

# Newsletter

June

2014



Kekeli Inc./ 518-465-6576

## Kekeli Inc.

## News

*“My child (Patricia) cannot talk and is always being called names.*

*I always wish my child to be in school but I do not know how.”*



Patricia and her mother in Abutia Teti

Read more about Patricia on page 2.

### Highlights:

New Groups	2
Patricia	2
Freeman	3
Future Projects	3
<b>How to Help</b>	<b>4</b>

## Greetings from Ghana

Parents frequently ask me how they can get their children into school when the teacher tells them children with a disability cannot attend. Persons with disabilities face neglect, abuse, and exclusion from society due to the stigma attached to their disability. Many people feel spiritual forces cause the disability. Persons with disabilities are often called spirit children or devil children and are hidden in their homes. Kekeli Ghana has seen tremendous change over the last few years but we still have a long way to go. Last year we were successful in advocating for the placement of three special education teachers at Helekpe Special Education Unit School. In Abutia three children with cerebral palsy were enrolled in Abutia EP Primary School. Now more families and persons with disabilities are advocating for their right to be included in society. This year we are working towards more change and with your support we know it is possible.

Thank you!

Carrie Brown

## New Groups



Brandford Tay, Kekeli's Project Manager, leads a group discussion with parents of children with intellectual disabilities in Tsito, Volta Region.

Kekeli is now working in two new communities in Ho West District of the Volta Region. We have found that speaking at community meetings and on the local radio station are two effective ways to raise awareness. After these programs we are able to organize the parents into groups to discuss the current situation of persons with disabilities, the role of the parents, the role of the government and the work of Kekeli Ghana.

After the first meeting we ask the parents to set dates for their own meetings to discuss the issues their children face in the community. We then ask if children with intellectual disabilities are being included in family activities, in the local schools and in the community. They answer that teachers in their community do not understand how to teach their children, children in the community who can't talk are asked to go to a special boarding school and many mothers in the group feel their husbands are irresponsible and not looking after the children because of the disability. The next step as a group is to discuss how we can overcome these challenges, what rights do we have and how can we achieve these rights.

### Patricia

Patricia is nine years old and has never attended school because her father was afraid children would bully her due to her disability. After her father died her mother wanted her to go to school but didn't know how. Many schools do not admit children who cannot speak because they feel a special school is better prepared to educate children with special needs. Last year she joined one of Kekeli parents groups and we sent Patricia for assessment at the Regional Assessment and Resource Center in Hohoe. Patricia has mild hearing loss, non-auditory response with no vocabulary and is autistic. The Assessment Center has written to the district education office requesting their assistance in finding a mainstream school that Patricia can attend. Kekeli Foundation is advocating for special education teachers to be placed at the school in Patricia's community to support the three children with disabilities currently attending the school and the many others who are yet to be admitted.





## Freeman



Freeman, six, is from a small farming village. He is not able to attend school due to complications from spina bifida. Freeman's father neglected his medical needs since he was born. Freeman's mother registered him for the national health insurance when he was born. But the clinic she went to was unable to help and they referred him to a hospital. The cost of transportation to the hospital made it difficult for her to send Freeman. Kekeli Ghana has been able to take them to Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra for consultation with a neurosurgeon and an orthopedic surgeon. Freeman needs three surgeries: one to drain the water on his brain which is causing pressure that can lead to brain damage, a second surgery on his spine, and a third to correct his feet deformities. The surgery for his feet should make it possible for him to walk. The other surgeries will be performed to stop further damage. The surgeries are not covered under the national health insurance. Kekeli is seeking support to cover the cost of surgery on his head and spine, casts for his feet and surgery on his feet.

## Future Plans

Kekeli Ghana wants to address the problem of inclusive education on a larger scale. Currently, there is no school that is fully inclusive for persons with disabilities in the Ho Municipality.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are more than 600 million persons with disabilities in the world, of which approximately 80 % live in low-income countries. In most developing countries, including Ghana, persons with disabilities constitute an impoverished marginalized group characterized by lack of access to public health, education, and other social services that would ideally support and protect them. Economically, as well as in social terms, persons with disabilities in developing countries are classified among the poorest of the poor. Persons with an Intellectual Disability (ID) constitute the third largest group of persons with disabilities. In Ghana this means that approximately 750,000 people have an ID and yet most are undiagnosed, hidden from the public and have almost no access to services.

Kekeli Foundations has a long-term goal of establishing a fully inclusive school in the Ho Municipality that will address the many needs of persons with disabilities.



Eric has CP and cannot walk or talk. Because of this, he does not attend school. Inclusive education is still an unreachable dream for many parents of children with disabilities.

SEND DONATIONS  
TO  
KEKELI INC.  
P.O. Box 712  
Slingerlands, NY 12159

For more information  
contact

PHONE:  
518-465-6576

E-MAIL:  
[kekeliinc@gmail.com](mailto:kekeliinc@gmail.com)

WEBSITE:  
[www.kekeli-ghana.org](http://www.kekeli-ghana.org)

How to Help

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 Guardian Angel
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 – Angel
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 - Patron
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 - Supporter
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 - Friend
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 - General Member
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Your donation is 100% tax deductible as a charitable expense.

Please make check payable to:

Kekeli, Inc  
P.O. Box 712  
Slingerlands, NY 12159

Every donation makes a big difference in the lives of people in Ghana

Note cards available

Sets of four note cards are available for \$10 depicting images of Ghana by Ghanaian photography students. All proceeds will go to Kekeli Inc. to help support future student projects. To order cards contact Mary Jane Brown at (518) 465-6576 or by email [kekeliinc@gmail.com](mailto:kekeliinc@gmail.com)

*Special  
Thanks to  
our Sponsors*



Kekeli Inc.

P.O. Box 712  
Slingerlands, NY 12159

