

KITCHEN AND STOREROOM CONSTRUCTION

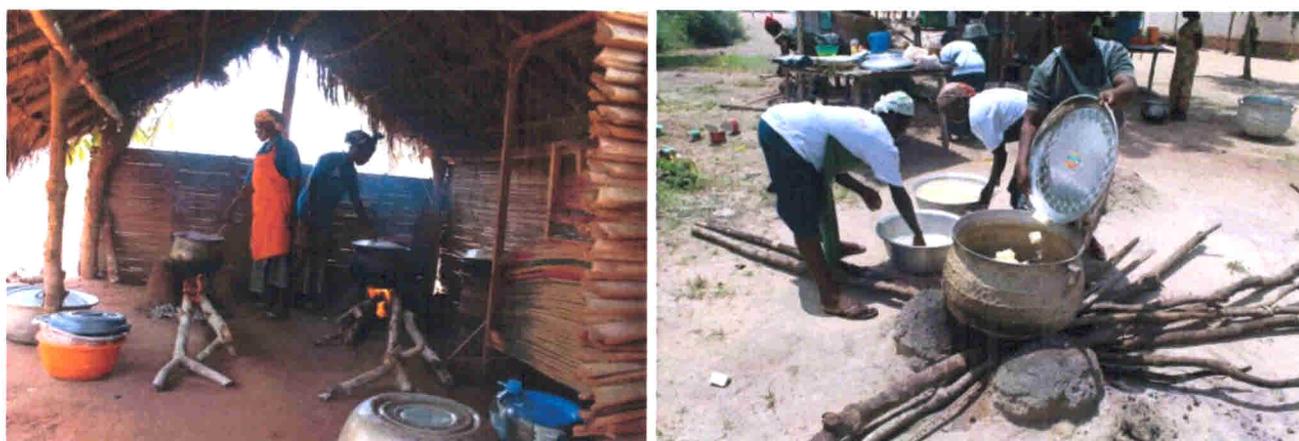
TOGO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Compassion's work in Togo began in 2008, and now 157 local churches reach out to 42,602 children, providing them with the opportunity to attend school, learn vocational skills and raise themselves out of poverty. The health of registered children and their families at three child development centres in Vogan, Togo (La Grace des Ad Vo-Koutim, Kades Lagbanou, and La Grace de Masse Kope) was a cause for concern, and so the centres were identified as priorities for additional assistance.

In addition to receiving a quality education, the children are also provided breakfast, snacks and a cooked lunch before they return home. Each Compassion centre feeds between 200 and 400 children on these days, yet because of the lack of a safe space to store and prepare food, the children were contracting gastrointestinal illnesses. They also usually ate outside in the open, exposed to the elements.

Before construction, food was being prepared in unhygienic environments – mainly outside in the hot sun and humid air. Whilst food was contained in pots and pans, everything was prepared on the ground, meaning dust, sand and grit tainted the food. Without safe storage, perishable food became contaminated and spoiled, and the centres were therefore unable to buy food in bulk, or very far in advance of centre days. The lack of appropriate storage and the fact that meals were cooked outdoors, also meant that it was vulnerable to contamination from flies, which are known to spread easily communicable diseases such as dysentery, cholera and typhoid.



The kitchen facilities at two of the centres

As well as health problems, during the wet season, cooks were using the centre office and church building to peel vegetables and descale the fish while waiting for the rain to stop to build a fire and begin cooking. This delayed meal times and interrupted the teaching timetable. When the children did not eat on time, they became hungry and couldn't concentrate as well in their lessons.

In order to eradicate health concerns and improve the centres food preparation facilities, this initiative aimed to build a kitchen and storeroom for each of the three centres. Eleven months later, the work is complete, and the amount of incidents of hygiene-related and waterborne illnesses contracted by Compassion-assisted children are much lower.

ACTIVITY REPORT

INITIATIVE	Kitchen and Storeroom Construction
LOCATION	Vogan, Togo
RESPOND NUMBER	TG-014861
BENEFICIARIES	Expected number, 646. Actual number 857.
FUNDING	£28,737
START DATE	July 2015
COMPLETION DATE	June 2016

The initiative took a total of eleven months to complete, from July 2015 to June 2016. One kitchen and one storeroom have been built for each of the three Compassion child development centres in Vogan, Togo. The three centres are no more than six miles away from each other.

At the beginning of the initiative, a meeting was held at a local primary school to discuss the funded proposal, explain the different stages of the work taking place, and set up the implementation schedule – including devising the bidding process for the building work. The meeting was attended by the local partnership committee members of each child development centre, the partnership facilitator, the in-country RESPOND initiative specialist, and the appointed external supervisor; each of these were also explained their responsibilities throughout the work.

Following this, the external supervisor sent an advert about the proposed construction work to the local radio station, which was broadcast for two weeks. As a result, 13 offers were received from interested building firms. Each of the three church partner committees selected the best firm, based on their qualifications, experience, and good references they had within the community, and contracts were signed by the selected firms.

After local workmanship had been found, the materials were purchased by each centre, and delivered to the centres. Following this, in October 2015, the construction work began at all three sites. Five months later, all three kitchens and storerooms had been built and then had equipment installed, such as furnaces, gas canisters, stoves, and fire extinguishers. Cooking utensils were also placed in each kitchen.

The final activity of the initiative was providing training for the 32 cooks and 12 health workers that would be using the kitchens. It was led by Dr Baba, the appointed nutritionist from the Ministry of Health. Participants were trained in food hygiene, food groups, how to create a menu, and care for malnourished children.

Ongoing maintenance plans were also devised to ensure the buildings last for years to come. These plans include:

-  Planting trees and grass around the building, to prevent the foundations from eroding.
-  Teaching children to look after the kitchens and storerooms.
-  Appointing one volunteer on each day the centres are open to clean the walls if they become dirty.

LESSONS LEARNT

This RESPOND initiative ran smoothly, on the whole. The main challenges that were encountered during the execution of the work were:

-  The delay in the beginning of construction work due to the wet season.
-  The mayor pausing the construction work, because the correct construction license had not been obtained.
-  Difficulties in finding the right building firms.

However, all of these issues were soon resolved; the right license was allocated, and although it took a little while to interview the different building firms that applied for the work, the right ones were found. The stakeholders collaborated harmoniously, and were able to overcome the challenges faced, and the initiative was completed on time.

IMPACT

The church partners, children and caregivers are so grateful to Fairway Training for funding this RESPOND initiative. Food contamination will no longer be a problem at the three child development centres in Togan, and their health won't be endangered any more.

Before construction, food was being prepared in unhygienic environments – mainly outside in the hot sun. Whilst food was contained in pots and pans, everything was prepared on the ground, meaning dust, sand and grit contaminated the food. This, as well as the constant flies, was putting the health of the Compassion-assisted children and centre workers at risk from diseases such as dysentery, cholera and typhoid.

During the wet season, cooks were using the centre office and church building to peel vegetables and descale the fish while waiting for the rain to stop to build a fire and begin cooking. This delayed meal times and interrupted the teaching timetable. When the children did not eat on time, they became hungry and couldn't concentrate as well in their lessons. Now the cooks don't have to depend on good weather before starting to cook, and meal times are served on time every day.

Encouragingly, although this initiative was originally intended for 646 beneficiaries, there are now 857 children and adults benefitting from the new kitchens.

The pastors, centre workers, registered children and church members are so grateful and thrilled with the kitchens being built. It has also allowed the centres to become wider known among the community, which is why more children have been registered into the child development centres.

The 44 members of staff who completed the training on food safety have been putting their new knowledge into practice, and are now wearing new aprons and scarves.

In addition, this RESPOND initiative has been a valuable opportunity for the churches and centre workers to improve their project management skills – something that will be very useful for them in the future.

The foundation work being completed





The structure of the building being completed and painted





INTERVIEWS

My name is Assigno Kossiwa Enyonam, and I have served at this centre for three years.

How will this initiative that has been completed affect the lives of people in this community?

This initiative has been the answer to one of our biggest challenges. It has produced a very big joy in the lives of the church members, especially the cooks, the children and the caregivers. The community members are wonderfully amazed by the work done, because they never thought that such a kitchen could be built in their community. Thanks to this initiative, meals are prepared in a very safe place, protected from the dust and flies. Children are also eating on time.

Could you describe how things will be different now the initiative has been completed?

In the past, cooks went through some difficulties before cooking to the registered children. They struggled with wet firewood during rainy seasons and with unbearable heat on sunshine. As a result, children never ate on time. But today, the tasks of the cooking volunteers have become easier. They will no more use firewood; they look

cleaner than before; they can stock goods and food in the storeroom and cook in a safer environment. Thus, children will eat healthier food and they will be eating on time.

What are the changes that you have seen in the life of the child development centre, and in the life of the children and their caregivers after this initiative?

Thanks to this initiative, the cooking volunteers are more comfortable in the kitchen. Their tasks have become easier than before. The use of furnaces with gas made them look cleaner. Kitchen utensils, materials and food are well secured in the storeroom. This has changed the appearance of the child development centre because it is the first modern kitchen ever constructed in our locality. Children eat meals which are well protected and healthy. Above all, the execution of this RESPOND initiative has made the image of Compassion Togo and the church more visible and the relationship between the church and the community has much improved.

How would you describe the impact of this initiative to those who made it possible?

I personally thank God and the donors for this special help. Today, we can happily say good bye to firewood and to the smoke endangering the health of the cooking volunteers. The registered children will also be eating on time and in a healthy condition. We are very grateful to the donors and pray the Heavenly Father to remember them, their families and their jobs.

My name is Adjikpo Kodjovi Jacques, my wife is Komlan Amélé Yvette. Our children, living with us are: Adjikpo Mawuéna Gloria, Adjikpo Koffi Mawugnigan and Apeti Massan.

Could you describe how things will be different now that this initiative has been completed?

The use of the bundle of wood and the fact that the cooking activities were done under a open hut at the open air exposed the food to debris and dust. The kitchen's utensils got dirty very quickly because of mud. Now with the modern kitchen, hygiene practices are observed, the meals are protected and the use of the gas has made the work easier.

What are the changes that you have seen in the life of the child development centre, and in the life of the children and their caregivers after this initiative?

The children are happy about the new kitchen and they come to Saturdays' activities with joy knowing that their food will be served on time. The community recognises and declares that the child development centre is working very hard for the children.

How would you describe the impact of this work to those who made it possible?

Our thanks go to all those who have contributed to the accomplishment of this initiative. The cooks are no more exposed to the rain and the sun shine while doing cooking activities. They have got the mastery of the use of furnaces with gas and are able to demonstrate good hygiene practices. Therefore, registered children will eat healthy food on time.

I am Pastor Danda Noe, I have been serving in the Assemblies of God church of Togo for less than a year.

How will this initiative affect the lives of people in this community?

The beginning of this work was not easy, but at the end of the RESPOND initiative, the church and the whole community have been proud of the new equipped kitchen. The church members and the volunteers are more eager to minister to the children.

Could you describe how things will be different now that the initiative has been completed?

Before the construction of this kitchen the cooking volunteers were suffering from sun, dust, rain, and mud during their cooking activities. They did not feel at ease and could not express any joy doing their job. After the construction of the kitchen, they feel comfortable and willing to do more to satisfy the children.

How would you describe the impact of this initiative to those who made it possible?

Food is served on time during activity days and registered children enjoy healthy food. As a result, there are no more disturbances during the curriculum implementation; the children follow more easily the lessons. We are grateful to those who have made this initiative possible.

BUDGET

These are the final figures, updated and revised from the interim report.

ITEM	AMOUNT REQUESTED BY THE CENTRE	AMOUNT THE CENTRE RECEIVED*	AMOUNT SPENT	DIFFERENCE
Preliminaries	£1,602 (local contribution)	£1,602 (local contribution)	£1,602 (local contribution)	£0
Construction	£18,237	£19,942	£19,633	£309
Equipment	£712	£775	£605	£170
Dedication	£3,724	£4,376	£1,646	£2,730
Administration in the UK	£5,748	£5,748	£5,748	£0
TOTAL	£28,737	£32,443	£29,234	£3,209

*Due to favourable exchange rates in transferring the money to local currency, the field received more funds than anticipated, which resulted in the outstanding amount of £3,209.

FINAL REMARKS

Thank you, Andrew, and all those at Fairway Training who contributed to make this RESPOND initiative a reality. As you have seen, the health of children and workers at these centres is no longer endangered, and the daily schedule runs on time. Not only has this project greatly helped the original 646 children and adults, a further 211 children are now also benefitting from the new kitchens, in the short few months they've been open.

This initiative has also played a significant part in helping Compassion progress toward our Clean Water and Sanitation Strategy for Togo. It's our goal to provide 70 percent of those in Compassion programmes access to clean water, and to educate them about the importance of water hygiene and proper sanitation practices by the end of this financial year. The training that the cooks received and passed on to the children has played a major part in making this goal a reality, so thank you.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Preston on 07830 791 899 or at MarkP@compassionuk.org.