has changed dramatically because the purchase of land was more costly than anticipated. Secondly, it took almost two years for the application to receive approval from the donors. Also, the rate of inflation in Ghana contributed negatively to the budget of the project. We have to apply for more assistance to complete the second and third phases of this laudable project.

Donors:

There are various kinds of donors: 1. Individual donors, families, parishes and church organizations (Private donors). 2. Group initiatives often called foundations. 3. Donor organizations.

CAS receives support from these three groups either in cash or in kind.

1. Private Donors: CAS receives a lot of support from individuals, families and church organizations. This group of donors donates to one of our accounts and only when we receive our bank-statements we will be able to thank them, because it is only then that we know where the money came from. These donations do not require financial and audited reports. CAS groups these donations as private donors. The amounts donated are often not labeled for any purpose or activity.

This is of course easy for CAS, because at times activities which are financed by specific donors do not always cover all the costs and additional money is needed which has been given by the private donors.

However, families and/or church groups could decide to finance particular activities. The fund-raised amount is sufficient for a certain period of time. CAS has to search for a new donor for the same activities later. This creates a problem for the financial officers.

Often they do not realize that the money has run short and the statements have to be corrected afterwards. Auditors are not pleased with these corrections. But how can this be prevented?

The Heads of Departments receive monthly imprests for the various activities. The heads liquidate the costs against the imprests they have received. Quarterly the overall costs are liquidated against the donors.

Donors who finance particular activities receive quarterly financial as well as progress reports. During this period it could

be discovered that the money for the activity has been exhausted. CAS uses monies received from private donors to complete the period. This explains why CAS has to continuously fundraise.

2. Foundations:

Foundations are group initiatives which fundraise and support particular charities. At times, the leadership is abroad. Memorandums of understanding have to be signed, before the monies are released. The foundation often requires a final financial and progress report. The foundation promises to raise enough funds for an activity. The Charity trusts the foundation and at times pre-finances the activity. Foundations, often finances visible items only and do not support running-costs.

This approach creates problems for CAS, because the activity includes manpower as well as visible items. Foundations in turn are accountable to their donors and want to show them that they have made it possible for CAS to carry out an activity. Often, one foundation and other donors support one activity of CAS, especially when manpower is included.



The foundation requires a financial report at the closure of the activity and not quarterly. The period could pass the financial year of CAS. CAS closes every financial year and opens new accounts in the new-year. At times the foundation releases the total amount at the beginning of the activities, but not always. Sometimes the fund is released in installments. Auditors have difficulties to understand this because they are not aware of the MOU signed.

We are aware that donor support has changed over the years. Donor organizations could decide to finance the activities of one department. Presently, the support covers only particular activities. This of course increases the administration of CAS because all donors want to receive reports.

Donor support is based on trust. Trust that CAS uses the money for the activity and give account for it accordingly. We have tried over the years to create the awareness of the plight of street children and explain our interventions. CAS has made videos which were shown on TV. CAS gave talks and interviews. We went to exhibitions and bazaars. Our website and this newsletter is part of these efforts. Still we wonder why it is so difficult to sell our story. Soon we hope to get assistance to produce better videos which we hope will help us to fundraise for these children.

We are very grateful for all those who have assisted us in the past. Many children have benefited from this support.

We are also very grateful to our partners/fundraisers abroad. In The Netherlands Equal Opportunity Fund processes our applications and contact the donors. Street Child Africa is assisting us in the same way in the U.K. And in Germany MISEREOR fund raises for us. Without this support many street children will remain in the streets.

NEWSLETTER NO. 45 DECEMBER 2008 SUPPORT.

We have reached the end of the year and we want to take stock. We also want to keep you informed about our experiences.

- Ricerca and Department of Social welfare.
As explained in the April edition an Italian NGO Ricerca Cooperazione (RC) and the Department of Social Welfare together with some NGO's are preparing to set up a new data base on children in the street. Several meetings took place to prepare this activity.

First all the personnel involved had to be trained. The NGOs have presented their fieldworkers while 42 social workers of the

Department of Social Welfare are taking part. All these workers have to have the same understanding about street children and other children they will meet in the streets. A five day training session took place at the Institute of Local Government in Madina. Several resource persons shared their knowledge on street children, their rights and problems. Since we at CAS are already 16 years dealing with them, I was also asked to share our knowledge and experiences on the children, on fieldwork and on the street mapping exercise. We have divided Accra-Ashaiman and Tema into 11 areas (zones). In all these areas the following has to be carried out. First a town mapping exercise has to be conducted. It simply means the workers have to know what they could expect to meet in that part of the city. Are there markets, lorry parks? This exercise has been started already. The first reports indicate that we have underestimated the size of certain areas and many more days are needed to cover all. Other reports suggested that the best time to carry the Head count is during the night. Counting during the night is of course different from counting during the day. We keep you informed.

- My experiences in Germany.
Report on my visit to Germany 13th-24th September 2008
MISEREOR one of the donors of CAS invited me (Bro. Jos) to attend two separate workshops in Germany.

The first workshop was a symposium organised by ISMO, International Society for Mobile Youth-work. 217 delegates took part. (14 from Africa, 4 from Asia, 14 from Latin America, 7 from North America and the rest from Europe). The aim was to exchange ideas about Mobile Youth-work or what we call Fieldwork. Most of the delegates were from Europe, and therefore most of the discussions and presentations were from Europe.

The main talks were given in 7 languages. You could choose which language you wanted to hear. The main language was German. Besides the general presentations you could choose to take part in forums. Forums, on Gender, drug addition, job opportunities and Health.

I was asked to do a presentation on Health. I had prepared a power-point photo presentation. Some members from East Africa did their presentation first and unfortunately I had to contradict them on several points. They generalized too much-in Africa...

You can imagine that this brought about a lot of discussion. I was fortunate that a lady from Uganda supported me because she said that the situation in Ghana is similar to that of Uganda.

The time was too short to come to conclusions.

Another forum I attended was on job opportunities. German mobile youth workers explained that they visit the streets, as we do but they also visit the schools. This discussion was very complicated because three languages were used and we did not have translation equipment.

We were also invited to visit projects in Germany. I visited with many participants from India and Latin America a project in Hallschlag which operate in an area where many migrant from Morocco and Turkey live. The workers concentrate on the youth, those who are born in Germany. We also visited a youth centre outside Stuttgart where all youth are welcome. The youth patronizes this centre a lot although it has been built outside the town.

Students organised a send-off party in a school. The German food was good but it was very cold and we had to stand for a longtime outside.

In Stuttgart we stayed at a “students-hotel” which was new and according to me an excellent place to stay. It was close to the zoo which we visited to see the animals from Africa.

In Stuttgart I had to find my way alone and at times in the night either on foot or by trains. This was an experience on its own. After three days we, representatives of 5 partner organizations from MISEREOR and two members of MISEREOR, travelled to Aachen. There we could stay at the Hotel from MISEREOR which is a good hotel as well.

1. From India – Butterfly project which is very similar to CAS.
2. From The Philippines- PREDA Project which work in the prison with young “offenders”.
3. From Zambia- Youth Alive- street children project.
4. From Burundi – a projects which targets groups of youth.
5. From Ghana- CAS

We formed a close friendly group and understood each other at once because we are all doing similar work.

We, representatives had to present our projects to MISEREOR staff those from the Asia and Africa Desks. For this meeting I prepared a presentation as well. The problem was we only got 20 minutes each.

As you know you can talk much longer on a project, therefore only the important issues could be highlighted. Questions were asked and on a few occasions there was time to challenge the MISEREOR workers. Although there was no time to discuss practical issues, the meeting was good.

The next day, Saturday MISEREOR had existed for 50 years. We took part in the festivities. An open day was organised and we could present our projects at an exhibition. Each one of us was interviewed by the public. In the evening the day was marked with a Mass and after the Mass we could get some food. This was a real struggle because of the crowd. A life band played till late in the night.

On Sunday we got a guided tour in Aachen which was interesting as well. In the afternoon we went to eat in a restaurant and there we witnessed that in Germany also poor people exist. A woman walked in and asked us for the remaining food. We gave it to her. She did not eat it but swallowed it as fast as possible. Of course the owner did not like this at all. The next day I had to leave early because I had to take two trains to the airport. The first train delayed 15 minutes with the result that I missed the speed train to Frankfurt. I lost one hour. This speed train also delayed 7 minutes and so I did not have sufficient time to check in. The plane left minus me. I had to pay for a rebooking and stay overnight at the airport. Here I had enough time to rest. The security was very tight not knowing that the next day some terrorists were arrested. The week has been very tiring because of all the walking but most of the meetings were worthwhile.

- TV videos

Two separate Dutch TV camera groups came to film CAS and the street children. One group focused on two street children and followed them from the field to the Refuge to Hopeland. The other group focused more on the director and on his motivation to carry out his job. Both TV programs have been broadcasted. We received some reactions from the Netherlands from volunteers who wanted to come and assist for a few months, but CAS only allows volunteers who are willing to come for 6 months or more.

We cooperated with these programs because we always hope that it encourages people to support us.

- Plan B.

During the past year, CAS has applied to various donors for support for the street children programs. Unfortunately, we have not received any positive responds so far. CAS is completely dependant on donor support. Therefore we have decided to start implementing plan B.

Plan B entails that because of lack of funds, activities to assist the street children will be reduced. This means some members of staff will loose their job. In December 2008, we have 53 members of staff with a total salary of 7.500 euro a month. We simply cannot maintain these expenses because the income is less than the expenditure.

Did we try to fundraise and start income generating projects? Indeed we tried the following:

Hopeland Farm project. In 1995, CAS started this farm project in order to have an income from farm produce and have a place to

introduce street children in farming. Hopeland farm is concentrating on animal husbandry. We rear chicken, pigs, ducks and grass-cutters. After trying to make Hopeland self sustaining, we decided in 2003 after ten years of experimenting to learn from the past and conclude that a farm cannot be income generating when children are involved.

The farm cannot be run in a professional way. Secondly, only three street children out of the many who stayed at the farm opted to learn this trade. Hopeland is now a demonstration farm.

The second project we tried is run by the Demonstration department. The name suggests already that the emphasis is on demonstrating trades to street children.

However, we tried to make artifacts in such a manner that they could be sold to the public. Because of the high unemployment rate in Ghana, many individuals are involved in the trade of making and selling of artifacts. Only the very good ones can make a living with this trade. Also, many items are now imitated and made much cheaper in China. CAS as a street children organization cannot compete in this market.

We will only be able to sell items which are not available in the market. Unfortunately here we also experience that as soon as we introduce a particular item it is imitated over night.

Therefore, this undertaking also does not provide CAS with any income. We are already happy when we sell the items which have been made. Our hope is that this department becomes self sufficient.

Fundraising in Ghana.

CAS has a fundraising committee in place. All departments have presently plans as how to fundraise in 2009. All members of staff have official identity cards so that they can present themselves officially. The idea is to target firms, factories, associations, banks etc.

We also sponsored an artist, a singer who recorded a song together with some street children. The record is called "shelter". We are now trying to promote this record and have presented it to several radio stations.

In short, we are spending more time on fundraising. We remain ready to support the street children but we have to be realistic, we cannot carry out activities which are not supported. However, we have "survived" 16 years already so we trust in the future.

Support from the Barclays Bank.

Members of staff of the Barclays Bank in Ghana supported CAS and the children by renovating the bath rooms. These

bathrooms are now tiled.

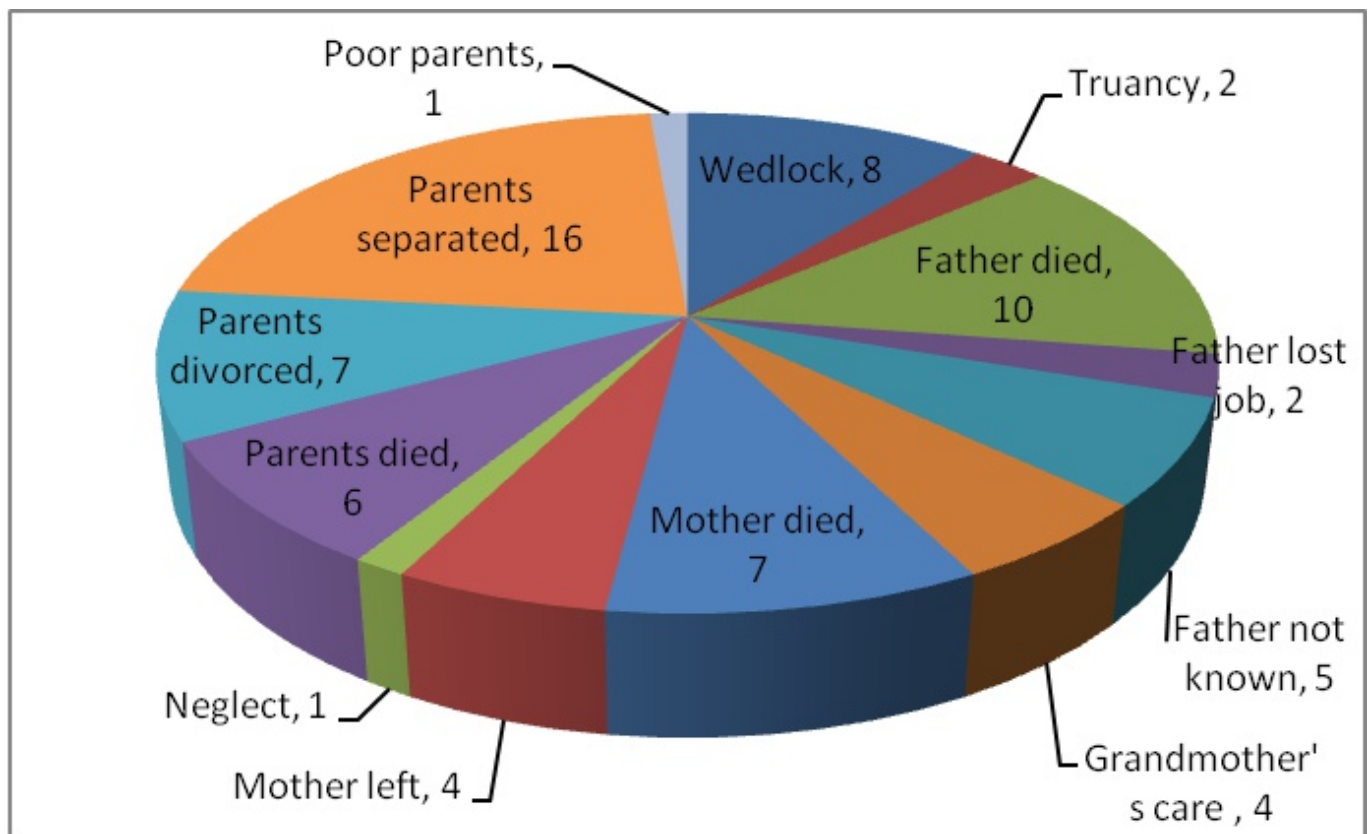
NEWSLETTER NO. 46 APRIL 2009 INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS

After some months of silence, we want to inform you again about the latest developments at CAS. Some are in relation with our cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare, others are related to the children.

Census.

As explained before we together with Street Girls Aid and the Department of Social Welfare have been preparing a Census on street children since early 2008.

The Town-planning exercise has been completed. This exercise took much more time than anticipated because we underestimated the size of some districts. Some group of workers needed additional days to visit all areas. The reports are interesting. In some areas no street children were found in other areas street children sleep but they move to the city centre during the day. Some of the social workers were advised not to enter the area because too many drug addicts and criminals live there. But of course it was necessary to include the area because children live there as well.



Last week, all persons involved met and experiences were

exchanged. Some questions remain on the table, should we count at night or during the day? How many days should we allocate for the census? Who should be informed, etc? The technical committee will meet to decide on these questions, then all the social workers included new persons who can assist have to meet to prepare for the actual days. Most probably the census will take place in the second week of April.

We will keep you informed.

SOCIAL SURVEY REPORTS.

Before a child goes on sponsorship, CAS conducts social survey reports on each child. This exercise takes a lot of time because the report is gradually built up. Street children are not ready to reveal their background outright. They have to protect themselves. It is the skill of the social worker to get the information needed. Reading through 73 social survey reports, I observed that most of the children have had already quite a history before coming in contact with CAS.

Most of them have not grown up in a stable environment. They have either lost one or both of their parents or their grandmother took care of them.

Let us go through the reports together. We have social survey reports of 29 boys and 44 girls. This time I have selected more girls than boys because many people think that we are only dealing with street boys. These social survey reports are from children who have gone through or are still in the sponsorship scheme.

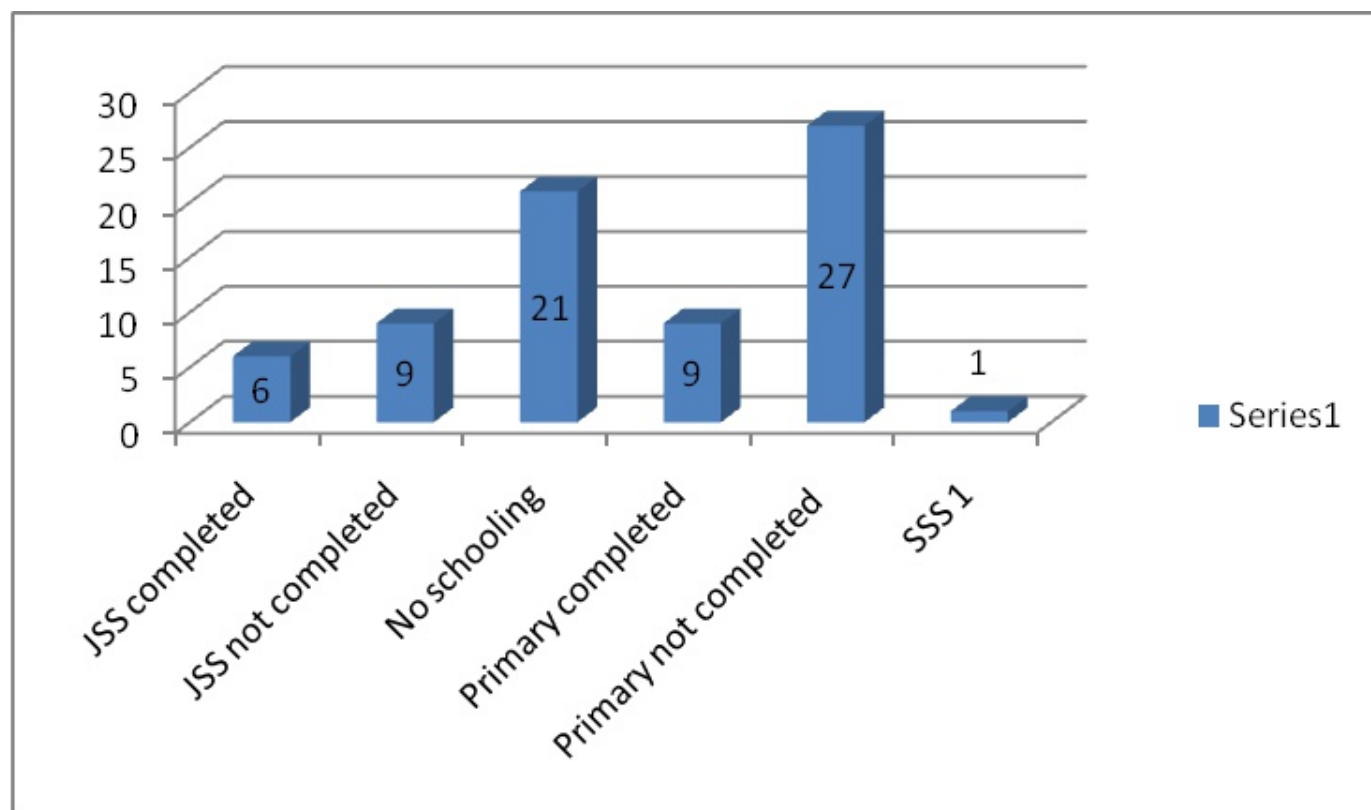
SCHOOL.

What is their educational background? Very poor! Of the 73 children 20 have never gone to school. What is the reason? There is only one child who has not gone to school because his parents could not pay for it. Others have not gone to school because the one parent left could not afford it. A few girls did not go to school because they are girls and the family did not want to invest in them. But most of them did not go to school because the extended family did not want or could not afford it.

Some of the children completed primary school and continued to JSS now junior high school. One of them dropped out of SSS now senior high school. The reasons could be finances or the child him/herself decided to leave.

Many of them experienced some form of trauma when one or both of their parents died. They even became angry with their

family members and the society, with the result that they run to the streets or became involved in crime or got involved with bad company.

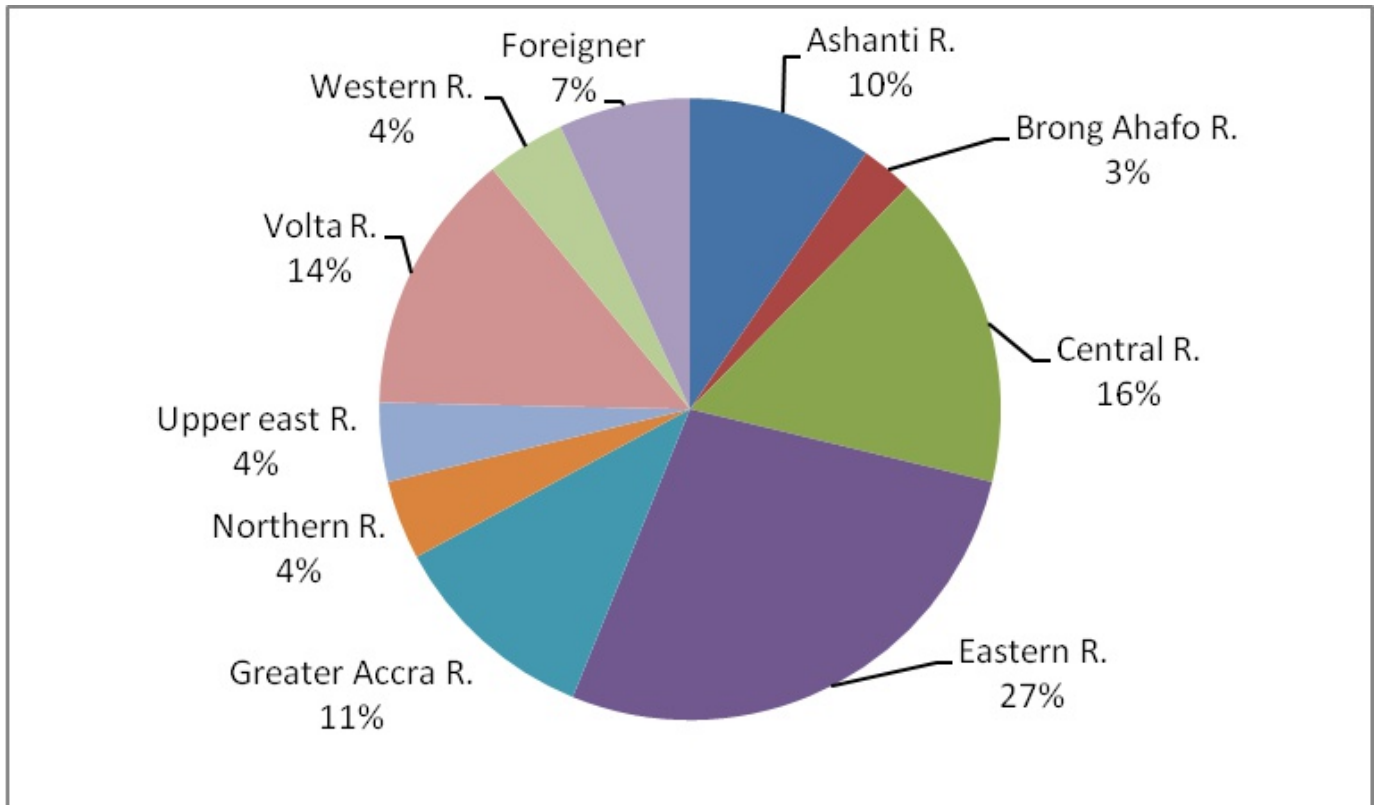


In addition to the many children (21) who have lost one or two parents, others lost a stable environment because their parents never married, separated or are divorced. There is a difference between separation and divorce because when they are separated there is still a change for them to reconcile.

36 children are victims of this situation. 5 of them do not know their fathers. This does not mean that the mother does not know the father, but they simply do not want that the child to know their father.

Most of them who have been brought up by another family member experience problems in their life. Some are maltreated and one of them was even sexually maltreated by her own father.

Where do these children come from. The children we meet in Accra come from all the regions of Ghana. In addition several come from foreign countries such as Nigeria, Togo and Ivory Coast. A number of them have parents who are from different



tribes. Children of these parents are then brought up in different cultures with the result that they do not know where they belong. More than half of the social survey reports talk about the movement of the child from one town or village to another. This also means that they have attended schools at different places.

Children who are born in a foreign country often did not go to school because nobody took care.

These breakdowns of family structures and movements of children resulted in the decision of the children to run away and move to the streets. Unfortunately for the girls, they needed somebody for protection and care. Several became pregnant and quite a few committed abortion.

Reading these stories does not make any sense to blame any one. The child could not prevent that their parents died or



separated neither could they have foreseen the dangers of the street. But what could we do? Nobody has the means to place these children into stable environments, or has all the financial means to educate all. Even our experience is that, most of these children do not belong in school. Their background and behaviour does not qualify them to go to school. Most of them could be assisted individually. Each child needs a different solution.

But what can we do for the future? To prevent that more children grow up in similar circumstances. We have the duty to educate the small ones. This is our advice to the government, churches, associations and everybody. Do not look backwards but look forward. Learn from the past mistakes society made and give chances to all who are born today.

WORKSHOP AGREEMENTS.

For children who follow apprenticeship training in a workshop, workshop agreements have to be signed with the managers. This system is unique because payments are not only in cash but also in kind. Some years ago an auditor from a donor



organization accused us of misappropriating donated money for parties. This was a sad story because he wrote it without meeting the management of CAS, but it is also a story to laugh with and that is why we want to share it with you.

Most children who follow the apprenticeship system follow the training for three years. At the beginning of the training the parent or guardian or sponsor pays a fee to the manager. This has to be paid again at the end of the course. This is called the completion fee.

An example of an average workshop agreement:
Starting agreement: Completion fee:

Cash 2.500 Ghana cedi	Cash 2.500 Ghana Cedi
+ one crate of minerals	+ one goat
+ one bottle of Akpeteshie	+ one bottle Akpeteshie
+ one bottle of gin	+ one bottle gin
+ one crate of beer	+ one crate of beer

The payment of items is calculated based on the inflation rate as of the time of starting and finishing of training. Therefore the workshop manager is sure to get what he/she wants.

These payments vary according to the trade but as you can see it is quite expensive. Once the auditor can confirm the workshop documents/receipts, then CAS can be sure that we are being transparent. The money is not used for eating and drinking. But for us it is a clear example of somebody who does not know the local customs and makes a wrong judgment.

Are similar questions (paying agreement fees) not to be asked when discussing child trafficking and child labor?

NEWSLETTER NO. 47 SEPTEMBER 2009

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS. THE ORIGINAL AIM HAS BEEN ACHIEVED

CAS' COLLABORATION WITH RICERCA E COOPERAZIONE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

As mentioned in the last newsletters, the above mentioned organizations together with Street Girls Aid and CAS were preparing a census on children in the streets of greater Accra region.

The aim was to know the number of children who are in the streets and to know their problems. The project tries to improve the living conditions of the children and the street mothers. The target group should be below eighteen years of age.

Eventually a database will be set up which will be updated

regularly. The planning and preparation started more than a year ago and many hurdles had to be cleared. First of all, all officers involved should have the same understanding of children in the streets. You must have noticed that I did not use the word street-children. This was indeed one of main problems. We have been involved in many discussions about the definition of street children. "ON" or "OFF" the streets, "Urban poor" or orphans? At the end our conclusion was that no child should be in the street, but in school. We therefore decided that all the children should be counted and later be placed into categories.

The officers of social welfare and those of the NGO's had a fair idea about the districts which had to be covered, not knowing that we underestimated the size of the districts. The work had to be carried-out on foot.

Another difficulty arose about the combination of Headcount and Census. We wanted to count them and at the same time ask them some questions. A questionnaire had to be made containing all the questions about their wellbeing.

Questions about their background, the life in the streets, the use of alcohol and drugs, and the involvement in prostitution had to be included.

In other words, it became a substantial book which could not be practically used while interviewing.

Therefore we asked all officers to study the questions carefully and memorize them. Of course several discussions arose about the usefulness and relevance of certain questions.

Experts asked us time and time again what numbers we were talking about. We could only give them rough figures. You remember that the headcount of CAS came to a figure of 21,000 street children in November 2007. At the end of the discussion we agreed to separate the headcount from that of the census. During the headcount, only few questions were asked. However, a sample method approach was used for the census.

It was also very important that the double counting had to be avoided. The solution was to carry-out the headcount during one weekend and in all the districts at once. This was done very well and the various leaders reported to us their findings by phone. The figures we received were more than we anticipated. I will not give you the final results because the report is not yet concluded.

In some districts, the numbers presented could not be accepted. Our workers operate daily in these districts and their numbers are different. Therefore some areas have to be re-examined.



In the meantime, the Department of Social Welfare which operates under the ministry of Social Welfare has created a unit under child protection for street children. A permanent officer is available for them and for their problems. CAS considers this as a very good development and we have promised already to cooperate with the unit.

What do these developments mean to us (CAS)?
 After 17 years of operating the original aims have been achieved. CAS was set-up to get to know the street children and to know what could be done for them. These tasks have now been taking over by the unit.

Our fieldworkers do not have to visit the streets daily to get to know the children.
 And what can be done will now be decided by the department of Social Welfare.
 We have offered "the unit" our full cooperation and asked them to make good use of our workers so that the work in the streets will be coordinated very well. We offered our workers to them because of the above but also for the simple fact that the financial crisis has hit CAS as well. Next year, we will not be able to pay these workers and activities because no donor has been found as yet to support the fieldwork activities.

We will keep you informed about further developments.

We also have taken stock of running 14 years the sponsorship program. As reported before, CAS workers meet a younger generation of street children, those who are born in the streets. We also reported that more and more especially girls abscond from the scheme. We are sure that what you learn as a child at an early age will have lasting influence on your future life. These children have not grown up into a stable situation with the results that it takes a lot of human resource and money to rehabilitate them. The question is, is it fair to spend so much on few children and achieve such a limited result?

We have now concluded that we could achieve more when we aim at a still younger generation. Children of the age group 5 to 10 could still be placed into primary schools if well guided. The costs of this sponsorship program will also be less because only the parents (mother) will be assisted to educate the child.

For the past 14 years we have assisted teenagers. This program will still continue till December 2011. This means that we have two years to gradually change our approach. We will do this together with our sister organization Street Girls Aid.

SUPPORT FROM DONORS.

I mentioned earlier that, the financial support from donors is limited.

CAS could carry-out many more projects if donors supported them. Whether we have tried to fundraise?

Yes we tried several methods and we received some very encouraging letters but unfortunately also some very undiplomatic replies. But we will carry on as long as it is possible. We know we do it for the children and not for our own interest.

Maybe we have to wait until we meet donors again who will trust us. CAS as a NGO stands not alone in this struggle. We have to accept the consequences. Fortunately, there are still faithful donors who continue with their support. Many thanks.

At the beginning of the year Fan-milk, the firm which sells ice-cream sold all their depots to private investors. Because of this we had to stop with the literacy program for the vendors which we organized for 14 years. Fortunately, Fan-milk is still supporting the 6 teachers allowances for one year more, in lieu of the closure of the project. We are very grateful for this.

Last June, we decided to stop with two trades in the demonstration department. An additional six workers lost their

job. We decided to do so because these two trades, candle making and ceramics were not profitable. There are many ceramic workshops in Ghana and it was difficult to sell the products. With the sales of candles we did not succeed as well. Customers dictated the prices and especially in other countries, many shops sell candles from other producers.

Moreover, we noticed that only few children showed interest in these trades. We have now decided to improve the sewing trade. The sewing of sachets and clothing can still be profitable.

At the House of Refuge, we are changing the former ceramic workshop into a general handicraft room. Drawing, painting, beads-making etc could be done at this room continuously. This means the children are welcome to use the room whenever they like. Till now, tables had to be setup every day for the drawing lessons which lasted only one hour. At Hopeland, we want to introduce a similar approach as well but we are still discussing these changes with the staff at Hopeland.

GOODS IN KIND.

We are also very grateful to all the donors who supported us with goods. I want to mention few donors but the danger is that I will forget some. Therefore all donors who support us with goods, we say many thanks.

1. Family Jansen- Scholtes
2. Mr. Hans Gleijm
3. Family Geraerds
4. Family Schaubert – Paul E.v.
5. Family van Dinther and friends
6. Family van de Andel
7. Equal Opportunity Fund
8. Brothers FIC
9. Stichting Derdehands
10. Family Lamberts
11. Family Kunnen
12. Parish Lambertus
13. Family Rademakers
14. Family Ricken

Not forgetting Development project assistance BV in Holland and National Catholic Secretariat who organize the transport and clearance of the goods.

SOLAR EQUIPMENT.

In order to save costs on the use of energy and save the electric equipment, we have examined the possibility to use solar energy.

Both at the Refuge and at Hopeland solar power in combination with the electricity net could save us many Cedis when installed. During the day, the power could come directly from the solar panels and in the evening from the net. At CAS most of the power is used during the day because staff and children use the computers during the day. Only at Hopeland additional power is needed during the evening and night. Children and staff are accommodated at Hopeland.

This year CAS experienced many unfortunate power surges. Although the computers are protected by a stabilizer and UPS (uninterrupted power supply), several computers were completely destroyed. Even the spare hard disks were affected. We have installed additional power surge protectors.

We have applied to a donor for assistance. In October we will know whether it can be realized.

NEW MEMBERS BOARD OF ADVISORS.

As some of you might know, Fr. Anthony Asare has been the chairman of the Board for a very long period. He has travelled to Rome for further studies. Archbishop Buckle appointed Fr. Joseph Arthur as the treasurer of the archdiocese. Fr. Joseph has replaced Fr. Anthony as well as member of the Board. Also Mrs. Mary Amadu has gone on retirement. She was the Director of Department of Social Welfare. The new Director has appointed Mr. Prince Lamptey an Assistant Director as their representative on our Board. We thank all the persons concerned for their interest in street children and for their contributions to find solutions.

THE FUTURE OF CAS.

Soon the Board of Advisors will meet to discuss the developments and financial situation of CAS. Donor support is diminishing and maybe the time has come that smaller NGOs can no longer exist.

If indeed that time has arrived, we are happy that CAS has achieved its main objectives. There are several persons who have told us that there are still people who are willing to support our work. We have to discover new ways to find them. I am convinced that the traditional approach does not work any longer.

The Ricerca group will discuss what should be done in the

streets and how the children could be supported and advised.

Our future is not sure but we are still ready to continue assisting street children.

NEWSLETTER NO. 48 DECEMBER 2009 TRANSFORMATION

The number of members of staff has been reduced, some have been re-assigned and the Fieldwork activities have been changed. As reported before, CAS has completed its mission to carryout research on street children and to know more about their problems. CAS has published the report- The state of the Ghanaian street child-CAS' perspective. This report has been published on our website: www.cas-ghana.com

During the exercise CAS conducted together with its partners S.AID, Ricerca and the Department of Social Welfare, we came in contact with street children but also with urban poor and working children. In order to prevent confusion, we decided to take care of all children who are in the streets but should have been in schools. Therefore, we have adapted the name: "out of school youth".

1. In 2010 members of CAS will be available for all the out of school youth below the ages of 18 years.
2. In addition, CAS will continue supporting children who choose to leave the streets.
3. CAS will create general awareness by tertiary students the plight of out of school youth.

Let us explain these statements in detail.

1. During the past years we have reported to you that CAS came into contact with children who come from the rural area but also with many who have been born in the streets. As such the term street child and urban poor child merged. Street mother often live with their children in Kiosks made from wood or sheeting materials. They live in shelters. Although, often on illegal land, they have become city dwellers. Urban-poor or street children? Often they live in shanties. We are following with keen interest the developments of one of such shanties- Konkomba market. This is the place where we started the baby care program in 1995. CAS conducted a research on the mothers and babies who were living in this area. This report can also be found on our website. Several successive mayors of Accra City have tried to remove this slum because the environment is indeed not suitable for human habitation and the area has been earmarked for development. Unfortunately the



population has increased dramatically since 1995. It is now estimated that 50,000 persons live on that small piece of land. Land is not even the good description because a large portion is a flattened refuse mountain. The baby crèches were built on a heap of sawdust which we had poured into a swamp. These crèches were temporary crèches and the minders were often confronted by fire outbreaks because the sawdust started smoldering. Indeed it is not a good place to live. But where should these city dwellers go to. Recently they have tried to remove these settlers with force but that did not work. Several plans have been made in the past often with a social approach, but these plans are yet to be implemented.

There is also a “school” in the area which CAS supports. This school teaches 270 kindergarten-primary school children. It started in a shed where horses were kept. CAS presented school benches, teaching materials and assisted in the improvement of the building. Unfortunately, everything got burnt last year when there was a fire out break. The teachers did not know what to do with the children and we urged them to keep them in the area. CAS contributed again to make a concrete floor. What will happen in the future, we do not know.

We are following the developments with keen interest because many street-mothers and street children live there.

More could be read from pages on the internet:
www.peacefmonline.com, September 2009
www.graphicghana.com -2009-Oct 06
 The nation-weekly newsmagazine 2002-10-11
www.myjoyonline.com

2. SPONSORSHIP

CAS started a sponsorship program for street children in 1995 and received financial support to make this possible. Most training programs were for three years duration. We decided on a three year program because this is the minimum time to learn the basics of a trade. During the three years, the trainee can sit for a grade two NVTI exam, which will help the trainee to continue the training or to obtain a job.

I did not mention skills. There is a big difference between a trade and a skill. Once you know a trade you have a future. A skill is helpful but does not guarantee a future. Under skills we understand activities such as; soap making, basket weaving, hair plating etc.

The sponsorship scheme takes care of the living condition of a child. S(he) need to be accommodated, either in a room or in workshop. S(he) need to have a bed, clothing, pocket money etc.

We realize this kind of sponsorship is quite expensive, but fortunately, many children have benefited from it over the years.

Still many children are left behind who are not interested to go to the classroom but have interest in sports, in caring for babies or learn some of the skills mentioned above.

These could be assisted but it requires much more preparation time. These children have to be counseled and supervised very well. Two ex-fieldworkers have been re-assigned as supervisors. This training will be done at the House of Refuge and maybe some will be trained at Hopeland. We are working out a sponsorship package for them. The training will be shorter, the items needed are not so many and many more children could benefit.

We have redesigned the programs at the House of Refuge. We want to place the emphasis more on education than on taking care. Every child who visits the Refuge will receive a kind of education. This means more teamwork is needed. CAS is not running a school where many subjects are taught, rather we want to educate children and improve their behavior, their way of living and help them to take care of themselves.

Two ex-fieldworkers are now working as members of staff at Hopeland training Centre. Children who are invited to stay at Hopeland need assistance and supervision for 24 hours. These children are accommodated but receive assistance for their daily living. Hopeland remains an extension of the streets. Hopeland is not a boarding school. We have no illusions that we are able



to change a child in 6 months time, the duration of their stay. We assist children at the Refuge, at Hopeland to a certain extend so that we are sure they can take care of themselves when they receive training at a workshop or in a school.

3. CREATING AWARENESS.

During the past 17 years we worked to achieve our aims.

CAS MISSION:

1. To interact with street children so that they can be understood and supported.
2. To assist those children who choose to get off the street and into a stable living situation.
3. To create general awareness about the plight of street children 0-18 years old who sleep rough and work in the streets of Accra, Tema and towns in the Catholic Archdiocese of Accra.

As explained, we have completed the first aim. We want to continue with the second aim and approach the third aim differently. Of course we have tried to create the awareness of the plight of street children using several means; by giving talks, by taking part in exhibitions and bazaars, by writing article and newsletters, and by making videos and showing them on TV. But we did not achieve our aim. Simply put, many people do not accept that there is something wrong with their children. The term street child is not very helpful as well. Therefore, we want to use the term “out of school Youth” more often. This term is friendlier, and different kinds of children are part of it. It includes street children as well as urban poor children. It also includes children who attend school in the morning and work for the family in the afternoon and evening.

We want to create the awareness of the plight of out of school youth first of all among tertiary students. How we will do it is under discussion. Already students of ASHESI University

College in Accra, who wanted to do community service at CAS, have shown a lot of interest and drafted a plan as how to contact other university groups. We have to prepare and re-publish all the information we have gathered over the years so that this could be used to inform others. We will keep you informed.

SPORTS

Stichting Stivosina, a Dutch organization which promotes sports activities, has approved our proposal to improve the volleyball/basketball field and the football field at Hopeland training centre. The volleyball/basketball court will be resurfaced. A road/path will be made to easily reach the football field and the football-field will be re-graveled. The contractor has already started constructing the road/path which will run through the compound, surround the water-dam and enter the football field. The road/path runs through our farmland. We decided to do so because if directed around the farmland the road becomes too long and most probably will not be used afterwards. All should be ready in January 2011, when the donors will come to commission it.

DONATIONS

Members of some churches in our neighborhood have shown their concern for the children and have presented food items. We are happy that more and more persons show concern.

SOLAR

Kindermissionswerk, a German donor organization has approved our proposal to install solar equipment at Hopeland Training Centre. Magnus Bruning-Africa desk paid us a visit. Magnus spend two days with us. We visited Hopeland and held discussions with members of CASAS support group. Kindermissionswerk is currently assessing as how to be of more assistance to their partners in the field and be more involved in the aims and objectives of the organizations.

Soon we hope to start with the installation of the solar equipment at Hopeland. We have decided where it should be installed and we are also discussing to how to improve the security at Hopeland.

VISIT SUPERIORS FIC BROTHERS

In October we were happy with the visit of the General superior and assistant of the FIC brothers as well as the Provincial superior of Ghana. Heads of departments could discuss with them the future of CAS and listen to their advice and encouragements.



VISIT REPRESENTATIVES OF STREET CHILD AFRICA

During the same months two representatives of Street Child Africa UK paid us a working visit. Ms. Savina Geerinckx and Ms. Ashley Damewood were with us and we had the opportunity to explain to them all the activities of CAS as well as our vision behind it. We have agreed that the traditional application for sponsorship has to change and be more in line with the present fundraising climate. We also could discuss in detail our

application to SCA for assistance in 2010.

These visits are very helpful because fundraisers and those in the field can discuss everything in detail. This can never be achieved by writing emails or contacting by phone.

NEWSLETTER NO. 49 APRIL 2010 COOPERATION

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, CAS had to reshape its programs because of the response of the children. Although we are working for many years with street children we have to admit that we do not know everything about them. We at CAS are very careful about the statement that we know the children, because during the 18 years of existence we had to adapt our approach several times because of the response of the children. Street children we meet today are completely different from street children we met in 1992. If we had to start a 'NGO' for street children today, the setup will be completely different. What is the difference?

The kind of children. The number of children in the streets has increased tremendously. Many are members of the group of urban dwellers because they have been born in the street. Many children (now adults) who were registered in the crèches run by Street Girls Aid since 1995, are still in the city. They have not gone anywhere because they are not members of certain tribes or regions. At an average S.AID has 700 to 750 children in their crèches. These children live with their mothers either in kiosks or in some kind of shelter in the streets. Of course strictly speaking they are now urban poor persons.

We also noticed a change in their social behavior. In the past we often met single mothers with babies because these girls got pregnant as a result of rape or prostitution. Now we meet many young couple who have decided to live together and have a baby. Fathers come to the Refuge to take care of their baby. This indeed is a new development! Teenage girls want to know whether they can get pregnant and have babies.

Often they do not think of the consequences of having a baby. But when they get one, the staff observes that these girls do not take good care of the baby.

They are very rough, give them wrong food and are angry when their baby cries. We have to spend more time educating them on simple issues such as hygiene and care to make them more responsible.

CREATING AWARENESS.

A few members of staff have formed a committee to prepare the awareness creation. The committee first examined what CAS has published in the past and which photographs and videos are



available.

CAS has published several reports of researches conducted in the past. All these reports are now available for downloading from our website. We have re-activated our website and it is now available on www.casghana.com.

Several pages on the website have been updated to explain the current situation. Some members of staff are now re-designing this website and we will try to keep it in good order from now on. CAS receives many requests for information on street children especially from university students. We now direct them to the website because it is too much time consuming to answer the many questionnaires we receive.

The handouts have also been examined.

In the past, CAS was able to present the booklet “The Ghanaian Street Child” to interested persons, but we have now realized this information is from 2003 and therefore no longer up to date.

We re-designed CAS handout, a profile, and a leaflet about the children.

These pamphlets have been presented to the printer, Saki Publicity Limited and we hope they will be ready soon.

The committee is also preparing our new approach to meet the

social development group at the universities. Members of the Board of Advisors of CAS are ready to join the committee members to meet the students. But before the meetings take place some power-point presentations have to be made.

COOPERATION WITH SISTER NGOS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

The fieldworkers have started their new approach to meet groups of street children and advise and educate them on several topics such as:

- Matters regarding their behavior and personal live.
- On health matters.
- On responsibilities being parents of children.
- On rules in the society.
- On their own rights and responsibilities.

The fieldworkers still meet the problem of communication because they do not speak all the local languages and certainly not the dialects.

The members of the fieldwork department and management of CAS met to discuss the possibility to work together with the Department of Social Welfare in the field, in the city of Accra and its environs. Social Welfare has 10 district offices in the Greater Accra Region. We also discussed it during the Board of Advisors meeting.

Under the auspices of the chairman of the Board of Advisors of CAS who is staff from the Department of Social Welfare a meeting was organized in the Child Protection office of the department. The heads as well as the regional director and the program coordinator for community care and the Director of S.AID were also present. We discussed our proposal to plan and workout joint fieldwork activities. We are happy that the meeting has accepted our proposal and we are now planning a meeting with the district and zonal organizers which will take place this month.

We will keep you informed about the unfolding developments.

A SHORTER SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM.

Several children presently visiting CAS have followed the step by step approach for the 3 year sponsorship scheme. They did not succeed. They either left during their time at Hopeland training centre or during the first year of training. During the year 2000, the drop-out rate was still 14%. This was rather low, considering the kind of children and their background. Suddenly, this figure increased to 40%. CAS members of staff held several meetings to determine the courses and to find solutions to the problem.

We asked one member of staff to become a permanent supervisor. She devoted all her time to interview the children

and to advise them to return to the scheme. We discovered that peer pressure was the main reason of absconding from the sponsorship. One of their group members failed or decided to stop with the sponsorship and convinced others to do the same.

We, on the other hand are convinced that our preparation program was too short and not intensive enough. Several ex-fieldworkers were asked either to assist the staff in the Refuge or at Hopeland. In addition we increased the number of supervisors.

These measures are still not enough. We studied the children more intensive and realized that many do not want to go to the classroom but have other interests. They either want to learn to play one particular sport or take care of babies. They want to



learn more about body care or learn how to bake or cook local dishes.

We have now decided to pay more attention to this group of children and allow them to learn skills. In our latest newsletter we have explained the difference between trades and skills.

When you know some skills, you are assured of some income, when you know a trade you could get a job for your future.

Skill training takes less time. For some a period of 6 months to a year is sufficient. We have designed a training package for them which include 3 preparation stages. All these stages could be done at the House of Refuge. The final stage, the actual training has to be done in a training centre.

We have now applied to donors to assist us to obtain the necessary training equipment. Those who are interested in sports have already started.

Some female members of staff including the nurse have started with a mother & baby training program.

Some of the girls have shown interest in sewing and have joined the sewing team which uses empty water sachets to sew small bags for pens, coins or other small items. This is part of the ABAN ON NEGLECT project. American students on an exchange program in the University of Ghana Legon, got interested in the plight of street children and established the non-profit organization called ABAN. They convinced Ghanaian students to get involved. S.AID as well as CAS produces these items and the students collect them and send them to the U.S.A. where university students sell them to fellow students. This project is slowly taking shape and members become more professional. This means they learn cost price calculation and marketing so that the children here in Ghana can benefit from it in a long term.

SUPERVISION:

Supervisors are members of the sponsorship department. They are responsible for obtaining good social survey reports.

Children who show interest in learning will be interviewed and social survey report will be written. CAS has developed an excel file format which can be updated by members of staff.

Eventually, more and more will be known about the children and so the social survey report can be updated.

When children move to Hopeland, the files will be transferred to the computers at Hopeland and the staff there can update the files again. This information is used by the sponsorship department to find suitable places for training. We also hope that the drop-out rate reduces when more is known about particular children. The supervisors together with the child decide how to proceed.

SOLAR.

We are happy that we can report that the solar equipment at the House of Refuge has been installed as well. We now enjoy continuous electricity so that the work can continue and the children can be entertained.

Thanks to Kindermissionswerk for financing the equipment and Energiebau Sunergy Ghana Ltd. For installing it.

We are proud to present to you the 50th edition of CAS newsletter. We present it to you in a picture form showing all editions of the past.

Of each copy we have highlighted the main topic. You will be able to see:

- The history of CAS as a NGO.
- The change in structure.
- The different kinds of children involved. Street children, Urban poor, working children, Out of school children.
- The cooperation of other stakeholders, sister NGOs and fundraisers as well as donors and advisors.
- Important workshops and reports.
- The state of the Ghanaian street child.

Enjoy reading.

Bro. Jos van Dinther
(Director CAS)

Summary version of the speech delivered by Bro. Jos van Dinther-Director of CAS at 'New Urban Childhoods seminar held at British Council Hall on the 26th of May 2010. The Seminar was organized by the Department of Sociology of University of Warwick, United Kingdom and the Department of Social Studies, University of Education Winneba, Ghana.
January 2010 'NEW' URBAN CHILDHOODS.

Street Children in Ghana. GENERAL OVERVIEW AS AT 2010 – CAS Perspective'.

It is approximately 25 years ago that a number of street children appeared in the streets of the regional capitals of Ghana. Of course, there have been always children in the streets but never in alarming proportions. What have we learnt? We have learnt that this particular problem has occurred in the Ghanaian society which is not adequately addressed.
What did we learn from the children?

We know that there is not only one category of children leaving on the street as thought by many. During the early days, many children have migrated from the rural areas to the cities. We call them children migrants.

The second types are those who have been born on the streets. 'The second generation of street children' or 'Children of street

children'. These children born in the street do not belong to one particular tribe or are from any particular region.

The third types are children who have relatives in the city and appear in the streets for several reasons; this type could be called Urban poor children. We want to capture all categories and use the term 'Out-of-school Children or Youth' to describe them all.

What are the reasons of coming or being in the streets?

The reasons of being in the streets are in manifolds but two are often outstanding: neglect and an unstable family life. Many children do not experience a regular family life. Therefore, the street children problem or out of school youth problem is of more of a socially related.

Other reasons are truancy, violence at home, peer pressure, death of parents, cultural practices, ethnic violence etc. Fortunately, not many orphans are in the streets by definitional standards. Many have at least one parent alive or have aunts or uncles who could take care.

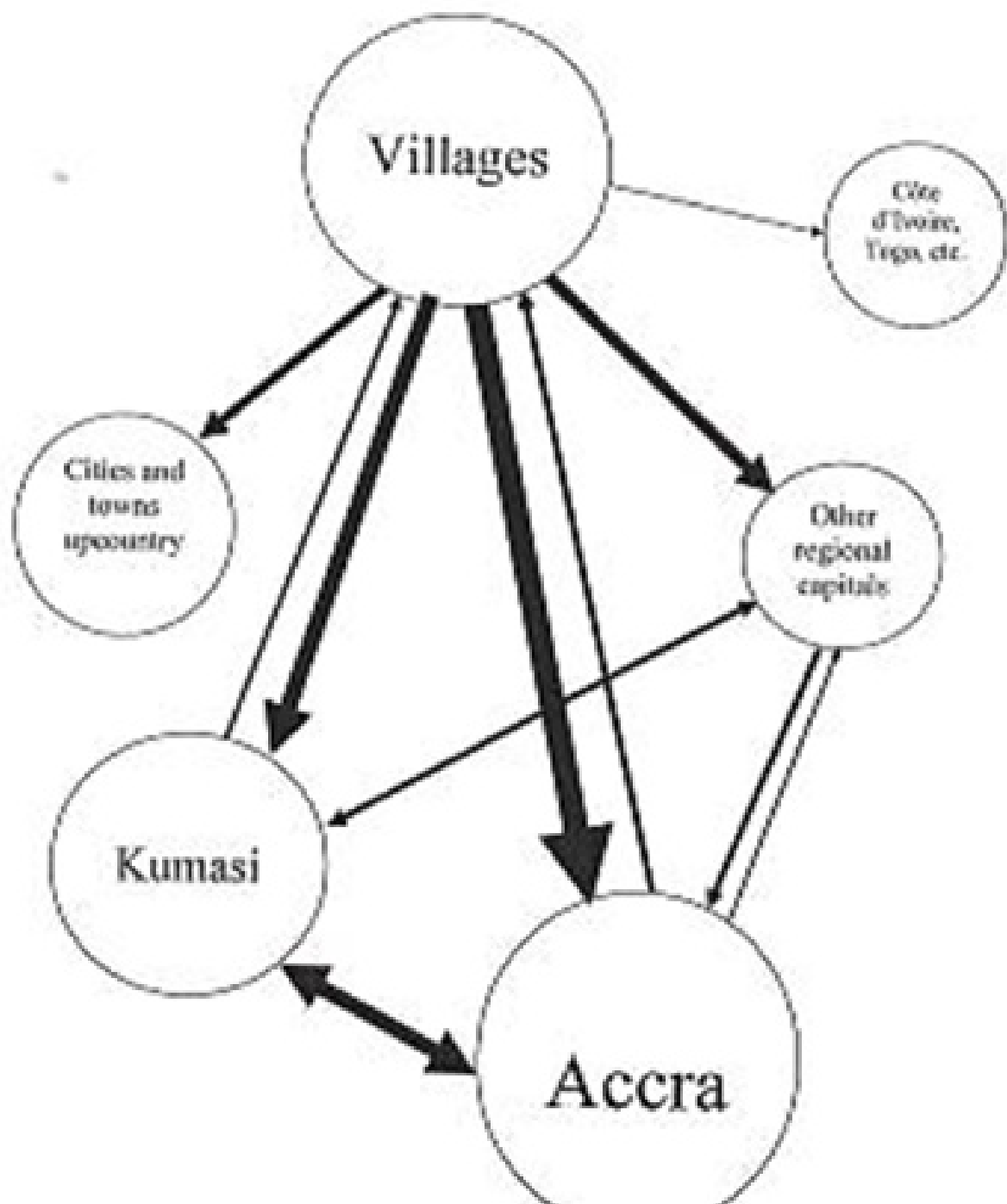
Child trafficking: The fieldwork reports as well as the social survey reports of CAS do not have any indication that trafficking of children is an issue for street children. Therefore; trafficking and street children are two different issues.







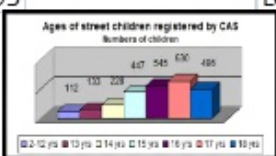





What are the numbers involved?



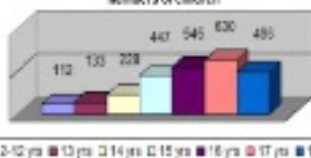





1. Street children- First Headcount conducted in 1992.



















Migration Flows Of Children- The Exodus report 1999





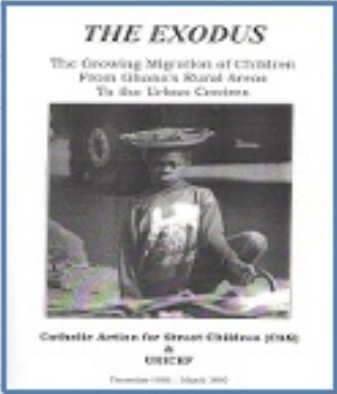








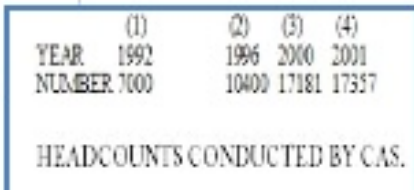
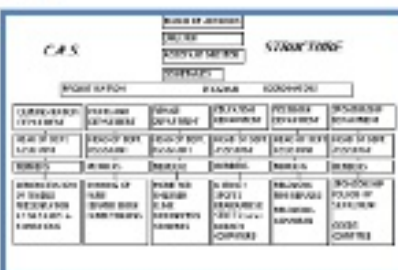



		<i>Where do they come from?</i>
Letter 1 March 1994		Letter 2 June 1994
Datebase of all children- March 1994 -215 were registered.		1994 Street Girls Aid opened a Refuge at Mamobi.
		
Letter 2 June 1994		Letter 3 Sept. 1994
Sponsorship program started in 1994.		Many children who visit the Refuge are older than 16 years of age.
		
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<i>Experiences in schools and workplaces.</i>		
Letter 4 Dec. 1994		Letter 4 Dec. 1994
Cooperation with Fannilk company- December 1994		May 1995 Hopeland Farm became part of CAS.
		
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<i>Programmes for Street children</i>		
Letter 5 April 1995		Letter 5
First statistics of street children.		Baby Care at Konkomba market.
		
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<i>Every child need love.</i>		
Letter 6- July 1995		Letter 6
Demonstration classes in trades.		Networking with NGO's in various countries.
		
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<i>CAS Report</i>		
Letter 7 December 1995		Letter 7
Evaluation on children.		A depart: Literacy, Sponsorship, Baby Care and Hope land.
		
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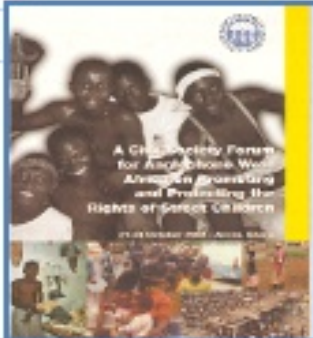






<i>Realities</i>		<i>Consultations</i>	
Leter 8- March 1996		Letter 9 June 1996	
Social Survey reports on street children.		Meeting points in the streets.	
Letter 9		Letter 9	
Health programme for the children.		Remand and Probation.	
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<i>Obstacles</i>			
Letter 10 September 96		Letter 10	
Income generating ventures.		Draft policy paper on street children.	
		<i>Appreciation</i>	
Letter 10		Letter 11 December 1996	
Mini Refuges and Headcount		Evaluation of CAS and S.AID	


Letter 11		Letter 11	
Salvation Army Church in charge of Health issues.		CAS education, S.AID Baby care, Salv. Army Health	
<i>Creating Awareness</i>		<i>Live in the streets</i>	
Letter 12 march 1997		Letter 13 July 1997	
Workshop on Africa's Child friendly Cities.		Surveys conducted in the streets.	
		<i>Sustainability</i>	
Letter 13.		Letter 14 December 1997	
Glass collection - income generating		Five years of experience.	
<i>It is a complex situation.</i>			
Letter 15 April 1998		Letter 15	
Street children have also Rights.		Videos on street children and CAS.	

<p><i>The Plight of Street children</i></p> <p>Letter 16 July 1998</p>		<p><i>Facts and findings</i></p> <p>Letter 17 Sept. 1998</p>	
<p><i>The Children's Bill on child labour and child Rights</i></p>		<p><i>New refuge in Lartebiakorshie.</i></p>	
<p>Letter 17</p>		<p><i>A Way Forward.</i></p> <p>Letter 18 December 1998</p>	
<p><i>Statistics.</i></p>		<p><i>The Exodus research started.</i></p>	
<p><i>The Exodus</i></p> <p>Letter 19</p>		<p>Letter 19</p>	
<p><i>The Exodus report is ready</i></p>		<p><i>Saving schemes for children.</i></p>	
<p><i>Special edition</i></p> <p>Letter 20 June 1999</p>		<p><i>Consolidation.</i></p> <p>Letter 21 Dec. 1999</p>	
<p><i>Blessing of the New Refuge.</i></p>		<p><i>Coalitions.</i></p>	

		<i>Capacity Building.</i>	
<i>A Participatory Approach</i>			
Letter 22 April 2000		Letter 23 June 2000	
Listening to street children.		Staff Training	
<i>More Awareness</i>			
Letter 24 Sept. 2000		letter 24	
Invitation cards for children.		Another Headcount.	
<i>Acceptance</i>		<i>Experiments</i>	
Letter 25 Dec. 2000		letter 26 May 2001	
Six Departments:		Number of boys and girls.	
Letter 26		letter 26	
Street corner and computer centre		Statements and policies of CAS.	

<i>Structural Set-up</i>			
Letter 27 Dec. 2001		Letter 27	
Participatory approach.		Networking with schools and workshops.	
<i>Research for the Future</i>		<i>10 years - CAS</i>	
Letter 28 Apr. 2002		Letter 29 Dec. 2002	
Volunteers and students.		Verifying our findings.	
Letter 29		<i>CAS' Tenth Anniversary</i>	
Structure of CAS and job descriptions.		Letter 30 April 2003	
		The Ghanaian Street Child Published.	
<i>Promotion and Protection of rights</i>			
Letter 31 Dec. 2003		Letter 31	
Fundraising in Germany.		Civil Society Forum.	

<p><i>Closing of the Anniversary Year-CAS</i></p> <p>Letter 32 April 2004</p>		<p><i>Improvements in Approach</i></p> <p>Letter 33- June 2004</p>	
<p>Report on the civil Society forum.</p>		<p>Walk the Walk activities in the streets.</p>	
<p><i>Job Opportunities Trafficking+ HIV/AIDS</i></p> <p>Letter 34 Dec. 2004</p>		<p><i>New Developments</i></p> <p>Letter 35 May 2005</p>	
<p>Our opinion on child labour, etc.</p>		<p>Children of Special Need.</p>	
<p><i>Re-Structuring CAS</i></p> <p>Letter 36 Oct. 2005</p>		<p>Letter 36</p>	
<p>A different type of street children.</p>		<p>Preparation Committee.</p>	
<p><i>Planning for 2006</i></p> <p>Letter 37 Dec. 2005</p>		<p>letter 37</p>	
<p>Understanding the children better.</p>		<p>Strategies and Methodologies.</p>	

<i>Research</i>			
Letter 38- April 2006		Letter 38	
Leaving the past and starting a new approach.		Re-Mapping the cities.	
<i>Who are street children?</i>			
<i>Where do they come from?</i>			
Letter 39 June 2006		Letter 39	
Changes in Accra City.		A new type of child.	

<i>Street mapping</i>			
		<i>Progress report</i>	
Letter 40 Dec. 2006		Letter 41- April 2007	
Many children born in the streets.		Communication within.	
<i>Evaluation of CAS</i>		<i>Creating another</i>	<i>database on streetchildren</i>
Letter 42 Dec. 2007		Letter 43 April 2008	
Evaluation of CAS activities and approach.		With Ricerca, S.AID and DSW	



THE STATE OF STREET CHILDREN IN GHANA.

May 2009.

CAS PERSPECTIVE

Introduction. The phenomenon of street children.

During the past 20 years, Ghana has been experiencing the influx of street children in the main towns and cities of the country. Children from the rural areas travel from the villages to the towns. This movement is vice versa. This does not suggest that there were no street children in the cities before, but they were not present in alarming numbers. There are many different definitions of the term street children. In this report we consider all children below the age of 18 and are on the streets during school hours as street children.

CAS has been working with the street children and conducted a number of researches since October 1992. During the years it has become clear that, the population of street children changes in size and character. A second generation of street children has emerged during the past 9 years.

		<i>Cooperation</i>	
Letter 48		Letter 49 April 2010	
Young Couples with babies.		With sister NGOs and Fundraisers.	
		<i>50th Newsletter</i>	
Letter 49		Back flash.	
A shorter sponsorship training.		50 editions- Back flash.	