

# 1 Main activities in the months September - December

## Monthly meetings of Daddy's and Mothers Clubs

During the reporting period, GYDF staff visited each of the 10 project communities and engaged with the 20 groups set up. Group activities as designed were carried out according to plan (see table below). Because of the increasing self-confidence of group leaders to chair meetings themselves (based on the training they had received at the first training workshop), the role of the GYDF team has changed; it is now focused mainly on monitoring and supervising group meetings and to assess the work and activities being undertaken by each group.

Community	Date September	Date October	Date November	Date December
Amuzudeve	16/09/2021	10/10/2021	20/11/2021	08/12/2021
Dawanu	18/09/2021	03/10/2021	20/11/2021	15/12/2021
Dorkpo	08/09/2021	06/10/2021	10/11/2021	24/12/2021
Dzakpo	12/09/2021	10/10/2021	28/11/2021	12/12/2021
Gavorkofe	23/09/2021	19/10/2021	13/11/2021	10/12/2021
Golokope	26/09/2021	17/10/2021	21/11/2021	16/12/2021
Kordiabe	04/09/2021	31/10/2021	14/11/2021	27/12/2021
Kpodzi	26/09/2021	20/10/2016	24/11/2021	20/12/2021
Kpodoave	20/09/2021	16/10/2021	21/11/2021	18/12/2021
Seva	11/09/2021	24/10/2021	07/11/2021	04/12/2021

In the months under review, a range of topics were covered with each of the groups based on the suggested methodology as described in the manual which each group leader had received at the training workshop.

As the meetings of the Mother Support Groups and Daddy's Clubs are increasingly organised and chaired by the groups' leaders, i.e. attendance by GYDF staff is not required each time, the GYDF team used visits to communities to address other target groups, such as adolescent girls and their parents (see photo).



**Women Support Group and Daddies Club meetings in Kpodoave (12 September, 2021)**

### ***Work visit from UK expert on gender equality, masculinities and psychotherapy***

Lesley Hill, an art therapist and mental health practitioner linked to UK-based NHS Scotland's Highland /Ghana Health Partnership and Multi Agency International Training and Support (MAITS) visited the Grow Your Dream Foundation in October 2021 to see how best GYDF might add a mental health focus to their community work.

Director Jacob Ahiave Sedemor facilitated the trip along with GYDF colleague Linus Gaba. They orientated Ms Hill to the GYDF gender and health work and community contexts. They facilitated a visit to one 'off the beaten track' community up the mountain in Adaklu. This visit served as an initial introduction of the concept of mental health within GYDF work for the community and an opportunity for Ms Hill to deliver a taster art session to show how using art can enable communication and discussion within the community groups. The 45 min walk along a rocky path and under the shade of the trees led to into the community itself, nestling below a steep rockface. The chiefs and community provided their customary welcome with singing and drumming, speeches and gifts. The topic of mental health was briefly introduced by Jacob Ahiave and Linus Gaba followed by the art exercise. This enabled discussions about good and bad experiences in couple relationships, a roof blowing off – then being repaired, a sick child who got better, having no money then making money and being able to buy food. Thus using art in this way proved to be a useful tool to explore difficulties in life and help to talk about them.



**GYDF team member Mr Gaba in discussion with Ms Hill**

A visit to the Adaklu polyclinic to meet community care and mental health personnel, share GYDF intention to develop mental health within their remit, and flag up the availability of community health for disabilities training available through MAITS, rounded off the visit.

Following the visit, Ms Hill linked the GYDF team to Mr Dan Taylor, Director of MindFreedom Ghana (MFGh), based in Accra. MFGh is a non-government organisation established in 2004 with the vision of improving the mental health and social lives of persons with psychosocial disabilities in Ghana as well promoting their human rights and dignity. Jacob Ahiave was quick to take up the opportunity of joining a MindFreedom training event in Jasikan in the north of Volta region which focused on the impacts of Covid 19 on mental health, see below.



**Ms Hill with community elders and group members in Kordiabe**

### **Further training of GYDF staff in mental health**

MindFreedom Ghana (MFGh) currently seeks to foster and strengthen links with similar minded organisations both across Ghana and internationally to harmonise operations, learn from each other and explore diverse forms of cooperation, all with the goal of upscaling the assistance available to people with disabilities. One of the key objective of MFGh is to support and assist people with mental disorders in their treatment regiment and advocate for conditions – both in the communities and at psychiatric facilities – that would not infringe on their human rights and dignity.

MFGh invited organisations and experts interested in mental health matters to a workshop held in Jasikan (Oti Region) on 26 October, 2021. GYDF director Jacob Ahiave participated in the training and also used the opportunity to network with representatives from MFGh and the other workshop participants. In attendance were the Mental Health Nurses, the Oti Region Health Director, several District Directors as well as representatives from various District Assemblies from across the region.



**GYDF Director Ahiave with Dan A. Taylor, Executive Secretary of MindFreedom Ghana**

### **Second workshop**

On November 24th and 25th, the team of Grow Your Dream Foundation (GYDF) conducted a two-day refresher training in Adaklu for the leaders of 20 community groups. Recent months have seen a large number of group meetings in each of the communities, plus meetings of the Project Group and consultative meetings of the GYDF team with key stakeholders in health and community development. The purpose of the refresher training was now to review the progress made, collect feedback from the group leaders and discuss individual experiences, with a view at ensuring that the achievements will be sustained and build upon after the end of the project duration, i.e. end of 2021.



**Second workshop with group leaders**

The training was opened with a short prayer from Mr. Fiah Danie I, a Daddies Club leader from Amuzudeve. This was followed by an opening speech given by Madam Antoinette, the public health nurse at Adaklu District Health Directorate. Madam Antoinette called upon the participants to continue their valuable training activities in their communities in spite of the Covid-19 pandemic. She stressed that GYDF’s activities compliment Ghana Health Service’s outreach activities across the Adaklu District very well, particularly with respect to communities that are remote and hard to reach through the road network. Madam Antoinette underscored the need for women empowerment as a means to achieve social development and improvement of health outcomes for all Ghanaians. She added that women empowerment activities must involve not only women but also men to achieve the intended results. In a final remark, Madam Antoinette

asked the participants to lead the crusade in their communities to help fight the spread of Covid-19, which must not be allowed to endanger the progress made in term of health, social and economic growth across the globe, but especially in the developing world. Madam Antoinette concluded by calling on GYDF to extend its community engagement programme to other communities across the District.

GYDF Director Mr. Ahiave Jacob then summarised the project experience so far. He stressed how impressed and satisfied he is with the level of commitment and enthusiasm shown by all 10 communities for the project's goals and activities. He reiterated the need to build good relationship with the key actors in the domains of health, women empowerment and community development in order to tap into their expertise and experience for supporting social development across Adaklu. A special emphasis during the discussions was placed on the topic of mental health, an area which the GYDF team wants to focus on in future activities in collaboration with the 10 communities. Representatives from the Ghana Health Service (GHS) and the Department of Social Welfare, Adaklu District attended the refresher training and contributed their expertise on the relevance for mental health for social development. They explained that a wealth of scientific evidence suggests that mental health is very important determinant of quality of life, and it plays a key role in ensuring people's general health and wellbeing. The GHS, the Department of Social Welfare and GYDF therefore see a great need for proper and sound education on the core dimensions of mental health and how it can be supported at individual, family and community level.

A key element of this year's project is the attempt to make use of digital tools and online social networks for supporting the community engagement activities. The aim is to let all group leaders become part of a so-called 'community of interest' (in the form e.g. of a WhatsApp group) which allows them to network with each other, exchange experiences, suggestions, practical hints, photos, etc. The channel should also be used for the GYDF team to distribute multimedia content such as audio and video clips, infographics, etc., to support the group leaders in their activities. To participate, group leaders need access to a personal smartphone. Fortunately, the network of mobile provider Vodafone covers most of Adaklu, and charges for sending Whatsapp messages and other data are modest. An earlier investigation had shown, however, that most group leaders do not own a smartphone yet. To be able to kick-start the digital networking activities nevertheless, HITA agreed to provide additional funding for 20 inexpensive smartphones, which were then procured by GYDF from a retailer in Accra.

At the workshop, each group leader was presented with a smartphone, on which Whatsapp and Facebook had been installed by GYDF beforehand. SIM cards were handed out and registered by a Vodafone representative who had been asked to attend. Some mobile credit, funded from the project budget, was provided as well. The GYDF team then gave an introduction into how to use the device and, in particular, the Whatsapp application. A Whatsapp group was set up on the spot through which communication with the full group will take place in the future. The workshop organisers made sure that before the end of the event, each participant fully understood how to operate the smartphone and take part in the discussion via Whatsapp.



**Group leaders were equipped with a smartphone for networking**

## Follow-up to the workshop

In the days of the workshop, all group leaders were contacted through the Whatsapp Group to organise the final activities in 2021, namely a visit of the GYDF team in each of the communities. The opportunity was used to collect feedback on the outcomes of the project from key individuals who did not take part in the workshop, namely community elders, and make recording for a video to be used for dissemination purposes. The video will shortly be uploaded to the GYDF and HITA websites as well as YouTube and other appropriate online platforms.

A meeting was also arranged and conducted with four group leaders who were not able to attend the workshop, at which they discussed the project experience and were equipped with smartphones as well.

## Collection of mobile phones

In order to prepare for a continuous supply of mobile phones for use in the context of the activities of the Daddy's Clubs and Mother Support Groups, HITA started collecting used but functional devices in Germany for shipment to GYDF and distribution to group leaders.

  
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### Ausrangierte Smartphones gesucht!

Sammelaktion September 2021  
im Rahmen des BMZ-geförderten Kleinprojektes „Digital unterstütztes Community Engagement für Geschlechtergerechtigkeit und soziale Entwicklung“, Adaklu, Ghana

**Warum?**

Der Distrikt Adaklu ist einer der ärmsten Regionen Ghanas und weist erhebliche Entwicklungsrückstände auf, wie sich z.B. an der hohen **Mütter- und Neugeborenen-Sterblichkeit** sowie der Zahl der **Teenagerschwangerschaften** zeigt. Vor diesem Hintergrund konzentriert sich ein von dem deutschen gemeinnützigen Verein HITA e.V. und der ghanaischen NGO **Grow Your Dream Foundation (GYDF)** initiiertes Projekt auf **Geschlechtergerechtigkeit** und ihre Rolle für die **soziale Entwicklung**. Der Fokus liegt hierbei darauf, den weiblichen Teil der Bevölkerung eine größere Rolle bei Entscheidungsprozessen zu verschaffen, Aufklärungsarbeit zu Fragen der „sexuellen und reproduktiven Gesundheit und Rechte“ zu leisten und Mädchen eine gleichwertige Schulausbildung zukommen zu lassen. Wie umfangreiche Forschungsergebnisse aus den letzten Jahren bewiesen haben, stellt die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter einen **hocheffektiven Schlüssel zur Armutsbekämpfung** insbesondere in Entwicklungsländern dar\*. Das Projekt wird von den Schmitz-Stiftungen aus Mitteln des EZ-Kleinprojektfonds des Bundesministeriums für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit (BMZ) gefördert.

Seit Start des Projektes im Frühjahr 2021 wurden bereits viele wichtige Ziele erreicht. Das GYDF-Team hat in 10 Dorfgemeinschaften Adaklus die Gründung von **Daddies' Clubs** und **Mother Support Groups** initiiert, in denen interessierte Dorfansässige über Geschlechterrollen, die Aufgabenverteilung zwischen Männern und Frauen und die Überwindung traditioneller Hindernisse für die volle gesellschaftliche Partizipation von Frauen zu beteiligen. GYDF setzt hierfür eine Reihe von Techniken an, um die Auseinandersetzung mit der Thematik so ansprechend wie möglich zu gestalten und gleichzeitig Hemmungen, die einem offenen Austausch erschweren, abzubauen. Jede Gruppe verfügt über zwei **Leaders**, die mittels einer Train-the-Trainer-Schulung für ihre Rolle fit gemacht wurden.

In der letzten Phase des zunächst einjährigen Projektes sollen die Gruppenleitenden aus den 10 Dörfern nun miteinander vernetzt werden, wozu auf die schon weit verbreitete Nutzung von **Social-Media-Diensten auf Smartphones** zurückgegriffen werden soll. In der Tat ist die Abdeckung mit

schmalbandigen mobilen Datendiensten auch in ländlichen Gebieten Ghana sehr gut – worüber sich das HITA-Team vor Ort vergewissern konnte.

Wie sich im Laufe des Projektes herausstellte, verfügen jedoch die wenigsten der freiwilligen Group Leaders über ein Smartphone, da sie i.d.R. über keine eigene Einkommensquelle verfügen. Aus diesem Grund wollen wir kurzfristig ausgesonderte Smartphones nach Ghana schicken, die an die Betroffenen ausgehändigt werden sollen. Prepaid-SIM-Karten mit einem für den Zweck ausreichenden Guthaben werden aus dem Projektbudget finanziert. Eine Einführung in die Nutzung der Smartphones zum Zweck des Austausches über Social-Media-Gruppen (z.B. WhatsApp Group Chat) wird bei einer zweiten Schulung Ende November / Anfang Dezember gegeben.

**Was benötigen wir?**

Benötigt werden (**weitgehend**) **funktionsfähige Smartphones**, deren **Akku noch recht gut arbeitet (oder aber austauschbar ist)**. Risse im Display und ähnliche Schäden sind kein Problem, solange die Bildschirmanzeige noch gut erkennbar ist. Auch noch verfügbares Zubehör wie Ladekabel, Hülle, etc. wird gerne genommen. Falls auf dem Gerät befindliche Fotos und Daten noch nicht gelöscht worden sind, werden wir dies nachholen. Wir werden die Geräte dann auf sicherem Wege (per FedEx) nach Ghana schicken. Falls Zollgebühren anfallen sollten, werden wir diese übernehmen.

**Wohin sollen die Geräte?**

Bitte schicken Sie die Geräte **vor dem 1. Oktober 2021** an folgende Adresse (Arbeitsadresse des zuständigen HITA-Mitglieds Karsten Gareis):

**Karsten Gareis, c/o empirica GmbH, Oxfordstr. 2, 53111 Bonn.**

Bei Fragen wenden Sie sich bitte an: [karsten.gareis@hita-ev.org](mailto:karsten.gareis@hita-ev.org)

**Wir bedanken uns recht herzlich!**



The activity will be continued in 2022, with the goal to collect a sufficient number of suitable devices before the next trip of the HITA team to Adaklu, preliminary planned for summer 2022.

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### Wrap-up of the project

Starting in late 2021, the project teams of GYDF and HITA jointly wrapped up the administrative management of the project. Moreover, the experience during the 11-month project was discussed in detail, focusing on evaluation of the success of the activities, barriers faced and how most effectively to overcome them, and any other learnings generated. First ideas were generated for a follow-on project to commence in 2022.

In order to give a festive ending to the project activities in the communities of Adaklu, HITA supplied some additional, modest funding for the purchase of Christmas related paraphernalia for distribution among children in 3 communities, see pictures.



## 2 Diversions from the workplan

There has been no change of the workplan for the remaining duration of the project in the reporting period.

### Workplan

Activities	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
I. Set up of project management infrastructure											
II. Community entry, engagement of target groups, set-up of additional Clubs											
III. Preparation of digital content and social media channels											
IV. Training of Club Leaders											
V. Digitally supported operation of Fathers, Mothers, Adolescents Clubs											
VI. Impact analysis, reporting											
VII. Dissemination											