

# Ghana Make a Difference

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Ghana

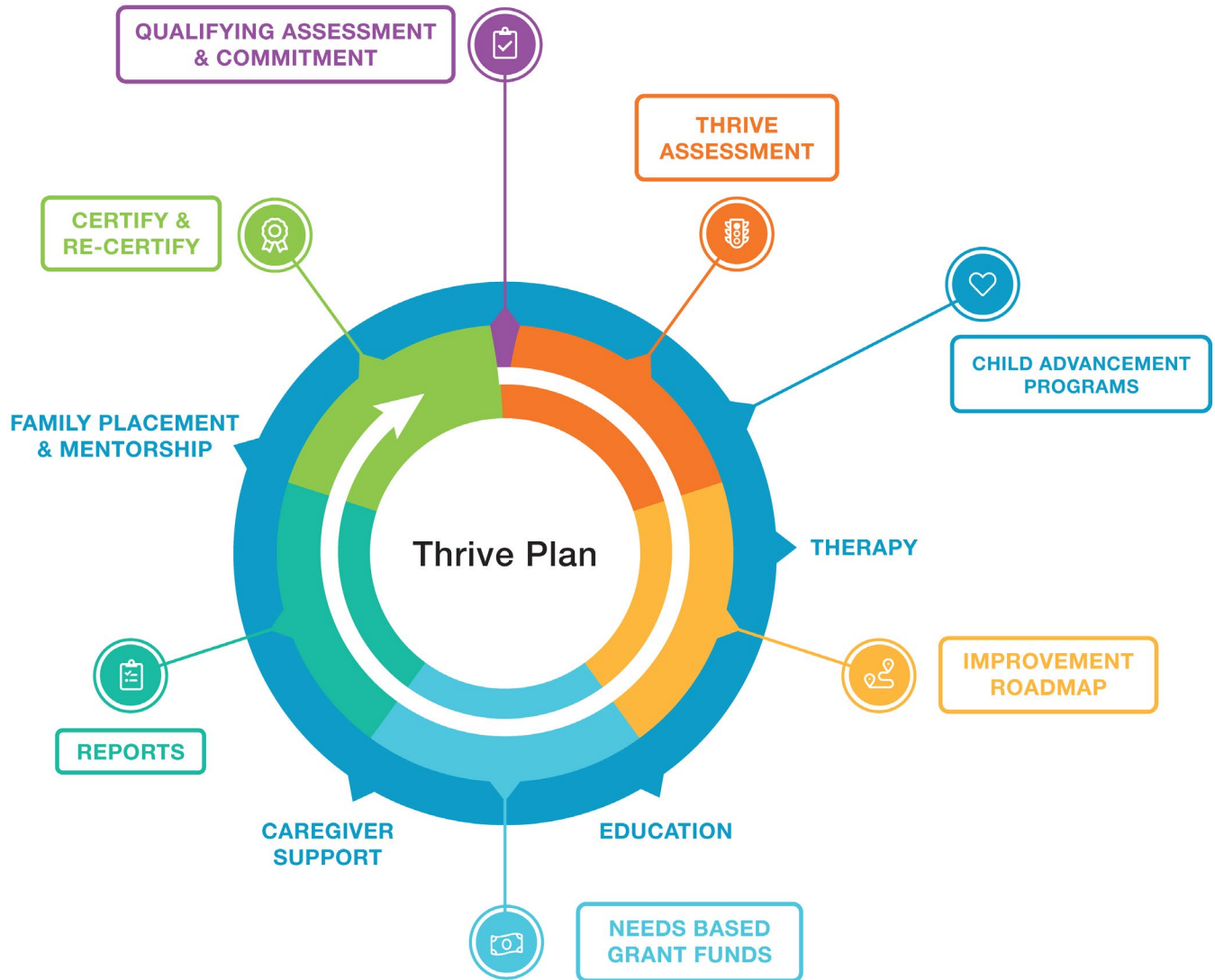


## HOME IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

October | 2022



# The Thrive Plan





## Thrive Plan Agreement

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to “Lift Orphans from Surviving to Thriving.” We are dedicated to programs that offer long-term success. Through vetted relationships and clear priorities, we help connect donors to programs that are already working.

Each Improvement Roadmap (OIR) is built with the home's leadership after reviewing the results from the Thrive Assessment. In order to provide children with better outcomes, the leadership prioritizes initiatives and works with A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) to create a plan for the next six months and beyond. The result is a document that allows donors and other parties to clearly see how they can contribute to improving the environment that will allow orphaned children to thrive.

Achieving certification demonstrates the ability of the home's leadership to provide a place where children can thrive, heal, and be prepared for a joyful and productive life. For most homes, the certification process takes a year. ACHF is deeply committed to our orphanage partners, and we demonstrate that commitment through grants made to help achieve strategic initiatives, coordinating with a network of partners to help address needs, and building strong, ongoing relationships with the home's leadership to provide support, coaching, expertise, and advocacy.

Homes will be recertified annually, using the Thrive Assessment and building a new OIR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then reports back to donors, sharing the home's progress towards their goals. A Child's Hope Foundation works as a partner with home's leadership to ensure that improvements are maintained and that children have the best opportunity to thrive.



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# Overview of Orphanage

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## Background

Cory and Stacey Hofman first traveled to Ghana in May of 2012; seeing that so many children were lacking many basic necessities in life, they were determined to help. Upon returning home, the Hofmans joined with others in Idaho to create Ghana Make a Difference (GMAD). GMAD was founded in July 2012 to protect vulnerable children and to preserve families in Ghana. We also have a sister organization in Ghana, also called Ghana Make A Difference, that is a legally incorporated Ghana charitable organization.

Since GMAD started, on five acres of land donated by the local village chief, we have constructed. Currently, they operate a main children's home (8,200 sq ft), smaller home for children with special needs, a school, a dental/medical clinic, and a volunteer house.

We employ 36 local, full-time Ghanaian and refugee workers (nannies, social workers, teachers, cooks, maintenance and grounds workers, and management). Each year we have over 100 volunteers that travel to Ghana (mostly from the USA) to help us maintain and operate the home.

# Mission

We believe that children have been endowed by their creator with the inalienable right to be reared in a family. That's why we make a difference in the lives of Ghanaian children by providing them with a place they can call home: a temporary home that includes food, shelter, and physical, mental, and emotional nurturing, while trying to reintegrate them with their biological family or find them a new adoptive family. We shelter children who have been abandoned and who have been rescued from forced child labor.

We believe that families are central to God's plan for His children's eternal destiny, and our operations in Ghana reflect this belief. We preserve families by providing a path to self-reliance through education, adult literacy, vocational training, social assistance, healthy living, and access to medical care.

Our goal is to always be, pound for pound, the most impactful place you can put a dollar. That's because we shelter and reintegrate some of the most vulnerable children in this world. We run our operations using sound business practices, operating on donations and volunteer efforts from people like you, so 100% of every dollar goes directly to the cause. Anyone can make a difference at GMAD.

## What Makes This Orphanage Unique?

We shelter children who have been rescued from forced labor trafficking, abandonment, or who have special needs until we can reintegrate them with their families or successfully place them somewhere else on the path to self-reliance.

In Ghana, children with special needs are stigmatized and are even thought to be part of a curse that is the source of a community's problems. These children are quickly abandoned and left for dead. We offer these children a home, and in turn, we can teach our other children, our staff, and our community (1) the truth about disabilities, (2) the good to all that comes from inclusion, and (3) the power of love. Our partner, Acacia Shade, has helped us with these efforts.

Many of the children sheltered at GMAD have been rescued from labor trafficking and have never attended school. The GMAD Academy of Learning was created in 2017 to provide a powerful curriculum that is customized and flexible to better meet the needs of our children. Unique for Ghana, our children learn on tablets and laptops. The school is located onsite.



## Long-Term Vision

Every child in Ghana is attending school and being raised in a family.

### WHAT PIECES OF THE VISION DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS?

Double our capacity from 60 children to 120. Complete new school to educate these children and others in the community who are unable to attend school.





# The Thrive Assessment

## What is the Thrive Assessment?

The United Nations (UN), an international organization, has worked tirelessly to find ways to promote a better quality of life so that basic needs are met. In 1959, the UN adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, and nutrition.

Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation ([miraclefoundation.org](http://miraclefoundation.org)), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of the rights to the children in their care. This Thrive Scale not only gives child care facility leaders a picture of how they're doing, but specific and practical steps to improve.

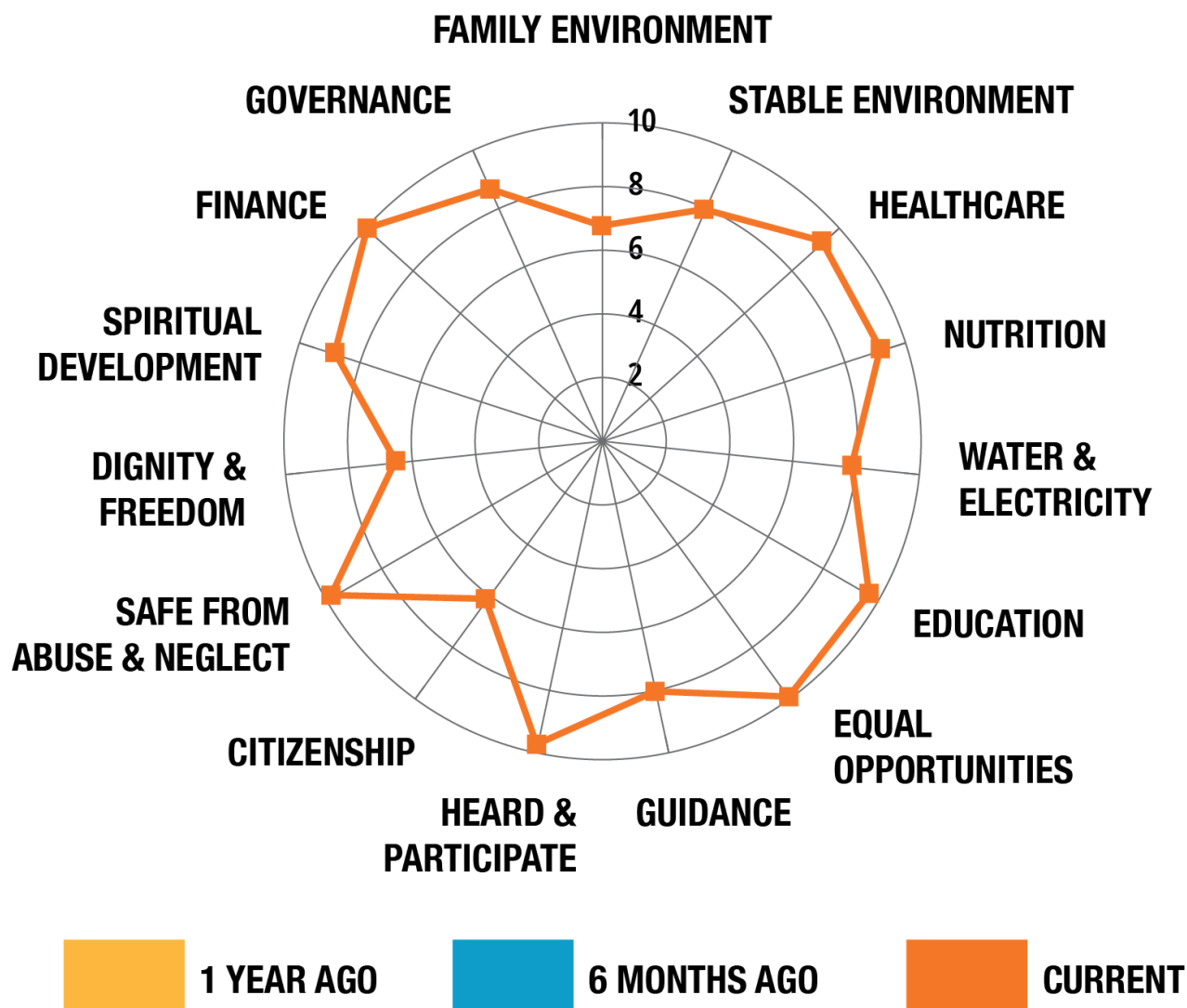


With permission, A Child's Hope Foundation has revised The Thrive Scale to make it adaptable for orphanages. We have codified all 12 Rights, as well as a Finance, Governance, and Human Resource standard, resulting in a total of 15 ACHF standards. These standards ensure that children receive care that truly helps them to thrive, now and in the future.

The Thrive Assessment will be administered every 6 months to chart the progress of each standard. It, along with the Orphanage Improvement Roadmap and individual Child's Hope Plans, will measure and help obtain these rights for each child.



# Current Thrive Scale for Orphanage





## Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

GMAD is **SUSTAINING** in the right to live with family. The home has 78 kids and 36 staff (caregivers, cooks, security, facilities, and social workers). Kids range from 3-18. The home is in the works of getting a nursery and has even hired the nannies for that specific assignment. When kids reach the age of 18, when they would typically age out, the home sponsors them to go to a boarding school, and they are still allowed to come back home on breaks and holidays while they are attending this school. They promote family visits case by case, but it depends greatly on the families. About half or more of the kids receive visits from family members. The home has nannies that stay on-site with the kids. They work on average 5 days a week and get a rest or two each week. The home is not currently set up as smaller groups (family groups), but it is broken into 4 groups (older boys, younger boys, older girls, and younger girls). Caregivers are doing weekly check-in/training with directors. International Justice Mission is doing quarterly training and evaluations on caregivers.

No next steps are needed at this time.



## Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

GMAD is **SUSTAINING** in this category. The home has age-appropriate rules that are explained to kids in an appropriate time frame as they adjust to the home. Kids have a lot of time to spend with siblings and other kids. Kids have chores around the house, like sweeping and collecting trash. Caregivers are great at keeping the kids on schedule and ensuring they have what they need. The home leadership would like to see the caregivers engage a little more with the children in play and other time together. The home is trying to transition to a more foster parent-type structure with foster moms in each home. There is a weekly movie night with popcorn that all kids participate in. A Ghana tradition is to soak a person with water on their birthday as a way to celebrate with them. The home participates in this tradition, and the kids enjoy it.

No next steps are needed at this time.



## Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is **THRIVING** in access to healthcare. GMAD brings medical groups to visit the home and care for children, including a yearly dental exam. They also have a medical clinic onsite and a hospital nearby in emergencies. The home counts on a medical fund for things that occur that need quick funding. All kids are insured with medical insurance. The boys take pride in receiving weekly haircuts and look clean and fresh. The girls change their hairdos frequently and care is taken to ensure all kids feel good and look clean. The home has 5 kids with severe special needs. Those nannies receive special training to care for these kids in the way each one needs.

No next steps are needed at this time.



## Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In the right to nutrition, the home is **THRIVING**. The home has focused on cleaning up the food storage area, and it is now free of bugs and very well organized. The home has sufficient food for all meals purchased as needed from a local market. The kids like the meals prepared. There is a menu prepared in advance for the week. The home has had nutritionists visit over the years to assess the menu and ensure it is sufficient to provide for the kids' needs. GMAD collects donations that they use to purchase food. It's about 30% of the budget that is dedicated to food. Slightly over \$2/day per kid for 3 balanced meals. Food is always an ongoing need, and an increased budget would ease the burden each month.

- ☐ The home has an ongoing need for donations of food. An increase in the monthly budget of \$250.





## Right to Safe Water and Facilities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

GMAD is **SUSTAINING** in the right to safe and adequate water and facilities. The Social Welfare Department in Ghana inspects the home annually for safety and other compliance issues. The home has access to water via an onsite well drilled by another organization's donor. They also have access to city water. They can pump it 8 hours a day, and then it dries up, but the next day they can pump another 8 hours. They store the water in tanks. One-third of the water is filtered and pumped to the drinking taps. The rest of the water is used for toilets and showers, etc. They have tanks that collect rainwater used for washing clothes and cooking (boiled). When the home gets low on water, they pay for a water truck to come to fill the tanks. The home has 4 members of a facilities team to maintain the property -things like an electrician, plumbing, gardener, etc. The home would like to have solar throughout the property. Right now, they have a huge generator that they can use when needed. The Ghanaian government does plan power outages, and the home uses the generator during those times.

The home has need to expand the kitchen. This will make for a better work environment for the cooks, be safer for the children (moving the cooking space from foot traffic), and set up GMAD to care for additional children in the future.

A dream would be for the property to run on solar. The home currently spends over \$800 a month on electricity. A solar system for each building would run around 6,000-8,000 per building. A system for the whole property would be about \$60,000-\$90,000 USD.

- ☐ Solar panel system sufficient for the property - \$60,000- \$90,000
- ☐ Expand the kitchen- \$5,000



## Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In the area of education, the home is **THRIVING**. All able kids are enrolled and attending school. They have a hard drive of educational materials they use with the kids at home. Ongoing internet access would cost \$1000/month. The home has a pay-as-you-go plan that they can use for school work or other things. At times, the home will receive kids that don't speak English and only speak an African dialect. The home works with those kids, and most can speak English within 6 months of arriving at the home. English is spoken in the home, which becomes a huge benefit to the kids as they go out into the world already knowing English. The home hopes all kids leave knowing English, writing and reading, and computer skills. The home has a library with books, and it is accessible to children to use the books when they desire. The home evaluates the stocked books about once a year. It's organized into reading levels, and they try to include as many culturally appropriate books about Africa as possible.

- ☐ Internet access - \$1000/month USD

## Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is **THRIVING** in the right to equal opportunities. The kids have access to play soccer or dance. Activities are encouraged. The playground area for the kids with special needs could use some attention. They do have toys for those kids, but they tend to get broken and could use repair. Ghana, as a whole, is behind in terms of gender equality, but GMAD is making great strides to have equality in their staff and for the children. There are both male and female workers and role models on site for the kids. The education system in the home and the frequent medical missions both contribute to the equal opportunities offered to kids that live in this home.

No next steps are needed at this time.



## Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

GMAD is **SUSTAINING** in the right to guidance. The home has a social worker who checks in with the kids monthly. Because the home is working towards reintegration for their kids, there is frequent interaction with the social worker. Some of the older children will start to shadow the onsite workers or local tradesmen to learn valuable skills they can use once they transition out of the home. During the annual training from the Department of Social Welfare they cover topics like how to teach and reinforce the skills and behavior of the children.

The home would like to hire another social worker to provide more opportunities for kids to receive psychological therapy and support.

☐ An additional social worker focused on psychological therapy for kids- \$225/month USD



## Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is **THRIVING** in this right to be heard. The kids choose what they want to do in their free time and what they wear daily. The kids have a lot of communication and interaction with the leaders and workers of the home. Some kids have risen as natural leaders among the group. It feels like a healthy dynamic among the children. The weekly staff meeting being held has helped improve the culture of the home. Kids can tell that the leaders have their best interests in mind.

No next steps are needed at this time.



## Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is **SURVIVING** in this category. About half the kids have a birth certificate, and although the government doesn't encourage the home to have these, GMAD would still like all kids to have them. Kids have chores and help around the house. The nannies and older kids will wash the clothes of the youngest kids, but as they get older, they are taught to wash their own clothing. Most kids sweep the grounds and pick up trash each morning. The older kids help when medical or dental missions come, they will help with things like translation, office aids, admin support, passing out water, etc. The kids are allowed to give back during activities like this. Offsite activities in the past have been visits to the ocean to hang out at the beach and going to the local visiting swimming pool.

The home wants to involve the older kids more in the household tasks or other errands like grocery shopping, etc., to teach them life skills.

- ☐ Create a plan to include the older kids in age-appropriate errands and tasks





## Right to Be Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

GMAD is **THRIVING** in protection from abuse and neglect. The home is enclosed with a cinder block wall that surrounds the property. The windows on the homes are also reinforced with bars. A common practice in Ghana is caning. The GMAD home is proud that caning is not a practice supported by the home or the staff. All volunteers that visit the home are required to get a background check before coming on-site as a way to protect the children in their care.

All staff is trained weekly on topics including positive discipline techniques and punishment. The home has a child protection policy in place that includes the policy that no adult is allowed to be alone with a child. IJM does training that educates the kids on recognizing and reporting abuse when they see it.

No next steps are needed at this time.



## Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is **SUSTAINING** in the right to dignity and freedom. The kids are bathed daily, and their clothing is kept clean. The home has a bed for each child and sufficient supplies for the kids. The kids have a playground, including a basketball court, soccer field, and jungle gym for the kids to use during recreational time. The kids can check out a soccer ball or frisbee to use during playtime and are responsible for returning what they check out.

The home has a shortage of fire extinguishers to use in an emergency. There is one on-site but it would be good to have 4 additional throughout the home. The home would like to put into place a plan of action in case of an emergency at the home (earthquake, fire, home invasion, etc.).

☐ 4 fire extinguishers - \$ 100 USD for 4

☐ Emergency Plan of Action



## Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

GMAD is **THRIVING** in spiritual development for the kids. Ghana is a very religious country, 70% Christian and 30% Muslim. GMAD is not faith-based, accepting people of all faiths they allow those on site to practice Christianity and the kids have the opportunity to worship onsite. A lot of the older kids attend seminary classes or other religious classes. The local Christian missionaries will spend time with the kids as role models and giving service.

No next steps needed at this time.



## Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is **THRIVING** in the finance standard. GMAD has a third-party financial review from an individual that comes each month. The home works off a monthly budget and requests money from their headquarters specific to their needs. The home has a system in place to easily provide receipts for all donated goods or funds.

No next steps are needed at this time.



## Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

GMAD is **SUSTAINING** in this category. The directors meet with staff every week to check in and address any issues as needed. GMAD has an active license to function as a children's home in Ghana. The school on-site also has an active license to run as a school for the community, with about 20-30 additional students attending from the surrounding community. The home has a job description they use when looking for new caregivers, and they do ongoing reviews of the caregivers to ensure a good fit for the home and the children.

The Department of Social Welfare offers caregivers training on attachment and child development. The home would like to incorporate training for caregivers on things like CPR, infant care, caring for sick children, etc.).

- ☐ Incorporate training for caregivers on CPR, infant care, caring for sick children, etc.

# Strategic Initiatives

## EXPANDING OUR KITCHEN

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	This will make for a better work environment for our cooks, be safer for the children (moving the cooking space from foot traffic), and set up GMAD to take better care of additional children in the future. Adding square footage to the back of the building and plumbing gas and water to the new area.
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	<\$5,000

## HIRE A SOCIAL WORKER

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	The home needs additional psychological therapy support for the kids. A full-time social worker's wage would be about \$225 a month or \$2,700 a year.
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	<\$5,000

## INTERNET ACCESS AT THE HOME

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	The home does not currently have consistent internet access. They have the option to tie into the fiber optic line that runs near the property. New educational content, wifi, updated networks throughout GMAD, and local partners to maintain our laptops, tablets, and other tech. This is the upgrade we have been looking for! We believe that making this jump will make a huge difference in the educational experience of our students and will make GMAD more sustainable.
<b>ESTIMATED FUNDING</b>	\$10,000-\$15,000





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FOUNDATION