



The Unseen side of ethical engagement

One child. One chance. One future.

How a trip to Ghana changed my life

There are experiences that change not only your view of the world, but also your own compass in life. In October 2024, I traveled to Ghana with my husband. The occasion was a so-called service trip, during which we were able to learn about and support social projects. What began as a one-time commitment became a project close to my heart – and an initiative that has had a lasting impact on my professional and family life.



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Every purchase of a Hedzole product is a step toward freedom – for our artisans, our communities, and the environment.

I am a pharmacist. My everyday life often revolves around health, prevention, and hope. But nothing prepared me for what I experienced in Chorkor – one of the poorest neighborhoods in Accra, the capital of Ghana.

WHAT WE SAW – AND DID – IN GHANA

Together with a small tour group, we visited **B.A.S.I.C.S. International** in Chorkor, an organization that has been

bringing children off the streets and into school for over 25 years. It's not just about education, but also about protection, dignity, development, and long-term prospects.

During our time there, we helped build sanitary facilities, cleaned the beach together with locals, helped the children with their homework, played, sang, and danced. Despite the challenges they face in daily life, the children

approached us with striking openness, a thirst for knowledge, and a vibrant spirit that left a lasting impression. They want to learn. They want more from life. But often, simple things like notebooks, uniforms, or money for a warm meal prevent them from attending school.

We also had the privilege of witnessing a very special moment: the groundbreaking ceremony for Camp Aklowah. This holiday camp offers children a safe place to participate in supervised activities, sports, and life skills workshops during school breaks. Today, the first buildings have already been constructed, and everyone is eagerly awaiting the opening.

BACK IN GERMANY – THE BEGINNING OF A MOVEMENT

Back home in Germany, I couldn't stop thinking about what we could do to help in the long term.

As a pharmacist, I know that our profession stands for care, responsibility, and trust. So, I launched the #1Kind-ProApotheke (#1ChildPerPharmacy) initiative to use my network in the pharmacy world to support the organization. The idea is simple and effective: a pharmacy sponsors the education of a child in Chorkor and provides €750 per year to finance school materials, tutoring, one hot meal per day, clothing, medical care, and social and psychological support in difficult situations.

This sponsorship not only changes a child's life, but also has an impact far beyond the classroom: children who

graduate from school later help their families, pass on their knowledge, and strengthen their community. Education is the bridge between poverty and opportunity.

I am particularly moved that my daughter, Marie-Sophie Klüber, who works at Fujifilm, has supported the project from the very beginning. She helped with planning, listened, asked questions, and this year she will travel to Ghana as a volunteer with a friend to see the situation firsthand, lend a hand, and get involved.

WHAT BECOMES VISIBLE WHEN YOU LOOK

One of the most memorable moments of our trip was my meeting with Patricia Wilkins, the founder of **B.A.S.I.C.S.** International. Pat, or "Auntie Pat" as she is affectionately known, is an extraordinary woman. Born in New York, she once gave up her career in the fashion industry to devote herself to setting up an educational organization in Ghana.

We met at the neighborhood's lively market – right in front of *Hedzole's* small sales stand. Colorful fabrics, hand-sewn bags, cosmetic bags, key chains – all made with great care by women from the community. *Hedzole* is more than a craft project. It is a path to economic independence, recognition, and something that cannot be taken for granted in this environment: a regular income for women.

The name "Hedzole" comes from the Ghanaian Ga language and means "freedom" – a freedom that is emerg-



I ALSO HELPED WITH HOMEWORK IN THE AFTERNOON





A WORKSHOP FROM THE HEDZOLE PROJECT, WHERE WOMEN CAN COME TO WORK



ing here step by step. Women who previously had few opportunities learn not only sewing at BASICS, but also entrepreneurial thinking, quality standards, teamwork, and self-organization. They sell their products at local markets – sometimes even through international partners.

Pat put it this way: "Every purchase of a *Hedzole* product is a step toward freedom – for our artisans, our communities, and the environment."

These words resonated with me. Because they show how much can be contained in a seemingly small bag: independence, pride, belonging – and a perspective that extends beyond the next day.

The project is one of several with which **B.A.S.I.C.S.** specifically empowers women. These also include training courses on career orientation and workshops on women's health – such as breast cancer screening, which is implemented with great commitment despite a lack of technical equipment. In small rooms, trained volunteers perform regular breast examinations. It's not high-tech medicine, but it's a start. For many women, it is the first step toward caring for themselves.

LOOKING AHEAD

Our trip in October 2024 was just the beginning. In March 2026, we would like to travel to Ghana again as a family – to help, continue learning, expand our networks, and perhaps foster new forms of cooperation.

At the same time, we are continuing to look for educational sponsors who are willing to support a child. We also welcome companies that would like to contribute their expertise. Whether in the medical field, IT, or diagnostics, such partnerships can help improve individual projects, such as breast cancer screening.

WHAT REMAINS

Change often begins quietly, with a conversation, a glance, an open door. It does not require grand gestures, but rather people who are willing to look and take responsibility where others might look away.

The work of **B.A.S.I.C.S.** International shows how much can be achieved when education, care, and community come together. It is not about quick fixes or heroic aid, but about continuous support – and about believing in the potential of every single child and every single woman.

The stories we experienced in Ghana continue to have an impact. They remind us that not everything has to be visible to be important, and that it is worth sticking with it together – step by step.

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