

Report on the project finding mission in Ghana 2017

Between June 28th and July 13th we have been in the two villages of Aferikrom and Fahiako in the Eastern Region of Ghana together with members of our Ghanaian partner organization Youth Advocate Ghana (YAG). The object of our visit was to discuss the options of projects with the local population.



Aferikrom



Fahiako

We visited each village for 4 days. In village meetings and in conversations with individuals and families, we researched the greatest strains on people. Most of them live on subsistence farming. The proportion of the people living under poverty line is between 85% and 95%.

The absence of a school and the lack of access to clean water were the most deplored problems in both villages.

Need of school projects

In Fahiako, the nearest school is about two hours walk away, so only a few children attend school. A regular school attendance is also rare. The reason for this is seen in the great distance to school, which burdened the children seriously. So they usually go to school only three days a week and then they are exhausted to go to school for the rest of the week. Also rainy season is a problem. The children often fall ill due to the weather. Early pregnancies are no isolated cases, and girls who become pregnant mostly quit school. But also lack of money or the lack of interest by the children due to the long distance to school, lead to the fact, that they quit school.



Road to school in Fahiako

In Aferikrom, the conditions for attending school are a little better than in Fahiako, so the number of children attending school is higher. There are three schools in the region, two public and one private school. For visiting private school, fees must be paid and every time, when it rains, lessons are cancelled, because there is no suitable school building. The nearby of the both public schools is of such poor quality that the parents prefer to send their children to the school, which is about 2 hours walk away. And so there are the same problems like in Fahiako.

Need of water projects

The water supply in both villages depends on a very small river, rather a stream, which is already falling dry three months after the end of the rainy season. Then people either have to buy drinking water or dig for it. Because of their very low income, the purchase of water is a huge burden on them.

The water in both villages contains numerous bacteria that cause diseases such as cholera and diarrhea, but also the guinea worm and parasites, which cause skin and eye diseases. The streams from which the people in Aferikrom and Fahiako get the water are flowing through numerous other villages, and so the water is also contaminated with detergent residues and garbage. Also animals use the water, so it is contaminated by them.



The stream – water supply of Fahiako

In Aferikrom there is a well, which was built in 2015. But this well is of water for approximately three days only in the rainy season after a rain shower, otherwise it is dry. The reason for this is assumed in the too low depth of the bore. Also the recommendation of the people of Aferikrom to drill the well on another place with larger water resources was ignored. So people in Aferikrom are still dependent on water from unsafe sources.

A woman in a part of Aferikrom showed us a pool, which only leads water in the rainy season. Her statement “the water is undrinkable” was well comprehensible, because the water was milky white and the algae thrive splendidly. In two other parts of the village the water in two wells was saline and therefore not suitable for drinking.



A pool in addition to the stream – water supply of Aferikrom in rainy season

Further problem descriptions by the population

Not only lack of school and water supply are the problems in the villages. There is no electricity supply and the light in the evening comes from one single kerosene lamp in every household. So it is difficult for the children to do their homework.

Also the great distance to the next health center poses a problem. Due to the very bad roads in both villages, whose condition deteriorates even further during the rainy season, it is often only possible to go there by feet in case of illness or delivery. Patients who are not able to walk by themselves, often are carried by family members.

Because of the bad condition of the road, the bus company refuse to drive. Also taxis drivers refuse to drive from and to the villages or they take heavily increased prices.

These also affect economic activities. People often cannot sell their harvests in the local markets because they have no transportation. The vegetables rot and this means a loss of income for the farmers.

Our decisions for projects

Due to the discussions with the villagers, we and our partner organization YAG have decided to implement **2 projects in each of the both villages.**

The first project is the construction of a **primary school with an integrated kindergarten.** This decision was made because the planning and construction can be implemented relatively quickly and in both villages land for school construction is available.



Example for a school building

As a second project, wells are being built in each village to supply the people of Aferikrom and Fahiako with clean drinking water.



Well with hand pump

The people of the villages are involved actively in planning and implementation of the projects from the very beginning. After completion all projects will be handed over in the ownership of the people of both villages, who then take the responsibility for them. The administration and maintenance will be taken by committees, which are elected by the people and accountable to them.