

# “EMPOWERING THE YOUTH FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE THROUGH SPORTS”. (EYBFS)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

### AIM

The goal of our community-based youth development sports project is to empower our youth for a bright future through sports. Our programs and activities are aimed at improving the physical and mental health of the youth, and equip them with vital social, and life skills.

To sum up, we hope to shape the future of our youth for a positive contribution towards the socio-economic development of the community either as sportsmen and women or responsible skilled citizens.

### OBJECTIVES.

The program objective is to provide free regular and structured sporting, cultural and recreational activities, workshops and clinics to the children and youth including girls, and the disabled in the 5 communities along the coastal areas of Accra where we will be working. Specifically, our objective is to

- Increase the value placed on physical activities and sports by parents, volunteers and community members
- Provide free regular sporting activities (football, basketball, tennis, athletics, table tennis, beach soccer, and volleyball) and non-formal educational activities (seminars and workshops on hygiene, adolescent reproductive health, sanitation, environmental protection, peace, leadership, health and unity) for 1000 children.
- Enhance and improve the physical, mental and psychological health of 1000 children and youth in the community
- Reduce the likelihood of the occurrence on sports and physical activity related non-communicable diseases among 1000 community youth in the long term.
- Use sports as a medium to educate the 1000 youth participants on healthy living, HIV/AIDS, personal hygiene, sanitation, environmental protection, climate change and moral uprightness
- To improve the learning outcome of 1000 less privileged youth by using sports as a means to foster academic performance, boost self-esteem and cultivate leadership skills.
- To provide a platform for 500 young girls to participate in sports and physical activities.
- Prepare 50% of the youth participants for a professional career in sports.
- To equip 50% of youth participants with essential social and life skills.
- Attract 2000 parents, volunteers and community members to participate in the organization's sporting activities and programs for the children.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

Numerous research studies point to the fact that sports and physical activities can render an individual both physically and mentally healthy. In view of the importance of physical and sporting activity in the lives of the youth and the country, it is essential that concrete efforts are put in place to engage our youth in constant physical and sporting activities. However, the situation is different in the communities

along the beaches of Accra – Ghana. The lack of participation in structured physical and sporting activities especially among the youth in Ghana is quite worrying. This problem is actually as a result of other underlying problems that culminate to make physical and sporting activities not attractive to the youth or not available at all. The lack of adequate sporting facilities, coaching and a structured program in our community also contributes to the problem. It is important to note that subsequently the youth get involved in other social vices in the absence of a well-structured sports program that can trigger behavioral change and bring about development in their lives. Mostly, the result is that these children end up smoking, getting involved in petty crimes, and subsequently armed robbery. Majority of the social problems and vices we encounter in our community in recent times is very much linked to the absence of a program that can engage the youth in the proper manner so as to prepare and develop them for a successful life.

## **PROJECT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

In order to achieve our objectives, the foundation employs specific strategies for specific ends. As part of our strategies, we will embark on an awareness creation drive. It is our belief that if parents, volunteers and community members understand and accept the importance of physical and sporting activities in the lives of our youth, then they will be willing to support the youth to actively participate in the structured physical; and sporting activities one way or the other.

As part of our activities, we will employ the “Long Term Athlete Development Module” in the training of our youth for both physical and sporting activities at our 5 sites on a daily basis. This module seeks to develop the overall capability of the athlete from an early age of 6 to young adulthood of 18 and above, through structured physical, and sporting activities. Most sporting activities in the country for children has not be programmed to engage them long enough to equip them with skills for a professional career in sports or imbue in them the spirit of friendliness, peace, love for one another and unity. This program will engage our youth on a long-term basis and we believe its benefit is likely to stay with the kids for life. The project will refurbish and upgrade the training fields at our 5 training sites in the communities in which we will work. This will create a perfect platform for the children to engage and practice sports in a safe environment. At Martisans Sports and Cultural Foundation, the safety of our children is paramount and we will, therefore, ensure that all training sites are of optimal safety standards for the children.

The organization will also actively carry out non-sporting workshops, and clinics and other nonsporting activities to teach the children and youth about environmental protection, personal hygiene, sanitation, leadership skills, peace, unity and love for one another. This group of activities will seek to equip the children and youth with some necessary information, social and life skills as individuals. The project will stage periodic competitive tournaments, street shows, and rallies. The tournament will give the children the platform to showcase what they have acquired and stakeholders especially the coaches and the project manager to analyze the impact of their work on the kids. Street shows and rallies will also seek to create more awareness and spread the word about the need to provide children with physical and sporting activities on a constant basis and also educate the community about other important agendas such as sanitation and environmental protection, HIV/AIDS, climate change etc. Peer education and community engagement activities like clean-up exercise will be periodically organized by the

organization with the aim of emphasizing the value placed on sports and increase the awareness of the community on the benefits of sports during these activities.

Research and development activities will be undertaken as part of the project plan in subsequent years. We believe knowledge is the foundation for improvement and development. The more we know about a problem, the more likely we can effectively deal with it. We will embark on various research activities aimed at unearthing the underlying factors contributing to lack of interest and participation of children in sports in our community. In the absence of adequate literature on the topic in Ghana, we hope our findings will add to literature and also provide vital information for policymakers.

## **IMPACT**

MSCF impact in the community we serve has been significant over time. Since 2010 to date MSCF has created the opportunity for over 10,000 children especially the less privileged to be engaged in sport and physical activities. Our project has experienced dramatic increase in the number of children applying to participate in recent years. Currently, the foundation provides 2.5 hours of sports and physical activity sessions daily at each of our current 5 training sites from Monday to Friday. The project has enrolled 600 children all our 5 training sites and the target is to hit 1000 children at our 5 training sites. The health of 650 young children including girls who regularly participate on our programs has significantly increased by 50%. Averagely, these youth have been able to shed off 5 seconds in their personal time for the 100 meter race over a period of 6 months constant training. Furthermore 70% of the children participants reported an increase in their level of concentration at school and a subsequent increment in their academic assessment grades. The physical and mental health of these children has been tremendously improved due to participation in the 'Empowering the youth for a bright future through sports' project. The 100% of the girls involved in the project can now do rope skipping for a continuous 3 minute without break, something that was not possible when they first join the project. Juliet Wellington, a 12 year old female participant can now do 50 rope skipping jumps at a time; she could only do 25 when she joined the project about 3 months ago. These children have increased their level of self-esteem and have developed leadership skills as a result of participation in the foundation's activities.

## **SCALE**

The foundation has plans to scale the project to other parts of the country where children also lack access to basic sports and physical activity for health. The target is to enroll 16,000 children in the 16 regions of Ghana. In the coming years the foundation hopes to open 2 new sites in Kubumgu and Tibumg in the Northern part of Ghana, Liberia and Togo. Residents in Tibumg are largely marginalized and they lack very basic human needs. Government policy hardly reaches residents in this area. The children in this area have no platform to properly participate in sports and enjoy the benefits thereof. This is very detrimental to their health in the long run and the consequences can be very fatal, resulting into non-communicable diseases. It is worthwhile to note that non-communicable diseases are currently the leading cause of death worldwide among the youth and concrete efforts must be made to reduce or probably totally eliminate this problem. The cost of this future project will be borne by the foundation with support from donor grants and other stakeholders.