

Profile

Name: KAJI Misaki

Job Description: Primary School Education

Organization: Ho International School

Assignment place: Ho, Volta Region

Organization

The school where I am assigned to is a private school (kindergarten to junior high school), established in 2014, with approximately 180 students and 25 teachers. The school focuses on the importance of practical lessons incorporating hands-on learning. Although many teachers, in their 20s have professional expertise, they face some challenges in terms of lack of knowledge on child development and teaching skills. Most students are coming from financially stable families and there are many parents who are highly interested in education and demand high standard of education from the school.



Activity

My assignment is to improve mathematics and science classes. Currently, I am working in a Primary 1 classroom, teaching mathematics to improve basic numeracy skills. The goal is for the lower grade students to acquire the synthetic decomposition of 10 so that they can perform accurate calculation.

Most classes are conducted in a talk-and-chalk (teacher-centered) style. I'm planning to support teachers to incorporate hands-on activities using locally available materials and to create experimental tools for conducting science classes. Another challenge is that teachers' knowledge and understanding on the characteristics based on students' developmental stages and classroom management. After the needs survey conducted, I am planning with my counterpart to organize training for teachers to improve teaching skills.

In addition, a workshop on science experiments is planned to be held at my school with a support from other JICA volunteers working in education sector in Ghana.



Assignment Place

Ho is the capital city of the Volta Region and attracts people from all parts of the region. It is home to the Ewe ethnic group who speak the Ewe language. Most of them are calm people compared with other regions. Many Ewe people live in Togo where Volta Region is bordering with as well as in Benin. The people in Ho love a local food called banku (a staple food made from fermented cassava and maize flour). Tilapia caught in the Lake Volta are also popular and available at cheaper price.



Profile

Name: OYAMA Kei

Job Description: Primary School Education

Organization: Aboom Zion C Basic School

Assignment Place: Cape Coast, Central Region

Organization

The school I am assigned to is a relatively small-scale public school with a total of 326 students (one class per grade) and about 20 teachers. As in Japan, the primary school is based on a classroom-teacher system one teacher teaches all subjects, while the junior high school uses a subject-based teacher system, where teachers specialize in specific subject. The students are full of energy and love to be physically active. Fellow teachers are very kind and helpful whenever I need help, making it a wonderful place to work for me.



Activity

I teach mathematics mainly to the 1st-year students at Junior High School. The students are cheerful and full of energy, but many of them do not fully understand the basic mathematics, make mistakes in addition and subtraction, and do not fully remember multiplication. Under these circumstances, I am planning to hold an event on mathematics with the aim of improving their motivation to learn. Through the event, I hope that students will acquire basic skills while having fun and become more confident and motivated by building up successful experiences. The school has started to collect the plastic sachet of “pure water” (drinking water sold in small plastic sachet) and empty plastic bottles and sell them to a recycling company. The funds raised from the activity are being utilized for the school's operations. In the future, I hope that student will have a deeper understanding and realize the importance of school beautification and environmental protection and foster their active participation in these activities.



Assignment Place

The school is located in the center of the Cape Coast, three-hour drive west from Accra. Cape Coast is the capital of the Central Region and faces the Gulf of Guinea and prospered as a hub of slave and gold trading. Visitors can learn about the history of slave trade at Cape Coast Castle. The castle is registered as a World Heritage Site and attracts many tourists from domestic and abroad. The local people are gentle, warm, and welcoming to visitors. There are many opportunities to interact and experience its history and culture, and it is a place where you can feel a sense of peaceful life.



Profile

Name: MURAKI Rena

Job Description: Welfare for Persons with Disabilities

Organization: Kibi School for the Deaf

Assignment Place: Kibi, Eastern Region

Organization

Kibi School for the Deaf has a kindergarten, primary and junior high school and a class for students with multiple disabilities, with a total enrollment of approximately 200 students. Students live in a dormitory on the school compound. There are 35 teachers, about half of whom are Deaf. Communication is done in Ghanaian Sign Language, English, the local language called Twi, and written communication. The photo shows a worship service held every Wednesday morning where all students participate.



Activity

(1) ICT classes for 4th to 6th year students at primary school

ICT is a compulsory subject in the Ghanaian educational curriculum, and classes are conducted with the goal of “enabling students to master basic computer operations”. Since ICT equipment and facilities are inadequate and textbooks are not sufficiently distributed, I am trying to make the lessons memorable and easy to remember.

(2) Coloring classes and fun learning activities for students with multiple disabilities

The lower photo shows an artwork of the student. student cut the African fabric into the shape of a traditional Ghanaian costume and pasted with glue and draw a picture of man dancing. I am working to incorporate more new activities the students can do.

*In order to communicate easily with the deaf students, a little practice of American Sign Language, which is the base of Ghanaian Sign Language, makes communication easier. The JICA volunteer can always assist with some difficult expressions.



Assignment place

Kibi has one of the oldest and most developed educational institutions in Ghana. It is also the birthplace of one of the Six Greats at the time of independence. It has also produced many politicians, and because of this, the town itself is wealthy and often feels that it has a strong focus on education. Although the town is small in size, it has a sports park, a library, a university, and other educational facilities. The photo shows an inter-school sports competition. You can find fresh food and daily necessities, but there are no big supermarkets in town.



Profile

Name: KOKETSU Natsumi

Job Description: Community Development

Organization: Ghana Education Service, Abuakwa South Municipal Education Office

Assignment place: Kibi, Eastern Region

Organization

Ghana Education Service is a government agency under the Ministry of Education and is responsible for the operation and management of public schools, annual planning, personnel management and the training of teachers and staff. I am assigned to one of more than 200 regional offices in the country and has jurisdiction over 66 kindergartens, 61 primary schools, 56 junior high schools, 2 high schools, and 1 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institute. Abuakwa South GES office has seven school districts, and the School Improvement Support Officers (SISO), staff members of the office, provides on-site guidance and teacher training in an effort to provide better education services.



Activity

While access to education has improved, challenges lies in quality of education and in educational management. The Eastern Region is a target area of the JICA technical cooperation “Project for Improving Learning Outcomes through Community Participation for Sustainable School for All (known for COMPASS)”. I am working in collaboration with the COMPASS project to monitor the activities of the School Management Committee (SMC) that is serving as the basis of school management, and also to understand the current situation and identify some issues to address at 6 selected basic schools in town.

I have only been working as JICA volunteer for a few months and do not have a whole picture yet, but I feel that education at home is being neglected and management of textbooks and materials is a challenge. I would like to support the preparation and implementation of “school activity plans” in line with issues and needs and propose activities to improve students' learning.



Assignment place

Kibi is a small town located about 2.5 hours drive by bus from the Capital, Accra. Surrounded by mountains, a land in rich in nature. The current President is from Kibi, and you can find relatively big houses in town. There are market and electronics stores, and you can buy all the daily necessities. When I walk around in town, the local people are very friendly, and they often speak with me asking “How are you?”. It is a comforting place with rich nature and kind people.

