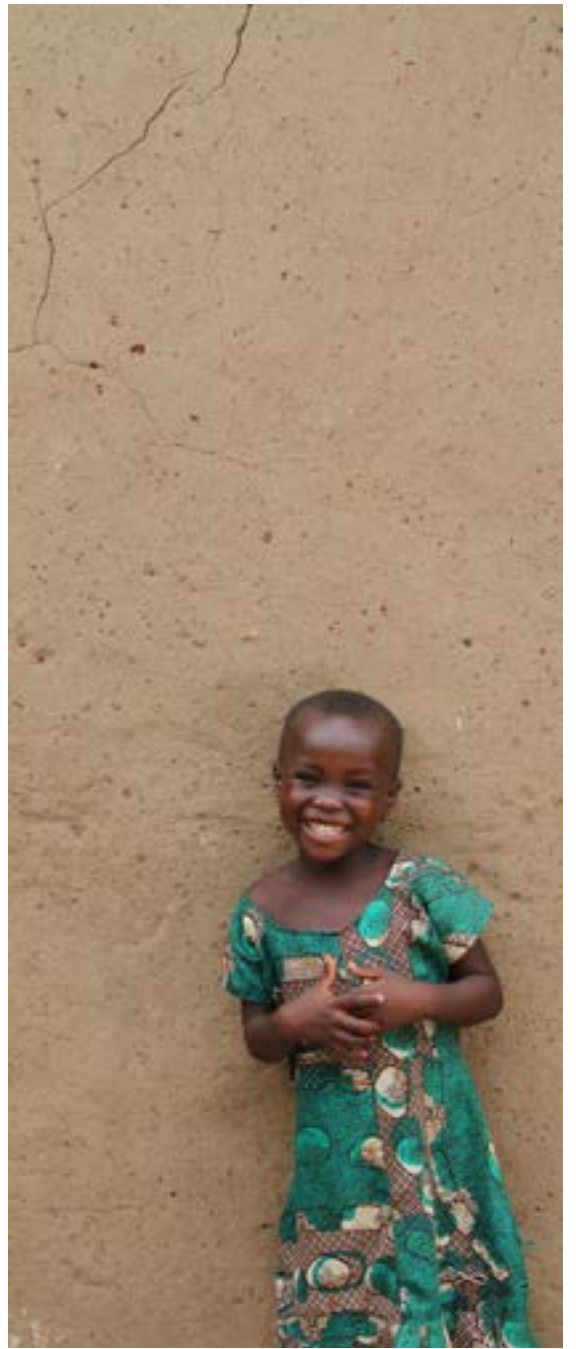




For two decades, AfriKids has worked with dedication and commitment for the rights and wellbeing of children in northern Ghana.

AfriKids is a unique and multiple award-winning partnership between a UK charity and a local organisation embedded in the communities of northern Ghana. Together we have helped make a life-changing difference to hundreds of thousands of children, many of whom have now grown to adulthood and are seizing their life chances - their moving stories are the story of AfriKids. Now we are looking forward to an exciting future in an environment of new challenges and opportunities. AfriKids is well respected by the communities in which it works and has enjoyed the trust of a wide variety of partners and supporters in Ghana, the UK and around the world.





AfriKids & Child Protection

The majority of AfriKids' work protecting children from harm is preventative: tackling the driving forces that put children at risk of neglect, abuse and exploitation in the first place. We have achieved this by improving family livelihood security to reduce the pressures of poverty and by ending customary practices that put children in danger, like corporal punishment, child marriage, child labour and discrimination of children with disabilities

One of AfriKids most valuable areas of expertise is Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC), we work with communities and build long-lasting relationships which have enabled us to challenge deeply engrained cultural attitudes and practices that can put children at risk.

There are two key factors which have led to AfriKids enormous success with the SBCC issues, which are that our projects are designed and implemented by Ghanaian staff, most often from the north themselves, and secondly our extensive stakeholder consultations shape our projects from the very beginning. With these principles AfriKids has succeeded in large-scale, multi-year interventions tackling issues that no other NGO in the area has attempted. We have seen sustained changes as a result, even 10, 15 years after intervention.

AfriKids can further attribute our success in the area of child protection to our holistic approach to programming. We have worked to rescue and reintegrate victims of child trafficking, we have helped children to stop working in gold mining - but both of these efforts would not have been sustainable without a holistic approach to programming. This is because without understanding and addressing these pushes and pulls that challenge a child's safety, they could find themselves vulnerable once more to the same forces, shortly after intervention.

58

communities have ended the killing of spirit children

34,383

community members educated on child disability

13,463

children supported off the streets

171,572

children educated on their rights

2,063

children have been given safe homes



Our Projects

Ending the Spirit Child Phenomenon

2004 (Operation Sirigu) – 2009

2013 – 2016 – SCP Phase 1

2018 – 2021 – SCP Phase 2

Funded by Medicor Foundation and the Commonwealth Foundation

The aim of this series of projects was to increase knowledge on child rights, to lead to a rejection in misconceptions and harmful practices in 58 communities, building acceptance and understanding of children with disabilities so that they can enjoy their rights to education, health, and dignity.

The spirit child phenomenon is a belief that deformed or ailing children, births concurrent with tragic events, or children displaying unusual abilities, are spirits sent from the bush to cause misfortune and destroy the family. From the perspective of a Nankani community in Northern Ghana, spirit children are not human, but are bush spirits masquerading as such. In some cases, family members give suspected spirit children a poisonous concoction to confirm their spiritual status and return them to the bush. We can interpret the spirit child practice as infanticide, however, it is essential to note that not all spirit child cases involve death-causing activities. In some circumstances, families identify children that have died of a medical condition as a spirit child in an effort to better understand and explain the child's origin, destiny, and brief residence in this world.

Our work to address the 'Spirit Child Phenomenon' had the following objectives: Communities change attitudes and reject harmful practices towards perceived spirit children. Traditional Healers and soothsayers have alternative livelihoods and become child rights advocates. Government professionals become more responsive to needs of vulnerable children as a result of increased engagement between them, communities and other stakeholders. And finally, improved support and care of children with disabilities by parents and caregivers.

The project's precursor saw an end to Spirit Child Practices in 7 communities. Having trialled and developed the model, the first phase took the activities into 11 communities and based on its success we were able to massively scale up the activities for the second phase, reaching 40 communities – for a total of 58!

At the end of the three years of the project's 2nd phase, community members are aware of the rights of children and now reject misconceptions about 'spirit children'. This has resulted in public declarations to end infanticide by traditional leaders. In the years following, stakeholders and community leaders have not reported a single case of infanticide in their communities. Moreover, key stakeholders and leaders during the end of project interviews reported that:

- People have stopped referring to children with disabilities as spirit children
- The killing of perceived spirit children had ended
- Support for children with disabilities has improved due to an increased understanding on the causes of disabilities
- There is remarkable decrease in stigma of parents/mothers with children with disabilities leading to increase in reporting and detection to the appropriate health and education facilities.

96%

of community members reject harmful practices to children

100%

of Traditional Healers formally declared an end to killing perceived spirit children in their communities

848

parents were supported to provide the right care for their child's disability

147

suspected spirit children were rescued

2,326

children attended child rights clubs where they learned about disability rights

Trafficking in Persons

2021 - 2022

Funded by UNICEF

Children are involved in almost every aspect of fishing on Lake Volta. Children produce and maintain equipment and gear including boats, traps and nets. They set and collect traps, and go out onto the lake in boats, rowing, bailing water, and reeling and casting nets. They are often made to dive to the bottom of the lake to free trapped nets, which is the most dangerous task with a high risk of drowning.

In a 2016 report, our partners the International Justice Mission (IJM), found that more than half of the children of children working on southern Lake Volta's waters were likely trafficked into forced labour and that the majority of them were 10 years or younger. However, the same study found out that these children often had contractual agreements for their exploitation, which were frequently between the trafficker and the child's parent/guardian. This demonstrates the complexity of the issue and that rescues alone won't end trafficking.

AfriKids and its partners, UNICEF and the IJM, worked to identify child survivors of trafficking on Lake Volta, prosecute child trafficking offenders, and ensure that survivors and victims of child trafficking are provided comprehensive, gender-sensitive, trauma-informed care; as well as case management services and appropriate community re-integration and follow up.

The School of Night Rabbits

2009 - 2020

The core objective of the intervention was to get street children off the street and back into mainstream education. The intervention took these children and offered them night classes where they received tutelage on numeracy and literacy education, as well as other general education like life skills and moral talks. The education, and skills trainings, was implemented with a focus on a reintegration of beneficiaries in formal schooling also.

The street- and working- children and were also provided with support, protection, and counselling through our Child Protection Teams (CPT). Their aim also included preventing street children from migrating down to the south, through a collaboration with the transport unions in the region. To support the children living and working on the streets of Bolgatanga, AfriKids also worked closely with the local community. Our community work included reintegration of beneficiaries with their families where appropriate, economic empowerment of parents of street children, and community awareness raising on the dangers of street life.

We have been able to place over **8,000 children back in school** with a retention rate of about 70%

For the skills training component, we have placed over **250 teenagers in skills training** with a retention rate of over 95% and with currently over 210 of them engaged in their own businesses.

Over **450 children have been reintegrated with their families** and over 400 families have been supported with livelihoods

Ending Early and Forced Marriage

2015

Funded by UNICEF

AfriKids was an implementing partner for this UNICEF funded project, which worked to improve knowledge of, and attitudes towards, girls' rights and child, early and forced marriage. The project created an environment where girls are able to fully exercise their rights.

AfriKids worked with school communities to promote an awareness of female rights and a shift in attitudes. This female empowerment project focussed on adolescent girls, as well as communities encouraging them to stand up for girls' rights, whilst also working in partnership with the Ghana Education Service to develop adolescent and reproductive health manuals to promote girls' rights and educated on the issues of Child Marriage.

Operation Sunlight

2006 - 2012

Funded by the ILO

Children's involvement in artisanal or galamsey gold mining in Ghana is an important concern. Not only do children miss out on their education, but they are also exposed to very hazardous conditions – dangerous chemicals and, of course, cramped, narrow, and potentially unstable mineshafts. AfriKids' Operation Sunlight tackled the issue of child labour in the gold mines of the Talensi Nabdam District. The project ran from 2006-2012 and successfully removed 320 children from working in the dangerous conditions of these small-scale mines.

The project first worked with communities to ensure children wouldn't enter mining in the first place through our child rights club methodology and community sensitisations. The project then worked directly with children already engaged in mining, supporting their reintegration into education and rehabilitation. To ensure they stayed in schools, we worked with parents to improve their livelihoods, so that the income from their child was no longer necessary. Lastly, we worked with child labour committees and workers unions to advocate for an end to child mining.

Independent filmmakers, **@StuartHarmon** and **@PaulaEly**, came across our work whilst travelling through Ghana and produced an award-winning documentary *The Money Stone*. The film is a moving and authentic account that takes you deep into the lives of children working in Ghana's gold mines and the difficult choices they're forced to make. It is a window into the world AfriKids works hard in every day and a wonderful example of how we're ending child suffering and creating brighter futures.

You can view a trailer for the documentary here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjdCHKy25f0>

Or watch the full film:

www.moneystonefilm.com

The Bolgatanga Area Programme

2009 – 2019

The Bolgatanga Area Programme had a focus on child displacement and child streetism. AfriKids staff identified children who were the most in need of intervention, especially those who were living on the street and not in school, addressing their needs through several projects which all fell under the BAP umbrella.

The relationships that needed to be built with these children takes a long time, establishing the reasons why they are not in school, not with their parents, and why they were living on the streets. The vast majority of the time, poverty was the cause – their may not have been enough food for everyone at home or the child might have had to work.

The programme established these relationships and worked out the root of their hardships. Staff then collaborated with the children on a plan to improve the situation, resulting in, where appropriate and conducive to a child's development, children returning home to a family who received support. Children would also be enrolled into formal schooling and supported with the necessary costs. For some children where this more nuanced journey, who were not willing to return to school yet, night classes were offered where they could learn numeracy, literacy, and build future skills. When they completed this programme they were then mainstreamed into formal schooling.

Operation Mango Tree

2006 - Ongoing

Funded by the St. James Place Charitable Foundation

Children in Ghana can end up living on the streets because of poverty, abuse, parents being unable to look after them due to illness, or losing their parents and having no other family to rely on. Operation Mango Tree has been offering a safe haven for children since 2006. It has served as home to children from some of the most troubled backgrounds: street-children, orphaned, and those abandoned due to being perceived as 'spirit children'.

Many children's homes in Ghana are not registered with the Department of Social Welfare and children are often treated poorly. OMT has embedded play into social care, play is essential for the physical and mental health of a child. Children who play, develop problem solving skills, creativity and work cooperatively with others. Children with disabilities are often heavily stigmatised by communities and often face neglect and abuse; as such many children are abandoned. Mama Laadi, who runs the home, has a background in nursing and has been providing specialised care and understanding of children's conditions.

Many children in residential care in Ghana may have surviving parents and families. The project as a principle, always seeks to resettle children with their families where appropriate. We have built awareness of community members about family-based care and improve their knowledge about the reality of institutional care in Ghana.

Our Staff

David Pwalua - Country Director

David is a performance-driven, humanitarian specialist with more than 16 years' experience in participatory development planning, project design, management of operations, research, monitoring evaluation and learning. He has specialised expertise in educational leadership and administration, child protection, community development, grant management, coaching & capacity building, and managing donor relationships. He has great interest in mobilising support for development, promoting inter- and intra- organisational learning, and sharing good practice models. He has experience in institutional capacity building in a Ghanaian context. He has his background in education; with a degree in Education from the University of Cape Coast and over 20 years of experience in policy and practice.



Linda Marfoh - Director of Operations

Linda is an adaptable Human Resource professional, with eight years post-qualification experience in recruitment, performance & rewards management, training & development, procurement and project management among others. She has put her experience and expertise to bear in ensuring AfriKids operates effectively and efficiently. She has 5-years' experience of teaching at the basic school level.

Solomon Ali - Finance Manager

Solomon has a master's in Financial Management from KNUST and has been working on education interventions for over 15 years. He has a wealth of experience managing financially grants received from donors like USAID, Comic Relief, People's Postcode Lotteries, Gower Street, Medicor Foundation, just to mention a few.



Mandela Atibila - Head of Grants

has over 11 years' experience managing and overseeing grants. Under the CBE intervention, he was MEL manager for the first 3 years before moving on to manage another grant which AfriKids had just won by then. He was part of the team that designed the STAGE intervention which AfriKids won and is currently implementing with him exercising some oversight responsibility. He has a wealth of experience managing donors, external partners, conflict resolution and Monitoring and Evaluation. He has been core to the design and management of over 70% of AfriKids' interventions in education. He has exercised overhead responsibilities over AfriKids' interventions, managing donors & external partners, reporting, and giving feedback to donors for the past 8 years. He holds a BA in Sociology and Philosophy from the University of Ghana and a Masters in Human Resource management from the University of Cape Coast.

Daniel Kpabitey - Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Manager

Daniel joined AfriKids in 2009 and before assuming his current role, he handled a wide range of projects and management roles, AfriKids including ICT instructor (teaching ICT to primary and JHS children and training their teachers to be able to teach their students). Daniel has 19+ years' experience implementing social /economic development interventions, with a special emphasis on Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Research, as well as the development of processes, techniques, skills of staff in outcome, and impact assessment, as well as deep experience of project management.

Daniel also has a strong grasp of and experience with USAID's Collaborative, Learning, and Adaptation (CLA) framework, FCDO's MEAL system, and OECD assessment standards, all of which are proven solid systems for Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Research, and Learning (MEARL). He was also the MEL manager for AfriKids CBE intervention. He has a strong interest in gender equality and the empowerment and development of the future of young people. Daniel Kpabitey is a graduate of the University of Ghana, Legon, with a degree in statistics and computer science and he is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation with the expectation of graduating in June 2022.



Lena Naaso - Safeguarding Manager

Lena has worked with a team to ensure safeguarding is incorporated or mainstreamed in the work of AfriKids since 2019. Lena joined AfriKids in December 2008 as Administrative Officer and Personal Assistant to the Country Director of AfriKids Ghana. She is presently the Safeguarding Officer for AfriKids Ghana, while doubling as the Project Coordinator for AfriKids Ghana's all girls' project aimed at improving educational outcomes for marginalised out-of-school girls in 5 districts of Northern Ghana (STAGE, funded by the Girls Education Challenge of FCDO). Lena has a Higher National Diploma in Secretaryship and Management Studies from the Tamale Technical University, a bachelor's degree in Business Management Studies from the University of Cape Coast and is currently pursuing a Masters' degree in Human Resources Development at the University of Cape Coast



With thanks to the supporters who
have made our Child Protection work
possible



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