

G H A N A

LERNEINSATZ



11. JULI - 08. AUGUST 2021

Preamble

Dear readers,

the 'Lerneinsatz' was a beautiful occasion to visit the friendly country of Ghana. It is located on the Gulf of Guinea – where the Atlantic Ocean meets the coasts of the West African countries in the north and east. The country borders on Ivory Coast to the west, Togo to the east and Burkina Faso inland. Eight of us Austrians had the goal to not only widen our horizons but also make long lasting memories, friendships and connections which would enlighten us about culture, habits and language. With the help of the 'Dreikönigsaktion' it was possible to do so and furthermore get an impression of what it is like to be a man or a woman in the West African society.



What increased our curiosity the most beforehand was definitely the colorful traditional clothing, the highly praised food, the interference of languages, but also the existence of many projects which get funded by the DKA. Luckily, our stay ,which lasted from the beginning of August till the beginning of September, was possible, as the global Covid-19 pandemic hindered the expedition to take place one year earlier.

Speaking of time, the four weeks passed very quickly and we happened to make the best memories spontaneously. For example by singing songs, visiting a drum and dance workshop, sipping drinks at a rooftop bar or taking pictures and interacting with the people from the various projects that we visited.

Note for our fellow travelers: Power cuts only do happen once in a blue moon. No just kidding. They do happen occasionally and to be prepared for it, make sure to bring your flashlights along.

Have fun reading our travel report and best greetings from your 2021 participant

Ines Danmayr

Valentina

is an organisational talent, reliable and always keeps track of things, She is always up for exciting discussions and impresses with her ability to spontaneously pull one game after another out of the hat. Valentina is always ready and willing to take part in every venture, loves to dance and is a Party Queen. She always has a piece of paper ready for important notes and equipped with a medicine for all eventualities. She is creative, committed, energetic, funny and motivating.

Anna

can listen well, likes to have deep conversations and is the calming influence of the group. She gives new ideas an valuable contributions to discussions, but also can get loud(er) when nobody is listening. She reflects on her statements before making, is honest and also formulates "not so great" things with nice words. Anna is inspiring and draws beautifully. She is always up for a chat, is a wonderful musician and loves LACHGUMMIS

Group

What united us as a group have been the adventurous and long bus rides, which we used for singing, discussions and sleeping. The Uwemba and Malerone time kept us always on track. We are proud owners of goats, turkeys and guinea fowls and are still learning ghanaian patience together.

Theresa

seems to compete with the shining of the sun and enriches the group with her loving nature. She curious, helpful, committed and full of ideas. Theresa wants to make the world a better place with her ideas and thoughts and does so with her kindness. She is a motivated participant at every sports session and likes to think about the meaning and interpretation of words



Katrin

is super uncomplicated, helpful and sincere. She has an open ear and a home remedy for everything. She is always well prepared with her big backpack with UNO and THE pharmacy on the road. She is motivated for an Oware game has a geame ready for boring bus hours and likes to make "how-to" videos. Katrin cares about everything and everyone, loves her cat, is very organised and disciplined.

Tobias

surprises again and again with hidden talents, like with his backflip. He is reliable, understanding, motivated and always up for fun.

He is always on time and likes to tell others when they are not. Tobias is an enthusiastic ovare player, loves riddles and puzzles with mathematical, meticulousness until he finds the solution. He is a pleasant travel buddy, the keeper of the electric mosquito bite thingy and the best little brother substitute

Ines

is a master of haggling and drives the salespeople to sweat. She is THE Workout Queen and gives energy with her direct and motivating way. She magically attracts mosquitoes, is a daredevil, dancing queen and loves babies.

Ines is best photographer on earth and also makes other people better photographers. She is a world traveller and a morning person

Stefan

is a "professional butcher" and therefore very popular potential husband in Africa. He always wants to know how much a goat really costs. He is down to earth and deeply relaxed. He is a motivated second photographer, loves to buy fruit at the roadside, because it saves time and money and makes lemonade out of lemons. Stefan is always up for a joke, good for a surprise and doesn't like to lose to Katrin at Ovale.



Marianne

organises everything, sees that everyone is well. She is incredibly well organised and has everything in her view and is the best nurse and mum substitute. She can remember eye colours very well and you can have good conversations with her. Marianne doesn't like yams or fries, refuses chocolate and Haribos. She is the sudden bus mama and motivates with her exuberance. She dances very well to African sounds and would go well with the Ghanaian dancer <3

Interviews

with people from Ghana



Name: Thomas El Hassan Abukai

Place of origin: Village 5 miles from Yendi, Gbungbaliga

Place of residence: Tamale

Occupation: Social worker

Age: Due to lack of awareness of the existence of a calendar as his parents were illiterate, he does not know his age. As he was of no use to farming anymore after he lost his arm due to a snake bite, his parents encouraged to send him to school. He started counting the years from there on. However, when travelling he had to fill forms including his age which is why he invented his birthday: 21 July 1955.

Best advice you ever got?

It is not easy to live in this world with one hand. When I was engaged to help missionaries to communicate with the local people by translating, one missionary was surprised that I was not begging on the streets despite my disability. He told me to encourage other people with disabilities to look at me as an example and not be in the streets begging. This led me into become a social worker.

Best advice you can give?

Be prepared anytime to be a disabled person, because anytime through an accident/disease you can become physically challenged. Thus, use your body with doubt.

Your most useful item?

My bicycle, because if my bicycle weren't there (he rides it 10-20 km every day) I would have to walk and thus in no time I would lose the soles of his shoes, and I am not financially in the place to afford this. Moreover, it would mean losing my mobility.

Is there something you would like to be able to do, if you could?

I want to remain useful to myself and to others, and continue social work.

What does happiness mean to you?

No one can make a person happy, you create it yourself. Try it!

If you could change one thing in Ghana, what would it be? And why?

I would change the attitude of people toward each other, because there is little care among people in Ghana.



Name: Aldi Zacheus

Job: he is working for the government in the executor office

What was the best advice you ever got?

God has a willing for everyone. You have to make small steps to reach your goal.

What is the most useful tool you have?

My car. He is living in Accra, but the rest of his family is in Tamale. He needs to get there.

What is happiness for you?

He gets his happiness from Christ. You have to make yourself happy. It is not about money or work, you just have to make yourself happy. You can find the happiness in Christ.

If you could change one thing in Ghana what would that be?

He would change the constitution to make the people equal.

What would you like to be able to?

He is working for the government at the moment and that's okay. He doesn't need any change.

Name: Gottfried

Occupation: Bus driver

Place of residence: Tamale

What was the best advice you ever got?

The best advice I have ever heard is to trust in good, to obey my parents and to live in a very good environment to be free with people and live with them.

What is the most useful item you own?

My family. It means a lot to me. I would do everything for them.

What would you really like to be able to do and why?

What I really want to do is to save good. Because I don't think there is something on earth that I enjoy.

What does lucky mean to you?

Luck means to me, that I can do whatever I want to do.

If you could change one thing in Ghana, what would it be? And why?

Ohh, that's easy. I definitely would change indiscipline, because we have many norms and values in Ghana. A lot of people don't have discipline concerning their life and work. They are living in the present and don't think in a future-orientated way. Maybe you saw it in your village. Almost every man sits in the shadow under a tree while their wives are working.





Name: Razak

Occupation: Finance officer and teacher

Birth town: Tamale

Who is somebody that you truly admire?

There is one man who is a preacher in Tamale. He preaches peace, togetherness, unity and some of the doctrines of religion.

What is the best advice that you have ever heard?

Best advice comes from my mother. She once told me: "Think of peace and embrace peace to have a better life and a better future."

What is the most useful object that you own?

My knowledge. I could always lose my properties and my assets, but the education that I have inside my head is priceless.

What does it mean for you to be lucky?

To be the type of human that embraces peace. I prefer peace over violence.

What would you like to be able to do and why?

I would want to become a better person and the best version of myself possible. I also want to be able to help raise my siblings and help them become better persons as well.

If you could change one thing in Ghana what would it be?

Politics. We have a lot of sexualism, tribalism and corruption. They should focus more on the national agenda. We should have politics that have the focus on the nation and the people.

What was the best advice you ever heard?

In 1976 he finished the middle school and his uncle gave him the advice: Be careful of yourself. There are people in the world, which you have to be aware of. Always remember where you are coming from.

What is the most useful tool you have?

The most useful tool is to be educated. His parents didn't know education, but he enjoyed education. He has 3 children and all went to university. He was a teacher for 38 years. He and his first daughter finished the college in the same year. His last child has one year left in university.

Name: George

Job: teacher and bus driver

place of residence: Tamale

What would like to be able to and why?

He wants to be able to educate his children. Nobody can cheat them. They know their rights.

What is happiness for you?

As a normal human being you can be happy throughout. There are ups and downs. Some of them are natural, some are artificial. But he is happy, when he is healthy. He was sick from 2013 to 2015 and realized that health is the most important thing in the world.



If you could change one thing in Ghana, what would that be?

He would like to change ignorance. A lot of children are going to school now and that's good. The people hope that Ghana is going to be better in the future.



Name: Asana

Age: 29 years

Place of residence: Tamale

Occupation: Trader

Best advice you ever got?

Play safe and just be patient. Trading grows gradually.

Your most useful item?

My shower gel.

Is there something you would like to be able to do, if you could?

To move on with life. I'm not from a rich background so I want to help others and my family. I wish to be rich to help others.

What does happiness mean to you?

Happiness means a LOT to me. I need love to be happy. If my family loves me I'll be happy.

If you could change one thing in Ghana, what would it be? And why?

I would change our economy. We are suffering. Just stabilizing our economy.

Name: Daniel

Age: 29 Years

Place of residence: Tamale

Occupation: Taxidriver

Best advice you ever got?

It was from my mum. She always said that you should do what you can do at your best.

Your most useful item?

It is my Yellow Yellow [1] now. That is my livelihood. This is what I do for my living.

Is there something you would like to be able to do, if you could?

Hm... I would like to establish my own business. I don't want to work for anybody. That is why I started with the Yellow Yellow.

What does happiness mean to you?

Listen to music. Music is something that makes me happy.

If you could change one thing in Ghana, what would it be? And why?

Well, I would change our thinking. Sometimes you see certain things wrong, but because of political affiliations people will support it. People have a problem with their thinking, because of how they are affiliated to a party. So that interests in fighting for even the wrong, because it's a party, or a government, ... that is something that is not happening in Ghana.



[1] Name of a Taxi in Ghana

Akwaaba - Welcome to Ghana!

After successfully passing the PCR-Test we arrived at the Kotoka airport in Accra. Luckily we were able to pass the customs declaration without further hesitation – of course we did not mention the 3 liters of schnaps that we carried along for medical purposes. Several minutes later we already experienced our first Ghanaian power outage. Not knowing we had many more to come.

Due to the rather slow philosophy of living and various checkpoints we managed to leave the airport three hours later. Even though the TIICLS-Team had to wait all that time we enjoyed a warm welcome and got taken to our guest hotel, which would be our base for the next four days.

Monday started off with a relaxed trip to the beach at the Gold Coast. The Covid-19 restrictions only allowed us to dip our feet into the sea shore but no diving unfortunately. We finished off the day by sipping some pineapple juice and watching the sun set.

On Tuesday afternoon we visited the Nkrumah Memorial and got some further glimpses into the political history of Ghana, which enlightened us about Ghana's independence in 1957. Our first visit to the market turned out to be not only stressful for the retailers but also for us. The feeling of excitement and panic did not help us very much when trying to purchase some bargains. Strengthened by some delicious food in a sea view restaurant, we started our inspection of the electro waste dumping station "Agbogbloshie". We could only see the leftovers as it got destroyed shortly before our arrival.

Wednesday 14.07 – Got up at 5:30!

Why you might ask yourself? – To do the Walkway in the National Kakum Forest, where we crossed hanging bridges that were located at 40 meters height. Eating fresh coconuts and fresh cacao beans, to recover from our sorrow of failing to detect some monkeys in the tree heights, made us feel better instantly. Alongside the coast, in Elmina Castle, we go to know more about the trade triangle and the west-African slave history. Heavy traffic caused our delay and we arrived later in the night to get some rest. Nevertheless we survived the waiting period by buying fresh plantain, avocados and pineapples.



On Thursday we broke down our mosquito nets and headed to the St. Pölten house in Koforidua. Our welcoming committee consisted of 100.000 mosquitos and pouring rain. The cacao plantain warehouse allowed us to dig deeper into the world of cacao farmers. Equipped with a huge banana leaf to protect us from the rain we followed a mysterious path into the jungle. What followed after this was fine dining in a fancy restaurant, singing, reading and even a sporty workout still fit into our busy schedule.

Arrived in Kumasi on Friday, we explored the Art Center there and got to know more about the people, the clan structures and the traditions of the Ashanti communities.

Saturday was Ines's birthday and a nice birthday song was performed to wish her our best. Then we bundled to leave for Tamale where our stay for the following two weeks was going to be.



Week 2

Upon arrival in our new home-town for the upcoming two and a half weeks we attended the early morning Sunday mass at 7 am. After two hours of gospel, prayer and two rounds of donation collection we introduced ourselves to the church community in the frame of singing an Austrian song accompanied by our Guitarlele which we brought along. Thanks to the local yellow-yellows, a motorized vehicle frequently used for individual transportation owing to the shortcoming of public transportation, we arrived safely at the buzzing central market of Tamale. The trading site offers anything from cola nuts, to spices, locally produced soap and pegs. While exploring we interviewed a trading lady which you can find [HERE](#).

From Monday to Friday we were kept busy by the TICCLS Team, external lecturers and daily afternoon-excursions. Salifu explained to us the difference between norther and southern Ghana, while the North is characterized by one single harvesting season, compared to two seasons in the South, it's scarce population, it's sparse resource endowment as well as it's historical enslavement for the shipment by British rulers across the Atlantic. Consequently, northern Ghana experiences higher poverty rates up until today. Moreover, we were taught that the chief system plays a crucial rule in today's Ghana which was translated into the constitution in 1992. Chiefs, who are either successors by family heritage or democratically chosen, remain the main instance for solving cases, as Ghanaians are predominantly reluctant to go to court. A chief's decision is respected by the court as per constitution. When visiting the local chief and the elderlies we had to offer either cola nuts or cash and communicate with him via his linguist as the tradition prescribes it. In return we received a Guinea fowl. When it comes to gender balance, there are only few female chiefs, however there is high female participation in the central government. Strict gender roles, however, dominate the quotidien life.

In the course of a lecture on cross-cultural systems Stephen introduced us into Ghanaian do's and don'ts including the usage of the right hand only for any communication purposes such as waving goodbye or receiving cash. We experienced his hint to never expect people to be on time extensively throughout our trip. The habit of bargaining proved to be difficult, especially owing to our skin color, as white people are perceived to be rich. During several dagbanli (one out of more than 60 local languages) classes we prepared for interactions during the upcoming village stay.

On Tuesday, after a lecture on urban poverty in Ghana including governmental attempts to combat related challenges we visited a sewer training center financed by the DKA which instructs destitute girls with skills. Moreover, a local producer showed us how to convert Aluminium waste into cooking pots with the use of termite soil as a shaping tool. As Shea production and weaving by women is very common in the North we visited production sites. The busy day continued with a visit of the Shekinah Clinic (Check out their short documentary on YouTube: 'Under the Mango Tree'). The clinic is run by volunteers only and offers medication, treatment, shelter and food to people in need. In the evening we were provided insight into the the NGO ANPA (agriculture for nutrition and poverty alleviation) founded by Stephen and his colleagues. One of their interesting projects cooperates with the Austrian project 'Treesy Peasy'.



On Wednesday, Salifu introduced us to the kinship system which consists of patrilineal, matrilineal and a dual system. Depending on what system your klan belongs to, one's identity is defined by it. As Ghanaians particularly strive to fulfill expectations the system dictates how one behaves. Afterwards, more in depth discussions on gender roles including the issue of divorce, heritage and female oppression followed. In the afternoon we improved our bargaining skills at the cultural market.

On Thursday, we continued our courses at TIICLS by learning something about divination as a tool for problem solving in the Ghanaian culture and about interreligious dialogue in Ghana. Our teacher made us recognize the different purposes and meanings of divination and religion. While Ghanaians tend to go to the diviner when they have a problem or when there is a special event, e. g. a childbirth, the religious life in the church and mosque is, beside other things, very important for the community life and coming together. We learned that in Ghana, there are about 70 percent Christians and about 30 percent Muslims. There are also a few percent who assign themselves to traditional nature religions.

In the afternoon we had the chance to experience our newly-acquired knowledge in a practical sense by visiting a traditional Muslim diviner. He explained us how he became a diviner and what kind of problems he supports people to overcome. We also had the opportunity to ask questions. Afterwards, the diviner would tell everyone of us who wanted separately something about their future. In the meantime, the others spent their time playing with his children who were very curious about us.

After this special experience of getting to know a real diviner, we went to a Pito bar to taste the traditional Pito beer which is made out of millet. Some of us felt it tasted a bit like "Most".



The next day, we had the opportunity to visit two different schools and gain an insight in Ghana's school system. First, we went to a public school and afterwards to a private one. It was very interesting for us to see the differences and similarities between them.

In the evening, another special event took place at TIICLS: a group of traditional dancers and musicians came and introduced us into the Ghanaian dancing and drumming culture. Their performance was really impressive, as they knew how to move their bodies in incredible ways. After a short period of insecurities at the beginning, we danced with them. It was really a lot of fun.



Afterwards, we enjoyed a great dinner outside in the moonlight with various traditional Ghanaian foods that wonderful Mary had prepared. It was a very intense and joyful evening.

On Saturday, we started our trip to the very East of Ghana, to Yendi and Ngani, close to the border to Togo. We visited the Ngani "witch camp". It is a community of people who have been accused by the people of their villages of possessing witchcraft. These women and men had to leave everything behind and flee from their communities for their safety and survival. We were really shocked by the fact that even today people accused as witches are persecuted, expelled, and sometimes even killed. In the Ngani camp, many of them have found a new home. They are still stigmatized though. For example, no one outside their community wants to buy their products because the people are afraid of witchcraft. One member of the community, always followed by his dog "landlord", explained to us the background of the camp and his own story. Then, we visited the community. We talked to the chief and they showed us around. During our tour through the camp, a lot of children followed us and interacted with us, mostly by asking if we had some sweets or pencils for them.

After this very intense visit, we were happy to come to our accommodation for the night.

Week 3

Central Mosque in Tamale

Just a short bus ride from our Home Base (TIICELS) is the Central Mosque of Tamale. It is a very beautiful and large building which offers space for believers on three floors. As you can see in the photo below, this mosque has four towers at the corners and a large dome in the middle of the building.

We got a tour from the Imam personally, as is customary, of course, without shoes.

While visiting this mosque we got an insight into the prayer practice and the Muslim tradition. In this way we were able to convince ourselves of the particularly open interreligious coexistence in Ghana.

A prayer helper showed us how to pray and also which movements are necessary, all on his prayer rug. We learned that they pray five times a day at so-called prayer times.

As we already noticed, they broadcast the prayer outside via loudspeakers. Our Imam (guide) said that when you hear the Imam, you have to come to the mosque, if you don't hear him or if you are too far away from a mosque or not able to come you should pray your prayer in another place.

We went up on top of the roof and enjoyed the view from the mosque over Tamale. Finally, we had an open question circle with our Imam.



Damongo Batik Talk to DYDI

In Damongo we were able to let off steam creatively with the so-called "batik technique" and get to know some of the employees of the DYDI organization.

The employees themselves are still in training, which lasts three years.

Where they not only learn how to print the fabrics, but also how to create a business out of them in order to be able to make a living from it.

That's how it works:

The batik technique works with hot wax stamps and colors.

Here the wooden stamp is dipped into the hot wax. Then the stamp is placed on the linen cloth and lightly pressed so that a nice impression is created.

When the desired symbols or patterns have been applied, the sheet comes in the desired color and is dyed. After dipping in the paint, the fabric is dried under the sun.

The wax is then washed off the cloth with white water and the underlying color comes to light.

Then, after a hearty dinner, we got a deeper insight from Anthony, the director of the organization, into their activities and projects.

Over the days, Anthony's family provided us with home-baked bread, self-made yoghurt and tasty food.

Mole Nationalpark



At 5:30 in the morning, we started our trip to Mole National Park. It was founded in 1971 as the first Animal Reservoir of Ghana and it is with the size of 4.840km² the largest Nationalpark in the country. Mole is in the Savannah Region (North Western Part of Ghana) and it is home of 93 different species of Animals. Reptiles, amphibians, different species of monkeys and elephants, birds, lions, leopards, buffalos, antilopes and warthogs stay there. In the Park there are also Lodges for Tourists and a Swimming Pool. In the middle of the Nationalpark is a settlement with a school and a hospital ward. Mole is one of the few places, where it is forbidden to leave rubbish on the roads or in the woods.



Because of this, it is a very clean place and liveable place for the animals there.

We did a safari on the top of a Jeep. A Ranger accompanied us and told us about the Nature and animals in the Park. We've seen a lot of antilopes and birds. One of the most impressive moments was, when „Nash“, a 70 year old Elephant crossed our pathway.

Talk on the Educational System in Ghana

In Ghana, the Educational System starts with the pre-school stage. The maternity leave takes about three months. From the age of three months to one or two years, parents bring their children to the Creche. From age two to three, kids go to the nursery and continue to Kindergarten (KG). After this, there is the primary education. Children attend the Primary one at the age of six and then they go to Junior High School at the age of 12. The quality of education and facilities in public schools differ a lot compared to private schools (where parents need to pay for). When children have finished the Basic Education, Teenagers (at the age of 15) can decide either they want to attend Senior High School (Secondary Education), or they want to do a Technical and Vocational Education, where there is an emphasis on theory as well as on practice and they get a certificate or diploma, when they graduate. After graduation, people can attend a Technical University/Poly-Technic, then a Master Tech and a PhD. If students decide to focus more on theory after graduating Senior High School, they can go to University and do a Bachelor, Master and finally a PhD.

Trip to Tuna & Visiting a CDC School

It started with a rainy day in Damongo. We were on our way to Tuna and had to pass the most challenging roads we've seen in Ghana until this point. It was a long ride until we arrived at our destination: A Primary School, which is supported by the Organisation CDC (Care for Deprived Communities). We were welcomed with traditional Music, Dancing, Drumming and Singing. All pupils, parents and teachers have gathered together and were celebrating. We were overwhelmed by this warm and friendly welcome. After watching everything for a while, we were asked to participate in the Dancing and we joined the group.

We also visited the Chief of this community and we got a turkey and a goat as a present. We named them Tony the turkey and Gaby the goat. They have accompanied us in the car on our way back to Tamale. They are hopefully still safe and happy there. ;)

John, the director of CDC gave a speech and we helped to distribute school uniforms, sandals and menstrual pads, that were offered by CDC to the girls and boys of this particular school. It triggered an unpleasant feeling in us, to be the „white people“ from Europe who spend things to the poor ones in Ghana. We discussed that point later in the evening in our group and shared our ideas, concerns and experiences of giving/receiving donation.



In the evening, John gave us a talk on the contemporary Educational System in Ghana as well as on the background of CDC. The Organisation CDC promotes the rights of the vulnerable, disadvantaged und marginalized people in the Northern Region of Ghana and is also supportet by DKA Austria. It was founded in 1999 and startet with an HIV-Prevention Programme. The Organisation ActionAid (<https://actionaid.org/>) sponsored the HIV-Invention of CDC in Bole and the National Tuberculosis Control Programme (NTP) (<http://www.tbghana.gov.gh/>) was added to it. Another main emphasis of CDC is the work against Child Trafficking. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), a UN-based Project, helped CDC to work against these Issues. Other areas CDC is focusing on, are Environmental Projects and the support of school girls and there families.

Week 4

Sunday, 1st August

Topic: Village Immersion First full day at our villages

Everyone had individual experiences. That depended on our village helpers, the opportunities of our villages and it also depended on ourselves, what we wanted to do. We were divided into two pairs in four villages. The villages we went were Gumo, Napayili, Nwodua, and Yapalsi. For example, I was in Napayili. On Sunday morning we went to the chief's palace. We brought cola nuts and talked to the chief for a long time with mutual questions. After the chief, we had a short break before we went to the local church. We had our lunch early in the afternoon and subsequently, we made our way to the neighboring village Nwodua. Two daughters of our helper accompanied us and showed us the way. Once there we spent a few hours with our friends. On our way back we stopped at the subchief of our village and made an acquaintance with a teacher. He showed us his compound, his goat and corn farm. When we arrived at our compound, our friends from Gumo were already waiting for a short visit. Before sundown we played soccer, we drew and tied ribbons with the children from our village. Later we took a bath and ate dinner.

Findings

The day showed us how nice all the people in the village are, even though we are strangers and not from Napayili. That showed us how dogged and serious the Austrians are.



Monday, 2nd August

Topic: Village immersion second and last full day at our villages

Our second day in the village began with a guided tour from our helper through the village. We greeted a lot of residents and were able to improve our Dagbani language skills. Thank to our tour we visited weavers, farmers, and a shea butter production, where I was able to help roast the shea nuts. Afterward, we visited the kindergarten and the primary school of our village, where we had a good talk with the teachers at the school. Afterward, we had another early lunch and subsequently, we made us on the way to the other neighboring village Gumo. When we arrived there, a large group of children was waiting for us. We shortly played with the children and posterior we talked to our friends. When we got back home our two guides from the TIICLS were waiting for us to inquire whether everything was ok. Before we got our lunch, we played for another two hours with the children.

Findings

I realized from that day that the children in our village are very poor because they kept asking for balloons, pens, and pads, even though we didn't give them anything. This could be due to the number of visitors from previous years. They already expect a lot of gifts when white people come to visit them. Unfortunately, that's very annoying.

Tuesday, 3rd August

Topic: Funeral in Gumo and a cooking class with Mary

The return day to our home base TIICLS began with a funeral in Gumo. When we arrived in Gumo our friends were already waiting for us. They reserved a seat for us. In the middle of the funeral, we got a call that we have to leave because the TIICLS team already waited for us to bring us back to Tamale. Once there, each of us was looking forward to a shower, in the village, we could only wash ourselves with a bucket. Subsequently, we did laundry and had our lunch.



In the afternoon our guest mother Mary came to teach us how to cook the traditional meal Jollof Rice. After a very good self-cooked dinner we reflected as a group our village immersions. Before going to bed some of us played the traditional game Oware and Uno.

Findings

I noticed how lucky we are to live in a country where you don't have to worry about clean water. We also noticed that a funeral is celebrated in Ghana and not mourned. The people wear bright colors and dance all day to say goodbye to the deceased person.

Wednesday, 4th August

Topic: Debriefing, university, dumping site, farms, and the kebab party

The last day in Tamale began with the debriefing of the whole intercultural course in Tamale. We gave constructive feedback and suggested improvements for the future. After lunch, we made us on the way to a dumping site near Tamale. We saw a huge hill of plastic and garbage and had the opportunity to talk to construction workers, who were building a recycling system. Subsequently, we visited the university of Tamale, the farm from our guide Stephen, a fish farm, and a chicken brute station. Back at home, we prepared ourselves for the farewell party in TIICLS. All the village helper plus their families came to a final dinner.

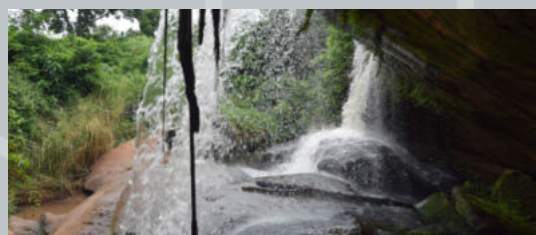


We got our certificates for the language and cultural learning program and danced into the night. Between that, we performed our sketches of the journey and learned the whole team to dance the Wiener Walzer.

Findings

I was shocked by the dumping site and realized that we really have the privilege to live in Austria. It's bad how everything is simply thrown into nature, starting with plastic waste, sewage, and electronic waste. I recognized how big waste management in Ghana really is.

Thursday, 5th August



Topic: saying goodbye to TIICLS, Kintampo waterfalls, art center in Kumasi

Early in the morning we said goodbye to Salifu and the guys from the TIICLS team. After that we hopped into the bus and got ready for a long bus trip to Kumasi. After three Ghanaian hours we finally arrived at Kintampo. We already stopped there in our first week, but the waterfalls were closed at that time. This time we were lucky. We took a small breakfast and got an introduction of the park and the waterfalls. Full of new information we were ready for the walk to the very impressive waterfalls and for the two suspensions bridges. The last waterfall is huge and at its bottom is a natural pool, where some of us took a small refreshment.

In the afternoon we drove to Kumasi, where we made a stop at the Kumasi art center and prepared ourselves with small Ghanaian presents.

Findings

Waterfalls and rain forest is a wonderful combination and Ghana has a lot of impressive nature to show.

Friday, 6th August

Topic: travel to Accra, art center in Accra

On that day our main goal was to get to Accra. We spend a lot of time in our second home – our beloved bus. Special highlights were interesting road transport methods and buying products from a local seller on the road, for example banana chips. When we finally arrived in Accra, we had some time left and decided to spend it at the art center in Accra. There we got a little drum workshop and some of us bought a djembe. An hour and a lot of hard bargaining later we tried to get all our new stuff into the bus and got to the Good Shepherd Guest House, where also stayed in the first in week.

Findings

Accra is a very big and rich city compared to the North. At the first week I didn't recognize that, because I have been overstrained with the African lifestyle and culture and too busy with thinking about the new impressions. But now – when I already was used to the life in the North – I discovered the differences between the North and the South.

Saturday, 7th August

Topic: gold mining, saying goodbye to Ghana, flying home

On our last day we finally found time for the lecture about gold mining. That lecture should have taken place in the first week, but we had to rearrange the program. Ghana is one of the leading producers of gold in Africa and the seventh leading producer in the world. Large commercial companies mine a lot of gold using heavy machinery and cause a lot of problems. In the afternoon we packed our bags and left our guest house. At the airport the final goodbye-saying took place and we took our last group picture in Ghana. After that the whole airport process began: checking-in the big luggage, security check, passport check, visa check etc. and of course spending our last cedis in the airport shops. After some hours we finally entered the airplane, which brought us to Amsterdam during the night.

Findings

We will definitely miss our new Ghanaian friends. The journey was a great adventure with a lot of new experiences and memories. Some of us will come back to Africa soon, maybe to Ghana or maybe to another African country, which wants to get explored.



Sunday, 8th August

Topic: travelling home, getting used to Austria again

After six hours of sleeping, watching films and thinking about what we have experienced we arrived Europe. We had enough time for a short breakfast. Then we had to get ready for our second flight, which brought us from Amsterdam to Vienna. In Vienna we had some troubles with getting our bags. But after some minutes we got all of them, except one. That one arrived a day later. For some of us Vienna was already the final destination, some of us had to make another journey to come back home. In the evening all of us – from Salzburg to Vienna – were finally back home.

Findings

It is not sure, that your bag will arrive in time. But just do it like the Ghanaians. Relax and go with the flow. Everything will become good.

Village Immersion at Napayilli

We stayed at the village for 3 nights starting on Saturday, July 31st until August 3rd. Despite some communication difficulties and hardly any time for yourself, our stay was a pleasant one and we learned quite a few new things about Ghana. We were welcomed warmly by our village helper Simon. His daughter was very nice to us, but unfortunately, she couldn't talk English very well. So, the time we spent with her was very quiet.

On our arrival day, many children hung out in our compound. Because of that my partner and I were overwhelmed with the whole situation. We couldn't communicate because we didn't speak Dagbani and the children didn't speak German. They kept screaming for gifts and leaving us no space to stand. We felt useless and left alone. Therefore, we made us on the way to the compound of our village helper. Once there, we were clearly unwanted, and he sent us back to our compound where we were supposed to wait for our dinner. After dinner, which was brought by one of his daughters, we were glad that the children left our compound and went to bed. We recognized that going to bed in Ghana isn't comparable with going to bed in Austria. In the evening children were often looking for our attention until very late and shouted, "Sister Ines give me a balloon!"

On the next day, our village helper picked us up and told us that we were not allowed to move around the village alone without the permission of the chief. So, the first thing we did, was to go to the chief. After a long talk, we had permission the walk around the village and went to the weekly church mass. In the early afternoon, the presence of the children became too much for us and we decided to visit our friends in the neighboring village named Nwodua. We had a good talk and recognized how lucky they were with their village.

On the third day, our village helper led us through the village and showed us the various farms such as corn, okro, tomato, bell pepper, potato, and a shea butter production. In the afternoon we again escaped from the children in the village and visited other friends in Gumo. We talked a lot and learned that a funeral is on the next day.

So, in the morning on our departure day, we made us on our way and met our friends at the traditional funeral in Gumo.

All in all, it was a very nice time, in which we learned a lot for our future life. We would like to thank our Village Helper and his daughters for this opportunity.

Village Immersion at Kukuo Yapalsi

Our stay in the Village of Kukuo Yapalsi was a really great and educational time we would not want to miss during our Study Tour. Upon arrival we were already warmly welcomed by our helper Thomas – a former assembly man and local politician - and his youngest daughter Lydia (18) as well as dozens of kids from the village. After some collective singing and dancing with the children who were very fond of our attention, Thomas showed us around the Community and introduced us to many locals.

On Sunday morning we went to church and attended the longest Mass we had ever been to. It took more than three hours and was held in Dagbanli (with English translation). After a nice lunch which we prepared together with Lydia, she took us to the farms. We were accompanied by dozens of children from the community who had by then become our new sisters and brothers. On the fields the farmers grow maize, okro, tomato, pepper and potato. Moreover Sheanut trees grow naturally in between the fields. Towards the evening, Thomas took us for a ride on the Motorbike to the priest seminary nearby, where he had worked as a cook for over 6 years. On our way back to the village we stopped by at a bar in the rural area and enjoyed interesting discussions with local people.

The next morning, as early as 7 a.m. we visited a sub-chief and the chief of the Community. The Chief and his companions, the elderlies, were very curious about our origins and what life looks like in Austria. In return to his hospitality of allowing us to stay in the village, we offered him Cola Nuts as tradition prescribes it. After omlette and bread for breakfast sheabutter producing village women were already awaiting for us to do the „Pounding“ (the manual production) of the butter. Even though the processing gets exhausting quickly, we spent enjoyed our time among the local women. Pursuing our intense and packed program designed by Thomas we visited the Water Reservoir, which supplies water to the whole town of Tamale. We had a look at the construction of the pipes, went on top of the building and got an overview of the surrounding landscape. Afterwards we also had the chance to visit a public primary and junior high school. It was very interesting and moving to see the differences and financial and structural difficulties which the pupils, teachers and headmasters have to cope with. After „our kids, brothers and sisters“ have finished their school day we were exposed to their endless energy and thirst for playing with us „silimincis“ (= white people in Dagbanli). We offered them Soap bubbles, balloons and crayons and sang, dance and played with them.

Many young girls already take care of their younger baby siblings from early age on. This also explains why children from all ages stick together during the day. We noticed that the concept of “bed time” which is common in western societies does not exist for kids in Ghana. In the evening kids were often in the search for our attention until very late. When it comes to waking up, we experienced their early mornings and were even woken up by our newly made children friends by them shouting for “Sister Theresa” and “Sister Marianne” at our window (which was no entire glass but only a mosquito net, hence there was no way to stay in bed once our friends were up). Once again we were overwhelmed by the village women’s diligence. Most women were continuously hard working by cooking breakfast to sell on the streets, by weaving fabric, producing shea butter, sewing clothes, cooking for the family or doing the laundry by hand.

We want to say a big THANK YOU to our wonderful helper Thomas and his amazing daughter Lydia for having us at Kukuo Yapalsi, showing us so many things in the Community and spending a great time together.

Village Immersion in Nwodua

Valentina and Anna had the chance to stay in the beautiful, calm and nice village Nwodua with our village helper Paul and his family. We lived in the compound of our host family together with Paul, his wife Mary, and some of their children, grandchildren and daughters-in-law. The compound was across the street from the Catholic church, well, in Austria we would call that a small hut, so we didn't have very far to go for Sunday services. There we enjoyed a musical and beautifully designed service of the word in dagbani language. We were lucky that Paul has a TV, therefore the house was a magnet for many children and guests to come by to visit, talk and play with us.

Two sons of the family, Isaac and Andrews, showed us a lot around the village. We had the possibility to see the village, its facilities and the surrounding environment as well as the family fields and animals. So we discovered the pond, the biggest mountain in the area, had a beautiful view of our "home" and were able to enjoy freshly harvested maize from the family fields. During our walks we received one or two marriage proposals, but unfortunately never agreed on the number of cows, sheep and goats.

Nwodua is an especially interesting place because several schools are located there. You can find the primary school and junior high of the region as well as the Kofi Annan vocational training institute, named after Kofi Annan after he visited the village a few years ago.

Currently they are expanding this school, so we were already allowed to see the first new rooms and accommodation of the future school kids. The students will have the chance to do several apprenticeships there, for example sewing, agriculture and secretary work.

Besides visiting the different places of the village, we spent our time talking to the people, helping with the daily tasks, for example nut cracking, and playing with the children.

In the evenings we were lulled to sleep by goats and sheep that had their stall outside our window and in the morning, sometimes a little too early, we were woken up by the rooster.

In the morning of our departure a special event took place in the village and we had the chance to attend it: The name ceremony of a newborn baby. The little girl got the name Rosina.

Situation about the livestock animals in Ghana

On the trip through Ghana I dealt with the subject of farm animals.

What we all noticed is that goats are everywhere and really everywhere, standing next to and on the street and of course the goats are jumping around on almost every object.

These goats are important meat suppliers for the people there. And that's why everyone has one or more goats somewhere. These run around somewhere and supposedly they will find the way back home in the evening. In the villages there are small, self-made stables made of branches and round wood where they are also fed with twigs and greenery (grass).

Further to the north there are more cattles, in general there are more livestock in the north than in the south. The cattle are kept in small herds and are only kept for meat suppliers. Generally, there is almost no milk produced, it is mostly meat. The cattle are usually very tall, lean and with long horns.

Of course, chickens also play a major role in Ghana and are kept in cages as laying hens. But chickens are also very popular for their meat, and are probably the most commonly eaten type of meat available. Chickens are also mostly kept in their own homes and usually run free on the streets, compound, or in the living room (everywhere).



Pigs are not so well represented in Ghana. This not only has to do with the fact that there are many Muslims in the north, but also because in the years 2016-2018 African swine flu ensured that the pig population was drastically reduced. But many people want to start with pig production on a broader basis.

A lot of fish is eaten in Ghana, most of which comes from the sea. But we also saw a few aquacultures, where mostly the African catfish is fattened.

In summary, one can say that everything is eaten in Ghana, including other animals such as muskrats and civets. These do not count as farm animals because they are not kept as such. The products that are made from the respective animals are mainly pieces of meat for frying and cooking.

The Ghanaian waste management and plastic perception by the population

Whether an empty water bottle made out of plastic is perceived as waste remains subjective and lies in the eye of the beholder. Initially, when entering Ghana coming from Austria, where waste management gradually became of interest for almost every ordinary person, one may be struck by the amount of waste which is being carelessly dropped on the streets. Even when going for a hike or walking in natural environments, plastic bags, bottles, sachets and packaging material may be found this frequent that collecting discarded plastic wastes becomes an impossible task. Owing to the effort I put into reducing my plastic waste generation during my quotidian life, I chose to analyze the situation of plastic waste and its perception during our trip in Ghana.

The magnitude of the plastic waste generation amounts to approximately 1.1 million tonnes per year in Ghana according to the World Economic Forum, while only 5% of it is being collected for recycling (World Economic Forum, 2021). The common practice of waste treatment is burning of municipal waste by individuals. However, there are emerging local businesses such as Zoomlion Ghana Limited which focus on waste management and environmental sanitation [see picture below]. This respective company claims to clean public areas, recycle plastic wastes and produce compost among other things. A local observer however believes the collected plastic wastes are partly being dumped in the open ocean. Subsequently, the polluting items end up on the beaches in huge bulks particularly when ocean currents flow accordingly



To counter plastic pollution, in 2019, Ghana's Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation joined an international initiative - Global Plastic Action Partnership led by the World Economic Forum (Ghana News Agency, 2019). In the course of discussions with locals we explored the perception of many locals that the underlying incentives by the Ghanaian government is often influenced by western interests. Thus, whether governmental efforts will prove successful remains to be seen. In 2021, however, polluting and untreated plastic wastes remain a persistent constituent of the general scenery. A relevant difference which we observed during our trip was the increased plastic waste generation in areas which are well connected. In comparison, remote and rural communities seemed less polluted by plastics, most probably due to greater autarky and minor influx of processed food products and other plastic packaging.

When it comes to the general perception of plastics, the average Ghanaian seems to be insufficiently aware of the health hazards and environmental pollution plastic represents unless properly treated. For every purchase, from bottled water and artisanal souvenirs to street food, one or even several plastic bags are offered for packaging. It happened to us several times whenever we requested for "no rubber bag", that traders shared their astonishment that we - the "white people" - do not like plastics.

As mentioned, wastes frequently end up on the roadsides or in nature. Artificial items beyond their usage period irritated us whenever we saw them discarded, however when talking to locals we were introduced to the opposite perspective where items are oftentimes not yet considered waste. This may be explained by the fact that in Ghana many items which we would consider waste are reused for different purposes or are upcycled. For instance, empty plastic bottles are commonly used as soap dispensers for self-made liquid soap. Moreover, used aluminum separated from waste are melt and reshaped into pots [see picture below], cutlery and other cooking tools. Ghana's capital city Accra also hosts one of the greatest informally settled scrap yards for e-waste which received international attention due to its detrimental environmental and social conditions. However, the entire area which consisted of approximately 200 small houses of scrap dealers and recyclers was demolished by the regional government only a week before we arrived in Ghana. Previously, burning of cables and other inadequate techniques



for treatment of waste electric and electronic equipment caused immense health and environmental hazards.

Concludingly, I would like to highlight the importance of recognizing the difference in perception of items being waste versus items being considered potential resources. Similar to the fact that the western society usually imagines our standard of living, our economic understanding and scientific practice as being aspirational, we shall not forget to include "the others'" perspective. While I am strongly in favour of advocating for increased awareness about the negative effects of plastics and improper waste management, I believe the solutions may best be found by those who best understand the perspective the local society.

Theresa Aigner

Fufu

Ingredients: Cassava, yam, plantain or cocoyam, Water, salt

- Prepare and wash vegetable
- Put into saucepan, cover with water, boil until soft and allow to cool after straining off water.
- Wash fufu pot and stick.
- Put the cooked vegetable into a mortar, a little at a time and with the cut side of vegetable uppermost. Beat a little, then remove from the mortar.
- When all has been beaten a little, return it to the mortar and beat until soft and free from lumps.
- Turn the fufu over, while beating with clean wet hand.
- Shape into balls and serve in warm dish.
- While beating the fufu keep the food protected as much as possible from flies and dust
- If fufu is to be kept for several hours, add a little salt when beating.



What does the typical Ghanaian cuisine look like?

First of all it is good to know, that the Ghanaian people like spicy and hot food. The meal nearly always comes with a hot sauce. Typical meat is chicken, goat, beef, pork and of course fish – and it is always well done. So no worries about raw meat or anything like that. The most important side dishes are made with plantains, yams and rice. Rice is maybe the most important ingredient in the Ghanaian cuisine. Most of the restaurants offer plain rice, jollof rice and fried rice.

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Jollof rice is like religion in Ghana. We even got a cooking lesson from our host mother Mary to learn how to make the typically orange and spicy jollof rice. Ghana is very proud of its rice tradition and especially of the jollof rice. But some other countries also claim themselves as the founder of the jollof rice. The Jollof feud between Ghana and Nigeria is arguably the most heated food debate amongst any diaspora. Nevertheless Ghanaian women really know how to make jollof rice. Cooking is traditionally a thing for women. Men are not really allowed in kitchens.



Ghana has a lot of tropical local fruits, for example mango, coconut, banana, avocado, watermelon, orange and lime. You can find it high above in the trees or on the street, where primarily women sell them. Ghanaians don't know a dessert or many different cakes like we do. If they want something sweet, they get some fruits.

There are also some traditional dishes, which definitely need to be mentioned here. Banku and Fufu are very common in Ghana. Banku is a dough made of a mixture of fermented corn and cassava. The preparation of the dough needs a lot of time – it takes approximately a day until the corn is soaked enough. When the dough gets cooked, it turns into a smooth paste. Fufu nearly looks the same but tastes a bit different.

It is made of cassava with green plantains or yams and mixed with water and stirred on stove. Banku and Fufu are always eaten with a spicy sauce and fish or meat. And it is absolutely important to know, that you should use your hands to eat Banku and Fufu – not both of your hands, but only the right hand!!

Ghana's cuisine is varied and offers a lot of new tastes and experiences. If you don't have the chance to get in touch with it directly in Ghana, here is a recipe for you on the previous page.

Katrin Wengler

The role of the English language in Ghana

In what context is bilingualism important?

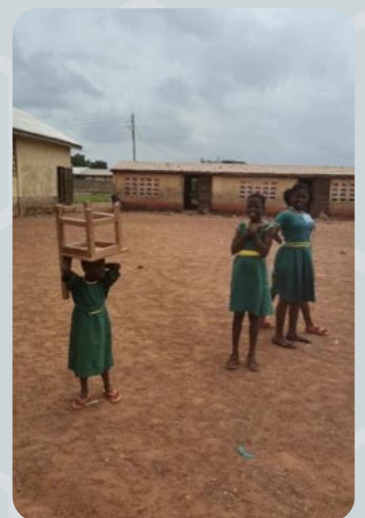
Ghana has not only one, but of course many more languages. One of the official languages would be English.

English is very important, especially when it comes to putting your kids into international schools. This is only possible for the minority of the population, as study fees are shooting towards infinity. But finding the right school type is still a process and there is also a mid-sized pool to choose your options from. Studying in an international school enables you to find a job later on in life more easily and be respected also outside of Ghana. One of the best schools which got recommended to me is the Lincoln Community School. It is located in Accra, has 752 students, is co-educational and prides itself with the title "American International Education."



The next important point also is about some kind of education. Stephen our tour guide here in Ghana teaches his child David four languages at the age of three months only. First of all when the public situation requires it, English is being spoken. For example when we visited his house, which was not far away from TIICLS, we only communicated in English. Furthermore Stephen's wife has her own tribal language. Having been together for many years, Stephen is by now able to talk in this language as well and so they use it when they talk with each other. Then Tree, the language which is being spoken in the area that they are living in is another language we can add to the repertoire. Last but not least Stephen taught us Dagbani, so this would be the fourth language David is going to speak in the future. Impressive, isn't it?

What is also noticeable is that people who have jobs that are quite important, tend to speak English better than the rest of the community. In the village, in which we had our village immersion, the English of the tutors in the public and private school was significantly better than the English from the rest of the community. This is due to the fact that being a teacher in a public school is one of the best and safest jobs you could get. During the global Covid-19 pandemic for example the teachers of the private institutions were left behind. They did not receive any money or appreciation for over 10 months. Meanwhile did the teachers from the public schools still receive a fixed salary every month and could therefore continue buying needed supplies for themselves and their families.



I learned out of this situation that being bilingual has many advantages. But unluckily not everyone can afford the suitable education. This made me tear up as it is so easy to have access to language courses in Austria and I wish the Ghanaians the same in the very near future.

Ines Danmayr

The national sport of Ghana and its historical development

I have chosen this question because I identify with the sport, and I also do sports regularly.

So, I asked myself the question of whether Ghana has a national sport and if so which one. Furthermore, I was interested in its historical development.

It was quite easy to find out that soccer is the national sport of Ghana. The reason for this is, that during my journey through Ghana I saw a lot of soccer fields, soccer shoes for sale at the market, a football stadium, and even children and teenagers wearing jerseys from famous and well-known soccer players. But on the other hand, it was very difficult to find something out about its historical development.



As for today, the Ghanaian Soccer team is one of the best teams on the African continent. They won four titles in the African Cup of Nations, one title at the FIFA U-20 World cup. Furthermore, the two most well-known clubs including Asante Kotoko SC and Accra Hearts of Oak SC won several African Champion League titles (Wikipedia, 2021).

This is not surprising when you consider that England, the inventor of soccer, was the colonial overlord for more than one century. At the beginning of the 18th century, the British brought the ball and the sport to Ghana. In 1882 the official matches were organized and ensured the popularity of the sport. In 1903 the first soccer club was introduced and twenty years later the British arranged the first formal competition. Until the fall of the government under Ghanaians first president Kwame Nkrumah soccer underwent a massive development. He used the sport as a tool to clarify that Africa did not need to bow down before anyone, and certainly not before imperialists. After the fall of the government in 1966 soccer ended abruptly. Most of the football fields, built by Nkrumah, were destroyed. As a result, a lot of soccer players migrated to European clubs. Today the Ghanaian national team is doing quite well, and it has a positive influence on the local league. In the past years, the big teams acquired some big sponsors. Despite earning much money according to Ghanaian standards, most of the players are focusing on a transfer to famous European clubs (TUFA, 2021).



As I mentioned in the beginning, I had a lot of good experiences discover some helpful ideas and thoughts during my journey. Especially at my village immersion. As a recommendation from my neighbor in Austria, I brought a ball to my village. I decided to play with the children in front of my compound. After a while, I recognized that almost everyone played good soccer. I really had to make an effort. In the evening I reflected a little bit and came to the conclusion that, logically, many of the Ghanaians play very well. The reason for this is simple, because a village only has one field, and all the children play soccer at the same time on it. In my case, I played soccer with approximately 70-80 children.

In order to get the ball and to be able to play, you have to assert yourself. The child who has the ball the longest can dribble the best. And this is the reason why many Ghanaian players in European leagues are excellent dribbler

Tobias Dollmann

Being a Woman and Femaleness in Ghana

What is it like to be a woman in Ghana? What is it like to grow up as a girl? These are interesting questions that I tried to answer for myself by talking to people in the country and observing common behaviours. In the following text, I tried to describe what I found out about the Ghanaian culture concerning femaleness. While there are of course many more aspects to consider, I decided to focus on the points growing up as a girl and motherhood.

As a child, you are confronted with gender roles very early. In Ghana, as well as in more or less every other country, there are specific tasks that are attributed to women and others that are attributed to men. That is the case for boys and girls too, except when there are only boys or only girls in a family. Then, the children will do tasks that are not referred to their gender as well.

Girls are for example demanded to help in the household and look after their younger siblings.

Girls are very protected by their families concerning boys and relationships to males. Usually, the parents do not want their daughter to have a relationship with a boy while she is still at school. They want the girl to be focused on her studies, and they are also afraid of an illegitimate pregnancy. This leads to the situation that many girls and young women do not introduce their boyfriend to their family until they are engaged and planning to marry soon.

Being married and having children seems to be the dream of many Ghanaian women. They appear to identify very strongly with their role as a wife and mother. When a woman has a baby, she can have a maternity leave of three months. But there are many professions where you cannot take your child with you, for example as a teacher. So many women stop working when they are having children unless they have a grandmother who can look after the child or when they have the possibility to put the child in a creche.

Most mothers carry their baby with them almost all the time. They carry it on their back while they are working. I also noticed that in contrast to the situation here in Austria, it is normal in Ghana to breastfeed your child in public. Breastfeeding women besides the streets simply seem to be a usual part of everyday life. Despite the fact that Ghanaian culture is still very traditional and prescribes girls and women how to lead their lives in many ways as mentioned, this is an aspect of femaleness that is acted out very openly.

Anna Benedikt

Conclusion

What surprised us during the Study Tour was the african sense of rhythm, how little chocolate and milk someone of us "need" and the social cohesion, e.g. in the village - which can be a social pressure at the same time. What we also didn't expect is, that the North is poor while the South is rich - unlike in Europe (tendentially). The migration movements in Ghana were also new to us. The peaceful and appreciative coexistence of Muslims and Christians was another thing, we were surprised about.

Three things we have learned in Ghana, have been at first: be calm and patient, second: There are a lot of goats in Ghana , thirdly, the basics of the language Dagbani and that there are many things we have no idea about. ;)

Some personal highlights we had, have been the dancing at the kebab party, the incredibly enriching time in the village, John's presentation at the final evening as well as the friday evening church visit which turned out to be a dance- and music-filled celebration.

What we learned about ourselves is, to be more patient and not let yourself get stressed, because everything will happen eventually, just not at the time you want it to. You often achieve more than you give yourself credit for. And you can live in the moment at any time and don't always have to plan everything in advance in your head. Happiness cannot be bought

The term "Study" in Study-Tour means to us to experience a country first hand and being showered with many impressions. Furthermore it is about getting to know people, talking to them and coming into contact with them. To study also means to us to get to know a foreign culture intensively and thereby reflecting on one's own way of life and views.

Participating in the DKA-Study-Tour has motivated us to tell all people in Austria about Ghana, to have Ghanaian mango trees planted and to think more consciously about Africa.

To clean out at home - not all at once and brutally, but use up things and then consider whether you really need them again. We can also learn a lot from the Ghanaians - not only the other way round (as one might think at first).

The Western lifestyle and our perception of economic success as well as a fulfilled life is enormously subjective. Therefore, we cannot put African conditions into our prefabricated pigeonholes without reflecting on them beforehand.

This quotes and sayings best sums up our experiences in Ghana

- *Life is short, waste it wisely.*
- *Go with the flow*
- *Let's continue!*
- *Don't take your life too seriously*
- *Thank you elephantely (for the opportunity to the T11C1S team)*
- *"Strangers have big eyes, but they don't see." (Quote from Salfu)*

THANK YOU!

*TO ALL WHO MADE THIS LERNEINSATZ
SUCH A UNFORGETTABLE & WONDERFUL
EXPERIENCE*

