



ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



UK registered charity 1105489 | Ghana registered NGO DSW/4852

Building Brighter Futures

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INTRODUCTION

I am thrilled to introduce you to our latest annual report as Sabre's new Executive Director, Ghana. It has been an exciting time to join Sabre, with our programme activities growing from strength to strength and our engagements with the Government of Ghana and national education reforms solidifying our position as a leader in early years education in Ghana. This year Sabre was asked by the Ministry of Education to collaborate to create a kindergarten specific assessment tool to be used nationally. Sabre was also called on to support the Ghana Ministry of Education's National Council for Curriculum and Assessment as part of the writing team for the new kindergarten curriculum.

Our Transformational Teacher Training saw the training phase of two projects coming to a successful end, one in the Western Region and our first ever districtwide kindergarten (KG) teacher training in the Central Region. We also had new beginnings, with the launch of our biggest KG teacher training project to date in six districts of the Eastern Region. This project will reach more people in three years than all of our projects have reached to date.

As an organisation we are incredibly proud of the results that our KG teacher training produces, and so it was highly encouraging for us to receive results from an impact evaluation on our teacher training methodology to back this up. The impact evaluation, carried out by Innovations for Poverty Action, provided groundbreaking results in an African context,

proving that gains made from receiving a quality kindergarten education persist into primary school, going against the suggestion that there will be a fade out.

We hit a huge milestone for our Building Playful Schools programme when we signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the end of 2019 with the Fund and Procurement Management Unit of the Ministry of Education to co-create a new cost-effective, child-friendly kindergarten design. The most exciting part of this project is the potential for the new design to be rolled out nationally if successful.

All the milestones that have been achieved this year would not have happened without all of the hard work that our teams in Ghana and the UK dedicate day in and day out. Never ones to rest on their laurels, I had the privilege of joining Sabre's strategic review in November, prior to starting my full time role, where we set out some truly ambitious and exciting plans for the next three years. Our vision is to start bringing our work to scale across Ghana, deepening our relationship with the Government of Ghana in the process and consolidating our position as a thought leader in early years education. Although ambitious I am sure that our hard working team can achieve these goals.

The end of this year brought something that none of us could have predicted, COVID-19 causing worldwide devastation and disruption, and the closing of schools indefinitely in Ghana. I am proud to lead a team that has adapted so brilliantly in these challenging times, and their commitment has allowed us as an organisation to continue our work with the Ghana Education Service in educating young Ghanaians and their parents throughout the school closures.

Finally, Sabre wouldn't be where it is today without all of our wonderful supporters, funders and partners. Thank you for your continued support for our work during these challenging times.


Tony Dogbe
Executive Director, Sabre Ghana



ABOUT US



Teacher Training



Building Schools



Advocacy & Policy

Imagine if every child had an equal opportunity to learn and succeed.

Sabre Education works in Ghana to unlock the dreams of thousands of four and five year old children by improving early years education, known locally as kindergarten. We achieve this through our **Brighter Futures programme**, made up of two key programmes, intertwined with close engagement with the government, to ensure the long-term sustainability of our work:

- Transformational Teacher Training
- Building Playful Schools
- Advocacy & Policy work with the Government of Ghana

In Ghana, Sabre Education is registered with the Department of Social Welfare (Reg. DSW/4852) as a Non-Government Organisation. We have 26 employees who are responsible for the delivery of project activities, national advocacy and local fundraising.

In the UK, Sabre Education has been a registered charity since 2004 (No. 1105489). We have four employees who are responsible for general management, fundraising, financial and strategic reporting and global advocacy. We are also fortunate to have a long term volunteer Education Advisor.

SABRE'S STARS

We'd like to say a big thank you to all our donors, volunteers and supporters, with a special mention to:

Addax & Oryx Foundation • AECOM • Ann-Marie McGilvray • Arup • Aubrey Malcolm-Green • The Big Give and Big Give donors • Book Aid International • Brotherton Real Estate • Carmen Harris • David and Jacqui Main • David Lawrie • Dubai Cares • Echidna Giving • Edwin Abaka • The ELMA Foundation • Forge Architects • Freda Wolfenden • Helen Varma • Ian & Betsy Coles • Ian Bauckham • Jackie McAngus • James Bellew • Lillian Owiti • The Marr-Munning Trust • Matthew Stuckey • Mayer Brown • Medicor Foundation • Mike Scott • Nicholas Ruffalo • Pelican Post • Peter Colenso • Rosalind Kainyah • Reach Cambridge • Richard Tandoh • Rotary Club of Lostwithiel • Sarah Rowse • Shanley Charitable Trust • Stephen & Sarah Tricks • Sonya & Terry Hinton • ThirdWay Group • ThirdWay Trust • Tribe • Tullow Ghana Limited • Tullow Oil Plc • UK aid from the UK government • UK National Commission for UNESCO • UNESCO • Vitol Foundation • The Waterloo Foundation • WMP Creative

VISION

Helping all children succeed, by giving them the best possible early education.

MISSION

To contribute to transforming the life chances of children in developing countries through our Brighter Futures programme.



WHY EARLY YEARS EDUCATION?



First and foremost, there is a serious lack of quality in the early years (kindergarten) education that children in Ghana receive:

- A quarter of teachers have never received any formal training
- Learning is often delivered through a rote-based 'chalk and talk' method
- There are not enough learning materials, with one workbook for every three children
- Kindergarten classrooms are often overcrowded with an average of 52 pupils per class
- 5,280 existing kindergarten classrooms are in need of major repair
- A further 7,270 kindergarten classrooms are needed to meet the government's target of 40 pupils per class

(Source: Ministry of Education EMIS 2017/18)

This is despite a myriad of research proving that a quality early years education sets the foundation for the rest of a child's education and beyond.

"Early childhood development is a key opportunity to develop important 21st century skills, including cooperation, teamwork, communication, creativity, self-discipline, and motivation. Early development of these critical skills will create a virtuous cycle and help children to continue to learn and engage in later life."

(Global Business Coalition for Education, 2018)

Sabre is committed to helping Ghana achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4.2- universal access to quality pre-primary education.



A CLOSER LOOK AT TRANSFORMATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING

Sabre's Transformational Teacher Training improves the quality of early years education that children receive by supporting teachers to adopt child-centred, play-based teaching methods endorsed by the Government of Ghana.

Our Transformational Teacher Training is made up of three key projects that help to equip teachers with the necessary tools and skills needed to make a lasting impact on children's education:

Fast-Track Transformational Teacher Training: This project combines pre-service and in-service training through the development of 'Partner Schools' in the vicinity of teacher training colleges that deliver a quality play-based pedagogy and support enhanced practical placements for student teachers.

In-Service Teacher Training: District-wide training courses to equip teachers with the tools to adopt a child-centred, active and play-based learning approach and a positive learning environment.

Newly Qualified Teacher Support: Continuation of support throughout Newly Qualified Teachers' first year of teaching who have been through the Transformational Teacher Training programme. Support provided includes refresher training, head teacher training and sensitisation for Ghana Education Service officers.

A CLOSER LOOK AT BUILDING PLAYFUL SCHOOLS



Sabre's Building Playful Schools programme creates safe, child-centred classrooms that are conducive for learning at the kindergarten level. There are three key projects that we deliver:

On Campus Centres of Excellence: Demonstration schools built to our highest urban specification at teacher training colleges and universities, which showcase optimal learning environments and support classroom observations for student teachers.

District Model Schools: We build these schools to provide an optimal learning environment that not only functions as a government school, but also provides a focal point for changing attitudes towards early years education, and a venue for teacher training courses.

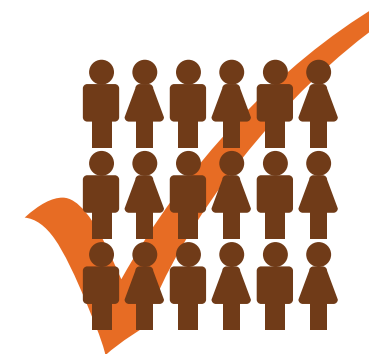
Improved Learning Environments: These smaller scale projects apply aspects of our core model school design to renovating existing classrooms, outdoor learning areas and playgrounds.

SABRE'S REACH AT A GLANCE

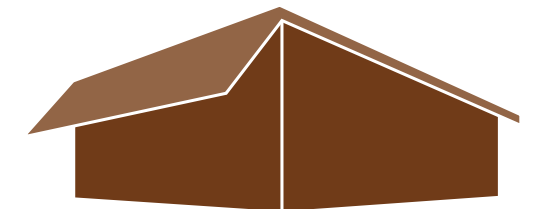
Sabre might be a small charity, but we are showing that small charities can have a big impact. Since 2008, our Brighter Futures programme has reached over 80,000 people in Ghana.

79,556

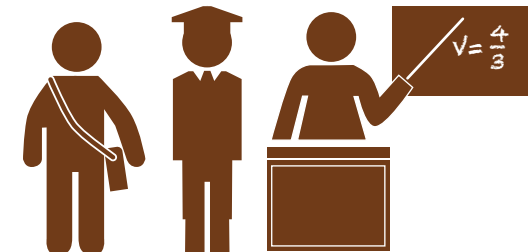
four & five
year olds
have received
a better
start to their
education



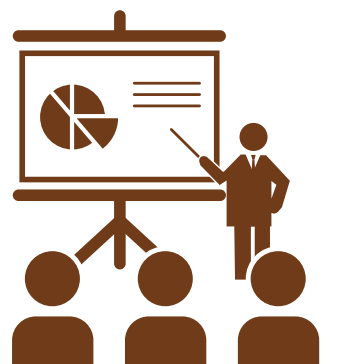
18 kindergarten schools have been built



2,135 teachers, head teachers & student
teachers have received transformational
training



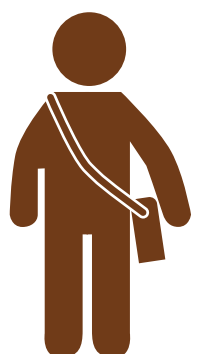
503 Ghana
Education Service
officers have
received training
and support
to monitor and
maintain the
standards of
teaching in the
classrooms



25 College of Education tutors make up the
team of trainers able to deliver transformational
teacher training



961 Newly
Qualified Teachers
have received
support in their first
year in post



WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO THIS YEAR

UK Study Tour

Two members of our Transformational Teacher Training team spent two weeks in the UK on a study tour, where they were able to spend time in various early years classrooms to learn from and observe the teachers.



Reflecting on the experience, Ruki, Sabre's Training Manager, said; *"This study tour has undoubtedly opened our minds to a whole new world and we would highly recommend that this opportunity is given to other members of our team. The possibility of this experience changing the way we do things could be endless."*

Newly Qualified Teacher Refresher Training

We were delighted to welcome back over 200 Newly Qualified Teachers from across the Central and Western regions for a two-day refresher training workshop. These teachers are alumni of OLA and Holy Child Colleges of Education, and were mentored when student teachers by teachers who had been trained as part of our Fast-track Transformational Teacher Training.



Fast-track Transformational Teacher Training Western Region Closing Ceremony

The two-year training phase of the Fast-track Transformational Teacher training for 40 classrooms in the Western Region came to a successful end, with all participants' achievements celebrated during the closing ceremony. We will now enter into the exit and sustainability phase.



"The child centred approach has really been helpful. We realised that the kids felt free, they felt at home and they had a conducive environment to really play and as they are playing they are learning which makes it interesting because the activities are repeated in different environments"
Nancy Peterson, Kindergarten Teacher

Districtwide In-service Training Begins in the Eastern Region

The start of this project marked a significant expansion of our teacher training work into the Eastern Region. Over the next three years this project will deliver districtwide in-service teacher training across six districts, reaching over 900 teachers and 38,500 children.



"The training was very insightful and it is an eye opener to lots of things I previously overlooked, most importantly the pedagogy that should be used in the early stages of education. It has made me very resourceful and aware of the positive effects of using play. We have been introduced to new ways of teaching and learning in the kindergarten classroom."
Margaret Quaye, Kindergarten Teacher



Monster Triathlon

Four incredible athletes took on the epic Monster Triathlon, raising over £8,000 for Sabre in the process. This challenge is no mean feat, starting with a 5km swim in Loch Ness, continuing with a 1000km cycle from Scotland to London and finishing with a 50km ultra marathon along the Thames.

Sabre's Key Role in Education Reforms

We have been supporting the Ghana Ministry of Education's National Council for Curriculum and Assessment as part of the writing team for the new kindergarten curriculum. Sabre team members have also been selected as Master Trainers to train regional and district trainers on the new kindergarten curriculum.



Year 1 of First Districtwide Training Completed

Year one of our first ever districtwide in-service teacher training programme in Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese came to a successful end. Over just one year we were able to provide training to 88 schools, 173 classrooms, 271 teachers, 87 head teachers, 13 Ghana Education Service officers, providing a quality kindergarten education to 4,426 children. We will now enter into the final year exit and sustainability phase.

Three Model Kindergarten Schools Completed

With funding from Tullow Ghana Limited and Medicor Foundation, three Model Kindergarten Schools were completed in the communities of Asebu, Beyin and Ehunyame in time for the start of the new school year. These schools provide much more than just a classroom, as the schools benefit from being fitted with outside teaching areas, playgrounds, kitchens and toilets.



Sabre, UNESCO and the International Labour Organisation

Sabre had the privileged opportunity to join the UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers for Education events in Casablanca and Dubai. These occasions have helped Sabre to be exposed at global fora, meeting new people and organisations in different parts of the world sharing similar aspirations.



Construction starts at two Model Kindergarten Schools

Construction commenced at two new kindergarten schools in the communities of Aboadze/Abuesi and Nkontompo, with both of the schools funded by Tullow Ghana as part of its social enterprise policy. The kindergarten classrooms in both of these communities suffered from overcrowding and dangerous structural problems. Traditional sod cutting ceremonies marked the official start of construction work.



Sabre shortlisted for the WISE Awards

Our Transformational Teacher Training was selected as one of just 15 finalists in the prestigious WISE Awards 2020. Each year, the WISE Awards recognise and promote innovative projects from across the world that are addressing global educational challenges. The winning projects will be announced in October 2020.

Construction begins at a new Model Kindergarten School

Construction of a new kindergarten school for the community of Aboadze in the Western Region commenced in October. The existing kindergarten classrooms had serious structural deficiencies, with cracks in the walls that made them susceptible to collapse. This new kindergarten complex will provide a safe space for children to learn.

Sabre signs Memorandum of Understanding with the FPMU

We reached a pivotal moment in our construction work when we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Fund & Procurement Management Unit of the Ministry of Education to co-create a new cost-effective, child-friendly kindergarten design, with the potential for this design to be rolled out nationally.

JANUARY 2020

FEBRUARY

MARCH

COVID-19 closes schools in Ghana

Sadly COVID-19 forced the Government of Ghana to make the difficult decision to close all schools indefinitely on 16th March.

Sabre embarks on two exciting capacity building initiatives

Sabre embarked on two key initiatives that will help to build the skills of our team members and in turn grow the organisation. Firstly, Deloitte's D2i International Fellowship Programme, where we worked alongside D2i fellows for six months on three business challenges. Secondly, Bridgespan's Investing in Future Leaders Programme, which supported us to implement growth plans initially for the management team, which will subsequently be rolled out across the whole organisation.



Sabre represented at UNESCO in Paris

We were thrilled to be invited to UNESCO in Paris to participate in the celebrations for the 10th Anniversary of the UNESCO Hamdan Prize, which we were lucky enough to win in 2018. Lord, one of our Training Officers in Ghana, had the opportunity to deliver a speech about his experience as a transformational trainer and all that he has achieved.



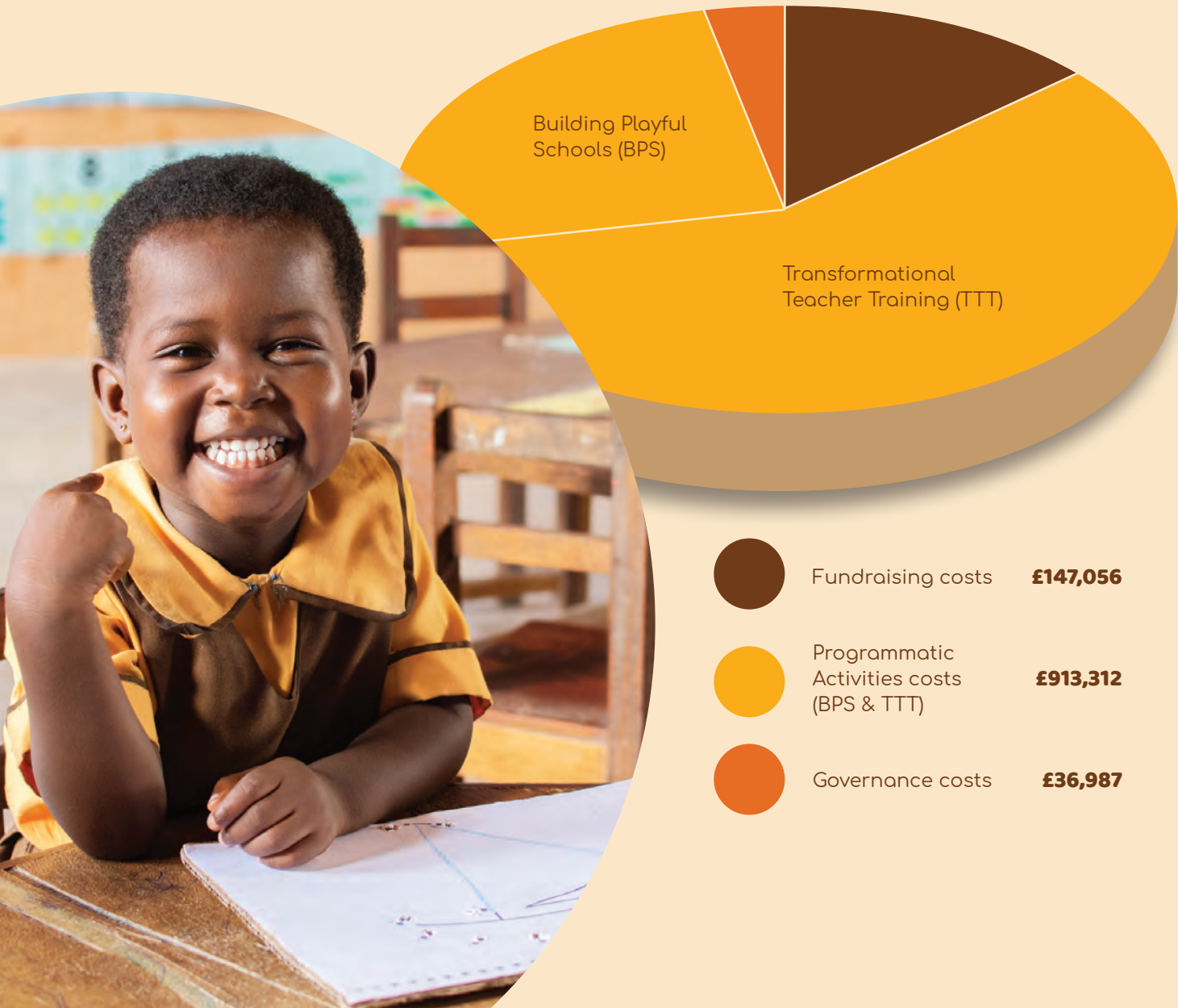
OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

OUR FINANCES

The figures presented here are for the financial year ending 31 March 2020. During the 19/20 financial year, Sabre's organisational activities and expenditure increased by 18% from £931,561 in the 18/19 financial year to £1,097,355. This increase is indicative of Sabre's transition from a period of 'modeling and proving' our work to a phase of 'scaling and influencing', with 83% of our expenditure going towards programme activities in Ghana. Full audited accounts are available via the charity commission.



WHAT'S NEXT FOR SABRE?

Our overall strategy for Sabre over the next three years falls under three pillars.



The next year will see us continue our growth, and movement from a phase of modeling and proving to scaling and influencing, allowing us to realise our vision of being a system change organisation as we strive to fulfil our three year strategy. We will deliver the following projects:

- Work with the Universty of Winneba to create a network of Partner Schools to host their student teachers.
 - Delivery of the QP4G-R project. This is an extension of the QP4G in-service training that was based on Sabre's methodology and delivered in Accra in 2015. In conjunction with Innovations for Poverty Action and the Ministry of Education we will adapt this training to a rural setting and align it with the new kindergarten curriculum.
 - Roll out our Improved Learning Environments project in the Eastern Region.
- Co-create a new kindergarten school design with the Fund & Procurement Management Unit of the Ministry of Education and construct a prototype school.
 - Assist the government to roll out new teacher and classroom assessment tools for kindergarten and publish teaching and learning materials that support the new kindergarten curriculum.
- Digitisation of our training content for ease of replication in Ghana and beyond.
 - Partner with Innovations for Poverty Action's Right Fit Evidence Unit to develop our learning strategy and build the capacity of our learning team.



WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

Our projects have helped to provide a quality early years education to 75,686 children in Ghana. This is all thanks to the support of our donors, partners, volunteers and friends.

If you would like to get involved, we would love to hear from you!

You can find out more and make a donation on our website
www.sabre.education/get-involved
Or contact us at info@sabre.education | +44 (0) 203 239 9476

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