



## **Business Plan 2014 to 2017**

V7 (November 2015)



Trustees meeting with scholarship students (Ann Bannister, FoW 2009)

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## Background

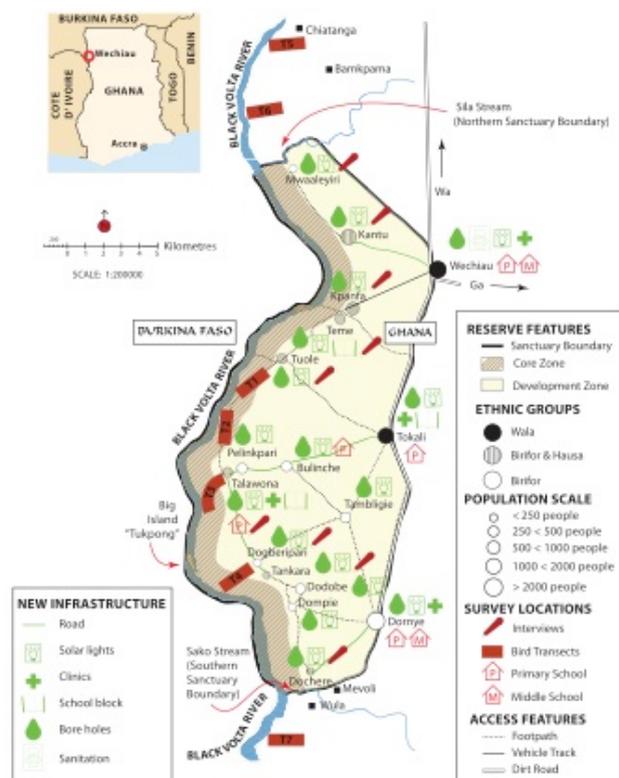


(R.Y.Abudulai Issahaku, WCHS)

The Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS) is situated in the Upper West Region of Ghana and is an area of chronic poverty. The WCHS was established in 1998 and is managed by a board of traditional leaders and chiefs and representatives from the 17 local communities with minimal external government involvement. The sanctuary is an example of a community based natural resource management model, which has the dual goal of biodiversity

protection and poverty alleviation.<sup>1</sup> Savannah Fruits Company also operates within the Wechiau Community Sanctuary area by supporting the trade of organic shea butter from shea nuts collected by local women.

The 'local community' consists of approximately 720 dwellings housing 10,268 people (including 5620 children) in 17 communities. These communities comprise four ethnic groups, each with distinct languages: Wala (or Wechegee), Birifor (or Lobi), Hausa and Dagaabe. The Wala settled in the area in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and have customary rights to the land whereas the other three ethnic groups do not. Islam and Traditional African religion are the predominant belief systems, with a smaller number of Christians. The Wala are mainly Muslim or follow Traditional African religion, whilst the Birifor are mainly followers of Animism or are Christians.



Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary map  
(Donna J. Sheppard, Calgary Zoo)

Individuals from the UK who visited the sanctuary in 2002 as Earthwatch volunteers set up the Friends of Wechiau Group and established with the Sanctuary Management Board the development of an education programme to support the local community. The main aim of the

<sup>1</sup> [Ten years of adaptive community-governed conservation: evaluating biodiversity protection and poverty alleviation in a West African hippopotamus reserve](#); Donna J. Sheppard, Axel Moehrensclager, Jana M. McPherson, and John J. Mason, *Environmental Conservation* 37(3):270–282 © Foundation for Environmental Conservation 2010  
[Perceived Benefits and Sacrifices of a Community Resource Management Area in Ghana](#); Brianne Labute, Ashley Coulter, Llanavis Davies, Devon Clark, Cody Harman, Shannon West, Research report Department of Recreation and Tourism Management at Vancouver Island University

education programme is to provide scholarships to the more able students (termed ‘brilliant and needy’ by the local community leaders) who would not be able to continue their education or training without support. These students are ‘bound’ to contribute to the sanctuary on completion of their studies by undertaking 12 months community voluntary work. This combines the need for conservation of the local area with the benefit of individuals who live there.

## Governance

The Friends of Wechiau Group (FoW) is an unincorporated membership organisation registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

The FoW objects are as follows:

*“The advancement of education of people resident within the boundaries of the Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary, Ghana, or surrounding areas by the provision of educational materials, funding of teachers and supplies and at the discretion of the trustees the provision of scholarships for individuals to extend their education and training.”*

The Friends of Wechiau Group has a partnership agreement with the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Management Board and the Savannah Fruits Company (SFC) for the management, administration and monitoring of the education programme. SFC disburses the FoW funds locally and provides an independent monitoring role.

A local based education committee comprising of representatives of members of the Sanctuary Management Board, SFC, schools, former scholarship students and representatives of the local community selects the scholarship students and the school to benefit from school supplies based on the funding agreed annually with FoW.

A local administrator of the scholarship programme has agreed terms of reference reviewed annually.

## Vision

A fully educated population within the boundaries of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary.

## Objectives of Friends of Wechiau

- To raise funds for the provision an education scholarship programme to enable young people to attend senior high, tertiary education and any other education and training provision agreed jointly by the Friends of Wechiau Group and the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB)
- To raise funds for the provision of primary school supplies to improve the range of educational materials available to students in local schools
- To promote conservation with students in the scholarship programme by requiring them to do volunteer work within the sanctuary area for 12 months after completion of their study (for example acting as tour guides or as teachers)
- To promote self sufficiency of the Sanctuary Management Board to administer the scholarship programme locally through the provision of an honorarium for the sanctuary manager.

## Outcomes from FoW funding provision

Investment in education will provide benefits for (a) the sanctuary, (b) young people, and (c) the community.

The sanctuary will benefit from

- a wider group of educated young people contributing to the sanctuary's work
- the development of potential new community leaders from amongst the scholarship students who will be committed to community conservation.

Young people will benefit from

- advancement of their education through attending schools and colleges that would not be possible without additional funding
- an awareness of the importance of conservation locally
- a widening of their experiences through gaining education outside the WCHS area
- development of new skills through volunteering opportunities
- new opportunities for employment and training.

The community will benefit from

- improvements in local livelihoods and alleviation of poverty
- scholarship students acting as role models for advancement of education.

## Current achievements

Since the start of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary education programme in 2005, 38 education scholarships have been awarded. 28 scholarships were funded by FoW and 10 by the Sanctuary Management Board from other funders. 30 students were male and 7 female, 21 were from Wechiau and 13 from surrounding villages; the students identified their religion\* as 19 Islam, 6 Christian, 1 traditional; their starting age ranged from 15 to 22 years old. [\*note the religion, age and home village was not recorded for all students and one student received 2 scholarships].



Scholarship students selected 2015 with their parents/guardians  
(R.Y.Abudulai Issahaku, WCHS)

Of the 28 scholarship students that have completed their senior secondary school education:

- 2 have completed their teacher training one of which is now teaching in the South of Ghana
- 18 are studying in higher education
  - 11 training to be teachers (5 studying away from home at university and 6 through distance learning)
  - 1 studying BSc Disability and Rehabilitation Studies at University of Science and Technology
  - 1 studying BSc in Civil Engineering at University of Science and Technology
  - 2 nursing training
  - 1 Health Assistant training
  - 2 at polytechnic (1 secretarial and management/1 hospitality and tourism)
- 8 are continuing to apply for further education.

Over the 11 years of the scholarship programme only one student (funded by the Sanctuary Management Board) has discontinued their studies and dropped out of the scholarship programme.

The students receiving scholarships are required to undertake voluntary work at the sanctuary for 12 months after completion of their education, usually as tour guides or in teaching. Most beneficiaries have complied with this requirement although for some this has been delayed whilst they continue their studies after finishing senior high school.

## Consultation

New reporting and feedback forms were introduced in 2013 to assist with the local administration of the education programme. The local administrator of the education scholarship programme holds annual meetings with most of the scholarship students, past and present to obtain feedback on the how the scholarship programme has assisted them, their individual education achievements and their hopes for the future. The local administrator of the scholarship programme provides an annual report summarising the achievements and includes recommendations for future funding. The board of trustees considered the recommendations to base the plan for the next three years.

The recommendations from 2013 provided by the administrator of the education programme based on the meeting with the past and present students were as follows

1. The student who would like to better their results should be considered by Friends of Wechiau by assisting them financially to register, these students can easily be identified by looking at their results or let them request for help from the FOW scholarship fund.
2. A motorbike should be given to the Administrator in Ghana for easy implementations of Friends of Wechiau programs in Wechiau. A request of motor would be sent to the FOW Office.
3. An amount of money should be allocate by Friends of Wechiau expenses at the beginning of every academic year, some of the areas of expenditure are, Printing and photo copying of scholarship forms, Photo copying important documents to keep copies in the Friends of Wechiau Ghana office and send some to the UK office, Communication and Transportation are some of the areas.

4. The first aid training which planned for the staff of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary by Friends of Wechiau which was not executed should be reconsidered.
5. The school supplies program should be continued Friends of Wechiau Group, because it's help the schools at the sanctuary catchment area to teaching and learning materials to better teaching and learning at the schools.
6. If the scholarship money for the Senior High Students could be increased so that they can pay their fees and also buy some reading material for their studies.
7. If the Friends of Wechiau Administrators stipend could considered or increased, that is the money I use some times to do the Administrative work.
8. If Friends of Wechiau could focus on Senior High Students more than the Tertiary students and that would even mean increasing the number of the Senior High Students, because our Junior High Schools are increasing and more children need support to go into Senior High Students.

In addition a request was made for details of the membership of the Friends of Wechiau Group and their location around the world.

## Plans for activity for next three years (2014 to 2017)

### Student scholarships

The main focus of the education programme over the next three years will continue to be the provision of scholarships to senior high school students. In addition funds will be provided for a scholarship for one tertiary school student in any single year.

Each year four new students will be chosen for scholarships. The academic year of 2014 will start with four students entering their second year of three years of study. Therefore over the next 3 years FoW will fund scholarships for the following number of students:

Year	Continuing SHS students	New SHS students	Total number SHS scholarships	Continuing tertiary student	New tertiary student
2014 - 2015	4	4	8	1	0
2015 - 2016	8	4	12	0	1
2016 - 2017	8	4	12	1	0

The scholarship amounts are reviewed each year based on the current level of fees that students are required to pay to enter senior high school, college and university. The fees paid by the 2013/14 students are between GH cedis 440 and GH cedis 587. For the next three years the amount awarded for scholarship will be as follows, subject to any increase due to inflation or currency fluctuations:

	Award 2013/14	Award 2014		Award 2015	
	GH cedis	GH cedis	GBP	GH cedis	GBP
Senior High School	300	500*	91*	585*	114
College/university	1,500	2,000*	364*	2,000*	391

\*[Note: There has been a change in the currency exchange each year. The figures are based on 5.49 GH cedis to 1GBP for May 2014, and 5.11 GH cedis to 1 GBP in 2015]

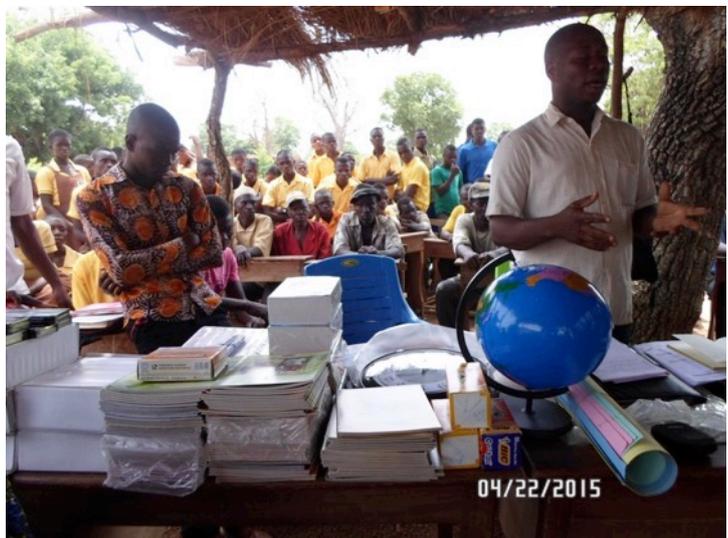
FoW will continue to monitor how the students are selected to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in the process. It is acknowledged that the current achievement by students in passing the required grades is restricted by local factors such as the quality of local Junior High Schools and societal discrimination.

In order to overcome the local factors the following will be implemented:

- A target of 50% scholarship students to be women by 2023
- The local administrator to visit annually the schools that always have poor exam results to talk to the community and other authorities about improving the students' performance.

### Primary school supplies

For many years FoW provided funds for the purchase of school supplies for a different primary school selected by the WCHS Management Board each year. The school supplies are distributed to the school at a special meeting attended by students, teachers and parents to ensure collective responsibility for the use of the materials. Due to changes in the administration of the education programme locally this provision ceased a number of years ago. It has been reintroduced in 2014 and administered by the administrator of the education scholarship programme.



Presentation of school supplies in 2015  
(R.Y.Abudulai Issahaku, WCHS)

The amount to be awarded for primary school supplies each year was GH cedis 1,000 (GBP182) in 2014 and increased in line with inflation each year to GH cedis 1,200 (GBP235) in 2015.

### Administration of education programme locally

The sanctuary manager has provided the administration of the education scholarship programme locally since 2012 with the award of an honorarium. The honorarium has been reviewed in 2014 as a result of the increase in responsibilities and lack of other funding available for stationery, printing and other supplies. In addition a request has been made for the provision of a motorbike to assist the administrator in carrying out their duties.

Three options were considered for the provision of a motorbike

- An amount is included in the general expenses for the administration for the rental of a motorbike.
- A one off amount is provided to the administrator of the education programme to purchase a motorbike.
- An agreement is made with Savannah Fruits Company for them to purchase the motorbike for the administrator of the education programme who then pays for the motorbike over a 24 month period from a special stipend awarded by FoW.



After much discussion amongst the trustees and with the Savannah Fruits Company it was agreed to provide a one off amount for the purchase of a second hand motorbike at a cost of GBP223 (Gh cedis 1,000).

Presentation of motorbike to local administrator October 2014 (Donna J Sheppard, Calgary Zoo)

The amounts to be awarded for the local administration of the education programme are reviewed annually based on agreed reporting of all expenses over a 12 month period and taking into account inflation. The amount awarded for last 3 years are as follows

Item	Award 2013		Award 2014		Award 2015	
	Amount GH cedis	Amount GBP	Amount GH cedis	Amount GBP	Amount GH cedis	Amount GBP
General stipend	480	£160	725	£132	850	£166
Motorbike expenses			100	£18	117	£23
Printing/stationery/post age	Nil	Nil	75	£14	88	£17

\*[Note: There has been a change in the currency exchange each year. The figures are based on 5.49 GH cedis to 1GBP for May 2014, and 5.11 GH cedis to 1GBP in 2015]

## Management of the charity

The charity will organise a membership campaign in 2014/15 through the distribution of posters and business cards promoting the work of the charity in the UK and at the WCHS. The website will be updated and a 6 monthly newsletter will be introduced.

The constitution of the charity was last reviewed in February 2006. Therefore the charity will carry out a review in 2014 of its constitution to ensure that it is fit for the current purpose and activities of the charity with a view to any changes being put to a vote at the 2015 AGM. In addition a new code of conduct for trustees is to be agreed.

## Fundraising

A very successful fundraising initiative took place in 2012/13 through the Quantock Deanery, with over £4,300 raised in 2013/14. In addition £500 was donated from the Bristol Commonwealth Society in 2012/13. The trustees have a target to provide talks to a minimum of 2 organisations per year to initiate further fundraising.

Further work is underway to evaluate the benefits of the use of social media and raising funds through crowd funding, Just Giving and other similar web based appeals.

Also corporate sponsors are to be approached to look at any fundraising initiatives linked to the hippo logo.

## Finance

The balance of accounts at the year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 was £8,040. The annual income for 2013/14 was £5,546 and the annual expenditure £1,465.

The outlook for the next three years is as follows:

<b>Income</b>	<b>2014/15*</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Regular donors (monthly subscription)	480	480	480
Other donations	732	420	420
HMRC gift aid	253	180	180
Interest	19		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1484</b>	<b>1080</b>	<b>1080</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
SHS scholarships	728	1092	1092
Primary school education resources	182	182	182

Tertiary student scholarship	364	364	364
Local admin Honorarium	132	162	162
Local admin expenses	32	32	32
2 <sup>nd</sup> hand motorbike (one off)	182		
Tax	4	4	4
UK and Ghana bank charges	29	29	29
Miscellaneous	26	25	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>1679</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>1856</b>

	<b>2014/15*</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Income - expenditure	- 195	-810	-810
Balance brought forward	8040	7845	7035
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>7845</b>	<b>7035</b>	<b>6225</b>

\*updated May 2015 based on actual income and expenditure.

## Monitoring

Friends of Wechiau are aware of the difficulties in managing a project internationally and ensure an independent monitoring system is in place to provide evidence that the charity's funds are used for their intended purpose. Each year the Friends of Wechiau trustees agree the funding including the number of students to receive scholarships, the amount of the scholarships, how much is to be provided for schools supplies, the honorarium for the local administrator and any additional expenses. The agreed funds are transferred to the Savannah Fruits Company in Ghana. Savannah Fruits Company provide a monitoring role by witnessing the selection of the scholarship students and the disbursement of funds to the following:

- The administrator of the education programme in Wechiau
- Each scholarship student
- The education supplies to primary schools.

The administrator of the education programme in Wechiau provides an annual report to Friends of Wechiau which contains application forms for newly selected students, signed and witnessed receipts of all funds disbursed, photographs of scholarship students and primary school meetings, feedback and letters from current and past scholarship students and the progress of all past scholarship students. The application forms for all new scholarship students require information to be recorded on gender, ethnicity/tribe, religion, parent's occupation, home town/village and age. This information is collated to ensure that as much as is possible within local constraints there is equality of opportunity for all young people to access the scholarship

programme. The Friends of Wechiau trustees review this report along with any recommendations from the local administrator to inform the decision on funding for future years.

## Exit Strategy

The long-term aim of the Friends of Wechiau is that the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary will become self sufficient and able to raise their funds directly without the involvement of an external UK based charity. If the FoW decide that the charity is no longer required or is unable to continue due to other factors sufficient reserves will always be available to enable scholarship funded students to complete their current course of education.

## Public Benefit

The trustees undertook a full review of their activities according to the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission at their meeting in November 2013 and review this annually. Applications for the scholarships are open to all people living in the sanctuary area and the beneficiaries are selected by an education committee, based at the WCHS, made up of representatives of members of the Sanctuary Management Board, SFC, schools, former scholarship students and representatives of the local community. Priority is given to those who were in most need of funding, had good education results and were well motivated. Efforts are made to ensure that the scholarships were awarded on as equitable basis as is possible considering factors such as gender, ethnic group/tribe and religion, with a particular emphasis towards more disadvantaged groups including young women and young disabled people.

Version	Changes made	Date
V1	Draft for meeting May 2014	23.4.14
V2	Amendments following May 14 meeting	25.4.14
V3	Amendments following decision on motorbike for local administrator.	22.10.14
V4	Added performance monitoring section	29.10.14
V5	Added acknowledgement for photos and updated finance information	24.11.14
V6	Updated with actual income/expenditure for 2014/15 and information of 2014 selected students,	11.5.15
V7	Updated with new photographs for students selected in 2015 and presentation of primary school supplies. Also updated with funding for 2015/16	5.11.2015