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GHANA EARLY EDUCATION PROJECTS- REFLECTION ON PRACTICE

THE PROJECTS.....

1. SOUTHERN GHANA-ADA

✘ *Ada Early Education and Cultural Centre*



- ✘ Nursery and early primary education
- ✘ Adult literacy classes
- ✘ Evening youth centre offering sports, arts, music infused with Health Education

2. NORTHERN GHANA-KPANDAI

✘ *Let Us Shine Girls School*



98 Girls on full board scholarships paid for by people in Scotland:

- ✘ Inclusive of 3 meals/day
- ✘ Teaching and Accommodation
- ✘ Clothing
- ✘ Full vaccination program and health Insurance

WHY THE NEED?



- Girls live in mud hut villages with no access to water or electricity
- Begin farming from the age of 4
- School in the area with upwards of 120 per class.
- Village school are often old blackboards hammered to trees
- Parents Illiterate
- Desperate to learn and better their lives

GOOD PRACTICE

- 1.) Things can and will go wrong-expect it
- 2.) Learn/work closely within local cultures
- 3.) Where possible use local staff
- 4.) Don't be afraid to deviate from initial plans
- 5.) Check, check and check again
- 6.) Work with, and become part of community you are in
- 7.) Be open and honest about costs /size

1.) THINGS CAN AND WILL GO WRONG-EXPECT IT

- ✘ Don't be disheartened at not meeting deadlines, understand that things don't always happen at the same rate in Africa
- ✘ Become familiar with geography of a location before planning time objectives-rainy seasons, peak farming times etc
- ✘ For cost effectiveness investigate water, electricity, and soil content of land in area before committing to building



2.) LEARN FROM AND WORK WITH LOCAL CULTURES....

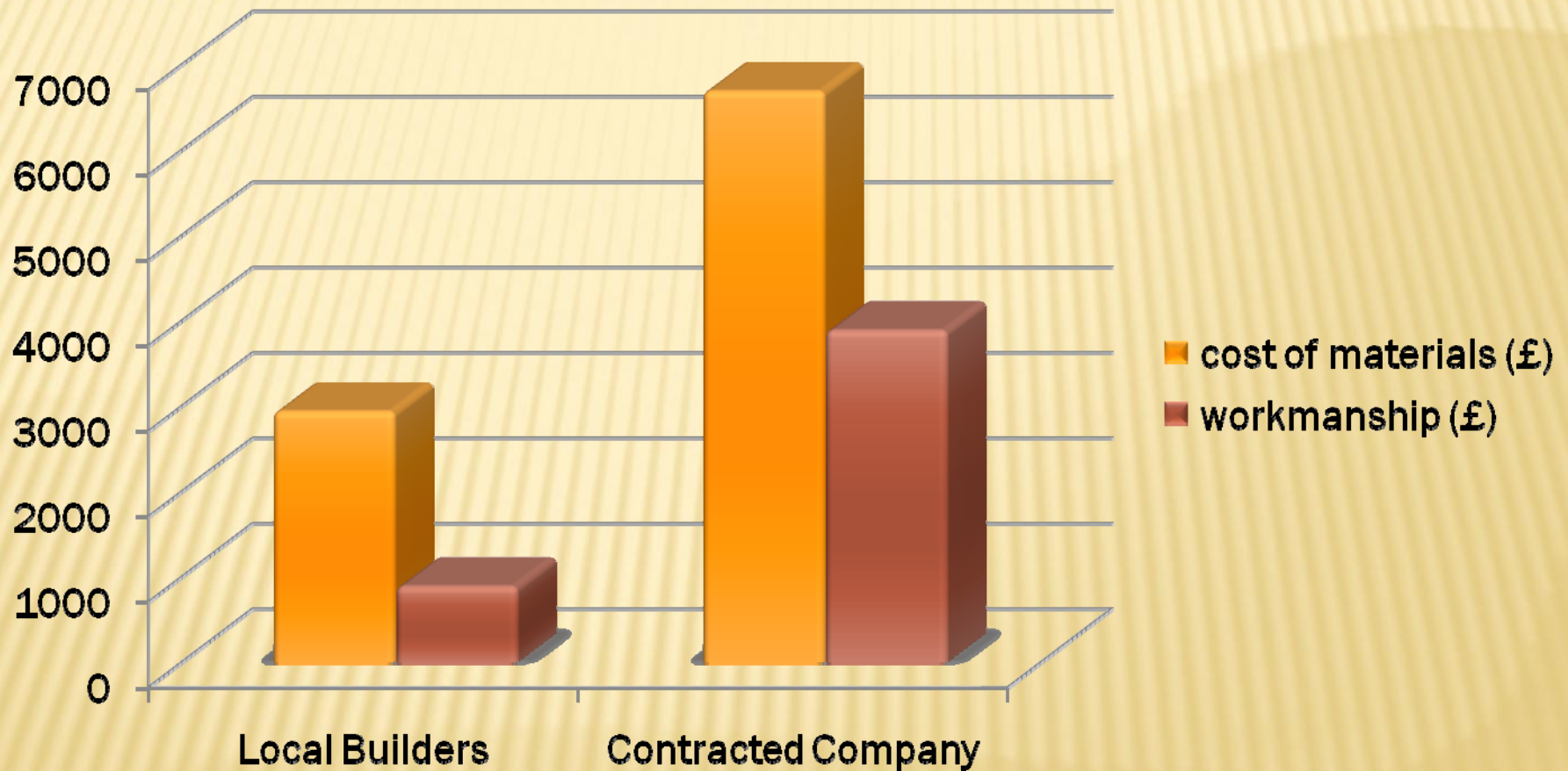
- ✘ Research tribes, language spoken and major religions in field of work
- ✘ Introduce yourself to village leaders, local parliamentarians and NGO's working in area
- ✘ Accept local beliefs
- ✘ Don't try to 'westernise' your project



3.) **WHERE POSSIBLE USE LOCAL STAFF**

- ✘ Often those out with community you work in are seen as foreign in the same way we are
 - + Project managers
 - + Builders
- ✘ Advantages of local staff include:
 - + Stronger desire for success in their own community
 - + Knowledge of skill mix in community
 - + Provision of employment within community
 - + More cost effective

COST ANALYSIS OF LOCAL BUILDERS V CONTRACTED COMPANY



4.) DON'T BE AFRAID TO DEVIATE FROM INITIAL PLANS

- ✘ Evaluate successes and failures at regular intervals
- ✘ Not all the best written project plans work in reality, deviation is not a sign of failure



5.) CHECK, CHECK AND CHECK AGAIN

If like us money is an issue, invest time in thoroughly checking all costs involved:

- × Get quotes for EVERYTHING
- × Limit access to accounts
- × Question all expenses
- × Receipt all purchases
- × Count brick work, test building quality and reinforce deadlines

6.) WORK WITH AND BECOME PART OF COMMUNITY YOU ARE IN

✘ We introduced ourselves to the communities we are based in by:

- Organising an all star village football match
- Inviting all tribal chiefs and village elders to visit our building
- Participating in local festivals and Independence day parades
- Personally meeting all pupils parents and explaining our working philosophies



7.) BE OPEN AND HONEST ABOUT COSTS AND LIMITATIONS

- ✘ As a western NGO it appeared at onset to locals involved that our budget was endless
- ✘ Stress importance of value for money and cost saving- i.e. roofing used in decent standard buildings not the best of the best used for city mansions.



- ✘ Always speak and deal in local currency
- ✘ Set budgets and stick to them. If quotes and costs are too high in areas don't give in to demand. negotiate, barter, redesign and if necessary pull out

AND FINALLY.....

Ensure every staff member and every volunteer understand the mission of the project and are made accountable.



Each in their own way should contribute to the development of our girls and the overall aim of educating them to contribute to the growth of their nation