



The Work of Our Hands

May the favour of the Lord
our God rest upon us;
establish the work of our
hands for us - yes, establish
the work of our hands.

Ps. 90:17

This November the hands of NEA and GRID were extended to over ten thousand people by a team of health professionals from Canada and the United Kingdom. Partnering with a huge team of Ghanaian volunteers, the visiting doctors, nurses, dentists, and

surgeons provided much-needed medical care to villages in the Deg tribal area, one of Ghana's most remote regions.

During the health team's visit, nine clinics were held and five thousand patients were seen by doctors. Over six thousand more received basic treatments such as tylenol, vitamins, and de-worming. One hundred eighty-six surgeries were performed.

The numbers say a lot, but they don't tell the whole story of lives saved and transformed. As you

read some of our stories on these pages, we hope that you will see beyond the numbers to the people who are living stronger, healthier, joyful lives because of NEA's continued presence among them. We hope that you will understand the great challenges that exist, but also recognize the powerful hope that is blossoming as poverty is being alleviated.

And we hope that you will celebrate with us as you glimpse what God is accomplishing through the work of many hands.



GRID (Ghana Rural Integrated Development) and NEA (Northern Empowerment Association) are partner organizations working to alleviate poverty in Northern Ghana. Motivated by Christ's love, our mission is to assist poor communities to meet their basic needs in a sustainable manner. You can learn more at grid-nea.org.

Medical Clinics

The mobile medical team travelled out each day to the remote rural villages where NEA serves. After registration, patients were seen by a nursing team and then directed to the physicians, dentists, mobile surgeon, diabetic clinic or eye clinic for a consultation. The final step was a fully stocked pharmacy where patients received necessary medicine as well as relevant health education.



Surgical Clinics



We were privileged once again to partner with [Operation Hernia](#). Led by Dr. Kingsnorth, this team of world-class hernia surgeons and nurses from the United Kingdom provided life-saving surgery to 146 patients, in many cases completing more than one procedure per patient. The impact of these surgeries will be felt in the region for years, as the beneficiaries are able to once again work and provide food for their families.

Hundreds of names remain on the waiting list for this surgery, so there is much work left to do!

Diabetic Clinics

A team of two diabetic specialists started work before their first breakfast in Ghana, testing NEA's entire staff for diabetes. Seven individuals were identified as having diabetes or pre-diabetes and went on to receive one-on-one education and treatment during the team's visit.

One of those individuals was Simon, NEA's chief driver, who was unaware that he had diabetes. At the conclusion of the team's visit, he thanked God for bringing them to Ghana specifically to save his life.



Dr. Bashira, Simon, and RN Cathy Fockler

Dental Clinics

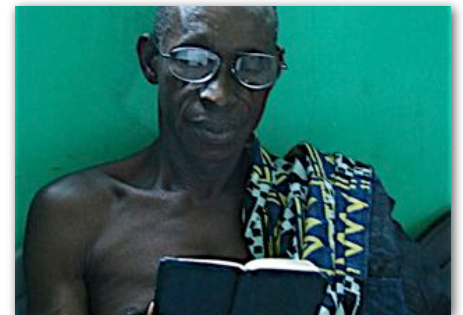
Prior to 2008, the word "dentist" did not exist in the Deg language. This year when our dentists arrived, the Deg tribe knew exactly who they were! Hundreds of adults and children were given dental care and education by our creative dental team who overcame the obstacles of no plumbing or power to provide this service from dawn until nightfall.



Eye Clinics

In 2008, the health team noticed the absence of eyeglasses in the region. Women were struggling to sew and cook; children were dropping out of school; men were injuring themselves at work because of poor eyesight. This year two team members conducted eye exams and gave hundreds of donated glasses to people who were assessed with poor vision.

One man came to the team with only one complaint: he couldn't read his Bible any more. When he received his pair of glasses, he immediately picked up his Bible to read God's Word for the first time in many, many years.



Health Education



Each day a nurse educator would gather key village leaders and present health education material to them. Together they would then move through the crowds, educating people about the important topics of malaria, diarrhea, and HIV/AIDS. NEA volunteers were also trained and resources were left in Ghana for ongoing use in the region.

Numbers

Medical personnel	45
Clinics held	9
Clinic patients	5000
Fast-track patients	6000
Surgeries completed	186

On the way to church, George Yeboah, the lead translator for the entire surgical program in Carpenter, crashed his motorcycle. He suffered a deep laceration to his leg that cut right through a muscle tendon.

By God's grace, the medical and surgical team had the personnel, equipment and supplies to repair George's leg right at the NEA compound.

Mr. Yeboah shared that he has not had an accident in the more than 20 years that he has been riding his motorcycle. He felt that God brought the team to Ghana specifically to be present at the time of his accident.



Mr. Yeboah with nurse Janet Burrows



Dr. Jennifer Wilson with Lydia, Peter, and baby Joshua

God's Hand At Work

In the remote village of Yaara, Lydia brought her sick three month old baby Joshua to Dr. Wilson. Joshua was quickly diagnosed with severe pneumonia and desperately needed intravenous antibiotics and fluids. By God's grace, a nurse specialist in IV therapy had been prompted to join our health team and was on hand for this critical situation. She was able to get an IV into Joshua's tiny vein, and he spent the day in the nursing station receiving the fluids he needed.

By the end of the day, the child was still in critical condition. With no option of sending him to an intensive care unit in a pediatric hospital, the team decided to take Joshua and Lydia back to the Carpenter home base with them. His father, Peter, was already in Carpenter receiving hernia surgery.

The nursing team attended Joshua around the clock until his life was out of danger. We are grateful to God that this child was completely healed, leaving the clinic on the final day of the team's stay.

"There's no question in my mind that Joshua would have died without this help," said Dr. Wilson. "He should have been on a ventilator in intensive care at Sick Kids' Hospital -- he was that sick."

Joshua's father, Peter (who is David Mensah's brother), shared with the team that he felt God brought the medical and surgical team to Ghana specifically for his family.



Baby Joshua receiving care



The Work Continues

The conditions in Northern Ghana are difficult and, some might say, hopeless. But in the region where NEA is working to bring clean water, eradicate hunger, establish peace, and grow churches, hope is blossoming. There is joy and thanksgiving; a song for everything. The team was privileged to be recipients of this each day and to hear these songs of hope, joy, and praise, even in the face of so much suffering and death.

Providing health care through a volunteer team will remain critical until the Deg area has a working health infrastructure in place. NEA is working diligently towards that day by implementing a holistic development program in partnership with local communities. NEA's program addresses the root causes of poor health: dirty water, hunger, poor sanitation, lack of education, conflict, and environmental toxins.

Without NEA's ongoing development program, the arrival of a health team would not be the blessing that it is. If people were treated and then abandoned to live in unchanged, unhealthy conditions, then the health team's work would be quickly undone. But by working together to provide both long-term solutions and immediate, critical help, individuals and whole communities are being transformed in Northern Ghana.

Lives are being saved. We praise God, who has blessed the work of the many hands extended in his service.

“We have heard about the Christ, and we have read stories about the Christ. But when you are here, we see Christ in our midst.”

Pastor Jacob from Bamboi,
to the 2009 Health Team

To all those who made this team possible --

the organizers,
the volunteers,
the families left behind,
the friends who prayed,
the people who gave generously --

Thank you!

We have seen Christ in our midst.



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