

MindFreedom Ghana (MFGh) started in 2004 when three individuals -- Nii Lartey Addico, Dan Taylor and Janet Amegatcher contacted Graham Morgan of the Highland Users Group in Scotland, who referred them to Tina Minkowitz, of the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry. MFGh obtained its formal statutory certification to operate as an NGO in Ghana in November 2005.

The operations of MindFreedom Ghana (MFGh) are currently based in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. The Vision Statement of MFGa is to “improve the mental health and lives of sufferers and survivors in Ghana.” Their website is [HERE](#). Their goals and objectives are [HERE](#)

In a 2005 report by MFGh’s co-founder Dan Taylor, describes the stigma faced by people in Ghana who have psychosocial disabilities. Many people believe that individuals who experience psychiatric problems have “offended the gods” resulting in maltreatment.

“Sometimes relatives chain the patients and send them to fetish shrines or spiritual camps where they are placed in the scorching sun when they get uncontrollable or wild. The chains sometimes cause wounds which when not treated in time cause tetanus infections and in some cases get gangrene. These then may culminate in amputation or even cause death of the patient.”

Although the report frequently use terms like ‘mental illness’ or ‘schizophrenia’ there can be no doubt that MFGh is passionately focused on human rights for people with psychosocial disabilities.

In Ghana, there are three major psychiatric hospitals the largest being the Accra Psychiatric Hospital, a 100 year old prison like facility built by the British colonial Government for individuals considered to be “uncontrollable”. The high walls and other prison-like features are painful reminders of how colonial days. The facility houses over 1,000 individuals in 24 wards. Shortages of food, bedding, and clothing, and exposure to vermin such as rats and roaches were are described in a 2005 report by MFGh [HERE](#)

All three hospitals are located in the southern part of Ghana, increasing the disruption to people’s lives when family members are brought to Accra Psychiatric Hospital. MFGh supports reintegration and vocational support for discharged patients.

In 2011, MindFreedom International sent a delegation led by David Oaks (co-founder of MFI) and Celia Brown (Board President, MFI) to Accra, Ghana, Africa to conduct a training and meet with a wide variety of cross-disability organizations and government officials. The delegation visited Accra’s psychiatric institution and found that the primary ‘treatment’ offered was confinement and psychiatric drugging. A description of the delegation’s findings can be found on MFI’s website [HERE](#).

MFGh’s more recent work focuses explicitly on collaborating with the World Health

Organization to develop and promote an e-training Ghana. Other partners are the European Union, the Ministry of Health, Germany, DFID and Foundation d'Harcourt.

MFGh started the planning last September and the project was launched in February. It will end in 2022.

MFGh is also partnering with the Mental Health Society of Ghana (MEHSOG) and the University of Cagliari, Italy to implement a component of the Quality Rights project which focuses on assessing the psychiatric facilities and some selected general hospitals in Ghana. Mental Health Authority also partners with MF Ghana with funding from the European Union.

As part of this project deliverables, Dan Taylor and Humphrey Kofie of MEHSOG will be travelling to Italy in September to attend a training workshop there which include the partners from Lebanon and Armenia.

Dan Taylor conducted a training session last month for the 22 assessors including in Accra which was facilitated by MFGh's partners from the University of Cagliari.

MindFreedom International Board President Celia Brown recently visited with MFGh representatives in Accra in 2019 and is proud of the work of MFGh