

CoRe Tales of Resilience

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End of Programme Edition

Experiences of young people
bouncing back from the
disruptions of the COVID-19
pandemic through the
empowerment provided by
the COVID-19 Recovery and
Resilience Programme (CoRe)

Editorial

This is the second compilation of the CoRe Tales of Resilience, a compendium of experiences of young people bouncing back from the disruptions of COVID-19 through the empowerment provided by the COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Programme (CoRe Programme).

This publication features 200 tales of stakeholders in the CoRe Programme sharing their own disruptions, learnings and experiences. There are 156 stories of young people telling, in their own words, incredible stories ranging from educational, career and emotional disruptions suffered through this COVID-19 pandemic and how the CoRe Programme helped them to survive and thrive.

It is naturally very difficult to choose a favourite because each tale tells in an authentic way, the experience of someone who lost so much but found new hope. In the very first tale Samuel tells a story of losing his job as a teacher but being coached by CoRe to turn his talent into a thriving shoe making business. Then there is the inspiring tale of Dorcas who lost her entire livelihood and had to start life afresh. There is also Felicia, the artisan who lost all her customers to the competition but found a new lease of life through the understanding of customer service gained through CoRe. Of course, there is also Promise, the inventor, who was mentored and inspired to successfully develop an incubator for hatching eggs and a gadget regulator, also known as a stabilizer.

This second publication additionally took the unprecedented step of sharing tales of 35 of our hardworking mentors and counsellors who worked behind the scenes with the young people as well as 9 of the members of the CoRe operational team sharing their frontline experiences.

About CoRe

The CoRe Programme was a collaboration between the Springboard Road Show Foundation, Solidaridad and the Mastercard Foundation. The programme run in Ghana over the six-month period from June 2020 to November 2020 spilling over till the end of the year.

The CoRe Programme deployed three main platforms e-Learning, e-Counselling and e-Mentoring to equip young people aged between 18 and 35 years with the skills to survive and thrive during and after the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CoRe Programme targeted 692,000 young people in the formal and informal sectors. It was a media and digital-driven intervention with minimal in-person engagement. The programme provided them with job readiness skills, psychological support, health and wellness tips, among others.

Reach and Impact

The CoRe Programme reached approximately three million young people in Ghana each month through radio and television broadcasts. Altogether, the e-Learning broadcasts impacted 23,056,950 people over the entire six-month period. Social media activities, including e-conferences and e-Learning episodes, engaged over six million people. The WhatsApp Group Mentoring and Counseling interventions directly interfaced with about ten thousand individuals who reached out to CoRe's facilitators for support in different areas. 300 professional mentors and 50 certified counsellors from the Ghana Psychological Association were engaged in this effort.

Having been in youth development for a decade and half, we are humbled by the successful exclusive deployment of digital tools like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Zoom, and YouTube for such a massive and interactive intervention, which allowed beneficiaries to send feedback on lessons, ask questions, and engage resource persons from different parts of the country. The use of local languages (Akan, Ewe, Ga, Hausa, Dangme and Dagbani) is another fulfilling development.

We are confident that the publishing of these CoRe tales of resilience will encourage and empower millions of young people across Ghana and Africa to defy all odds and go on to reach their full potential.

Enjoy the read.



Albert & Comfort Ocran
Springboard Road Show Foundation

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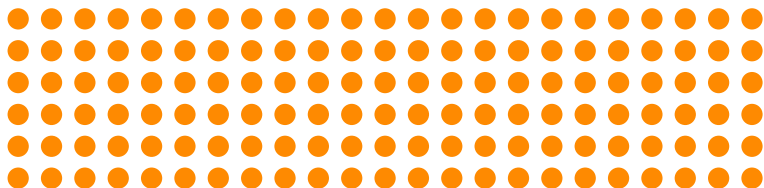
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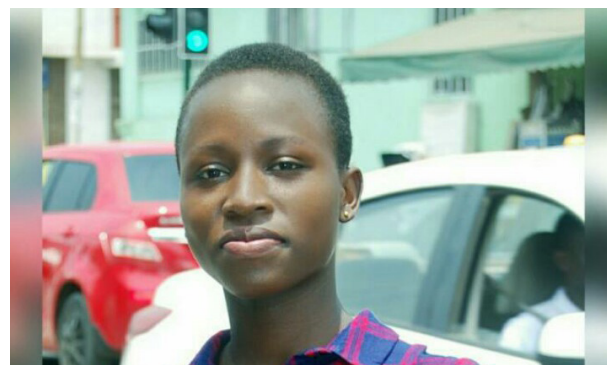
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01 I lost my job but discovered my shoe making talent

Samuel Owusu Addo

Samuel's is a story of a total turnaround. He lost his job as a teacher during the early days of the pandemic. Faced with the stark reality of unemployment, he took inspiration from the CoRe Programme and turned to his talent as an alternative source of income. He shares how it happened:

My name is Samuel Owusu Addo, a YIEDIE beneficiary and a member of the Machine Operation mentoring group under the CoRe Programme. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I was a dance teacher in a private school called Brainy Bairn International School, West Land, off the Haatso Road, Accra.



The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the attendant restrictions really affected me. I lost my job as a teacher and my world literally came tumbling down. I felt hopeless and wondered what I could do to earn an alternative source of income. I had never previously considered the possibility of doing anything else and so was left totally perplexed.

I chanced upon the CoRe Programme through my YIEDIE network and decided to sign up. I found the e-Learning aspect of the programme very convenient. I listened to episode after episode and they helped me to bounce back big time.

The key turning point for me was the realization that I had a hidden talent within me, that is, the making of slippers and sandals. I jumped at it with both hands as an income lifeline to sustain myself and my family. I kick started the business and now it is doing very well. The future is great.

Not surprisingly, my favourite e-Learning sessions were the series on Talent with Rev. Albert Ocran, the Time Management session with Nanya Nuamah and the one on dealing with the unexpected by Dr. Erica Dickson. I have been fortunate to learn the following key lessons from CoRe:

- How to discover my talent.
- How to do business with my talent to make income.
- Doing business in the new normal way.
- How to deal with an unexpected pandemic.
- How to deal with loneliness and anxieties.
- How to use my time wisely and start my day early.

I intend to apply the principles I have learnt to help me grow and expand my business. I would also like to train some of the YIEDIE students who have not discovered their talent or learnt any skill for free. That would be my little way of saying ‘thank you’ for such a life-changing opportunity.

I am very grateful to CoRe Programme.

Samuel



02 I have reconnected to my painting talent

**Nana Akua
Asantewaa Afram**

Nana Akua found herself struggling to cope with her Chinese studies due to changes occasioned by COVID-19. CoRe gave her a doorway to virtual learning, which she embraced with both hands. She tells her story:

My name is Nana Akua Asantewaa Afram and I live at Tema. I was a tertiary student studying Chinese prior to the outbreak of the Coronavirus. COVID-19 dealt a big blow to my academic pursuit. I suddenly found myself struggling with a totally different approach to my university studies.

As a language student, I had been made to believe that the traditional mode of learning was the best way to learn the Chinese language. I was therefore



really worried. Nonetheless I managed to adapt and pass my end of semester exam. Then the Coronavirus struck. There was so much uncertainty and confusion surrounding the pandemic that I became anxious and often quite depressed.

I heard about the CoRe Programme through social media on a WhatsApp platform. I got interested and signed on. My curiosity and appetite for knowledge made me add on one mentoring group after another in my quest to consume as much information as I could find.

I ended up participating in the Blogging, Creative Writing, Entrepreneurship, Interior Decor, Music, Banking and Finance, Student Counselling, Investment Banking, Accounting, Administration and Human Resources (HR), Communications and Public Relations (PR), Event Planning and Organization and Marketing groups. My mentor was Charles Wundenjda.

Through the practical e-Mentoring and e-Learning sessions, I was able to bounce back from my anxiety and depression. I also learnt a great deal from various mentors and networked with quite a number of people. I have been encouraged to do more than I had in mind before this pandemic.

The CoRe e-Mentoring has helped me to gain a broader range and better perspective on many careers than before - what they entail and their technicalities. I have also been able to gain some helpful leadership and communication skills, learning to make modifications where necessary. My ability to balance work and personal life has improved. I am now able to use a pragmatic approach to solve problems.

As an upcoming leader, I have also learnt to seek guidance from those who have gone ahead of me in the various paths I seek to tread. The CoRe Programme has opened my eyes to the fact that adversities are inevitable but my response to them is what makes all the difference. I have therefore resolved to be very tactical in dealing with them. I have also learnt to invest massively in my talent.

In addition to the mentoring, I also benefitted from the CoRe e-Learning sessions. For instance, the first and second episodes with Rev. Albert Ocran focused on discovering and harnessing one's talent for service to humanity. These sessions opened my eyes and

“The CoRe e-Mentoring has helped me to gain a broader range and better perspective on many careers than before”

challenged me to revisit my artistic talent, which I had abandoned a few years ago.

Thanks to CoRe, I have been able to harness my potential and I am currently running a pencil painting business, which is gradually building a client base.

I am grateful for this platform which gave me the opportunity to network and expand my contacts which I believe will be beneficial someday.

I intend to put to the best possible use the various lessons I have learnt, and the experiences which the mentors shared with me. Most importantly, I intend to go all out with my art, build on my peer counselling skills and share my blessings with others.

Nana Akua

03 CoRe reshaped my career

Naa Amerley

In the face of disruptions brought on by COVID-19, Naa has taken advantage of the CoRe Programme to acquire new skills and tools to facilitate her future career and business. She shares her experiences:

I am Naa Amerley and I am particularly excited that I got the opportunity to participate in the CoRe Programme. I was in the Medical Laboratory Science mentoring group. Before the COVID-19 pandemic came to disrupt our lives, I was looking forward to starting and running a business or possibly exploring other career opportunities. However, the pandemic put brakes on all my plans.

I heard about the CoRe Programme at the appropriate time because it happened to be a time when I was making a number of important choices concerning my life and my future career. CoRe equipped me for these decisions in a significant way: I must say some of the skills and lessons I learnt were totally unfamiliar.

For instance, I was pleasantly surprised to find out about the 'Applicant Tracking System' (ATS) which enhances an individual's chances of getting a job.



This system is able to help one to digitally assess the relevance or suitability of their CV. Just after that session, I thoughtfully made the necessary changes to my CV and passed it through ATS to ensure that I was compliant, confident that the CV I submit in future to potential employers would be well-structured and 'rich'.

Now I look forward to starting a business with what I have learned and hope to further my career in a field that will be beneficial to society. Thank you CoRe Programme.

Naa

I aspire to become the Mark Zuckerberg of Africa

Gideon Sosu Jnr.

Gideon looks back at a year of massive disruptions and realizes how fortunate he is to have learnt so much about technology, real estate, investment and leadership through the CoRe Programme. He shares his lofty future aspirations here:

Before his demise, my father once asked us, his children, during a Christmas Day dinner: “What do you guys want to become in future?” My junior brother said he aspired to be a doctor. I said I wanted to become a great engineer. I want to share how that dream almost fell on the rocks and how the CoRe Programme brought it back to life.

I am Gideon Sosu, Jnr, based at Maamobi in Accra. I first heard of CoRe through the YIEDIE Youth Programme. I signed up right away and was privileged to be a part of the Software and App Development, Civil Engineering and Investment and



Finance groups. My mentors were Ing. Moses, Mr. Claude Amadu and Mr. Myles Hagan of UMB Bank.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent announcement of the partial lockdown in the country had affected the growth of my businesses in safety and security mechanisms (CCTV, electric fence wiring, fire alarm, access door control, intruder alarm system) and software application development, not to talk about my personal life.

Since March 2020, I had not been able to close any sales deal with either existing or new clients: the economic turn of events had affected the businesses of my clients so much that they were experiencing dwindling incomes and incurring losses.

Through the CoRe sessions, I learnt the basics of developing an App using the B4A. Additionally, I acquired knowledge in how to start a real estate business or up-scale it by becoming a realtor. With the new law reforms surrounding the real estate industry, I learnt that I had to become a member of an accredited real estate organization and acquire a valid member ID to become a real estate agent. I also learnt how to bid for contracts and a bit about Banking and Investment. All these have become very essential to me and my business.

Apart from the technical and business skills, I was also privileged to imbibe some leadership lessons. I learnt to get work done through people by providing the adequate information and tools. I also learnt about the different kinds of risks associated with making investment decisions.

The CoRe Programme has really opened a window into my future aspirations. I believe I'm on track and I will surely get there. My one-on-one meetings and long chats with Ing. Moses gave me more hope and insight into what the future held for me.



I had the privilege of serving as the group leader for the software App Development group facilitated by Mr. Claude Amadu. This knowledge has come in handy: it has taught me the value and importance of growing relationships. I am learning more day-in-day-out because I really aspire to become the Mark Zuckerberg of Africa. I really love the CoRe Programme and the great resource persons they brought on board.

I have wasted no time incorporating what I learnt into my scope of business and personal life. I can say the future is much brighter, I can see light at the end of the tunnel, and I just need to be focused and persistent.

Gideon

05 CoRe has made me more assertive

Helena Aidoo

Helena grew up feeling marginalized and unwanted because of a challenge with her eyesight. Joining the CoRe Programme gave her back her confidence. She now looks into the future with assurance and a sense of self-worth. She shares how things turned around for her:

My name is Helena Aidoo and I am a National Service person. I hope that sharing my experiences from the CoRe Programme will affect the lives of others positively.

I grew up with a unique challenge with my eyesight. Back in the day at high school, I was teased a lot by my friends because I happened to be short-sighted. This visual challenge became one of the biggest setbacks of my life.

Of all the discouraging remarks in school, the one that nearly sank me was by one of my teachers. He insinuated that I could not go into certain professions like the military because I was shortsighted. These



words scarred me: they limited my vision and the choices I felt 'allowed' to make. Any time I had to make a decision, I found myself asking if I was qualified enough. I used to be quite sociable, but the teasing had a negative impact on my self-confidence and social life. I became very reserved and often kept to myself.

Fast forward to 2020. Everyone was hit in one way or the other by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Personally, my finances were severely impacted and I had to significantly cut back on my expenditure as anticipated revenue inflows failed to materialize.

I heard about the CoRe Programme from the National Service Secretariat and signed up to the e-learning and the e-counselling modules. My biggest take-away was the essence of networking and relationship building. I enjoyed the other topics but this one impacted me the most because it spoke directly to my situation.

After the session on the value of networking and relationships, I promised myself that I would go back to being the outgoing and bubbly person I used to be. I reckoned that if I didn't do that, there would be a delay in achieving my goals in life. I am making the effort to be a more assertive, confident and connected person. I recently attended a friend's wedding and actually made two new friends. It felt like a big achievement.

This is my story, - thanks to CoRe.

My resolve is to make a conscious effort to create one-on-one interactions with speakers and resource persons when I attend seminars. I also want to interact more with people in my church and other circles who are on the same career path with me.

Looking back and seeing how far I have come I really appreciate the CoRe Programme for giving me a new outlook on life.

Helena

I have learnt how to manage my emotions

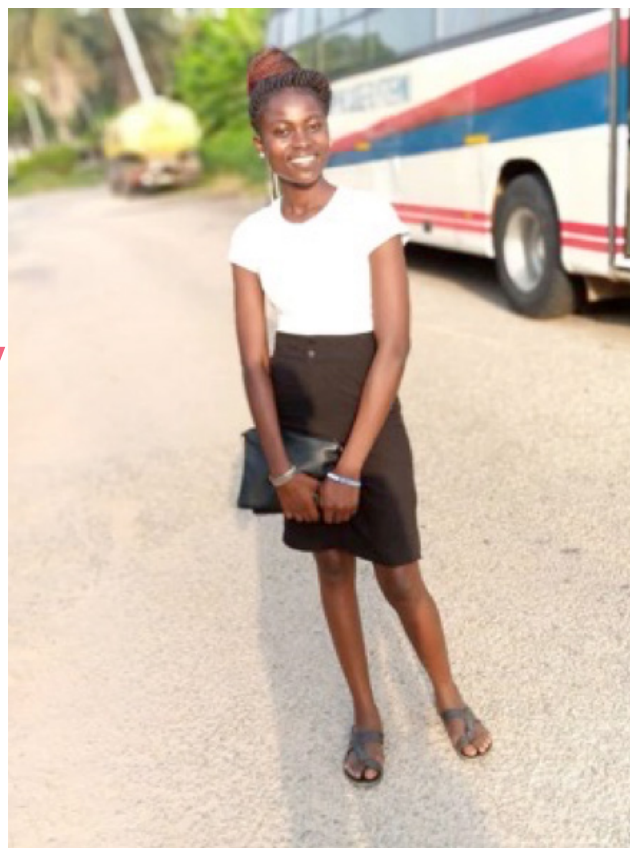
Doris Danso Akonkoh

Doris lost her way during the pandemic as she struggled to adapt to virtual learning in her Chinese course. She embraced the CoRe Programme with both hands and joined as many mentoring groups as she could. She tells the story of her transformation:

My name is Doris Danso Akonkoh and I am a student at the University of Education, Winneba. I had the privilege of being part of the Radio Broadcasting mentoring group in the CoRe Programme.

As a student, the impact of COVID-19 was severely felt in my education and finances. I struggled to adapt to the new ways of learning. I also experienced some financial difficulties.

I heard about the CoRe Programme and signed up determined to learn as much as I could. CoRe helped me, first of all, to manage my anxieties and



loneliness. I also got connected to new friends who encouraged and inspired me. Even though the e-Learning programme was virtual, I found myself listening to the audio episodes over and over again and getting very motivated. The most fulfilling part of my experience was when I was given the opportunity to be a leader in my mentoring group.

CoRe has taught me a number of new things. The following are some of the most notable ways in which the CoRe e-Learning sessions have added value to my life:

- **Talent Discovery:** I learnt that talking is a talent which can help me to teach, preach or become a broadcast journalist. After listening to Rev. Albert Ocran's presentation on this subject, I also made my own short video on 'Discovering Your Talent'. I believe I have discovered my talent and my future. I want to become an international journalist. This is my dream career.
- **Dealing with loneliness and anxiety:** CoRe taught me that in every situation, I have to manage my thoughts. It helped me to recover from the loneliness I was facing, which had been caused by a heart break. I will always remember one of the slogans I learnt, 'Slow motion is better than no motion', which literally means that every step counts in causing change to happen. This valuable lesson came from the counsellor, Dr. Joana Larry-Afutu.
- **Surviving disruptions in life and work:** I learnt the importance of building a high-quality social support system to cushion me against crisis, and disruptions in life. Thank you, Dr. Richmond Acquah Coleman, for that lesson.
- **Visualize the end from the beginning:** CoRe taught me how to use the lessons from my past mistakes to improve upon my current state. I used to have a hard time controlling my anger. However, the sessions gave me insight into how to handle difficult situations to keep my emotions under control. I am committed to maintaining this attitude for a bright future.

“The most fulfilling part of my experience was when I was given the opportunity to be a leader in my mentoring group.”

- **Leadership Skills.** Finally, CoRe taught me to discover my leadership skills and to build on them. I feel empowered because I can now make my own decisions and respect those decisions I make.

Long live Ghana!

Long live the Springboard Road Show Foundation!!

Long live CoRe!!!

Doris

CoRe is one of the greatest gifts of my life

Michael Jajah

Michael lost his teaching job and experienced financial setbacks due to the lockdown occasioned by the outbreak of COVID-19. He shares his story of recovery:

I am Michael Jajah, a National Service person residing at Abeka in the heart of Accra. I was teaching in a private school until March when the nation had to go into a lockdown.

I was drastically affected by COVID-19 in multiple ways. I experienced the humiliation of being without a job and the financial troubles that come with it. As time went on, things got very tough for me. My service allowances stopped from April.

Fortunately, I was allowed to continue teaching, handling two core subjects - Mathematics and Science - until the students wrote the BECE. At that



point, when nothing came in, I had no option but to quit my post as a National Service teacher.

I heard about the mentoring component of the Core Programme and was attracted by the prospect of learning from professionals in my field. I signed up for the programme and opted to join the digital marketing and graphics design group.

CoRe has given me hope. It has taught me how to create my own business or look for a job other than teaching. Specifically, I have learned the strategic dynamics that can keep a business growing on all fronts. My first priority now is to occupy myself with something so that I do not stay idle. I want to learn more and improve myself as I work. Ultimately, I want to become a business owner and employ other people.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to my mentor Maximus Amertorgoh and the team that organized the Core Mentoring Programme. This is one of the greatest gifts of my life.

Michael

I want the world to experience the best of me

Joseph Twum Addo

Through his patronage of the CoRe Programme, Joseph has been empowered with the skills needed to set up his photography business. He looks back at how this helped him to overcome the disruptions caused by the coronavirus:

My name is Joseph Twum Addo and I am based at Ablekuma in Accra. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I played multiple roles; first as a student and as a National Service person with a private company while trying to start my own business.

The main setback I encountered during the pandemic was when the company where I was doing my National Service asked us to stay at home. This was a very disconcerting experience.



I heard about the CoRe Programme through the YIEDIE Youth Group. I got on board and found it to be a priceless initiative. The lessons I received in photography were top notch. My perspectives and orientation were reshaped. I received the impetus to raise the money to start my own photographic studio, thanks to my mentor, Mr. Kofi Gyasi Acquah.

Going forward, I am committed to saving money from my earnings to procure the equipment I need for my business. I want the world to experience the best of me and benefit from what I have learnt through this wonderful CoRe initiative.

I give the credit and appreciation to the CoRe team and to the YIEDIE Group through which I heard about CoRe.

Joseph

09 One text message changed my life

Kingsford Gyesi Arthur

Kingsford is a National Service person who has started creating designs that will use discarded materials to construct classrooms for kids studying under trees and in other unconducive environments. He attributes this journey into innovation to a text message he received about the CoRe Programme.

My name is Kingsford Gyesi Arthur, and I reside at the Madina business area. I was doing my National Service with the Ghana Highway Authority (GHA) at the turn of the year when COVID-19 broke out. As the pandemic escalated, all the scheduled trainings and off-site engagements that the company had scheduled for our learning could not take place. Consequently, we were sent home.

I was in the process of looking out for other opportunities when, one day, I received a random text message on my phone informing me about the CoRe Programme. I took action on the text message and I am glad I did. Today, I can look back and say one text message changed my life.



When I joined CoRe, I opted to participate in the Real Estate session where my mentor was Mr. Yamoah.

CoRe put me on the trajectory to gradually start my own non-profit designs, making use of discarded materials to construct classrooms for kids studying under trees and in unconducive environments. The idea struck just before the CoRe programme, but currently, it is happening!

My perception about the real estate industry has significantly been enlarged by my mentor, Mr. Yamoah, who shared his wealth of experience in varied fields of life. In the next decade, I see myself building a one million capacity brick kiln to construct mortgage homes for the marginalized.

This is my dream and thanks to CORE, it is possible.

Kingsford

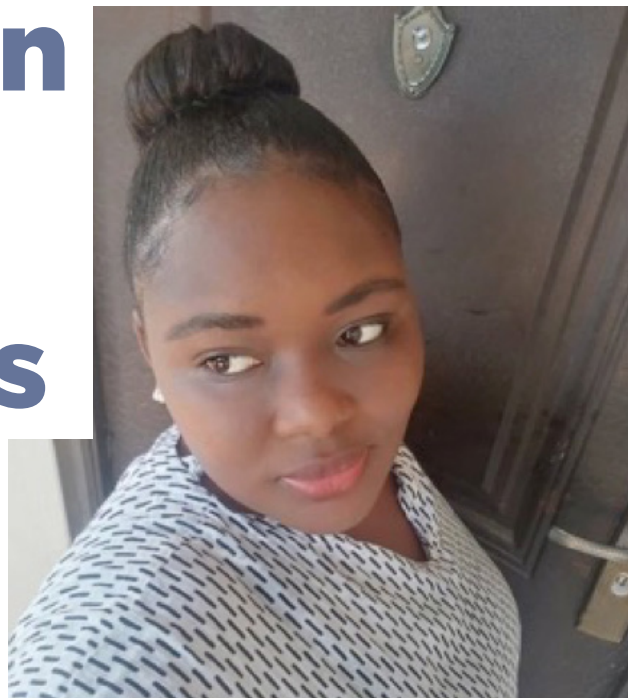
10 Participation in CoRe is worth a million cedis

Rukmini Adjetei

For many, the National Service Scheme is a transition into full time employment. Rukmini was one such person who found the COVID-19 pandemic and its disruptions very unwelcome. She tells her exciting story about how CoRe helped her to start a clothing and footwear business:

My name is Rukmini Adjetei and I reside at Amasaman. I was a few months away from completing my National Service at the Balme Library of the University of Ghana when the country went under lockdown. Although I received my allowances as a service person, the situation with COVID-19 made it unlikely for me to find a job after service.

It was in these low moments that I heard about CoRe. I received a text message introducing me to the programme. I participated in the first session, got hooked and concluded that it was worth the investment of my time.



I joined a number of mentoring groups, including Entrepreneurship, Digital Marketing and the Creative Writing Class. I cannot over-emphasize the immense benefits I have received from this programme; In my opinion, participation in CoRe is worth a million cedis.

Thankfully, the Entrepreneurship session guided me to have my own start up, 'Divine Wear', which is into shoes and clothing. Through my business I am gradually making ends meet while I look forward to mainstream corporate engagement.

I am grateful to my mentor Nana Sei and the entire Core team.

Rukmini

11 I am the architect of my future

Ethel Adika

As a teacher, Ethel struggled to come to terms with the new reality of digital based learning. The CoRe Programme gave her a doorway into that space and equipped her with priceless life lessons. She shares her story: .

I am Ethel Adika, a teacher trainee at Mount Mary College of Education at Somanya in the Eastern Region. I reside at Adidome in the Volta Region of Ghana.

COVID-19 disrupted my education, as it forced the world to adapt to virtual learning. As this was a novelty, it was not easy for me to cope. Additionally, the cost of data discouraged me from learning as much as I typically would.

I heard of the CoRe program on a WhatsApp group page. I thought it was a great idea and therefore signed up. I participated in the Education and Creative Writing mentoring sessions. I have been inspired by the story and lessons of my mentor and facilitator, Madam Leticia Baidoo.

CORE has not only bridged the gap in my learning; it has provided an ingredient I never thought I needed. These are my selected lessons from the programme:

- **Volunteerism:** CoRe infused me with the spirit of volunteerism. I have decided to commit my spare time to projects and initiatives geared towards engendering change in the lives of young people.



- **Possibility:** I learnt that my background will not hinder my progress; that I can do anything I set my heart to do.
- **Gratitude:** I have become more thankful for the opportunities I receive.
- **Networking:** I have learnt how to start and sustain valuable relationships and conversations.
- **Focus:** I now know that I will attract into my life whatever I my give attention to. I have therefore decided to focus on my books and my personal development.

Thanks to CoRe, I now believe that I am the architect of my future.

Ethel

CoRe taught me to be frugal

Daniella Boateng

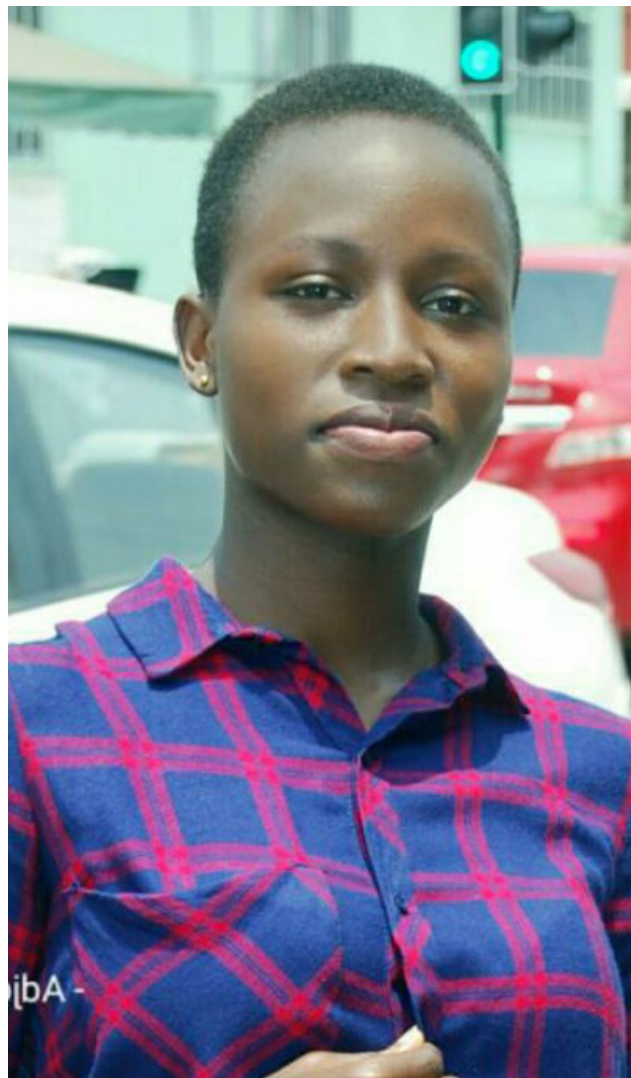
Daniella is a student who learnt the fundamentals of personal finance from the CoRe Programme. She shares how beneficial the experience has been:

My name is Daniella Boateng, a student living at Adabraka in Accra. Because of COVID, my schooling was disrupted and I found myself at home doing nothing.

I heard of the CORE program through a friend. I immediately made up my mind to participate, and I did. I must say I found CoRe very helpful. I benefited most from being part of the Insurance Mentoring Group. With insights received from CoRe, I have learnt how to save and not spend on impulse.

I am grateful to the CoRe team and I encourage many more people to participate.

Daniella



CoRe has expanded my knowledge base

Michael Owusu Agyemang

Michael credits CoRe with giving him a deeper understanding of and interest in his chosen industry, which is insurance. He shares his story:

My name is Michael Owusu Agyemang and I am based in Kumasi. I first heard of CoRe through a friend via WhatsApp.

I was schooling while working for a life insurance company. I had some financial challenges due to COVID that affected my schooling. I therefore took advantage to participate in the Insurance mentoring sessions of the CoRe Programme.

I can't believe how much my understanding of my industry has been enhanced. And I got all this for free! I now have a far better understanding of both the life and non-life insurance dimensions of the business. Through the CoRe initiative, my overall



interest in insurance has increased. I have even gone ahead to take out a life insurance policy and I am educating all my contacts to be on one as well. After all, you can't sell what you haven't experienced.

CoRe has taught me how to conduct myself more professionally. I have also come to value work ethics far more, thanks to my mentor, Masud, and the entire CoRe team.

Michael

I intend to pass on the knowledge gained

Yakubu Mohammed Mudasir

Yakubu jumped at the opportunity to learn from different mentoring groups about law, procurement, software and insurance. He is now much better equipped to bounce back in his shea nut business.

My name is Yakubu Mohammed Mudasir. I am a shea nut farmer, trader and distributor based in Tamale, Northern Region of Ghana. COVID-19 negatively affected my life financially: I lost customers and made losses in my shea nut business.

When I heard about CoRe, I joined the Procurement and Supply Group, the Legal Practice Group, the Insurance Group and the Software and App Group. I found it exciting that I was able to flexibly combine various modules that I had selected based on my interests in life.



CoRe has taught me how to cope with any life situation that I will find myself in. The programme has imparted knowledge to me in diverse ways. I have also acquired skills on how to manage my business. Most importantly, CoRe has taken me through capacity building skills, for which I am most grateful.

CoRe has been a life changing opportunity for me because the knowledge that I have acquired is going to transform me academically, mentally and financially. I intend to pass on the knowledge I have gained.

Yakubu

I have acquired managerial skills

Esmeralda Arvo-Quardoo

Esmeralda is a nursing mother who struggled to care for her twins single-handedly in the raging Covid 19 pandemic. She shares how CoRe gave her a new lease of life and enabled her to learn and improve herself, while managing her home:

My name is Esmeralda Arvo-Quardoo and I am based in Akosombo. I was blessed with a set of twins a few days before the COVID-19 lockdown. The fear of infection, however, meant that no one could come in to help me. I had to totally focus on nursing my twins all by myself.

And that is where the positive aspect of COVID-19 kicked in. I signed up for the CoRe Programme and the flexible design made it a perfect way to stay focused and continue learning while nursing my children. I had so much fun in the Communications and Public Relations (PR) sessions with Mr. Timothy Karikari. Mr. Dennis Adjei-Dwomoh was also fantastic as he took us through his Legal Practice sessions.



Thanks to CoRe, I have learnt to let go of every entitlement mentality I previously had. I have to work hard towards whatever I set my mind to.

Esmerlada

CoRe put life in my business plan

Mohammed Yussif

Mohammed's greatest dividend from his membership of the CoRe Agriculture mentoring sessions was the revitalization of his poultry business plan as well as the work ethics and attitude required to excel in his chosen field. He shares his story:

My name is Mohammed Yussif from the Jegun community in the Nanton District of the Northern Region. I graduated from Tamale Technical University in 2018 with an HND in Business Accounting.

I subsequently did my National Service at Tamale Metro Non-Formal Education Office. Before COVID-19, I was a volunteer field officer and an Accountant for a local NGO in Tamale.

I started working with the NGO in 2016 while I was schooling. Along the line, I developed a business plan with the support of a colleague volunteer and



I was in the process of organizing funds through the work I was doing to start the business. Then came COVID-19, which totally disrupted my life and the business plan. I could no longer save money from the little I was getting. Everything came to a standstill.

Then the world began to turn. It started with an SMS message which I received. I clicked on the accompanying link, and that is how I found myself enrolling in the COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience (CoRe) Programme. The experience has helped me greatly. I joined the Agriculture (Animal) Group. During my first session at the group meeting, I shared my intentions and plan of how I wanted to develop my poultry business plan.

Our mentor offered to give me additional assistance beyond the group interactions. I needed help, so the mentor's offer was most welcome. I shared my poultry business plan with him during our private interactions. He went through and suggested a number of changes. Thank you very much Mr. Isaac Nartey (Citizen Nartey) for those wonderful mentoring sessions.

My lessons from the CoRe Agriculture (Animal) mentoring sessions included discipline, teamwork, commitment, tolerance, punctuality, self-confidence and determination. I also learnt the importance of work ethics and professionalism in my work as an entrepreneur or employee. I was also guided to create a logo for my poultry business.

I am going to put in more effort to implement everything I have learnt from the CoRe Programme. I also intend to solicit for support to start my poultry business. A special thank you, Mr. Eric Otchere, the CoRe Mentoring Coordinator, for all the support.

Mohammed

CoRe made me smile and keep on moving

Lydia Tettekie

L Lydia experienced significant financial disruptions both as a student and teacher as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. She shares how CoRe helped her to survive and cope:

I am Lydia Tettekie. I was a student and teacher before the outbreak of COVID-19. The pandemic was an absolute tragedy to me, both as a student and a teacher. The resultant financial hardship made life a struggle.

To survive, I had to relocate to the village to live with my extended family. I determined to do something because there was no knowing when the pandemic was going to end. Before the pandemic, I also used to prepare a cereal mix for sale. My work as a teacher, however, didn't allow me to go round hawking my product, so I got the idea of turning it into a real business to support myself and my family.

The starting point wasn't easy at all, I must say. It was really challenging trying to turn my hobby or leisure activity into a business. Although tiring, I encouraged



myself to keep going because nothing good comes easy.

Things began to change when I started receiving daily quotes from the CoRe programme. The daily motivational messages always reminded me of something I needed to do. I declare that I regained my inner strength because of these inspirational messages. I confess that there were several times when I felt like stopping, but somehow, a smile crept through the gloom each time and I kept moving.

I have also learnt a lot about entrepreneurship and how to go about building one's own business. God richly bless all our leaders and mentors on this platform.

Lydia

I can have two professions

Awurama M. Antwi

Awurama is a pharmacist who always wanted to study Law in addition. She signed up to the Legal Practice Mentoring Group of the CoRe Programme with all manner of COVID-related anxieties. Today, she is on her way to her dream of adding Law as a second profession. She shares her joy at how it happened

My name is Awurama M. Antwi. I am a pharmacist. As a health professional, COVID-19 affected my life in many ways. I lived with a lot of anxiety about getting infected with the disease because of the great number of people that I had to attend to.

Before the pandemic, I had planned to go to Law School in 2020. The Law course fascinated me but because of COVID, I couldn't start school. I all but gave up on the course because I kept hearing that it was very difficult.

When I heard about CoRe, the only thing that attracted me was the Legal Practice mentoring group. And I am glad I made it! I have gained resilience through the mentoring sessions. I am now certain that anyone can become a lawyer through determination and hard work.



I specifically learnt that as a woman, I needed to work twice as hard as men to overcome some of the systemic barriers in our culture; but guess what: it is possible to overcome them. Every dream is achievable once the mind is set to it.

For a long time, I held the notion that having two professions as a woman would not be feasible because it would be too difficult.

I now know for sure that with hard work, I can earn a seat at any table I desire to be at.

Awurama

I have improved on my web design skills

James Komla Coffie

James is grateful to the CoRe Programme for equipping him with skills in web designing, creating and maintaining a website. He looks forward to eventually blending these skills into his business as a digital designer

My name is James Komla Coffie. I was undertaking my National Service when the pandemic broke out. Paradoxically, COVID-19 was both a curse and a blessing. It restricted my movement but that gave me more time to spend with my books. The CoRe Programme has helped me to be more practical in my area of study, which is designing.

I was in the Web Design and Development Group. The programme has added to my knowledge in the area of web designing, creating and maintaining a website. Having been equipped so well, I want to keep learning and eventually blend the skills into being a digital designer. I will then move into business. Thank you, CoRe for this opportunity.

James:



I live in anticipation of every CoRe session

Derrick Atadi



Derrick is grateful for the opportunity to have been mentored by an experienced banker. He shares about how much CoRe has come to mean to him:

My name is DERRICK ATADI. I reside at Abavanah Down, a suburb of Kotobabi New Town in Accra. I was teaching as my National Service assignment before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

I was not privileged to join the CoRe programme from the start. However, the depth of information I have gathered since I joined the mentoring sessions is simply overwhelming.

My CoRe mentor, Dr. Myles Christian Hagan wields an amazing scope of knowledge when it comes to investment. I am privileged to be gathering tons of

relevant insights in each session to transform my life and career.

I intend to keep learning about each investment firm in Ghana, how they run their businesses and how they target their market. I currently work with an insurance firm. I am understandably very excited about this program and I am living in great anticipation of my progress after each mentoring session.

Derrick

It's a new beginning with CoRe

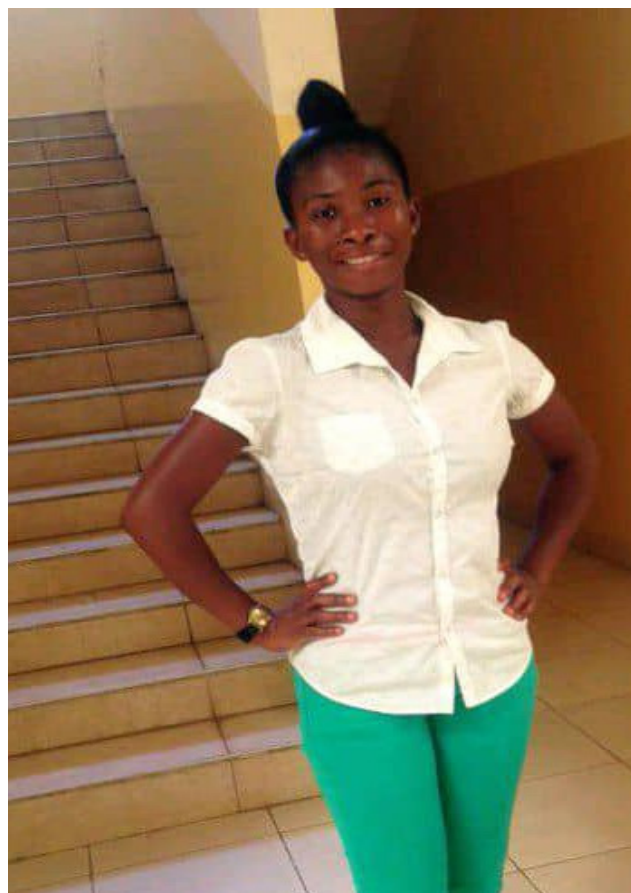
Elizabeth Bukari

Elizabeth experienced a jolt in her progression and suffered a personal financial decline as a result of COVID-19. She shares how her learnings from the CoRe mentoring sessions gave her a new zest for work.

My name is Elizabeth Bukari and I reside at Dome Pillar 2 in Accra. I was doing my National Service as a nurse before the coronavirus pandemic struck. I was earning additional income by specializing in wound dressing for a fee, in the homes of clients who couldn't come to the hospital.

Unfortunately, during the pandemic, I lost all my clients and therefore that revenue stream. The financial challenges this created were unbearable.

Thanks to the CoRe Programme, I learnt how to brand my business, gain more clients, and seize the opportunity to generate income wherever I find myself. I enrolled in Nursing Group 2. My mentor, Eric, took us through important topics like 'How to make



money from your talent'. The nuggets I collated from each discussion were simply priceless.

My passion for the sale of medical supplies has received a fresh boost. This initiative was designed just for me. Thank you, CoRe.

Elizabeth

22 Dealing with the unexpected

Akwasi Sarpong

Akwasi lost his job as a music teacher when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. He shares how the CoRe counselling sessions and mentoring by a famous gospel musician helped him to deal with the unexpected setbacks.

I am Akwasi Sarpong, a music teacher residing at Tema. The coronavirus pandemic led to my losing my job, but I used that as an opportunity to learn online.

My utmost gratitude goes to the CoRe Programme which trained me during this period. Each session on the platform helped to psych me up to the conclusion that all hope was not lost.

My most treasured session was on 'Dealing with the unexpected', facilitated by Dr. Erica Dickson. It helped me know how to respond to different kinds of unexpected developments and how to look for the positives in every situation.



Renowned gospel musician Akesse Brempong served as my mentor in the music group and he was completely phenomenal! I can't believe I had unfettered access to coaching from such a top professional in my industry, and for free!

Thank you, Akesse!
Thank you, Springboard!
You've done it again.

I suddenly lost my income; but found hope

Prosper Sedohia

Prosper is a banker by profession and a businessman based in Anloga in the Volta Region of Ghana. He heard about the CoRe Programme through the YIEDIE Group. His sources of livelihood were impacted heavily by COVID-19. However, through to the timely intervention of the CoRe Programme, he acquired the knowledge needed to pass through the storm and get back on his feet. He shares his story here:

I am Prosper Sedohia. I was part of the Digital Marketing, Crop Production, Manufacturing, Design and Rebranding mentoring groups in the CoRe Programme. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in low profit margins in the organization I worked with. My remuneration and bonuses were curtailed as a result.

However, the knowledge and inspiration I have received from the CoRe Programme opened me up to other investment opportunities, which I am currently exploring with the little saving I have



made. I have received a lot of knowledge and this has sharpened my business skills and soft skills, especially in the area of human relations. I have learnt how to avoid certain pitfalls in pursuit of my career aspirations and also about being a good team member. My career has been given a boost by the new knowledge acquired. Currently, I am considering more opportunities in farming and I am confident of doing well.

Prosper

This has been a re-learning experience

Beatrice Asampong

Beatrice is a teacher whose school was closed down during the pandemic. Through CoRe she found a place to re-learn and improve in various aspects of her life. She also learnt how to nurture the important relationships in her life.

My name is Beatrice Asampong. I was teaching in a Senior High School for my National Service in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

At the peak of the pandemic, my school had to shut down. I had specifically opted to do my National Service in a senior high school because I wanted to re-learn a lot of things. The closure meant that I couldn't achieve that aim. I felt my dream was shattered.

Through the CoRe Programme, I gained the zeal to start researching about things I didn't have the slightest knowledge about. I gained fresh exposure and expanded my horizons. It was worth participating in both the accounting and auditing



sessions. My mentors, Mr. Kyei Boateng and Madam Theodora Senya, were gems!

Specifically, I learnt a lot about networking. Connecting with people had always been easy for me; however, I often struggled to keep a relationship for a long time. This was nullified through CoRe as I learnt various strategies to nurture valuable relations.

I'm looking forward to applying whatever I have learnt in this programme and transfer this knowledge to people around me who might need the information I have gathered through this programme.

Thank you, CoRe, for making me a better version of myself.

Beatrice

Learning was made convenient with CoRe

Philemon Morkli

Philemon is a member of the YIEDIE Youth group operating in the electrical industry. His is a story of business mentoring and all-round improvement made possible by the CoRe Programme.

My name is PHILEMON MORKLI. I live at Kwabenya in Accra. I was engaged in the electrical field before the onset of COVID-19. Life before the coronavirus pandemic was good because work was going on very well. However, everything came to a standstill during the lockdown. Life became very difficult as there was virtually no stream of income.

That was when I heard of the CoRe Programme through the YIEDIE Group. The most gratifying part of the programme is that it brought the things I needed to learn to my doorstep, making learning very convenient. I found the electrical mentoring session very relevant, and my mentor, Mr. David Tronu, has just been very supportive and inspiring. .

I have learnt a lot from the CoRe Programme. In my line of work, I receive numerous calls from persons who need assistance in executing a contract or project. Through



the coaching sessions, I have been groomed in the art of conducting myself professionally in such instances.

My relationship with my superiors and compatriots has seen significant improvement because I have learnt a whole lot about communicating effectively. Lastly, I have gained insight into the culture of savings and investment for the growth of my business.

Some of these lessons dealt with major challenges confronting me in my field. I am therefore very grateful to CoRe for this knowledge. I intend to help and encourage my co-workers and friends to apply the principle of savings to their field of work.

Thank you, my mentors!

Thank you, CoRe!

God bless you all!

Philemon

My 360° learning experience

Philip Abeiku Sam

When a student facing disruption gets mentored to start a small business, it is practical economic empowerment at work. That is the story of Philip, which he shares with us:

I am Philip Abeiku Sam, a student residing at Achimota in Accra. At the height of the coronavirus pandemic, everything came to a standstill as academic programmes were suspended. However, the CoRe Programme reached out to me to choose a professional area in which I could receive mentoring. The invitation came through a link I received via WhatsApp.

The knowledge I gained about investment and business setting has helped me to initiate a small-scale rubber bowl distribution business which is earning me good income. I intend to expand the rubber bowl distribution business and also start a cashew farm which I dream of expanding into a plantation.



Participating in the investment mentoring group has provided me a 360° learning experience, thanks to my mentor, Mr. Eric Boamah.

Philip

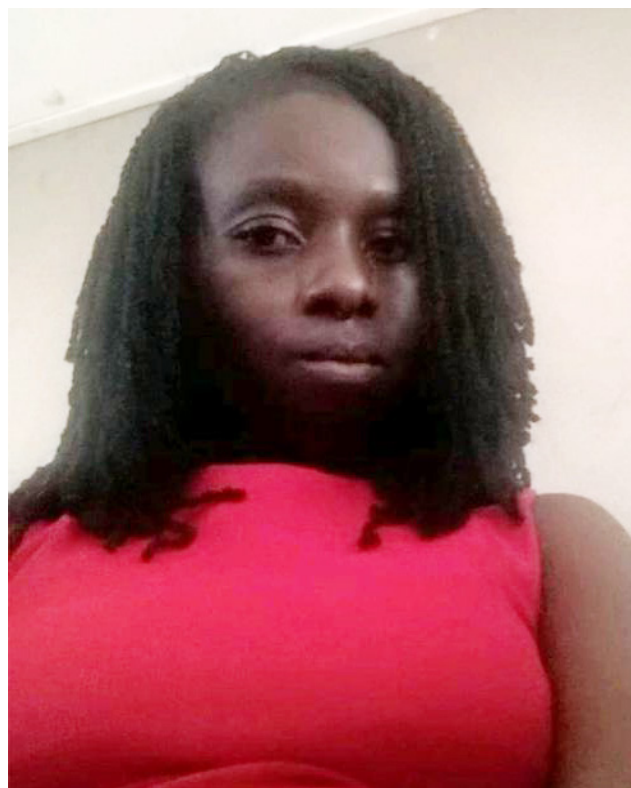
CoRe counselling has enriched my life

Hilda Lamisi Bugre

Hilda is a National Service person who benefitted from counselling through the CoRe Programme. She shares how her career path has been enriched as a result:

I am Hilda Lamisi Bugre, a 35-year-old National Service person from Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region of Ghana. I heard of the CoRe Programme through text messages sent to all National Service personnel. Since then, I have regularly followed it, sometimes through Facebook, Radio Broadcast and also counselling sessions on with my psychologist, Madam Ethel Obeng-Trewe, who has been a great inspiration to me.

Life was not easy in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, but thanks to this initiative, I have received counseling on what to do to make life better



even if the pandemic persists. As a result of these counseling sessions, I have made a decision to take an Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) course while I wait for employment. I am also planning to start a small business of my own.

Thank you, management of CoRe. I really appreciate your efforts to empower the youth. Thank you, my mentor, Madam Ethel. God bless you all.

Hilda

I have been educated on insurance

Theophilus Edzie

Like every final year student, Theophilus had a lot of questions about the world of work and the options open to him. CoRe helped him answer many of these questions with rare insights into the insurance industry.

I am Theophilus Edzie, a level 400 student of University of Mines and Technology, Tarkwa. I live in Winneba. COVID-19 affected my academic work, finances and social life in diverse ways.

Thankfully, the CoRe Programme came along and brought me hope and a new learning experience. I learnt the importance of insurance and the need to insure myself against future uncertainties. I intend to use the knowledge I have received through CoRe to educate my family and friends on the need to insure themselves against future uncertainties.

Theophilus



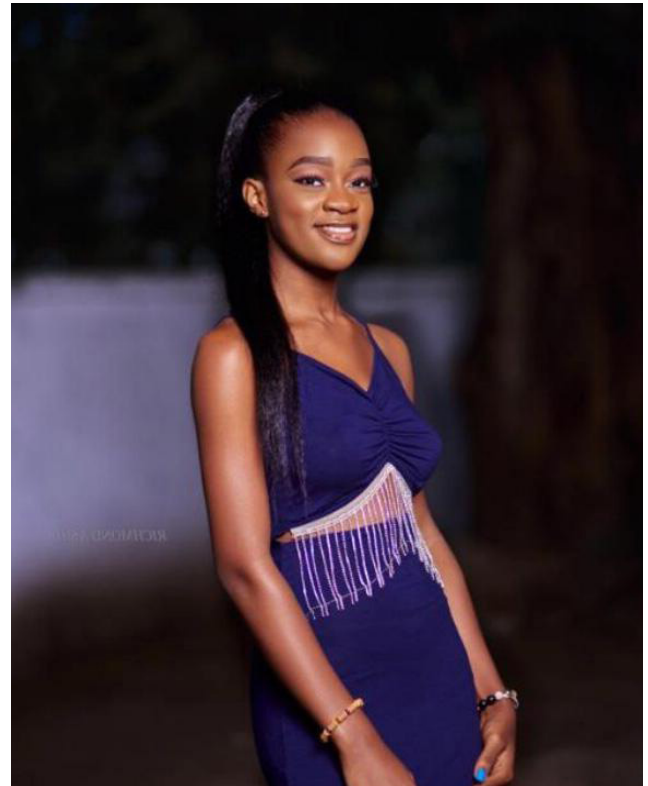
29

I have broadened my knowledge with CoRe

Caroline Kyeremateng

Caroline struggled to adapt to life as a virtual student at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. CoRe exposed her to the online learning platform and the insurance industry.

I am Caroline Kyeremateng. I am a student resident at Teshie. COVID-19 affected me indirectly through our educational system. Physical lecturing came to a halt which led to the emergence of online studies. I experienced a lot of challenges with this style of education, as a result of which I struggled at the initial stages.



CoRe brought me a new learning experience. I specifically learnt about making claims in insurance, which has helped me broaden my knowledge about the right guidelines by which claims are made in the event of a disruption in life. With the knowledge I have acquired, I intend to take out an insurance policy and also educate others on what I have learnt.

Caroline

30 CoRe taught me to be resilient

Edmund Agyapong

For a National Service person looking for a job, the opportunity to be directly mentored by a seasoned banker and investment analyst is the best thing that could have happened to him. That's the story of Edmund:

I am Edmund Agyapong, a National Service person based in Koforidua in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The coronavirus pandemic restricted my movement greatly, making it impossible to go to work. This was very disruptive for me.

Along the line, I was introduced to the CoRe Programme and this helped me to build resilience to walk through the storms of life. I am currently searching for a job but I joined the Banking and Finance Group 1, which was mentored by seasoned banking guru, Mr. Patrick Abankwah. It was just what I needed.



Through CoRe, I have learnt that SMART work and diligence always pays. This has helped cushion me keep through these difficult times. I intend to apply what I have learnt, help others to be more stable economically and also to uphold the good name of Ghana.

Edmund

I am on the road to recovery

Simon Odjam

The loss of one's income coupled with the uncertainty of a pandemic tends to erode your level of confidence. That was Simon's unnerving experience, but the CoRe Programme threw him a respite. Here's his account.

I am Simon Odjam, an entrepreneur. The coronavirus pandemic affected me greatly as it reduced my income and standard of living. However, I am most grateful to CoRe for coming to my rescue by boosting my confidence in most aspects of my life. The CoRe mentoring sessions trained me to build a solid career path. I am bouncing back step by step and I intend to learn more and apply the knowledge I have acquired.

Simon



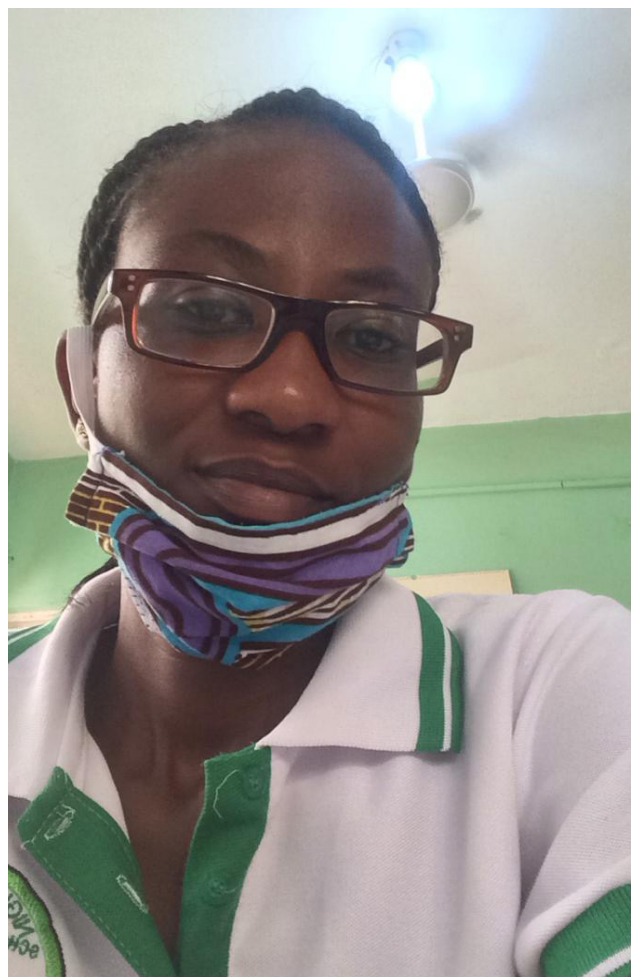
I am enjoying the new learning experience

Elsie Asumaning Baffoe

Elsie has been ushered into the world of investment through the sessions on the CoRe Programme. She looks forward to consolidating the gains made.

I am Elsie Asumaning Baffoe. I come from the Central Region and work in the accounting unit of an institution. I heard of CoRe on the Joy Prime Television channel. I found the e-learning content very relevant to my situation. This was because the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic had led to the ineffectiveness in my work.

I subsequently found out about the mentoring component of the programme. Based on my career aspirations and my interests, I joined the Investment group. I intend to learn as much as I can about the



investment firms we have in Ghana, how they run their business and how they target their clients. My mentor for this course was Leticia Baiden and I and look forward to learning more and investing in the right firm.

Elsie

My hope has been ignited

Frank Wilson

Frank is a security guard with other business interests in delivery services and mobile money retail. The effects of COVID-19 left him reeling but CoRe re-ignited his hope in the future. He shares his story:

My name is Frank Wilson and I reside at East Legon in Accra. Prior to COVID-19, I worked tirelessly as a security guard at a health facility while doubling as a delivery man for a health and wellness products company on an on-call basis. The financial pressures I was under meant that these two businesses could not meet all my needs. I therefore had a third stream of income - a mobile money retail business.

Although business was not very brisk, I managed to stay afloat with the little I earned from each of my three income streams until March 2020 when the global COVID-19 pandemic struck in Ghana. The first setback was that with the lockdown in Ghana, the health facility I worked with experienced a 75% decline in patronage as many outpatients avoided hospital visits. As if that was not enough, the company I rendered delivery errands for also



experienced a sharp decline in sales resulting in little or no dispatch work for me. I therefore ended up falling on the little saving I had made over the years.

The already bad situation was further aggravated when my mobile money business was raided by robbers who bolted with about Five Thousand Cedis (GHS 5,000) of my hard-earned money. This unfortunate occurrence made the 30th of April a dark day for me. I filed a report with the police, who are still investigating the incident.

After a while, I found myself down to a single income source; that was, the salary from my security job. Things were difficult and I felt discouraged and hopeless as I struggled to pay my regular bills and also pay up my loans.

In the face of all this, my hope was re-ignited when I came into contact with the CoRe Programme. I chanced upon a publication on Facebook which gave me information about CoRe and what it was doing for and with young people. I followed through and I must say it has been particularly beneficial. I participated in the Digital Marketing sessions under the mentorship of Mr. Stephen Naasei Boadi.

I got introduced to a team of mentors who were zealous and prepared to help me and other mentees to get back on our feet. This was really encouraging.

I have learnt a number of important lessons from the CoRe Programme. I share the most significant ones below:

1. Firstly, I learnt about digital marketing tools. I was enlightened about the various professions in digital marketing and how to use the right tools to my advantage.
2. Secondly, I learnt about the need for savings and investment. I was made to appreciate the need to build a culture of financial discipline.

3. Thirdly, I learnt problem solving skills. This was my favourite lesson because I became convinced that this particular model, when well applied, was capable of solving any challenge an individual or business could encounter.
4. Fourthly, I appreciated the importance of ethics. As a young person growing my business, CoRe taught me to be a law-abiding citizen and to follow regulations and live by a high moral code.

I owe a lot to the team at CoRe for their dedication and priceless contribution, particularly to me and what I do. Such selfless investment in the youth is simply admirable and commendable.

I have started creating my future with all that I have learnt and gathered through the mentoring from the CoRe Programme.

Frank

CoRe gave me my digital ‘baptism’

Kofitse Dogbatse

For someone who had a phobia for digital media, Precious is now able to share relevant content with others via YouTube, Video Ask, Facebook and other social media platforms. He shares his story of personal development:

I am Precious Dzidzornu Kofitse Dogbatse, a teacher based in the Oti Region of Ghana. I joined the Corporate Finance mentoring group on the CoRe Programme where I had the privilege of having Mr. Roland Akafia as my mentor.

I am very grateful to the CoRe Programme for the great help it has been to me. It had always been my passion to leverage social media in sharing information with the world. However, upon completion of my Bachelors’ degree, I had no external push to propel me towards the attainment of this goal. I therefore found myself of the fringes of many of the developments in the digital space.

To further compound the situation, the e-learning approach to teaching and learning introduced by



schools during the coronavirus pandemic did not benefit me: nothing had prepared me for the shift. I lacked the skills and I struggled to keep pace with the new trends.

This was my main challenge until I encountered CoRe and embraced their training modules. The e-learning, e-mentoring and e-counseling sessions I participated in resurrected my dead passion and restored a fresh wave of confidence within me.

Today, I am delighted to say that I am able to share relevant content with others via YouTube, Video Ask, Facebook and other social media platforms. My heartfelt gratitude goes to the CoRe Team, especially the resource persons who handled the Problem-Solving session on the Corporate Finance platform. I may not have attained the ultimate goal and certainly there is much more to imbibe, but that inferiority complex I grappled with is no more.

Thank You CoRe, Thank you Springboard!

Precious

My creative abilities have been unleashed

Samuel Nketiah

Samuel tells his story of how the CoRe Programme has equipped him to overcome financial challenges and turn crisis situations into potential money-making avenues:

My name is Samuel Nketiah, an Electrical Engineer living in Takoradi. I joined CoRe through the YIEDIE Group, and I have had a really great time. Dr. Myles Christian Hagan and Ms. Vivian N. Aubyn were my mentors.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had an adverse effect on my finances and my work life. However, the roll-out of the CoRe Programme equipped me to overcome my challenges and turn crisis situations into potential money-making avenues.

I have created a group where I instruct individuals on the best use of their home appliances for energy conservation, thereby saving them money. Overall, I would say that participating in the CoRe Programme



has deepened my creative abilities and equipped me to task my mind to always find better solutions. I'm very grateful to the initiators and implementers of this programme.

Samuel:

36 CoRe has had a positive impact on me

Constance Ewuradjoa Hanson

One of the most disrupted industries by the COVID-19 pandemic was that of makeup artists. The aversion for physical contact meant literally zero business. Constance shares how CoRe helped her to build resilience and learn new things:

I am Constance Ewuradjoa Hanson, a student and make-up artist. I am honoured to share how the CoRe programme has been of immense benefit to me.

By its very nature, COVID-19 discourages close physical contact, which is a core feature of my profession. As a result, my makeup business was badly hit. Things ground to a halt and I almost lost everything as the pandemic raged. At a point, depression began to set in.



I heard about the Core Programme and got onto the platform. The mentorship at CoRe helped me to learn new things and appreciate what I had, what was going on around me and how I could make them impact my life positively. The strong attitude and resilience helped me to hold on till business resumed, even if on a limited scale.

On the professional side, I was taught to distinguish between original and fake make-up products. Armed with this newfound knowledge, I am not able to easily purchase the right products for use in my work. I also learnt about how to manage my time and how to save and invest my income.

Thank you, CoRe!

Constance

The employer in me got sparked

Godson Kumah Kyerewura

Godson was doing his National Service before COVID-19 as a teacher in the Northern Region. He was forced to stay at home due to the closure of schools. However, he was never idle while at home. The seemingly negative circumstances of COVID-19 opened him up to other interesting opportunities. He shares his story

My name is Godson Kumah Kyerewura. I was doing my National Service as a teacher at the Kpandai District in the Northern region prior to COVID-19. The lockdown and other COVID-19 restrictions leading to closure of schools meant that I had to stay home; thus terminating my service and job as a teacher.

This was the period during which I got introduced to the CoRe Programme through the National Service Secretariat and my life has since not remained the same. I joined the Accounting, Auditing, Banking and Finance mentoring groups and I am glad I did.

Through the timely intervention of the CoRe Programme, I was inspired to start exploring



opportunities related to my talent while at home. This included home tuition, home barbering, networking, even the selling of eggs. In addition to all these, I signed up as an insurance sales agent.

These have further enhanced my networking capabilities and increased my scope of reach by virtue of the people I met in the process. I am optimistic of taking these initiatives further and employing many others.

My dream of becoming an employer has just been sparked.

Godson

CoRe made me take up four online courses

Richard Abeiku Bonney

Richard was a National Service person at Kumasi before the outbreak of COVID-19. His dream of getting a job after National Service was shattered. But thanks to the CoRe Programme, he's managed to cope as he explores other opportunities that came to light during the programme. Here's his story:

Richard Abeiku Bonney is my name. I was doing my National Service at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) before the outbreak of COVID-19. Life became very difficult after service as my chances of getting a job kept dwindling because businesses and potential employers were also affected by the pandemic.

I heard about the CoRe mentoring programme through a text message I received, and I have since not regretted since. I joined the Hospital Administration mentoring group, and it was very instructive. I was encouraged to take up online courses and to the glory of God, I have four certificates now from reputable institutions,



including Imperial College, London, and Johns Hopkins University.

These courses have strengthened my CV and enhanced my chances of gaining admission for my Masters' degree in Health Systems Research and Management at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

My major take from the CoRe mentoring programme is that there are always opportunities one can harness under the most difficult circumstances. There's always a way out. When one door closes, surely other doors open. I am really inspired to become an ambassador of hope to other graduates in the times of difficulty. There are indeed many other opportunities aside from getting a job which I believe graduates can harness.

Many thanks to the CoRe Mentoring team.

Richard

CoRe remedied the destruction of COVID-19

Prosper Setsoafia

Prosper is a professional painter based in Adentan in the Greater Accra Region. He is also a member of the YIEDIE group, which got him introduced to the CoRe mentoring programme. He is confident of getting his business back on track again as well as exploring other new opportunities.

I am Prosper Setsoafia, a professional painter at Adentan. I run my own company called WESTLAG Painting Services. I lost some of my contracts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I heard about the CoRe programme through the YIEDIE youth association and it has proven to be a great learning experience for me. The programme has broadened my horizon and drawn my attention to other opportunities aside from my painting business.



I am confident of succeeding with the new knowledge I have been equipped with. Through CoRe, I have identified other opportunities in communication, leadership, training, administrative work as well as inspiring others. With faith in God, I hope to put into practice my new lessons and explore more opportunities. I believe I can make it.

COVID-19 came as a major distraction for me; but the CoRe Programme has provided a bridge to get back my life and livelihood. I encourage the youth to not give up but persist in continuous training and learning, in which are the seeds of the turnaround to make them greatly successful in their chosen endeavors.

Prosper

40 I learnt to regularly save and invest

John Atiso Servoh

John's mobile money business took a major tumble during COVID-19. With the little saving he had accumulated, he decided to explore other financial avenues. He is confident of doing well with the knowledge gained from the CoRe Programme. Here is John sharing his experience:

My name is John Atiso Servoh. I heard about the CoRe Programme through a friend named Doris and joined the Hospitality Group.

Before the outbreak of COVID-19, I was into mobile money business at Assin-Fosu in the Central Region. Life became a real challenge with very low returns on my investments



Thanks to the CoRe Programme, I've opened up to other opportunities which I intend to explore to enable me to come out of the negative circumstances. I have also inculcated a new habit of putting aside a portion of my income for saving and investment, a practice which is helping me to manage my finances better.

John

From emotional trauma to knowledge hub

Timothy Yeboah Larbi

After the interruptions in the educational system during the COVID-19 restrictions, Timothy got introduced to the CoRe mentoring programme through a friend and it has been a great learning experience for him. He shares his story here:

My name is Timothy Yeboah Larbi, a student of KNUST. The COVID-19 pandemic, with its associated lockdowns, stay-homes, restricted movements, closure of schools, businesses, churches, wearing of masks and having to submit my course works via the internet, was the shock of my life. I was totally unfamiliar with the new arrangements and found it emotionally traumatizing: I had become so used to the old ways of our educational system.



I joined the CoRe Programme rather hesitantly because I felt nothing new was going to come out of it. I was quite doubtful how it could be of benefit to me. I suspect my inertia was also because it bore a semblance to the digital learning I so dreaded. Amidst all my doubts, I still joined, although rather late.

Having submitted to the programme, I am thankful that I finally signed up. The knowledge and inspiration gained about real life issues, including topics such as money, investment, personal branding, consistency, discipline, building and maintaining brands, has elevated my spirit. I now have a deeper understanding of these sensitive areas of life than before.

Mrs. Gillian Hammond who facilitated some of the sessions also made a huge impact on me with the clarity she brought to bear on the issues at hand.

I'm glad that through the mentoring sessions I have decided to take my personal savings and investments more seriously than before. As we were taught – and it's true in life - money solves a lot of the problems and challenges we find in the society.

I have learnt to become a more rounded person, live a balanced life, be open-minded and to utilize the opportunities that come my way.

Thanks to the CoRe Programme.

Timothy

42 Social media marketing is 'resurrecting' my sales

Amos Amedzi

Amos faced redundancy at his workplace due to COVID-19. Sales from his architectural drawings and other businesses also plummeted due to the pandemic. Through CoRe, he started advertising his works through social media and this has transformed his business. Amos shares his story of gratitude here:

My name is Amos Amedzi. I am into architectural drawings and other art-related works as well as mobile money business. COVID-19 affected my sales in a significant way due to the lockdowns and redundancy faced by some of my clients.

A friend introduced me to the CoRe Programme, and I joined, hoping to learn something new to help my business bounce back. I was a beneficiary of the Building, Draughtsman and Architecture Mentoring modules of CoRe.



Thanks be to God, the programme enlightened me about how to advertise my business using social media and this has enhanced my customer base as I get positive feedback from the online advertisements. With this new method of putting my works out there, business is gradually picking up. Things can only get better.

Thank you, CoRe!

Amos

43 I am finding opportunities in adversity

Michael Kwao Tamakloe

Michael's livelihood as a teacher was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the CoRe Programme, Michael has equipped himself with the relevant knowledge and insight for his profession, which he is looking forward to exploring along with some opportunities in farming. He shares his story:

I am Michael Kwao Tamakloe, a teacher based in Accra. As a result of the disruptions in my work caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19, I have had to relocate to Odumase-Krobo in the Eastern region. My salary has been reduced by half, thus making life very difficult for me financially. Furthermore, my related channels of additional income such as extra classes all dried up suddenly.

I heard about the CoRe programme on radio and decided to sign up. Being part of the Education mentoring group helped me to develop resilience to withstand the adversities of the pandemic. With a passion to venture into agriculture in the near future, I benefited greatly from the knowledge that I received about the agricultural sector.



As a teacher, I've been very much equipped with more knowledge and am thus poised to become a better teacher when schools reopen. I have also started saving the little I can towards the crop and poultry farming, which I intend to start, thanks to the CoRe Programme.

Michael

44 CoRe has given me hope for a great future career

Solomon Tetteh Okornoe

Solomon was a final year student of the University of Ghana who had challenges with paying his school fees due to the inability to get a job during the pandemic. However, he managed to sail through and is getting ready for the world of work while poised to make continuous learning a lifestyle.

Solomon Tetteh Okornoe is my name. I was a student before COVID-19 broke out but I have now completed and am doing my national service.

The impact of COVID-19 on my education was unbearable. I have always had to work to earn some income to pay my school fees but I found it particularly difficult getting a job during the pandemic. It was quite a desperate situation because I needed to pay my final year fees before I could take any exams in the university.



The CoRe mentoring programme has taught me never to give up on my dreams but be strong and equip myself to bounce back anytime I'm faced with challenges.. I learnt a lot about how to manage pressures at the workplace, dealing with real life challenges. I also gained a wealth of knowledge on savings and investments.

I intend to make continuous learning a part of my life as I prepare for the world of work after service. I believe that with the new knowledge acquired, I will reach the pinnacle of success in my chosen career. CoRe is a blessing sent straight from God.

Solomon

Secrets of business success uncovered

Nathaniel Attuquaye

Nathaniel has imbibed the foundational lessons in entrepreneurship and started a small business venture while continuing with his studies in hotel management. He shares his story:

My name is Nathaniel Attuquaye, a part-time student at Accra Technical University. I signed up for the Hospitality module of the CoRe Programme and it has taught me a lot. One of the key areas of instruction for me was about how to start a business, knowledge which I believe would help me a lot in the near future.

From the mentoring sessions, I realized that taking a loan to start a business was not the best way. I also learnt that it is better to start small and continue growing steadily. I picked up some important lessons



on savings and investment. With my experience as a poultry farmer years ago, I am currently into chicken and turkey dressing for the market. I am continuing with my studies in hotel management as a part-time student.

Nathaniel

I am inspired to inspire others

Mabe Vida Bamaabe

Vida is a nurse and entrepreneur. But her business could not stand the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. She has picked up valuable lessons from the CoRe Programme to get her businesses running more effectively

My name is Mabe Vida Bamaabe. I am a nurse and a businesswoman. COVID-19 affected my business massively leading to low patronage of goods. Additionally, as a direct result of fear and anxiety associated with the pandemic, healthcare delivery to patients in the hospital suffered.

Joining the CoRe e-mentoring group helped me to realize that in every situation, I need to stand firm, adjust appropriately and find ways to thrive in spite of the challenges. These lessons have been very useful personally, professionally and in my business.

I have learnt a lot about business development and intend to apply these lessons to my business to enable me to make an even greater impact in my society. I intend to share with colleagues, family



and friends the knowledge I acquired through e-mentoring.

Mabe Vida

I have an advantage in my procurement course

Worldlight Nkrumah

CoRe came in at a time when Worldlight seemed to be struggling to cope with her academic work which had been move online. CoRe helped her to move online and also gave her additional insights into her chosen field of procurement and supply.

My name is Worldlight Nkrumah, a Procurement and Supply student at the Koforidua Technical University. COVID-19 interrupted my education in the sense that we were sent home and all our academic sessions were held online.

This made learning very difficult because we had to use one month to complete an entire course and write our examinations, a process which hitherto took four months. The CoRe Programme has helped me to learn a lot about Procurement and Supply,



which I believe will enrich my performance as a student. I have learnt the right procurement terms to use and how to work as a professional.

Furthermore, I learnt about investment and savings and doing business. I have started consciously saving the little money I get from what I earn from assisting my mother with her trading. Thanks to my mentor, Madam Felicity Commey, for the precious lessons.

Worldlight

I intend to harness my gifts and talents

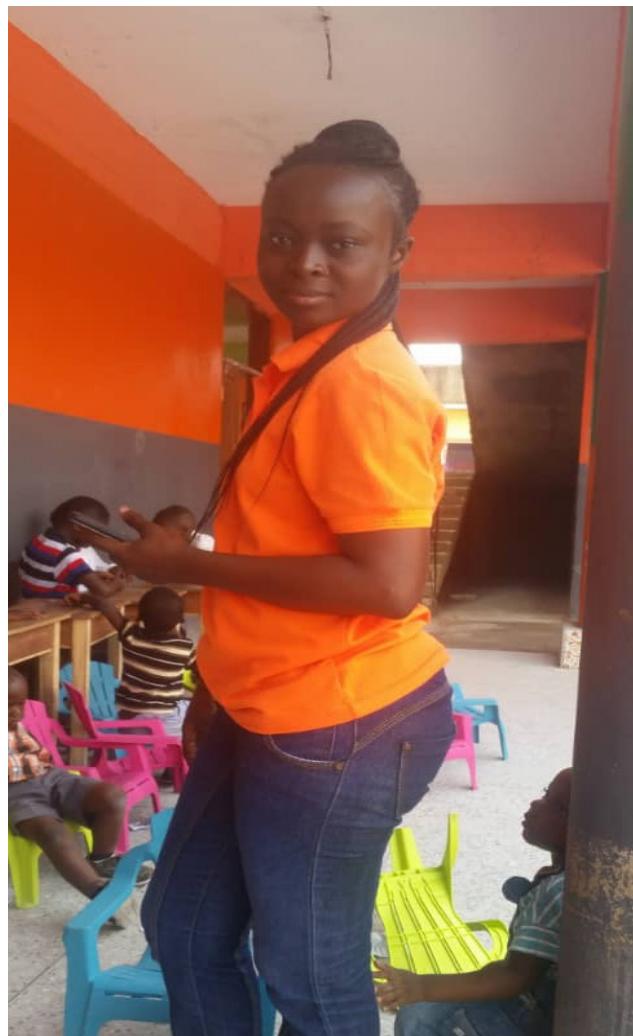
Bridget Apraku

Bridget is a teacher at Medie, a suburb of Accra in the Greater Accra region. She lost her job as a private school teacher during the pandemic but is gradually putting her life back together as she focuses on exploring and developing her talents.

My name is Bridget Apraku. A friend introduced me to the CoRe Mentoring sessions after I lost my job as a private school teacher at the height of COVID-19. CoRe has enlightened me in diverse ways, including how to manage my work as a teacher and how to develop and harness my talents.

I believe my life will not be the same after this CoRe Programme. Thank you, CoRe.

Bridget



Lessons and opportunities in every situation

Sulemana Mohammed Nazeef

Sulemana is from Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana and is a student at the University of Education, Winneba. With new insights gained from the CoRe programme, he is poised to become an achiever, no matter the challenges. He shares his story.

My name is Sulemana Mohammed Nazeef. I am a student at the Kumasi campus of the University of Education, Winneba. My education got interrupted by the pandemic. However, I came across an advert about the CoRe Programme on one of my school's WhatsApp platforms. I am really happy to have signed up to the programme.

Through the E-counselling as well as the journalism and auditing mentoring groups of the programme, I have learnt to respond positively to life's circumstances and become an achiever, no matter the stumbling blocks. I have also learnt that from every situation, there's something to learn and new



opportunities to consider. I have come to realize that a lot depends on my attitude. These lessons, among others, have taught me and prepared me to become successful in life in spite of any challenges I might encounter.

Sulemana

I am poised to bounce back

Gifty Esinam Hiatorpe

Gifty is a midwife at Ejisu in the Ashanti region of Ghana. She does some business alongside her profession as a midwife. Her businesses got badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic but she's learning how to reposition herself after a colleague introduced her to the CoRe Programme.

I am Gifty Esinam Hiatorpe, a midwife by profession based in Ejisu in the Ashanti region. Aside from my profession, I am also into bird farming, network marketing, clothing and cosmetics business. However, almost all the business ventures I started have gone down with the exception of my bird farming along with my professional role as a midwife.

Having gained some exposure and insight from the Nursing Group of the CoRe e-mentoring programme, I'm poised to bounce back and continue with my business.

Gifty



I want to develop an investment culture

Janet Dzuffle

Janet is an accounting student who enjoyed a rare opportunity to gain real life perspectives from practitioners in her chosen field through the CoRe mentoring sessions. She looks into the future with confidence.

My name is Janet Dzuffle, an Accounting student based at Weija in Accra. I was in school preparing for my examinations before the outbreak of COVID-19. Things have not been the same since then.

I joined the Accounting and Investment Banking group of the CoRe Programme after receiving a text message from a friend about the programme.

I have earnest expectations that the lessons from this programme would help me to be successful in my chosen area as a student. On the personal



development front, I am keen to learn more about Savings and Investment. I hope to learn something new and build a culture of investment through the CoRe Programme.

Janet

I am learning to stay strong and focused

Comfort Twum Akonorbea

Comfort is a healthcare assistant who is building resilience to confront her challenges through her participation in the CoRe Programme.

My name is Comfort Twum Akonorbea, a health care assistant. I also provide assistance in domestic care needs. My livelihood was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated lockdowns.

Through CoRe, I have learnt how to stay strong and focused during times of challenges. I have also learnt to keep calm and explore ways to get out of any situation I encounter in life.

Thank you, CoRe!

Comfort



I have learnt so much for free

Kofi Asempa

Kofi considers the cost of education and cannot believe he's learnt so much from the CoRe Programme for free. He tells his story:

My name is Kofi Asempa. I joined the Creative Writing Group of the CoRe mentoring programme and my life has not been the same as a result. CoRe has afforded me the opportunity to learn many things I would have paid money to learn elsewhere. I benefitted immensely from topics such as problem solving, savings and investments, and the value of networking and relationships.

I have learnt my networks can be a major contributing factor to my vision or a liability depending on the people I interact with or regularly relate to. I am determined to cultivate the right relationships and do away with every wrong



relationship. I really thank the leadership of the CoRe Programme. It has refocused my life.

Kofi

Core Got Me Back Up After A Painful Breakup

Araba

Araba endured a combination of broken relationships in an era of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her world came tumbling down with an emotional breakdown. But Araba, saw a turnaround, thanks to the counselling and mentoring from the CoRe programme. She shares her story:

In July this year, my life was totally disrupted, not necessarily by COVID-19, but, by a painful break-up with my boyfriend. It affected me deeply. The worst part was that I was in the middle of writing an examination when we broke up.

I couldn't concentrate; I couldn't study well for my examinations. I was very disappointed. My whole life was falling apart until the MASO Youth chairperson introduced me to the CoRe Programme.

I went through the counselling and mentoring sessions under the CoRe Programme and my life changed for the better. The session with Dr. Joana Larry-Afutu, the clinical psychologist, was instrumental. She taught me about how to manage my thoughts. I somehow found myself in the examples she kept using during the training programme and it resonated very well with me.

In his session, Dr. Acquah Coleman emphasized the importance of building strong social relationships. This soon became the remedy for my broken heart. I was no longer as lonely as I used to be. I shared my pains, fears and anxieties with my core group of friends within my trusted social circle. All these helped a lot in building me into the new person that I am today.

Through this CoRe programme, I have come to realise that disruptions are a normal part of human life, which brings about changes. My duty is just to ensure that the changes that come about as a result of those disruptions are positive. But for this CoRe programme, I wouldn't have known what my life would have been. Thank You CoRe.

Araba

From Fear To Opportunities

Jimmy

Jimmy, who operates an eatery joint, turned his fear of COVID-19 into an opportunity and in the process won a government contract to cook for students under lockdown in the Ashanti Region. He now has a new and expanded mini-restaurant where he serves his customers and still educates them on how to fight COVID-19. He shares his story:

I am a living testimony of how the CoRe Programme has positively impacted many lives. The fear of contracting COVID-19 crippled me and any ideas I may have had. I operate a small fried rice eatery, but my business took a nosedive during the peak periods of COVID-19 principally because I was afraid.

My business involved traveling to Kumasi to buy foodstuffs, but I stopped. I virtually locked myself up as I saw and read how people were dying from the virus. I became largely depressed until the CoRe programme came along.

Interestingly, my first session treated how to deal with my worries and anxieties. I was subsequently taught how to observe the COVID-19 protocols and stay safe even in the midst of the pandemic. I started

observing them and gradually the fear left. I started travelling to buy my ingredients and suddenly there was a boom.

I turned my fears into an opportunity and, as I speak, I have been able to acquire a new container to expand my eatery business. I have also become a quasi-ambassador for the COVID-19 prevention effort. This involves educating my customers on how to observe the protocols and even distributing face masks to my customers as a token.

The most significant development is that I received a contract to start cooking for some of the public schools during the period of the lockdown. I have indeed benefited immensely from this CoRe programme. I wish to entreat the organisers of CoRe to keep up the good work and even expand it so others can also benefit like I have done.

Jimmy

My destiny has been refocused

Bismark Obeng

Having participated in the various sessions of the CoRe Programme, Bismark has gained clarity about his life's mission and is now focused on living a more purposeful life.

My name is Bismark Obeng, an electrical engineer based in the Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. Prior to the pandemic, business was not all that good. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 simply worsened matters. There was virtually no work and no contracts. Things were very rough for me. I got frustrated and did not really know what to do.

As a member of the YIEDIE group, I got introduced to the CoRe Programme and immediately got hooked to it. I wished that the experience could go on forever. Each time I participated in the sessions, I found myself reliving the experience over and over again because the lessons were so thought-provoking.

The e-Counselling sessions proved to be very revealing for me. One of my epic moments was the session on 'Falling in love' which was the nineteenth episode. I wished that the session would never end.



The enlightenment into the dynamics of love and relationships was so fresh and practical.

Madam Sabina Fremah Ansah, a counsellor, presented that session and I really benefitted from it aside all the other sessions which I also found very enlightening. The expositions on talent discovery by Rev. Albert Ocran has also led me to exploring other technical areas especially mobile phone repairs aside the electrical engineering.

God richly bless the conveners of this programme!

Bismark

Choosing better responses in life

Edudzi Winner Nukunu

Having struggled in the past with managing setbacks, the CoRe programme gave given him a better outlook about life. Edudzi is hopeful of applying the lessons and living a more productive and impactful life.

My name is Edudzi Winner Nukunu. Before joining the CoRe Programme, I was poor at responding properly to situations that come my way. However, with the deep thoughts and knowledge gained from the programme so far, I have realized that my responses to the issues of life can either make or unmake me.

I'm therefore now more deliberate in choosing how I respond to life rather than reacting poorly to situations, which only further worsen matters. One other key lesson I have taken so far is about how to harness my gifts and talents and transform them into value for others and in business pursuits as well.

Edudzi

I have found a gold mine

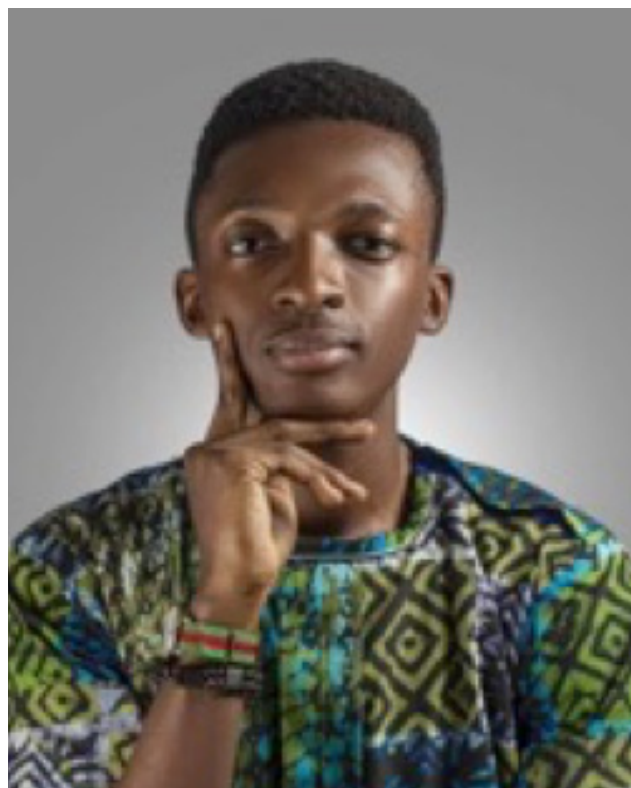
Michael Edusei

Socializing with others was a challenging area for Michael. But the E-Counselling group sessions of the CoRe programme have equipped him to start developing better relationships with the people around him.

Michael Edusei is my name. I live at Accra but am currently based in Takoradi doing my national service at the Takoradi Technical University. As a student during the early days of the pandemic our studies got seriously hampered.

The new mode of transmission of lessons came with so many challenges. Not everyone was equipped with the relevant gadgets to hook on to the online method of teaching. I ended up missing out on some lessons. I was however forced to manage.

Additionally, my personality type also meant that I had the habit of keeping to myself and isolating myself from others. Socializing did not come to me naturally and the circumstances of COVID-19 and the restrictions that came with it further worsened my habit of self-isolation.



Thankfully, I came across information on a Whatsapp group I belonged to about the CoRe Programme and the rest they say is history. Having joined the programme, and the E-counselling group in particular, I realized that the habit of always keeping to myself was not going to help me in anyway, since no man is an island.

I therefore decided to start making efforts at developing better interpersonal relationships. I have realized that relationships do matter and good relationships complement our quest as humans to reaching the top of our fields. I am more confident now and on the path to becoming a better person.

Madam Sarah Woldeamanuel was so helpful in her expositions about drugs and consequences of its abuse. Some people in efforts to manage depression and stress end up into abusing drugs which can harm them for life. The knowledge I have acquired from CoRe is like a gold mine that I will jealously guard and guide myself with. I believe others who come into contact with me will also be impacted positively.

Thanks to the CoRe Programme.

Michael

CoRe has been my game changer

Samuel Entsie

Samuel's business was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; but the lessons learnt about resilience in the face of challenges have helped get him back on track.

I am Samuel Entsie. It has been a tremendous blessing following the CoRe Programme. The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic adversely affected my barbering saloon business. The pandemic disrupted my business in the following ways:

- It slowed down the flow of customers.
- I lost a number of customers.
- My daily sales figures dropped.
- I couldn't even pay my electricity bills.
- The shop had to be closed.

Thanks to the teachings I received on resilience, I found the strength to keep moving on. I later resorted to serving my customers on a house-to-house basis. This worked the magic because once they felt safer and found it more convenient, they



were able to resume the service. I even made some savings on electricity usage.

CoRe has definitely been a game changer for me. May God bless the pioneers of this programme with the needed wisdom to keep doing more!

Samuel

60 I will deploy my talents

Gabriel Kudani

Gabriel is becoming a better student of time-management; having realized that time lost cannot be regained, he is determined to maximize his time and deploy his talents more productively.

My name is Gabriel Kudani and I am a mason. The CoRe Programme has been very instructive to me in the area of proper time management. Anyone who knows anything about our profession will admit that many masons waste time and money, probably because the work is so difficult.

Through the CoRe mentoring sessions, I learnt that time indeed is life. I also acquired a lot of knowledge which will enable me to deploy my talents more effectively and earn some income as well. Life is full of obstacles but I now know how to respond more positively and overcome any barriers or setbacks that come my way.

Gabriel

I was helped to get a combined harvester

Francis Adiyure

My name is Francis Adiyure. I am into rice farming and selling in Navrongo in the Upper East Region of Ghana. I am also into poultry farming and the cultivation of pepper.

My business was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in many ways. Key amongst which was the fact that because there were restrictions on physical activities, workers had less to do and also we could not sell much. It affected our production and finances. Business was really slow.

It was in this period that I received an SMS from Springboard about the CoRe Programme. Even though I didn't know what it was, being an alumnus of the Springboard Road Show, I was convinced that it would be equally impactful.



I therefore had no hesitation in joining the CoRe Programme. I signed up to the Crop Production e-Mentoring Group. This really helped to improve my farming business. I was challenged that there was much more I could do to become a successful entrepreneur.

By far, the biggest benefit from the CoRe Programme was when I posted on the Crop Production platform that I needed a combined harvester to harvest my crops because they were overdue. I faced the prospect of losing all I had toiled for if I didn't get a response.



Thankfully, Mrs. Comfort Ocran of Springboard noted my plight and reached out to Mr. Nanya Nuamah, a CoRe facilitator who has worked extensively in the Northern Region of Ghana. He was able to help me secure the combine harvester to save my crops from going bad.

As my own small way of extending the benefits of CoRe, I have decided to also start educating people close to me who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs.

Thank you CoRe.

Francis



Dreams come true

Elijah Belo

Elijah is happy to have finally started working on his painting and interior designs dream after joining the CoRe Programme. He now has a vision of turning it into a bigger enterprise dealing in foreign branded paints. Elijah shares his story.

I am Elijah Belo. Before joining the CoRe Programme, I had the dream of becoming an artist particularly in the area of painting and interior designs. After weeks of joining the e-mentoring component of the programme, I got inspired to start living out my dream.

I really benefitted from the sessions on how we can put our talents to profitable use and challenge the status quo.

I am now a painter and an interior designer, thanks to the CoRe Programme. I look forward to improving my skills and becoming an expert in this area. My vision is to establish my own enterprise dealing in foreign branded paints.

Elijah

All is not lost

Stephen Mansu

Stephen was on the verge of completely losing hope when his bee-keeping business tumbled down due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. After participating in the CoRe Programme, his hope to start again and persist has come alive. He shares his story.

My name is Stephen Mansu. Life has always been a struggle especially after my second-cycle education. Everything I tried seemed to fail after a while. I attempted driving, teaching and my most recent engagement, which was beekeeping.

Unlike my previous attempts, the beekeeping venture seemed promising entering into the year 2020. However, the unfortunate outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic distorted my plans. My encounter with the CoRe Programme has helped me to break free from the mental limitation that “all is lost”.

Although I have not re-commenced the business in full-swing, I have been equipped with new strategies which I can adopt and deploy to do business profitably. I am grateful to the dedicated souls behind this programme for their patience and persistence.

Stephen

A little seed from CoRe has changed my life

Bright Fiafenyo

Bright is putting his communication acumen into fruitful use after being inspired by the CoRe Programme. He has now started his own agribusiness venture.

If there is one talent I know I have naturally, it is the ability to communicate. I have always believed that I speak well; but all through my life, I have never considered how that could be an advantage to me in my professional life.

The first two e-learning sessions on 'Identifying your talent' and 'Doing business with your talent' by Rev. Albert Ocran really changed my worldview. The facilitator inspired me to find my talent and use my unique abilities to solve problems and get paid for it.

I immediately decided to use my communication skills to market products to others. Things took off relatively smoothly. I have since opened my own

shop and commenced the sale and marketing of agro-chemicals to farmers. This is how a little seed can change a person's life completely.

It is my ardent desire, however, that the CoRe programme would not be abandoned. I believe this programme has to continue to inspire us the more towards becoming achievers.

Bright

Channeling my talents into productive use

Kwesi Bismark

Kwesi is poised to harness and sharpen his talents, gifts and abilities and deploy them for the benefit of the world.

The sessions I have participated in on the CoRe Programme have given me confidence in my gifts, talents and abilities. I have really learnt to appreciate and own my God-given talents, and rightly channel them into productive ventures.

I pledge to use the knowledge in a manner that would benefit me and those around me.

God richly bless those at the forefront of this initiative.

Kwesi

I am now more optimistic about life

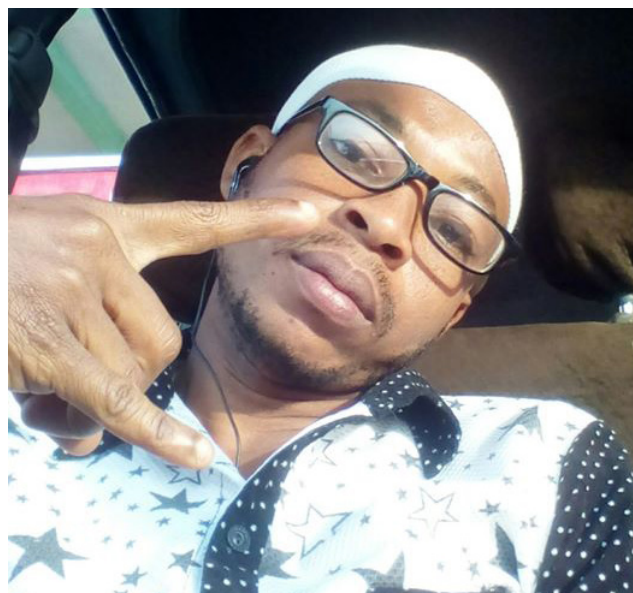
Joseph Quartey

For several years, Joseph limited himself to a world in which he was pessimistic and reserved. Through his participation in the CoRe Programme, his confidence level has shot up. He's now working on improving his social skills and becoming more resolute and resilient to the issues of life.

My name is Joseph Quartey and I'm based at Koforidua, specifically in Nyamekrom. I am a teacher, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been at home since March 2020, when schools were closed down.

Due to the restrictions on movement that accompanied the initial lockdown, my plans to travel to Accra to be with my family and loved ones was curtailed. It was in the midst of this period of frustration and depression, that I got introduced to the CoRe Programme by one Ms. Ama Obeng.

I subsequently joined the e-counseling group; and I must say it has been very helpful to me. Looking



back, I realise that I had very poor social skills. I have however been inspired and equipped to start improving. The CoRe Programme has given me hope for the future.

I have learnt how good relationships can be a springboard to achieving one's purpose in life. I feel more stronger emotionally than I was before. No matter the challenges I encounter in the course of my life, I believe I can overcome them and prevail. I am now more optimistic about life.

The sessions by Madam Ama Obeng were so instructive to me, among others, and I intend to keep touch with the facilitators.

Kudos, Kudos and Kudos to the CoRe team.

Joseph

One door was closed and another was opened

Kwabena Asante Aboagye

Kwabena is hopeful of taking his chances at entrepreneurship with the wealth of knowledge imparted to him by the CoRe Programme. His national service was disrupted but the story did not end there.

I was working as a service personnel before the outbreak of COVID-19. The ensuing developments brought my national service to an abrupt end. I missed out on the opportunity to get the much-needed experience on the job.



However, being a Regional Executive Member of the National Service Scheme, I got to know more about the CoRe Programme at an orientation workshop with the Springboard Team at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA).

I made the decision to be part of the programme and joined the Agribusiness mentoring group, which was facilitated by Madam Hagan. Through her sessions, I literally got opened up to the world of work and especially entrepreneurship. I learnt about the threats, challenges and possibilities around the world of business.

The CoRe e-counselling sessions have also helped me to appreciate that challenges are part of life so I should always hold my head up high and fight hard.

Having completed my National Service now, I feel equipped and empowered to explore some of my ideas. I believe that with faith and resilience, I would succeed.

I intend passing on the knowledge acquired to others and helping others to also sail through their challenges in life and excel.

Kwabena

68 Emotionally fortified for the future

Augustina Awinyela Samari

Having made wrong choices and mistakes in the past, Augustina is hopeful that the new knowledge and experiences gained during the CoRe Programme will serve as a springboard for better decision-making and a brighter future. She has started paying more attention to her talent development.

Augustina Awinyela Samari is my name and I am from Yendi in the Northern Region. As a member of the Victors mentoring group of the CoRe Programme, I indeed benefitted greatly. I got to know about the programme through a message I received on my phone from a lecturer named Counselor Eyram.

COVID-19 had made me fearful of losing my job and even dropping out of school. But thanks to my counselor, Madam Pearl, I sailed through the difficulties and I'm now doing well. The CoRe Programme has so far made me a better person.

I have made terrible mistakes in the past that could easily have been avoided if I had the knowledge I have now. I have learnt important lessons on how to handle stress and approach difficulties in a more



proactive manner. The lesson on being patient and avoiding hasty decisions was so instructive for me.

Through CoRe, I am now getting a hold of my emotions. I have been equipped to handle the emotional aspect of my life far better, especially with regards to relating with others, including my love life.

The e-learning sessions on talent development were another major benefit for me. I am now paying more attention to my talents and gifts in order to develop them in the best possible way and impact others with them. Thanks to the CoRe programme.

Augustina

69 Managing stress in the midst of a major disruption

Zinatu Tahiru

Zinatu was stressed out by the events that followed the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her normal life was seriously disrupted, having had to at stay home and away from her regular office work. She shares about her experience.

I am Zinatu Tahiru, a member of the Victors Mentoring Group of the CoRe Programme. COVID-19 was a major distraction to me, especially the closure of schools. I was forced to stay at home to help take care of my kids all through this period.

This prevented me from going to work, thus my work was also interrupted. It has been so stressful. I am however being able to manage all these challenges through the revealing insights obtained from the mentoring on CoRe programme. I am positive about



the challenges I face as I've learnt to look at the brighter side of issues. I am also developing better relationships with people around me.

I have also learnt about how to deploy social media to do business effectively and productively. This was another key lesson of the programme and I'm really enjoying it.

I have a dream of running a school and incorporating ICT into educating children right from their early childhood. Although I don't know where to start from, I am optimistic that with all that I'm learning, my life will never be the same and my dreams will be fulfilled.

Zinatu

70 I love the new me

Pindairuos Bayala

Pindairuos participated in the e-Counselling sessions of the CoRe Programme. He tells of how the programme has transformed him and given him a new sense of awareness, confidence and the strength of character. He acknowledges his e-Counsellor as being a major influence in developing and unearthing these virtues.

My name is Pindairuos Bayala, from Obuasi in the Ashanti region. I work as a security officer and a personal development trainer. I was with the E-counseling session of the CoRe Programme and also benefitted from the writing group, with my beneficiary group being Springboard.

Before joining the CoRe Programme I was really battling with a few challenges and seriously needed counseling. I chanced upon an advert about the CoRe Programme and decided to sign up purposely to receive counseling and I must say that the outcomes have totally exceeded my expectations after joining the programme. I am glad I made such an important decision to join the programme as it has re-introduced me to myself and drawn out



virtues such as confidence, assertiveness and self-belief.

Through the programme, I have learnt how to build resilience and bounce back when faced with challenges in life. A key personal attribute I have developed in addition to this has been the dexterity to relate with all manner of persons from different backgrounds without much difficulty but in harmony always.

Before signing up for the programme, I worked on a manuscript which has been lying idle for about two years but through new insights and inspiration gained from the writing group, I was re-energized to

pick the manuscript, complete it and I am glad to say, it has been published into a book which I am currently selling, thanks to the CoRe programme.

The e-Counselling sessions have also been indeed very helpful in causing a mind-shift which has empowered me to believe and know that I have all that it takes to succeed in any endeavor of life no matter the circumstances or encumbrances. My counselor has been a great tool in raising my confidence level and becoming more courageous. Having applied the principles taught on daily basis, I have realized the intrinsic value of the many attributes and values taught by my counsellor, through whom I have developed a new sense of awareness and a strong human spirit. I no longer get easily offended or worried unnecessarily about naysayers.

My counsellor, Ms. Justina has really been helpful to me and I cannot appreciate her enough.

Thank you

Pindairuos

Failing Is Not Final

David Hammond

David's key take-away from the CoRe programme is that failing is not final; that failure actually offers an opportunity to try again, again and again until you succeed. He shares his story.

My name is David Hammond, a beneficiary of the CoRe Programme. On the whole, the various sessions over the weeks have been very impactful for me and I must say thank you to the CoRe team. I particularly found the sessions on 'Building Resilience' and "Bouncing Back" more impactful in my life.

Through the programme, I learnt that successful people or winners were not people who had never failed, but rather persons who failed but fought back and won. Indeed, failing offers us an opportunity to persist and succeed.

After the sessions on resilience, I reckoned that since we cannot guarantee that we would never fail or be broken in life, we must be prepared to forestall letting our failures or losses keep us down. We must be therefore be resilient, build mental fortitude and overcome.



Thank you for the good work you are doing. God richly bless you.

David

72 Depression made me contemplate ending it all

Essilfie

Essilfie experienced depressed after losing her dad. At the lowest point, she actually contemplated suicide. Thankfully, the CoRe programme came in at the right time to strengthen her.

My name is Essilfie. Participating in the CoRe Programme has been extremely beneficial. My challenges were not directly connected to the COVID-19 pandemic but coincided with the period.

Things became very tough for me when my father passed on. There was no support from anywhere. The social distancing and isolation of the lockdown and the period that followed did not help because I had very little emotional support from friends.

At the lowest point, I thought for a while about committing suicide because I felt life was not worth it. It was at this point that I heard about the CoRe

Programme. I was fortunate to be connected to the e-Counselling group where I found the professional counsellors and other beneficiaries really amazing.

Being part of the CoRe family has taught me how to overcome difficult situations and make the most out of them.

Essilfie

I found new exposure for my business

Richard Danso

CoRe has taught Richard to build resilience and explore new ways of thriving in business. He has found a new avenue for marketing his products through social media.

Richard Danso is my name. One of the recurring themes of the CoRe Programme is the need for persons to be Resilient in this era of a “New Normal”. In my own way, I am making all efforts to assume this posture in my business. Now I’m able to market and sell my products (shoes) online, and I’m happy to disclose that I have a much wider market.

Richard

I have a new-found hope

Adiza Malith

Adiza had her bread business adversely affected after the outbreak of COVID-19; but thanks to the CoRe programme, she has received hope to persist.

Adiza Malith is my name and I am into baking bread. The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic adversely affected my business because everything changed from what I had been used to. I didn't understand why all the progress I seemed to have made was eroded in such a short time. I felt devastated.

The CoRe Sessions, particularly the e-learning session by Dr. Joana Larry-Afutu on 'Dealing with the Unexpected' gave me a new hope that the collapse of my business or any other venture is not the end of my story. That has been the main source of strength for me as I prepare to bounce back in business.

I am very grateful to the brains behind this programme.

Adiza

75 Our response to challenges makes all the difference

Delphina Aboagye

Delphina has learnt that challenges are inevitable; and when they come, one must learn to adjust, overcome and prevail.

I am Delphina Aboagye, an interior decorator and a YIEDIE programme beneficiary. I must say that CoRe helped me to know “my left from my right”, especially in the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The interior décor business is one of those that has been severely affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Everything we do involves coming into people’s personal or corporate spaces or events. Sadly, people were isolating, offices were operating below capacity and the events industry had totally ground to a halt. There was therefore nothing to decorate.

Through the CoRe Programme, I have learnt that crisis situations are inevitable; and when they come along, I need to exercise my critical thinking ability and deploy relevant talents to keep me going. It has not been easy but I can confidently say that I am not the same Delphina I was before participating in the programme.

Delphina

I wanted to quit but changed my mind after CoRe

Nasil Ofori

Nasil almost gave up on her job when she got overwhelmed by her daily tasks. Thanks to the CoRe programme, she has a new outlook about her work after being empowered by the sessions on staying power and resilience.

I am Nasil Ofori. I had the rare privileged to be among the few personnel to have be retained after my National Service as a technical staff in a hospital's pharmacy. It obviously seemed like a very favourable thing that had happened to me.

However, deep within, I soon got fed up with the job as I found myself burning out very quickly. I struggled to cope with the tedious nature of the daily tasks to be performed. I had already programmed my mind to quit my job when I stumbled upon the CoRe Programme on radio.

I followed the sessions closely for some time and had a change my mind about quitting my job. Through the sessions with the clinical psychologists, I have learnt what it means to be RESILIENT. This is what has kept me standing up until now. I entreat each person to take the sessions seriously and I am very grateful to everyone on the CoRe Team.

Nasil

77 I grabbed an early bird opportunity with both hands

Paulina Adufie

Paulina chanced upon the opportunity to sew and sell nose masks during the early days of the outbreak of the pandemic. She hopes for more support to expand her sewing operations.

I am Paulina Adufie, a beneficiary of the YIEDIE Programme and now the CoRe Programme. The COVID-19 pandemic distorted all my plans. The lockdown directive and the social distancing measures instituted to check the spread of the virus really affected me, as we were all asked to stay home.

To ensure that I thrived during the period, I chose to sew face coverings and sell them to persons within my community. The idea was inspired by the CoRe Programme sessions on how to seize opportunities and do business with your talent.

Since CoRe was instrumental in my decision to embark on this venture, I seek the support of the

conveners of the programme to help me get a new sewing machine and to assist me to refurbish my sewing operations shop.

Paulina

78 Business is strategy and swiftness

Angela

The pandemic and its rippling effects ravaged her pastries business. But she was encouraged through the CoRe programme to start the selling of nose masks and sanitizers. Her original pastry selling business is now taking shape gradually.

I am a YIEDIE beneficiary. Before COVID-19, I used to sell pastries. However, as a result of the lockdown, my business literally came to a standstill. The CoRe Programme taught me not to fold my arms when I encounter such challenges.

I therefore decided to go into the sale of nose masks and hand sanitizers via social media platforms to make sure I was still relevant within the business landscape. Now that the high prevalence of the COVID-19 disease seems to have relatively subsided, I have gone back to the sale of pastries but I now do

it in addition to the sale of nose masks and hand sanitizers. Essentially I initially lost one leg but now I have gained three. And that is how I have benefited from this CoRe Programme.

Thank You.

Angela

79 Thriving in business and hopeful of greater results

Stella Acheampong

Stella expanded her tabletop business to include the selling of nose masks and sanitizers during the outbreak of Covid-19. She is aspiring to open a provisions shop and hoping for more support to make this happen.

I was introduced to the CoRe Programme at a YIEDIE Youth Group meeting. From the programme, I learnt that I need not sit idle following the many restrictions on movements. In view of this, I expanded my tabletop provisions business to include the sale of nose masks and sanitizers.

Things are better than before but could be far better. I appeal to the authorities at the YIEDIE and CoRe Programmes to help me to expand and establish my provisions shop. I'm however very grateful to them up for the support till this point.

Stella

80 CoRe has been a breath of fresh air

Abubakari Saeed

Abubakari has learnt that every negative situation has its solutions and opportunities. His attitude to challenges is now more positive and proactive than ever before. He credits CoRe for this and his learnings about how to build good relationships.

My name is Abubakari Saeed, a YIEDIE beneficiary from Djwamoase in the Ashanti Region. My business was messed up by the COVID-19 pandemic and I just couldn't move forward. I heard about the the CoRe Programme from my friends in the youth group.

I immediately got involved because I needed every help I could get. I have been motivated to keep pushing in my work, while I observe all the safety protocols. The programme has instilled in me the truth that within every negative situation lies some positive outcomes and solutions. I have also learnt

the value of building good relationships as a form of positive influence to keep me on the right path in life.

CoRe has been a breath of fresh air in what has been a very difficult period for most people.

Abubakari

81 I adjusted my business focus

Stella

Sales in Stella's bead-making business dropped at the onset of the pandemic. This really affected her but she managed to stay strong and explore other opportunities in a liquid soap business, which she now seeks to grow.

I am Stella, a bead-maker and a YIEDIE programme beneficiary. My business was affected by the coronavirus outbreak because once people were not going for weddings, funerals and events, no one was buying anything to wear.

Through participating in the CoRe Programme, I learnt that in such difficult times, we need to adjust quickly to keep moving on. The key lesson in the business sessions was about focusing on something that was in high demand that you had the talents or access to provide.

I therefore decided to venture into the production and sale of liquid soap. The need is really great and demand is high. However, my products do not yet have labels. I also don't have a fixed location where I operate from. I will therefore be grateful for any assistance from the organizers of the CoRe Programme in this regard.

Stella

82 I am inspired to harness and utilize my talents

Grace

Grace mentions how the CoRe Programme made a huge impact on her life and business. Aside the many lessons, she is inspired to develop and deploy her talents to serve humanity.

I'm into Aluminum Fabrication and I reside at Kasoa-Tuba. I am a Yiedie beneficiary. While I was home at the initial stages of the coronavirus outbreak, I heard about the CoRe Mentoring Programme and kept following it. I must confess that it has been of great benefit to me.

I have been greatly inspired to use my talent to do business and practice effective time management as well as maintain very good hygienic conditions in the workplace.

My attitude and skills for business has really been enhanced through the CoRe Programme. I honestly appeal to the organizers and sponsors of the programme to consider supporting us financially so we can become established to open our own shops in the times ahead.

Grace

I now relate to my clients with confidence

Prince Awuah

Prince testifies of an improved relationship with his clients. He is now considering deploying his talents in addition to his regular business.

My name is Prince Awuah and all I can say is “thank you”. I am a YIEDIE beneficiary who has struggled for years with speaking in public and relating confidently with people.

The CoRe really mentored me, especially in the manner in which I relate to and communicate with my clients. The COVID-19 pandemic affected all businesses, but the CoRe programme opened me up to the possibility of using my talent to earn an extra income.

Prince

Challenged, but not defeated

Isaac

Isaac was left discouraged by a disruption to his work by the COVID-19 pandemic; but the CoRe Programme inspired him to be strong and explore other opportunities. This has kept him thriving till now.

My name is Isaac and I am a YIEDIE beneficiary. I was engaged in rendering 'small jobs' until the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, which distorted all my plans and placed me under severe pressure.

The wisdom and counsel I received from participating in the CoRe Programme proved to be very timely. I was told not to be discouraged, but to keep moving. Through participating in the programme, I was inspired to get another job that kept me occupied until I was called back to my previous work.

Isaac

Tragic situations can be turned around

Afia

Afia has learnt to see adversity as an opportunity to show resilience. Rather than becoming victimized by it, she is using it as a steppingstone to greater exploits. She shares her story.

The COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Programme (CoRe) has been one of the best programmes I have ever participated in. It has helped me to better appreciate the various phases of life and that conditions of life are never permanent, especially tragic moments.

By participating in the programme, I have learnt to allow tragedy to shape me for the good, instead of allowing it to instill negativity and pain that really amounts to nothing beneficial. Thank You to the CoRe Programme and its facilitators.

May God bless you richly.

Afia

How Two Mentors Changed My World

Janet Mensah (Interior Decorator)

For many young people, the opportunity to interact with a role model is one they always look forward to. Janet shares her inspiring story of how her experience with two mentors on the CoRe Programme have reframed her thoughts:

I am Janet Mensah, an interior decorator; I am so blessed to be part of the CoRe Programme e-mentoring sessions. It has been a humbling, learning experience for me hearing the inspiring life stories from our mentoring group leader, Auntie Farida as well as a well-known achiever like Gifty Anti. These two mentors have made a mark on my life.

To start with, I was pleasantly surprised to hear Auntie Farida say, during the mentoring session, that she started off as a house help. Sometimes in life, when you see people at the top, you become so obsessed, and sometimes even jealous about their successes.

But we fail to learn the stories behind their successes. I am so inspired by her story. It tells me that, with determination and focus, one can achieve whatever dream one sets for herself.

As an interior decorator, I learnt how to build good customer relations with my clients and not to always focus on money. Auntie Farida shared an interesting story about how she went to her client's place to fix curtains she had sewn for them after several months without demanding money. I immediately knew what to do to build and keep my customers.

Our hang-out at the e-Lead with Oheneyere Gifty Anti was also very inspiring. The “breaking through the glass ceiling” session was a story of how to be humble even in success and I was so blessed by it. Despite the many achievements of the ace broadcast journalist and women's advocate, Gifty Anti still believes there is more to learn and to achieve. Last year, she was awarded the super woman of the year; but she responded that she was not a super woman because she didn't know it all.

This is a female role model I really look up to. I learnt from her how to prioritize the activities of my life in order to reap the full benefits. She said something that inspired me so much, “you shouldn't live your life to please people. It should be about you”.

I also learnt about how to be versatile in my work. Even though I am an interior decorator, I realized that there are other related businesses I could take advantage of to help me achieve my goals in life.

Closely related to that is what Afia Pokuaa also taught us. I learnt about how to be flexible in my line of work. I learnt that we must deviate from the norm in order to achieve our dreams. According to her, “Sometimes we keep doing the same thing over and over again; and so the outcome is still the same. We have to change”.

I learnt about the need to upgrade my skills and knowledge in my area of work. I also learnt from the hangout about how to make good use of social media to expand my business and provide better services to my clients.

For years, many of us have worked with no idea about what the outcomes would be; but my sessions with my mentors have taught me to be deliberate about life. We should be deliberate about the network of friends we keep and how we can keep improving those relationships all the time.

I have learnt a lot from various CoRe mentors. I know the nuggets of wisdom I have received from them will help me a lot in building my business.

I am so grateful for this CoRe Programme; and I especially thank Aunty Farida and all our mentors for the impact they have made on my life and my business.

Janet

CoRe helped us to strictly observe protocols

Emmanuel Ansah

Without the CoRe Programme, Emmanuel wonders how he would have coped in the face of the ravaging pandemic and its effect on business.

I am Emmanuel Ansah, a YIEDIE beneficiary based in Upper Weija. I work as an Aluminum Fabricator. The coming of the CoRe Programme has helped the youth of Ghana in diverse ways. Had this programme not been introduced, I wonder what we would have done in the very difficult days when COVID-19 broke out.

The most important benefit I personal gained from the CoRe Programme is that it helped us to strictly observe all the safety protocols in our business dealings to avoid contracting the virus. We encourage the CoRe programme to continue supporting the youth as much as possible.

Emmanuel

I was helped to understand the pandemic

Ernest

Ernest believes the CoRe programme has given him some new insights about how to expand his work and get more customers. He however hopes for more support in the form of resources to extend the strides he is already making.

I am an Aluminum Fabricator and a YIEDIE beneficiary who has benefited enormously from the CoRe Programme. When the virus first came on the scene, it was so unwelcome. Everything was totally unfamiliar; we didn't understand it and did not know what to do. CoRe became our saving grace.

I learnt a lot from the messages that were regularly being forwarded to us through the CoRe SMS platform. As a result of the information I received, I changed my approach and began moving from door-to-door in a safe way to get more business. I now thing I have gained more skills, expertise and knowledge regarding the job. I look forward to more support in the form of equipment and financial resources to expand our operations.

Ernest

I am far ahead of my friends

Edward Oduro

Out the many sessions that Edward benefitted in from the CoRe Programme, his topmost have been the ones on talent discovery and resilience in difficult times.

My name is Edward Oduro, an Aluminum Fabricator and a YIEDIE beneficiary. The CoRe Programme has taught me several things especially regarding identifying my talent and dealing with the unexpected. I look back today and I am simply amazed at how well I have come through this pandemic so far.

Compared to other friends who didn't get the chance to participate in CoRe, I think I am far ahead.

God bless this initiative.

Edward

I wish I knew earlier what I know now

Kwame

Kwame believes he could have done better with his life so far if the knowledge and insight gained from the CoRe programme, had been exposed to him earlier. He is ready to run with what he now knows as he believes he has been challenged to become more focused and creative.

Each person on the various platforms can attest to the fact that the CoRe Programme has been highly impactful. I used to contemplate whether or not I would be successful in life but coming into contact with this programme has reshaped my thinking and challenged me to be more focused and creative.

Some lessons I have gleaned from this programme include developing the habit of critical thinking, dealing with discouraging comments and making the most of even the most unfavorable circumstances to yield positive results. I also learnt about how to network effectively and connect with persons who can influence me positively.

I believe if I was exposed to this knowledge earlier in life, my status would have been very different from what it is currently.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the organizers of this programme, and I would be glad if this project is pushed further.

Kwame

Adversities have birthed greatness in me

Augustine A. Asare

Augustine's hope of getting a job and setting off with his career plan seemed to have been dashed by the ripple effects of the coronavirus pandemic. In the midst of his fears and doubts, he found hope to press on after encountering the CoRe Programme. He shares his story with us.

My name is Augustine A. Asare and I live at Burma Camp. I got to know about the CoRe mentoring programme through a text message I received as a National Service person. I subsequently signed up to the Marketing and Digital Marketing group.

Before the outbreak of COVID-19, I was doing my National Service with the Ghana Armed Forces. The reports about the effects of the pandemic such as redundancies in many companies and businesses created a sense of fear and uncertainty in me about



being able to get a job and pursue a career after my National service.

Additionally, I was a reserved and shy person growing up. I always had struggles relating with people in a new environment so I decided to use my National service as an opportunity to improve my human relations but this was not to be due to the interruptions and restrictions that came with the pandemic. In the midst of all these uncertainties, I became a member of the CoRe programme, which has benefitted me greatly.

I learnt that, in the midst of difficulties and challenges, some of the greatest people we know today discovered their strengths and pursued the ideas that have placed them on the world stage. This is a key lesson and thought pattern that seems to have changed my perspective about challenges.

The CoRe programme has helped me to further clarify my career path. I have also learnt to be resilient and strong whenever I encounter difficulties until I overcome them ultimately. The sessions on work-life balance, savings and investments, among many others, have proven to be vital lessons for me.

I highly recommend the CoRe programme to anyone who wants to have a successful career in the corporate world. I have been able to balance my job search efforts with learning and having a healthy interaction with people around me.

The CoRe mentoring sessions on Digital Marketing Essentials held via Zoom have been very significant for my development as a marketer with passion for branding and digital marketing. It gave me the needed start in my pursuit of excellence in the digital marketing space. I surely will share these timeless lessons that have benefitted me with others.

May God bless the CoRe Programme.

Augustine

Displaced, but bouncing back

Dorcas Awudi

Dorcas lost her livelihood at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as life became unbearable for her. She received new knowledge from CoRe that has equipped her to be strong and work towards bouncing back.

I am Dorcas Awudi and I live at Dome in Accra. I was part of the Educational Administrators group of the CoRe Programme, which I joined after a friend introduced it to me. I am a teacher by profession with a basic school in Kasoa in the Central region of Ghana. I also double up as a volunteer care giver with Compassion International.

Everything seemed to be going fine for me until the ravaging effects of the pandemic struck and affected my jobs. Subsequently, life became very tough for me, especially in the area of my finances.

Getting unto the CoRe programme set me on a path of bouncing back and enjoying my life once again. In our weekly sessions, I learnt about time management, interviewing skills and school



management. One big lesson for me was about the need for individuals, businesses and corporations to expand their scope of operations through digitization in whatever services they offered.

As a result, I have taken my computer studies seriously and am now acquiring some basic Microsoft software skills. The CoRe program has really helped me.

Thank you.

Dorcas

93 Passion in data science awakened

Alhassan Kamilu

Having been a member of the computer science group of the CoRe programme, Alhassan has a newfound love for data science and is making efforts to develop his skills in it. He shares his story:

My name is Alhassan Kamilu from Kumasi. My CoRe experience started when I came across an advert on social media about a COVID-19 recovery and resilience programme. I got interested because I thought it was very timely and much needed. I signed up to the e-mentoring programme and joined the Computer Science Group.

I was a student before the outbreak of COVID-19 and the pandemic interrupted my education. The CoRe programme came in at the right time to fill the huge vacuum the effects of the pandemic had created.



I had the opportunity to learn new things, especially about data science and the opportunities related to it. The new learnings have ignited my desire to explore that area of study.

I intend to enroll onto an online programme to pursue this area of science and expand my knowledge in it. This is my story and I say thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme.

Alhassan

94 My life as a blogger

Stephen Agbemasiku

Stephen chanced upon the opportunity to be part of the CoRe Programme and this has inspired him to pursue his blogging passion with much more consistency and dedication. He has also gained insights into how to deal with volunteers and individuals in the international organization in which he works. He shares his story:

My name is Stephen Agbemasiku, from Assin South in the Central region. I have completed my national service and am now scouting for a job. I am excited to have been a member of the Blogging Group of the CoRe programme

In 2018, I developed the interest in blogging after visiting a friend's website for news. I asked him to develop one for me, which he did. I then began my journey to creating my personal media house known as Stephen Media Gh. I engaged in blogging for about seven months but was never consistent. I then lost interest and left my site dormant.

In September 2020, I learnt about the e-mentoring aspect of the Core Programme on television and decided to join. After several mentoring sessions, I came to the realization of how to become a



successful blogger. I now understand how things work and the need to be consistent, passionate and dedicated to my blog.

I have learnt about how to name a blog, the kind of information to churn out to the public, how to avoid fake traffic and, above all, how to monetize my blog, generate additional income from the biggest search engine in the world and other technicalities.

I am confident and ready to bounce back to my blogging. I will not just be an ordinary blogger but one with a difference, especially with my new website I am about to launch.

Through CoRe, I have been able to gain new insights and extensive exposure to several fields through presentations and discussions led by our mentor, Madam Leticia Baidoo. I have received guidance on how to choose a career and to cope with work

I am the Secretary-General of an international voluntary organization currently operating in eighteen (18) countries across the globe. We are into youth mentorship and development. I have gained more insights into how to deal with volunteers and individuals I give mentorship to in these countries through WhatsApp, Google Meet, email and other social media platforms.

I'm very grateful to the CoRe mentoring programme for coming to my aid. Thank you

Stephen

Inspired towards greater academic pursuits

Samuel Adjei Gyekye

Samuel has been inspired to explore new career opportunities and intends to take up a new degree. His knowledge about career choices as well as work-life balance has been refined through the CoRe programme.

I am Samuel Adjei Gyekye from Obuasi but I have been in Accra for a number of years now. Having joined the CoRe programme and the Doctors Group in particular, my scope of knowledge has been enriched. I found the topics, 'Steps in choosing a career' and 'Work-life balance' very helpful, insightful and practical.

The programme has inspired me to pursue two other academic programmes instead of topping up in the same field. This has been my major take-away from the CoRe programme so far.



All I can sing to my God is, 'Great is thy faithfulness.' Thanks to the CoRe Mentoring Programme.

Samuel

I can become what I want to be

John Appiah

John now believes that with a greater focus on his dreams, he will excel. He has decided to explore additional opportunities in career and business. He shares his story.

I am John Appiah and it was an absolute pleasure to be a member of the Legal Practice Group of the CoRe Programme.

The mentoring sessions inspired me to explore other career or business opportunities in addition to the law. New areas such as software, hardware, real estate and many other opportunities are now on the table.

I am convinced that the world will become a much better place if everyone studies law.

Nobody will be scared of big books and big English. I have learnt the need to cultivate cordial relationships with my clients and treat them fairly. I have learned to listen more as listening is part of communication.

My big take out has been that we must never get off track; we can be what we want to be when we focus on the dream. I am applying my newly acquired knowledge to my life and career, thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme.

John

I changed my approach to farming

Seidu Iddrisu

Seidu changed strategy in his farming business after the impact of COVID-19. The lessons from the CoRe programme equipped him to be resilient and persist in the face of challenges. Things are now picking up with his new approach to business, especially in the area of record keeping.

My name is Seidu Iddrisu from Tamale in the Northern Region. I am an Engineering student at the University of Mines and Technology (UMoT) and an Agriculturist (poultry farmer). I also sell insurance policies as an agent of an insurance company.

I received an SMS about the e-mentoring sessions on the CoRe Programme. I registered to partake and signed up to the Psychiatric Group. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and its accompanying restrictions affected my sources of income as a farmer while my insurance agency work ended abruptly.



My farming business suffered because my birds were mostly layers. I struggled to cater for the cost of taking care of the birds, including feeding and vaccination. The situation was so difficult that I switched from layers to broilers, the cost of which was much more manageable as compared to the layers.

Through the CoRe Programme, I learnt how to market myself and my business. I improved on my networking skills as I realized the enormous benefits of having good social networks. I also learnt about packaging and branding, which have all helped me to scale up in my farm business.

Joining these mentoring sessions has been one of the best decisions I have made this year. It has helped me to understand that we all need to support each other in pursuing our various goals in life as no man is an island. It is clear that everyone needs help every step of the way no matter how far you have come in life. I've learnt to be resilient, to never give up on my dreams and these are valuable lessons I will forever cherish.

CoRe Mentoring team, AYEKOOOOOOO!!!

Seidu

98 Pursuing my passion in graphic designs

Mustapha Sumaila Adokoh

Mustapha is elated to have taken his passion for graphic design to another level by acquiring the skills to maximize his talents. The CoRe sessions on writing a good curriculum vitae and preparing for interviews have also enabled him to reposition himself in his search for a job after national service.

Mustapha Sumaila Adokoh is my name from Takoradi in the Western Region. I completed my national service this year.

I joined the CoRe Programme after seeing an ad on social media. I was part of the Core Goodness Group and benefitted from the banking, finance, savings and investments groups.



The sessions on talent discovery helped me to realize that my interest and passion in graphic designing is something I could take up more seriously. I learnt that every talented person needs to acquire skills in their talent area to be able to maximize their talent. I have taken a cue from that and have started an online programme to help me explore and acquire more skills in graphic designing, my passion. I am therefore in the process of improving on my talent.

I have also realized common pitfalls about curriculum vitae (CV) writing and interview skills. These were very helpful to me in my search for a job after my national service. I now have the opportunity to work with a company in Kumasi.

The sessions on career choices, relationships, time management, work-life balance and networking were indeed very insightful. I now see challenges as steppingstones to greatness. My relationship with my colleagues has also improved.

With the impact I've received from the CoRe programme, I now am a more responsible person and hope to mentor others with all that I've learnt. The CoRe programme has been very helpful to we the youth of this nation. I will never regret joining it.

Mustapha

99 Inspired to Attain Success

Patrick E. Nartey

Patrick's interest in research and continuous learning has shot up; he now believes that with the right knowledge and information, success will be inevitable. His hunger for accomplishment has therefore been stirred up.

My name is Patrick E. Nartey. I had the wonderful privilege of being part of the Investment Banking Group of the CoRe programme.

Personally, the program has been an enlightening experience for me, especially drawing from the practical step-by-step slides and audios given to us by our mentor. I learnt a lot about being resilient especially in this COVID-19 period. The lessons on financial management have shifted my paradigm about money, savings and investments which I will apply to my life.

I have also developed more interest in research and continuous learning and my hunger for success in life has been stirred up.

Patrick



100 I have acquired new business skills

Sandra Serwaa

Through the inspiration of CoRe, Sandra has gone into the sale of kitchen wares. She has also acquired new skills and principles in business, which she is applying. Here's her story:

My name is Sandra Serwaa from Sunyani in the Bono region of Ghana. In the course of the year, I received an SMS notifying me about the CoRe programme and subsequently joined it. I benefitted immensely from the Make-up Artistry Group.

I went into the sale of kitchen wares and it is gradually picking up. The guidelines from the programmes on business including negotiation skills and forging partnerships, among many others, have been very helpful.



Some other key take-aways for me include how to recognize a fake product from an original one and how to build one's brand through referrals and advertising. I have also understood that self-discipline is very key in combining schedules in our work and home as well.

I'm now very cautious of the make-up products I buy in the market. I'm also applying the tips on building a brand for my business through social media.

Sandra

101 My law dream has been ignited

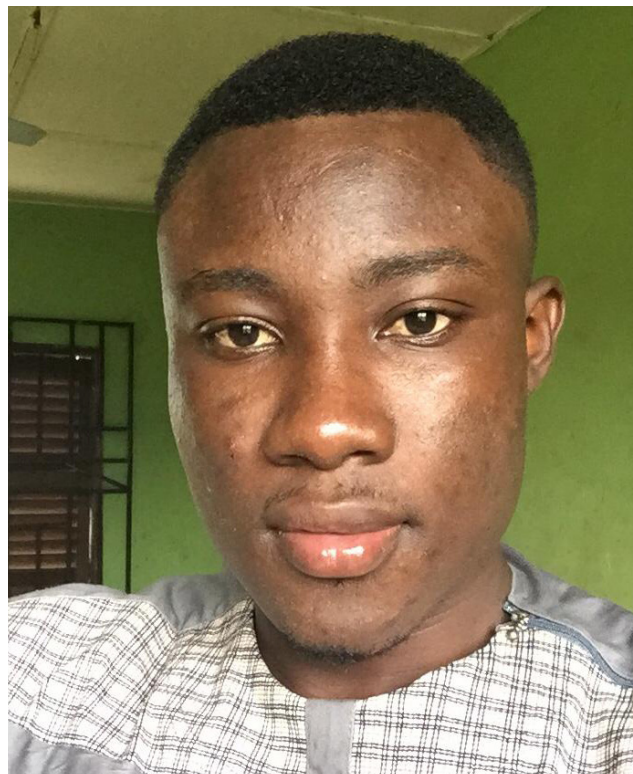
Stephen Kwapong

Stephen's dream of excelling in the legal profession has been inspired. He's also learnt to explore additional opportunities for greater impact in his life's pursuits.

I am Stephen Kwapong, a member of the Legal Practice Group of the CoRe programme.

I learnt that law is not just what we see outside; and that becoming a lawyer does not guarantee that you'll be successful or wealthy. One has to work extra hard and explore additional opportunities to scale-up one's income and accomplish a lot more. It could be in the areas of software development, hardware management, selling goods, trading currencies and real estate among many other opportunities.

Even though I am not a lawyer or legal practitioner, my dream is to become one. The information from the CoRe programme has been really educative and helpful in inspiring that dream. I am excited about



the prospect of practicing law and convinced that CoRe has groomed me very well to become a good lawyer in due course.

Aside of the professional aspects of these lessons, I have also decided to develop the habit of listening more, which is an important part of communication.

I am gradually applying it and, with time, I will achieve my dreams.

Stephen

102 I have a new sense of direction

Benjamin Manu

Benjamin feels a new sense of direction after the expositions he's had on several key topics on business, career and personal life from the CoRe programme. He's learnt to give out his best in whatever he does knowing that service is primarily unto God.

My name is Benjamin Manu. I was part of the Hospital Administrators Group of the CoRe Programme.

Going through the programme gave me a new sense of direction in life. I realized that in my personal, business or professional life, whatever I do is not for men but first and foremost unto God. As a result, I should not bother whether men acknowledge my work or not. Instead, I must remain focused and serve wholeheartedly in whatever I do in the knowledge that God is the rewarder. I have also learnt about how to relate with my superiors at my workplace.



I learnt a lot about leadership and the need to be passionate in whatever I do.

I am still applying the lessons of the CoRe Programme to my life and trusting God for more impact as I climb the ladder of life and success.

Benjamin

103 Poultry farm scaled up

Richard Kweku Ampomah

Richard has scaled up his poultry business and is now exploring commercial sales of his farm produce. The knowledge he's acquired from the CoRe programme has enabled him deploy best practices to expand his farm. He shares his story:

My name is Richard Kweku Ampomah from Takoradi in the Western Region. I was doing my national service in a private school when COVID-19 broke out. This interrupted my work as a service personnel.

However, I got to know about the CoRe Programme by text through a link I received from the National Service outfit. I subsequently joined the Agric Animal group. Signing up to the CoRe programme greatly filled the vacuum in my life. I acquired a lot of new knowledge and insights into topical matters such as choosing a career, negotiation skills, work-life balance, etc.

I had a small poultry farm before joining the programme. During the various learning sessions, I realized that I could do better with my farm if I put in place some measures and structures. I'm glad to say that I have started implementing this new knowledge in managing the farm.



Since I started proper record keeping, some aspects of the cost of running the farm as well as my pricing have improved tremendously. I can now tell whether I'm making a profit or loss, which I didn't know earlier. Since I understand my costing better, I am better placed to price my farm products. From being a peasant poultry farmer, the CoRe Programme has challenged me to scale up my farm business.

I have also acquired the skills needed to draw a line between my work and my social life, which was another big challenge for me.

Richard

104 CoRe has given me a new horizon of life

Haruna Zakari

Haruna is happy to have participated in the CoRe programme as he's been exposed to a lot of new information. He hopes that interventions like this would continue and further assist young people to set up their enterprises.

I am Haruna Zakari. CoRe has exposed me to many truths I was previously oblivious to. I am a YIEDIE beneficiary. I am currently an apprentice in Aluminum Fabrication, and I have a long way to go in my chosen field of apprenticeship. Thanks to the CoRe Programme and the nuggets shared with us, my business is now on course.

I however entreat the leaders of this programme to keep supporting young ones like me with the needed tools and equipment to be well-established.

God richly bless those who initiated this programme to support persons like me.

Haruna

105 Inspired to dream again

Victor Atsu Ocansey

Victor was discouraged and emotionally bruised as the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and its effects ripped through him. Thankfully, he has been encouraged and strengthened to bounce back through the many insightful sessions from the CoRe Programme. He shares his story.

I am Victor Atsu Ocansey from the YIEDIE group and a beneficiary of the CoRe Programme.

I am most grateful for the lasting impact the programme has had on my life. It has indeed strengthened me and set me on the path to dreaming again. I was emotionally bruised but I have been given the courage to face my challenges squarely and overcome rather than become a victim. The inspiration from this programme makes me see challenges as an inevitable part of life, which must necessarily be overcome through resilience and decisive positive action.

Indeed, no man is an island. Our challenges become bearable when we share them with persons who can encourage and support us rather than keep to ourselves and risk losing out at the end of the day. I have been equipped to adapt new strategies in my



field of work and build relevant social networks. I also intend exploring and developing my talents and put them to productive use. This I believe would help me to stay focused.

Thank you, CoRe. I have had a wonderful learning experience.

Victor

106 My life has been reshaped

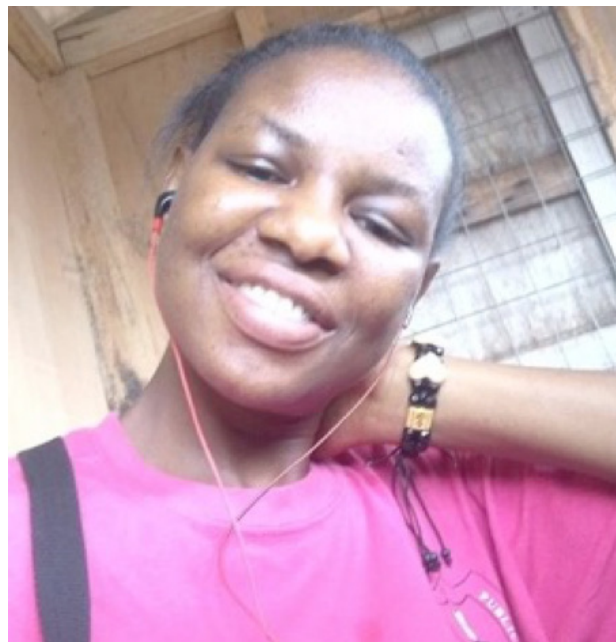
Rebecca Mamley Nartey

Rebecca has gained insight about how to set SMART goals and dedicate herself towards their achievement. Her life has been set on a more purposeful path. She now reckons that with self-discipline, she will attain whatever she sets her mind to achieve.

I am Rebecca Mamley Nartey, from Oyibi in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. I am a proud beneficiary of the CoRe programme, which I joined after I came across an ad on social media. I am a student, but the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic interrupted my schooling.

The CoRe Programme came in at a good time to revitalize my life and career aspirations. I have become more focused and am adequately informed about career choices and opportunities. I now think and make decisions not just based on the present but with the future in focus.

From the various training segments, I have been practically taught how to enhance my productivity



by setting SMART goals and writing them down. The need to make self-discipline a personal value to enable me act on my goals was thought provoking, which I believe solves the problem of procrastination and inertia. I am now more determined than before to achieve my goals.

My life has been reshaped and I owe it to the CoRe Programme.

Rebecca

A refreshing encounter

Emmanuel Obeng

Emmanuel has realized the need to choose a career path which aligns or agrees with his strengths, capabilities, talents and interests. He sees the need to focus on his strengths to avoid struggling in his career pursuit, a key thought he derived from the CoRe sessions.

I am Emmanuel Obeng, a beneficiary of the CoRe programme. This initiative has added value to my life.

I have been refreshed with the relevant knowledge and information I need to excel in life. Through CoRe, I got to understand how to make the right choice of career by accessing my strengths and weaknesses.

As a student, I have also learnt to focus my energies on what I do best, which I believe will enable me to chalk great successes in life. I am very grateful to the promoters of the CoRe initiative for birthing such a programme.

Emmanuel



108 Great customer service is the foundation

Clara Dansoa

Clara has learnt how she can provide the very best customer service to her clients and relate with them more professionally. This has given her profession as a painter, a new lease of life.

I am Clara Dansoa. I live at Asylum Down at Accra. I am a beneficiary of e-mentoring through the Painting Group of the CoRe Programme, which I joined through YIEDIE, a group to which I belong.

My major take-away from CoRe has been the insight gained on customer service, which have sharpened my skills in that area. I have come to realize that great customer service and business success are inseparable and go hand in hand.



The privileged to be trained extensively through the CoRe Programme is by all standards superior to any other training or previous knowledge I have received.

I have therefore improved upon my relations and particularly my service to my clients and this has made a huge positive impact in my business.



The use of social media to expand the scope of my business has been for me like a miracle. I can now reach a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds. I am no longer limited to the traditional ways of marketing my business. I am very grateful to CoRe for making this possible.

Clara

109 Timeless secrets indeed

Edwina N. A Randolph

Edwina sees the new knowledge gained from the CoRe Programme as lifelong lessons, which will benefit her both in the present and the future. Thanks to CoRe, she has learnt about business strategies she can deploy in her decoration business.

I am Edwina N. A Randolph, from Tema in the Greater Accra region of Ghana and I am a YIEDIE beneficiary. Professionally, I am into interior and exterior décor. I am proud to have been a member of the Interior Décor Group of the CoRe Programme.

I am very grateful to CoRe for the training I have received. Joining the CoRe programme has rejuvenated my business through the new strategies I gained. I now know how to communicate effectively with my customers and take my personal and business branding a notch higher. My attitude towards work has improved greatly and I believe these timeless secrets that have been revealed through the programme will remain a part of me in all my endeavors of life.



Thank you CoRe for your immense contribution in transforming my life and future.

Edwina

A unique exposure for success

Gifty Jackline Adjei

Gifty's membership of the Interior Décor mentoring group helped her to interact and relate with her customers more professionally than she did previously. She believes these lessons will enable the pursuit of her business aspirations.

I am Gifty Jackline Adjei, a beneficiary of the Interior Décor mentoring group of the CoRe programme.

CoRe has given me the right exposure in learning about my career and business. I have seen a great improvement in my business as a result of my participation in this CoRe initiative. The areas in which I benefitted greatly include how to interact with my coworkers, how to brand my business and how to connect with with my clients and also how to use the media effectively.

I am very grateful to CoRe for this initiative and the many benefits I have seen as a result.

Gifty



111 Knowledge indeed is power

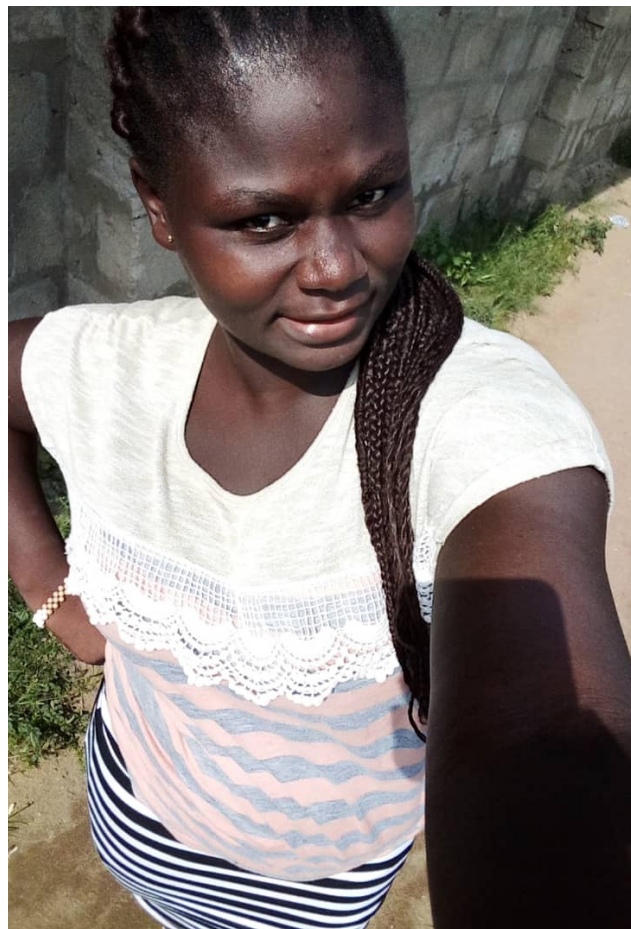
Gifty Rejoice Kwofie

Among the many thought-provoking sessions of the CoRe programme, Gifty has learnt how to deploy social media effectively in her business and develop good customer relations with her clients. She shares her story:

My name is Gifty Rejoice Kwofie, from Shama in the Western Region. I am a Yedie beneficiary. I signed up to the interior décor group of the CoRe programme through Yedie and it has been a great experience. I am into the baking of cake and Events planning. I have acquired a wide range of knowledge and this has helped me in my business, career and human relation skills.

Through the CoRe programme, I have learnt to:

- Use social media effectively in doing business
- Communicate effectively with my customers.
- Welcome my customers into my business.
- Be courteous in relating with my customers and
- Offer the best customer services to my clients.



CoRe has improved my learning skills and made my life valuable and worthwhile. I am most grateful for the learning opportunity they have provided. A big thank you to the initiators of the programme. Indeed, knowledge and continuous learning are the key to personal, career and business success.

Gifty

My life has been repositioned

Sarah

Learning through the CoRe Programme has taught Sarah how she can look out for opportunities even in the midst of adversities. Having been clueless as to what to do after the pandemic set in, the CoRe programme has given her more courage and changed her perspective about life in general. She shares her story.

I am Sarah, a beneficiary of the CoRe programme. The global pandemic of 2020 has had a negative toll on me as an individual. I have lost a lot and was clueless on how to rebuild my life until the CoRe programme stepped in.

Learning with CoRe has taught me how to get opportunities in times of adversities. I have learnt to not follow the path of complaints in times of adversities but rather seek for opportunities and focus on them. Among the many vital lessons of the

programme, my human relation skills have improved greatly and I have also learnt how to:

- Follow up on clients for feedback.
- Find my area of interest and focus on it.
- Handle clients to my best capacity and
- Deliver quality goods or services on time.

Learning these have repositioned my life and given me reason to keep progressing in life. I am grateful to CoRe for making this possible.

Sarah

My passion has been sparked and set ablaze

Hannah Ninson

Hannah has improved on her communication skills which she is deploying in her business to nurture and grow better relationship with her customers. She shares her story.

My name is Hannah Ninson. I live at Lebanon in Ashaiman within the Greater Accra region. Over the years, I've nurtured a passion for events planning and interior décor as well as the baking of cakes; but I didn't really know about how to deploy these interests and talents I had.

Thankfully, I got introduced to the mentoring programme on CoRe through a friend, who is a member of the YIEDIE Youth Group. I joined the Interior Décor and Digital Information Groups. Being a part of this initiative, has enabled me to transform my interests and talents into a business, which I am currently pursuing in addition to my day job in a construction company.



I have seen a massive progress and improvement in my human relations skills, which I am harnessing in my relationship with clients. I am using the appropriate words and gestures to communicate. I have also been trained on how to be very meticulous with clients as well as using social media to promote my business.

The CoRe Programme has helped to unearth and make good use of my talents. I have learnt the appropriate way in handling clients and seen massive improvement in my business as a result. Thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme.

Hannah

An awareness about the future

Odelia Kafui Alornyo

Odelia is thankful to have had the opportunity to be mentored on the CoRe Programme. She now has a more futuristic and generational mindset, which she believes will guide her life goals and aspirations.

My name is Odelia Kafui Alornyo. I am very thankful to CoRe for their various inputs in training me for the future. CoRe has built me up to be a very futuristic individual. I have learnt to have foresight into the future and plan my life as such. The consistent training I have received has aided me in:

- Keeping records
- Earning profits and
- Saving for the future

I intend applying these to ensure that I remain productive and frugal as an individual. I am most grateful to CoRe for granting me this opportunity.

Odelia



A mind-shift indeed

Isaac Agyare

Isaac never once considered exploring business opportunities outside of his fashion design work as he felt he needed to focus. Each passing day of the CoRe lessons changed his paradigm about business. He shares his story:

My name is Isaac Agyare, from Accra in the Greater Accra region, and a proud beneficiary of the CoRe Programme. I am a fashion designer but the outbreak of COVID-19 seriously hampered the progress of my business due to the accompanying lockdowns and restrictions. I shared my challenges with a counselor in my church called Abishag. She subsequently introduced me to the CoRe mentoring programme. I am forever grateful to have had this opportunity.

CoRe equipped me with the knowledge I needed to be able to start and manage multiple businesses. I learnt how to practically set money aside, to save for my business. As a result, I have changed certain ways of doing things. I have mustered the courage required to start a new business. My interpersonal skills have also improved greatly and this is reflecting in the quality of relationships with my customers.



My perspective about business has totally changed. I now realize that many of the world's business tycoons have invested in diverse related businesses rather than just one. This has shifted my thinking on the subject matter.

I am most grateful to the CoRe programme for making this possible.

Isaac

My passion to become a writer is literally lit

George Brown

George has finally landed the opportunity that would turn out to be the springboard for pursuing his passion and talent in writing. He has gained so much information on the subject matter and believes his dream of becoming a writer in on course.

My name is George Brown. I have always been passionate about writing and looked for opportunities to explore this talent. Thankfully, I met CoRe and I was guided thoroughly through this.

I have learnt so much from this initiative, but in a nutshell, I would say as someone who loves to write and wants to grow into a professional writer and author, that this has been a very good platform for me. Interacting with mentors has taught me about the nitty-gritties of writing as an art, a skill and a profession.



Over the past few weeks, after taking part in the CoRe mentoring sessions, I have become more committed and consistent with my writing. I have learnt to be highly resilient and creative in what I do. I am now able to write much more in a month on my blog. I am also efficiently contributing to other write ups.

Moving forward, I intend to get back to a manuscript I started working on almost a year ago to make sure I complete it, publish it and make it available to the world. Thanks to the knowledge and inspiration from the CoRe initiative.

Thank you CoRe for motivating me to go to this extent with my skill. I am very grateful.

George

117 **Becoming an effective time manager**

Philip Essien

Philip works as a safety officer in a mining company. His major take-away from the CoRe programme has been the inspiration and knowledge gained on how to become an effective and diligent time manager. Let's read his story.

My name is Philip Essien, from Tarkwa in the Western region. I work as a safety officer in a mining company. I had the opportunity to be part of the CoRe mentoring programme, through an ad I came across on social media.

CoRe has taught me a lot about work-life balance and interpersonal relational skills. I have also learnt to become a diligent time manager by planning and making the most productive use of my time every day.



I have made it a habit to make sure my day is clearly planned out with specific time allocations to the most important aspects of my life. This has helped me to avoid unnecessary waste of time which may be a consequence of having no planned schedules.

Through the programme, I have been reawakened to what the priorities of my life should be as an individual, so I can make the most of my time and life.

I am most grateful to CoRe for making this possible.

Philip

I can make a better choice of career now

Elizabeth Agyapomaa

Elizabeth who is yet to continue her education after senior high school has had the opportunity to learn about factors to consider in choosing a career path. She believes this will serve as a great guide in her future career and business pursuits.

My name is Elizabeth Agyapomaa. I became a member of the YIEDIE Group while in Accra. I currently reside at Tamale in the Northern region.

The CoRe mentoring programme has been a great blessing to me and I am very grateful to the CoRe team for the change it has brought into my life.

The programme has practically educated me on the career path to choose as an individual. I have learnt to follow my passion and choose a career based on what I am most passionate about.



Through the programme, I have learnt how to encourage myself no matter the difficulties that may arise. I have learnt resilience and determination and these have shaped my mindset and made me a more purposeful person.

Elizabeth

119 Morbid fear turned to hope

Samuel Kofi Mensah

Samuel had lost all hope at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic and its ravaging effects. He feared that it was going to be the end of his life because he was not gainfully employed and his finances were nothing to write home about. The CoRe Programme gave him hope to look out for new opportunities in the midst of difficulties.

Samuel Kofi Mensah is my name. I come from Kumasi but am currently in Accra. I am a beneficiary of e-mentoring through the Procurement and Supply Group of the CoRe Programme, which I got introduced to through a link shared on social media.

Before the COVID-19 crisis began, I was already in my post-National Service period, having served in one of the most sensitive ministries of Ghana.

The effect of the pandemic on me was indescribable to say the least because I'm not gainfully employed. My finances were badly hit. I had no money to rely on during the crisis. I resort to fervently praying that the



president would not heed to calls from a section of the society to impose lockdown restrictions.

I was gripped with morbid fear that it was going to be the end of my life. I did not have a dime on me to afford even an 'olonka' tin of gari (a local staple) let alone the sugar that should accompany the gari. I was totally clueless about which business venture I could engage in immediately, just to enable me to survive. As a matter of fact, there was no available escape route—I was left with myself and fate.

In my frantic attempts to find a window of escape from my difficulties, I chanced upon the CoRe Programme and, truth be told, it has given me hope and a new perspective about believing in myself. I now know that there is still a way out for me to thrive even in the face of the disruption. I yearned for the motivational messages that came through the CoRe group each morning and that carried me through the difficult days.

It has by all standards invaluable helped me in discovering myself. It has offered me the opportunity to re-think about what I could do in my own simple way and also see the crisis not as a curse but a blessing in disguise that will lead me to self-discovery.

Through CoRe, I have also developed some leadership skills. I was privileged to be the group lead for the Procurement and Supply Mentoring Group, where I have learnt how to bring people together for a common cause.

CoRe gave me the opportunity to regularly learn new things from an experienced mentor in the Procurement and Supply industry, which has, in turn, enabled me to put together relevant skillsets I need to advance.

I intend to share with others, within my circles, what I have learnt and also use writing via a blog to reach many more people outside my sphere of influence.

I will surely apply to my life and work the key lessons from the CoRe Programme.

Samuel

120 Giving up is not an option

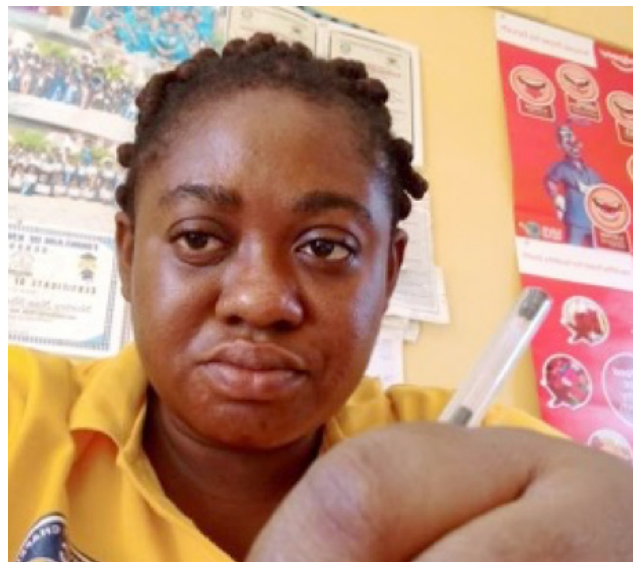
Priscilla Addo

The educational sector especially private school businesses were badly hit by the ravaging effects of the coronavirus pandemic but Priscilla has not given up as she enhances her skills of connecting with her students and staffers in these difficult moments.

My name is Priscilla Addo. I am at Ablekuma in Accra and work as an educator. I got to know about the CoRe programme through an SMS that I kept receiving and finally decided to follow it up.

I have learnt as a leader to be emotionally strong and help others come out of their difficulties without necessarily making it look obvious to them about my own struggles. The importance of regularly checking on my students came as a good strategy of showing more care and concern to my pupils which I believe will ultimately enhance the school's success and serve as a way of encouraging her pupils, parents and guardians as well. This lesson I believe would really help me as an educator.

I was encouraged to not give up on the school business but rather put in all necessary efforts to



maintain both staff and students during and after this pandemic.

I have already started implementing the new ideas from the programme. The culture of checking on my students regularly has started in earnest than before. Meetings with members of staff to deliberate on ways of surviving and thriving have also gained much reinforcement.

Thanks to the CoRe Programme.

Priscilla

121 Repositioned to provide better services

Felicia Maame Cobbina

Felicia was blissfully unaware until competition in her industry ravaged her business. She was concerned and perplexed as she began losing her customers but thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme, she acquired the relevant business skills and knowledge to help her provide great services to her clients and thrive in her business.

I am Felicia Maame Cobbina, from Efiakuma in the Western region. I graduated from the YIEDIE program as a youth artisan in December 2019, intending to use my newly acquired skills to start a business. By God's grace, I soon got a job and saved up enough capital to start my business. Initially, all was well, or so I thought. I had acquired a few customers and started to gain confidence. Little did I know that I was living in self-delusion.

Before long, a competitor started a similar business nearby and before I could blink, my customers started leaving me. It took some time, but the problem became apparent - my customers were



not satisfied with my service. Although I now knew the problem, I struggled to solve it, because I could not pinpoint exactly why my interactions with my customers left them unhappy.

Luckily for me, a link for the CoRe program popped up on the YIEDIE platform. I joined the programme and thanks to the CoRe team, business has started looking up. I now realize that one's skills can attract customers, but attitude is crucial to keep the business going. If not for the CoRe Programme, I would have lost my job.

Now my customers love to patronise me and I enjoy serving them as well. Thanks once again to the Springboard Road Show Foundation, MasterCard Foundation and Solidaridad. A special thank you to my number one counsellor, Sarah Woldemanuel. I'm eternally grateful.

Felicia

Lost in deep thoughts but rescued

Christian Annati

Christian with his entrepreneurial mindset had a plan to start a project that was to be an intervention to help solve accommodation challenges he observed with national service personnel. Little did he know that there was a pandemic brewing and readying itself to surface and disrupt his plans. He shares his story with us.

My name is Christian Annati, from Akosombo. The outbreak of COVID-19 affected me badly. During my national service, I made a keen observation at the national service secretariat about the accommodation challenges that my fellow service personnel were faced with.

Having an entrepreneurial mindset, I started thinking of how I could reposition myself to help solve this challenge. I shared my proposal with a few people



who liked the idea, so I started believing that my concept would become reality.

Right after we begun the project, news of COVID-19 started making rounds and finally reached Ghana. Suddenly my dreams were on hold. I was discouraged and didn't know what to do. I was lost in deep thought when I received an SMS through the National Service outfit to sign up for the CoRe mentoring programme.

I subsequently signed up to the mentoring and the e-counselling program and was part of a wonderful CoRe group. With the help of the counsellor, I can confidently say that I have bounced back. I have learnt to build the mental strength to withstand any disruption that may come my way.

I have learnt to be innovative in whatever I want to do. I have always perceived counseling as something people did before getting married, but now, I believe that every institution needs a professional counsellor for the wellbeing of its people.

Additionally, I made a new discovery about myself – I can teach! This discovery emerged when I was given the opportunity to teach in some CoRe groups. I really enjoyed it and I haven't looked back since.

The mentoring sessions were also very good. I am now more focused on my goals. I have learnt not to undervalue my network and my circle of influence. Indeed, the CoRe Programme has been a blessing to me. I plan not to keep the good things that I have learnt to myself but rather, to share with others.

I am very grateful to the organizers of this programme and to my wonderful counsellor Sarah Woldeamanuel, who always finds time to talk to me and helps me in making the right decisions. Thank you to my selfless mentor, Mr. Benjamin Nortey, who helps us understand and see what is ahead of us as young entrepreneurs in the IT world.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to the CoRe team, Springboard Road Show Foundation, Solidaridad, and MasterCard Foundation.

Akpe.

Christian

Lines falling in pleasant places

Douglas Opesika Aguddey

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic dashed Douglas' hope of starting his business but through providence, he had a call that led him to start following the CoRe Mentoring programme. The story has been different ever since.

My name is Douglas Opesika Aguddey from the CoRe Bright Akan group. In 2019, I went through a training programme in painting through YIEDIE and another in Entrepreneurship at African Aurora Business Network (AABN).

My plan was to start my professional painting business in 2020, but COVID-19 disrupted this idea completely. I became disappointed, confused and perplexed. I shared my concerns with one of my training instructors, and that opened a new chapter of my life. He introduced me to the CoRe mentoring programme. I started listening to the CoRe Programme and started getting encouraged anytime I listened. To the glory of God, the lines have started falling in the right places for me and I am bouncing back on my feet and achieving my goals.



I have learned through joining the CoRe sessions that challenges must not put us down, but we must find the strength to overcome our challenges by identifying other opportunities that we may have been blind to.

CoRe taught me to identify my talents and to use them to solve societal challenges. I have also learnt a lot of new skills and gained knowledge about business, including lessons on how to relate to clients and serve them to the best of my abilities.

I am indeed very grateful to the CoRe Programme for helping me. I am encouraged to continue improving my skills and learning new ways of providing the best services.

Thank you.

Douglas

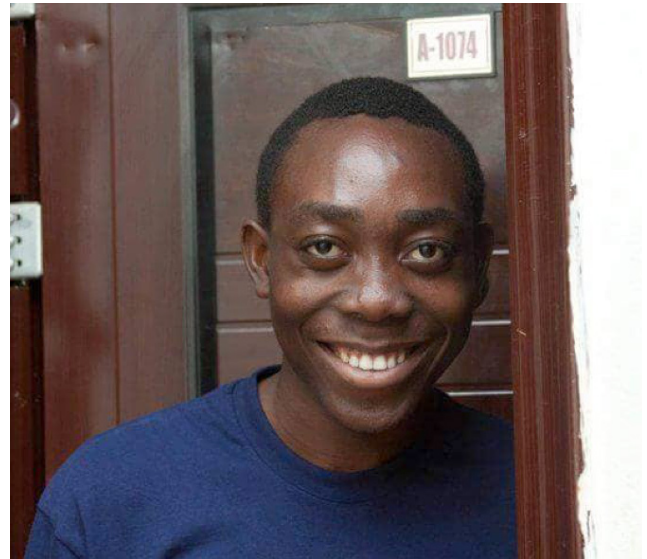
Success Requires Extra Efforts

Richard Helegbe

Everyone desires to attain one form of achievement or the other. Richard has realized that it takes diligent and persistent extra effort to become an achiever. He shares his story with us.

My name is Richard Helegbe, a graphic designer from Accra. I joined the CoRe programme after I encountered an ad on social media about the programme.

The programme has connected me with people from diverse backgrounds and helped me to grow my leadership capacity by giving me the opportunity to be a group lead. I have learnt that every dream or goal in life is only achievable on the platform of diligent, consistent and persistent effort.



To be impactful in any chosen career or business, one has to put in a lot of extra effort to succeed and make a difference. Additionally, self-discipline is required because many others may be pursuing same path of career as you are. I firmly believe that these and many other CoRe lessons would help me excel in my graphic design work.

Richard

My attitude and outlook on life reshaped

Adelaide Akosua Kumi

Adelaide had to fend for herself after senior high school. She moved on from one job to the other when COVID-19 set in and affected her livelihood. It was quite a challenge for her until a friend introduced her to the CoRe mentoring programme. She shared her story of how the programme has changed her mindset about life and business.

My name is Adelaide Akosua Kumi, a young woman of 22 years. I come from Kwawu-Abetifi but reside at Odorkor. I was a member of the agribusiness mentoring group.



After completing Senior High School in 2018, I moved to Accra to stay with my mom to explore economic opportunities. MTN employed me to register mobile money SIM cards for a month, then I became a salesgirl in a shop at Dansoman. A couple of months into this role, I became jobless as COVID-19 had set in and the restrictions on movements and businesses affected my employer. I could no longer go to work and this affected my finances, because I had no other means of survival.

I don't know how I would have coped if not for the timely intervention of the CoRe programme which my friend Samuel Skylove introduced to me.

This has re-shaped my outlook and attitude about my life and business.

I had the opportunity to go through E-learning topics such as how to identify and monetise my talents and how to do business in the new normal. I also learnt about time management, raising money for a business, and marketing one's products and services. I also joined very insightful sessions on how to plan and start a business.

I realised that COVID-19 should not be a barrier to my success. I then decided to start a business of my own, and mobile money came into mind because of the experience I got from working for MTN. I had Ghc 700.00 by then so I used Ghc 300.00 to register the business and used ghc 400.00 as my working capital.

While pursuing my mobile money business, I was still looking for employment to help me raise more money to invest into the business. Fortunately, I met a woman whom I have since taken to be my godmother. She ran an online wallpaper business and asked me if I could do the job. I told her to try me. Remembering my lessons about doing business in the new normal and doing business with your talent, I knew that this was the time for me to practice what I was taught. I still work there to date, and with time management, I'm operating my mobile money business on the side.

Thanks so much to the CoRe programme. I hope this intervention continues, as a lot of people out there need it, just like I did. I intend to share the knowledge I gained with my friends and people that I encounter in my life.

Adelaide

A timely learning opportunity

Johnny Edem Agboado

Johnny had the opportunity to join the CoRe programme a bit late but has enjoyed the learning experience.

My name is Johnny Edem Agboado, from Ashaiman in the Greater Accra region. I am currently a student. I joined the marketing group of the CoRe programme after coming across a link on social media about the programme.

The outbreak of COVID-19 interrupted my education. However, the opportunity to have been part of the CoRe Programme, although quite late in the day, has been a great learning experience. I am a member of the media crew at my church; thus photography is one of the things I do passionately.



I have gained a lot more insight and knowledge about photography through the programme, including learning about different kinds of image postures. I feel like my skills have been sharpened.

God bless the CoRe Programme initiative.

Johnny

127 **A great intervention for success**

Aishatu Ahmed

Aishatu says she's committed to giving off her best in whatever she does after being enlightened about personal and business success through the CoRe programme. She shares with us her lessons.

I am Aishatu Ahmed, from Dansoman in the Greater Accra Region. I am a YIEDIE beneficiary, and I have learnt a lot through the CoRe Programme.

My foremost lessons include how to be time conscious, smart ways of doing business online, how to relate with my clients (especially difficult ones) as well as how to be resilient and persistent even when the unexpected strikes.

I am committed to giving my best and applying the knowledge gained in my personal life and profession. The programme is a great intervention and I hope that more support would keep coming. God bless the visionaries behind CoRe.

Aishatu

128 Core set in just at the right time

Nadia

The CoRe Programme came just at the right time to give her and many others hope during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic which affected many lives and businesses. She's learnt how to maximize her time. Let's hear her out.

My name is Nadia, and I am a YIEDIE beneficiary. The coronavirus pandemic really affected many businesses in the YIEDIE programme. It was so timely that the CoRe Programme started around the same time to give us hope and enable us to carry on.

Personally, I have learnt how to make the most of my time, deal with unyielding and difficult clients and how to maintain composure even when things do not go as planned. I am really thankful to God for this intervention and like Oliver Twist, I ask for more support to enable me scale up my business ventures. Thanks to CoRe Mentoring.

Nadia

I am navigating my way out of my challenges

Seth Hammond

Seth's publishing business was severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The mentoring received through the CoRe Programme has given him a road map to restoration. Seth shares his story with us.

My name is Seth Hammond, a publisher based in Ho in the early days of COVID-19 but have currently relocated to Agbozume, near Aflao in the Volta Region. My business as a publisher was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Everything literally came to a standstill.

I heard about CoRe through a text message from a friend. I subsequently signed up for the Banking and Finance mentoring group. Through CoRe, I have been equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills to navigate my way out of any adversity and



become successful. The programme has enabled me to see some opportunities even in these difficulties, and they are now serving as a source of income.

Aside from my publishing business, I now sell Kente cloths. I am also running a talent hunt programme where I seek to identify and nurture talents in young people especially in the area of music. The CoRe Programme has helped me to reposition myself in all these businesses.

I've also learnt a lot about social media marketing, branding and how to manage my clients. All these have helped to sustain me and keep my businesses thriving during these difficult times of the pandemic. I am learning a lot more from the programme as the days go by.

On the relationship front, I have also received some helpful insights into how to manage my family and work and how to respond to various work-related challenges.

These are some of the benefits I have gained from my CoRe mentoring group. I intend to share my experiences with others to enable them scale through their own challenges and accomplish their goals in life.

That's the spirit of CoRe – learning together and growing together.

Seth

130 Resilience and hope in a disruption

Abigail Tetteh

Abigail really felt the heat of the effects of the corona virus pandemic as her livelihood was not spared either. The CoRe programme encouraged her to be resilient and not throw in the towel but rather maintain a positive outlook. The new knowledge and skills she has acquired would enable her to bounce back, she says.

My name is Abigail Tetteh, from Kasoa in the Central region of Ghana and a YIEDIE beneficiary. I'm a professional decorator, and the onset of COVID-19 really affected my work as harsh restrictions meant there was virtually no business for me.

However, the CoRe Programme has enabled me to be strong and resilient in spite of the challenges. I have also acquired a lot of knowledge, which I believe will help me to do better in my business. Learning to communicate tactfully and effectively with my clients was key for me.

Sessions on talent discovery, time management and managing my personal finances were also thought provoking for me. It has been an amazing learning

experience right from the beginning to the end. I also appeal to the organizers of the CoRe Programme to give me further support to acquire certain tools that I need to enhance my success as a decorator.

We are grateful to have been introduced to this programme.

Abigail

I have learnt new ways of advertising

Abdul Rasheed

Abdul has been exposed through the CoRe Programme to alternative ways of advertising and doing business. He shares his learnings:

My name is Abdul Rasheed. I am an Aluminum and Fiber Glass Fabricator and a YIEDIE beneficiary. CoRe for me can be summed up in three words - learning, innovation and correction.

The programme has taught me new ways of doing business. I previously did not know that business could be done online but the CoRe Programme has really enlightened me about a whole new range of possibilities and opportunities and I am really grateful.

We humbly appeal for some more assistance to enable us to open our own shops in the times ahead. God bless this initiative.

Abdul

A mind-blowing encounter

James Nii Quaye

James has been challenged and inspired to become an achiever. Being a naturally shy person, he's gradually learning to overcome that challenge. He believes that the insight he's gained on building a business and career will serve him well on the path to success.

I'm James Nii Quaye, an automotive engineer and startup poultry farmer. I was a member of the Agribusiness Mentoring group of the CoRe programme.

My idea of doing business has really been changed. I actually had very little knowledge about the many business strategies and avenues that were brought to light during the sessions. It was like a mind-blowing encounter. My scope of options has expanded greatly. My communication skills have improved. I used to be very shy and found it an arduous task interacting with others but that situation is gradually improving.



I have been challenged to dream big and attain success especially after encountering the mentors and counselors who helped us through the programme.

I am a better person now, thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme.

James

133 Exploring My Interests

Akpene Anku

Akpene has learnt to pay attention to his talents and gifts by identifying and developing them to serve humanity. She shares her story.

My name is Akpene Anku. I joined the psychiatry mentoring group of the CoRe programme. The E-mentoring programme has provided me the space and opportunity to explore my interests even before entering the world of work. I must say CoRe is doing a great job.

I have learned that it's good to explore many career opportunities but also ensure I specialize in an area of interest and passion and run with it.

Akpene



134 Leadership Skills Refined

Dennis Ato Plange

Dennis had a fine opportunity of being a group lead in one of the mentoring groups. This has helped in reshaping his leadership potential. He believes lessons from the programme will serve him well in his present and future aspirations.

My name is Dennis Plange, a member of the doctor's mentoring group of the CoRe programme. I am 18 years old and I completed Senior High School this year. The programme has been a major exposure to me and has expanded my horizon.

I had the opportunity to be a group lead of the doctoring mentorship group and this has further sharpened my leadership skills. I now have a greater sense of awareness especially about Time Management, Communication and Interpersonal skills which came about through interaction with group members. I am really thankful to Ps. Eric Otchere for giving me this opportunity.

The mentorship programme has built in me certain qualities that will help me in my education and future career. I have been inspired to dream big.



My Pre-university Orientation Has Started In Earnest With Core Mentoring

Dennis Plange makes the assertion that his encounter with the CoRe Mentoring programme has served to orient him towards his plans of entering into the university to pursue medicine. The opportunity given him by Mr. Okyere to lead one of the groups further deepened his communication and leadership skills.

My name is Dennis Plange. I live at Dome a suburb of Accra. I recently completed high school education and now aspiring to enter into the university. I got to know about the CoRe programme through a link I came across on social media and joined the Doctoring mentorship group.

I was given the opportunity to lead a group and this helped me to become a more organized person and sharpened my leadership skills.

On the whole, the programme served as my orientation for the university which I'm yet to gain admission to read medicine. Personally I have learned to be more open-minded, and more practical in managing my time. This programme has taught me to plan thoroughly and has equipped me with values which help me interact better with others.

I intend to use these values in making my life simpler and less complicated. Having learnt to be open minded makes me take criticism better and learn from my mistakes. My interpersonal skills have really improved and I am really grateful to have had this lifetime opportunity from the CoRe Programme.

Dennis

135 **Business is service to man**

Isaac Armah

Isaac has learnt a crucial lesson in business which is to ensure that every business service or product he offers must be aimed at solving one problem or the other and make lives better for others. He shares his story.

My name is Isaac Armah, from Accra. I was a member of the entrepreneurship mentoring group which I signed up to through a link on social media. Professionally, I am an entrepreneur in real estates and agriculture.

The CoRe Programme immensely impacted my life. I have learnt so many new things in business and career pursuits which I believe will guide me in my businesses.

I learned that in establishing a business, my focus should be on how to solve problems and make lives better for people. In addition to that, services or products that I offer must solve human needs and put smiles on the faces of my customers. A great learning experience indeed. The opportunity to be a group lead also enabled me to network with many others.



Thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme.

Isaac

Overjoyed by the CoRe Programme

Emmanuel Boateng

Emmanuel asserts that they have learnt a lot on different subjects about life and business and are challenged to become problem solvers.

I am an Aluminum Fabricator and a member of Yiedie. We have been overjoyed by the coming of the CoRe Programme. We have learnt diverse new lessons on effective communication, relating with clients and we have been challenged to be problem solvers.

I believe my work as an Aluminium fabricator will not be the same after this programme. I would surely be distinguished in my work. Currently we serve as apprentices, but we hope for more assistance to enable us to open our own shops in the times ahead. God bless the conveners and facilitators of this programme. We are truly grateful.

Emmanuel

Core Turned My Farming Business Around

James Agbogah (Farmer)

James' farm products were getting rotten because of his lack of contact with traders. He had a business turnaround when he came into contact with the CoRe programme facilitators. He overcame his fear of the virus, took the right steps and saw his business resuscitated. How did he do it? James tells his own story:

James Agbogah is my name. I am a farmer in New Edubiase in the Ashanti Region and a member of the MASO Youth group. In all the discussions about COVID-19, very little has been said about farmers and how it has negatively impacted our lives and work.

The reality is, we had no problem going to our farms. Our biggest challenge was how to sell our farm produce to our customers and other traders after harvesting them. Most of our customers were afraid of contracting the virus and so were we.

My harvest could not wait for the pandemic to be over. The foodstuffs were going bad and I had to sell them. I was terribly confused and frustrated, not

knowing what to do. Thankfully, I was introduced to the CoRe Programme which has since been of immense benefit to me.

Through this programme, I learnt a lot and was exposed to safer and better ways of meeting and interacting with my customers to sell my produce. I was now able to switch to house-to-house delivery of my produce. This was done while observing the safety protocols.

This approach transformed my business and shaped my vision in no small way. I am very grateful to the organisers. I want to invite the leadership of CoRe to visit us here to teach us some more of these principles. I believe many more people in our communities will benefit from it. Thank you.

James

It beats my imagination

Enoch Amponsah

Enoch battled with challenges in his work as an Aluminium fabricator, especially with regards to machinery needed for the work. Thankfully, through CoRe, he gained insight about savings and investments and was able to save some money to get some of the working tools himself. He shares his story.

I am an Aluminum Fabricator at Kasoa and a YIEDIE Beneficiary. I am very grateful to the initiators of this wonderful programme. Unfortunately, in our line of work, acquiring machines can be very challenging and costly. In spite of this, I have not been altogether discouraged, though concerned.

My encounter with the CoRe Programme has been so helpful. I have learnt valuable lessons on managing my finances and effective communication. Previously, I had not conditioned my mind to set money aside to acquire the needed tools and equipment, but CoRe has taught me otherwise. I have now been able to save some money and I've procured some tools on my own. If I was exposed to this in the beginning, I would have gone farther by now.

What CoRe has done for me beats my imagination. Thank You very much.

Enoch

An intense resolve to overcome and succeed

Oben Amankwaa Amofa Capito

Oben found it difficult cultivating the habit of savings and investments but thanks to the CoRe programme he's been inspired beyond measure to start saving the little he can to enable him accomplish his goals, coupled with very interesting lessons he gained joining the programme. He shares his story.

My name is Oben Amankwaa Amofa Capito, from Kumasi in the Ashanti region of Ghana. I got to know about the Core programme through a link on social media and it has been by far a most inspiring learning session for me as I continue to learn new things every time. The various mentors have shared a lot with us and God bless them.

Lessons on savings and investments have challenged me to cultivate the habit of savings no matter how little my income is. This is to enable me start up something. I believe that even if I have to "squeeze the rock to get water", though slow, saving consistently would bring results. I'm considering a number of prospective ventures and if I am able to raise a certain investment capital, I know I will hit the jackpot and break it.

I have had interesting and challenging moments in my job as a supervisor of a school. The outbreak of the pandemic and my encounter with the CoRe

programme thought me a lot of lessons. I believe if I had this knowledge earlier, I would have made better decisions and avoided certain mistakes.

Key thoughts on pro-activity and going the extra mile in service and in my work even in challenging times were so much of a blessing during the programme. I have really been inspired through the CoRe programme and I know with diligence and a focused mind-set, God's plan for my life would be fulfilled in all my endeavors and I will succeed.

The platforms have really been instructive. At first, I was only building hopes on securing loans from the financial institutions but now I have realized that, loans are majorly secured to expand business rather than to start a new business. The need for continuous learning was one great lesson for me. Thus, I have started applying myself to some online professional courses which has been really helpful.

Knowledge is the most important thing for me now as compared to having certificates. I am really passionate about becoming self-employed and growing steadily in that regard. So help me God.

I express my sincerest gratitude to the CoRe programme for the huge impact it has made in my life.

Oben

140 **An inspiring encounter**

Samuel Amofo

The effects of the coronavirus pandemic affected Samuel's animal rearing business as he became so under-resourced that he could not buy ration for his farm animals.

My name is Samuel Amofo, from Asiwa in the Ashanti region of Ghana. I wish to express my gratitude to the organizers of the CoRe mentoring programme for such a wonderful initiative. I heard about the CoRe programme on radio and decided to follow it. I have been part of the Agric mentoring group which has had a major positive impact on my personal and work/business life.

Before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, I was into animal rearing, but encountered major challenges after the pandemic set in especially about the lack of resources to buy ration for the animals. Consequently, I decided to rely mainly on grass in feeding them and the outcome was that, about five of the animals died.

Through the CoRe Programme, I have learnt not to give up when faced with adversity. I feel very much empowered to navigate my way out of difficulties and excel in life. Again, I have drawn profound lessons on how to balance work and personal life and what it takes to be an effective negotiator.



Last but not the least, I have also been equipped to prepare a professional curriculum vitae and a well-structured business plan. I cannot say thank you enough to the great minds who came up with the idea of the CoRe Programme. It has indeed been an inspiring encounter to me. Thank you once again.

Samuel

141 Inspiring strides in entrepreneurship

Elvis Wireko

Through the CoRe programme, Elvis has guarded the momentum and inspiration to take some humble and bold strides in business. He shares his story with us.

My name is Elvis Wireko from Kumasi in the Ashanti region. I was doing my national service at Nzema in the Western region during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic but have completed my service now.

I have been privileged to participate in the CoRe Programme through an SMS I received from the National service outfit and I must say it has been one of the most important decisions I have made. Through the programme, I got inspired to set up two businesses that give me a relatively good and stable income. I now offer online registration assistance to prospective students, checking of results, including providing of printing and other clerical services.



I have also been inspired by the Programme to set up a barbering salon and I believe I am on the path to becoming a successful entrepreneur. Thanks to the CoRe Programme. I entreat others to participate in this rare lifetime opportunities such as this programme and you never know the difference it can make in your life.

Elvis

142 An inspiring knowledge hub

Martina Amina Karimu

Martina has really enhanced her knowledge by joining the CoRe programme. The various group discussions and sessions on talent discovery and development, resilience in times of challenges, reinventing one-self among many others have set her on a path of a new awakening and impart. She shares her story with us.

My name is Martina Amina Karimu, a general nurse and a beneficiary of the CoRe programme.

I heard about the CoRe programme via social media on my workplace WhatsApp group and was attracted to sign up to it since the focus was on COVID – 19 and its effects. Registration was easy, I was in the CoRe - healing group for e- counselling and nurses group for e-mentoring.

It was really a humbling experience being part of my group as we listened and shared ideas about how to overcome the struggles and challenges we face especially due to the pandemic. Partaking of the various sessions and group discussions via zoom and webinars were a good and exciting experience with the level of new knowledge that I gained.

I was exposed to a world outside my comfort zone. I learnt about how to see uncertainties as a part of life and be focused and resilient enough to overcome them.

Sessions on How to discover my talent, reinvent myself, staying relevant and building up a superb Curriculum Vitae in my field of work, how to broaden my scope of providing health to all other than just in the hospital, as well as developing and harnessing my talents to serve the world were really instructive. I also learnt a lot about love and relationships.

The programme has reinforced what I knew, thought me what I didn't know and given me more conviction to explore more opportunities in life. It was such an inspiring hub of knowledge and wisdom.

I intend to use what I learnt in my future endeavours in life as well as teach others given the opportunity at home, school, work and wherever I find myself.

I hope this awesome CoRe programme continues as it would help a lot more people if it does. Thanks to all the sponsors and facilitators of the programme

God bless you and Thank you.

Martina

143 I am getting my life back

Elliot Adi Tokoli

Elliot's livelihood as an electrician was adversely impacted by the ravaging corona virus pandemic. He's learnt to be resilient as he gets his life back. He shares his story.

My name is Elliot Adi Tokoli. I am an electrician and a YIEDIE beneficiary. The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic affected my livelihood. It was devastating and very challenging but I signed up to the CoRe mentoring programme and I must say that the programme was God sent.

I have learnt to be resilient and not allow myself to be a victim of circumstances. I have been inspired to know that there is still hope and I can bounce back if I keep my focus and think of possible alternatives to explore and still do my work in spite of the pandemic.

As it stands now, I'm getting my life back in a new normal way as we have been thought during the programme. I would describe my experience with CoRe as a wonderful experience. God bless this initiative.

Elliot



144 Encouraged To Persist

Ebenezer Kofi Mensah

Ebenezer is an electrician but currently facing some challenges. He hopes life will get better as he starts putting into practice the many lessons learnt from the CoRe Programme. He shares his story.

My name is Ebenezer Kofi Mensah. I am an electrician, and I was part of the Electricals group of the CoRe programme which I got to know about through Yiedie.

It has not been easy for me at all since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. First of all, I am not established yet in my electrical work and I am yet to have a shop. I relate with customers especially through phone calls and go out to do jobs whenever someone needs my services.

I have been managing this way until the effects of the pandemic made things worse especially during the restrictions on movement. My customer base was affected because of the fact that I do not have a shop either.

I have been encouraged through the CoRe programme to persist and not give up. I have learnt that there's always a way out even in the midst of Covid-19. I earnestly hope things would get better as



I put to practice the vital lessons learnt during the CoRe programme.

Ebenezer

145 Opportunities in the midst of inefficiencies

Richard Narh

Through research and keen observation, Richard had the awareness about some inefficiencies and gaps that some farmers grapple with in managing their farms.

This came to light during interactions at the CoRe programme. He quickly moved like an eagle to create a software programme that can potentially bridge the numerous gaps and challenges in farm management.

My name is Richard Narh. I started work as a Software Developer with a startup company in March 2020. It has been my intense desire to design a software programme that many would find useful. In the midst of this aspiration, I received an invite link to join the CoRe programme. I did and joined the Animal farming group. During interactions in my group I realized that members in my group grappled with many bottle-necks in their farms.

Some of the challenges include the high cost of feed for poultry birds whereas preparing one's own feed was much cheaper with the right formula, effective



management of poultry birds in terms of tracking birds by batches was also a challenge.

I went further with a research and found out bookkeeping was a major problem with most poultry farmers. I reckoned that upgrading their operations by putting their farm on an online platform can also boost their sales so I decided to create a software programme to solve these problems.

Having gained a lot of knowledge and inspiration through the many sessions of the CoRe programme especially sessions on talent development, I put the knowledge to work and to the glory of God I designed a software by name Khofarm; a farm management software, with different features to help farmers.

Some of its features are:

- Sales/Invoice (Income) processing
- Bills/Expenses processing
- Animal feed setup and configuration (Setting up a custom feed formulation chart for a poultry farm)
- Farm production (Effective management of batches of birds)
- Updates on reports and farmer to farmer business module is ongoing.
- Emailing and SMS using the platform will also be completed soon.

The programme audios helped me a lot and my life has been impacted greatly. I've gleaned much information about planning, consistency, putting talent to use, discipline and good attitude towards completing a task. This and many more skills acquired from the programme made it possible for me to execute this project.

I intend upgrading the software from time to time whenever necessary.

Many thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme.

Richard

146 Equipped and inspired to become an achiever

Evans Frimpong Kwabi

Evans' film making and event coverage business came to a standstill due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Coming into contact with the CoRe programme has enabled him to become resilient and hopeful of a brighter future due to the many insightful and inspiring sessions of the programme. He shares his story.

My name is Evans Frimpong Kwabi. I live at Abeka in the Greater Accra Region. I am a product of Ghallywood Academy of Film making and National film and television institute (NAFTI) respectively.

I am a professional film maker (Audio Visual Editor). I do a lot of freelance film making especially with event filming and editing and my livelihood depends mostly on that. Business was however slow at the beginning of the year 2020 but I was managing to survive.



The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic further worsened matters with my business due to the many restrictions on movement and social programmes including wedding events, birthday parties, funerals, church services, conferences etc.

Thankfully, my mentor Sarah Woldeamanuel Getahun introduced the CoRe programme to me and this has helped to improve my life in many diverse ways.

Firstly, I've been empowered about relationships; how to simply identify healthy and non-healthy relationships, how not to follow only my heart in relationships but use my mind as well. I have also learnt about how to be resilient in the face of challenges and come out victorious.

Skills like proper time management, effective use of social media and digitization all came in handy with the sessions. Lastly, the CoRe programme has taught me how to do business the new normal way which would help me in my daily business activities and how to reinvent and rebrand myself in this era of COVID-19 and bounce back.

I would like to appreciate my E-Counselor, Ama Obeng-Berkyaw. Her sessions in the CoRe happy group were so enlightening.

I say Ayeekeo. God bless the entire management team of CoRe, especially Mr. and Mrs. Albert Ocran for this programme. I am poised to be the self-reliant youth the future awaits. From all the topics treated, I believe that my future is already a brighter one. I intend not to keep what I have learnt from the programme to myself but rather reach out to family and friends to educate them as well.

God bless the organizers of this wonderful programme.

Evans

147 My talents have been discovered

Shamun Abdul-Samed

Shamun was greatly inspired by sessions on talent development. He has since been able to discover his talents and is happy to be putting them to good use. Additionally, he has gleaned a lot from sessions on resilience and how to respond to change. His relationship and networking skills have also been enhanced. He shares his story.

My name is Shamun Abdul-Samed, with Yiedie Youth Association at Takoradi. The CoRe programme has been tremendously successful in Building Resilience, Creating Health Awareness, Wellness and Safety insights, Developing Workplace Skills as well as preparing beneficiaries to be ready for the job market.

Personally, I have been able to discover my main talent and a supportive talent and I'm proud to say that I am utilizing them. Acquiring and introducing innovative ideas make us unique in whatever we do and the need to discover our talent and utilise it, is our great gift to God, these and many other thoughts from the programme has really given me a lot of new and refreshing perspectives about life.



In addition to that, I have gained the understanding that challenges form part of life. They make life interesting and overcoming them makes life meaningful. If we set our mind on a challenge-free life, it would be hard for us to live up to our goals. Also, by understanding that change is inevitable, we will be ready to adopt, adjust and cope with situations and changes that occur in our lives.

I have been equipped to take good care of my physical, mental and emotional well-being. My relationships and networks are also crucial because, relationships and networks cushion us in difficult times in life and help us to achieve our goals. There is therefore the need to build relationships that would propel us to achieve our vision and our aspirations in life.

Through the Core Programme, I have been able to acknowledge my feelings, do what I love and connect with people with similar interest by creating a strong social support system with people around me, those who love, care and recognize my feelings to help me overcome obstacles in life.

Also, I have reinvented myself by becoming a better time manager and avoiding procrastination as well as changing my spending habit and staying away from unprofitable things. I have become more focused than before. Thanks to the Core Programme.

May God almighty richly bless you.

Shamun

I am now an inventor

Promise Dzidedi Fiadzigbey

Promise was inspired to pick up his dream of becoming an inventor after partaking in the CoRe Mentoring programme. He has since been able to successfully develop an incubator for hatching eggs and a gadget regulator, also known as a stabilizer. He shares his story.

My name is Promise Dzidedi Fiadzigbey, I joined the CoRe programme as a Yiedie beneficiary. One of the very prominent benefits of this programme to me is that it has helped me discover my talent and come out with my own inventions.

I first conceptualized this project (an emergency call system) in 2017/18 but it was stalled because I lacked the needed resources and was not prepared to run at a loss. I had a lot of discouraging comments from close friends and associates but the narrative has been different ever since I encountered the CoRe Programme.

I have successfully developed an incubator for hatching eggs and a gadget regulator (also known as a stabilizer). I listened to Rev. Albert Ocran's audio on Talent Discovery and one other on staying focused, and that was enough to propel me to do what I am currently engaged in.



I must say that much work and thorough research has been conducted leading to the development of those inventions, especially the egg incubator – to help farmers in my locality. The programme has also helped me build strategic alliances, where I have partnered with a colleague from the Accra Technical University in working on these inventions even through virtual platforms. Obviously, it has been a tough journey.

Glory be to God and a big Thank You to the promoters of the programme especially Rev. & Mrs. Albert Ocran and Mr. Eric Otchere who was very supportive when it came to putting my project together.

Promise

149 CoRe lifted my spirits

Josephine Amakye

Josephine sees this phase of the CoRe programme as a major blessing. She mentions six personality traits and how one's personality must be a key consideration in the choice of career, knowledge she had not averted her mind to before joining the programme.

My name is Josephine Amakye. I am a Student and I live at Ashaiman in the greater Accra region. I got introduced to the CoRe programme through my sister. I joined the programme at a time when schools were suddenly closed and I had to stay home.

It was quite a challenge but thanks to God, the CoRe programme kept me busy while at home and I never wasted my time. I believe I've become more enlightened by the numerous learning sessions I went through. My social skills have improved and I learnt how to interact more with others. I gleaned a lot of information on how to design a career path and be successful.

Another session that was so revealing was about savings and investments. I realized through that lesson which was facilitated by Seth that I didn't have to wait to get a huge sum of money before I start saving and investing. I can save little amounts and



be consistent and regular with it and with time it will grow. This and many other lessons were so helpful to me having participated in the programme.

Indeed, the first face of the CoRe e-mentoring program has been such a blessing. All I ever knew was my dreams and how to achieve it but due to this programme, I have come to know about the six personality traits and how one's personality trait must be a key consideration factor in choosing which career path to pursue.

I intend to help younger ones to know themselves well and not opt for any career due to parent's advice or peer influence but rather choose careers based on their personality traits, gifts and talents to enable them to excel.

Josephine

150 I am a mason and I am inspired

Amos Anzoli

Having been inspired as an artisan, Amos hopes to hone his skills with more professionalism to enable him to become more competitive and productive in his work as a mason.

I am Amos Anzoli, a mason by profession, from Wa in the Upper West region of Ghana.

I have learned how to relate with my clients professionally and cultivate a very cordial relationship with them. This has started helping me in my work.

The teachings made a huge positive impact and impression on me. I very much hope to apply them to my personal life and profession as a mason. I am inspired and more confident as an individual and as a mason than before because I realized I could really do well in my profession if I put to use the valuable lessons acquired through the programme.

Thanks to the organizers.

Amos



My banking career has been given a boost

Selorm Adade

Selorm read banking in school and thus joined the banking and finance group of the CoRe Programme, which has given him a broader view and wider perspectives about banking. His career has just been given a boost. He shares his experience.

My name is Selorm Adade from Ashaiman in the greater Accra region. I was doing my national service at Ada in the West District Assembly when I received an SMS about the CoRe programme. Having done banking in school, I chose to join the banking and finance, consulting, investment banking and the corporate finance groups.

I would describe my experience as very eye opening, inspirational and instructive. The mentors were simply down to earth and I've gained another dimension of insight into the banking sector.

I also learnt about how to start one's career path and have a clear detailed plan on where I want to be in any chosen career path and how to work towards



it. How to have a good work- life balance, being professional in my career pursuit and adhering to industry principles were also very crucial points for me which I would apply to my life and career.

I believe with time and as I consistently and steadily apply these lessons, I will reach the pinnacle of success.

Selorm

I am more confident about my chosen career

Larry Yarmoah Antwi

Larry is a media person specialising in sports. Apart from being a production team member, the CoRe Programme has created in him the desire to aspire higher in his chosen career and achieve greater heights.

Larry Yarmoah Antwi is my name, from Pobiman at Accra, on the Nsawam road. I am a media person and a production team member for that matter. I came across an Ad on social media particularly on Owureku's facebook page about the CoRe Programme and signed up to the Sports Journalism Group.

Being part of that group gave me a lot more exposure about the intricacies of my work, which has helped me understand and improve upon my football analysis and data collection skills via the use of the internet. I learnt a lot about how to take my career to



the next level in sports journalism and I believe the new insights I have will serve as a springboard to the next stage.

Lessons on savings and investments has also been so crucial to me because it's a subject matter that should concern everyone. I hope to apply all this lessons to my personal life and career and become an achiever in my chosen career field, thanks to the CoRe mentoring programme.

Larry

Events planning is my passion

Evans Kofi Yeboah

With his interest in events planning and management having been invigorated, Evans is ready to deploy his new skills to initiate his own events and support other events while in the university.

I am Evans Kofi Yeboah, from Ablekuma at Accra and a student at the University of Ghana. I came across an ad on social media about the CoRe programme and decided to sign up. I joined the events planning and organizing group because it's an area I'm passionate about. I also benefitted from the project management and personal executive assistance groups.

There was so much exposition on how to plan and have a successful event. Key thoughts such as having clear objectives for the event in question, preparation of the event budget, how to promote the event to attract the specified audience, recruitment of events support staff and planning specific time schedules on various aspects of an event were indeed great lessons to me. In fact time and space won't permit me to share all that I learnt.

I am currently planning an event to roll out next year and applying the many teachings gleaned from.



Apart from that, I'm part of a volunteering group on campus and my new knowledge in events planning will come in handy.

During the many sessions, contributions from other participants and sample tasks on event planning gave me clues on how to come up with an event that could give my business or any business the right exposure to customers and permeate the market.

I also discovered the vast opportunity in pursuing careers in Event Planning and Organising, as our social life is characterized with many events. Using the event check list would get me prepared for these events and learn new ideas in addition.

Evans

154 **My work-life balance has improved**

Ebenezer Ackon Mensah

Ebenezer has been equipped with skills to create an effective balance between his work and his personal life in addition to learning how to communicate more effectively.

Ebenezer Ackon Mensah is my name, from Fetteh Kakraba in Gomoa East in the Central region. I got to know about the CoRe mentoring programme via a text message I received.

I work with the District Assembly and have been greatly impacted through the CoRe programme with respect to my work-life balance, how to be a great team member and an effective communicator.

One aspect that was also very interesting was in the area of harnessing social media to do business as well as other strategies to help grow one's business.

I am really inspired. Lessons on resilience taught me how to respond in times of difficulties and overcome whatever challenges that come my way.

The various sessions have had a positive impact on me personally, and in my career and business.



The lessons on how to manage workload and pressure, the need to have good relationships and make good use of networks were also very insightful.

I've already started implementing the new knowledge to myself, career and business and have decided to make continuous learning a part of me as I got to know that it is the key for continual progress and success in life.

I'm grateful to the CoRe programme.

Ebenezer

CoRe got me out of my shell

Beatrice

Thanks to the CoRe Programme, Beatrice has learnt to overcome her weakness with human relations and gleaned some insights into other areas.

First of all, I am grateful for this opportunity and platform to share my story on how I have been impacted by this programme.

Before joining the CoRe Programme, I had difficulty relating with people. I was very introverted and could not make friends easily. This was really affecting me as people tagged me as an anti-social person.

The episodes on networking and negotiation really struck me because I am very introverted and seen as an anti-social person by most people. I previously would not have kept more than ten (10) friends, but the CoRe Programme has helped me to come out of my shell and I have worked on my weakness.

Again, I happened to have been engaged in a negotiation activity when the episode on negotiation was being tackled, I quickly applied the principles and lessons; and I ended up with a wonderful deal for myself.

I am thankful to everyone behind this important initiative.

Beatrice

156 **Courage to be resilient**

Prince Kojo Asiedu

Prince has learnt the courage to be resilient in times of difficulty. Having completed his national service, lessons such as writing of curriculum vitae and preparing for job interview have been helpful as he explores the job market.

My name is Prince Kojo Asiedu. I reside at Dodowa in the Greater Accra region. I am a national service personnel but completed my service recently. I was with the Corporate finance group of the CoRe programme which I got to know about through the online platform of the national service secretariat.

I have learnt how to write curriculum vitae and prepare for an interview and how to achieve success in my career pursuits, lessons which I've already started putting to good use.

The programme has given me the courage to be resilient in times of challenges by understanding that challenges are bound to occur, but the most important thing is how I choose to respond to the challenges.

I intend to apply the knowledge acquired in every endeavor of my life.

Prince



Tales from Mentors, Counsellors & CoRe Team

I have made a life-long commitment through CoRe

Roland Kwame Akafia (Corporate Banking Mentor)

Roland has been inspired by CoRe to dedicate sometime every month to providing guidance and mentorship to young people with the help of technology. He shares his story of how the programme changed his own perspectives.

My name is Roland Kwame Akafia. I am a banker by profession based in Accra.

I love supporting young people, and my work in the bank is directly involved in an incubator programme that provided mentoring and support to business startups. I recognized the fit immediately I got the invitation to serve as a mentor on the CoRe Programme. I was thrilled to accept to mentor the banking group.



By mentoring others, my mind has been opened up to new aspects of my field. I have also been refreshed on subjects I was already familiar with. This was due to the preparations I was required to put in before every mentoring session. Perhaps, the most ironic and fulfilling part of the engagement was that I was also privileged to learn from the experiences of the mentees.

I have been inspired to dedicate a portion of my time every month to help young people to develop themselves. I reckon that with technology, this is even more feasible than before. I am really willing to contribute in this regard.

I hope that my participation has been able to impact positively on the lives of at least one mentee. I'm glad to have been part of this great CoRe Programme.

Roland

158 **Mentoring others has honed my speaking skills**

Anthony Andoh (Tourism Mentor)

Anthony talks of how the CoRe Programme challenged him to study and research more in addition to helping him acquire the new skill of virtual public speaking. He shares his story.

I am Anthony Andoh and I am into Tourism. I had the opportunity to mentor the Tourism Mentoring Group under the CoRe Programme.

From the very start of the mentoring programme I thought it was going to be a walk in the park, but with time I began to rethink the responsibility that had been bestowed on me as a mentor.

The protégés' engagement and the various perspectives they brought to bear during the sessions increased my deep-seated hunger to search for more detailed knowledge coupled with creative



intelligence and practical examples to deepen their understanding.

The programme has certainly widened and deepened my understanding of the hospitality and tourism industry, especially with regards to how the rules of the game have changed abruptly since the inception of COVID-19.

Key areas like operations, managerial leadership and industry best practices have been modified due to COVID-19, and this, in a way, has also shifted my knowledge and understanding of the industry.

A practical example is, due to COVID-19, tableware and crockery are no longer laid on tables before customers arrive. Instead, they are nicely and neatly packaged, sealed and only placed on tables which have guests seated and ready to dine.

Through the programme, my skills and confidence in virtual public speaking have been tremendously boosted. The skills needed are not the same as having a physical audience in a space. It is natural to think that virtual speaking should be easy but it's a whole different ball game. I have made some strides in this area and it has been so fulfilling.

I must say that although COVID-19 has had a negative impact on our lives and livelihoods, it also led to significant leaps in our lives. Many talents, dreams, creative abilities, intelligence and crafts have been unearthed in this extraordinary era.

Thank you CoRe.

Anthony

My mentees enjoyed the practical tour

**Awurabena Okrah
(Fashion & Textiles
Mentor)**

Mentoring has given Awurabena nostalgic feelings as she casts her mind back to her days as a professional teacher. She enjoyed the entire experience and gave her mentees extra value with an organized visit to her facilities at Winglow.

My name Awurabena Okrah, CEO of Winglow Clothes, a leading Fashion and Textiles company in the country. I volunteered to mentor the Fashion and Textiles Group and what a time I have had. The CoRe programme has really been beneficial to both me, as a mentor, and to the mentees. The programme really took me down memory lane when I was teaching as a profession. Counselling and mentoring others is akin to teaching and it's been a great opportunity for me.



I took researching and preparation for mentoring sessions seriously and brought content down to the level of mentees. I found out that simplifying my presentations by keeping them concise and succinct made it very easy for mentees to understand and flow with.

Using the WhatsApp platform as one of the main mentoring mediums turned out to be very convenient. Not only did it enable texting, we also deployed audios and, even occasionally, emojis to express our feelings. Thus, it catered for everyone. It offered mentees the opportunity to always go back to review the sessions they missed.

My recommendation would be for the programme to continue with coaching sessions for smaller groups. This should allow for walking them through what they have learnt in a more practical way as well as targeting those committed to the programme.

My mentees were very enthusiastic when I suggested an industry tour of the Winglow facility. We therefore planned a one-day training visit at the end of the programme to enable them learn from a well-run fashion company showcasing the right equipment, tools and innovative technologies as well as good business practices.

We eventually got to arrange the visit after the programme had ended. That was by far the crowning moment for them. Seeing all the principles we had spoken about being practiced reinforced the lessons we had shared.

CoRe is a very good programme and I highly recommend that it follows through with coaching the mentees.

Awurabena

At the request of Springboard, Madam Awurabena Okrah is one of a number of CoRe mentors who has elected to continue supporting her mentees beyond the end of the CoRe Programme. A practical learning tour of her Winglow Clothes factory came off on Friday 29th January 2021. Here are a few of the pictures:



160 CoRe was a rare opportunity to share my experiences

**Mark Ato Ghansah
(Entrepreneurship
Mentor)**

Mark cherishes the experience of having to share his experiences with others to enable them receive insight and guidance in the pursuit of their own aspirations in life. He shares his story.

My name is Mark Ato Ghansah, an entrepreneur.

The CoRe Programme has helped me to research and share my experiences on how I started my business, its current stage and the way forward with mentees. I believe these sessions have empowered mentees to enable them persist in their ventures and become successful entrepreneurs.



Through the programme, I have personally been exposed to how I can communicate effectively and guide young people to accomplish their goals in business. It's been a great learning experience for me.

It is my fervent hope that through the CoRe programme, more young entrepreneurs will be raised so that more businesses can be built to create more sustainable direct and indirect employment for our generation and generations unborn.

Mark

I will keep supporting my mentees beyond CoRe

**Dr. Myles Christian Hagan
(Investment Group Mentor)**

Dr. Hagan enjoyed the experience of researching into the various topics and preparing presentations for his mentees. The phenomenal feedback from his mentees has proved to be a great source of motivation for him to continue mentoring them beyond the tenure of the CoRe Programme.

My name is Dr. Myles Christian Hagan. I am responsible for digital engagement as Head of Channels in a leading bank in Ghana. I served as Investment Group Mentor on the CoRe Programme.

I have had a good time researching into the various topics and preparing PowerPoint presentations to share with my mentees. The use of voice notes to engage mentees proved to be very effective and useful. Deploying the voice notes was even more exciting for me because there were times when I



recorded my voice notes while on the move.

The flexibility of the CoRe programme design and the smooth flow of the execution has been great. I have really enjoyed the feedback and side chats from the mentees. Many of the mentees have engaged me for additional support and we have shared ideas, explored new opportunities and are really using technology to share and motivate ourselves.

Ultimately this has been very exciting, and we have all had a very good experience and we will keep supporting these young people beyond the tenure of the CoRe Programme.

Thank you.

Myles

162 I was both a mentor and mentee

**Isaac Kofi Arthur
(Acting Mentor)**

Kofi served both as a mentor for the acting group and a mentee for the tourism group. He is exhilarated about the new stuff he has learnt about tourism, which is his other passion.

My name is Isaac Kofi Arthur. I am a writer, author and actor. I was privileged to serve as mentor for the Acting Group on the CoRe Programme.

The programme gave me the opportunity to teach young people who want to learn more about acting. The need to research to deliver relevant content to my audience further broadened my scope and understanding in my field. It felt very fulfilling to be able to support the professional growth of young people. This is CoRe mentoring is a really good initiative and I encourage the organizers to sustain it.

Interestingly, I also took advantage of the opportunity to join the Tourism Mentoring Group, this time as a mentee. It was surreal to sit on the other side and note what they were doing differently



and how I could incorporate those ideas into my own group.

I want to congratulate the tourism mentor, Anthony Andoh for the good work he did by providing educative and useful contents for the weekly sessions. I want to use this opportunity to encourage him to keep it up. I really love tourism and his sessions made it even more attractive to me.

Such a phenomenal programme CoRe has been.

Isaac

163 **A humbling experience**

Benjamin Nii Ayai Cobblah (Computer Science Mentor)

Benjamin reckoned from the experience of providing mentorship that people really need such assistance and he's willing to avail himself for subsequent programmes of this nature. He tells us why:

My name is Benjamin Nii Ayai Cobblah, an IT professional. I got involved in mentoring the Computer Science Group and really enjoyed it. My direct benefit from the CoRe programme had to do with the interactions with the mentees. Questions posed and interactions during sessions made me understand how truly blessed I am and I will readily avail myself for such engagements going forward.

Some of my key areas of personal learning and self-improvement include typing fast during sessions and combining all types of media (text, voice, pictures, video). I always had to decide on one based on which would be easily accessible, would not require too much bandwidth from mentees and also provide a rich delivery experience.

I think the platform used, WhatsApp, is good but it has a few limitations. Some mentees may read the submissions from the mentor and may partially



understand what is being shared. However, feedback may sometimes be hindered. But on the whole, it has been an insightful knowledge sharing and mentorship experience.

Thank you.

Benjamin

164 It's been a great eye opener

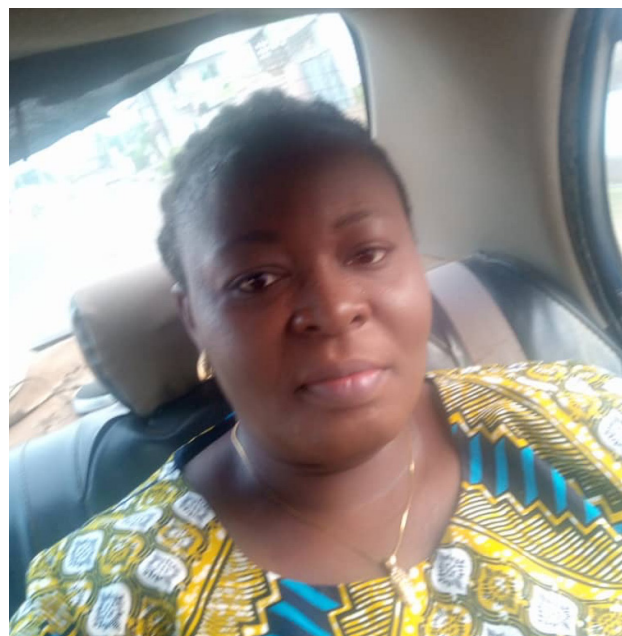
Eunice Armah-Nunoo (Nursing Mentor)

Eunice asserts that her role as mentor gave her the opportunity to share her knowledge and experience in her profession as well as build her own capacity for future engagements. She shares her experience.

My name is Eunice Naa Koshie Armah, a nurse by profession and a Nursing Group Mentor for the CoRe Programme. The mentoring programme allowed me to evaluate my principles and values based on what I shared with the mentees.

Researching into various topics, served as both a revision and an add-on to my existing knowledge. I found the meetings via WhatsApp to be quite interesting and flexible and I must admit it was something I never thought was possible.

I think the whole concept of CoRe is an eye opener and very informative. I have benefitted from some of the recorded audios, which are guiding my practice. It has been a great learning experience.



The focus of the programme facilitators on maintaining discipline and decency on the various platforms is exceptional.

I am grateful for being part of this great vision as it has offered me the opportunity to building my own capacity for future engagements.

Eunice

165 Learning via social media has been a revelation

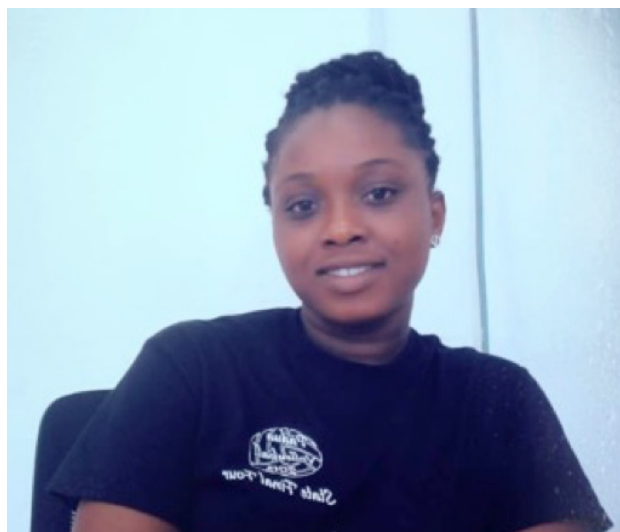
Sandra Swatson-Oppong (Crop Production Mentor)

Sandra enjoyed the learning experience with the mentees as she realized she had a lot more within her to give out and a lot more to learn. Her knowledge has increased as a result of research she was involved in during the programme. She shares her story.

My name is Sandra Swatson-Oppong. I am into Crop production and I mentored the Crop Production Group.

Meeting young people who have an interest in Agriculture was a good motivation for me as a young farmer. I gained more knowledge as a result of doing research for the sessions. It made me appreciate the role of social media in knowledge transfer especially in this period of COVID-19. It presented me with the opportunity to share my knowledge with people and this made me realize that I have more to give and more to learn as well.

The social media platforms that were harnessed for the programme, including Whatsapp, were



user-friendly and aided communication flow between myself and the mentees. However, despite their effectiveness it was difficult to control the conversation because you couldn't determine when a mentee decided to ask a question during the session so if care was not taken, some peoples' questions and needs, could be lost in the chats and not addressed.

Some mentees did not seem to understand the concept of mentorship. In future projects mentees should be coached on the concept and thoroughly interviewed before they are enrolled onto the programme. Additionally, the number of persons assigned to each mentor in future programmes should be reduced to the barest minimum so that the mentor can fully address the needs of the mentees.

Thank you.

Sandra

166 It's been an enriching and exciting experience

Fareda Abdulai (Interior Décor Mentor)

Fareda mentions that her interest in reading and research has been boosted through participation in the programme. She really enjoyed the interactions with the mentees.

My name is Fareda Abdulai, an Interior Decorator and mentor of the Interior Décor group.

I am so glad I had the opportunity to be part of the CoRe Programme because I have really enjoyed the experience and learnt a lot in the process. My reading and research skills have also been sharpened as I realize that I now read and research more than I did previously due to my role as mentor.

Interacting with my mentees and giving out what I know was very fulfilling. The use of WhatsApp was helpful as well.



A lot of young people have benefitted from the programme and I encourage the initiative to continue. I am willing anytime to continue to share my knowledge and experience.

Fareda

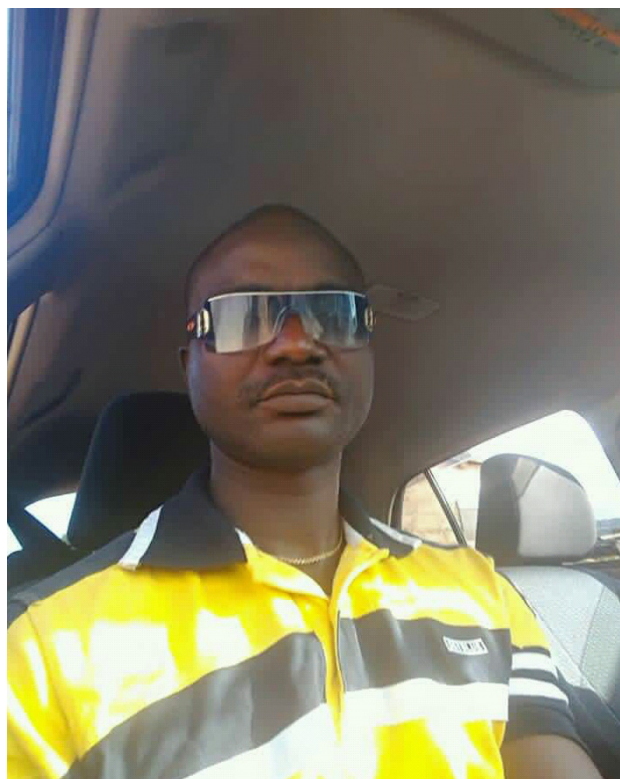
I was compelled to stay abreast

**Richmond Amankwah
(Computer Engineering
Mentor)**

The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic affected Richmond's work as a teacher but the opportunity to mentor others enabled him to read and research more during the period which has boosted his own knowledge.

I am Richmond Amankwah, an IT professional and a teacher. I am so delighted to have been introduced to be a part of this CoRe initiative. My role as teacher in the private sector took a hit. The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic left persons like me idle and without a regular flow of income.

The platform to mentor others was an awesome opportunity and great learning experience that came my way. The process of researching into topics and staying abreast with current developments in my field propelled me to be the best – especially in the discharge of my duties as a mentor. The quality of interaction on the virtual platform was another memorable experience to talk about.



Dealing with diverse stakeholders virtually was a very interesting and challenging task which offered me the opportunity to add to my knowledge bank. One of the few challenges I faced was with regards to getting many of my constituents on the Engineering Platform to consistently participate in the weekly sessions.

In spite of this, I am still grateful to all of them as well as the organizers of this programme for making it a success. On the whole, it has been great and impactful.

Richmond

A new discovery of learning

Mawulom Hagan Awume (Agribusiness Mentor)

Mawulom has mainly been involved in Agribusiness and general agriculture. However, the CoRe mentoring programme offered her an opportunity to get to know more about animal rearing because some of her mentees were involved in that. She shares her enriching experience

My name is Mawulom Hagan. I mentored the Agribusiness group. Being part of this e-mentoring programme has really benefited me in terms of having to read wide and get some practical knowledge in the field of small animal rearing.

Even though my field is agribusiness and general agriculture, I discovered that most of the mentees in my group were into rearing small animals like poultry, rabbits and the like. In view of this, I had to study copiously and gain practical knowledge into the area of their occupation.

Venturing into these unfamiliar areas has been a major benefit to me and have widened my scope in agribusiness.

Additionally, I took advantage to participate in other aspects of the CoRe Programme that I found very



beneficial and insightful, particularly the LEAD Conferences. I've gleaned numerous nuggets from there to help in my personal life and career.

I must say that this is my first experience of being a mentor on an e-platform. Initially, I had my own reservations regarding how things would turn out; but going through the weekly sessions and engagements brought me to the conclusion that e-mentoring is effective and makes room for real time responses and feedback.

There were a few times where the following on the virtual platform was not high as I had expected, but, generally, the chosen medium of delivery was very effective. I wish to commend the whole team and those who put in hidden and background efforts to ensure that this worked. Their efforts have been worth it. I am also grateful for the opportunity to have been part of this as well.

Mawulom

A new experience in PowerPoint presentations

Ebenezer Kwesi Awusi (Medical Laboratory Science Mentor)

Ebenezer's scope of knowledge as a Medical Laboratory Scientist has expanded. He has been opened to more opportunities in his profession and his leadership skills have gained a boost through the experience of mentoring others.

My name is Ebenezer Kwesi Awusi, a Medical Laboratory Scientist. I was a mentor of the Medical Laboratory Science Group.

The benefits obtained from this CoRe Programme have been enormous. I am so grateful to have been part of this great initiative. It has really paved the way for me to learn more about my profession and enlightened me more on the various professional opportunities I can grab.



My research techniques have been sharpened and my experience as a mentor has further enhanced my leadership skills. I have significantly improved on how to organize information to make it simple, presentable and understandable with PowerPoint slides. The various topics treated have really enlightened the mentees.

I have realized that most of the mentees were able to pick some information that was so new to them, especially as regards the specialization programme in medical laboratory science.

I will suggest that mentees are examined before bringing them on board for subsequent programmes. This would help to get committed individuals whose seriousness will go a long way to motivate other members in the group to partake with all seriousness.

I will also suggest for future programmes that mentors are briefed fully about the profiles of the mentees, including their educational background and qualifications, among others. This will further enhance and reposition the mentors' approach in providing mentorship. Kudos to the team behind this initiative. It's been really inspiring.

Ebenezer

170 An experience I never could have imagined

John Benjamin Eshun (Education Mentor)

Benjamin sees the opportunity of serving as a mentor in his chosen field as an eye opening one. His tight schedules posed a challenge but he pulled through.

My name is John Benjamin Eshun, an Educationist. Becoming a mentor of the Education Group was an eye opener for me. I had to always spend some time to prepare and this was sometimes tough due to my busy schedules.

I have enjoyed the one-on-one interactions with some of the mentees who contacted me. I have thus been enlightened by the sort of things some of them are engaged in and have shared personal lessons, which they appreciated.

The opportunity to reach out to over 200 young people and share experiences and knowledge in



my profession on WhatsApp was not something I thought would be possible. But it is a reality now. The depth and knowledge some of the mentees possess was amazing. The few times I gave the platform to some of them was really exciting as they shared great lessons on Personal Branding and Vision Board Creation.

Even when it looks like mentees are not responding on the page, they are actually reading. This has been a great opportunity to reach out to these mentees. I would wish there was another opportunity to do in-person sessions at least once a month.

The CoRe Programme has been a great and timely initiative. Thank you.

John

An opportunity to give back to society

Leticia Baidoo
(Education Mentor)

It has been a fulfilling experience for Leticia as she realized through feedback from her mentees that she was on course in her efforts to guide them. She sees the opportunity as a way of giving back to society what God has deposited in her through her profession.

My name is Leticia Baidoo, an Education Group Mentor

I am trapped in a learning stage which gives me an intense desire to be on the lookout for new information on scheduled topics. The programme has been a great opportunity to become an asset or positive influence to the younger generation and give back to society.

It has been really fulfilling as feedback from mentees indicated that they really benefitted from the learning sessions. It has really been a fruitful use of my time.

The social media platforms including WhatsApp have really come to stay and indeed it was really helpful in



transmitting information to mentees.

I would recommend smaller groups of mentees per mentor to further enhance the effectiveness of the programme. I also recommend organizers to consider mentors building long term ethical and professional relationship with mentees.

The programme should also focus on building well-rounded individuals with respect to physical well-being, educational or personal development, financial, community and political well-being, among others.

The entire CoRe Programme is really an asset, given the excellent organizational set up, coupled with the solid team and brand. It is transforming and impacting society and should be sustained. I am really impressed.

Leticia

172 Many more young people need this

Rose Aduful (Nursing Mentor)

Rose reckons that her own life and career path have been impacted immensely through her mentorship role. She has gained additional insights to improve her own job. She would like to see CoRe as an annual intervention to benefit more young people.

My name is Rose Aduful. I am a nurse by profession and a mentor of the Nursing Group.

Before I met my mentees, I would always conduct comprehensive research from credible authorities and this has helped me to learn a lot of new concepts and ideas that would not only improve my professional path but my life as a whole.

CoRe has given me new dimensions to challenge my career. I have also gained new insights that would improve and promote my job.

The programme has been an inspiring opportunity to raise excellent professional nurses for Mother Ghana.



The use of WhatsApp in the mentoring process was effective because it's one of the easiest means of communication and very economical to use.

CoRe is a great initiative and I think it should be an annual programme to develop the lives of some more youth across the nation because I realize from the feedback that a lot more out there need this to grow in their personal life and careers.

Rose

An interesting discovery

**Michael Mensah Akornor
(Business Development
Mentor)**

Michael has enhanced his ability to research and organize information to make it more presentable and beneficial to others. In addition to this, he is fascinated by the discovery that he has a lot within him that can help propel others on their own path of success.

My name is Michael Mensah Akornor, an Accountant by profession and a mentor of the Business Development Group.

The CoRe Programme has enriched my research skills and my ability to harness information and generally transfer skills. I have discovered myself as a bank of knowledge and expertise because of how impactful and transformational the sessions have been with the mentees.

The WhatsApp platform that served as one of the mediums has indeed proven to be a useful tool for transforming lives and not just one for entertainment.

Michael



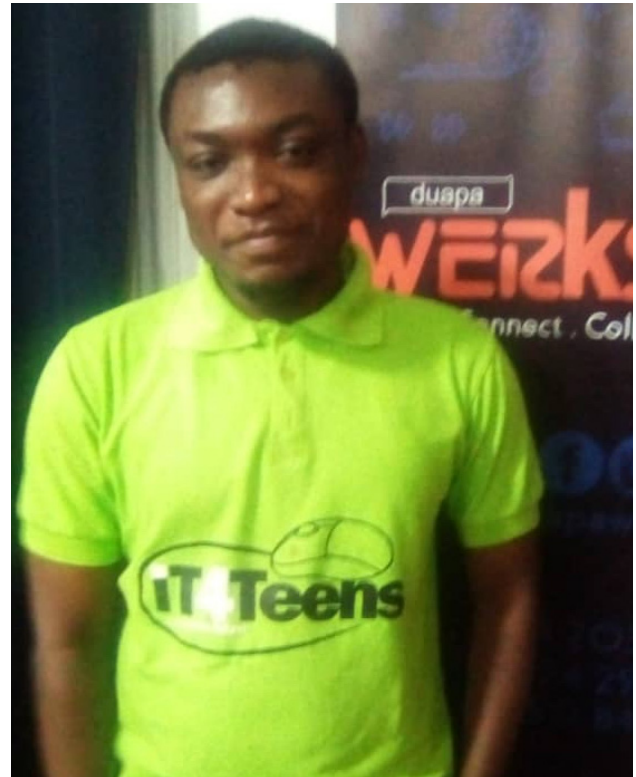
An experience with research

Claude Obiri Amadu (Software and Apps Development Mentor)

Researching and interacting with mentees has been a phenomenal and fulfilling experience for Claude. He tells us why.

My name is Claude Obiri Amadu. I am into Software and App development. I served as the Software and Apps Development Group Mentor on CoRe. It was an enriching experience of more learning for me through research on diverse topics. Interactions with mentees and getting to know their interests were also revealing.

Although the WhatsApp platform used as medium of information transmission was good, it wasn't too effective for some aspects of my focus area, particularly Software Development. On the whole, I



believe CoRe has been a great initiative, thanks to the organizers.

Claude

175 **My skills have been enhanced**

**Christopher Osei Bonsu
(Entrepreneurship
Mentor)**

Christopher had a rare experience of having many skills he possessed sharpened through the performance of his role as a mentor.

My name is Christopher Osei Bonsu, an entrepreneur and an Entrepreneurship Group Mentor of the CoRe Programme. I had the opportunity to improve upon myself and upon some skills in particular which includes interpersonal, research, problem solving and my communication skills.

The programme has indeed benefitted the mentees as the virtual platforms including WhatsApp were easily accessible to them and served well in training them.

One key learning for me was the art of using brainstorming as a tool for interaction and mentoring sessions.



I applaud the teamwork and effective coordination of the programme which led to maximum success. Kudos to the CoRe team.

Christopher

176 Social media is a great learning tool

Elorm Ahiagbenyo (Makeup Artist Mentor)

Elorm is impressed by the effectiveness of social media as an educational tool and a medium for knowledge transfer.

My name is Elorm Ahiagbenyo, a make-up artist and Makeup Artist Group Mentor of the CoRe Programme.

This was my first experience in mentoring young people under such a structured arrangement. I learnt a lot from researching on the topics provided in the curriculum in order to teach my mentees. WhatsApp was effective in impacting young people since it seemed to be the most easily accessible platform for them.

I would end by saying that, generally, the CoRe programme is a great and impactful initiative and I encourage organizers to keep it going.

Elorm



177 CoRe made me walk the talk

Anita Griffiths Buaku (Investment Banking Mentor)

Anita has been inspired and challenged to be a better role model to others as she conscientiously practices the tenets of her profession as a banker.

My name is Anita Griffiths Buaku, a banker and Investment Banking Group Mentor of the CoRe Programme.

The programme empowered me to be a good example to my mentees - putting me in check to live what I teach and to walk the talk. I have enriched my knowledge through research and my engagement with mentees.

Young people need people to talk to, to share ideas with and to look up to as they are always enthused to hear your story and experiences.



I hope for an opportunity to one day meet my mentees in person for discussions, feedback, socialization and to continue touching lives.

Anita

I have been stretched to do more

**Naomi Osei-Asemani
(Education
Administration Mentor)**

The ability to deliver presentations virtually without a physical presence and active participation of an audience was an interesting new learning for Naomi. Her scope of knowledge has increased through researching into areas that were not necessarily in her regular line of work.

My name is Naomi Osei-Asemani, an educationist. I was the Education Administration Group Mentor.

My direct benefit from the mentoring programme had to do with the discipline and time involved in researching on my topics, preparation of my presentations and the actual delivery of the presentations. These have helped to expand my knowledge on other key topics which hitherto have not been in my line of studies.

I have also learnt how to do a virtual presentation from beginning to the end without a direct active audience listening. It takes lots of intrinsic motivation to do that. I believe this skill can really help me in the future.



One other key aspect for me was my ability to share my experiences with other people. I have come to realize that the more I share, the more fulfilling the experience is.

This has made me realize that I have the capacity to achieve more than I have currently done.

It's been a successful programme on the whole and I hope subsequent editions would have mentees finding time to attend to the virtual meetings in real time so that sessions can be more interactive.

Naomi

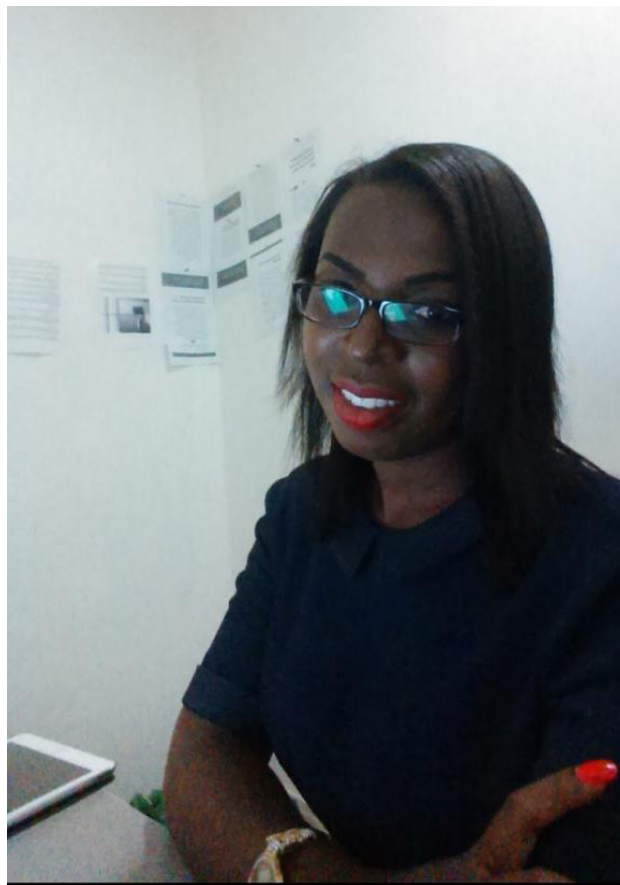
An opportunity to impact lives

Gladys Arthur (Executive Assistant Mentor)

Gladys is elated to have been given the opportunity to mentor others in this manner. She asserts that mentees have been empowered to build resilience in the face of difficulties and upscale themselves professionally.

My name is Gladys Arthur. As a mentor for the Executive Assistant Group, I have had the direct benefit of doing thorough research on topics, particularly on savings and investment, which hitherto I hadn't keenly considered to go in-depth with.

I developed the discipline to consistently deliver value regardless of the seemingly quiet participation of mentees during sessions because at the end of the day, report and feedback indicates most of them were really learning and applying what they had been learning from the programme.



My gratitude goes to the Springboard Foundation, Solidaridad and Mastercard for the CoRe Programme. It has provided opportunities for mentors like me to impact lives and guide mentees to build resilience and upscale in their respective areas of work.

Thank you.

Gladys

180 Technology is a real game changer

Owuraku Nyamekye Ampofo (Sports Journalism Mentor)

Owuraku believes the future of sports journalism would be in good hands having interacted with mentees who had different and interesting perspectives about sports journalism. He acknowledges that technology is indeed the game changer.

My name is Owuraku Nyamekye Ampofo, a sports journalist. I was the mentor of the Sports Journalism Group in the CoRe programme.

As a young person myself, the most cherished benefit from this programme was the opportunity to learn from the aspiring sports journalists. Although I was the mentor, I always opened up our discussions and as a result benefitted from different perspectives of the topics discussed.

Sharing my knowledge in this field and learning from these mentees was an eye opener for me and it did leave me really excited because the future of sports



journalism would be in good hands.

I came to the conclusion that technology has really been the game changer in this generation. The mentees were filled with so much knowledge about sports journalism. They have a far better understanding of the field than I did when I was in school; and this is due to the availability of information across the internet. This made our sessions really interesting because everyone had an idea and could contribute to the topics being discussed.

The CoRe Mentoring programme has been a good learning experience for me as a young mentor because I believe the most important trait of a good leader is to empower other people.

I really appreciate the opportunity CoRe has given me to share my experiences with aspiring sports journalists. It is my hope and prayer that they will grow up to also mentor people one day. Amen!

Owuraku

181 The future of education is online

**Kofi W. Gyasi-Acquah
(Photography Mentor)**

Having observed how practical and successful the CoRe Programme has proven to be, Kofi asserts that the future of education is online. He shares his story.

I am Kofi W. Gyasi-Acquah. The CoRe Programme has helped to unearth and rediscover my own teaching potential and the ability to pass on knowledge to the next generation. I reckon that the future of education is online. We have to make online schooling more seamless, affordable and accessible.

I anticipate that future programmes would enroll a lot more young people who will be much more committed and dedicated to maximizing the benefits of this great intervention.

Kofi



A new outlook and strength to overcome anxiety

Ama Korsema Obeng-Berkyaw (e-Counsellor)

Ama has gained a new positive outlook and perspective into handling her own challenges. She asserts that her confidence level and self-acceptance have been enhanced through the opportunity the CoRe mentoring programme provided. She shares her story.

My name is Ama Korsema Obeng-Berkyaw. During and after the COVID-19 lockdown, I had so many stressful situations. Joining in the Springboard CoRe Programme helped me to have some understanding and gain new perspectives and a positive outlook on the issues confronting me.

As a person, I had issues that brought me much anxiety and depression and I was almost developing self-defeating behaviours. However, after listening to the audio recordings and reading around the topics for sessions held, it helped me to cope with the



various situations. It also increased my confidence level and gave me greater self-acceptance; so that I was able to manage my emotions better and was relieved of my anxiety.

I will conclude with this: “Facing and confronting issues as well as dealing with mental health issues is very important “. Although most people feel embarrassed and shy to share their problems, I strongly believe the CoRe programme was able to pull together a lot of such people who were given the freedom to do so without fear and judgment by families and friends within their respective groups.

Listening to feedback from beneficiaries revealed how it helped in making them feel less lonely and isolated in their suffering, especially during this COVID-19 uncertainty.

Kudos to the CoRe Mentoring programme. Thank you and God bless you.

Ama

A humbling experience

Hilda Dwamena Boateng (e-Counselor)

Hilda came on board the CoRe Programme as a volunteer to counsel others. She however encountered other experienced professionals who really made a huge impact in her life. It has been an extremely enriching experience for her.

I am Hilda Dwamena Boateng. I volunteered for the CoRe e-Counseling programme with the hope of impacting the youth, since that is my area of interest.

Through this programme, the self-impact has been massive. I have had the exposure and the opportunity to meet and learn from experienced counselors and to a larger extent, it has been a very humbling experience.

I also learnt a lot from the e-learning sessions on the topics like “Identifying your talent, doing business with your talent, doing business the new normal way, etc”. My knowledge has also expanded due to the additional reading and research I had to engage in during the programme.

I have had the opportunity to meet and interact greatly with persons I have never met on the individual and group level. My use of social media has greatly increased like never before. I have come to the realization that, to get to the youth,



through social media, WhatsApp is one of the most convenient channels. Simply watching clients’ statuses and reading other posts has provided really helpful clues for counseling.

Altogether, the programme has given me practical insights into counseling. I got introduced to the use of zoom and telegram in a better way.

To the initiators, facilitators, coordinators and Springboard, I say God bless you for the opportunity.

Hilda

184 I was both a counsellor and beneficiary

**Ben A. Mikado
(e-Counsellor)**

Ben has gained valuable experience in E-counselling and he believes it will serve him well in the future as a young counseling psychologist. He shares his story.

My name is Ben A. Mikado, a counsellor. The CoRe e-Counselling programme has been very impactful for me. I was not just a counsellor but also a beneficiary. As a young counselling psychologist, it gave me the opportunity to learn from very experienced psychologists from various branches in the field.

This was due to the constant debriefing sessions and several webinars prior to the programme take-off to equip us with the best practices regarding e-counseling. I really learnt a lot. Now, I have gathered a lot of experience regarding e-counseling, which has become a necessary part of counseling in the world today.



The information contained in the videos and audios meant for beneficiaries proved useful as I also gleaned lessons from them. I also had the opportunity to do a lot of reading and research on the topics before my sessions and it served me well. Through the programme, I had the opportunity to interact with youth from various backgrounds in our dear nation.

God bless the organizers of the programme (SRSF) and the Ghana Psychological Association (GPA) for accepting the challenge and providing the necessary resources for a successful programme.

I made an observation during some of the translations of the e-learning audios and video into the various local languages. What I noticed, especially with the local language, is that recordings related to mental health issues were translated by persons who were not practitioners and it was a bit challenging for them.

I suggestion that in future, psychologists who are equally versed in the local language can be consulted to assist in the translation, especially, the local psychological terms and words before recording.

Thanks.

Ben

185 This has been revealing and fulfilling

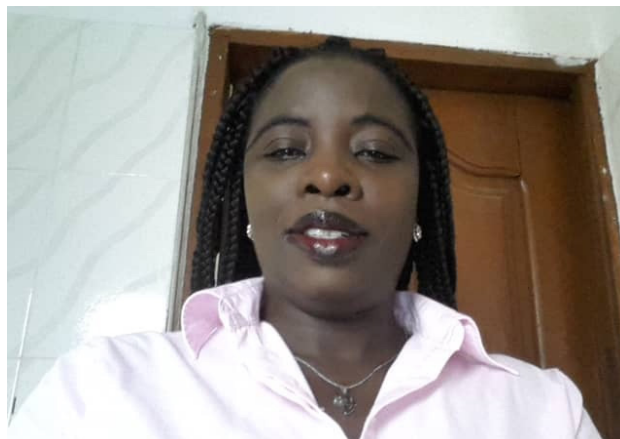
**Paulina L. Essel
(e-Counselor)**

Paulina was doubtful about how feasible the idea of e-counselling was going to be as she had had no previous experience. To her amazement, she realized the enormous potential in e-counselling as beneficiaries were able to share their stories and receive help. She calls it a revealing period of her life.

I am Paulina L. Essel, a Counseling Psychologist. I was initially wondering if I wanted to join this CoRe e-Counselling programme. I considered the fact that I had not had e-Counselling for a group in my three years of experience as a Counselling Psychologist. I however took up the challenge.

It is with a grateful heart and great joy that I state that this e-Counselling programme has been a most fulfilling experience in my life.

One topic which I felt was an eye opener for the beneficiaries was the topic on 'dealing with the unexpected' handled so expertly by my colleague,



Dr. Joana Larry-Afutu, and subsequently used for the group sessions. In my counselling career, one issue I try to avoid is assisting clients in crisis because it makes me emotional.

Ironically two of the beneficiaries were in crisis and I had to apply all my skills to intervene. Surprisingly, I dealt with them to their admiration and within a few weeks, they had bounced back earlier than I even expected. Those who wanted to privately message me to assist them also did so.

All in all, it was a revealing period of my life and the experience gained was enormous.

I am appreciative of Springboard and other partners for coming out with such a programme to assist our young ones in their lives' journeys.

Paulina

It's been a rare opportunity

Charlotte Amoah Saben (e-Counsellor)

Charlotte had the rare opportunity of moderating e-counselling sessions of the CoRe Programme. It was a really enriching experience for which she remains grateful, coupled with the new knowledge she acquired. Let's hear her story.

My name is Charlotte Amoah Saben. Joining the CoRe programme has been of immense benefit and exposure to me, particularly the virtual, focused group discussions. I had the opportunity to moderate some of the sessions and I must admit that I enjoyed the experience as I was equipped with the requisite technological tools to aid my work.

The medium for the e-Counselling was good because participants were on the various social media platforms which were deployed for this purpose, thus making participation easier.

I must also say that the program audios were crucial for my career. I gleaned a lot from them. I learnt how to manage my time better and how to schedule and plan my days in order to maximize my participation in the programme. Apart from that, my own emotional struggles were dealt with and I have become more patient with my clients.

I have learnt to be resilient and calm and persist in the pursuit of my goals in life.

Charlotte

I got my life back through helping others

Augustina Atkinson Dadebo (e-Counsellor)

Having been psychologically traumatized and filled with fear after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Augustina gained back her life and composure after she seized the opportunity to help others through their difficult moments and the effects the pandemic had on them. She shares her experiences.

My name is Augustina Atkinson Dadebo. For me the CoRe e-Counselling programme was a blessing. I was not just a counsellor, but I can confidently say I was a beneficiary as well. The video and audio on 'Dealing with the unexpected' brought me joy and peace.

2020 started so well with me and COVID-19 brought the unexpected. Amidst the fear of contracting the disease, loneliness and idleness, I felt terribly sick and it was such an emotional experience. I took up the challenge to serve on the CoRe programme and it helped me to build resilience even on my sick bed.

The Ghana Psychological Association (GPA) coordinator held debriefings for all psychologists



after every session. The interaction and stories from other counsellors did me a world of good. They were actually refreshing. I realized that my fear was gone. The joy of always preparing to impact lives brought back life to me.

I had to read and prepare to meet intelligent young people. I had to check up on my group members to remind them of meetings. I had brilliant group members who when given assignments, would prepare and present their work as if they were presenting them in class for marks. This made me more alert to read and research more to facilitate my group.

God bless the dreamers and the coordinators of CoRe.

God bless all the e-counsellors.
God bless our Association (GPA).
God bless our homeland, Ghana.

Augustina

An experience of joy and satisfaction

**Alice Elsie Afram
(e-Counsellor)**

Alice had the fulfilling opportunity to offer her services as counsellor during the CoRe Programme. She shares how it proved to be a fulfilling experience and the insights and exposure she gained in the process.

My name is Alice Elsie Afram, a counsellor. I served as an e-Counsellor for the CoRe Peace Group. The CoRe Programme gave me an opportunity to offer my skills and help to those who needed it the most. It gave me great joy and satisfaction as I pursued my passion and purpose in life.

I learnt a lot from the programme as it pushed me to do more research on the various topics that were discussed. The CoRe Programme has been an eye-opener for me to start providing online counselling services. I have gained more confidence in myself.



I say a big thank you to Springboard Road Show Foundation and the Ghana Psychological Association.

Alice

189 This has been a soul-inspiring and uplifting experience

**Sarah Getahun Woldeamanuel
(e-Counsellor)**

Sarah talks about the huge impact the Core programme has had on mentees and participants and how she was filled with so much joy and fulfillment because of that. She shares why she is confident that the programme has achieved its goal.

My name is Sarah Getahun Woldeamanuel, a counsellor. I served as e-Counsellor on the CoRe Programme with the CoRe Wonderful group.

When I received a message from the Ghana Psychological Association (GPA) office asking me if I was ready to work as a front-liner for COVID-19, although I gladly said yes, thinking that it was one of



the face-to-face assignments that I did earlier, little did I know that I was going to become ‘omnipresent’; traveling to every region, entering every room, and simultaneously speaking to everyone in the comfort of their space.

After working for a while, I realized that although the programme is targeted at bringing resilience to the youth of Ghana who have been affected by

the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, I can confidently say that as one of the e-counsellors, I have also benefited from the programme in various ways.

First and foremost, was the joy and the fulfillment that I got when I understood the positive transformation that was taking place in the lives of the targeted population. As I observed their migration from hopelessness to optimism, from fear and anxiety to resilience, from joblessness to productivity and earning incomes, each day became exciting because of all these transformational experiences being expressed on the platform and through phone communications with the beneficiaries.

Secondly, it was a blessing hearing the testimonies of the individually counseled youth concerning their victories over suicidal ideation, substance abuse, depression and other psychosocial-related issues.

Furthermore, it was uplifting to observe our professional intervention being appreciated by the new generation and their in-depth understanding of the importance of the role that counseling psychology is playing in aiding mankind's total well-being. It was heartwarming to observe their readiness to serve as ambassadors of counseling psychology wherever they found themselves.

Here are some of the expressions that have been taken from some of the beneficiaries' posts and phone conversations:

Annati Christian, who became very enthusiastic about the role of professional counseling said: "...I think there should be a professional counselor in every organization." He also said

during another discussion: "Now I know that I have to get a professional counselor in a company that I am trying to set up" In another session, he asked the following question in despair: "How many young people are aware of professional pre-marital counseling?"

Another group member, Joseph Bukwe, expressed his disappointment towards some of his friends' ignorance revealed in their response to another friend who had lost both parents in an accident on the same day. "When I wanted to connect him to a counselor, his friends said they could handle him. You see, how society doesn't even know the value of experts?"

During a screening session, another lady also said in appreciation "I know that a counseling service is very expensive. We are grateful for the opportunity given to us to get it for free; and we intend to make full use of it."

Consequently, while they were benefiting more and more, they did not want to keep it only to themselves but started sharing, and also seeking help and interventions for their friends and family members who were not part of the CoRe programme, and counseling services were provided for them. We can all now confidently say 'change is inevitable but bouncing back is possible.'

Initially, beneficiaries were not ready to share and discuss their issues on the platform. But as we moved on, they developed trust and confidence not just in their counselor but in themselves as well. Subsequently, I was no-longer a counselor alone but a significant other and a source of social support.

I remember during one of our sessions when I asked the group to write the names and contact numbers of at least 3-5 people to serve as their social supports, some of the members said my name and contact number would be among their list, which I also gladly replied saying “Sure!” and I have become one. They do call or send me messages any time the need arises.

We have enjoyed each other’s company during our sessions; although the programme was designed to last for one-hour (7:00-8:00pm), it has never been so in the CoRe Wonderful group. The meetings kept going on and on even as late as 9:30 pm. My group members were not bothered about checking their time, and I didn’t want to remind them either. When duty is calling, time becomes irrelevant.

In general, I can confidently say that the programme has achieved its goal successfully. However, I would also like to give some suggestions that could help in preventing the reoccurrence of some of the challenges experienced in the course of this programme.

In my opinion, the responsibilities of screening beneficiaries, forming the groups, and procedures of joining the groups should have been given to the e-counselors from the onset of the programme so that the following challenges would not have been faced:

1. The issues of having uneven numbers in each group especially during the time we were on Telegram.

2. The challenges of starting with Telegram and moving to WhatsApp that drew us back in our services leading to the missing of extra days.
3. The issue of having an open group that contributed to members being in multiple groups (group shopping). This had the effect of drawing back the groups any time new members were joining.
4. The challenges of unqualified individuals joining groups since there wasn’t adequate pre-screening.

Finally, I would like to express my enormous gratitude to the brilliant minds behind the planning and designing of this programme, and to the commitment and hard work of each individual in turning the simple social media into making ways and changing lives and for bringing mental health service to every doorstep and making it reachable.

Thank you, Ghana Psychological Association (GPA), the CoRe team, Springboard Road Show Foundation, Solidaridad, and Mastercard foundation.

I say Ayekoo! God bless you all!

Sarah

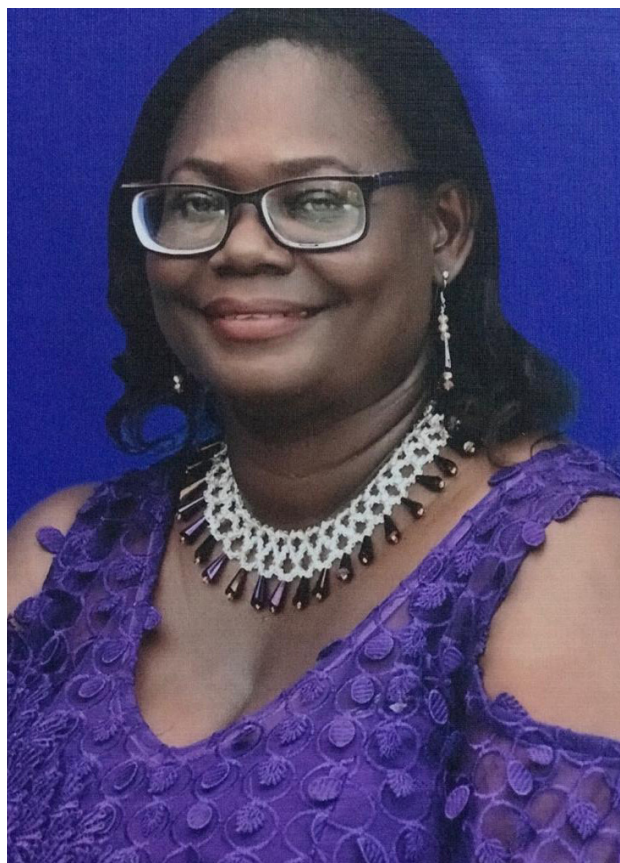
190 I met people from different backgrounds

Shirley Ama Atta Hayford (e-Counsellor)

“I met a whole lot of people from different backgrounds...”, Shirley asserts, as she chronicles how the opportunity to network with different minds and perspectives have served as an eye opener for her.

My name is Shirley Ama Atta Hayford. I served as an e-Counsellor on the CoRe Programme. Through the programme, I have gleaned a lot of knowledge from programme beneficiaries, my counterparts and the Springboard-CoRe team.

The CoRe Programme was an eye opener for me especially the topics which bordered on finance. My level of knowledge and understanding has shot up and I’m able to make an impact on my beneficiaries and family as a whole. Imagining or placing myself in the shoes of beneficiaries has enabled me to understand them better and relate with them more empathetically.



I met a whole lot of people from different backgrounds, shared ideas and we learned from each other in such an awe-inspiring feeling of togetherness. I also got a lot of fulfillment from counselling participants who shared their challenges with me. Indeed, beneficiaries of the programme gave a lot of good feedback about how they have been impacted through the various modules of the programme and how they have thus improved upon their skills and are making progressive changes in their lives.

Aside of the numerous impact areas of the programme, beneficiaries are indeed really happy and have developed a more positive outlook on their lives and future. Making new friends and establishing contacts with others has really served to expand my scope of networks which I believe will be relevant in my career pursuits.

I must say that it has been a good experience and we are returning to our various workplaces with a lot of new discoveries, talents and ideas from the CoRe programme.

Kudos to the engineers behind this great intervention called the CoRe Programme.

Shirley

I am delighted to have served

Dr. Albert Sedohia (Psychiatry Mentor)

Dr. Sedohia is happy about the many lives that were imparted through the CoRe. He shares his enthusiasm about persons who contacted him about mental health cases and how he helped link them to the relevant facilities.

I am Dr. Albert Sedohia, a Psychiatrist Specialist at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. I was with the Psychiatry Mentoring Group of the CoRe Programme.

The CoRe Programme has offered me the unique opportunity to reach out to a far larger audience particularly through virtual means with the message of mental health. The peculiarity of this subject area is that quite a number of persons are ambivalent and ignorant about the presence of these conditions in their lives.

It was however worthy of note that through this programme, a good number of persons have contacted me and cases that ought to be linked to the appropriate facilities have been referred. The programme has also helped me to keep abreast with latest happenings and topics within and outside my practice.



I am really delighted to have had the opportunity to serve as a mentor because, “to whom much is given, much is expected”. I commend the organizers of this remarkable programme for taking advantage of the digital space to transform lives.

Albert

Many will reference CoRe as their turning point

**Matthew Peprah Boateng
(CoRe Deputy Project Manager)**

Matthew saw at close range how COVID-19 abruptly disrupted the Springboard 2020 Road Show as well as his Master's Programme. He describes how the CoRe Programme became arguably a far bigger outlet for expressing his passion for developing young people.

The global news coverage in December 2019 of a new coronavirus and its rapid spread appeared as one of those conventional happenings that capture the world's attention for a short while and quietly fade out without much fuss. Little did I know that this outbreak will escalate into a global pandemic in record time and considerably change my life within a few months.

My name is Matthew Peprah Boateng, and I oversee operations at the Springboard Road Show



Foundation. I served as a Deputy Project Manager in charge of Operations on the CoRe Programme from June to December 2020.

When the President of Ghana directed that all public events should be put on hold as a COVID-19 preventive measure in March 2020, our team was feverishly preparing for the Global Convocation of the Springboard 2020 Road Show in Accra.

Our mandate for the 14th annual edition of that nationwide youth development intervention was to train and mentor five thousand emerging leaders, young entrepreneurs, and tertiary students through zonal conferences and a million others through digital channels.

Before the directive, we had held two highly successful events in Kumasi and Cape Coast. We had the finale slated in 6 days' time at the Accra International Conference Centre when the COVID-19 lockdown was announced. All pre-conference activities and stakeholder engagements were terminated with significant financial and logistical implications.

On a personal front, I was, at the time, preparing for the final semester of my Master of Arts (MA) in Marketing Strategy with the University of Ghana Business School. I had planned to take an extended break from work to concentrate on academic activities. All of a sudden, one could not be sure of anything.

The various uncertainties clouded my passion for driving change and improving lives. The hopes of many young people who depended on Springboard's roadshows for career and personal development guidance was fading. After a while, it became clear that young people needed to urgently reskill to be relevant during and post-COVID-19.

Amidst all these uncertainties, the CoRe Programme became the bridge for the gap in my life.

Contributing to the planning and scoping of the CoRe Programme and being so directly involved in its implementation brought me fulfillment and renewed hope. CoRe created new and limitless avenues to reach more young people, something I've been passionately pursuing for the most part of my professional life.

Initially, the task of using digital platforms and mainstream media to provide support for young people to survive the challenges of the pandemic appeared daunting from the onset, considering the many technology and internet limitations among the target beneficiaries.

However, through teamwork, a learning spirit, hard work and dedicated leadership, CoRe reached record numbers with an average of over three million young people benefitting from the e-learning broadcasts each month throughout the period.

Through the e-Learning episodes, young people were guided to nurture and utilize their talents. They were counseled to cope with job losses, anxieties and traumatic experiences, and also groomed to develop skills relevant for the post-COVID-19 world of work. The Group Counseling and Group Mentoring sessions brought beneficiaries closer to professionals for psychosocial and technical support, respectively.

By far, the most gratifying part of this CoRe Programme has been the opportunity to hear, at first hand, the impact stories of beneficiaries, many of whom expressed deep appreciation to Mastercard Foundation, Springboard Road Show Foundation and Solidaridad as well as their mentors, counsellors and facilitators.

I firmly believe that the lessons and impact of the CoRe Programme will be felt for many more years. The stories and testimonies will continue to pour in and the overall impact will grow bigger and bigger over time.

I will not be surprised to hear people share stories in the near future and refer to the CoRe Programme as the turning point in their lives.

Thank you, Mastercard Foundation, for investing in young people's lives and rekindling my passion.

Matthew Peprah Boateng

I was stretched to accomplish more

Eric Otchere (CoRe e-Mentoring Team Lead)

Eric is filled with awe and amazement about the way technology and social media have been harnessed so effectively to impact the lives of so many across the globe before his very eyes. As the e-Mentoring lead for the CoRe Programme, he has been challenged to aspire to greater heights.

I Eric Otchere, and I had the honour of serving as the e-Mentoring Lead for the CoRe Programme.

Before COVID-19, I was working as Church Administrator and a Probationer Pastor of the International Central Gospel Church in Accra, Ghana. My world was totally disrupted when COVID-19 unleashed its multiple effects upon all of us. I could not do the normal duties of a pastor including attending meetings and services, pulpit ministry, and visiting members, not to talk of going to the office to work. We were thrown into a different world altogether. One major realisation for me was that no job was secured.



When I joined the CoRe programme, initially through the Thursday hangout, Rev. Albert Ocran shared a three-part message about Talent Discovery, Development and Deployment. It set me on a path to thinking about what I have been doing with my talents, experiences, and education. I got back to blogging and also started another initiative of podcasting.

The writing spurred me on to begin sending articles to news outlets such as myjoyonline.com, citifmonline, ghanaweb.com and modernghana.com. I also had the opportunity to write for some new bloggers I got to know. My eyes were totally

opened to a new world of blogging and sharing daily content to help other people.

I then got the invitation to be part of the CoRe Team as the Lead for e-Mentoring. Initially, I felt it would be too much, knowing the workload at my workplace. But I was challenged to join the team and I found it really amazing.

Here are a few things I have learnt:

- One, a common tool like WhatsApp can transform generations if used for educating people. Even though I knew it was possible, in my very eyes, I saw over 9,000 young people sign up to groups and be mentored.
- Two, it is possible to do more than we are doing now. I learnt as a team member that we can always stretch ourselves to do more than what we are currently doing at work. CoRe has stretched me to do more and achieve more. Coordinating over 300 mentors and assistants, 9,000 mentees and groups proved to be humbling.

Being part of CoRe is arguably one of the most fulfilling ventures I have undertaken in my entire life, even though the fallouts COVID-19 led to 2020 being described as a period of destruction.

Eric

I learnt to build resilience and strength

Sylvia Akuffo (CoRe e-Counselling Team Lead)

Sylvia has learnt how to build resilience in the face of unexpected situations including COVID-19 and its effects. She has developed the agility and mental strength needed to prevail and thrive in the midst of crisis moments.

My name is Sylvia Akuffo, e-Counselling Lead for the CoRe Programme.

Before COVID-19, I was primarily at home taking care of my family because a project I was working on had just ended. As a stay-at-home mother, I faced a lot of mental stress and anxiety with the outbreak of COVID-19.

I was burdened with the uncertainties and risks of the pandemic and the effect it could have on my family, especially considering the fact that some



close family members because of the nature of their work had no option but to go out very often. I was honestly very scared, asking so many questions such as “what if they contracted the virus and what if the whole family subsequently contracted it?”

Joining the CoRe Programme within that period and being the lead on the e-Counselling intervention of the programme, I was fortunate to be exposed to most of the counselling sessions on the programme. I must confess I benefitted immensely from the sessions.

I learnt how to deal with unexpected situations including COVID, building and developing my mental strength to go through crisis moments, bouncing forward and being more resilient in all situations.

I consequently became better able to manage my anxieties especially as a family person. I learnt and became more relaxed and encouraged close relations to strictly adhere to the precautionary measures and protocols of COVID as part of the learnings received in dealing with my anxieties relating to COVID. The programme has really helped me to build my mental strength and be better placed to deal with my anxieties, which hitherto was a challenge.

Prior to joining the programme, I never imagined that social media and, in this case, WhatsApp could be utilized to implement a huge programme such as CoRe and impact the lives of thousands of young people in Ghana and even beyond. I have thus come to realize through the CoRe programme that it is possible to transform and even save lives virtually by putting in place the right infrastructure and systems.

Sylvia

A humbling, insightful and fulfilling encounter

**Madonna Yaa Oduro
(CoRe Project
Coordinator)**

The feedback from beneficiaries of the CoRe Programme about how it has helped them has been a humbling and fulfilling experience for Madonna. Having heard the stories of many of the mentees, she is happy to have been given the opportunity to be a blessing to them through the programme. She shares her story.

My name is Madonna Yaa Oduro. I served as Project Coordinator for the CoRe Programme. Before the outbreak of COVID-19, I was working on another youth initiative project and when the number of cases increased in the country my organization asked its employees to work from home. This presented an opportunity for me to learn the ropes of working effectively and productively from home to meet deliverables.

Personally, aside dealing with the anxiety that came with the pandemic, my husband had to be away for



about a year because of the country's lockdown and the closure of its international borders and airport.

Working on the CoRe project made me grateful and grounded because I realized I was fortunate. I had to look at the positive side of everything as I continuously heard the stories of other youth who were not as fortunate as myself. I also acquired a lot of knowledge from the different components of the project, and I was therefore better prepared to deal with the challenges that came with the pandemic.

The project made me to better appreciate that when technology is used appropriately and effectively, it can be a great tool to create an impact in the lives of youth. One great highlight of the project for me was the effective use of messaging platforms such

as WhatsApp to provide mentoring and counselling to beneficiaries. I also embraced the new way of life which was that technology was going to play a crucial role in every aspect of our lives.

It was always such a joy to hear from our beneficiaries through feedback and success stories about how the project has impacted their lives through listening to our weekly e-learning episodes or being counselled and mentored on the project.

Madonna

196 Who Moved My Cheese?

Augustine Bediako (CoRe Project Support, Southern Sector)

Augustine mentions that in the midst of the many unanswered questions bothering his mind, the story “who moved my cheese?” which chronicled amazing ways of dealing with change and the superb presentation of the story in the e-learning sessions calmed him down and kept him on track. He shares his story.

I am Augustine Bediako. A Project support responsible for regions in the Southern Sector of Ghana on the CoRe Programme.

“Man proposes, but God disposes” I had an agreement in place with the National Board for Small-Scale Industries in the Ashanti Region to organize the Youth Inclusive Entrepreneurial Development Initiative for Employment (YIEDIE) members in all the districts to develop group business plans for them to access grants and loans.

I visited four districts and organized five groups. Again, the electrical association of the Sekyere South District invited me to conduct workshops and develop business plans for interested members but I could not do so because of the pandemic. News of the pandemic was first heard from afar but it drew closer and eventually infected fellow countrymen, especially in Kumasi where I live. Watching television



channels updating the public about the number of infected persons abroad and in Ghana frightened me. However, the lockdown was timely and did slow down some of my fears.

My livelihood as a technical business advisor and executive director of Skyhoz business consult was affected. The contracts I was about to sign with some customers could not materialize. My hopes were dashed.

COVID-19 also affected my life spiritually. During and after lockdown, my children’s desire for going

to church reduced drastically because they felt the quiet time and Bible studies we did at home were enough. Generally, many people in my church were reluctant to come back to church after the lockdown because of fear. My social life was reduced to phone calls. There was no opportunity to attend social programmes because of fear and the restrictions imposed.

The CoRe Programme implemented by Springboard Road Show Foundation became the game changer in my life. Apart from provision of employment in terms of income, I listened to every single episode and shared it with my friends. I participated in most of the mentoring groups and did join most of the hangout sessions as well.

These became the antidote to what I thought were challenges or problems. In fact, every component of the CoRe Programme influenced my life very positively ranging from resilience, health awareness, safety and wellness, workplace skills and job readiness.

One major question I grappled with was the question of how the whole world came to a standstill because of a virus. I had no answer. I went back to the Bible trying to understand it, but the situation kept growing from bad to worse.

The magical story of “who moved my cheese?” and its amazing prescription for dealing with change and that superb presentation of the story on the CoRe e-Learning session by Rev. Albert Ocran calmed me down and kept me on track.

The programme was characterized by great teamwork, rich content, excellent presentations and useful information gathering and application. Here are my lessons:

- Everything is possible if attention is paid to it in detail.
- I actually became a mentee in several mentoring platforms and I really learnt a lot.
- Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp and tweeter are more effective as compared to radio and television.
- When planning, one has to consider unforeseen circumstances.

In conclusion, I think the CoRe programme has been one of the best responses to the coronavirus pandemic. I highly recommend that it continuous even after the pandemic to positively affect the lives of direct and indirect beneficiaries all across the country.

Thank you.

Augustine

197 Repositioned to explore more opportunities

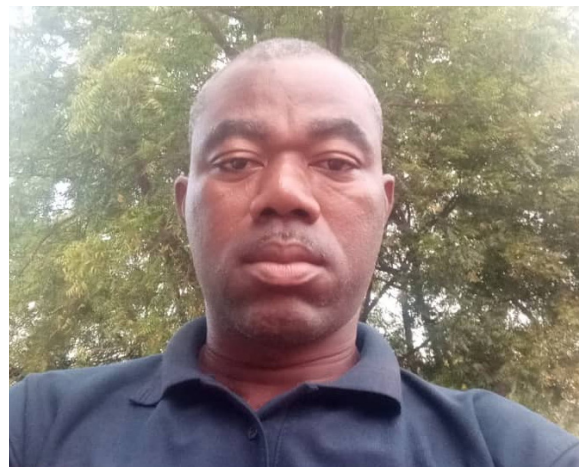
Ibrahim Elijah (CoRe Northern Region Support Staff)

In the midst of the challenges posed by the pandemic, Ibrahim's business was not exempted. He shares his story about how the CoRe Programme gave him and his family hope as he looks forward to exploring other business avenues.

My name is Ibrahim Elijah, Northern Regional support staff on the CoRe Programme. COVID-19 came as a big surprise to everybody all over the world especially as the New Year began with so much promise.

I was working on my small retail and animal rearing business before the outbreak of the pandemic. The moment Ghana recorded its first case, my fears and anxiety increased as I never knew what the future would look like.

My retail business which was basically into the selling of consumables was affected because of the



associated lockdowns and restrictions in movement. The business nearly collapsed but God being so good I managed to survive the situation.

The benefits of the CoRe Programme cannot be overemphasized. I have become a more resilient person. Through the programme, I have learnt how to market my business in the midst of difficult economic situations and how to identify opportunities even in difficult situations and prevail.

CoRe came at a time when my life and family were turning upside down, but for the intervention of the programme, I'm now better placed to take up new business opportunities.

Thanks to CoRe for the wonderful opportunity. My family and I have been immensely impacted and the CoRe Programme has become a household name in my home.

Ibrahim

198 Leveraging technology to impart lives

Napoleon Kofie (CoRe Digital Lead)

Napoleon shares how the CoRe programme has stretched his ability and given him incredible skills and knowledge to complement his expertise as a digital consultant. He shares his amazing experiences.

My name is Napoleon Kofie. I am a digital consultant and I served as Digital Lead for the CoRe Programme. Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, I was involved in several projects including providing of strategic directions, building technology systems, and designing client experiences for businesses.

The biggest recent need is that of businesses and organizations seeking to successfully upgrade their business operations online. This enables their employees to work remotely and remain efficient and productive as well as customers also accessing services and products through online platforms.

I found the CoRe Programme to be a very fascinating initiative largely because of my passion for youth



development. I also saw this as a more fulfilling opportunity to make a mark during these times.

Joining the CoRe Programme team allowed me to contribute to designing and implementing the digital architecture for our three key interventions, namely e-Learning, e-Counselling and e-Mentoring. We also built a phenomenal web and mobile experience for our beneficiaries and developed an unparalleled strategy that saw us leverage the digital landscape to reach millions of young people every month.

I am humbled by the impact of these initiatives. I cannot forget the incredible and touching stories I received firsthand from beneficiaries across the country about the immense impact of the CoRe Programme on their lives.

In the course of the CoRe Programme, I picked up incredible skills and knowledge to complement my current level of expertise. The CoRe Programme has really expanded my capacity for executing nationwide projects of this magnitude. I have also seen how technology can normalize the risk of a very damaging event such as the COVID-19 pandemic and can be used to show empathy in impacting the lives of people. This intervention has shown that we can leverage technology for social good and even leapfrog human capital to its fullest potential.

I'm extremely glad to have served in undoubtedly the biggest youth intervention programme in Ghana during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a significant accomplishment and I do not take it for granted.

Many thanks

New perspectives for greater impact

Kweku Buah (CoRe Administration)

As a manager of a football club and a market survey associate, Kweku's livelihoods were hugely impacted by the outbreak of the pandemic. He got introduced to the CoRe Programme and it has made a whole lot of difference in his life and the team he manages. The sessions on talent discovery gave him an entirely new perspective which he is applying to his football club.

I am Kweku Buah. I was with the Administrative unit of CoRe. I was managing my juvenile football team, TopBase Community Football Club, and working as a Market Survey Associate in a company when news of COVID-19 started making rounds in the world.

My team had just been visited by a scout who owned a football club in Europe in February 2020. He had selected four of my players on standby for European trials. COVID-19 put all these plans on hold. I was also in the final stages of registering with the Ghana Football Association. Again, because of COVID-19, we had to put all that on hold. We did not train from



March to September 2020. Most of the boys lost interest and returned to their old lifestyles – the same social vices for which reason I formed the team to take them away from.

In terms of finances, my survey job was put on hold for obvious reasons – all bars, restaurants, night clubs, etc. were under lockdown. I had no income, but I was spending. A few of the boys in my team also looked up to me. Times were tough for me. Some of my friends who supported my team withdrew, either because they were also hard hit or for the fact that they knew we were not playing matches.

That was when I got a call from Mrs. Ocran, upon the reference of a friend of mine. She asked if I would like to work on a social intervention project. I agreed and joined the CoRe team. My thought processes

and mentality changed from the very first day I attended one of their sessions.

It was a training conference being held for the YIEDIE group executives at GIMPA. I was invited to observe and familiarize myself with the project. As I would later learn, they played specific videos from the e-learning episodes to participants as part of the CoRe in-person conferences.

I was privileged to listen to two episodes on, ‘Discovering your talent’ and ‘Doing business with your talent’. After listening to the teachings by Rev. Ocran in the 15-minute videos, I immediately had ideas on how to make some income. I had a snooker board in my living room which had been sitting idle. I started scouting for possible places that I could station it for people to play and pay.

I also built a table tennis table, I observed that there were a lot of kids at home at the time, and they would be interested in table tennis, so I designed a quite simple one. Because it was mobile, I could send it to different locations. I turned my passion for sports into a simple business.

Indirectly, I have employed two of my players to take care of the two boards, and I give them stipends every week. It was exciting because I was not only making some money but helping others as well.

As a football talent hunter, owner and manager of a football team, I have learnt the key factors to discovering your talent. I have taught this subject to my boys. I know a lot of them joined the team for the love of football, and not that they are particularly talented. As a result, two of them have joined the Management team because they have discovered they have a hidden talent in organizing and coordinating.

To conclude, I would say that “information is ad infinitum” I thought I knew it all when it came to issues bordering on talents, but I learnt a great deal about it, and it is helping me run my football team.

In one of the CoRe Hangout shows, discussing digital branding, I learnt how to look out for engagement triggers to engage with the people we would like to connect with in the social media and internet space. With this cue, I started engaging with a professional footballer I needed to connect with. I keep commenting on his statuses on WhatsApp, till one day he wrote back. Today, he has promised to support my team with a set of jerseys and to visit and inspire the boys when he next comes to Ghana.

I believe the CoRe Programme should go beyond COVID-19 and enter into full time sensitization and engagement of the youth.

Kweku

200 CoRe must be replicated in our schools

Selom Apanya (CoRe Monitoring & Evaluation Lead)

“I wish there could be a way this programme could be made more permanent...” These are the words of Selom as he considers how impactful the CoRe Programme has been to him and others in the midst of a major disruption in work and career pursuits.

I am Selom Apanya, Lead for the Monitoring & Evaluation Unit of the CoRe Programme.

I work as an independent consultant engaged in the provision of Data Collection, Research and M&E Services to development partners in Ghana. At the latter part of the year 2019, I checked out of full-time employment with my previous employer to pursue other opportunities that had surfaced at the time.



Opportunities in the offing included international consulting collaborations and the prospect of pursuing my PhD in the United Kingdom. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, all these opportunities evaporated.

Honestly, I was very disappointed and confused because the future looked very uncertain to me. I also questioned my decision to leave my former employment. But being part of this programme

and getting to learn from others really opened my eyes to realize that life happens and uncertainty is part of life. Hence, when such uncertain situations occur, that is not the end of the story.

As part of my duties for the CoRe Programme, I was in charge of collating impact stories and conducting surveys. This opened my eyes to the experiences of so many people and made me realize everyone was affected – one way or the other. It also dawned on me that if these persons have now been built and equipped with the skills to bounce back, then why not me?

I took the decision to listen to all the e-learning videos, and this was an amazing expedition. I have now built the resilience to know that irrespective of what life throws at me, I can overcome it. If people are given the right skills and knowledge, there is nothing they cannot overcome.

From the survey and other responses from people, I concluded that people

were in direr situations than I was, but they have all been equipped with the skills to bounce back. It saddens me that this programme has come to an end. It is my desire that everything that has been built over the past six months turns into something more permanent.

As a relatively young person myself, I can say that young people really need help. It may not be monetary help per se, but we need knowledge, and we need to be helped to think anew.

I wish there could be a way this CoRe Programme could be designed to be made more permanent and even incorporated into the syllabus of schools and so on. I thank Rev. Albert and Comfort Ocran and the Mastercard Foundation and Solidaridad for making this CoRe Programme happen.

Selorm

Thank you
Mastercard
Foundation for
making the CoRe
Programme
possible.



Solidaridad

