



The way of a container to Tamale

In the spring of 2012, we managed to gather a lot of good effects into being routed through a container to the group in Tamale. The container project is supported by MS. The container arrived in Tamale in the middle of August and the content is being distributed for the benefit of schools, hospital and Youth Home! Among other things, the content of the container was 60

school desks, 118 school chairs, office furniture, a dental clinic, sewing machines, textbooks for high school, musical instruments, a keyboard, panels, medical equipment (beds, mattresses, an incubator, wheelchairs, walkers), 54 computers, 40 flatscreens, lego toys, 9 bicycles and a typewriter. Through the association's large network, many people have worked hard collecting the goods in Denmark. The road to Tamale was not easy. There were many papers to be filled out and many problems to be solved. And last but not least, in Ghana great efforts were made by Abramam gathering signatures from three different ministries in Accra to ensure that the contents of the container came into Ghana avoiding customs duties and taxes

On the 11th September the hospital equipment were handed over at a ceremony. The Hospital Director arrived with a group of his staff. He told that over the years, many whites had been passing by promising equipment and help, but never showing up again. To him this project is obviously different and he was deeply grateful. The next day, the 12th of September, the schools were invited. The Youth Home Cultural Group distributed sets of school furniture and computers to 11 schools in Tamale. It was strongly emphasized by Abramam in his speech, that the computers were intended for teaching children in the classrooms of



the schools and not supposed to end up in the school offices. This statement caused great rejoicing. He added that if this was a success, in the future more computers might come to Tamale from Denmark.

All in all it has been a great success. We shall work on sending another container in the future. If you want to read the news about the event in Tamale, you can go to these links:

<http://www.ghananewsagency.org/details/Health/Tamale-Teaching-Hospital-receives-dental-surgical-equipment/?ci=1&ai=49039>

<http://zaaradio.com/index.php/home/news/821-cultural-youth-group-donates-medical-equipment-to-tth>

Informationwork in Denmark

We have started a process to update and develop YHCGs website. The work will continue. Bente Højer and Lise Drewes are responsible.

Ian Brodersen has made a nice leaflet about the association, which we use for recruiting new members.

Sponsorships for education and training

When the association started in 2011, Annemarie Grüner and Lise Drewes were responsible for a total of 11 sponsorships, all continuously running. This year, we succeeded in establishing two more. It is a great joy to follow these children and young people, and experience the opportunities they get in their lives by going to school and getting an education. One of the sponsorchildren will graduate from highschool this autumn and has a dream of becoming a journalist.

Development of partnership projects

In May, Abramam was on a visit to Denmark. The purpose was to meet with partners in Denmark and discuss future projects. Meetings were held with the Ministry of Culture, Egedal School of Music, Ranum School, IPC in Helsingør and Roskilde University. Boardmembers of the association participated in several of these meetings.

Future activities of the association

Egedal Music School's project together with YHCG has been extended for an additional year. Several danish members participating in this project will travel to Tamale in October. We write more about their trip in the next newsletter.

It is further more planned, that members of the group will come to Denmark in May and June 2013 to work with Egedal Music School, and to visit the association too. We are looking very much forward.

Economy

Recently there have been expenses by sending the container. We have paid for Abramam's trip to Accra working with the papers. And there was payment of the press for covering the presentaitonceremony of the container on 11 and 12 September 2012.

New members - NB NB !

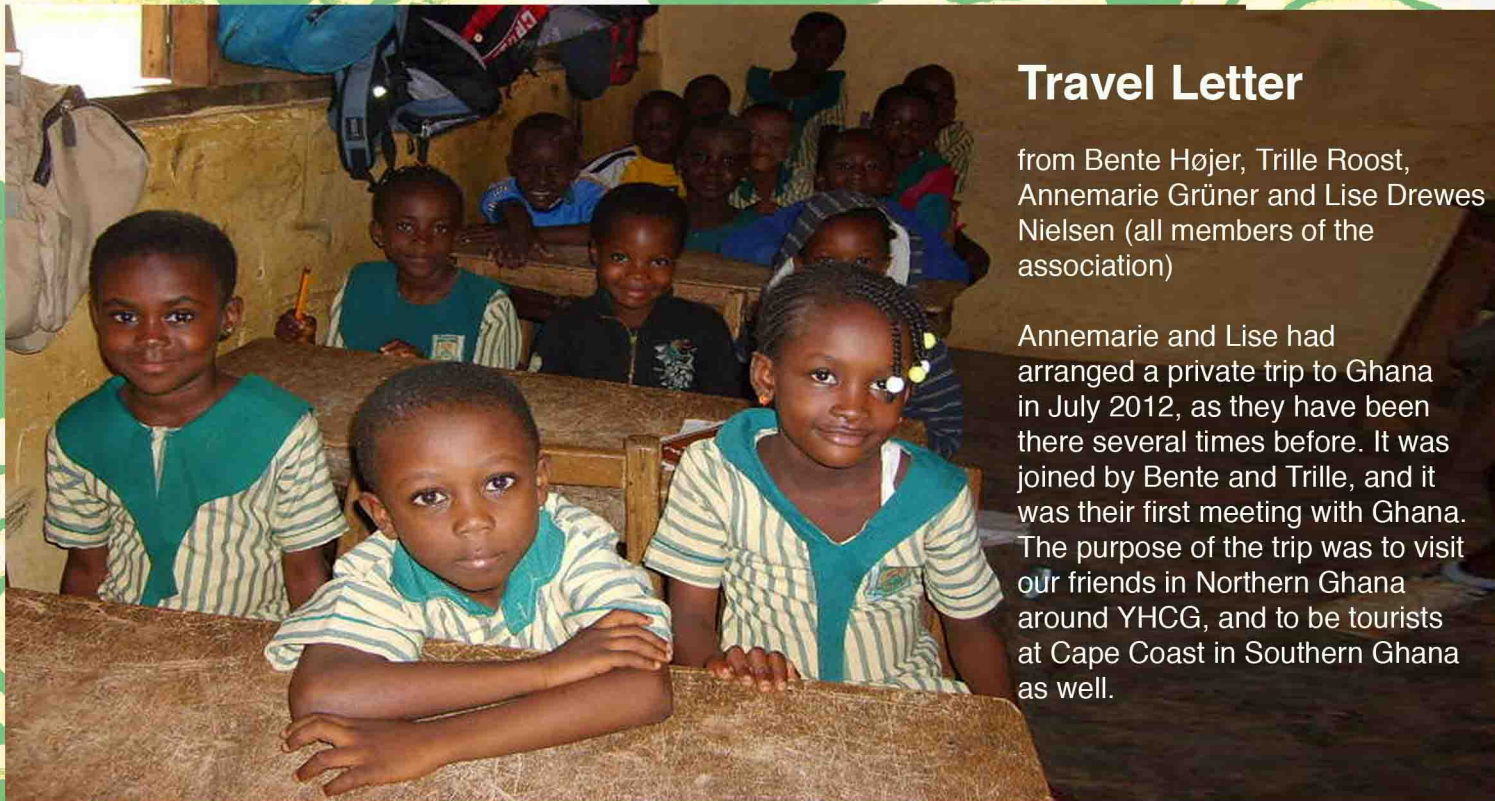
We are at the moment 35 members, which is a great progress in one year. We would very much like to be at least 50 members as soon as possible, as it is a prerequisite for applying for new relevant projects through the Project Consultancy.

Do you know any, do you have family or friends who would like to support the work of the association for the benefit of Youth Home Cultural Group??? Ask them to join, more people are needed.

Lunga - The Talking drum

Lunga, the name of this newsletter, is the dagbani word for the talking drum.

The talking drum is the drum that communicates - calls out messages and proverbs, and is giving all the signals in the traditional music and dance of the dagombas.



Travel Letter

from Bente Højer, Trille Roost, Annemarie Grüner and Lise Drewes Nielsen (all members of the association)

Annemarie and Lise had arranged a private trip to Ghana in July 2012, as they have been there several times before. It was joined by Bente and Trille, and it was their first meeting with Ghana. The purpose of the trip was to visit our friends in Northern Ghana around YHCG, and to be tourists at Cape Coast in Southern Ghana as well.

On the first day in Accra, we had planned a trip to the danish plantation Frederiksgave where the governor's main building has been restored by the Danish National Museum. Our plans, however, were cancelled. Instead we rushed to the port of Tema to adress what was happening to the container, and to obtain the necessary signatures for an 'Exemption Letter' that was necessary to avoid taxation and delays of the container on its way to Tamale. We all attended a meeting at the logistics company to help Abramman with this: The staff who was responsible for the container had without further notice gone on holiday. Unfortunately we did not get all the needed information. This meant that Abramman had to rush back to Accra, while we could continue our abbreviated trip. We just managed a visit to Aburi Garden and the woodcutters village in Aburi before we returned to Accra.

In Tamale we had a busy schedule: We visited the group and joined their training, watched them performing at a big wedding, saw them teaching children drumming and dancing at a school, visited Faiza's new sewingworkshop. We arranged two meetings with the group; one about their stay in Denmark and one about our joint activities in Ghana / Denmark. We participated in a conference on a new youth policy: National Youth Policy of Ghana,

We were interviewed for TV, watched a ceremony where a children's choir, who trains at Youth Home were given their certificates, we visited a chief of villages, we had a meeting at Art Center's director in Tamale, we went to Church, we were with Abramman's wife Awulatu on the market and we had several evenings at home with Abramman's family for dinner and socialized with his children and nephews.

(continues)



It was an incredibly intense, positive and rewarding week. We were warmly received everywhere, and it was especially touching to see again, the teammembers who have visited us in Denmark. At one meeting with them, we asked what the trip to Denmark and their education as a music teacher in the project with Egedal Music School have meant to them. They have so many positive memories of their trip to Denmark, and they often talk together about it. Sometimes they even try to speak Danish with each other and they are actually able to say a lot of Danish words. Here are some cues as to what they have learned:

'I have learned to teach in new ways'

'I have become conscious of what I do when I teach'

'I have been given new tools to teach'

'I never thought I'd be able to teach, but now I am!'

'I have learned to accept strangers when I saw how I was received in Denmark'

'I have learned how to teach Danish children when they're running in all directions'

'It was great to be so overwhelmingly received by the children - they even wanted our autographs!'



Besides the professional learning they had achieved, they expressed how they had developed as persons in many different ways in their meeting with a foreign culture. They were kindly received and got great recognition for who they are and their culture. We could also assure them, that they had lived up to all expectations in the best way, both professionally and socially. A groupmember ended the talk with these words: 'Denmark has meant so much to me that I cannot put it into words.'

After an intense week in Tamale, we went to Cape Coast, where we stayed at the lovely Anomabo Beach Resort. Abramam and Gausu (our driver) were with us. We had some glorious days of relaxation and visits to the major slaveforts in Cape Coast and Elmina. Two evenings we experienced training and performances by a local drum- and dancegroup, friends of Abramam. At this occasion, he taught them some dances from Northern Ghana. Anomabo Beach Resort is highly recommended; good food, nice service, lovely rooms, great security and in a fantastic location with coconut palms just off the beach.



My first trip to Ghana - but not my last!

Posted by Bente Højer

I have travelled a lot in my life - been to many countries, met many people, but I have never met a population - met people with so much warm-heartedness as in Tamale.

How?

I am in Tamale on my own - or with my 'so-called white travelling companions'. We are virtually the only foreigners in town. Everywhere I meet people they greet me : 'You are welcome'.

... And I feel welcome.

This applies both to the Youth Home Cultural Group - young lovely drummers and dancers, and to Abramán's family. It applies at a visit with a chief and the tribal elders - and at the Catholic Church. Everybody meet us with interest and share with us what is important to them in relation to 'their Ghana'.

Much has impressed me and could be explored: How can it be possible that we in Ghana experience Muslims and Christians living peacefully and close to one another? Why has Abramán (as a muslim) no hesitation in saying 'yes' to a query from a Christian teacher when she asked if she could use YHCG's facilities for the education of her students?

How can they have so much laughter and joy when they are struggling so hard for the daily food? I take many impressions with me.

Women dressed in their magnificent, coloured dresses. Women carrying tubs of laundry on their heads and babies in a cloth on the back.

They exude a dignity.
Pictures that I today carry with me, and impressions I would like to explore- I must visit Ghana again. Definitely!

