

Final Report of Practical Training at
Rev. Father John Unit – “We are one - yeye kor”
In Winneba
July 2009 to March 2010

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Seven month has passed by, since I arrived in Ghana on the 15th of July 2009. The school I am working at is Rev. Father John Unit in Winneba. Winneba is set at the Central Region in Ghana, about 60km away from Accra, the capital of Ghana.

In which way did the preparing- seminars in Germany helped me during the programme?

I visited two Seminars of the organization “bezev e.V.” before I came to Ghana. Either I went to the town Kassel to attend one seminar of “EMC- Ghana Project”.

I enjoyed the seminars and the conversations between the volunteers very much. I was happy to attend these seminars, because during my studies and working in the afternoon I had not a lot of time to think about my stay as a volunteer in a deeper meaning. We had a lot of time for discussions and for interaction, which is very important to become aware of the work helping people. Our guides from “bezev e.V.” did a very great job in leading us through our discussions and showing us new areas of development work. It gave me more strength and self confidence. Through the close relationship to our guides, I was able to ask any question and to talk about problems I was afraid of. About many topics I have never thought about before. So the seminars created a new way of how I can help people. Through role plays I had the chance to look from both sides for those who want to help and also those, who the help will be done for. I was a little bit worried, when I got to know, that many of the volunteers already knew much more about their project. Some of them knew which responsibility they will have during their time as a volunteer or how the names of their children are. I only knew the name of my school, name of my headmistress and the name of my family. But I also knew that everything will turn out good.

In the end I thought about whether the seminar would have been more intensive to be only in a group, who will go to Africa/ Asia/ South America. But I liked it very much to be in a mixed group, with volunteers who will go all over the world. The information we learned were not so specific, either more interesting. How it really would look like we really got to know when we arrived.

More specific was the seminar of “EMC- Ghana Project”. On this weekend I met the volunteers, who have just arrived from Ghana. I’ve heard of many stories about interactions between the population and the volunteers, the host families and the schools, they were working with. I was able to ask many questions about items we especially should bring from Germany and what we also can buy in Ghana. It was also good to get to know, how to behave during special situations.

My school in Winneba

In Winneba I was working in Rev. Father John Unit. This is a school for children, who are mentally challenged. We had five regular teachers and three internship students were teaching in the school. Every year internship students are coming from University of Education, Winneba. They almost stay there for one year to practice teaching. Also there is an assistant working at Rev. Father John Unit, who helps cleaning the classrooms or she helps, when there is a child who needs help going to toilet. Our headmistress is Mrs. Comfort Ahiameny. She is also one of the teachers.

I was the first volunteer, who worked there for eight months. The school was founded in 2002 by an Professor Kniel. He was a lecturer at University of Education Winneba for six years. He and his wife built up about 20 Units all over Ghana. The Unit, in which I worked, was attached to Don Bosco Primary School and so we have one classroom at this school. I was mainly working in this class of seven pupils, but five are always regular at school. Our children are on a very low level in their development and in the teaching of the alphabet or numbers from 1- 20 is hard to understand. Rev. Father John, which is our main building, was in the center of Winneba. It has about 20- 30 children regularly. I went there every Thursday to work with one young woman assigned to me on a one to one situation. Her mother wanted her to learn how to use a pair of scissors and a knife in the correct way. But as I started the training I realized I need to get her attention. It was and still is very hard for her to concentrate at least more than 5 minutes on one topic.

Usually 50 children are registered in our Unit, but Parents are not sending their children anymore to school, because we don’t belong to the feeding program. The children in the class, where I worked have behaviour problems. It was my wish that some children of Rev. Father John Unit in town would come to join our class, so that our children learn from those, who have a higher level of development. Yet none of them come to our class, because for most of them it is too far to walk.

My mentor and the connection to the responsible people during my programme

My mentor in Winneba was Mrs. Georgina Agbontor, the teacher of my class. I was working with her nearly everyday, except the day I was at Rev. Father John Unit in town. Mrs. Georgina Agbontor and I had a good relationship. We mostly discussed issues before or after classes or during break. We didn't have a regular meeting time, where we sat down and talked about an issue. I wished we would have had some more time together, where we can only talk about our class and what we are planning to do with them. Or a time, where we sat down and talk about each other wishes. In the beginning we did it once, but unfortunately we didn't do it again. My relationship to the headmistress of my school, Mrs. Comfort Ahiameny, was also very close. Since she was a very good friend to my host family, she often visited us at home. Also in school we sat down together and she answered many of my questions. She was interested in my feelings and often asked whether I have any problems in school or at home. We were able to talk about anything.

EMC- Ghana Project contacted me through e-mail and in February our coordinator Moritz came to Ghana. He was on holidays, but he took his time, to meet the volunteers in Winneba for one day. Then all of us had a meeting together with Mrs. Kwadade in Accra. It was great that Moritz met all of us. We were able to discuss some issues and tell him how family life is going on and of course how we are working in our schools. During my last week Mrs. Kwadade visited me in Rev. Father John School. She wasn't able to come before that day, because she went outside the country. An intermittance meeting would have enabled me to have a new view of how to work in my project or to handle my children in special situations. It would have helped me to reflect on my behaviour in my host family and also in contact with the population. The meeting during my last week in school my headmistress, teachers and myself had the chance to reflect the time of my stay. She asked us to talk about every issue, which is important for us and whether it was positive or negative. It helped our group that a person from outside came to listen to us and she showed us new ways to solve problems. She prepared my school with the information that new volunteers will probably arrive in September.

Unfortunately no person from Special Education Division Office Accra came to the school to see, how things are going on. They also never asked, how I feel in school.

The contact to "bezev e.V." was mostly through e-mail and very often in that time. First we needed to be in contact because of the contract. And when I had questions for example in money issues, visa issues or how to write my smaller reports, they answered very quickly. Fortunately, I had no bigger or severe problem during my stay, so that I would have to talk to "bezev e.V" often. In the end of my stay I attended a mid- term seminar with the organization "AFS". Marlene, Lena and Susi, who are also in Ghana through "bezev e.V.", attended this seminar. For all of them and five other volunteers it has been a mid- term seminar. I was the only person, who was in the last month of her stay. During the seminar I had several new ideas of projects I could have done with my children or how to manage some situations at home. But because I knew I

will leave soon, I saw that there wouldn't be enough space to fulfill these ideas. That made me sad and realized I could have done a lot of wonderful things during my stay in my school. Or I could have handled some situations with people in the society more easy. When I met other volunteers I realized, that I sometimes didn't behave in my own way but rather in the way I thought the people would expect from me. During the mid-term seminar I also learned a lot of new vocabulary in Fante to use them in school or with the population. We had only one day during the seminar to talk about important issues like conflicts with the population, in our project or with our host families. We also had other topics like religion, gender role and our personal mood curve. These were all good and of course very important topics, but there was no time to talk about it very deeply and I was unsatisfied at the end of the day.

Family life

In Ghana I lived together with the Amedzo Family. There is Daddy or Brother Dan, Mum or Sister Hellen, Dela and Edinam. Dela is ten years old and Edinam became five years old in February 2010. Both of my parents are teachers and in addition my daddy is also a taxi driver in the evening and night time. My mother is now writing her final paper in Human Rights in University of Education Winneba, so she is not teaching at the moment. I luckily got my own room in their small apartment, while the parents and daughters were sleeping in one room. Edinam and Dela removed all their toys, so I had enough space for my stuff. From the first day on, they told me and also let me feel, that I'm a member of the family. I was allowed to use everything, what we had in the household- so we shared even our soap. I really enjoyed eating from one plate with my parents. That gave me a very close feeling to my parents. During my last two month of stay my parents were attending a church program every evening, so that we couldn't eat together most of the time, because I came home after they have left. I had especially to my mother a very close relationship because she was mostly at home in the evening, while my daddy is away as a taxi driver. I usually was talking with her about news we saw on TV or about our day. And whenever I had questions to any Ghanaian tradition or situations she answered me. It helped me a lot to understand certain ways of behavior and how to react to people I met during the day. Fortunately my family took me to several Ghanaian events like Funeral, Engagements and Weddings and also Name- Ceremonies. These events are very important in Ghana and for Ghanaian people it is part of life to celebrate all this events very big. As already said, we were eating mostly together and I have learnt a lot about Ghanaian dishes. My special meals were yam and Kotomre stew, Banku and Okrow stew and Koko in the morning. I enjoyed the freshness of plenty fruits- I guess, this is something every white man or woman enjoys. And whenever I didn't like the food, my family made sure, that I'm satisfied by cooking noodles or rice on my own or they cooked a different dish for me. Fortunately there was never a big conflict with my host family during my stay. I also tried, not to worry them and to get adjust to their family life, so that all of us have a good time together. In the beginning it was a change for me to see, that children in Ghana have such a big responsibility very early in life. They learn how to cook, to

wash, to serve food and have to send many things at a time. Also my older host sister had such a big responsibility at home and in the beginning I really didn't understand, why a child has to do so many things in the household and it felt for me more like she was a servant. But as time passed by, I learned that it is part of Ghanaian culture that children have to help the parents as much as possible. I loved to come home, while my sisters were waiting for me in the hall. I had especially to my smaller sister, Edinam, a very close relationship. She is a very smart girl for her age, but as a five year old girl, she often looks for physical proximity. When Mama and Daddy weren't there, it was me, who she came to and sat on my laps. Then she also gave me hugs, which I missed from my family and friends in Germany.

What did I do during my free time and which experiences I made?

In my free time, I faced a lot of different situations and I wish you would have seen me, how I reacted in these moments. I was living close to the North Campus from the University of Education of Winneba. Mostly I went there to go to the Internet café or to sit on Campus. There I also met two good friends- Wendy and Albert, two students of the University. I met them mostly after school in the afternoon and I chat with them. I talk about my experiences and they also helped me to understand certain things. They showed me places, where I can print pictures and so on. Sometimes I visit friends and families to talk to, play games and to watch pictures. For two months I attended a choir at the University, although I was not a student. It was a ministry choir and so we were singing gospel songs in English and Twi. Unfortunately I already forgot the beautiful Twi song- perhaps I may meet somebody who can teach me again.

In the beginning of my stay in Ghana, I was afraid to go out and buy things on the street or to face other people. I feared, they would cheat me or I would blame myself by not understanding, when they talk to me in the local language, but with the help of my coordinator at Winneba I overcome it.

When I had to buy things for the school I went around in town, searching for them. I prepared items and myself for the next school day and also typed a diary about school lesson to remember what happened in school. Once a month I saw Marlene, who also came through "bezev e.V." and lived in Swedru, which is not far from my place. While speaking to her, I learned the German sign language, which I'm proud of. I'm still not a good student of sign language, but I'm able to communicate.

Some lazy days were also in between all of them. Then I just stayed at home, reading a book, slept in the afternoon or played with my younger sisters. I almost watched TV every evening- in Germany I won't have time for that again. I made many interesting, nice and not so nice experiences with the population in Ghana.

I was asked several times, whether I want to marry a man. The situations were very funny. I just entered a taxi and the guy, who sat next to me and told me: "I love you and I want to marry you". My answer was: "Thank you, but I don't love you and I don't want to marry you". Then he asked: "But why?" I said: "Please, give me one good reason, why you want to marry me!" "Because you are white!" I guess this is only one experience I made and which I didn't understand mostly. Perhaps I am able to follow this way of thinking small, why Ghanaian people want to marry white people. They want to go abroad, get to know the world or want to earn more money. Mostly I made the experience that somebody wanted to get to know me. The person was interested to come along with me and they were not more interested in me as a person. So after a while I was really exhausted to talk again to people, because I had the expectation, people just want to have my number, to get a contact to a European Country. However I also met people, who were very interested in my work or my personality. It was mostly a short meeting with the people, who were really interested in having a longer conversation. But especially these meetings kept me on doing what I do.

When you walk through the streets of Winneba, there was always somebody, who was calling or coming to me to talk for some small time. After two months my mood depending on this conversation was very bad and I tried to cut the conversations very fast. My friends told me, I shouldn't be unfriendly to the people. I realized that I was a little bit too hush to some people. It helped me a lot to talk with my friends about the experiences I made. Within in the time, I guess, I understand the attitude of the people better and was cooler than before. When children were calling, I mostly respond and also realized they just like to see a white lady. I was more open and also interested into conversations and gave the people the chance to talk to me. I loved that you can buy everywhere you go food and drinks on the street. You never have to go far. But I learned to select the places, where I eat my meals, because eating outside is not the best. I also got to know, where the stores are in town to buy food and other items for the cheapest prize. One of the most things I enjoyed was to come home from traveling. I liked it very much to be outside, get to know new people, new environments, to drive in the Tro Tro- main lorry car to travel with in Ghana- but it also took a lot of energy and it was dangerous, too, because of the road conditions. The best thing was to meet my family after arriving at home. They welcomed me with a smile and nice food.

People are lovely here. Wherever you go, there is always somebody, who is calling you, asking you whether you need help. But it's not every time that people want to be good to you. Often they try to cheat you as a white person. White people are always rich in Ghana. I've learned always to ask for the prize before buying, even when you are going to take the taxi, you should talk about the prize before you enter the car. Otherwise you will be surprised when reaching the place. So sometimes you really feel discriminated being a white.

Within the time I traveled a lot. I went nearly to all regions in Ghana- Ghana is a beautiful country with many resources. The population was always friendly to strangers and happy to meet you. Every region has its own character and I was fascinated about all the different landscape.

Especially the north shows the variety, that Ghana has. It feels like you are more in Turkey or another orient country. I also visited Susi and her family in Kumasi two times. To Susi I often talked on the phone and it helped to talk to an outstanding person, when I was unsure with situations in school. Or we talked about situations we made with the population.

What have I learned during my stay for my own personality?

In the beginning of my stay I felt alone sometimes. I wanted to talk about my experiences being a white person among all the black people. Often I felt tired of being seen everywhere and want to talk to somebody, who is also in my situation. After I met other white people I saw, how much I was already into the Ghanaian life. Whenever I stayed at hotels or guesthouses and afterwards entered the streets of Ghana again, I felt much more comfortable being in this part of life. Probably I have learned that everything will take time and it doesn't always go the way you want to have it. In cooperating and working with others, I have to accept other's views. You need to take your time in everything. I'm a person, who tries not to get into conflicts, so I most of the time try, to adapt to people. During the time my fiancé visited me, I learnt, that it is good to be, who you are. No need to be afraid, that people don't like you, because there are always people, who like you and others, who don't like you. My fiancé, when in Ghana, behaved the way, he is. In the beginning, I always tried to show him how things are done in Ghana or how to answer the people. But people liked him, just the way he was. Also in my host family, he just did and says, what he thought and I learned a lot from him, so I also try to behave more free. I really got a new view of myself.

Apart from all of this, the most important thing is, you can feel at home all over the world, whether you just meet the right people. Africa is not what many Europeans see it to be. Ghana is a country in Africa, where conditions of life, language and politics are different from other African Countries like Tanzania. Africa is not Ghana. Africa is a continent. When I thought about Ghana before my coming, I mostly thought of sand, animals and small villages in the bush and that people are not well educated and that most of the people need help. But when you really enter the life in Ghana you see the difference. There are people, who are lecturers, big cities, and big buildings. Houses, which are made of wood, cement, stone or loam. And Ghana is also not that country, which has plenty of wild animals like Tanzania or Kenya. When you come to Ghana, you see all classes and religions living with each other in peace. They accept the culture and ceremonies of each other. It's fantastic to see that, because this is not the experiences in Germany.

How I was able to work in my project and helped with my own ability and qualification?

First of all, it helps me a lot, that I'm a person, who is very interested into other people's life. When I come to a new place and I am alone, I get in contact with people very fast and ask a lot of questions. This let me understood some things very fast. I'm also very open minded to new ideas, views of life or how to solve problems. But this sometimes also turns into a problem for me. Since I accept other peoples opinions whether I like them or not and I'm afraid to tell the person my own opinion, because I don't want to get into a conflict with him or her. I often get into a conflict within myself and become disappointed by not telling the person my opinion.

As I am studying Inclusive Education in Germany, I have got to know a lot about the school system for people with disability in Germany. During my studies we discuss a lot of experiences we make in society as well as personal experiences. In these discussions we reflect our own behaviour and learn from each other. I guess the reflections also helped me during my stay and my work in Rev. Father John Special Unit. I tried to give the pupils as much responsibility as possible and learned to take my time doing something. I learned to be more patience with the pupils. I start to write down, what we did every day in school during the first term. It helped me to remember later, what we did and I was able to reflect, what happened in school and where I change my behaviour. Through this diary it was easier for me to follow the development of our pupils in class. I'm disappointed with myself I didn't learn the local language Fante well. It would have helped me a lot to talk to the children. Often I saw that they didn't understand me and it was not possible for me to keep doing what I started. Easy vocabulary like to get to know the age of someone were not possible for me. Or to ask during lesson, which colour, or animal is that, I couldn't handle the situation always. By trying to explain a more complex issue or topic I always needed a teacher with me, who translated it for me. I used my hands and feet and arms a lot, but when the children had questions I couldn't answer them.

When I was sixteen years old, I worked with teenagers and children. During a social year I worked in a group for children with speech and behaviour problems and during my studies I worked with older people who have disabilities. So I got to know a lot of different areas in working with people with disabilities and I made many experiences, which let my knowledge grow. I am able to compare the system of disability of Germany and Ghana. It was possible for me to get into the system in Ghana a little bit deeper and understand the way the Ghanaian government came to handle the issue of disability.

Description of the project during the first term in school

Before our first term started, Sister Gina, the teacher of my class, and I sat down to discuss, what plans we have for the term. We realized that the communication of our children is very less for their age and so put our ideas together. By using the drum and singing songs, we were able to get their attention much more. So I created a little music project for our children. For about 1 ½

month I draw every week the programme on a paper to explain it to the children. Every morning we sat in a circle, where we sing familiar songs. I tried to use a logical method how to build up the project. In the beginning we had exercises and games, where our bodies and names were involved into songs or dances. Later we learned especially about the drum, because it is the most common instrument in Ghana for music. We played the drum and sung at the same time. We learned also some new songs. Let me give you an exact example to understand how our lessons looked like.

Before the lesson, our children go to morning assemblies with Rev. Fr. John KG pupils. After that we marched into our classroom. I begin the lesson by sitting the pupils in a circle. Sometimes not every child wanted to sit directly, so we gave him/her the chance to walk around and mostly he/she joined us later. In our morning lesson we sang many different songs. These were songs about our body or about animals. We accompany the songs with instruments, clapping or stamping our feet. It was fantastic to see, how enthusiastic our children become by singing some songs. They were not able to say every word of the song, but whenever they liked a song, you see it in their body language and they come to attention. During the singing, those children, who have problems and were not able to sit the whole time join us because they like the song. Mr. Piano, a small doll made by foam, was with us every morning and talked to the children. Already after a week he had no hair anymore and some parts of his body were removed. We had a programme paper, which was fixed on ply wood. Together we went there and looked, what was expecting us. Since our children can't read, we used the programme paper and Madam Gina told the children, what we wanted to do. One day, we took local items and built our own instruments. We had sand, stones, shells, crown cork, bottles, tins and sticks of wood. Two of the children started to fill the sand into the bottles. Then they took the shells and put them inside the bottles. This trained their fine motor skills. Others listened to the self made instruments afterwards very carefully. To another boy my teacher and I hold the bottles next to his ear and shook it. He became fascinated by the sound. Later he also shook the bottles on his own. Two of the boys took Milo tins and two sticks of wood and begin to play them like the drum. It was noisy in the classroom. But it was also good- everybody was using the local items to make sounds. The moment I said "Stop!" and hold my finger in front of my mouth, suddenly there was silence. The children understood and also listened to me. This is how the lesson ends. Unfortunately on other days things didn't work. The children couldn't concentrate or sit for longer time. I then for example have to take them one after another and we sung a song about our fingers. It goes like that: "One little, two little, three little fingers. Four little, five little, six little fingers..." During the singing I lift up my fingers. After that I went with the child to the board, hold the hand on the board and drew the hand on it. Then we counted the fingers again. They had fun and were even able to wait for each others turn.

Another day we invited a music student to the unit. He brought drums and castanet and taught our children one famous rhythm on the drum and another Fante song. During break many children from KG came to our classroom and played with us. We danced, drummed and sang. It

was a fantastic day and the children were so interested in what the student did and gave him attention the whole morning. I guess our neighbour class was happy, when we had finished the project. Sometimes we were very noisy, but fortunately nobody was complained.

In class we sometimes had days of chaos, especially when I had no idea, how to keep on with what I was doing. I came home tired and weak and had to think about different and new methods to teach my children. In our school teachers also use the cane during teaching. I felt very uncomfortable, whenever teachers used the cane. We talked about that issue sometimes, but never really sat down and had a bigger discussion. So I tried to find my own way, when the children were fighting or behaved inappropriately.

Now in the end, it is nice to see, how our pupils have developed. I would like to see, how things will go on in future. One boy is now beginning to speak and often repeats, when the teacher says one word several times. It is wonderful to see, how much fun he has, when we talk to him. Two others can sit and concentrate on one exercise for a longer time and do them with more confidence.

As I wrote in the beginning, I worked in Rev. Father John Unit in town with one young woman, who is 21years old. In the end I did an assessment with her to find out, how her skills have developed. I also wrote an Individualized Education Programme (IEP) about her. In this programme I wrote down, which strength she has and in which skills she should improve. Every Thursday I met her in school. We did many exercises, like picture reading, matching colours, doing a puzzle or we coloured. It took a long time until we had finished one exercise because she couldn't concentrate for at least five minutes on one exercise. When other people move around in the room or cars passed by she looked at them. I went to her family's house three times and asked her mother a "Parent Questionnaire". The questions were about the background data of the child and family, about the child's handicap and challenges the family has to face and about strengths and resources of the child. All in all, the young woman became better in her skills and she developed also new skills, when you read an assessment, which was made in 2007.

Contact to Don Bosco Primary School

Because we are a Unit we belong to a regular school, the Don Bosco Primary School for girls. As I told in the chapters before, my classroom was next to this school. During the eight months the integration of our unit for decisions and meetings increased. Even we belong to the regular school, we are not part of government programs or we have to fill out forms separately. Also we receive a different capitation than they do. In the beginning it seemed they forgot us and didn't inform us about the plans they did. Or pupils were sent to our classroom to collect money for a funeral, but we weren't inform who died. First I had the feeling they only informed us about meetings, when they needed something from us. This could be, because the headmistress of the primary school was new and she first had to get used that we are also part. Later we were more

part of decision making and meetings. It is important to be part of that, because often things happened we didn't know before. In the end the communication was more continuous.

The integration of our children to the regular school

The special character of a unit is, that we are not a school on our own, but we are under a regular school. So naturally it should happen, that children with and without disability meet and learn from each other. Unfortunately not all of our children had the chance to be next to the regular school, because the regular school moved away, while our unit couldn't move because of walking distances for the children. So only one class came to the new site next to the regular school. The children in our class were known at the other children. They mostly met during break and played with each other. They played football, walked around together or try to get to know each other by painting, Children of the regular school sometimes looked strange at our children and didn't know how to handle them, but later the insecurity was gone and they were interested into the other person. Units are good way, so that children learn that they don't have to be afraid of children with a disability.

Project Fund Raising- Plans to build up a toilet

Our school doesn't has a toilet, so I thought to use the fund raising program of EMC- Ghana Project to built up the toilet. I started to organize this project very late, so I couldn't finish. We decided, that together with the new volunteers it is hopefully possible, to finish the toilet. Together with Mr. Michael Alayi the steel bender, the carpenter and the mason came to tell us the estimate to build it up. I wrote an estimate, which I gave to Moritz Reckling, the coordinator of EMC- Ghana Project. I hope, that the project can be continue, when the new volunteers will arrive in September.

How will I benefit from my experiences I made in Ghana in future?

Through writing continually letters to my family and friends by e-mail, I was a lot in contact with people in Germany. Through writing about my experiences, I reflected myself. My stay in Ghana changed my view of an African country. To live in a European country and you talk about an African country, you will always be wrong, until you get there. I met nice people, who helped me a lot and gave me tips, whenever I had problems. Always, when I had to ask something or a situation was not clear to me, people explained it to me and were opened to any kind of question. Perhaps I can now also answer question, which will be expecting me by my return in Germany. I learned to work more on my own. When I didn't receive too much help, I tried to face situations alone. It didn't work always the right way, but does it always has to be perfect? During my work I also faced a lot of new situations, which will help me to face any similar situation in Germany. I received a lot of new knowledge. For example by talking about problems for the feeding programme or for applies we had to write for school, I got to know, how the education system in

Ghana is working. I guess I learned so many things and I myself changed also a little bit during my stay, but I cannot tell directly now, how my stay will affect my life in future. Perhaps I can tell you in two or three month's time. It is hard for me to imagine that in one week time I won't be here anymore, but in Germany sitting together with my family. A big benefit which I will take along is that I met so many nice people, who cared for me and really became friends.

Do I recommend sending a following volunteer to Rev. Fr. John Unit in Winneba?

I was the first volunteer, who went to Rev. Father John Unit in Winneba and I hope that new ones will follow. The Unit was founded by a German, who was Professor Kniel. He was a lecturer at the University of Winneba. The years, he worked in our Unit, we were supported by GTZ from Germany. After he left, the feeding programme and the support through GTZ was canceled. Although we are a small school, I see that some more things could have been done. At the moment the pupils are irregular and there is a lack of support. Fortunately we had our first meeting with all teachers in the beginning of January. During this meeting I heard a lot of interesting things, the Unit has done before. I got to know that they went to a Radio station in town to talk about disability in the local language and invited the parents to bring their children to our Unit. They went to two churches to explain the situation in the Unit and the churches donated soap, toilet role and cups. I mean the Unit had plenty of ideas, how to interact with the community and it worked out. I didn't have such great ideas, but perhaps the subsequent volunteers will let the motivation grow, to start the projects again. As the Unit was built up by a German, it is good to maintain the relationship between the school and Germany. Our Unit is also the only place in Winneba, where mentally challenged children are educated.

Since the unit is attached to a regular school, we depend a lot on Don Bosco Girls Primary School. So everything we are planning to do goes through the Headmistress of Don Bosco Girls Primary School. The Unit wishes to be allowed to handle more things on their own. New volunteers will continue the exchange of our experiences. New people coming to the Unit will bring new ideas on how to handle situations or to help change the situations.

Which aspects should or could be changed from the Ghanaian or German project partners?

First of all I have to say, that I felt very comfortable during my stay in Ghana. And both, the German as well as the Ghanaian project partners were responsible for my comfort ability.

I realized that it is very important to speak the local language depending in which area you live as a volunteer. It would help a lot, when much time is given at the beginning of the stay, where I

could learn it a lot. That means we would need an organized language teacher, so that during our stay, we could still look for someone, who could teaches us. Nearly every child speaks it and English is not well understood by them. This is because some people in society don't speak English well. So, when you want to communicate with them, it is appropriate to use the local language. Every time they hear a white person speaking their language, they become happy and love to communicate with you.

Now the time is over in Ghana and I really enjoyed my stay, even I missed my family in Germany, too. I'm glad, that I had a wonderful time and met many great people. Now I'm looking forward to share my experiences with many people in Germany and hope to come back in future to visit my family and friends here and to see, how my school will develop.