



Hope for Future Generations

Informed Communities, Improved Lifestyles

Newsletter








Fourth Quarter, December, 2 019.

In this Edition:

“Girls, Not Brides” HFFG empowers young people to rise against Child Marriage



Story on page 5&6

-  HFFG Leads Immunization Advocacy Initiative
-  Naomi's Golden Line Journey
-  Menstrual Hygiene at the Savelugu School for the Deaf
-  A Commitment to Less Plastic For Positive Health Outcome
-  Clean Hands for All in Tarkwa
-  A Moment for an HFFG Staff Tackling a Sanitation Crisis
-  HFFG trains media on SRHR Reporting



Welcome/Akwaaba

It is yet another quarter, and another opportunity to share with you some amazing stories on our activities as an organization.

In this edition of the HFFG Newsletter, we will take you around the country and share with you stories from some of the various interventions we are implementing with our partners.

Once again on behalf of the Board, Management, Staff, Volunteers and Beneficiaries of Hope for Future Generations, take a seat and let's journey together. Don't hesitate to log on to www.hffg.org for more stories.

Cecilia Senoo, Executive Director, Hope for Future Generations (HFFG)

The infographic features a central white box with a blue border, set against a background of blue and green abstract shapes. At the top center is the HFFG logo, which includes a circular icon with a person and a child, and the text 'Giving Equal Opportunities to Women and Children' and 'HFFG'. The background also contains the text 'Hope for Future Generations' and 'Giving Ed'.

OUR VISION

A nation free of **discrimination** where women, children and young people have equal **Opportunities** to develop their full **POTENTIAL**.

OUR MISSION

To **FACILITATE** and **IMPROVE** the health, education and socio-economic status of women, children and young people through empowerment, rights based approaches, innovative and acceptable participatory strategies.

OUR CORE VALUES

- ▶ Team Work
- ▶ Honesty
- ▶ Accountability
- ▶ Non Discrimination
- ▶ Professionalism
- ▶ Dedication and Openness

Naomi's Golden Line Journey



Naomi (Left) is economically empowered thanks to the Golden Line Programme.



Naomi is now able to generate extra income from the skills she obtained under the GLP.

Prevailing socio-cultural norms in Ghana often prevent women in mining communities from taking advantage of existing business opportunities that will inure to their economic and social development. Due to this, women in and around mining areas are only restricted to the menial jobs which can just guarantee them the smallest of wages making them vulnerable to sexual based violence or intimate partner violence.

To help address this, the Golden Line Programme (GLP), a five- year Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs funded intervention was initiated to economically empower women within and around some small-scale gold mines and increase their knowledge on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

Through the Economic and Social Empowerment (EASE) component of the Golden Line Programme, women under the initiative are introduced to the Village Saving and Loans Association concept and taken through business skills training in beadmaking, soap-making and other economic ventures that will improve their livelihoods. Beneficiaries are also trained on how to package the finished products to attract good market.

Naomi Asare, a mother of three from Essaman, a small mining community in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipal is one of the beneficiaries under the intervention. Prior to the intervention, she was into pastries making, a venture she says was not profitable.

“Women in Essaman like myself were noted for household chores, child bearing and caring and had no access to credit or loans. HFFG Staff on the Golden Line Programme came and sensitized me on the need to join one of the Village Savings and Loan Association under the intervention. I was trained on how to use beads for fashion accessories. This skill ensured I have an alternative source of income. Two years after I was introduced to the intervention, I have opened a beads shop with two apprentices learning beads-making from me. I am happy I can now manage my finances well and support my family economically,” she said.

Aside ensuring that women have access to financial services to increase and diversify sources of income, the intervention also empowered increased their access to Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) and end Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

The GLP is an initiative by a consortium made up of a SIMAVI, Solidaridad and Healthy Entrepreneurs, with Hope for Future Generations, as a local implementing partner of SIMAVI, a Netherlands – based organization

The intervention which ends in 2020 has seen about 1500 women from 23 HFFG implementing communities empowered to improve upon their standard of living.

Menstrual Hygiene with the Savelugu School for the Deaf



Members of the SRHR School Club in a group photo with a teacher (far right) and the team from HFFG

Due to inadequate Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructures in some public schools, young girls living with disabilities often find it difficult to manage their monthly periods safely, hygienically and with dignity. Some of them face further discrimination and stigma during that time of the month.

As a member of the Ghana Sexual and Reproductive Health Alliance for Young People, HFFG is working with the Savelugu School for the Deaf in the Northern Region of Ghana, under the Get Up, Speak Out (GUSO) project, which is empowering young people on SRH issues.

HFFG has formed an SRHR in the school to offer students an opportunity to discuss Sexual and Reproductive Health issues that prevents young persons from achieving their potential.

Menstrual Hygiene was the topic for discussion when the Savelugu GUSO SRHR School club met on September 29, 2019.

Through a dialogue approach club members were taken through steps through which they can manage menstrual periods and still actively take part in academic activities.

Members of the club were given information on how to use sanitary pads through demonstrations and how to dispose off sanitary pads after usage.

Male members of the club were also empowered with information on menstrual hygiene to prevent them from stigmatizing against girls during their menstrual periods. Female club members were presented with free sanitary pads after the meeting.

There are ten SRHR clubs established in various schools under the GUSO project.



A teacher (left) helps a Board Member from HFFG to educate club members Menstrual Hygiene.

The long-term objective of the GUSO project is for all young people, especially girls and women, to be empowered to realize their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in societies that are positive towards young people's sexuality. Cumulatively, HFFG has reached 3,852 young people with comprehensive SRHR education through the GUSO project since 2016.

“Girls, Not brides” Young people Rise against Child Marriage



Two performers depicting that girls can lose their lives if forced into marriage.

Child marriage denies many girls access to health, education, economic opportunities and prevents them from realizing their full potential. According to UNICEF, 15 million girls worldwide marry before their 18th birthday.

In Ghana, though the 1992 constitution notes that a person under the age of 18 is a child and therefore cannot marry or be given off in marriage, the National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage in Ghana (2017-2026) estimates that on average, 1 out of 5 girls in Ghana is married before their 18th birthday. This number sadly increases in the Northern part of Ghana where it is estimated that 1 out of 3 girls marry before age 18.

For these reasons, HFFG under the SIMAVI supported Get Up, Speak Out (GUSO) project being implemented by the Ghana SRHR Alliance project continues to use innovative strategies including drama to sensitize community leaders on cultural practices like child marriage and other behaviours that places young people at risk.

This approach serves as a platform for advocacy to create an enabling environment for Sexual and Reproductive Health information, education and services in the communities.

In Jarigu, a small GUSO beneficiary community in the Northern Region of Ghana for example, an SRHR drama group consisting of young people (aged 10-24) has been set up to bring to light SRHR issues affecting young people. This group meets to identify SRHR issues pertaining in the community. This informs the storyline of the plays they performed at community engagements especially.

In one of the group's recent performances at a community durbar, they were able to depict to the community leaders the negative impacts child marriage has on girls and the need for the practice to be stopped. The key message was that child brides are not physically developed enough to give birth hence are always at risk to lose their lives and their babies. Again, the drama troupe in its play further illustrated how the dreams of girls are cut short and their rights and dignity is abused anytime they are given out into marriage at an early stage.

Continue from Page 6

Girls, Not brides” Young people Rise against Child Marriage

“Girls are not brides. We do not want our dreams to be cut short. We want to be in school so that we can also contribute to societies meaningfully” - Musah Karima, female a member of the drama group and a beneficiary of the GUSO project said in the play.

Like most of their plays, an opportunity was given for community members to ask questions and deliberate on key SRHR issues raised.

Sulemana Aisha Tiyumba, a beneficiary of the project, said after the play: “strategies like this under the GUSO project provides a platform for young people in Jarigu to express themselves freely in front of their parents and community leaders. Aside building the confidence of young people, it is equally demystifying the myths surrounding the sexuality of young people in the community.

“I couldn’t talk in public but now I am glad I am able to use drama as a tool to address issues affecting young people. This Strategy has built my confidence to a level that I can stand in front of the whole community and speak for my peers,” she said.

A sub chief of Jarigu, Seidu Abdulai also said, “Through plays like this, we are able to listen to the views of young people on customary practices and social norms that infringes on their rights. I can say many of us are now enlightened and ready to address and end child marriage.”

Since 2016, HFFG has reached 15,390 young people reached with comprehensive SRHR information under the project. Over 200 people are structurally involved in the implementation of the programme at the community level.



Musah Karima, a beneficiary of the GUSO project speaks on the need of Child marriage to be ended in Jarigu.



Community Leaders watching the performance.



Some members of the drama group after the play.



Aisha Tiyumba, says the project has built her confidence.

Climate Action – A Commitment to Less Plastic for Positive Health Outcomes

Plastic pollution has become a major development challenge across the world. In Ghana, statistics from UNDP show that the country generates about 1 million tons of plastic waste annually. Out of this, only 2-5% are recycled.

Young Health Advocates Ghana, a youth group groomed by Hope for Future Generations has committed to help promote a sustainable environment by reducing the amount of waste they generate, both at home and in school.

“Reduce, reuse, recycle,” was the theme when advocates met the UNAIDS Ghana Country Director, Angela Trenton-Mbonde, in Accra during one of its regular meetings. The advocates took turns to make personal pledges to adopt better waste management practices in order to promote environmental sustainability.

“I commit to acquiring a personal reusable water bottle and to avoiding single-use plastic bottles. This, I believe, will safeguard the planet for everyone,” Pricilla Addo said.

Samuel Nyarko said, “I pledge to personally ensure that waste generated in my household is well separated so that plastics can easily be collected and recycled. I will educate my schoolmates and community to do the same.”

Ms Trenton-Mbonde encouraged the young people to ensure that their commitments to the planet are fulfilled.

“For a sustainable environment, each of us must take personal responsibility and make one commitment, no matter how small and insignificant it may seem in the beginning, because in the end we are all connected: people and the planet,” she said.



It is a thumps up for less plastic.

HFFG trains media on SRHR Reporting



Time for group photo after the media training in Tamale

Cultural sensitivities and myths surrounding sexuality often prevent young people from getting accurate reproductive health information, thereby inhibiting them from accessing their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). This puts young people at risk of unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Hope for Future Generations, under the Get Up, Speak Out (GUSO) project trained about twenty journalists from Tamale, in the Northern Region of Ghana on how they can diffuse the myths and culture of silence and stigma associated with reproductive health issues of young people.

The journalists were also urged to bring sexual and reproductive health matters of young people to the attention of people who can influence public health policies.

“Many young people in Ghana face barriers to reproductive health information and care. Some continue to be subjected to forced marriages, sexual abuse and other forms of gender-based violence. Journalists should amplify the voice of young people on SRHR issues,” a Communication Officer of HFFG, Attah-Effah Badu stressed.

He entreated journalists to raise awareness on the need for duty-bearers to include young people, especially those living with disabilities when in the drafting of health programs and policies at all levels.

The Northern Regional Coordinator of the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), Emmanuel Cudjoe Holortu enlightened the media on rights of children, and sexual and reproductive health right that needs media attention.

He urged the media to eschew sensationalism when covering reproductive health issue and take precautions to protect identities of minors involved sexual assault or gender-based violence.

Clean Hands For All In Tarkwa



Every year, 297,000 children (under 5 years) across the globe die due to diarrhoea linked to poor sanitation arising from the transmission of diseases such as cholera, dysentery and typhoid, says UNICEF and the World Health Organization.

As simple as it may seem, regular proper handwashing remains one of the easiest and effective practices that prevent infections and saves lives.

HFFG on Global Hand Washing Day 2019, educated about 580 school children from the Abonpuni Junior High School in the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipality on the importance of consistent handwashing with soap under running water at all times.

The pupils were grouped according to classes and age-appropriate handwashing messages were delivered to each of the categories. They were taken through a series of demonstrations on proper handwashing skills.

The same activity was conducted at three communities namely: Mile 10.5, Israel and Nyanso (also in the Tarkwa Nsuaem Municipal area).

Parents were encouraged to ensure the availability of handwashing facilities with soap and water in their households.

About 730 people, including, 580 schoolchildren and 150 community members benefited from the outreach.



A pupil demonstrates how to wash the hands properly.

The theme for 2019 was “Clean Hands for All,” stressing on the need for inclusiveness when addressing hand-washing disparities.

HFFG is one of the local partners under 5-Year Watershed programme which is empowering thousands of citizens from the Tarkwa Nsuaem Municipality to demand improvements in the governance and management of Water Access, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) as well as Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) services.

In the Media: *HFFG wants child abusers punished*



The Executive Director of HFFG, Mrs Cecilia Senoo contributing to the discussion

The Executive Director of Hope for Future Generations (HFFG), Mrs Cecilia Senoo wants persons accused of abusing children prosecuted and punished if found guilty.

Mrs Cecilia Senoo made the call while contributing to a TV discussion on an issue involving a 46 – year old man who is accused of sexually assaulting his ten-year-old niece for 4 years, and in the process, getting her infected with Gonorrhoea, a Sexually Transmitted Disease.

The girl, in an account to Accra-based Joy News Television, said the abuse started when she was six years old. “I was six years when he started (abusing me), he fondled my breasts and touched me inappropriately. He sexually abused me in the kitchen several times, especially when no one was around,” the visibly traumatized girl narrated.

The accused person is said to have absconded after allegedly admitting to abusing the girl. Commenting on the issue, the Executive Director of HFFG, Mrs Cecilia Senoo called on security agencies to do everything possible to ensure the culprit is apprehended and made to face the law if found guilty.

She expressed resentment on the continuous abuse of children by adults who often do not get prosecuted due to family interference. Mrs Senoo wants the child protection system to be strengthened in Ghana to ensure young girls live to their full potential without barriers like abuse and exploitations.

“Looking at the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child, this is a very serious issue and the person (accused) must be punished,” Mrs Senoo said.

World AIDS Day in Pictures

It was all fun in Accra on December 1, as HFFG joined the Ghana AIDS Commission, UNAIDS, WAPCAS, Young Health Advocates Ghana, partners and key stakeholders to commemorate 2019 World AIDS Day with the focus on Communities. We called on government to improve the quality of life of persons living with HIV-AIDS, especially the youth, and put in place strategies to empower them to take part in HIV response.



Staff Focus

A Moment for an HFFG tackling a sanitation crisis

The World Health Organization and UNICEF estimate that 4.2 billion people, including women and children across the world live without safely managed sanitation, and 673 million still engage in open defecation.

On World Toilet Day, we spent some time to appreciate Portia Abugbilliga, an HFFG staff who is helping communities to own and use toilet facilities in the Northern Region of Ghana.

As a District Resource Person attached to the Mion District Assembly, under the Government of Ghana-UNICEF Enhanced (WASH) programme, Portia has helped seventy-one (71) communities to be declared Open Defecation Free Communities from 2017 -2019.

She provides technical assistance, facilitates and participates in Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) activities undertaken by the District Environmental and Community Development at Mion.

To Portia, the declaration of a community open defecation free is always a fulfilling moment.



Portia has helped 71 communities achieve ODF status.

“When a whole community is declared open defecation free, I have been able to solve one of that community’s problems, especially for children under five and pregnant women who are the most vulnerable when it comes to diseases associated with open defecation such cholera and typhoid,” she declares.



Portia inspecting a household toilet in a community.



It is always a celebration anytime a community is declared open defecation free

Community Engagement Gets School Building Back on Track



A makeshift classroom at Gada

With its ever-increasing pupil's population, the people of Gada, a fast expanding community in the Awutu Senya Municipal Assembly in the Central Region of Ghana were happy when the Government of Ghana in 2018 awarded a contract for the construction of a new 3-unit classroom block to accommodate incoming Junior High School pupils for the 2019/2020 academic year. The high hopes of the community members were however dashed when the contractor suddenly abandoned project.

Luckily, as a selected community under the USAID Ghana's Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms (GSAM), project which seeks to improve accountability at the local government level by strengthening both the government and citizen's oversight of capital development projects in 100 districts in Ghana, community members from Gada were taken through empowerment engagements which led to community members engaging the Municipal Assembly on various platforms including the use community scorecards, community interface meetings, town hall meetings and radio discussions.

With sustained pressure, the Municipal Assembly had no alternative than to force the contractor back on site. The Gada M/A Basic School project is back on track with a makeshift classroom made available to house the new JHS pupils.

"I don't know what would have happened if the GSAM project has not been implemented in my community. My people are now enlightened and empowered to engage with the Assembly on infrastructural development implementation. We are also able to monitor project progress as details are made available to us. We are grateful to USAID and GSAM," the chief of Gada, Togbe Gada indicated.

The Ghana's Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms (GSAM) is a five-year USAID-funded project being undertaken by CARE International in Ghana, Oxfam and the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), HFFG is local partner helping in the implementation of the project.

Visitors' Gallery

HFFG forms partnerships in achieving its goals. Below are some snapshots of moments we shared with some partners.

HFFG during the quarter hosted four volunteers from the Pfizer Global Health Team for 4 weeks.

The Volunteers were in Ghana to review HFFG's existing strategic plan and work with its management and staff to actualize this plan with a detailed road map that will help address key operational challenges triggered by dwindling donor funding opportunities in Ghana.



On behalf of the Golden Line Consortium in Ghana, we hosted a delegation from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Social Development in November. The team was briefed on the impact the Golden Line project is having on women in Ghana.



In December, a team from Watershed Programme partner, AKVO was in Ghana in December to train some staff of HFFG, the Tarkwa Nsuem Municipal Assembly and Conservative Foundation on AKVO Lumen, a data collection tool.



HFFG sensitizes PWDS on lobbying strategies



Project officer for HFFG, Adjoa Lartey speaks to participants

Illegal extortion within the healthcare system is harmful towards the health of the public in general, and the impact is particularly felt by the poorest individuals and Persons Living with Disabilities who are easily exploited due to their lack of access to knowledge of their rights.

HFFG under the “Not In Our Name: Tackling Extortion in the Ghanaian Healthcare System” in November sensitized eighteen representatives from the Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations on how they stand against corruption in the health sector and also come together to lobby for their rights.

Anthony Nkrumah, a project officer at HFFG empowered participants on strategies for effective advocacy to bring about sustained and significant change in their communities, especially for peoples living with disabilities.

A private Local Governance consultant, Mr. Louis Agbe spoke to participants on how PWDs can participate in District Assembly processes, Modalities and platforms for participation as well as channels they can use to seek redress.

Participants shared instances where they have come together to successfully advocate on issues regarding accessibility to public spaces.

Project officer for Hope for Future Generations Adjoa Lartey briefed participants on the patient’s charter. She empowered them to demand for their rights when they visit health facilities.

Some of the issues brought up by PWDs included not being confident in the reporting processes that exist to receive redress to complaints they may have. They also raised concerns about paying right amounts for commodities included in national health insurance and also accessing district assembly common fund by PWDs.

HFFG leads domestic financing for immunization.



In the face of dwindling donor support in the health sector, the Government of Ghana has been urged to increase domestic funding in the national health budget, especially for immunization programs.

This call was made at a Civil Society Roundtable discussion organized by Hope for Future Generations as part of the Immunization Advocacy Initiative (IAI), a three-year project which aims to advocate for government to increase domestic financing for immunization.

The Immunization Advocacy Initiative is funded by the African Population Health Research Centre (APHRC). It is being implemented by Civil Society Organizations namely: SEND Ghana and a Hope for Future Generation consortium made up of the Ghana Registered Midwives Association, Socio-Serve, the West African AIDS Foundation as well as the Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Health, is also a member of the consortium.

Participants at the roundtable discussion unanimously agreed that despite competing national interests, immunization is a poverty reduction strategy that decreases the magnitude of vaccine-preventable diseases and therefore the need for government to invest greatly into it to sustain the gains made over the years.

The Executive Director of Hope for Future Generations, Mrs Cecilia Senoo noted that most of the interventions within the health sector including immunization are sponsored by external donors, putting the lives of many children at risk should donors continue to pull-out.

She indicated that civil society organizations have a role to play in advocating for the Government of Ghana to commit to funding immunization interventions and also meet its co-financing agreements with international bodies like GAVI, a public-private global health partner committed to increasing access to immunization globally.

For her part, the Programs and Advocacy Manager for the Immunization Advocacy Initiative, Gladys Damalin, revealed that the cost of immunization in Ghana is rising without a corresponding increment in government funding.

“The donor influence in immunization activities in Ghana has been so immense. The gains that the Government of Ghana has made in immunization coverage may not be sustainable if we continue to rely on donors to fund immunization in Ghana,” she said.

She noted that the Immunization Advocacy Initiative aims to ensure that the proportion of the budget allocation to immunization disbursed and spent in each financial year increases year on year by the Government of Ghana.

ED of HFFG, French Ambassador visits Maamobi hospital



On the 6th Global Fund's Replenishment Conference held in Lyon (France) on October 10, 2019, the Executive Director of HFFG, Cecilia Senoo who is also the Chair of the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) joined the Ambassador of France to Ghana, Anne Sophie AVE to tour the Maamobi General Hospital, a facility that has benefited from the Global Fund.

The delegation, including representatives from the National Disease Control Programs (NACP), the National AIDS Control Program (NACP), the National Tuberculosis Program (NTP), and the National Disease Control Program (NTP), interacted with the staff of the Maamobi General Hospital and also toured some units of the facility.

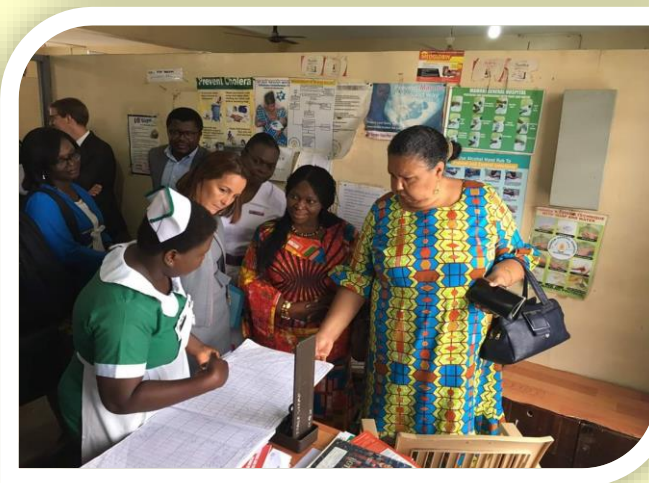
The team also visited the Head Office of the West African Program to Combat AIDS and STIs (WAPCAS), the main recipient of the Global Fund. The Global Fund has several objectives: maximizing the impact of actions against HIV / AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; building resilient and sustainable health systems; promotion and protection of human rights and gender equality and the mobilization of resources.

Since 2002, when it was created, more than \$ 40 billion has been allocated to 140 countries to fight these three pandemics. By 2018, programs supported by the Global Fund to Fight HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria have saved 32 million lives worldwide.

Ghana has received cumulative disbursements of US \$ 817 million since 2002. The government of Ghana on December 1 made a late pledge of One Million Dollars towards the Replenishment of the Global Fund.



The delegation interacting with the staff of the hospital.





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