



Upheld by the Hand of God

by David & Brenda Mensah

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)

2011 was a very full year for GRID and NEA. As we look back, we are grateful to God for his strength and grace as we have been involved in many demanding, but rewarding, initiatives.

In February, NEA hosted the second Christian Chiefs' Conference, which was attended by about 120 chiefs from 13 tribes. This remarkable gathering required an incredible amount of organization and hard work, but the results were well worth it. Watching leaders set aside past tribal differences to pray and discuss together was unforgettable.

In April, we were finally able to accept an invitation given two years ago to share the gospel in Tinga. This is a community that we have had a long relationship

with through our development work, and they wanted help in establishing a church there. NEA and 34 churches in the area organized a 3-day convention over Easter in Tinga. Although this event, too, required a lot of extra work from the NEA team, we were thrilled with the warmth of our welcome.

In May, a team of Canadian volunteers joined us to both build a church and teach in schools in Subinso. Shortly after they departed, we were joined by GRID Board members, Doug and Virginia Webster, for an intense week of theological training with the pastors of our local churches. And then, not many weeks later, our NEA staff participated in a week of project management training. In November, our annual medical team arrived and once again brought healing to thousands of patients.

In between all of these major events, we were able to launch the two-year Deg Health project, which receives funding from



CIDA, and to continue our ongoing community development program.

It has been a full year, and one that ended well. In December we were overjoyed to have our children and grandchildren join us for our first Christmas together in Ghana in many years.

We are grateful to God for the strength he has given us this year, and for the blessing that he continues to pour out on our work. And we are deeply thankful for friends like you who continue to partner with us in helping the poorest of the poor in Ghana.

Deg Health Project

In 2011, we launched the Deg Health Project, a two-year project that will receive up to \$500,000 in funding from the Canadian government .

The Deg Health Project aims to improve health by addressing many of the root causes of sickness in our region: little food, dirty water, lack of education.



This year, 200 extremely poor women received the seeds, tools, and training to start peanut farms. About 85 of these women have also received goats so that they can start small herds. By improving their food security and income, we can help them enjoy better health.



Community Health Volunteers have been trained and supported so that they can educate their

community members about important nutrition, hygiene, and disease topics. This education is so important in helping reduce preventable diseases in the area.

650 volunteer fishermen have been supported so that they can monitor about 500 km of the Black Volta River for illegal fishing. This is making an enormous difference in both the quantity and quality of fish available in communities.



environmental protection and peace building in the area.

The Canadian government, through CIDA, has committed to providing 75% of the funds for this project as long as GRID can raise 25% of the funds from Canadian sources. When you give to GRID, your funds are directed to CIDA-supported projects first, where your donation is effectively quadrupled by the Canadian government.



As part of this project, we also supported a network of chiefs who are seeking ways of resolving disputes without resorting to conflict. We have seen some highly charged situations defused by the careful intervention of these chiefs.

In 2012, we plan to add another 200 women to the project, to continue health education, and continue to support both

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.

Our Hopes for 2012

by David & Brenda Mensah

We have many plans for 2012 that we hope you will join us in praying for.

We are starting yet another CIDA-funded project that will help reduce malaria and improve care for newborns in the area. Our next newsletter will give more details about this exciting new project.

By the time you read this, our first team of the year will be close to returning home. This team has been building a church at Tinga and teaching in local schools.

We plan to have our third annual Christian Chiefs' Conference from February 23-27. Please pray for this important event, as it brings together leaders from so many different tribes. These tribes sometimes have long histories of tension and fighting, and it is a special challenge for these chiefs to meet each other in peace.

In May, we hope to return to North America to attend our daughter Elizabeth's graduation. She has completed her PhD program at Johns Hopkins, and we are looking forward to celebrating this achievement with her. We will then stay in North America for several months, catching up with friends and family.

In June, the GRID board members will meet in Toronto and we are looking forward to being a part of that. We would appreciate your prayers for the GRID board at this time.

Our plan is to return to Ghana in the fall.



If you are interested in inviting the Mensahs to speak at your church or group this year, please contact our Canadian office coordinator, Lynnita Weber, at lweber@grid-nea.org.

Next Ghana Health Team



We are grateful for the continued partnership of the Ghana Health Team under the leadership of Dr. Jennifer Wilson from Uxbridge. This team has visited us every November for the past five years and is an integral part of our community development program.

However, an election in Ghana is planned for late 2012, and this would complicate the team's planned November visit. After much prayer, GRID and NEA have decided to postpone the medical team's visit until **April 12 - 28, 2013**.

More information about this team will be posted on our website in a couple of months. For those of you interested in participating on this team, applications will be made available at <http://grid-nea.org> in April 2012.

Ella's Corner

Welcome to 2012!

Our GRID newsletters have taken on a new look. We trust that the up-to-date pictures in colour, as well as the reports, fresh from the field from the medical team and from the Mensahs, have been a blessing. Wonderful strides are being made in every aspect of our work.

God is so good. A new year makes us look ahead, but also look back. A number of people have asked where *Ella's Corner* is and have inquired if my husband, Doug, and I are still involved in this work. We are still members of the Board and from time to time you will continue to hear from us in this column. You'll also be introduced to others from our Board.

We are so thankful to God for blessing us with those willing to work on the GRID Board, as well as on our site in Ghana. He has sent GRID people with just the skills needed to do the job. These special people have chosen to be the answer to God's question, "Who will go and work for me today?"

In Ghana, new churches continue to be built. Together, GRID and NEA continue to address the need for clean water, food, education, and health care. The annual volunteer medical teams are such a blessing as they perform various surgeries, relieve pain through diagnosis and treatment, assess and solve vision and dental problems, and much more.

Looking ahead and looking back, we see plainly that this work would have been impossible without the financial help and prayers of our God-given support team: people of all ages and from all walks of life who have so willingly shared of their time and abilities.

The fields are still "white unto harvest." Together, let's continue to expect great things from God, and attempt great things for God.

As we look ahead in this New Year, let's remember to look back and thank our faithful God who has supplied our needs over and above all that we have asked. It reminds me of the Sunday School chorus: "*If God be for us, who can be against us? No one, no one, no one.*"

What a mighty God we serve.

Ella Porter



On behalf of GRID, I would like to thank Ella and Doug Porter for their years of faithful service.

We especially want to thank Ella for her hard work in keeping our partners updated on the progress of our work in Ghana. She has single-handedly produced our newsletters for 25 years! Dedicated, lifelong volunteers like Ella are rare, and we are grateful for her commitment.

Although Ella will not be writing as often on these pages, she and Doug remain very much involved in the oversight and direction of our work as GRID Board Members.

– Jacques Lapointe, Chairman

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Contact Us

PO Box 398
Milton, ON L9T 4Y9

T: 289-429-1099
F: 905-878-4597
E: grid@grid-nea.org
W: grid-nea.org

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