

Impact Report 2018



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1 OVERVIEW

1.1 What is BRAVEAURORA and where is it based?

WHAT: Support of vulnerable children and sustainable village development

WHERE: The origin lies in the village Guabuliga in Northern Ghana. However, big success let the organisation expand throughout the Northern Region of Ghana (West Africa)

WHO: Six voluntary board members are working from Austria. 12 local employees are based in Ghana. The association was founded in 2009 by three board members in Austria and increased in 2018 by three further members. In addition, the association is supported by a large network of dedicated volunteers and experts.

MAIN ACTIVITIES: After successful reintegration of 45 orphans in their extended families in Guabuliga and the successful closing of the orphanage in Guabuliga, BRAVEAURORA is supporting the projects in the villages through the principal of „aid for selfhelp“ and campaigns actively for the abolishment of illegal orphanages in the entire northern region of Ghana.

ACHIEVED MILESTONES: Pioneering work in the field of reintegration of children at risk into their families and communities in Northern Ghana; opening of the BRAVEAURORA training center with a variety of different trainings with recognized state certificate; handing over several successful projects to the village community: Water project, library, infirmary, greenbelt (reforestation) & dry-season farming project (year-round agriculture concept), organic gardening project; continuing education and training workshops for surrounding areas; raising awareness on the subject of voluntourism in Austria and Ghana; uncovering illegal orphanages; extension and scaling of the Young Ambassador project (ambassadors for reintegration) in Northern Ghana; intensive cooperation with the Ghanaian Social Welfare, official cooperation partner of UNICEF Ghana (since 2017) and close cooperation with local cooperation partners.

AWARDS: BRAVEAURORA is the winner of 7 renominated awards in development collaboration: Eduard-Ploier-Award 2015, Neptun Water Award 2015, Human Rights Award of the State of Upper Austria 2014, National Energy Globe Award 2014, Golden Sustainability Award of the campaign „Helping helps“ 2013, Upper Austria Club Award 2013, San Marco Award 2012/2013

TRUSTED PARTNERS: BRAVEAURORA has been a long-time carrier of the Austrian Donation Quality Seal and has been supported for several years by the province of Upper Austria with an annual subsidy

COUNTRIES: BRAVEAURORA is registered as an NGO in Austria, Switzerland and in Ghana.

1.2 Our long-term targets

- Abolition of illegal orphanages in Ghana and raising awareness on “sustainable volunteerism”
- Working together to develop solutions to hunger, poverty, education traps and environmental challenges with the local population and local partners
- Pro-active involvement of local women and girls in the projects
- Handing over the projects to the village population
- Transferability of different projects to other villages in Northern Ghana
- Achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially the following 14 of the 17 SDGs

1.3 What are the principles of BRAVEAURORA?

1. Help for Self-help

“BRAVEAURORA does **not create any dependencies** with its projects! Through constant mediation and **exchange of knowledge** and experience with the villagers, local experts, local staff and cooperation partners, it enables us to sustainably generate new sources of income for the people of Guabuliga and the surrounding areas. The **active participation** and involvement of the village population - including the youth and children – in our actions and discussions, are the starting point for successful project scaling.”

Co-Founder and President Christin

2. Transparency

"BRAVEAURORA guarantees that every donation that is received on our donations account (in Austria and Switzerland) is used **1: 1 for direct project work**. Our **financial report** is checked annually by an independent auditor. We have been carrying the **Austrian donation seal of quality** since 2013 - and donations to BRAVEAURORA are tax deductible - here, too, an annual audit is carried out according to strict criteria."

Co-Founder and Treasurer Julia

3. Sustainability

"BRAVEAURORA wants to empower the villagers themselves to adopt **new methods and knowledge** and thus make them independent from us in the long term. In the long term, what we aim for with our projects is, to achieve the best possible social impact within the population. We **do not want to leave any traces**, but gradually handing over projects to the population. "

Co-Founder and Secretary Sarah

1.4 The Association - Team Austria

Dr. Christin ter Braak-Forstinger
President, Co-Founder and Board Member

Sarah Kotopulos M.A.
Secretary, Co-Founder and Board Member

Julia Obereder M.A.
Treasurer, Co-Founder and Board Member

Alea Pleiner, MSc
Deputy Secretary and Board Member

Simone Blümel
Deputy Cashier and Board Member

Susanne Gahleitner, BA
Deputy President and Board Member



1.5 The Association - Team Ghana



Yidana Wuni - Security man

Baba Seidu, M.B.A. - President Braveaurora Ghana

Eklimatu Ali-Nuh, Dipl. - Social Worker

Susana Agana, Dipl. - Social Worker

Abdul-Rahman Gbana Iddrisu, M.A. - Executive Director

Abubakari Alhassan, B.Sc. - Livelihood Coordinator

Zenabu Saaka - Housekeeper

Scholastica Azure - Assistent of the Education Coordinator

Shahadu Kasim - Gardener

Simon Yaan Subuk – Financial and administrative Coordinator

Adam Mohammed Halisu, B.A. - Education Coordinator

Faiza Mohammed, B.A. - Social Worker

2 PROJECTS 2018

FROM A STUDENTS PROJECT TO THE SUCCESS STORY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

The projects in Northern Ghana started in 2008 - exactly 10 years ago, when the two former students of Social Work Julia and Sarah completed their internship in an orphanage in Ghana. Shocked about the circumstances, the association BRAVEAURORA was founded in 2009.

Our goals today:

- Abolition of illegal orphanages
- Reintegration of vulnerable children
- Perspectives through education & job opportunities

2.1 REINTEGRATION

BECAUSE EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT FOR A FAMILY!

In Ghana, thousands of children today live in orphanages. Within a few years, the number of orphanages in Ghana has risen from **5 to 148**. But why is it that so many children are orphaned in Ghana?



The answer is sad: It is **poverty** and **social tourism**.

9 out of 10 children living in an orphanage are **not orphans**. Their family is still alive but in need of help and often unable to care for their children. This is when their children become social orphans.

More and more volunteers want to do something good on their vacation and are willing to pay a lot of money for it. The **bestseller of social tourism**: caring for orphans. However, **demand exceeds supply**. Therefore, children are taken out of poverty-stricken families and put into illegal orphanages, that are created for short-term volunteers.

It is well known that having a **family** that provides safety and security to a child is the **best place for a child** to grow up and its ideal development. Still, even today 8 million children worldwide live in orphanages and other facilities. 80% of these children are not orphans but

were **separated** from their families **because of poverty**. Children in such facilities often lack security, comfort and well-being. BRAVEAURORA is clearly against this trend, fighting against illegal orphanages and for the reintegration of vulnerable people.

Our goal: **to return children to their families and to eliminate appealing factors of deporting children to such institutions**. BRAVEAURORA is considered a pioneer throughout Ghana with this approach.



2.1.1 Successful Cooperation with UNICEF-Ghana – for 2 years

For 70 years, UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, has been fighting in 190 countries and territories for the rights of children. UNICEF is one of the biggest and most important players in this field. In **Northern Ghana**, BRAVEAURORA is **pioneering the reintegration of orphans** into their extended families and fighting illegal orphanages, which in **2017 led to a cooperation between UNICEF Ghana and BRAVEAURORA**.



Goals of the UNICEF cooperation are:

- **Locating vulnerable children in remote areas and closure of illegal orphanages:** through cooperation with UNICEF Ghana, the number of orphanages across Ghana could be reduced from **148 to 118**. In total, **30 illegal orphanages** have been **closed**.
- **Analysis and documentation of cases:** In the analysis, our social workers identified the main reasons for putting children in an orphanage: **Loss of a parent (68% of children)** and **poverty (43% of children)**.

- **Support by the Ghanaian Social Welfare in the reintegration of children:** In 2017 **21 children** and in **2018** another **13 children** were successfully united with their families with the help of our social workers. Tailored reintegration packages were designed for reunited children.
- **Reintegration support and family support:** In 2017, a total of **634 children** and in **2018**, a further **150 children** and their extended families were accompanied and professionally monitored.



- **Support measures to strengthen the (economic) family structure so that there is no separation:** Reintegrated families were further assisted and supported through Case Management (Minimum income, education, health issues ...).
- **Training for future foster / adoptive parents as well as training in child protection for orphanages and other social services:** In 2018, three induction and training workshops and two evaluation workshops with employees of the DSW, NGO partners and orphanage leadership were conducted.
- **Active public relations and awareness-raising work on the subject of "Volunteer Business":** Via public discussions in radio stations or through workshops with young people (eg. voluntary social year in Austria). Educational work contributes to this mostly unknown or taboo topic in Austria and Ghana.

2.1.2 Aduko's Success Story

The now 16-year-old Aduko was one of the first children in the orphanage in the remote village of Yorogo (a suburb of the northern city Bolgatanga). Back then, Aduko was only 4 years old, living under poor conditions. His mother, the provider of the family, suffered from the disease Elephantiasis, an abnormal enlargement of a body part by a lymph-stasis (lymphedema). On addition to that, the father has left to escape the problems within this family. After the mother's



lymphedema has worsened, she has decided to give her son to the orphanage in another village for the sake of his survival.

Aduko lived in this orphanage for 12 years, receiving an education, daily food and health care. But he missed his Mom and was overjoyed when he was allowed to visit her. As Aduko got older, he was increasingly seeking contact with his mother, his home

and the village community. Sometimes Aduko left the orphanage unauthorized to visit his former home. In December 2018 he was reunited with his mother and the village community. Aduko and his mom describe this day as the most beautiful day of their life. BRAVEAURORA and UNICEF Ghana continues support through challenges until today.

2.1.3 Orphans as Ambassadors for Reintegration

The YAP (Young Ambassadors Program) project is a follow-up to successful reintegration. **Former orphans and their family members, together with our social workers, visit surrounding neighbor villages** and inform and discuss about the topic of **reintegration** into the family association as well as about the subject of **"Volunteer Business"**. The adolescents became so-called peers (multipliers inside = disseminators), trained and reported from personal experience, how negative orphanages can be for children and what the advantages of growing up in a family are.



In **2018**, we were able to reach a total of **1,527 people in 19 villages** with the workshops of our Reintegration Ambassadors, including **more than 1,000 adults and 500 young people**. The gender ratio divided into around 55% female and 45% male participants. Many workshop participants actively participate and also tell about their **personal stories and experiences**.

Due to the mutual exchange and the open discussions in the villages of Northern Ghana this topic is no taboo but is openly addressed and thus raises awareness of the dangers of illegal

orphanages. The villagers are encouraged to protect their children and dock them with potential support systems to help them out of the poverty trap.

2.2 POVERTY REDUCTION

Agriculture has always been a big issue in Guabuliga. About **90% of the inhabitants depend solely on agriculture for their foods and income**. The yields depend on the weather each year and so do the food rations for the family. Due to global climatic changes the dry season is getting longer and there are months in which there is no income, with no items to sell, or with no food for themselves. In this time **poverty** and **hunger** increase. Still a big problem in the North of Ghana is the **phenomenon of "Kayaye"**. These are people (often young women) who are leaving their home villages to seek work in the South of the country. Mostly they find work around markets that are neither lucrative nor safe. The Kayaye are often confronted with serious problems, because often these women find themselves in prostitution and exploitation.

2.2.1 Training Center

The BRAVEAURORA training center empowers people to independently find ways out of poverty and to be able to sustainably care for themselves and their families. Together with the village population, an approach was developed **to open economic branches** in addition to agriculture.

The training center offers a **variety of courses and trainings**. The selection of these courses is always based on intensive surveys and the resulting needs and desires of the villagers. To combat poverty, these courses and trainings also strengthen the **village entrepreneurship**.

In 2018, a total of **71 trainees** were trained in the following areas:

- 21 women in pearl design
- 20 women in shea nut processing
- 3 women and 6 men as shoemakers
- 11 men in moped mechanics
- 10 men in organic gardening

The group of 20 shea nut-processing women also received microcredits to build a business. After repayment of this microcredit, the businesswomen can continue their business independently and they are no longer in need of the support of BRAVEAURORA.



We are particularly pleased about the **cooperation with the Ghanaian social enterprise Linder Enterprise**. The company provided training for the participants of the shea nut processing training on in how to create four different types of creams from the locally grown shea nut trees.

In addition, Linder Enterprise has agreed to take the trained women entrepreneurs to trade fairs in the capital Accra.

The products made in the training center, such as the shea butter cream, are provided with a specially created logo and already sold in the region.



BRAVEAURORA was also able to organise a **one-year welding internship** in the **Fuseini Welding Enterprise in Walewale for five graduates**.

The trainees are happy to gain professional experience in welding technology in a professional company.

For **12 women**, training in the **production of completing pomades / skin care products**, a **refresher workshop** was organized in 2018 by **Hope Givers Enterprise**. The focus here was on the production of different types of body and hair creams.



PRODUCTS FROM THE GHANAIAN TRAINING CENTER ARRIVED IN AUSTRIA

In June 2018, for the first time a colourful product delivery directly from our training center in Northern Ghana was sent to Linz. These fabrics, bags, skirts, soaps, shea butter creams and much more could be purchased at the 10th anniversary celebration.

2.2.2 Ramatu's Success Story

Ramatu Mutala is from Manga, a community near Guabuliga. She is one of the women whose lives have changed in many ways, since she participated in trainings at the BRAVEAURORA training center.

Ramatu is married to Mr. Mutala, a farmer and they have two children. She tells us that her life was unbearable for a long time, since she was dependent on the so-called Kayaye, where she had to go to the Southern part of Ghana to find for a better life there.

Meanwhile, she has completed her training a training as a weaver in the BRAVEAURORA training center and founded her own little company, that provides her regular income.

At the beginning, it was challenging to find yarn for weaving. So Ramatu got a microcredit as a start-up aid. Now her business is growing. Ramatu can now use the income for her children's school fees as well as for food for her family and she could even buy two goats. Besides, she was able to buy a second loom.

A special sense of achievement: Ramatu currently has four weaver apprentices.



2.2.3 Biological Gardening Project

Overuse, monocultures and a high proportion of chemically synthesized pesticides are beginning to show their disadvantages worldwide. The BRAVEAURORA project team is taking action to address these issues and their negative consequences since **agriculture** in the North of Ghana is the **most important basis for a regular income**.



Consequences of erosion and infertile soils cannot be solved on a long-term basis with a higher use of chemicals, neither ecologically nor financially. For this reason, BRAVEAURORA maintains close collaboration with the **Asiribisi Self-help Initiative**, a non-profit organization dedicated to organic farming. It trains people in Guabuliga in sustainable and ecological

horticulture. In addition to the sustainable plant cultivation to **avoid nutrient-poor soils** by monocultures, they even produce fertilizer based on organic substances. Another focus is on **crossbreeding (mixed culture)** for a successful harvest.

In 2018, **10 people** were trained in organic gardening. BRAVEAURORA now puts the main focus to pass on **knowledge to young people** in order to guarantee sustainable agriculture in the future.

2.3 EDUCATION



Education is the key to a better future. Education should not depend on place of birth or the income of parents. BRAVEAURORA is convinced that through good education many problems can be solved. Education enables **economic improvement, democratic participation** and a **self-determined life**. That's why the BRAVEAURORA education program focuses on many levels, with the aim, to give children in Guabuliga the opportunity to develop their talents and abilities.

3 Schools ins Guabuliga:

Kindergarden: 187 students and 5 teachers

Primary school: 420 students and 16 teachers

St. Michael Junior High School: 324 students and 13 teachers

Good cooperation between all those involved in the education system is very important to BRAVEAURORA. This includes cooperation with **teachers, headmasters, parents' representatives** and the **Chief in Guabuliga** as well as the **Ghana Education Service** and other relevant **NGO's** in Ghana. In 2018, **four meetings with teachers and the school leadership** were held to discuss progress, challenges and their solutions in schools.



Furthermore, in the beginning of the year a **cooperation agreement** between BRAVEAURORA and the **GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE** was signed, which clarifies and strengthens the important cooperation.

There was also the first **networking-event** with the **NGO "Right to Play"** on a multi-day training course on **new, innovative teaching methods**.

2.3.1 Teachers Incentive Program

The "Teachers Incentive Program" aims to improve the school situation in Guabuliga and increases the attendance, motivation and performance of the teaching staff through a reward system.

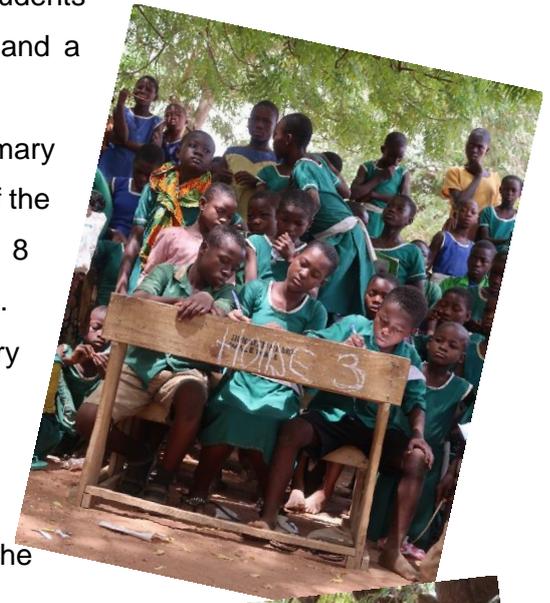
The Teachers Incentive Program provides incentive packages for teachers in Guabuliga to improve and provide quality education and raise educational standards. Depending on the performance of the teachers (random verification of attendance and preparation of course contents as well as performance of students), teachers can qualify for various incentives:

- There is a monthly reward in the form of **soap, rice or corn**. All **33 teachers were part of the monthly reward in 2018**.
- There are also group rewards in the form of a **continuing education workshop**. The three-day workshop this year was facilitated by the NGO "Right to Play", in which **innovative, holistic methods for more effective reading and writing learning** were shown and tested.
- In addition, a junior high school teacher qualified for "**Best Teacher of the Year**" award and a volunteer assistant teacher for the **Academic Ambassadors program**. Selected assistant teachers received a scholarship from BRAVEAURORA for teacher training.
- 3 of the 12 Academic Ambassadors were able to **successfully complete** their training to become teachers in 2018. Currently there are still 2 Academic Ambassadors in training.

2.3.2 Support and scholarships for students

- The "**Brain Food Program**" - co-financed by our former project manager Severin Schwaiger – supports excellent students who are in financial need. In 2018, Pious Yelabeyiani qualified, one of the reintegrated children of BRAVEAURORA, as the best student of junior high school in Guabuliga.

- For the "**Termly Scholarship Program**" 31 brilliant students qualified and received notebooks, pens, a backpack and a school uniform for their achievements.
- **Regular quiz and debating competitions** in Primary School and Junior High School support the motivation of the students, as well as a positive approach to learning. 8 quizzes and 2 debating competitions took place in 2018.
- **Tutoring at the primary school:** Those honorary teachers who receive a scholarship give compulsory tutoring during their apprenticeship. Each semester, the parents of the students are asked to contribute a small contribution in appreciation to the volunteer teachers. The amount will then be doubled by BRAVEAURORA. In 2018, 130 students benefited from this learning support.
- **Learning classes** in junior high school: Due to the poor performance of the students of Junior High School at the Final exam (BECE) "learning classes "for the students were formed. These learning classes are for all classes of the lower grade, giving 334 students the learning support in five (of eight) subjects.



2.3.3 Support for schools

- **Double desks and schoolbooks for Primary School & Junior High School:**

Many students in Guabuliga - especially in elementary school – had to lie or sit on the floor during the lessons, as there was hardly any school furniture. Beside the benches and desks, there was a lack of workbooks as well. There was not even one class book per subject in every class, let alone one book per child.

With the support of **XXXLUTZ's RED CHAIRity** Foundation, **250 double desks** and **600 textbooks** for the subjects Mathematics, English and Natural Sciences were funded. In the spirit of sustainability and supporting village development in Guabuliga, BRAVEAURORA commissioned the local carpenters, which were trained in 2016 in the BRAVEAURORA training center, for the manufacture of the school furniture.



728 students and 30 teachers benefit from this support.

The teaching staff is now more motivated, because they can make their lessons more effective and students no longer suffer from physical ailments.

The delivery of the tables and textbooks was duly celebrated during an **official ceremony** in the village.

- **Long-awaited play equipment and teaching materials for the kindergarten:**

The kindergarten in Guabuliga was poorly equipped, but with a **donation of BAfEP Ried im Innkreis**, BRAVEAURORA was able to support the kindergarten with the purchase of new materials. For the **playground**, a carousel, a swing and a slide were purchased, as well as footballs and skipping ropes and some **play and study materials** for the group rooms. Not just the kids, but also the adults, had fun to try out the new materials.



2.3.4 Sexual Education

Talking about sexuality is a taboo in many families. Sex education often does not take place, which causes many uncertainties and ambiguities. The educational workshops have been organized in collaboration with the **Youth Harvest Foundation** (a local NGO in Bolgatanga) and should help young people to be sufficiently informed about issues such as contraceptive methods, unprotected intercourse and unwanted pregnancy. **534 students** were able to be sensitized to these issues by our social workers.

2.3.5 Public Library and PC Room

The original projects of BRAVEAURORA are the library and the computer room which are already handed over to the village population - especially the schools. Due to a serious storm in spring, both premises were badly damaged, but fortunately these could soon be rehabilitated and are now available to the pupils again.

Currently, there are **2950 books** and a computer room with (unfortunately at the moment only) four computers for pupils and teachers available.

2.3.6 Education at university level

In connection with the reintegration package for the former orphans they also receive education support. We are very pleased that in 2018 Masahudu Issahaku, a reintegrated child from the orphanage in Guabuliga, has qualified for tertiary education and now studies "Computer Science" at University.

3 FOREIGN ASSIGNMENTS FROM QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS 2018

A total of **53 volunteer assignments** for BRAVEAURORA took place from 2009 to the end of 2018. Our special thanks to the following persons, who worked voluntarily in 2018 and have spent time, energy and care for vulnerable children in Ghana:

QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS IN 2018:

Simone Blümel - November 2017 to May 2018

Elise Waag - April to August 2018

Anna de Mink - May to September 2018

Anna-Lisa Freylinger - October 2018 to January 2019

Anna Lotter - October 2018

"As a social work intern, the 4 months with BRAVEAURORA in Guabuliga were extremely rewarding for me personally. For me, BRAVEAURORA is a great dedicated, motivated and goal-oriented organisation that does a good job in a great and versatile team - on site and in Austria - and in the last 10 years it has achieved a lot!

Not only did I learn a lot about myself, but also about people in Guabuliga and I was able to learn a lot of their zest for life and warmth. Thank you for this unforgettable time and above all, thank you to everyone involved. "

Elisa Waag



BRAVEAURORA is regularly **looking for qualified volunteers for project work in Guabuliga**. The volunteer work should at least last over a period of 6 months, as usually only longer missions make sense and is helpful for locals and the organisation. We dissociate from the so-called "Volunteer tourism" (Information: www.braveaurora.com -> „GET ACTIVE“). Trainees of "Social Work" have the standard criteria for an internship abroad of 4 months.

We would like to draw your attention to our **cooperation partner WeltWegWeiser**. WeltWegWeiser is an independent advice center for people who are looking for meaningful and sustainable volunteer assignments abroad. Together with other partner organizations, quality criteria for volunteer work are developed. Since we are against volunteer work, useful assignments are important to us, and we are very happy about this cooperation (www.weltwegweiser.at)!

4 THANK YOU

The year 2018 was a very successful one for us! Not only could we celebrate our anniversary with many supporters and companions, but also implement great projects in Northern Ghana due to your contribution!

We are grateful for any form of support and say THANK YOU to every donor, our interns, our families, all those who helped us with our anniversary ... because according to our motto many small steps can change the face of the world.

Nonetheless, we would like to highlight some individuals and sponsors and thank them for their generous support!

'I support BRAVEAURORA because the associations work is extremely exemplary and transparent. Regardless, I think help is most important where it is about surviving.

The sustainability aspect of the project is also a reason for me to get involved.'

Clemens Strobl, Strobl) Advertising Group

STROBL) ADVERTISING GROUP

The Strobl) Advertising Group not only has been supporting us voluntarily for many years in various fields concerning marketing, such as in the creation of the annual marketing concept, various types of printing, but also provides an office free of charge to the BRAVEAURORA board in Linz, Holzstraße!



STOCK FOR GOOD

The wellness hotel STOCK Resort in Tirol and its guests support a building of our training center in Guabuliga with roughly 10.000, - Euro, which were collected as part of the Stock Highlight Nights. We would like to thank Daniel Stock, his great team and all the guests, who contributed to this big sum!

The majority of BRAVEAURORA's revenues consists of smaller and larger donations from private donors from Austria and Switzerland. According to BRAVEAURORA's motto 'small moves - big change', every donation counts and flows 1: 1 into our projects.

About one hundred members support the work of BRAVEAURORA annually through their membership fees.

Become a member too! With an annual contribution of 40 Euro or 20 Euro (for students, apprentices, pupils or people with low-income) you can contribute to sustainable development cooperation in northern Ghana.

We sincerely thank all donors and sponsors for your trust!



With wholehearted gratitude
and respectful trust!



The BRAVEAURORA Board

Christa, Ina, Beate, Fritzi, Susi, Katja, Julia, Claudia

Susanne Gahleitner, Alena Pleiner, Simone Blümel

