

## «Chance for Children» TVET Agency in Ghana 15<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Why a dual TVET institution for adolescents for «Chance for Children»?  
(TVET: dual Technical Vocational Education and Training)

We – SITECO and «Chance for Children» – are convinced that an investment in dual vocational training for young people in emerging and developing countries is a highly effective way of promoting people and having an impact on the entire economy.

«Chance for Children» intends to enable a solid education for street-connected adolescents who emanate from poverty and/or internal migration and who are faced with family problems, in order to offer them a solid basis for “good life”. There are approx. 90’000 street children in Accra. The «Chance for Children» institution has existed for 21 years; it essentially provides an infrastructure for street-connected children and adolescents between 6 and 20 years of age by way of a base (drop-in centres and boarding houses). «Chance for Children» provides repatriation to state schools and families. Orphans – and there are many – find a home in the institution. «Chance for Children» had been working with the Zurich University of Teacher Education (PHZH) for years by providing internships for prospective teachers. As of 2021 there are 60 trained people who work in the «Chance for Children» institution in Accra, in Kumasi and in Tamale. [www.chance-for-children.org](http://www.chance-for-children.org)

The founder and director of «Chance for Children», Daniela Rüdüsüli Sodjah, approached Heinrich Strebel (Rotary Club Zurich Turicum, SITECO) in June 2020 with the request to examine the possibilities of dual TVET for adolescents of «Chance for Children», also with a view to establishing an institution for this purpose.

The concept was presented to the «Chance for Children» Foundation Board in Zurich in August 2020, which prompted the project planning phase in September 2020. The implementation plans were approved in March 2021, and pilot course 001 commenced on May 7, 2021. A rapid implementation was achieved because at times, the project team could work “full-time”.

At the beginning of the TVET project for «Chance for Children», the project team has been faced with numerous difficulties, as the educational landscape in Ghana has its own characteristics.

### TVET in Ghana

The TVET system in Ghana can be roughly divided into two parts. Of these, 10% are counted under «formal TVET», which can be better explained with institution-based and state-bureaucratic integration, whereas 90% are viewed as «informal TVET». This ad hoc method has been practiced for centuries: the adolescent hires a skilled person in a specific occupation and spends most of his time observing and imitating, thus gaining experience. «Informal TVET», surprisingly, has been ever more successful in Ghana than «formal TVET».

**The «formal TVET»** is state based, expensive for adolescents and thereby not accessible to all groups of young people. The concept to a large extent copies that of universities.

The adolescents are intellectually unable to cope with the chaos of theory and/or the teaching staff, the latter of whom are only academically educated and who never worked in a workshop or in

production. In consequence of which the teachers convey a distant, ill-understood world of production in a spiritualized way: it does not produce anything tangible.

**The «informal TVET»** represents the free market where people work and produce in a practical way. This type of TVET is inexpensive for state and parents. It is also available for adolescents from the precariat, but the learning processes are not structured, whilst the adolescents are being exploited at times. The qualification of the trainee ends just below the qualification of a “master”. After all, the adolescent is working in a daily production process, and he has therefore entered the business world. A third way is being practiced in the Don Bosco schools, which are actual «workshop schools»: education (focus on theory) in the morning and training (focus on practical learning and production) in workshops in the afternoon. This is a good model, yet it needs constant cash inflow from outside.

**The «Chance for Children TVET Agency» approach is:**  
**invent a suitable system,**  
**use existing resources,**  
**concentrate resources,**  
**structure resources,**  
**supplement resources.**

The Swiss dual TVET system was our model, which we reduced to the necessary elements that are tangible in Ghana. The number of apprentices at «Chance for Children» is too small for a puristic dual TVET school. To run a proper TVET school or a “teaching factory” simply ties up too many forces from the core processes of the organization, and additionally it narrows the adolescents’ perspective to just a few professions. That is why the Don Bosco model could not be taken into consideration. The cooperation with existing institutions failed because of the huge distances prevailing in the country, since obviously the special needs for looking after the street-connected adolescents could not be met.

#### **The «Chance for Children TVET Agency» (TVET - Technical Vocational Education and Training)**

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|---|--|
| - is a Competence and Documentation Center for TVET   | Aim: <b>Knowledge &amp; Public Relations</b> |
| - supports and trains the instructors in workshops “Train the Trainer”  | Aim: <b>Professionalism</b>                  |
| - supports the trainees with education and advice   | Aim: <b>Passion</b>                          |
| - constitutes the institution for quality in TVET: standards, structures  | Aim: <b>Performance</b>                      |
| - creates a future for adolescents and institutions   | Aim: <b>Perspectives</b>                     |
| - In a second phase, the «Chance for Children TVET Agency» is building “a Business Club” consisting of the “Masters” providing them a platform and a social position. |  |

**Our claim: Profession – Passion – Performance – Perspective**

## **How do you get the message across in Ghana for ambitious goals, such as dual Vocational Education?**

In Ghana everyone understands what makes a good football team. They also understand how to become an “African Champion”. Exactly this is our focus:

### **The methodical principles and the spirit in the «Chance for Children TVET Agency»:**

**A good football team requires:  
a captain, a trainer, a coach, motivated players**

The principles are practiced in the «Train the Trainer» workshops, while the apprentices are being instructed how to be competent in “Soft Skills” such as reflection, methodology, teamwork, communication, punctuality, reliability, initiative, responsibility. These are the core competencies that the organization CFC has successfully cultivated for many years. The «Action Skills» correspond to what is postulated in the Swiss curricula for TVET.

The trainees keep a personal «LogBook». Thinking while working and reflecting on what has been achieved and what goals have been set at work; this is new territory for many young people.

### **The project goals of the «CFC TVET Agency» Ghana**

**Answers to the economic and professional problems of adolescents**

**Support of the trainees through meaningful (= motivating) design of the curriculum**

**Support for “Masters” in “work-based education” and in “Train the Trainer” workshops**

**New quality in TVET in Ghana due to the dual track model**

**«Business Club» for the “Masters” and the TVET Agency**

**Promotion and development of the “dual TVET” concept by the TVET Agency**

**Cooperation with national and international sponsors of the TVET training concept**

The dual TVET model is new for Ghana, in that the companies, which mostly have 1-5 employees, take care of the training. Also new is the creation of a connection between knowledge and skills (education and training), the required skills, knowledge, attitude and habits.

## **Current Status and Outlook**

The pilot project is planned for the following professions:

1. Construction, 2. Hospitality, 3. Beauty & Fashion, 4. Mobility and Transportation.

**On May 7, 2021, the «CFC TVET Agency» pilot project was formally opened in Hebron/Accra.**

Professions:

Construction (+)            2 (1 Plumbing, 1Welding)

Catering, restaurant:    1

Beauty & Fashion:        2

Dressmaking:              3

Expansion planning for 2022: 16-20 participants        Consider opening the programs for outsiders

2023/24: 30-60 participants

additional professions: Mobility, Maintenance (if demand)

### **The next steps for pilot phase 2021-2022:**

- Standardize tools of support for apprentices
- Compare and optimize curricula with the masters. The expansion and implementation take place in cooperation with the "Masters". Important: "Invented in Ghana".
- Incorporate «CFC TVET Agency» Kumasi Branch and Tamale Branch in the local centres.
- Develop standards, establish cooperation.

From 2022:

- Business Club
- Alumni Club
- Establishing further professional categories

New requirements foreseen in the years ahead:

Digitalization, Green Economy, Entrepreneurship

### **Thanks to the project developers at «Chance for Children»:**

The project is complex. There exist approximately 180 items behind the term "Action Skills". «Chance for Children» transferred them from the experience kit to the TVET project. In addition to the «Dual Track Model», this part constitutes a novelty in TVET in Ghana.

It provides the future potential, namely the design of individual learning and life paths based on knowledge and skills, vocational training as likewise human education. Or to put it in African terminology:

*«It takes an entire village to raise a child».*

As the Project Advisor, I am pleased that SITECO was able to effectively contribute its experience and knowledge to this Project. I continue to enjoy my work because I rarely had the impression that a project was so tailor-made to the needs of adolescents in Ghana. The Project has a lot of potential, offering joy, hope and fulfilment. It goes without saying that there will also be individual difficulties to be faced, namely and simply the imponderables of life.

Great many thanks go to the Project Team for their courage and drive: Laura Müller, Daniela Rüdüsüli Sodjah, Francis Anipah, all from «Chance for Children», Markus Krattiger, Board Member «Chance for Children», and to my competent interlocutors of the SITECO Board.

*Heinrich Strebel, Prof. Dr., Secretary General and Project Manager Ghana at SITECO Zurich/ 15/05/21*