

Real-life stories: Ghana

Names: Musah and Fatimata Ziblim

Ages: Musah is 13 and Fatimata is 11

Where they live: Ghana, west Africa

The problem: Ghana is a poor country and there aren't enough schools for everybody. Musah and Fatimata weren't able to go to school as the nearest school to their village was many hours' walk away.

What happened:

SEND is an organisation in Ghana that receives help from a charity called Christian Aid. SEND helped people in Musah and Fatimata's village to ask their government to set up a school. It took time and hard work, but the government did pay for a school to be built.

How have things changed:

Musah and Fatimata can now go to school and they are more hopeful about what they will be able to do in the future. Fatimata says, 'I really want to be at school. I think it's good for me because it means I will be able to get a job and buy things for myself and my family.'

What other thing would they like to change?

Musah says, 'The thing that would make me happiest is if every child in Ghana could go to school.'

Ghana facts

- The capital of Ghana is Accra.
- Musah would like to be a farmer when he grows up. In Musah and Fatimata's village they grow groundnuts and tomatoes.
- The currency in Ghana is the Ghana cedi.
- The main religions in Ghana are Christianity, Islam and some traditional religions.
- The official language in Ghana is English, but lots of other languages are spoken too.
- Primary and middle-school education is free in Ghana but pupils need to pay for their uniform, books and pens.



Real-life stories: Guatemala

Names: Tirza and Bianka Barán Cornejo

Ages: Tirza is 9 and Bianka is 6

Where they live: Guatemala City, Guatemala

The problem: There was a war in Guatemala for many years. This has now ended but many areas are poor and there is a lot of crime. Lots of young people get involved with gangs, which can be violent and dangerous.

What happened:

Caja Lúdica, an organisation that works with a charity called Christian Aid, started to organise carnivals and arts classes to help young people join in with peaceful and fun activities. Caja Lúdica also started using a ruined old building to hold classes, so that people had a shared space to learn new skills.

Caja Lúdica now runs all sorts of events and classes from dancing and stiltwalking, to acrobatics and acting. Tirza and Bianka go to the classes and enjoy the parades and carnivals.

Tirza says, 'We dress up and go out on parade, dancing and marching. There are people on stilts and everything. I like dancing best.'

How have things changed:

People who take part in Caja Lúdica's activities are learning to be peaceful and get on together, and this is reducing violence. Tirza explains, 'I feel proud when I'm on stage dancing. If there were no dance classes, I'd be bored.'

What do they like about living in Guatemala?

Tirza says, 'The best thing is the arts, the worst thing is the violence.'

Guatemala facts

- The capital of Guatemala is called Guatemala City.
- The currency in Guatemala is quetzal.
- Spanish is the main language spoken in Guatemala.
- There was a war in Guatemala which ended in 1996. However, there are still poor areas of the country known as 'red zones' where there is lots of violence.
- Bianka and Tirza like playing 'matado', which is a bit like dodgeball.
- Bianka's favourite food is fried chicken and chips and Tirza's is spaghetti sauce and fruit salad with banana, papaya, melon and watermelon.
- Tirza and Bianka's house has electricity and a toilet but no television. They buy their water from a water lorry.



Christian Aid/Sian Curry

Guatemala