



Group Sponsorship Program

GHANA | Fall 2021

Child Sponsorship has been a staple of International Needs' work in Ghana for 37 years. Unfortunately, the pandemic has worsened education, healthcare, and nutrition inequity, leaving many children without the ability to attend school. Many children were missing out on lifechanging empowerment from our partner in Ghana.

Impact of the pandemic in Ghana

Research by UNICEF in January of this year shows the impact of COVID 19 on children in Ghana.

"The pandemic's impact on children's access and quality of education are most severely felt through the closure of schools without an alternative education service accessible by children." - UNICEF Ghana

Before the pandemic began, 50.9% of children aged 12-14, and 83.3% of children aged 15-17 were either not attending school, two or more years behind in school, or have not achieved the correct level of schooling for their grade. COVID-19 has not improved this situation.

The Group Program was developed in response to problems like this, and has started by empowering 375 children. When a child joins a group program like the one in Ghana, they do not just receive an education. The Group Program is fundamental in the way it holistically develops a child's mind and body while transforming their community.

This report will detail the efforts undergone in the past 8 months, the launch of the group program, the advantages of this arrangement, and some stories of transformation.

Development Objectives of the Ghana Group Program:

International Needs Ghana has created the following development objectives for the Group Program.

1. Contributing to the holistic development of children and the transformation of their communities.
2. Advancing the following UN Sustainable development goals:
 - a. No Poverty
 - b. Zero Hunger
 - c. Health and Well-Being
 - d. Quality Education,
 - e. Gender Equality
 - f. Clean Water and Sanitation

Major Program Accomplishments

Tuition support was provided for 375 children, lessening the financial burden on their families. Educational materials were provided to students and schools, enabling effective teaching and learning.

After-School Teams:

A big advantage of the Group Program is the after-school programming children receive. Children are divided into teams of 15-30 according to their strengths and weaknesses and spend time after school learning and spending time with classmates. Here are some things they learn:

1. Interpersonal relationships: How to grow in relationship with friends and family.
2. Grammar: Word puzzles and spelling bees.
3. Mathematics: integers, addition word problems, counting, grouping.
4. Personal Hygiene.
5. Environmentalism.
6. Protection from Abuse.
7. Crafts: Children worked with beads and lacing, creating necklaces and bracelets.
8. Leadership: Children were given the opportunity to lead small groups, developing valuable leadership and interpersonal skills.
9. Discipleship: Children learn the books of the Bible, popular stories and verses, The Lord's Prayer.



Nutrition:

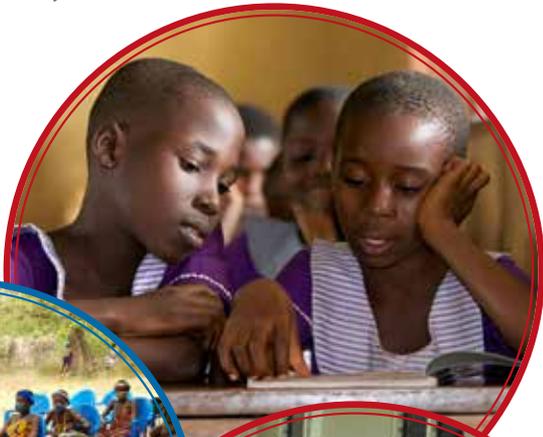
- Lunches were provided for 375 students each school day.

Healthcare and health education:

- **Students learned about the importance of personal hygiene,** including dental care, having clean skin and clean hair, and wearing clean clothes.
- **Handwashing has been emphasized during COVID** as a method of transmission prevention. Four hand washing stations have been constructed in the two schools, making it easier for students to keep their hands clean.

Discipleship:

- **Children were taught the books of the Bible,** popular stories and verses, and The Lord's Prayer.



Highlights from the past 8 months:

Group Program launch:

- In January, International Needs Ghana held a ceremony to introduce the Group Program to students, parents, and community leaders.
- The program was launched at Kpogede Community School (KCS) in the Volta Region. In attendance were parents, community leaders, members of the Community Child Protection Committee and Teachers Association, and the Executive Director of International Needs Ghana.
- Community leaders acknowledged the contribution of International Needs Ghana to the enhancement of human capital in the community. They pledged their commitment to ensure that the Group Program achieves its intended outcomes.
- Students of the Kpogede School participated in the launch, acting as the Master of Ceremony, ushering, and performing music and dances.
- A former student of KCS and a child sponsorship recipient had these words to say: *"In our world today, the best way to change the world is through education. In our community, we are privileged to have International Needs help as we educate our children. Let us not take it for granted at all."*



Parents get involved

As a part of the launch, a meeting was held with the parents of future students to discuss their role in their children's education. Managing the expectations of parents and caregivers is very important, especially when launching a novel education program for new students. This event gave parents the opportunity to ask questions so they could understand the group program on a deeper level.

Parents were very thankful for this meeting. *"When facilitators explained the parent Involvement form to us, I realized how important my contribution as a parent is to achieving the change we want to see in the lives of our children"* – Avorny David – Parent.

"The impact we want to see in the lives of our children will take the effort of all of us. Myself and every parent present here should play their role and not give up. The future of our children is very important." – Xlornyeku Grace – Parent.



We were very encouraged to see how well the program was received, especially by parents, who don't always get involved in their children's education. But in Ghana, we're seeing the parents taking an active role to advance the education of their children. Instead of one donor sponsoring one child, many people around the world are working together to empower hundreds of children. That's why we're excited about the group sponsorship model!

- David Marshall, Executive Director, International Needs Canada

Stories of Transformation:

Everyone involved in the launch of Group Sponsorship is committed towards the program's success. They all see the potential for transformation!

Cromwell Awadey, Executive Director of International Needs Ghana, is excited about the Group Program helping reduce sponsorship inequity in the schools and communities. *"It will ensure no children are left behind by compensating for the limitations of traditional sponsorship",* he says.

Felix, one of the after-school volunteer mentors said: *"I have worked with children in the past but volunteering with International Needs has challenged me to involve the children more in every activity. This is making children in my group more confident."*

The launch meeting provided a great opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss their roles and expectations. Parents are already invested in their children's education, and have dedicated themselves to helping any way they can.

Miriam's INGAP story

I am Miriam. I am a beneficiary of the Group Program. I am in an after-school group called the Gemstones. Our slogan is *"different colors, always skillful"*. This means that we may be different with different talents but when we come together, we are able to achieve our aim.



The activities of our group have been so exciting. We learnt how to make friends, work in groups and how to solve puzzles. We also learnt to be good to all manner of people and to relate peacefully with them all. We learnt about the Good Samaritan. That lesson teaches us to have helping hands and always be ready for service.

I resolved from that day not to make my mother ask before I offer helping hands. Since then, my mother has been happy with me. From that day, I also come to school early enough to keep the compound clean.

We also did addition of numbers. I had the opportunity to lead the discussion. I was so excited to lead. We also did word formation. This made us confident to form words. I have learnt new vocabularies that enable me to write my essays.

I love the Group Program and I am proud to be part of it. The lessons are so useful for life. Thank you, International Needs Canada.

The impact of the Group Empowerment Program can be summed up in 3 points:

1. **No child left behind.** Because donations are pooled, 375 children in the program receive education, nutritious food, and healthcare.
2. **Transformative Education.** Allows children to escape child labour, and gives them and their families a more promising future.
3. **Efficient Empowerment.** More children are eligible for the program, and our partners can provide a greater variety of programming.

Thank you for joining hands with other generous donors to make sure unsponsored children get the help they need during these trying times. Together you are making a difference, creating a beautiful space for children to grow.