

Monthly report – November 2011

ACCRA, GHANA

SOCIAL JUSTICE		LEGAL SERVICE	RESEARCH
HR Clubs	Community Policing Unit Training	Case Work	Mental Health
HR Focal	Shelter Work	Resource Development	
	Child Trafficking		

SOCIAL JUSTICE

HR Focal

This project has been re-launched this month. Volunteers are preparing resource materials to train teachers on basic human rights and children’s rights at Ashaiman scheduled to take place on 5th-16th December 2011.

HR Clubs

Volunteers provide lessons on human rights focusing on prisoners’ rights, domestic violence, child labour and mental health to students in Accra High, Accra Girls and Presec Senior High Schools weekly. There have been internal weekly debates on conflicts in African states, death penalty and assassination of dictators. At the end of the term, students engage in a human rights debate that tests their knowledge they have acquired from the various lessons. This term, there were a number of sporting activities in the various schools and most of our meetings were postponed. So, the debate has been postponed to next term, January 2012.

Community Policing Unit

Last month there were series of trainings to Neighbourhood Watch Committees (NWC) in various communities in collaboration with the Community Policing Unit of the Ghana Police Service. This month volunteers have made follow-up visits to the various communities to assess the impact of the training on participants. The feedback has been very positive. Meanwhile, some of the NWC proposed the use of arms in their operations but the PAHO team upon a deliberation with them made them aware that there was no need to use arm but other resources like “Walkie-Talkie” can be used to enhance their work. This went well with the NWC.

Shelter

Volunteers have been visiting the Osu Children’s Shelter. They have had a great time watching (and participating in!) some traditional African dances, which the children are rehearsing in preparation for a performance. Anouska, our Social Worker has developed a database for the Shelter and also trained caregivers to handle children professionally. She would be doing same at the Osu Children’s Home.

Child Trafficking

The team travelled to Ningo and Anhwim to observe the local volunteers teaching trafficked children. They also profile data on these children. The local coordinator visited the office to guide volunteers to write stories of the profiled children.

LEGAL SERVICE

Case Work

Volunteers have been attending court sessions in Madina Magistrate Court, High Court and Circuit Courts with Lawyer Hans. About four cases are running currently with a particular one that has moved volunteers is a woman who has been remanded in police custody for 4years for allegedly killing her husband. Lawyer Hans and volunteers are working hard to get the sentence changed from murder to manslaughter.

Resource Development

Volunteers have prepared clients in-take forms in order to receive clients who come to PAHO for legal aid.

RESEARCH

Mental Health

The team visited the Twelve Apostles Prayer Camp and the Macedonia Prayer Camp as part of the Mental Health Research Project. At each camp they met with the 'Prophet' and were shown around the site, but were unfortunately, although perhaps not surprisingly, unable to meet any of the patients. The two camps provided an interesting contrast, as one was very well-equipped while the other seemed much poorer, but both were interesting to see. Volunteers have prepared a report on this.

OTHER PROJECTS

School of Social Welfare

Volunteers have benefited from lectures at the School of Social Welfare. Anouska has also made a presentation to students at the School on Social Work in United Kingdom with comparison to Social Work in Ghana. She also emphasized on prospects in social work.

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

November has been a busy month for PAHRO with a huge change around in staff after losing two of our staff members, Lyndon Metembo and Tiffani Wesley and gaining Shuan Solomons as the new Social Justice Coordinator. Volunteer numbers are starting to die down now as we approach Christmas with many volunteers leaving and heading home for the holidays or continuing with their travels. We still have a good number within the office though and a few whom will be staying right through Christmas and New Years with us. Here are some of November's highlights.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Bonnytown

Bonnytown is still a favourite and seems to get the most attention from volunteers. This month we have held a number of workshops including a music workshop in which our new Social Justice Coordinator, Shuan Solomons, organised a band to play to the boys and get them up and moving. A volunteer was also successful in getting the go ahead from Bonnytown to organise a graffiti project for the boys. She spent time driving around Cape Town taking photographs of graffiti to show as examples and ultimately we want the boys to design some of their own. We are now looking at the best way to move forward with this project.

The Women's Shelters

Sisters Incorporated – There are currently no women at Sisters Incorporated to visit as they have all managed to get jobs or move out and become independent. This is great news but means that workshops here will not resume until a new influx of women arrive at the shelter.

St Anne's – Volunteers have been working hard at St Anne's shelter to encourage the women residing there to open up and discuss important issues. Volunteers have been enjoying the relationships they develop with the women here and many important topics are being raised, broadening the minds of both the women there and our volunteers who get to experience a different culture and view point to what they may be used to in their home countries.

Manenberg Girls

This month volunteers have been arranging and preparing a high tea for the girls and their mothers in Manenberg. Each week volunteers have been visiting the girls and getting to know them and what it is that they themselves want to be doing. Our plan is to assist them in organising certain activities and get them interested so that eventually they will be able to organise their own activities and get their own community involved without our assistance. They seemed to be very excited for the high tea which is due to take place at the beginning of December. The girls even asked some of our volunteers to judge a fashion show for them which will also be held in December.

Manenberg Boys

Things have been going well throughout November with the Soccer project progressing well. This month we were able to find someone who agreed to cut the grass on the field for free. This field is a great open space for the soccer to take place and for the boys to play and practice, it just needed some maintaining before any soccer could be played there. We are also hoping to be successful in sourcing coaches to coach the boys from a coaching school here in Cape Town. There is a plan in place to have a fun day on the field in January where we can invite all of the boys, the local paper and the football foundation who are willing to donate some footballs to the project. The volunteer in charge of this project also managed to get his local team in York who are willing to provide some football kits and gather donations of old football stuff.

Mock Trial/Debating Workshop

This month the volunteers have been rounding up the final few workshops before they present the mock trial in an actual court room at the beginning of December. The children have been writing exams this month so there have not been as many sessions with the children. They all seem excited to be heading to a real court room and we are preparing certificates to present to them once they have completed it. Once this mock trial has been completed, we are planning to have the children work on creating their own case rather than using a case which has already been prepared. This will be an even bigger challenge for the children and something we are looking forward to.

LEGAL SERVICE

Lavender Hill

We are currently visiting Lavender Hill every other week but volunteers are learning a lot and enjoying the experience. New clients are still arriving to request advice and assistance on a number of issues and we are managing to make a real difference to the lives of some of these people