

Konkreter Friedensdienst
Project Activity by Joana Keller in Busua, Ghana

Time frame: 20.02.2018 – 02.04.2018
Partner organization: Obrobinbini Peace Complex

Feasibility study on OPC concept using the Baobab Children Foundation as an example

OPC Volunteer Joana Keller carried out a feasibility study as her project activity during her stay in Busua for the duration of six weeks. Part of it was a visit of the Baobab Children Foundation (BCF) in Kissi and Cape Coast as this non-governmental organization works in fields that match OPC's content and working fields. OPC staff Joana, Joe and Kwame interviewed several members and participants of the BCF in order to find out success factors for the conceptualization and implementation period of the organization OPC.

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1.0 Interview Data

The data in the down standing chart resulted out of interviews the OPC members carried out with following actors of the Baobab Children Foundation:

Interviewed person (BCF)	Topic	Interviewer (OPC)	Date
Barnabas (BCF staff)	Introduction on the ground and working fields of the BCF	Joe, Kwame and Joana; Photo documentation by Joe (copyright OPC)	8 th March 2018
Volunteers Julia, Johannes and Josef	Introduction and general aspects, volunteers role and work	Joana	8 th March 2018
Three teachers of the agricultural department	Organic farming, success factors, exchange of expertise	Joe, Kwame and Joana	9 th March 2018
Mr. Alhaji (Management)	Success factors and challenges with special focus on management and inner structure	Joana with Joe and Kwame	9 th March
Edith de Vos (Managing director)	Volunteer program	Joana	9 th March 2018
Four senior students	Personal development and critical perspective on BCF	Joe (spoke Twi & translated) with Joana and Kwame	10 th March 2018
Volunteer Johannes	Critical aspects of volunteer program	Joana	10 th March 2018
Volunteer Josef	Products and marketing of the BCF shop, success factors and challenges	Joana; Photo documentation by Josef (copyright by BCF)	10 th March 2018

2.0 Results of interviews

FIELD	CONTENT	SUCCESS FACTOR (+); CHALLENGE (-)	NOTES
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Structure: Three weeks academics and one week workshop for students > Student: Have a difficult background and mostly didn't attend school or lack access to school education because of their social status or disability > Classes for children with special needs are separated from classes for children without special needs > Classes are male dominated, therefore BCF offers programs for girls to attract them to attend school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ask the social welfare for help with integration of children with difficulties in school attendance + Be open for children's approaches + Avoid manipulation of services/ support through strong decision making (funding of students i.e.) 	Mr. Alhaji and Edith de Vos mentioned that they forced through some of their visions i.e. funding a mental disabled child even though the community/family was sceptic
Solar dry machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Old dry machine was constructed by staff with the help of construction plans (internet) > One managing staff took responsibility over employed staff from the community which worked on fix hours picking leafs (moringa, papaya, hibiscus etc.) for the tea products being sold in the Baobab shop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Fixed working hours + Managing staff to organize & control employees 	
Organic farming (pineapple, moringa, vegetables)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Fertilizers and chemicals which are used by neighboring farms make insects flee to the organic due to less protection > The BCF strictly follows the rules of organic farming and these principles forbid to use pipe water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use bitter leaves like Neem for the fertilizer to avoid insects + Have access to a water source + Have labor and ensure their accessibility, availability and efficiency + Decide about cultivation by the factors of market suitability and availability, determination of market on production (shop and customers), analyze interest in organic products and prices as well as addressed customer 	Recommendation by Mr. Alhaji to contact a GIZ expert (he would provide the contact details if requested)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> s + Have a water reservoir, dam + Cover crops and build a carpet for the land + Use bamboo vinegar against insect + Do a soil test to find out what it lacks, a ph-test analysis is recommended for the land as well as the water reservoir + Compost needs more than leaves and fossil to be efficient + Find out if surrounding farming sites use pesticides and know the distance and rate of contact with the organic farm, find out what is introduced to the organic crops + Have plants to protect the land and prevent insects from entering the organic farm in building a “belt” around the farm by mixing same crops like cabbage & tomatoes with trees) + Remove stumps and plough because the land is raw/ clean 	
Compost site	> No usage of chemicals but leaves and cow dung (it has to cool down and dry before) as well as sugar cane	- Cow dung is not a local resource in/ nearby Busua	
Watering	> Earlier senior students had to water the vegetable garden but BCF was able to get sponsors for a pumping machine and pipes which access a natural water reservoir and a tank on the land. For the vegetable garden water sprinkler are used to water the one hectare big land > Big trees cover the land and provide shade to	+ Leave some trees in the farming land for shade	

	prevent quick evaporation after watering		
Medicine garden	> The medicine garden is not actively used and cared for	- Lack of responsible person and control - If there is no benefit in a working field it will be neglected	Idea by OPC member: Carry out a small study on sick people in Busua, using a treatment and a control group to show the effects of organic herbal medicine to the community (verbal channel of communication and advertisement)
Bicycle workshop	> Bicycles are given to students and farmers who have a long walking distance to the BCF > BCF teaches girls how to repair the bicycles		
Carpentry Department – wood engineering department, joinery and cabinet making	> All bamboo furniture of BCF is produced by the department and the students working there > Product orders come by restaurants and individuals who got to know about the products by seeing models the BCF shop in Cape Coast	+ Reach out to customers by exhibiting products in public places (arts/ drum exhibition i.e.)	
Volunteerism	> Volunteers are sent by weltwärts a German development aid program for young people without any profession/ degree (only Germans) > The BCF hosts three volunteers who are assigned to specific workshops but some also switch their field > Motivation plays an important role (seeing the world/ learning from locals/ “saving the world”/ providing skills etc.) > Volunteers stay on the BCF grounds whereas	+ Volunteers from the community are needed for some ongoing work. Provide a benefit to get them working + Skilled volunteers from abroad can share their knowledge and help in finding sponsors (*) - Cultural learning exchange can turn out to be only one-sided + Attitude and motivation of volunteers is important (suggestion: demand motivation I	* private fundraising needs some rules and conditions to avoid harmful practices - The interviewed volunteer doesn't consider himself as working labor and is aware that there are no visible results of his work rather he is learning part of an organization which does not depend on him personally ** A volunteer criticized lack of pers

	<p>their accommodation is in a separated building which allows privacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Working hours are flexible depending on the work load, free days are guaranteed > BCF plans to employ a local staff to run the shop in Cape Coast > Edith de Vos is looking for volunteers who have skills to teach and who share their knowledge and bring expertise into the field. Young unprofessional school graduates wouldn't benefit the NGO significantly > Therefore BCF aims to lessen the participation of weltwärts volunteers and look for experts like physiotherapists, IT experts and people with strong competencies in bicycle and agriculture 	<p>better in application period)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Preparation seminars by weltwärts have made an immense impact on the self-reflective attitude of the BCF volunteers and their sensibility on Whiteness, stereotypes etc. Furthermore the seminars promote the examination during the stay and back in the volunteers' home countries + Volunteers should have an external contact person to address if problems arise with the NGO - smoking (weed) of NGO staff and volunteers is illegal and can cause serious problems with the volunteer program management and volunteers who feel uncomfortable among smoking colleagues; suggestion: have rules + Have fixed meeting times with management to discuss work instructions, get feedback, share ideas, recommendations and critique + Take critique to heart and invest time in evaluation (outside perspective is important*) + Volunteers should stay at least six months, not less + Volunteers should go through preparation seminars the management recommends + Avoid commercial volunteering programs 	<p>istency and possibility to complain for or instance about slow working process and loud music in the night. Furthermore he shared his concerns about the "passiveness of Ghanaians" and "little independent decision making"</p>
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Community	<p>> Because some families didn't benefit from the activities of the BCF, the NGO opened it for everyone trying to minimize jealousy amongst community families</p> <p>> The BCF provides awareness programs to the community in the field of sweeping, tree planting etc. in order to be present and show their positive impact and interest</p>	<p>+ Open the culture school to students of every school and don't select</p> <p>+ Be transparent about funding of students because not everyone can profit and others should understand</p> <p>+ Have a youth club</p> <p>+ Ask social welfare (social workers) and/ or other human rights NGOs for support in expertise and to educate children on their rights (child abuse)</p> <p>+ Work with juristic expert and police to handle cases of child abuse (bring these to court)</p>	Child abuse needs channels for report which can make an impact to other unreported cases and can minimize abuse of children
Health care	> BCF provides health care in terms of funding transportation or health care for those who can't afford. Elder students and adults from the community use to come to the BCF to ask for help	+ Provide free health care or help with access to health care	
Motivation of organization staff		<p>+ Create a youth club to motivate younger generation for activities in promoting common sense. Attract them with payment in form of games, food and organized activities</p> <p>+ Network and cooperate with foundations/ associations/ clubs to get games (football, pencils etc.)</p> <p>+ Have (White*) volunteers on the farm as it attracts and motivates local children and youth</p> <p>+ Have youth club leaders and team managers to let the youth be part of the organization</p>	*Even though many OPC members and staff from the BCF is convinced that Whiteness of volunteers serves as motivation factor for local people, the NGO should not choose volunteers/ staff by their color/ background rather promoting diversity and minimizing discrimination

		on and empower them to organize themselves	
Power plays in management	<p>> Payment of workers is unequal because of different work quality</p> <p>> It happens that people from the community turn out selfish which leads to abuse of the services of BCF</p>	<p>+ Know the skills and personalities very well</p> <p>+ Don't only judge by papers rather have a closer look on what staff/children work and produce as well as talk to their managers and teachers</p> <p>+ Keep payment secret</p> <p>+ Leaders should make clear a workers 'role and the responsibility that comes along with it</p> <p>+ Have one person controlling each field</p> <p>+ Pay attention to issues like concerns about little payment</p> <p>+ Travel distance between private and working place can be a positive factor</p> <p>+ Have a "neutral face" towards the community and people from outside (address selfishness)</p> <p>+ Common sense: Leaders need to have a common understanding and focus on the aims, vision & mission, understand the concept</p> <p>+ Be honest and direct, communication plays a big role</p> <p>+ Looking ahead with a problem solving approach, don't look back</p>	

Board of directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Regular meetings depending on the size of the organization and members of the board of directors (weekly, monthly, yearly) > Decision making is carried out by the management and one management personnel should be part of the board of directors > The general manager (Mr. Alhaji) is involved in everything and informs the other management staff (Edith de Vos) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Decision making should not be forced to involve each and every member + Management needs rules, team work and persons should be placed in positions where he/she can perform + Question a person who is causing problems, have talks, give chances and don't be afraid of exchanging staff, find a cool way to separate + Have regular (i.e. every three months) internal and external control systems for finances to ensure transparency for expenses and get certificates 	
Inclusion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Get a skilled person to talk about ableism/disability, talk to parents and promote dignity and equality of every human being ("Everyone is needed") 	Students without disabilities reported that they support their disabled fellows -> impact on new generation, act as multiplier
Registration of organization in Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It takes long 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Provide a social and enquiry report + Show your office to the officials + Provide a copy of certificates and report + Have a board of directors (1 or 2 person) + Lawyer is an asset who can help with future issues (no employment but cooperation due to high costs) 	
Senior Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > BCF has given hope to their life as the schooling provides perspective for employment and future independency > Before they had no skills and no interest in trade work but BCF promoted their interest in this field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Volunteers/ members/ youth club should organize regular activities in the weekends + Complaints get attention and constructive critique is being implemented (control mechanisms) + Individual needs are considered as far as 	* Question of need of uniforms: Break the discriminative practice or adapt to the system?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The students do their own thing but also teach others who are in need > Critique: Heat in the rooms as there is no ceiling and there is lack of entertainment and activities in the weekends (these would be similar to working days) > Complaints don't go through even though there is a platform to share complaints: The management turns formal complaints down or pays attention to it (need to make a written request) > Students miss school uniforms as they function as representation of membership to a certain school: Feeling of discrimination because only less privileged and students of orphanages wear no uniforms* > Families are allowed to visit until 5PM as it is common practice in boarding schools > The students don't receive money but the management takes care of their needs (formal way to request i.e. cloths etc.) but some "needs" don't go through which makes an impact on the individual need of each child > Holidays are short, no vacations and some students stay in the school ground > Sometimes the students have to work at the shop 	<p>means allow it</p> <p>+ Side effect of promotion of equal treatment, dignity and solidarity irrespective of ability/ disability: students become multiplicands for change in societal mindset and role models</p>	
Baobab Shop in Cape Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > In the last years the shop made deficits as the expenses weren't covered by the shop > The Baobab shop is trying to address tourists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Profit is necessary to cover costs in case of damages and relapses - Lack of detailed accounting due to perman 	

	<p>as well as Ghanaian customers which is challenging because for most Ghanaians the products are too expensive but lower prices would cause more deficits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Products that sell well: Shopping bags and gym bags, wooden bowls, nice post cards, coconut oil (+++) and shea butter (+++), teas, soaps > Average sell success: jewelry (coconut & beads) > Bad sell: clothes (too colorful and sizes are not uniform, recycle bags (made out of sachets)) > 90% of customers are White and only White people buy the local coffee too > Baobab is known as restaurant and shop but many customers and visitors don't know about its actual function as a social NGO/ children foundation > Problem: Because the restaurant and shop attracts foreigners/ White it also attracts minor beggars which appears "contradictory" to the foundations aim to support children from difficult social background > Problem: Ghanaian staff is not familiar with selling strategies to White customers. The volunteers did training in form of role plays (scenarios) but it had no long lasting impact > Advertisement through Trip Advisor promotes the hostel and restaurant well: Visitors share their praises on the place and highlight volunteers as sellers ("creating a nice atmosphere") 	<p>ent change of staff (volunteers) and different level of reliability and feeling of responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use Trip Advisor/ travel guides or alternative platforms to get recommendations for the services + Share skills (i.e. exchange marketing skills) + Reliable staff is important. Avoid internal stealing by strict accounting and control + Produce and sell products that are requested most, let go of bad sellers (sachet bags) - manage split between low class and upper class customers which is closely linked to foreign/ local background and Whiteness/Blackness in this community: separation and discrimination should be avoided 	
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	> A security guard once stole 500GC		
Baobab Hostel & Restaurant Cape Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Bookings only run in Ghana, not via online booking platform. Bookings come in via phone call or mail one to two weeks in advance > Information/ advertisement on Facebook and BCF website > Trip Advisor: Baobab Hostel ranges first with 200 recensions, no competing hostel and restaurants because Baobab fills a market gap providing vegan/ vegetarian dishes in Cape Coast > Restaurant: Daily special which is a local dish for 10 GC doesn't run well > Hostel guests are mostly White (backpackers) because upper class Ghanaians would find the rooms too basic > Most guests stay 2-3 days (visiting the castle, beach and Elmina castle) > Drinks: No Coca Cola, Fanta, no alcoholic drinks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use online platforms such as Trip Advisor, Facebook, Website, Instagram etc. for advertisement + Provide services and standards according to the group of customers who are aimed to be addressed (have a range of standards or specify on one group/ NGO philosophy) 	Suggestions: Have Cocktails/ bar
Development		+ Start with one working field and focus intensively on this one. A coverage of couple/ all working fields at the same time can lead to the organization's failure	

3.1 PHOTO DOCUMENTATION – VISIT BAOBAB CHILDREN FOUNDATION IN KISSI (Copyright : OPC)



Image 1: Visit of the sewing workshop at the Baobab Children Foundation in Kissi



Image 2: In the bicycle workshop students learn to repair bicycles and wheelchairs



Image 3: Teacher and students weaving at the weaving workshop of BCF



Image 4: Students of BCF are working in the wood engineering department



Image 5: Barnabas (BCF) introduces the medical garden to Joana and Kwame from OPC



Image 6: Pipes access the natural water reservoir which is close to the farm land of the BCF



Image 7: Organic moringa farm of the BCF



Image 8: Joana and Kwame (OPC) visit the organic pineapple farm with guide Barnabas (BCF)



Image 9: Formel of mixture for the compost soil



Image 10: The turning process functions layer by layer in three steps

3.2 PHOTO DOCUMENTATION – VISIT BAOBAB RESTAURANT & SHOP IN CAPE COAST (Copy right: BCF)



Image 11: The Baobab House in Cape Coast includes a restaurant, shop guesthouse and conference room, currently used as art gallery



Image 12: It is located at a big street just few hundred meters from Cape Coast Castle



Image 13: View of the shop from the front desk



Image 14: Joana interviews a volunteer from the BCF in their shop in Cape Coast



Image 15: Sells well: Handmade shea butter and black soap



Image 16: Hard to sell: Colorful traditional clothes from the sewing workshop

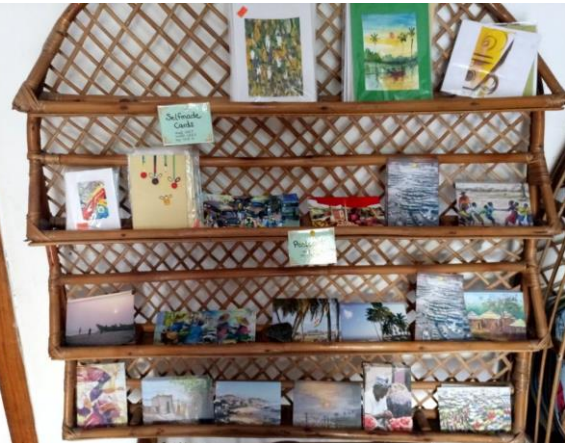


Image 17: Also paintings and post cards by talented students of the BCF are sold in the shop



Image 18: Coconut and beads jewelry with kente material



Image 19: Handmade wooden bowls from the wood engineering department



Image 20: The shop also offers traditional meter ware and provides a tailor service



Image 21: Self-made organic products from the BCF farm: Moringa powder, mushrooms, hibiscus and papaya tea



Image 22: Coconut oil is one of the few imported products that the shop offers



Image 22: Visitors enjoy the sea view and nice atmosphere of the restaurant in Cape Coast



Image 23: The restaurant offers fresh juices and vegan/vegetarian dishes with ingredients from the organic farm

4.CONTACTS

Name	Edith de Vos	Alhaji Issalken
Function	Managing Director	Local Manager
Phone Number	0244723241	0244204465
Email Address	baobabchildren@yahoo.com	-
Note	Interested to visit the farm land of OPC and get updated on OPC's development	Invited OPC for another visit and offered help if any other questions arise. The teachers of the agriculture department offered their support (expertise) and referred to Mr. Alhaji as contact person if OPC would request help