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# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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Youth leading Change

SETTING THE PACE IN  
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
IN NORTHERN GHANA



# About YEFL-Ghana

YEFL-GHANA believes in empowering young people. The act of leading change requires skills that are relevant for every step of action one will take towards the change process. That is why capacity building is key in our mission to enhance skills, ability and attitudes of young people to lead the desired change in their respective communities.

Youth Leading change is the ultimate goal, where we find ourselves in a stage where people are taking the initiative with a high sense of awareness and awakening; an action step that ignites the act and art of activism; that shifts the position of youth from an era of spectating to active participation.



**Youth leading Change**

# Acknowledgements

The Board of Directors, Management and staff of YEFL-Ghana would like to extend their appreciation to its Donors, Partners, Government agencies and MMDAs, beneficiaries , and traditional leaders for immensely contributing towards the successful implementation of its annual plan.

# Message from the Director

Welcome to the 2019 Annual Report of YEFL-Ghana. YEFL-Ghana continues to set the pace in youth development and influencing the youth leading change agenda. Our overall youth programming has focused on the economic, social and political empowerment of young people to actively demand their rights

whiles also contributing to solving community challenges in an enabling environment.

Within this year, YEFL-Ghana galloped in reaching out to more young people with its new strategic plan, our external collaboration with stakeholders has been key in this process.

As part of the urge and desire to meet youth at the point of their needs, we have over ten (10) years now, reorganized and restructured and enhanced our youth programming with new strategies, concepts and models.

We have also rebranded which has resulted in a change of name from Youth Empowerment for Life to YEFL-GHANA with a new logo with the symbol of a “thinking bubble”. This is inspired by the act, art and skill of leading change as one needs to always think out of the box and creatively in every situation or circumstance and



Jawol Vera Magan

Director

also with the changing desires and needs of youth the organization needs to also be well-positioned to “think on the go”and that makes us who we are.

The coming year promises to be more exciting and we will like to travel this through with you. So subscribe to our monthly newsletter and stay connected on our social media platforms.

Thank You. We appreciate your support.

!“Youth Leading Change”

# Acronyms

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CCFC	Christian's Children Fund of Canada
CHPS	Community Health-based Planning and Services
CJ	Community Journalist
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DA	District Assembly
DASGOP	District Agricultural Sector Governance Platform
E4L	Empowerment for Life
MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MP	Member of Parliament
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NYA	National Youth Authority
SC4Gh	Sanitation Challenge For Ghana
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UK	United Kingdom
YPs	Youth Parliamentarians

# Table of Content

Contents

About YEFL-Ghana	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Message from the Director	iii
Table of Content	v
Acronyms	vii
Youth Political Action and Accountability	1
Youth Political Action and Accountability Explained	2
Youth Parliament	2
Results outlook-Youth parliaments	4
Youth parliaments leading change	5
Youth parliamentarians visit National Parliament	6
Youth Networks	7
Result outlook-Youth Networks	9
Re-echoing impact of community journalism	12
Result outlook-Community Journalism	13
Art of Change	14



Result outlook-Art of Change	15
Youth Organizing for Change	16
Youth Organizing For Change Explained	17
Summer Camp	17
Youth Networks	17
Youth Rallies	18
Nurses Exchange	20
Reading Clubs	22
Student Engaged in reading games at Savelugu	23
Youth Entrepreneurship	25
Result outlook-Youth Entrepreneurship	27
Our Team	29
Expenditure	30
Our Partnership	31

# Executive Summary

In pursuit of the Youth Leading Change Agenda, YEFL-Ghana in the implementation of its youth programming in 2019 was shaped by refocusing and restructuring our four-year (2020-2023) youth strategy with new concepts and models that will collectively bring young people to actively participate in our social, political and economic empowerment interventions. It is exciting that these young people we work with are taken self-initiative in addressing issues that affect their development and that of their communities.

## Youth Political Action and Accountability.

Our desire to build youth agency to actively participate in decision – making and to hold duty bearers to account was realized through the Youth Parliaments, Community Journalism and Youth Network approach. The Youth Parliaments, in particular, have gained recognition as

a legitimate platform for engagement and holding persons with and in power accountable. To this end, 35 community parliamentary sittings have been held across 5 MMDAs with 3 MMDAs having committed through signed MoUs with 3 youth parliaments to continue engagements and supporting the parliaments. The Community Journalism has given voice to young people and highlighted various developmental challenges in their respective districts, the issues raised have also received a very positive response from duty bearers. The Community Journalism (CJ)\_ has also been successfully integrated into the Youth Parliament model to further highlight the issues uses the various media platforms to draw public and duty bearers attention., So far, about 33% of reported stories by CJs have been addressed through this process. Working with other, NGOs, CSOs, MMDAs and Partners we have facilitated

Regional and District Youth Networks that are advocating for young people to participate in local governance decision-making platforms, leading campaigns to improve performance in BECE and promoting literacy at the district and regional levels.

### Youth Organising for Change.

We successfully facilitated and mobilised young people through various platforms to have a collective voice for community building and action. We increased our reach to young people through our novel Youth Centres, Annual Youth Forum, Youth Rallies, Art of Change, Summer Camp, Reading Clubs, Twinning and Nurses Exchange Programmes. Our combined strategies have empowered young people we work with to continuously demand an equitable and just society.

### Economic Empowerment.

Our economic empowerment intervention has been focused on igniting the entrepreneurial mindset of young people to create their own

enterprises or get employment. This we have realized and continue to do through the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp Model we have developed (pls insert a link to model here). The model consists of the formation of village savings and loans association (VSLA), a five-day Bootcamp training and a follow-up training and mentoring targeting literate youth between 17 and 26 years. 75% of the youth trained are able to start their businesses with a 71% survival rate after one year. Working with others, 145 out of 187 young people reached and trained to start up their own business still have their business running with about 120 of them having recorded increased income.









# Youth Political Action and Accountability

# Youth Political Action and Accountability Explained

We empowered young people including women and persons with disability with the right skills, tools, platforms and the capacity to become politically active and demand for accountable and transparent governance from the community to national levels through our Youth Parliaments, Youth Speak Up, Youth Networks and Art of Change projects

## Youth Parliament

With the Youth Parliaments, we have an integrated approach where community journalism is deliberately embedded in the Youth Parliaments to amplify the voices of marginalized young people while bridging the information gap that exists between the adult dominated society and the youth.

Overall, in this implementation period, the combined strategies of using the Youth Parliamentary approach, Community Journalism, and Engagements has worked very well as both are youth-friendly in increasing youth voice, participation and responsiveness of duty bearers.

Consequently, the Youth Parliaments have significantly progressed to become a more sustainable youth – friendly accountability platforms, through collaboration with the Municipal and District Assemblies and significantly distinguished its self in seven (7) districts in the Northern Region (Nanumba North, Sagnarigu, Yendi, Saboba, Karaga, Savelugu, and Nanumba South). Notably, the YPs have a close and good working relationship with the planning unit, coordinating units and the sanitation units of the assemblies in setting the agenda and influencing major key stakeholders at the local level.

Through the Youth Speak Up, we are able to build the capacities of 45 young people who served as Community Journalists working through various media including radio and social media to generate information, raise awareness and push for change in their communities. We have been able to promote the voices of these young people to address injustices in their communities.

“...before the advent of Youth Parliament, the ability to speak in public was a problem...”  
Musah Asumanah, (Deputy Majority Leader, Nanumba North Youth Parliament)

All seven (7) MMDAs had increased collaborations with youth parliaments through an invitation to general assembly meetings.

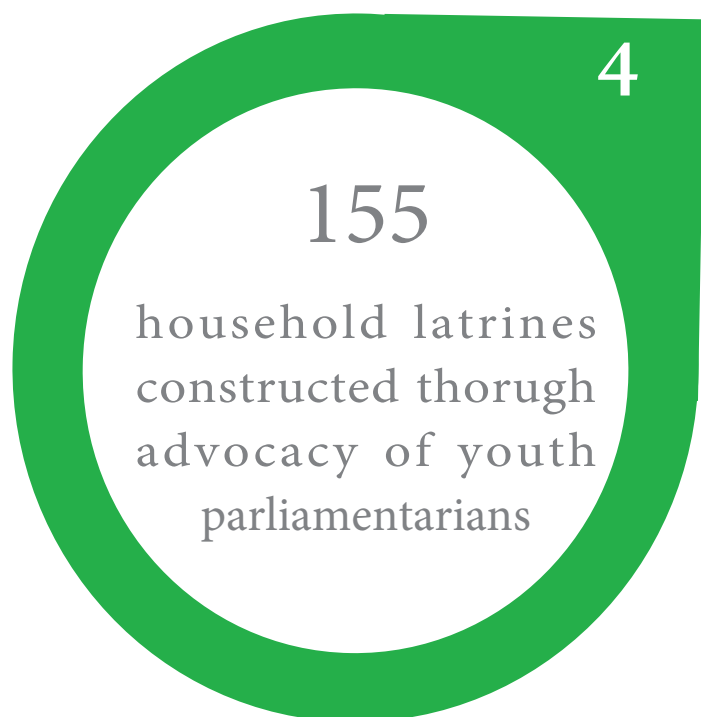
Three (3) MMDAs (Yendi, Nanumba South and Saboba) have signed Memorandum of

Understanding (MOUs) with three (3) Youth Parliaments as a show of their commitment to continue to work with the Youth Parliaments.



## Results outlook-Youth parliaments

The Youth parliament project has contributed to the achievement of the following;





# Youth parliaments leading change

## Partnering with state agencies

We supported the Nanumba North Youth Parliament to enter the Sanitation Challenge for Ghana (SC4Gh) hosted by the Sanitation and Water Resources Ministry. The Youth Parliament emerged third (3rd) placed position winning US dollars thirty-five thousand (USD 35,000) to implement actions aimed at addressing the sanitation challenges in the Nanumba North Municipality



## Focusing on social issues



The Sagnarigu Youth Parliament organized outreach to schools sensitizing pupils on the dangers of drug abuse.

## Promoting the interest of others



The Sagnarigu Youth Parliament advocated through the Assembly member and the Member of Parliament for the Sagnarigu constituency to acquire a decent place for lactating mothers at the Malshegu CHPS



## Youth parliamentarians visit National Parliament

We crystallized and consolidated the link between the Youth Parliaments and Ghana's Parliament where a selected few of the Youth Parliamentarians were supported through the STAR Ghana Foundation to pay a learning and networking visit to Ghana's Parliament. During the visit, the parliamentarians had engaged with the Youth, Sports and Culture Committee, Local Government and Rural Development Committee, Young Parliamentarians Forum of the

Parliament, the Minority Leader and the Right Hon. Speaker Prof. Mike Aaron Oquaye. Some individual MPs including Hon. Alhassan Suhuyini (MP for Tamale North), Hon. Dominic Nitiwul (MP for Bimbilla), were met also. The meetings allowed the YPs to interact with Honourable MPs on some key youth issues. This culminated in the presentation of a communiqué to the Speaker of Parliament detailing the demands of the youth.



## Youth Networks

Working with the Youth Networks as organized youth, we have strengthened them with the skills and platforms to be mobilized for collective engagement with duty bearers and to demand accountability with an emphasis on educational accountability and youth representation in decision – making processes with the local assemblies.

As primary beneficiaries of the education policies, young people through the District Youth Networks with support from OXFAM in Ghana, have held five (5) accountability fora on education focusing on addressing the poor performance in basic schools with stakeholders in Ghana Education Service.

Pushing persistently for youth inclusion in decision – making platforms through the District Youth Networks, has resulted in young people being invited

to some select sub-committees meetings at the assemblies' Medium Term Development Planning, General Assembly meetings and review sessions including the District Agricultural Sector Governance Platform (DASGOP) meetings.

Working with others, our response to the poor participation of young people in decision-making spaces has improved

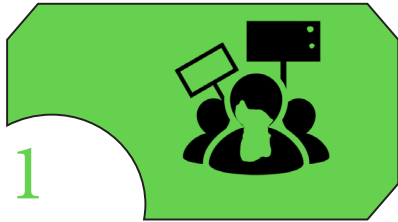
The One District; One Library campaign by the Northern Regional Youth Network stands out as a novel social advocacy and accountability issue that calls to action the revamping and resourcing of defunct libraries. From the creation of awareness on the state of libraries through flash mobs and documentary, the campaign has grasped the attention of MMDAs and the Northern Regional Library Authority thus leading to a commitment to revamping defunct library facilities. So far, 3 MMDAs namely; Saboba, Bimbilla & Savelugu have signed MoUs with the Youth Networks and the Library Authority for the realization of this goal.





Youth Network stages a flash mob in the regional capital of Northern Region, Tamale, seeking attention of authorities to revamp defunct libraries across the Region.

## Result outlook-Youth Networks

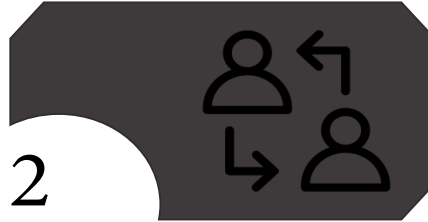


1

### SOCIAL ISSUES

The Northern Regional Youth Network has been assertive in petitioning state institutions including the Ghana Education Service, Ghana Health Service and the Police to act on reported harassment or sexual abuse of young people in second cycle schools in Tamale.

The youth network continued pressing for the revamping of the education week to contribute to better outcomes in basic schools

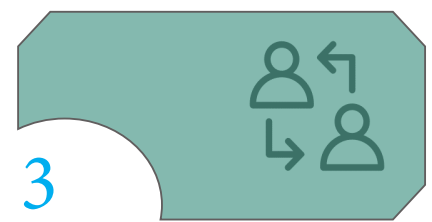


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### CAMPAIGNS

The campaign for functional libraires at the district and regional level dubbed 'One district one library campaign' led by the youth network has facilitated a memorandum of understanding between three MMDAs and the Library Authority to revamp defunct libraries.

The network continued to collaborate effectively with the National Network of youth groups to campaign on civic education of citizens on the 2019 referendum



3

### ENGAGEMENTS

The youth Network has engaged five MMDAs in educational accountability fora and used learnings to engage regional stakeholders in GES to contribute to better outcomes in Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE)

Across 10 MMDAs, district youth networks continue to press for the representation of young people in local government decision-making platforms, this has resulted in their participation in DASGOP meetings in two MMDAs.

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Youth Network at the office of the Tamale Metro Assembly Pressing for equal representation of young people in decision-making space

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The inaugural launch of the Northern Regional Youth Network by the Director of NYA, Northern Region.

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Annual congress of the Northern Regional youth network

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Our community activist speaking out at a community durbar at Saboba

# Re-echoing impact of community journalism

Yakubu Mohammed Hashim is a native of Pusiga, a community in the Nanumba North District. He has great ambition and loves to help others. His dream to help others started when he received training as a community journalist from YEFL-Ghana.

“ I once visited the Pusiga CHPS compound and got to realize we have so many problems there. First, was lack of accommodation for nurses, which I wrote a story on and sent it to the youth parliament for deliberations. We also went to Gmantambo radio station for presentation and through that, we hooked the MCE and he promised to build a nurse quarters. Delivering on his promise, the nurse quarters is under construction.

I also saw that babies were weighed under a small Shea tree at the CHPS compound which had no shade, so I wrote about it and consequently a pavilion was raised which is now convenient for lactating mothers to have their babies weighed. The publication caught the attention of CCFC that came to our aid by donating about 4 ultramodern beds for the CHPS compound and also some electric poles are been erected to connect electricity to the CHPS compound and I think that is an achievement”.



## Result outlook-Community Journalism

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45 young people across 9 districts  
trained as community journalist



120 impact stories have been  
reported by community journalist



State/private institutions have  
responded in addressing 40 issues  
reported by community journalist

## Art of Change

Arts has been a powerful tool for advocacy since the beginning of time. And even more so in this modern era where young people have become the silent majority where the responsibility to hold authority to account and lead thought has never been more theirs to bear.

Many examples can be cited from events in Ghana's recent past about young creatives using their outputs to cause one kind of change or another. It is in light of this inspiring evidence that the Art of Change project seeks to amplify and extend the reach some to much-needed voices of talented, but less heard artists.

YEFL-Ghana and the E4L program has started working strategically with using art as a change catalyst over a period of experimental beginnings resulting in a critical mass of young creatives in the Northern Region.

The aim is to give youth new and different platforms and tools to address

issues and put them on the national agenda. Furthermore, it is a strategic objective to create collaborations between North-South youth to bridge the divide and facilitate forums and platforms where the youth can address issues at the national level.

The Art of Change Project connects specific artists/creatives in Tamale, with artists/creatives in Greater Accra, Ghana. The activities comprise of a number of workshops, campaigns and collaborative meetings and exhibitions. So far seven mini-workshops in five districts in the Northern Region including the Tamale Metropolis have been held with young people which all culminated in two big exhibitions at the regional capital in Tamale.

As part of the Art of Change project, efforts were made to enable a Ghanaian based artist, Bright Ackwerh to team up with Danish based Phuc Van Dang to run an art advocacy workshop for select art students in Aarhus in Denmark and hold live/interactive painting sessions at the Wall of Sound

festival in Horsens.

Similar workshops have been held in various Youth Centers in the Northern Region of Ghana for selected youth

with one session culminating into an art exhibition during the national Independence Day parade in Tamale in 2019.

## Result outlook-Art of Change

1

Seven Political Cartooning workshops were organized for the youth in 5 districts and a total of 75 young people participating

2

Two art exhibitions held during 2019 . One held on Independence Day Celebration

3

19 Young artist are now using art as an advocacy tool



# Youth Organizing for Change

## Youth Organizing For Change Explained

We believe in the collective voice of the youth mobilized and organized for action. We have facilitated this process through the Annual Youth Forum, Youth Rallies, Youth Networks, Summer Camps, Twinning, Reading Clubs and Nurses Exchange activities.

### Summer Camp

The Nyankpala Youth Centre in 2019 organized a three (3) day summer camp in the Nyankpala community in the Tolon District of the Northern Region. The event which brought pupils from four basic schools in the Nyankpala community saw the school children participate in various activities including football, drawings, etc. All activities were held at the Nyankpala DA Primary School where students learned, shared their ambitions, had fun and were inspired. Youth groups from Adubilyili, Gbulahgu, and Nyankpala also contributed to the success of the camp activities as their way of giving back to society. The camp ended with positive remarks from the students and communities, with the hope of taking up the challenges of organizing a camp annually in their communities.

### Youth Networks

We facilitated the formation of Youth Networks and strengthened them with the right leadership, networking, mobilization skills, and platforms to lead in the mobilization and organization of youth efforts, talents, and resources for collective engagement with local-level stakeholders. The Youth Networks serves as an umbrella of youth groups from the districts to the regional level.

Within this period, the Northern Regional Youth Network continued to emerge as a credible network of youth groups in contributing to addressing issues affecting young people. The inaugural launch of the Regional Youth Network by the National Youth Authority presented a huge step towards the fulfilment of a Regional Youth Federation. This



has further given the youth network recognition and visibility.

## Annual Youth Forum

YEFL-GHANA annually holds the Annual Youth Forum (AYF) as a regional event observed on the African Youth Day. The events ignited and rejuvenated collaboration and network among actors in civil society. YEFL facilitated an open process where young people applied and two appeared as sanitation and agricultural ministers to pitch 10 minutes on their ideas to improve these sectors. Ideas presented by these young people were subjected to a critical debate by youth parliamentarians. The CSOs gala brought together over 15 CSOs to

participate in football, volleyball, 'tag of peace', egg race, and sack race activities. YEFL has charted this initiative and intends to make it an annual event contributing to SDG goal 17 on partnership. Young people numbering about 250 at the forum were facilitated to hold a round table discussion on

youth participation in active politics and youth entrepreneurship opportunities in the region and Ghana.

## Youth Rallies

Youth Rallies brings together young people from different backgrounds to interact, share ideas and have fun. The Youth Rallies fosters a kind of cultural exchange bridging cultural barriers and breaking stereotypes.

This year's youth rally experienced young people from the UK exploring three districts in the Northern Region with other youth groups in and around Saboba, Karaga and the Sagnarigu districts. The rallies provided platforms for promoting arts, exchange of cultural display and heritage.

The rallies were powered by Tzedek- a UK charity-based organization. YEFL-Ghana locally collaborated with Northern Voices Ghana, a youth group with experience in organizing outdoor games.





Youth present petition on the African Youth Day Celebration



## Nurses Exchange

The Nurses exchange program has evolved over the past year in module and scope.

The program is designed to have Danish final year health students of VIA University to understudy the health systems in northern Ghana, whilst learning and experiencing cultural diversity. Students during the period stay with local families in pairs within the Malsheigu area to experience the typical local northern home.

YEFL over the year received two groups of health professionals staying for three weeks with host families in Malsheigu whilst having an internship with health facilities within the Sagnerigu Municipality.

The first batch that arrived in February 2019 was made up of two (2) Occupational Therapist and (8) eight Nursing students. The second group which arrived in September

2019 had a total of ten (10) students; (6) Nurses, two (2) Nutritionists, one (1) Physiotherapist and one (1) Medical Laboratory Scientist.

Students spend a total of four (4) weeks in Ghana. The first three (3) weeks were used to understudy the health systems used by health centres within the Sagnarigu area amidst touring and learning the northern culture. The last week is spent in the south (Cape coast), this is to give the students a clear view of the difference in culture and development across the nation.

The numbers of students applying to join the program keep increasing since its inception.

We are proud to say all the students' expectations have been met in terms of health study, culture and adventure. This is a great testimony to how successful the program has been to participants and the success of our team here at YEFL.





Students from VIA University at Malseigu community



Students having fun with the coordinator of nurses exchange program

## Reading Clubs

In 2019, with funding from Global Affairs Canada (GAC) through Right To Play, YEFL – Ghana started

delivering supplemental learning activities to children while raising awareness among their parents and caregivers on gender-specific learning needs of girls and boys in 65 communities in 3 districts namely Savelugu, Kumbungu, and Tolon. The project has significantly invested in supplying over two thousand seven hundred (2,700) reading books to reach 65 reading clubs through a Motor King (three-wheeled vehicle ubiquitous in Ghana) Mobile Library system.

To reach 65 communities; our strategy had been to work with community volunteers through our Youth Groups. A total of 130 community youth volunteers were involved who reached a total of 1,950 children and a total of 3,250 parents and caregivers. The engagement of parents and caregivers

before the establishment of the reading clubs oriented parents on gender-specific learning needs for boys and girls. The project is contributing to SDG 4 which is to 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

Averagely, our community volunteers engage targeted schools on supplemental learning twice a week. So far three hundred and ninety (390) learning sessions have been held for school pupils. School pupils now have access to and use of two (2) books in a month.

The learning sessions are led by community volunteers with minimal support from Teacher Champions.





Student engaged in reading games at Savelugu

## Twinning

YEFL-Ghana in partnership with Tzedek is implementing the Schools Twinning Programme involving 11 schools in the UK and 11 schools in Tamale. The project is fostering global citizenship, promoting shared values and diversity amongst students and teachers in Ghana and the UK using a well-developed curriculum.

In 2019, we reviewed the twinning curriculum to ensure that it is still in-line with the current national education curriculum of Ghana and the UK and revived our teachers' network. The twinning content has 7 lessons which are learnt for 7 months, 3 of which are work exchanges between students from both Ghana and the UK. We leveraged on the expertise and experiences of the teacher network in the programme together with the Tzedek staff to review the programme content.

The teachers' network is being

encouraged to discuss lessons and share best practices before and after lesson delivery online and is also supported with interactive workshops that facilitate their teacher professional development. Teachers receive a certificate of participation, as do the schools, which helps to recognize the essential role they play and gives them a document that can be useful to demonstrate their ongoing professional development trajectories. Three of such workshops were held in 2019 providing them with skills in phonics, TLMs preparations, among others.

Our twinning programme reached a total of 984 school children and 26 teachers in Ghana.



# Youth Entrepreneurship

Our entrepreneurship training for youth is aimed at addressing target 8.5 of the SDGs to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value and target 8.6 to substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training respectively by empowering youth to become entrepreneurial individuals through the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp Model which is a time-tested approach to training young entrepreneurs in the rural communities of Northern Region of Ghana.

## Result outlook-Youth Entrepreneurship

Our work with the Empowerment for Life Programme (E4L) and Eastern Corridor Youth Development Programme has focused supporting young people to start their businesses in vegetable farming, animal rearing and fattening, pastries, agro-chemicals, credit retailing, provisions store, etc. Overall, these young people have not only increased their household income but have sustained livelihoods that leaves them independent from adult manipulation.



187

Young people have been reached and trained to start up their own business



145

have started their own business



120

have increased income

77%

65%



## YEFL-Ghana presents youth with farm implements to support their business



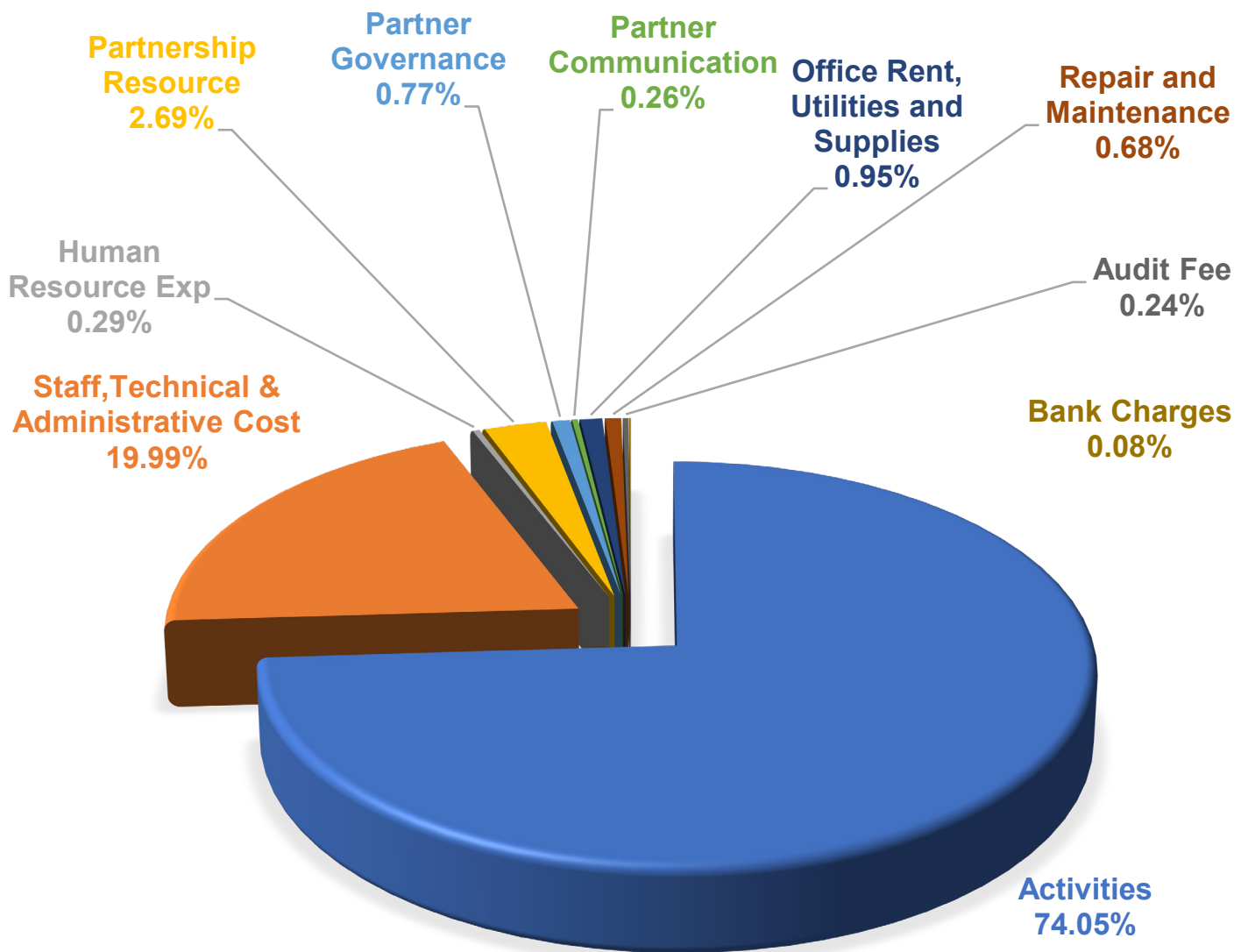


## Our Team



Jawol Vera Magan, Iddrisu Abdul-Nasiru Alhassan, Alhassan Abdul-Ganiyu, Mohammed Kamil, Laarie Sarah Faith, Obrani Lydia, Abdulai Amina Yurilim, Yakubu Hamdia, Amadu Zulyadeen, Nadiatu Illiasu, Mahama Aminu, Tahiru Abukari, Abdul Rahman-Alhassan, Salifu Abdul Ganiyu, Alhassan Mohammed, Alhassan Sayibu.

# Expenditure



## Our Partnership

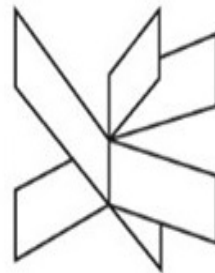
**GHANA FRIENDS**  
Partnership for change



**OXFAM**



**STAR GHANA  
FOUNDATION**



VIA University  
College

**tzedek**  
together against poverty



**RIGHT TO PLAY**







YEFL-Ghana exist to empower youth through engagements, networks,  
information sharing and capacity building to lead change



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