

**FOUNDATION FOR INTEGRATED AND STRATEGIC
DEVELOPMENT(FISTRAD)**

Title: Facilitating Playing and Learning for
Children in Builsa

January, 2015

1.0 Background

Rural children hardly have free time to relax and to explore their interest. This is certainly not good for their development. If children find time to relax and play it can help them to discover their interest and talents. For example, how can we find out whether a child has the potential to become a great footballer if we do not allow him/her to play football during leisure?

The time available for leisure is dependent on factors some of which are cultural. In Ghana and in the Builsa District boys have more free time than girls. This is because of the heavy time burden of girls. Families rely on girls to carry out domestic chores. Clearly, it is not surprising that many girls often end up becoming good mothers and good house wives because of the amount of time they spend in cooking, washing and sweeping.

Time spent on an activity is not wasted time. Just as time spent on learning a skill helps to make one perfect. To direct youth interest and to create opportunities for youth and career development, we need to provide ample opportunity for free time activity where children can engage themselves in non-work related activities.

Many homes in Ghana and in Builsa do not care about and appreciate the value of leisure. The thinking is that anything that is not related to work is an unproductive task that must be discarded. Because of this children grow up and all they do with their leisure is to ride bicycles or climb trees. This is good for their physical development but certainly not enough to provide them with the needed intellectual growth arising from self-directed learning. Naturally, children like to play. If therefore we want to make the productive use of leisure or free time of children then we must combine playing and learning. In fact, the distinction between playing and learning when dealing with children is an academic one. This is because children learn as they play and play as they learn.

If we allow the leisure time of children to spent on reading by providing the right environment and facilities, they will be become good readers and acquire knowledge and experiences that will guide them in their development process.

2.0 Project Description

The project is titled, "Facilitating Playing and Learning for Children's Development in Builsa". It seeks to provide an opportunity for children between age 10 –15years to learn and play during their leisure, particularly Saturdays, so as to minimise the time available for them to engage in acts that retard their development, Also, the project will help mothers at the FISTRAD vocational centre to concentrate on their training by providing toys to them. The constant interference from these kids age 3 months and above reduces the ability of the trainees to benefit fully from the instructional time.

It will be implemented in Sandema by the Foundation for Integrated and Strategic Development (FISTRAD) over a period of 12months and will seek to achieve the following milestones/outcomes:

- Beneficial use of leisure by 1,500 Junior High School students aged 10-15years
- Better use of instructional time by 50 teenage mothers of FISTRAD vocational centre
- Improved sexual health education by radio of 20,000 young people aged 10-15
- Acquisition of reading habits by 1,500 young people aged 10-15years

The project will provide play equipment such as sea-saw and merry- go- round to provide recreational opportunity for pupils of basic schools around FISTRAD. FISTRAD has a play ground that offers this opportunity for children to relax during their leisure. But the limited play equipment and the increasing demand for the facility puts pressure on the equipment leading to constant breakdown. Children queue or have to wait for their turn to use the play ground. The consequence of this congestion is that the children do not have enough time to enjoy them themselves. Increasing the number of equipment will make the play ground serve the needs of many more children.

Also, the FISTRAD vocational centre has 80% of its trainees as teenage mothers. The yard of the centre is used to accommodate them during training sessions. These children ranging between 3 months to 6 years engage in actions not conducive for the mothers to learn. Sometimes the compound becomes so noisy that trainees find it difficult to concentrate. Expanding the play ground would provide an opportunity for children to be engaged in acts that are exciting and which contribute to their development.

For children in the Junior High School (JHS) who visit the play ground, they wished they could combine the use of play equipment with the reading of relevant books. The FISTRAD library, for now, targets senior high school students. Relevant children's books are lacking. The project seeks to stock the library with children books that will serve as resource material for children who visit the place to play. These books will help the children acquire reading habits that would help in their future education.

We intend to use the play ground as a strategy for reaching out to children with sexual and reproductive health information. Early education will help prepare the minds of the children for the life that lies ahead of them as far as their sexual health is concerned. We will display posters on sexual health tips to provide the children with information that will make them live a healthy sexual life.

For the toddlers of our teenage mothers, we will provide them with a variety of toys to engage them, make them happy and divert their attention from what their mothers are doing. The toys to be provided will not only amuse the kids but also help in teaching them skills that will help them in their growth and development process.

3.0 Rationale

There are no recreational facilities for children and in the Builsa District. After school children are seen loitering around and engaging in acts that hinder their development as children. Providing a play ground would provide what is needed to mould the character, interest and wellbeing of the children. Lack of books for children hinders the acquisitions of reading habits that affects their ability to learn other subjects.

Many children of our teenage mother trainees do not benefit from early childhood education. If care is not taken they would not have the opportunity to benefit from formal education. This is because a good formal education must be based on a strong foundation. By providing learning opportunities for early childhood development we would be preventing the children from becoming illiterates who cannot function in society.

4.0 The Problem

A limited opportunity for the use of free time by children is hindering their development. Children need to grow physically and intellectually, Lack of physical activity which is associated with playing can affect the fitness of children and their capacity to function in life. Poor intellectual development also causes non-functional adults. Children must therefore be given opportunity outside their education to play, interact, learn and explore.

5.0 Specific Objectives

- Provide opportunity for 1,500 pupils' age 13-15 years to play
- Increase access of 1,500 pupils to children's books to cultivate the habit of reading
- Provide toys to 50 toddlers
- Sensitise 15,000 youth on adolescent sexual health
- Reach 1,500 youth with adolescent sexual health messages

6.0 Activities

- Purchase and installation of playing equipment on play ground
- Acquisition of children's books
- Acquisition of toys for toddlers
- Radio series on adolescent sexual health
- Production of posters on adolescent sexual health

7.0 Project Schedule

Activity	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 5	Quarter 6
Purchase and installation of playing equipment on play ground						
Fencing of Play Ground						
Acquisition of children's books						
Acquisition of toys for toddlers						
Radio programs on adolescent sexual health						
Production of posters on adolescent sexual health						
Reporting and Closure						

8.0 Sustainability

The library books will not be lent out to children. All the books will be regarded as reference books. This would prevent theft and damage to them that will prevent other children from benefiting from them.

The will be routine maintenance of the equipment to increase their lifespan. The play ground will be fenced to ensure that they are used in such a way that it does not affect attendance to school by pupils and also ensure a judicious use of the equipment.