

PANKO YOUTH CENTER

Tamale, Northern region, Ghana



INTRODUCTION

To our cherished readers, our team in Ghana and Germany is pleased to present to you our April, 2022 edition of PANKO Newsletter. Our goal is to use this medium to communicate, inform and to share with you the exciting work we are doing here in Northern Ghana to improve the lives of vulnerable and marginalised children. We are happy to share with you our success stories on our exciting journey to finding better lives for children in Northern Ghana and beyond and we are hopeful you will join us in this life-enriching, joy and fulfilling journey.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

INAUGURATION OF A DRAMA CLUB

Believing that there is a lot of talent we can tap into and provide opportunities for young people who have a passion for performing arts, we inaugurated a drama club in January, 2022. The goal is to help unearth hidden talents in our pupils in regards to acting/drama. While others are engaged in football, handball and “ampe” at the center, we now have a drama club to engage our pupils that have no interest in all the above mentioned. At Panko, no one is left behind and this is what gives us joy.



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HANDBALL INTRODUCED AS AN ALTERNATIVE SPORT



“Panko” a Dagbanli word which means “I’m not alone” was established with the objective of attaining social inclusiveness, collective growth and the need for social cohesion.

As a newly founded project, every child at Panko was considered and quite an enormous number of them developed interest in handball, after conducting a need base assessment to identify and select the right sports for children and youth engagement in these deprived rural communities.

Sports are the third crucial pillar of PANKO. Playing football, handball and other sports helps the children stay healthy and exposes them to the value of being part of a team. It is not surprising that the children are always particularly excited about the sport sessions.

STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE



Each and every week, staff takes turn to present well researched topics. Areas of consideration are phonics which is the cornerstone of our literacy foundation. Topics are picked randomly from phonics, language, facilitation among others. In some instances, the staff handling the session picks a topic on his/her field of study example, linguistics.

These capacity building sessions became necessary after staff renewed their commitment to help supplement the learning deficiency of their pupils.

The most interesting aspect of this capacity building sessions is how interactive participants relate to one another. Also the ability to research on a topic with no prior knowledge leaves a lasting effect on the researcher.

HEALTH TALK

With growth that comes naturally, the girl child is not exempted from this phenomenon. At Panko, health talks, especially sexual and reproductive health, and sexuality in general is taken seriously.

Led by Ms Lydia Akumbisa (a trained nurse), dubbed “girls girls” hour, topics on sexuality, reproductive health, menstrual cycle signs and symptoms, hygiene among others, takes the center of discussion. Ms. Lydia takes our girls through all they need to know as far as the above topics are concern.

With quite a number of teens among our pupils, this talk is necessary if we are aiming at grooming the next generation of strong, powerful women who have absolute control and knowledge of their sexuality.



PARENTS MEETING

Parents of Panko beneficiaries are our major stakeholder, so we kick started the year with a parents meeting. In attendance were parents of continues beneficiaries of Panko as well as newly enrolled, beneficiaries. The meeting goal was to remind parents of their responsibilities to their wards and Panko youth centre, where emphasis was thrown on our attendance and behavior policies.

Our director, Alhassan Mubarak, ensured parents of Panko’s continues support of their wards. However, he used same opportunity to admonish parents to complement the efforts of the centre by ensuring their wards report to the center on time, and take their academics seriously.



SPOTLIGHT Our Young Volunteers

Meet SULEMANA IMAN

SULEMANA IMAN is a vibrant member of the “Support Facilitator” team. She inspires her colleagues a lot in sessions by helping them with their learning needs. She enjoys reading and solving mathematical problems at her free time. Iman attends Bawah Barracks Junior High School. She aspires to be a medical doctor in the future so she can help humanity.



Meet ALHASSAN MUDASIR

ALHASSAN MUDASIR is in Junior High School two (2) at Yilo Naayili (J.H.S). Mudisir’s love for mathematics is so profound. This has earned him a spot in the “support facilitator” team. Mudisir’s role at the center cannot go unnoticed; His natural ability to run a session with little supervision from a lead facilitator is so much admired. He is sixteen years old and enjoys reading at his spare time. Mudisir dreams of becoming a military officer.



OUR YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

Panko with its “grooming” and leadership component was able to identify some pupils with leadership qualities, hence the formation of the “volunteers/supporting staff” roles.

From cooking, to facilitation to centers welfare, the volunteers has taken up various roles they seem to find connection with.

Some of the roles are breaking stereotypes and dogma, example: Adam Yussif is a member of the “center cooks”, not long ago; cooking by a male was considered a “taboo” in his community of birth.

The “supporting staff” roles are not only building the next generation of leaders but also nurturing strong individuals who are dedicated, community oriented, high value men and women and ultimately patriotic citizens



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following persons:

Christiane Wimmer

Email: wimmer.christiane@t-online.de
Tel: +49 1728238465
Germany

Gitta Zimmermann

Email: dr.gitta.zimmermann@icloud.com
Tel: +49 15222625317
Germany

Mubarak Alhassan

Email: mubarakstateman@yahoo.com
Tel: +233 243976453
Ghana

Website: www.projectpanko.com