

VOLPHIG

VOLTA PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED INDEPENDENT GROUP

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



**“We Support People with
Disabilities To Support Themselves”**



Introduction to VOLPHIG by Mr. Paul Fiavi, Board Chairperson

This year has been very challenging for VOLPHIG. Allegations were made by former volunteers concerning the organization. I am happy to inform you that, VOLPHIG was cleared of the allegations of financial malpractices in September 2010. The Director has given an overview of this allegation in the report. VOLPHIG has improved its administration systems, ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness within the organization as a result of these allegations. The organization is more transparent in its programme delivery and has become a preferred choice for donors to invest their grants for value for money.

Initially, we concentrated on people with physical disability in the Volta Region as a result of our capacity and expertise to deal decisively with diverse issues relating to cross disability. By sheer determination and hard work, coupled with honesty and transparent administrative style adopted by the Board, Management and staff of VOLPHIG, we have become one of the most dynamic, proactive and pragmatic Disabled People's Organisations (DPO) in Ghana today. With this achievement over the years, it has become necessary to broaden our frontiers to cover the whole country as a national cross DPO working with all people with disabilities at the grassroots level. The name VOLPHIG was changed to Voice of People with Disability Ghana to reflect the new focus of the organization. We will officially adopt the new name as soon as all legal requirements with the Registrar General's Department are completed.

VOLPHIG now has over 1000 individual persons with disabilities and 42 cross disability Self-Help Groups as members across the Volta Region. Our focus is to empower the self-help groups to become self-sufficient. We are aiming at changing from individual membership based style to a self-help group based organization. VOLPHIG has built new partnerships and networks in the year. In terms of external influence, the organization has strong linkages with other NGOs, local government agencies and other public institutions as well as international organizations. The Director of VOLPHIG is still a member of the Board of the Secretariat of African Decade of Persons with Disabilities.

I, however, wish to express my profound gratitude to Mr. Gerry McGeoch in Scotland and Mr. Dave Palmer in the UK who were former VSO volunteers with VOLPHIG. They have continued to be in touch with us all this while and continue to support our work. We are, indeed, grateful. I would like to thank all donors, especially IBIS for their support and advice towards nurturing and growth of VOLPHIG over the years. I would also like to thank you, Mr. John Moller and Rob Buchanan of MEND Trust, New Zealand for your unfailing support and thank all Friends of VOLPHIG for their financial support and advice which continue to sustain the organization. I would now like the Director to introduce you to our activities within the year, activities which are summarized in the following pages.

Thank you.

Signed:

Paul Fiavi
Board Chairperson
Sunday, 29th May 2011



It gives me great pleasure to bring to your attention, major activities and work of VOLPHIG within the year. As you will read from the Board Chairperson's remarks, the year has been very challenging for VOLPHIG. We were more focused on improving and strengthening office administration, financial management and internal control systems in the organization. I hope you will find the report useful. – **F. Asong.**

VOLPHIG Strategic Plan 2011-2013

VOLPHIG had reviewed its Strategic Plan 2007-2010 in October 2010. The organisation has taken very significant steps forward in development of self-help groups as part of its Strategic Plan for 2007-2010. We exceeded the target set for developing 40 self-help groups. We now have 42 self- help groups.

The new Strategic Plan 2011-2013 aims at working to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The organization's focus is on introduction of "Friends of VOLPHIG" to increase the involvement of individuals in fundraising and investment in VOLPHIG to finance its future work and training needs.

The Strategic Plan, 2011-2013, is taking a more programmatic approach to our work ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness within the organization to improving and strengthening our financial management and office administration systems. The plan also promotes access to quality education for children with disabilities, increasing self-help groups to 60 by 2013 and ensuring that self-help groups are sustained within their communities. It also aims to involve our partners in more innovative ways with the projects using the internet and by newsletter.

Field visits to Self Help Groups.

The staff held two separate meetings at Ave-Dakpa, and Ziofe for self-help-group members from Ave-Dakpa, Ziofe, Kpetoe and Adaklu Torda in October 2010. Gerry McGeoch, the former VSO volunteer who had visited VOLPHIG to support in the strategic planning process was also in attendance. The staff shared progress of the organisation and collated views from the groups to develop VOLPHIG Strategic Plan for 2011-2013.



The self-help group members asked VOLPHIG to support them to access their share of the 2% District Assembly Common Fund. They also called on VOLPHIG to focus its strategy on supporting members with income generating activities that could enable them make ends meet. The Director assured the groups that their views would be considered when reviewing the strategic plan.

Improving Financial System for VOLPHIG

VOLPHIG had developed a Policy and Procedures Manual in December 2010 for the management and control of the organization. This was in fulfillment of VOLPHIG's *Strategic Plan 2011-2013* to improve and strengthen financial management and office administration systems in the organization.

The manual has entrenched provisions for financial management and administration in the organization and contains both business activity delegations and financial delegations such as the authority to approve expenditure within the organisation. VOLPHIG has also developed a new accounting system to ensure that proper books of accounts are kept at all times. Weekly, monthly, quarterly and periodic financial and management accounts will be prepared and submitted on schedule and accounting records are maintained in accordance with acceptable accounting principles and grant requirements. VOLPHIG will also ensure that the organisation's administrative procedures are applied in all relationships with staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

VOLPHIG Supporting Civil Society Work in the Ho Municipality



Governance Issues Forum (GIF) was introduced by the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), www.ideg.org to deepen democratic governance through active civic participation in Ghana. VOLPHIG is the focal organization for GIF Network in the Ho Municipality. The network comprises over 30 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the municipality.

In September 2010, VOLPHIG worked with GIF members to sensitise the public on the 2010 Population and Housing Census, using radio talk shows and megaphones to inform community members about the event. The network also distributed fact sheets produced by IDEG to raise awareness about the 2010 Population and Housing Census to the general public.

In September 2010, GIFNet Ho delivered a position paper to the Ho Municipal Assembly to address the falling standard of education at the basic school level in the municipality. The Network noted that education of children is not for teachers alone but also that of parents. They argued that weak monitoring of children's performance in schools coupled with the frequent changes in education curricula were some of the factors contributing to the poor performance of pupils. The Network called on all stakeholders including the pupils themselves to make the quest for education a priority since that is a guaranteed way of improving their lives for the future. The position paper was received by Hon. Isaac Kodobisah, the Ho Municipal Chief Executive. He is enthused of the good work of GIFNet in the Municipality and said the Assembly would consider the position paper when reviewing its Medium Term Development Plan.



GIFNet, Ho had earlier participated in the public deliberation forum in May 2010, organized by the Constitution Review Commission (CRC) to present a position paper to the Commission for consideration.

VOLPHIG Staff Restructuring

VOLPHIG had re-structured its staff team in December 2010 with the Director, Programmes Officer and Finance/Administrative Officer as senior staff. The Self Help Groups Coordinator, Driver/Field Assistant and Security are the auxiliary staff. Each staff has appropriate responsibilities.

Developing Collaboration with the University of Education, Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation Unit

Level 100 students from the Rehabilitation Unit of the Department of Special Education from the University of Education, Winneba, made an excursion to VOLPHIG in December 2010. The students were led by two lecturers of the University including the Head of Department for the Rehabilitation Unit. The excursion afforded the students the opportunity to acquire knowledge about the work of VOLPHIG. They also interacted with VOLPHIG Board and staff on practical and contemporary disability issues including the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programme, which the Unit focuses on.

VOLPHIG used the opportunity to explore cooperation with the Rehabilitation Unit of the University. As part of this cooperation, the Rehabilitation Unit will supply VOLPHIG with students for internship. The Unit will also provide VOLPHIG with external resource support to implement its project, as and when required. This will enable VOLPHIG to maximise the impact and ensure effective delivery of its work. The Rehabilitation Unit will place a student with VOLPHIG for internship in February next year (2011).

VOLPHIG's Participation in the District Level Elections 2010



VOLPHIG had successfully coordinated the Voter Education and Election Observation of the District Level Elections 2010 in the Ho Municipality for the Civic Forum Initiative (CFI) and Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG). Francis Asong, the Director of VOLPHIG was engaged and trained by CFI/IDEG as a District Coordinator together with some other members from GIF Network nationwide to carry out Voter Education and to supervise election observers on behalf of CFI/IDEG in the Ho Municipality. GIFNet, Ho undertook an intensive civic and voter education campaign, using radio talk shows and megaphones to inform community members about the elections. They also mounted platforms for aspiring candidates in some electoral areas in Ho.



In spite of the challenges faced by the Electoral Commission in organizing the 2010 District Level Elections, the voting was generally peaceful, transparent, free and fair, devoid of any act of violence and intimidation at all the polling stations, where CFI/IDEG observers worked.

In a related development, VOLPHIG had successfully lobbied the Electoral Commission in Ho, to engage some persons with disability as Polling Assistants for the 2010 District Level Elections, held in December, 2010. VOLPHIG will pursue this cause in future elections.

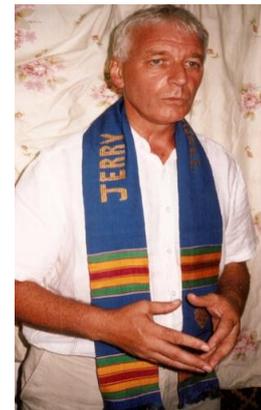
VOLPHIG Exonerated from Allegation

The VSO volunteer placed with VOLPHIG wrote directly to donors in April 2010, alleging financial malpractices in the organisation. VOLPHIG would have preferred that the volunteer discussed any concerns that she may have had in a mature manner with the organisation. As a result of these allegations, donor organisations commissioned Deloitte and Touche in Accra, Ghana to carry out investigations into the finances of VOLPHIG from the period of January 2007 until December 2009. This was to ascertain the veracity or otherwise of the allegation.

On 3rd September 2010, the investigative audit report was published by Deloitte and Touche. The audit report **exonerated and cleared VOLPHIG from the allegation**, although it cited some issues with recommendations relating to lack of organizational capacity and administration, which the Board is seriously addressing.

VOLPHIG Conducts Management Assessment

VOLPHIG Board and staff would like to thank Mr. Gerry McGeoch, a former VSO volunteer who was invited by VOLPHIG in the wake of the allegation of financial malpractices to conduct an independent management report concerning the allegations. Mr. McGeoch agreed to undertake this task at his own expense. He arrived on 24th October 2010 and left on 6th November 2010. He had access to the financial reports and other records concerning the allegations. He also had discussions with staff, Board members and senior officers from a number of organizations and personalities known to VOLPHIG including the Ho Municipal Chief Executive and the Volta Regional Director of Department of Social Welfare. Mr. McGeoch made a number of recommendations to improve upon VOLPHIG's administration systems, which the Board had since taken step to address.



VOLPHIG Donates to RTC, Ho



VOLPHIG donated 2 desktop computers and accessories to the Ho Rehabilitation Training Centre (RTC). The Chairperson of VOLPHIG, Mr. Paul Fiavi said he is pleased the organisation continues to be working in partnership with the Regional Social Welfare Department. VOLPHIG has had a closer working relationship with RTC and Social Welfare, since the organisation was funded in March 2002.

Over the years, VOLPHIG has donated wheelchairs and other mobility aids to people with disabilities and hoped to continue this good work in the coming years. The Warden of RTC,

Madam Dorothy Ketu, thanked the Board of VOLPHIG for their generous donation. She said the donation will benefit the trainees greatly and will give them the opportunity to learn new skills.

VOLPHIG gets new Executive Board

In May 2010, the term of office for the Board came to an end. Three members namely, Mr. Dehole Dometi (former Board Chair), Mr. MayPaul Dzramado (former Treasurer/Board Chair) and Miss Beatrice Bannerman (former Board Member) have ended their two terms in the Board and thus ceased to be Board members.

A new Board election was held at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Pensioners' Hall, Ho on 30th May 2010. Six Board members were elected in accordance with the Constitution of VOLPHIG and three members were co-opted later by the six elected Board members.

- Mr. Paul Fiavi is the Chairperson. He is an Accountant at Mawuli Senior High School, Ho.
- Mr. John Moller is the Vice Chairperson. He was the former Chairperson of the Danish Council of Organizations of People with Disabilities, Denmark.
- Miss Veronica Kofiedu is the Treasurer. She is Cashier at Electricity Company of Ghana, Ho.
- Mr. Godwin Ladzagla is a Board member. He is an Accountant at West African Examinations Council, Regional Office, Ho.
- Miss Doe Sena is a Board member. She is a teacher at Etordome E.P Primary School, Etordome.
- Mr. Bludo Timothy is a Board member. He is a banker at Unity Rural Bank, Ave-Dakpa.



The co-opted Board members are:

- Miss Francisca Afanyede. She is a retired Public Relations Officer of TUC and current Vice Chairperson of YMCA Volta Regional Council, Ho.
- Miss Comfort Kyei. She is a teacher at New Housing JHS, Ho.
- Mr. Tenasu Kofi Gbedemah. He is a civil rights activist and CEO of Institute for Information and Development - INFODEV, a local NGO in Ho.

VOLPHIG's Growth and Gender Equity

VOLPHIG has 42 community based cross disability Self Help Groups (SHGs) across the Volta Region as well as over 1,000 individual persons with disabilities as members. As a rights-based organisation, we promote inclusion for all and champions gender equality as thematic focus. Our staff, board and membership constitution requires an appropriate gender balance and our programme delivery are gender focused.

VOLTA PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED INDEPENDENT GROUP (VOLPHIG)

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2010**

REVENUE	2010	2009
Grants	7,643	74,412
Donations	1,397	2,067
Self Help Activities	-	3,022
Membership Dues	-	60
	<u>9,040</u>	<u>79,561</u>
Less cost of operation	6,214	63,334
	<u>2,826</u>	<u>16,227</u>
Add Bank Interest	7	349
Gross Profit	<u>2,833</u>	<u>16,576</u>
<u>DIRECT GEN. & ADMIN. EXPENSES</u>		
Staff	8,375	6,830
Establishment	1,012	1,672
Finance	482	276
Administration	<u>3,130</u>	<u>5,501</u>
TOTAL GEN. & ADMIN	12,999	14,279
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME	<u>(10,166)</u>	<u>2,297</u>

Detail audited financial statement is available from the office.

Thanks for reading.

Please, send all your questions or comments or suggestions about the report, and how we can improve upon it to VOLPHIG through:

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