



# Chiefs' Conference

## NEA's 2013 Northern Christian Chiefs' Conference

His presence was timely. All of the armed conflicts in Ghana have been in the north, and several of the major tribes in conflict were present in our gathering that weekend.

Dr. Adam Harunah, veterinarian, led a training session on livestock husbandry. He reminded us all that poverty is one enemy we all have to fight in Northern Ghana, and that animal husbandry is one of the easiest ways to fight it. Animals are able to withstand drought better than crops; they provide food; they can carry goods; and their manure is good fertilizer. Since all of the chiefs in rural areas keep livestock, they appreciated his tips and the chance to ask questions about the problems they were facing.

On Saturday afternoon, the chiefs spent two hours sharing concerns for prayer. It was remarkable to hear them sharing such personal difficulties with the group. We spent Saturday evening together, praying for their requests.

Sunday was a day of worship, and the chiefs were a sight to behold, arrayed in their finest. David continued the story



of Esther, reminding the chiefs that they, too, have people like Haman, who want to depose them. They can imitate Esther by praying and remembering that God has not forgotten them. The chiefs cheered at the end of Esther's story, and were full of hope that God would also turn their difficulties into rejoicing.

On Sunday evening we shared communion together. It is impossible to convey the sweetness of those moments. After singing their last song together, the chiefs moved around the room, embracing one another. It took half an hour for them to say their good-byes.

This was a wonderful few days and our chiefs left refreshed, challenged, and hopeful. Thank you for your support and for your prayers for this special event.

When the 151 chiefs gathered at the NEA compound in Carpenter this February, the air itself seemed to pulse with energy and joy.

David began the conference with the story of Esther. He reminded the chiefs that, like Esther, they can use their influence to save their people.

Chiefs participated in peacebuilding training led by Emmanuel Bombande, Executive Director of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, who described some options for bringing about understanding and transformation in a conflict situation. He encouraged chiefs to be peacemakers and to be prepared to change the culture where it needs to be changed.

**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**.

# Progress Highlights

Celebrating blessings from the past year



## Cassava Processing

When NEA began work in the Deg area, farmers were paid little for the cassava that they grew. We started a processing plant that turns cassava into “gari.” This year we processed over 300 large bags of gari. The plant employs over sixty women and pays farmers six times what they used to get for a truckload of cassava.

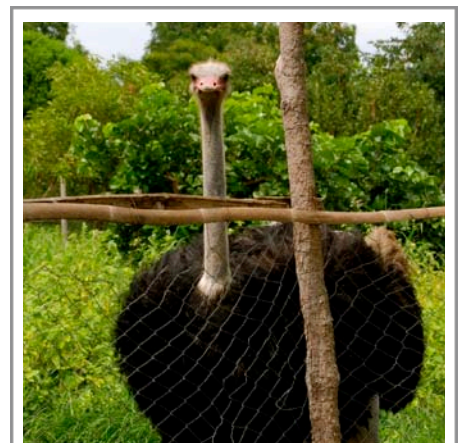
## Pigs

We began 2012 with 114 pigs, sold 249, and ended the year with 134! This is a thriving business that started with six pigs.

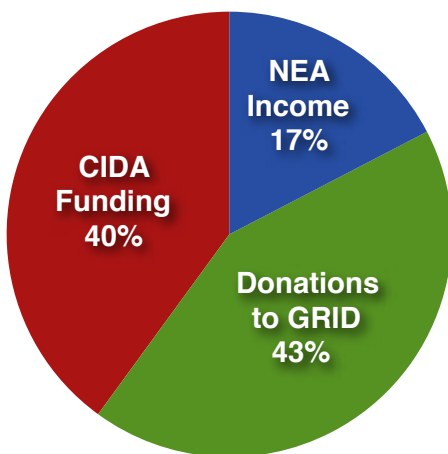


## Women’s Farms

NEA is currently working with 406 women who had a good peanut harvest this year. The warehouse is full of seed that will be planted just after the first rains. One woman reported that, after her thatched house collapsed, she was able to build and roof another with tin roofing sheets. “If not for this project I would have been sleeping in the cold.”



NEA sold two ostriches for \$800 each in 2012.



## 2012 Income

GRID and NEA’s development program is funded by three main sources: donations to GRID, project-specific funding from the Canadian government (CIDA), and income earned by NEA’s growing businesses.

In 2012, two large development projects received financial support from CIDA on a three-to-one matching basis. Our supporters gave generously so that GRID could meet our funding amounts for those projects.

We are pleased to see that NEA’s contribution to the ongoing development work is still significant. NEA’s income is mostly used to pay for local staff salaries. These trained people are crucial for doing development work, so NEA must be able to retain them regardless of

other funding fluctuations. Our staff members can do a lot with limited resources, but without them we can do very little. As Dr. Mensah expressed it to some North Americans, “When you give, we can do a lot of work; when you don’t give, we can still work.”

## Saving Lives in Northern Ghana

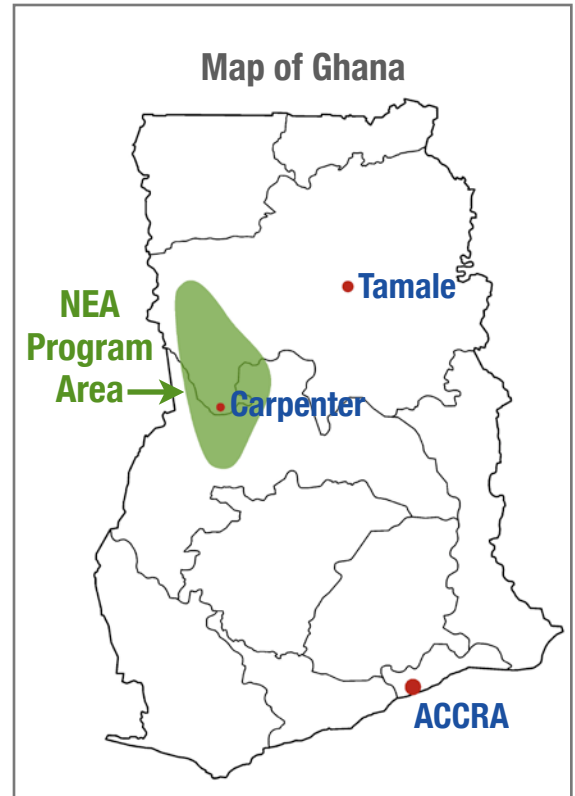
2012 was the first year for the Leyaata (“Rescue Us”) project, and what a year it has been! This project, which receives funding from the Canadian International Development Agency, has two main objectives in the 50 villages of NEA’s program area: to improve care for mothers and infants, and to reduce malaria.

Fifty community volunteers, one from each village, were trained to conduct home visits with expectant mothers and follow-up visits with newborns in the first week of life. They were taught how to identify signs of distress in babies and how to refer families to clinics for care.

The success of these home visits in the first year alone has been remarkable. In project villages, more women are going to clinics to have their babies. And the newborn death rate has dropped by more than half!

Because of these amazing results, different organizations are talking to NEA about starting similar projects elsewhere in Ghana.

Your support of GRID this year has truly saved lives, and has the potential to save many more across Ghana. Thank you.



## Unexpected Joy

by Dr. David Mensah



Ebenezer

NEA is helping the Asantekwa community to construct a church building for their growing congregation.

Our building contractor for the church, Ebenezer, is also an evangelist, and has been visiting the nearby farmer community of Tandigi on weekends to share the good news of Jesus.

This month, Ebenezer asked us to meet him at a stream near Tandigi on our way to church. Brenda and I left early so that we could meet him there, and as we approached the stream we heard jubilant singing under the trees. Twenty-five farmers were there, all who had given

their lives to the Lord and were waiting for us to baptize them and pray with them.

One of the farmers had brought a powerful talisman with him, and together we burned it. That man, when he came out of the water after his baptism, lifted his hands up and proclaimed himself free in the name of Jesus.

What an incredible day we had that day! Please pray for these twenty-five new believers, that they may grow in the grace and power of our Lord.

# We're Looking Forward To ...

## Chickens

NEA has recently started a new venture: chickens. Our main purpose in raising these is to feed the growing number of very large groups who visit us in Carpenter. We know that this news will please our visitors, too, as some of you still find guinea fowl a bit tough to eat!

We also anticipate that chickens will be a profitable enterprise, and will increase NEA's income contribution to our ongoing work in the area.

## A Container

Thank you to the hard-working volunteers who organized and packed a container of important equipment and goods for our work. We are anticipating its arrival and seeing the grins on NEA's staff members' faces as

they find the things that you packed.

And of course, we hope that some day our Canadian volunteers will visit us in Carpenter, where you can join us for meals and directly benefit from the cooking equipment that was sent. Thank you!

## Ghana Health Team

In 2012, the Ghana Health Team for the first time raised their funds directly through GRID.

Thanks to the team's hard work and their supporters' generosity, the Health Team raised nearly double what we dreamed would be possible! The extra funds will be used to make sure the team has adequate drugs for treating patients, to expand their services, to start up the next team, and to support other health initiatives in the area.

Thank you for your generous support of this team. We are excited to see what God has in store for them when they are in Ghana in April of this year!

## Fish Ponds

Several years ago, NEA dared to dream big and started praying for a bulldozer so that we could build fish ponds in every community in our program area.

Just last month, these prayers were answered in full: the final donations arrived that enabled us to purchase not only a bulldozer, but an excavator as well. Once this equipment is on site, we plan to use it to construct fish ponds for 50 villages. We will tell you the whole amazing story in an upcoming issue, but for now we wanted to share this wonderful news so that you can celebrate with us!

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## Donate from Canada

### Donate Online

[grid-nea.org/donate](http://grid-nea.org/donate)

### Donate By Cheque

Please make your cheque payable to GRID and mail it to us in Milton (see address at left).

## Donate from USA

Please make your check payable to **Evangelical Community Church**, and designate it to GRID.

Mail checks to:  
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