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Engage Globally
2021 Annual
Report
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**SUPPORTING COMMUNITY-LED
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**



FROM THE DIRECTOR

2021 brought growth and transition for Engage Globally. In rural Northern Ghana, schools reopened after Covid closures and our community partner, Capacity Rural International (CRI), received many requests from families about enrolling their children in our programs. We now have over 400 students attending our early childhood learning centers, like four-year old Kawusada, who is pictured on the cover on her first day of kindergarten.

As enrollment has grown, we have worked to enhance the school curriculum with environmental education in our large school gardens, new cultural activities, and expansion of our soccer program. We have also hired several graduates of our scholarship program as teachers, soccer coaches, and garden caretakers. Next year, we plan to build a third early childhood learning center, Tahama (meaning hope), for two hundred new students.

Our scholarship program for students in grades 3 to 12 has also grown and we are especially excited to have had ten students complete high school this year, even after their schools were closed for almost a year. Requests to join the vocational training program have risen rapidly as more trainees share their experiences and obtain jobs. In 2021, we added new business partners and programs in weaving, computer technology, and tiling. Thirty students participated this year and we anticipate adding at least 15 more trainees in 2022. This program has a significant impact on both community economic growth and women's empowerment.

In the U.S. we transitioned Engage from Washington, D.C. to North Carolina and focused on organizational growth and sustainability. We are grateful to our interns for all of their help in expanding our work on equity, diversity and inclusion, community outreach, and sustainability education. We are excited to welcome new Board members and appreciate their leadership and advocacy. And, we are especially grateful to all of our supporters who make our work possible. We look forward to engaging with you in 2022.

Thank you!

Heather

Heather Heckel, Executive Director, engage@engageglobally.org



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Our two early childhood learning centers in rural Northern Ghana currently enroll 400 children, ages 3 to 9, from pre-K to third grade. Students are taught using a bilingual, place-based curriculum that includes environmental education. Seven teachers and four support staff, who all come from our partner communities, collaborate to teach early childhood academic skills and cultural appreciation.

To accommodate the large number of students, classes meet in the morning or afternoon and come together at lunch. Two teachers are currently using outdoor classrooms, which we hope to replace through construction in 2022.

Each student in this program receives:

- A uniform sewn by vocational program graduates
- A pair of shoes
- A daily school lunch to help reduce malnutrition
- Learning materials including paper, pens, and crayons

Our early childhood centers use rainwater catchment to provide clean water for cooking and to teach hand washing. Both centers have large school gardens and tree planting projects, which are integrated into the curriculum. The buildings are also utilized for community activities including girls and boys soccer teams, English language learning, and Parent Teacher Association meetings.

In 2022, we hope to:

- Replace outdoor classrooms with new buildings
- Construct a new school for 200 more students
- Paint and repair both learning centers
- Add solar power
- Create lending libraries



Asana shares that she likes learning at school because, "I would like to become a nurse."



Alhassan enjoys, "learning and writing" in school.



SCHOOL LUNCHES

Our early childhood centers provide school lunches to improve nutrition. School food programs also increase attendance. With 400 students, our partners are serving over 80,000 lunches a year. CRI employs four mothers to prepare lunches for the two schools. Typically students are served rice with beans or peanut sauce.

The high number of students, continued Covid impacts on food prices and availability, and changing currency value in Ghana, have raised the costs of this program. We have offset some of the expenses and diversified ingredients through planting and harvesting in two large school gardens.

Unfortunately, rising temperatures, lower rainfalls, and soil health decline have also led to lower annual crop production in our partner communities. Thus, providing school lunches is even more important to help reduce malnutrition in children under age five.



SCHOOL GARDENS



Four students collecting lettuce from the garden.

For the second year, community members, CRI staff, and students planted tomatoes, cucumbers, garden egg (eggplant), rice, corn, and lettuce in two large (approximately 1.3 acre) school gardens.

Planting and raising these foods offers an outdoor environmental education opportunity. Most families in our partner community are subsistence farmers, so learning how to farm sustainably is an important skill. Harvested food is used for our school lunch program.

Impacts:

- Outdoor environmental and agricultural education for 400 youth, ages three to nine, in two early childhood learning centers
- Annual harvesting of rice, corn, and vegetables to increase nutritional diversity in our school lunch program
- Engagement of community members in plowing and maintaining the garden
- Employment of a youth scholarship program graduate as a garden caretaker
- Demonstration of sustainable and organic farming techniques



Teacher showing student how to plant rice.



SOCCER PROGRAM

Our early childhood learning centers have boys and girls soccer teams that meet three days per week, after-school. The soccer coaches, who are both graduates of our scholarship program, also help during the school day with physical education.

"What I like about coaching football is that it is helping me and the kids because they are learning, and at the same time it is good exercise for us."

- Coach Ayisha

"It is a great achievement for my football career to be a player as well as a coach and I am very happy for this opportunity.

And I hope this job will help me and my family, and help the kids to also be successful players."

- Coach Yussif



Girls after-school soccer team.



Fatima plays on the girl's soccer team.

Program Components:

- Over 30 players are coached in two teams, three afternoons per week, at our early childhood education centers
- Players learn teamwork and increase physical fitness
- Coaches assist teachers during the school day with physical fitness activities and soccer games
- The community often comes out to watch games on Saturdays



YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

2021 Enrollment

Total participants	50
Primary students in private schools	15
JHS students in private schools	21
SHS students in boarding schools	14
Completed high school in 2021	10
Transitioned to vocational training	5
New students joining in 2022	16



Mariam, a youth scholarship student.

Students receive a variety of support including:

- School, testing, and PTA fees
- Textbooks and other learning supplies
- School uniforms and a pair of shoes
- A bicycle for students in grades three to eight, as schools are located several kilometers away
- Bicycle maintenance and repair provided by a vocational program graduate
- Residential supplies and transportation funding for senior high schools
- Mentoring and meetings with families
- Annual meetings with teachers or school directors and collection of learning progress evaluations

In our partner communities, public primary schools face funding and teacher shortages and there are no public junior high schools within biking distance. Our youth scholarship program helps students continue their education beyond second grade. Students join the program if their test scores are high enough for entrance to local private schools. Each participant receives school fees, testing expenses, uniforms, books and school supplies, and a bicycle. Our partners work closely with the private schools, families, and students to ensure regular attendance and academic progress.

Older youth, who qualify for high school through Ghanaian entrance exams, receive school and residential supplies and transportation funding. Several graduates of our scholarship program have been hired as teachers and project managers.



A student being interviewed by Suale, a scholarship program graduate and new CRI team member.



VOCATIONAL TRAINING



A vocational student learning hair design.

Vocational training offers opportunities for older youth who are not able to pursue traditional schooling. In 2021, trainees studied:

- sewing
- weaving
- Batik tie-dye (traditional)
- beautician skills
- midwifery
- hairdressing
- motorbike repair
- carpentry
- welding
- tiling
- aluminum skills
- construction
- computer skills
- furniture making

Our program provides training fees, transportation and food stipends, and purchases required equipment for each job. When they graduate, participants are often hired by the supervisors that trained them. Some graduates request a start-up grant to open their own local business. The vocational training program provides cash incomes in communities where most people are subsistence farmers. For women, this can significantly widen their life choices and provide funding for them to support their children's education. These opportunities have also reduced migration to urban centers, where young people can face significant challenges.

2021 Vocational Training Program Enrollment:

Women	18
Men	14
Total	32

Eight new female trainees will join the program in 2022, as we begin implementing a generous grant from the JustPax Fund to support women's economic development and vocational training in environmental careers.



Tia began as a student in our scholarship program. He later switched to vocational training to learn the traditional art of smock making. In 2021, he completed his training and, with a grant, opened his own small business in the community where he was born. He now makes smocks for traditional ceremonies for his community.



WOMEN & AGRICULTURE

CRI staff helped to organize, and now work closely with, a women's agriculture group. This group includes over 80 women, from our six partner villages, who meet to discuss and select their priorities. Engage Globally supports their efforts with funding and capacity building and seeks their consultative advice in implementation of projects.

Pilot Agriculture Project:

In 2021, the women's group selected five women to pilot an agricultural enhancement project. The women were provided with a rented tractor to plough their land, seeds, and other supplies. They were also given introductory training on sustainable farming of garden vegetables. With these additional inputs and support, the women are expanding the land that they farm and diversifying their crops. If the project successfully increases yield and nutritional diversity then we will involve more women in 2022. We also plan to increase the training classes for women farmers and to provide grants for women who are interested in processing peanuts and shea nuts into butters that can be sold in local markets.



Woman carrying agricultural supplies.

King Moto Impact:

Farms are located approximately three kilometers from the village and women must carry most of the harvested food themselves, as pictured above right. Unfortunately, a great deal of food is lost to rotting and infestation before it can be harvested and brought to home storage areas.

To help address this challenge, the women's group requested that we purchase King Motos so that they would have a motorized method for transporting goods more quickly and safely. We have purchased two Motos that are being used to transport water and supplies to farms and harvested food from farms to the communities.



Purchasing a King Moto for the women's group.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

CELEBRATING BLACK ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS BLACK HISTORY MONTH



"I'm passionate about creating a stronger, more just and sustainable food system because I think that so many broad issues of social justice interact with the food system."

CHRISTOPHER BRADSHAW
Founder & Executive Director of
Dreaming Out Loud



engageglobally.org

Celebrating Black History Month with environmental leaders.

Resource Materials

With the help of our interns, Engage Globally is creating resource materials on the intersections of environmental conservation and equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are sharing social media posts like the examples on this page. And, we are developing resource guides including a list of U.S. based organizations who focus on environmental inclusion and a list of environmental leaders from under-represented communities. These materials are designed for educators, students, and communities seeking to learn more and can be downloaded from: <https://www.engageglobally.org/environmental-education.html>

Values and Goals

Engage Globally continues to pursue EDI goals within our organization, in our educational materials, and in our work in rural Northern Ghana. Our commitment to inclusive communities includes pursuing gender equity in all of our programs, sharing voices from under-represented communities, and striving to be diverse and inclusive in our organizational community including our staff, Boards, and intern programs. In 2022, we will be focusing on sharing more voices from our partner communities in Ghana, as well as producing more educational guides. You can learn more at: <https://www.engageglobally.org/inclusive-communities.html>

AS HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH COMES TO A CLOSE, CHECK OUT THESE WONDERFUL LATINX ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ON INSTAGRAM:



@CORAZONLATINOINC

@GREEN LATINOS



@LATINOOUTDOORS

@LATINXHIKERS



@VOCESVERDES



engageglobally.org

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month by highlighting environmental organizations and leaders.



Finance Report 2021

SUMMARY

Individual donations	\$44,978
Grants and corporate matches	\$23,223
Personal and family foundation and legacy donations	\$45,732
Ghana programs	(\$79,456)
Organizational expenses	(\$12,199)
Income carried over to 2022	\$22,278

IN APPRECIATION:

Engage Globally is grateful to our many supporters. We would especially like to thank the following for their help in 2021:

- The JustPax Fund
- Monthly donors whose contributions help fund our youth scholarship program
- The 2021 Engage Globally Board of Directors: Kaila Drayton, Emily Kouterick, Lauren Kruglinski, Aleah Myers, Gilbert Ruiz, and Kara VanderKamp
- Rachel Leen for her communications assistance and help creating this report
- Our wonderful 2021 interns!

100%

Of 2021 individual contributions were used for programs in Ghana

With gratitude to Lesley Gerolde

In 2021, Engage Globally received a generous legacy donation from Lesley Gerolde. Lesley was warm, generous, and fun, and she loved building communities of friends everywhere she lived and traveled. She was passionate about animals, wildlife conservation, gardening, and women's issues. Her contribution supported our new women's agriculture program, school gardens, and our 2021 operating expenses.



LOOKING FOWARD TO 2022

TAHAMA (HOPE) LEARNING CENTER

Enrollment for Engage Globally's early childhood learning centers in rural Northern Ghana has grown rapidly. To teach more students, we will begin building a new, environmental education themed, learning center for 200 children in early 2022. The center will be named Tahama, which means hope in Dagbani.



Tahama will be modeled on our Kulaa Early Childhood Learning Center.

The Tahama Learning Center will include:

- Four large classrooms
- A library (the first in the communities)
- A kitchen
- An office with computers
- Solar power
- Hand washing stations

Tahama will feature outdoor learning:

- Large organic garden for environmental education and the school lunch program
- Fruit and native tree planting
- Rainwater catchment systems
- Play area with swings and a soccer field



In 2021, CRI teachers completed a computer training course in preparation for using computers in the early childhood learning center classrooms.

Community involvement:

- The community will form a Parent Teacher Association to advise teachers and staff
- Outdoor gardens, soccer fields, and playgrounds will be open to the community
- Solar power will enable evening youth and adult education programs, including English language tutoring and women's public health classes
- Volunteers will help with school construction and annual planting of school gardens





HOW YOU Can Help

- Share Engage Globally's work with others who are interested in global sustainable development, education, women's empowerment, and environmental conservation.
- Are you involved with a business or community group that might be interested in learning more about our projects? If so, please email us anytime.
- Invite an Engage Globally team member to speak with your group or organization about environmental conservation and/or sustainable development.
- Follow us and like and share our social media posts with others.
- 'Donate your birthday' to Engage Globally.
- We have a variety of volunteer opportunities including virtual internships, professional needs, and board participation.
- Share your suggestions about how we can better engage with our supporters!

Contact information

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