

Perspectives 2020



EDUCATION, PERSPECTIVES, FUTURE. EVERYTHING OVER?

Last year, the global COVID-19 pandemic has hit all of us hard. However, the children in Ghana were particularly affected. Roughly 10 million children in Ghana were not able to go to school for an entire year! Moreover, many children do not return to school after this long break or drop out soon after their return as they struggle to re-adapt to school life. Another problem is that all students have to advance to the next school year even if they missed out on subjects as they do not have the right to repeat a school year. In other words, the Ghanaian school system deprives children and teenagers of their right to education – their chance for a better future. Hence, projects in the field of education were our particular focus during this past year. Our aim was to re-open schools, catching up on missed classes and thus safeguarding the future of thousands of children. Enjoy the read!

AWARDS

BRAVEAURORA won the following renowned awards in the field of development cooperation:

- Architecture Masterprize 2020*, *in cooperation with [a]FA, loA Angewandte Vienna
- Eduard-Ploier Award 2015
- Neptun Water Award 2015*
- Upper Austrian Human Rights Award 2014
- National Energy Globe Award 2014*
- Golden Sustainability Award by the Project „Helfen beim Helfen“ 2013
- Upper Austrian Association Award 2013
- San Marco Award 2012/2013 (in cooperation with nav_s baerbel mueller + Bernard Akoi-Jackson)

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1. Our Mission (A group that has a HUGE impact)

1.1. What is BRAVEAURORA and where is it based?

With the support of BRAVEAURORA, the Ghanain social welfare system was able to close 21 orphanages and reintegrate 724 children back into their extended families.

Our mission/Our Goal

To take a pioneering role in the field of child welfare in Northern Ghana and foster the reunification of children with their families

Why

We want to help every child in Ghana to exercise their right for a livable future with a perspective for their future

What

We create better living conditions for children in Ghana, to enable them to grow up healthily, in their families and in dignity

How

We fight against illegal orphanages and to reintegrate children into their families. Thus we provide effective education and training programmes in schools and in our training center.

3 countries

BRAVEAURORA is registered as a NGO (non-profit organisation) in Austria, Switzerland and in Ghana.

1.2. Which principles does BRAVEAURORA's work follow?

Help for Self-help

BRAVEAURORA does **not create any dependencies** with its projects! By constantly exchanging both knowledge and experience with the community, our local experts, staff and cooperation partners, it enables us to sustainably generate new sources of income for the people of Guabuliga and the surrounding areas. In order to successfully scale our projects, we start by actively involving the community - including children and teenagers.



Transparency

BRAVEAURORA guarantees that every project-related donation is used **1: 1 for direct project work**. Every year two independent auditors check our **financial report** following strict criteria. In 2013 BRAVEAURORA was awarded the **Austrian Donation Seal of Quality**, meaning that donations to BRAVEAURORA are tax deductible.

Sustainability

BRAVEAURORA wants to empower the communities themselves to adopt **new methods and to apply their knowledge**, ensuring their independence. In the long run, our projects aim to achieve the best possible social impact for the community. We **do not want to leave any traces** and aim to gradually hand over projects to the community.

1.3. Long-term goals

1. Abolition of illegal orphanages in Ghana and raising awareness about “sustainable volunteerism”
2. Developing solutions and finding ways out of hunger, poverty, education traps and environmental challenges, together with the local community and local partners
3. Pro-active involvement of women and girls in the projects
4. Handing over projects to the community
5. Transferring successful projects to other villages in Northern Ghana
6. Contributing to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially the following 14 of the 17 SDGs

1.4. COOPERATION PARTNERS



UNICEF



Department of Social Welfare



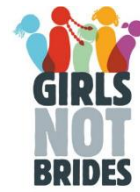
National Commission on Civic Education



Ghana Education Service (GES)



Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice



Girls not Brides



Better Care Network



Transform Alliance Africa



Orphan Myth



Global Giving



1.5 The BRAVEAURORA TEAM Austria

Sarah Kotopulos M.A.

President, 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

Our Advisory Board:

Daniel Roessler, MA

Clemens Strobl

assoc.prof.mag.arch. Baerbel Mueller

Univ. Prof. Mag. Dr. Rene Andessner

Mag. Sonja Loechtl



1.6 BRAVEAURORA TEAM Ghana



Baba Seidu, M.B.A. - Country Director Braveaurora Ghana
Director



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



Abubakari Alhassan, B.Sc. - Livelihood Promotion Coordinator



Susana Agana, Dipl. - Senior Social Worker



Eklimatu Ali-Nuh, Dipl. - Social Worker



Faiza Mohammed, B.A. - Social Worker



Simon Yaan Subuk – Financial and Administrative Coordinator



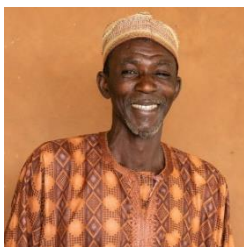
Alidu Mahamdu- Security man



Zenabu Saaka - Housekeeper
Education Coordinator



Scholastic Azure- Assistant to



Shahadu Kasim- Gardener



Mohammed Adams- Driver

2. Our projects:

2.1. Reintegration and fight against illegal orphanages

In 2020, we were able to reach 2,274 people in 22 villages (1,500 adults and 700 teenagers) in educational workshops conducted by our „ambassadors of reintegration“.

2.1.1.FIGHT AGAINST ILLEGAL ORPHANAGES

In Ghana thousands of children live in orphanages. Within a few years, the number of orphanages in Ghana rose from 5 to 148. But why are so many children in Ghana orphaned? The answer is a sad one: poverty and benefit tourism.

A growing number of volunteers want to do something good in their holidays and are willing to pay a lot of money for it. The top seller when it comes to benefit tourism is working with orphans. However, nowadays the demand for this kind of volunteering exceeds supply.

This means that children from poor families are brought to illegal orphanages which are only created for short-term volunteers to serve there. Worldwide, 9 out of 10 children who live in an orphanage are not actually orphans. Their family is alive, but needs help and is often unable to care for them. Hence, their children become social orphans.

Nevertheless, 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.

However, today 8 million children still live in orphanages and other facilities around the world. Children in such facilities lack a feeling of security,



comfort and good health. Therefore, BRAVEAURORA stands up against this trend and fights against illegal orphanages and for reuniting endangered children with their families.

Our goal is to return the children to their families and to eliminate appealing factors for bringing children into an orphanage. With this approach, BRAVEAURORA is considered a pioneer in Ghana.

“I liked the games in the orphanage, but sometimes the other kids beat me and gave me stupid names – I didn’t feel protected. I am a mother myself now and know how hard it is to care for a child. I try my best and just completed a tailor-training at the Training Center of BRAVEAURORA. Hopefully I can earn my own money soon.” — Asana, 17 Jahre



MILESTONES

1) Locating endangered children in remote areas and closing illegal orphanages: UNICEF numbers show that there are still 139 active orphanages in Ghana with a total number of 3,733 children living there. In the Northern region, in the area where BRAVEAURORA works, there are 20 orphanages where 520 children live. With the support of BRAVEAURORA, the Ghanaian social welfare system was able to close 21 orphanages and to reintegrate 724 children back into their extended families.

2) Creation of a system of foster care families and active participation in the Foster Family Committee in the 12 northern regions in Ghana.

Cooperation with Unicef

#For every child a family

Close cooperation with UNICEF since 2017



2.1.2. YAP-PROJECT

The YAP project (Young Ambassadors Programme = young ambassadors of reintegration) comes into play when children are successfully re-integrated into their families. **Former “orphans”** and their **family members visit villages in the northern regions, together with our social workers**, to discuss the topic of **reintegration** into their family and the topic of **"volunteerism"**, educating the population about support opportunities. The teenagers are trained as so-called **peers** (multipliers = disseminators) and report from their own experience, how their time in an orphanage influenced them and what advantages they see in growing up in a family structure.

In 2019, we were able to reach a total of **2,274 people in 22 villages** with workshops, including more than **1,500 adults** and **700 teenagers**.

My work has positive influence because I am able to convince others about family care and most communities are very happy after listening to our stories. ´- Iddrisu Yahaya

Moreover, there were 4 nationwide radio programmes on the topic of child protection and illegal orphanages, which reached 50,000 people. The programmes included the following special topics:

- Health care reform for endangered children
- COVID-19 measures song
- COVID-19 protective measures and nutrition for children



2.1.3. Workshops for reintegrated children and their parents

Our team organised 22 workshops for reintegrated children and their parents on the topics of:

- COVID-19 prevention and awareness raising (hygiene, legal restrictions, nutrition...)
- Understanding the role of girls and boys
- The role of parents in teenage pregnancies
- BRAVEAURORA and children's rights

"I lived together with my brother in the orphanage for approximately 8 years. My father was a drinker and my mother had to go for Kayaye* to the south because she had no money to feed us. In the orphanage it was difficult for us because we didn't learn about the work we were supposed to do in the village, and before BRAVEAURORA, we couldn't attend school. Back with my mother, I was happy. Now we know our relatives and how to show respect to people. I am in the final year of the Senior High School and my dream is to become a teacher in economics and maths. "— Pius, 21 Jahre, was reunited with his Mum



*The term Kayaye is explained under 2.2.

2.1.4. Empowerment in remote villages – WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

In 2020, we were able to give 55 young women and girls a voice through our Girls Club and encourage them to reflect critically on their different topics affecting gender equality. The regular meetings covered topics such as children's rights and duties, awareness raising for gender equality, job counselling and workshops on recyclable female hygiene products.

“The best thing any person can have is the opportunity to do what you love so much. Putting a smile on people's faces is what gives me so much joy and BRAVEAURORA gave me that opportunity. I am very glad to be a part of this family, the family that always has the vulnerable at heart. I am exactly 4 years now with BRAVEAURORA and we have made big moves together. Empowering young females is something I have so much passion for, we work with young females in communities and encourage them on how they can build a better future for themselves.”

-Faiza Mohammed, social worker at BRAVEAURORA



2.1.5. Psychosocial counselling

Our psychosocial counselling programme is for people who live in extremely challenging circumstances. The team frequently works with topics, such as dropping out of school, physical violence, teenage pregnancies and marriage counselling. In 2020, BRAVEAURORA was able to support 13 people with psychosocial counselling.

2.2. Livelihood promotion & job training

Since founding the training centre, a total of 655 people, including 450 women, were able to successfully complete a training!

The majority of the rural population earn their money in agriculture. This means, every year, the yields as well as the families' food portions depend mainly on the weather. Due to global climate changes, the dry season is getting longer and there are several months when the families do not have an income, cannot sell their products on the market and do not have food for themselves. In this time **poverty** and **hunger** increase. Furthermore, in the North of Ghana, "**Kayaye**" is still an issue. "Kayaye" are people (often young women) who leave their home villages to seek work in the South of the country. Most of the time, they will find work in businesses that are neither lucrative nor safe, e.g. prostitution. Hence, Kayaye are often exploited and confronted with serious problems.



„They call us dreamers, but we are the ones who don't sleep. “

2.2.1. Training Centre with national certification



The BRAVEAURORA training center empowers people to independently escape poverty and to be able to sustainably care for themselves and their families. Together with the community, BRAVEAURORA developed an approach **to explore economic branches** other than agriculture and to strengthen rural entrepreneurship.

Since founding the training centre, a total of 655 people, including 450 women, were able to successfully complete a training! However, due to COVID-19, we had to limit our trainings in 2020. In other words, we had to reduce the variety of our trainings. Nevertheless, we were still able to hold the following courses for 55 people:

- Course to learn how to produce cosmetic products for 34 women and 1 man
- Tailoring course for 20 women

In addition, the organic garden project, led by gardener Malam, continues to run and acts as a reference and inspiration for other projects.

Furthermore, BRAVEAURORA cooperates with the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) in order to offer the alumni official certificates for their training. Throughout the years, the students are able to demonstrate what they have learned in their training and how they can become independent entrepreneurs. We are very proud that until now all students have completed their exams successfully! The common trademark of the products made in the Training Center is the following logo:



2.2.2. Business Mentoring

In 2020 we followed-up with 80 entrepreneurs in order to evaluate how they were able to put their training into practice and where they experienced challenges on the job market. Moreover, we provided seed capital in form of microcredits for 15 promising and creditworthy entrepreneurs, supporting them during their initial phase.

2.2.3. Supporting the market in Guabuliga

The new market structure and 1000 buyers and sellers per week fostered entrepreneurship in the region.



Market concept and design by the architect and our long-time supporter Bärbel Müller and her students at the University of Applied Arts Vienna

„I didn't go to school, but my heart's desire was always to produce cosmetics. So I took the chance BRAVEAURORA gave me and I completed a training at the Training Center. It saved me from Kayaye, which I did for 5 years. Now I don't have to leave my kids anymore to be a head porter – I will never go to Accra again to sell water on the streets for little money. And the most beautiful thing is that I can send my kids to school every day on my own now – their education is most important to me.” Dorcas – Training Centre alumna, producer of shea products



2.3. EDUCATION

Education as key to a better future, catching up on missed learning due to Corona.



Outlook for 2021: tutoring lessons for 540 students to catch up on missed learning.

Corona prevention utilities, such as mobile hand washing facilities, soap etc. for more than 1,500 students.

Access to Education should not depend on the place of birth or the parent's income.

Education paves the way for democratic participation, a self-determined life and it improves the economic situation. In total, BRAVEAURORA reaches 2,180 students in Northern Ghana through various educational measures.

2.3.1. Our Covid-Educational Campaign

The Education Sector got hit by the Corona Crisis, particularly affecting children in Ghana. In 2020 schools were closed for over 9 simultaneous months, without home schooling as an alternative option due to a lack of infrastructure and parents struggling to support their children. Even worse: the kids were not granted the right to repeat a grade, they had to move up to the next one. If that does not happen, they don't get a second chance, no perspectives, hence, no future.

Measures

2.3.2. OUTLOOK for 2021

Short-term measures concerning the Corona Crisis in the Education Sector, made possible through donations:

- Private lessons for 540 students to catch up on shorfalls
- Corona prevention utilities, such as mobile hand washing facilities, soap etc. for more than 1,500 students
- Textbooks for teachers, which despite short-term curriculum adaptations, were not provided by the state
- Employing a qualified Education Coordinator, who detects irregularities in the Education Sector, demands solutions from those responsible and improves education programs.



"The COVID time was so bad for me. I was afraid to get caught by the disease, we were told to stay at home. Unfortunately, I couldn't

learn at home, I had to help at the farm. Now I can catch up with some topics again because of the extra classes. In the future I want to become a medical doctor, because I want to be able to save people's lives." Mohammed, 15 years, pupil and participant of extra classes.



MILESTONES

AWARENESS-RAISING WORKSHOPS

Only those who know their rights, can claim them.

HEALTH & SEX EDUCATION

In 2020 a total of 425 students aged 13 to 20 years were informed about various topics regarding physical and psychological wellbeing. The contents reached from teenage pregnancy and contraception to job information, self-confidence, and special COVID-19 information. Together with our cooperation partner CAMFED, 50 female graduates were reached in 2020.

IMPORTANCE OF FORMAL EDUCATION

For students and their parents. Despite the prevailing compulsory school attendance, there are still a multitude of school-age children in Ghana who don't go to school.

CAREER START FOR YOUNG WOMEN

The "CAMA-Transition-Programme" supports female graduates (from Senior High School) during their career entry.

Increasing Education Standards

2.3.3. TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR 25 TEACHERS

BRAVEAURORA intends to enable effective teaching of reading and writing and to foster the students' reading and spelling skills through innovative, playful teaching methods.

Reward System

2.3.4. Incentives for 27 teachers

The goal is to increase the teacher's presence, motivation, and performance through a reward system (with further trainings and financial incentives) and to improve and provide high quality education.

Scholarship

2.3.5. Academic Ambassador Program

In response to a lack of educated teaching staff, BRAVEAURORA grants scholarships to selected auxiliary teachers. Until now, 10 teachers successfully completed the training within this program. One teacher currently attends the course.

Tutoring

2.3.6. Learning Clubs

Initiating learning clubs for additional tutoring in the Junior High School, preparing for the final exam.

Student Scholarships

2.3.7. Scholarships for particularly talented students

The Termly Scholarship Program provides books, pens, a backpack, and a school uniform for students with outstanding achievements in Primary School and Junior High School.

3. FOREIGN ASSIGNMENTS OF QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS IN 2020

From 2009 to 2020, a total of 57 voluntary assignments for BRAVEAURORA took place.



Due to the Corona Pandemic and the uncertain developments, voluntary assignments to Ghana were no longer possible from March 2020. Nevertheless, two volunteers dedicated themselves to children's protection on-site in Ghana in 2020, until the outbreak of the pandemic. A huge thanks goes out to Cornelia Greimel and Gabriel Unterholzer.

"I have hardly ever learned so much in such a short period of time. You'll soon notice that the living reality in a rural area in Ghana is just as complex as in Austria, which means: If the solution to a question seems easy, most likely it isn't the right one." – Gabriel Unterholzer (January 2020 – March 2020).

BRAVEAURORA regularly looks for qualified volunteers for projects in Northern Ghana. The assignments should cover a minimum of 6 months, since only long-term assignments are truly useful and helpful for the organisation and the people on-site – short-term "holiday assignments" are clearly out of place. We strictly dissociate from the so called "Voluntourism"! (see www.braveaurora.com: "AKTIV WERDEN")

The usual criteria for international internships of 4 months apply for interns of the study program "Social Work".



4. PRESS- AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

In 2020, despite Corona and because of the continuing willingness to donate, 50 people (49 of them women) were trained in producing cosmetic products and in tailoring.

4.1. EVENTS / FUNDRAISING-EVENTS

- 12th January: Lecture on Ghanaian worlds of living, Voluntourism and approaches on sustainable development at the Musik-Kulturclub Lembach
- 18th September: Charity Concert in favour of BRAVEAURORA with Ozymandias, Call me Astronaut & Bernhard Schnur
- 2nd December: Virtual Meeting of BRAVEAURORA volunteers

4.2. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: (not translated)

- Latvijas Arhitektu savienība, 2020, Jaunais Guabuligas tirgus
- Österreichische Botschaft Abuja, 03.2020, Marktplatz im Norden Ghanas
- Topos Magazine, 06.04.2020, New Guabuliga Market
- Metalocus – International Magazine about Architecture, Art and Science, 23.04.2020, Social trigger. New Guabuliga Market by [applied] Foreign Affairs
- Arhitektu-ras platforma, 07.05.2020, Guabuligas tirgus
- BauNetz.de, 27.05.2020, Gemeinschaftswerk Marktstruktur von [a]FA in Ghana
- meinbezirk.at, 26.11.2020, Corona trifft Schulkinder in Ghana besonders hart
- tips.at, 15.12.2020, Schulschließung wegen Corona trifft Kinder in Ghana besonders hart
- ÖÖ Nachrichten, 22.12.2020, ÖÖ Verein hilft Kindern in Ghana

5. Thank you!

In 2020, 55 young women and girls were given a voice and encouraged by the Girls-Club to critically reflect.

“The African Continent has been exploited for decades. We should take action where most needed. I have seen for myself on-site that BRAVEAURORA takes the right steps and that help reaches the projects at 100 %.”- Clemens Strobl

SMALL MOVES — BIG CHANGE. DANKE! NPUSIA!

This year we are honoured to express thanks to a total of about 292 donors, over 16 volunteers and interns and countless supporters. The majority of BRAVEAURORA'S funds come from smaller and bigger donations of private donors from Austria and Switzerland. In line with BRAVEAURORA'S motto “small moves – big change”, any donation is of value and reaches our projects 1:1.

JOIN US!

About a hundred members yearly support BRAVEAURORA'S work with their membership fee. Become a member too! With a yearly contribution of 40 Euros (respectively 20 Euros for students, apprentices, students, people with low income) you can co-create the sustainable development cooperation in Northern Ghana! We are looking forward to meeting in person and interacting at the general assembly every 2 years!

GLOBAL GIVING

In September 2020 we were part of the GlobalGiving Accelerators – a two-week fundraising campaign for our YAP-Project. It was a huge



success! During these two weeks, thanks to our many supporters, it was possible to gain over 10,000 Euros from 65 donators for our activities. Besides, we thereby became a permanent member of the GlobalGiving Fundraising Platform. This enables BRAVEAURORA to reach more visibility, partners, and supporters worldwide.

MAJOR SPONSORS

In 2020 BRAVEAURORA received support from following donators and major sponsors (amounts from 2,000 EUR):

Office of the Provincial Government of Upper Austria