



# More Than We Dared to Hope

by **Brenda Mensah**

As we round the corner to the end of 2013, we do so with very grateful hearts. It's been an amazing year, and together we—the GRID team, the NEA team, the health team and you, our partners— have accomplished more than we dared to hope.

**More food into the local diet:** vegetables, pigs, fish, chickens, eggs, corn, cassava, and peanuts.

**More women meeting their basic needs** through farming peanuts and rearing goats.

**More students in school:** 22 of our 55 sponsored students have graduated, and additional young men and women were added to the scholarship program.

## More lives saved:

... through the well-orchestrated efforts of the Canadian, British, and Ghanaian health professionals who worked so tirelessly in Ghana last April;

... through the Leyaata volunteers in 50 villages who have visited every expectant mother twice and every newborn baby 3 times in the first week of life;

... through the distribution of mosquito nets and training in their use, thus preventing malaria— Ghana's top killer;

... through training health workers in baby resuscitation and emergency delivery care of mothers.

**More churches established** in the villages of Tandigne and Atta Kura. More pastors are being trained to care for growing churches.

**More Christian Chiefs encouraged** to be peace-building, Christlike leaders in their communities.

**More peace and stability** through continual mediation efforts between clans, opinion leaders and traditional rulers.

On behalf of those whose lives have been transformed this year, thank you. Your support is vital to the work happening in Northern Ghana. Together, by God's grace, we will do even more in 2014!

**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**.

## Saving Babies' Lives: The Leyaata Project



NEA has completed the second year of implementing the Leyaata ("Rescue Us") Project, which receives financial support from DFATD (formerly CIDA). This project combats two main killers: malaria and infant death in the first 30 days of life. We are thrilled to report that the number of newborns dying has been cut by more than half.

The Leyaata project relies on simple but powerful activities. Village health volunteers are trained and equipped to visit expectant mothers to help them prepare for birth, and to visit newborns three times in the first week of life. Project staff distribute treated mosquito nets and educate people about malaria.

The Leyaata Project has

been so successful that we are expanding it to include 35 additional villages. New health volunteers from each village have completed the training they need to be able to visit expectant mothers and newborn babies. The volunteers were very engaged during the training. They know that their families and communities will benefit from the new knowledge they have acquired.

In this area of Ghana, less than half of all mothers seek trained assistance at birth. The Leyaata Project is trying to change that by encouraging mothers to plan for assisted birth. This kind of change requires the support of chiefs and opinion leaders in villages, so chiefs are invited to participate in meetings to learn about the program. The chiefs in the new villages have promised their support and will encourage all pregnant women to contact their local CBSVs.

The support and skills of health professionals are also critical to the success and sustainability of these activities. Local health professionals are

receiving additional training in infant resuscitation and safe delivery techniques. The commitment of these men and women has been remarkable.

One clinic nurse, Ernestina, was providing training to new health volunteers when she got news that her clinic had received a national award, and she was to accept the award the next day in the President of Ghana's office. Ernestina asked someone else from her clinic to receive the award on her behalf, as the training she was doing was too important to leave. She felt that too many lives were at stake and declined this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.



Thank you for your help in saving so many young lives in Northern Ghana.

**\$325**

cost of a kit and bicycle for a community health volunteer

**49**

community health volunteers visiting mothers and infants

**65%**

fewer newborns dying in the first month of life

**You can learn more or donate to the Leyaata Project at [grid-nea.org/leyaata-project](http://grid-nea.org/leyaata-project) .**



# From Poverty to Self-Sufficiency



NEA starts women’s co-op farms in almost every village where they work. Women receive seeds, tools, and training to grow one acre of groundnuts [peanuts]. After three years of training, they graduate from the program and return a bag of groundnut seeds to NEA. NEA then uses these seeds to help other women start farms.

Ama Salla from Tikela is a peanut farmer. “Our mother died and left four siblings in my care. If not for this groundnut intervention, I wouldn’t have been able to see my sister complete secondary school.” She prays for God’s blessing on those who lead and support this program.

Asana Sesala from Banaintwe is a grandmother. She told us, “I am so thankful for

this groundnut farm program. My two children died and left seven grandchildren in my care. Without my groundnut farm, life would have been very difficult for us.”

Usually we expect women to harvest 6 bags of peanuts from their farm annually. A bag of peanuts has a market value of around \$50, so this translates into an income of \$300. This may not seem like much, but these women previously earned less than \$100 per year.

Every year there are some women who see remarkable harvests. Asan Kupour from Ayorya harvested 18 bags this season. “I look after 14 children, including my own and I depend so much on the income I earn from this groundnut farm for our up-keep.”

The two highest yields this year were very impressive indeed— Yaa Gyabuni from Sabule had 21.5 bags, and Afia Tia from Ayorya had 21 bags. That’s about \$1000 each!

Your donations to GRID’s general fund are used to continue important programs like the women’s co-op. Thank you for your generosity.



Asan Kupour from Ayorya harvested 18 bags of groundnuts (about \$900).



Afia Tia from Ayorya harvested 21 bags of groundnuts (about \$1000).



Yaa Gyabuni from Sabule harvested 21.5 bags of groundnuts (about \$1000).

**\$20 - \$100**

annual income of women before they join the co-op program

**\$200**

cost of seeds, tools, and training for a new farmer

**\$300 - \$1000**

annual farm income for women in the co-op program

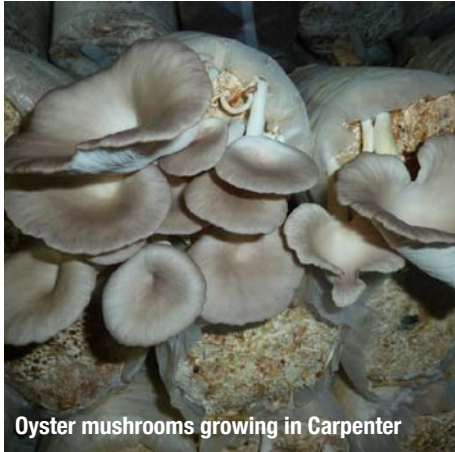
# Notes of Joy

## Mushroom Harvest

NEA's newest income-generating activity— oyster mushroom production— is off to a great start. The special building for raising mushrooms has been completed, the mushroom bags have been prepared, and NEA is already harvesting and selling mushrooms.



Frank and Dr. Mensah with the harvest



Oyster mushrooms growing in Carpenter

The oyster mushroom is a good source of nutrients and protein, and studies show that it has some important health benefits. NEA anticipated that the demand for this crop would be high, and they haven't been disappointed. Within one week of the first harvest, people from as far away as Tamale bought some!

## Arrival of Equipment



In our last newsletter we shared that the bulldozer, excavator, and tractor needed to

build 50 fish ponds had arrived at the port in Ghana. We're happy to be able to tell you that since then, all of the equipment has made its way safely to Northern Ghana and has already started earning income for our programs!

Thank you for your part in making this dream a reality. We are excited to think of the communities who will benefit from the fish ponds that this machinery will construct.



## 2014 Ghana Health Team

Plans are in place for a combined medical, surgical, dental, and eye care team for November 2014. Applications are now open for medical professionals interested in participating on the team. You can apply online at [grid-nea.org](http://grid-nea.org). Applications close Jan. 31, 2014.

<h3>Contact Us</h3> <p><b>Ghana Rural Integrated Development</b>        PO Box 398 Milton, ON L9T 4Y9</p> <p>T: 289-429-1099        F: 905-878-4597        E: <a href="mailto:grid@grid-nea.org">grid@grid-nea.org</a>        W: <a href="http://grid-nea.org">grid-nea.org</a></p>	<h3>Donate from Canada</h3> <p><b>Donate Online</b>  <a href="http://grid-nea.org/donate">grid-nea.org/donate</a></p> <p><b>Donate By Cheque</b>        Please make your cheque payable to GRID and mail it to us (see address at left).</p>	<h3>Donate from USA</h3> <p>Please make your check payable to <b>Evangelical Community Church</b>, and designate it to GRID.</p> <p>Mail checks to:        Evangelical Community Church        503 S. High St.        Bloomington, IN 47401</p>
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