



Of Roosters and Gifts

by Brenda Mensah

In Ghana, when someone has received a gift for which they are really grateful, they tell the giver “Every time you hear a rooster crow, it’s really me saying thank you again!”

That is how we feel when we think of you, our friends who have given so much to us. Your prayers, your encouragement, your time, and your

financial support have been precious gifts to us, and to the people we serve together.

I am reminded of the familiar verse: “For God so loved the world that he gave ...” Your gifts to us are a reflection of our Father’s love and the great gift of his son, Jesus. Whenever we think of you, we are grateful.



Teselima Pond Is Filling

NEA constructed a community pond for Teselima, a nearby town to Carpenter. The pond is slowly filling, having been through one rainy season. (It usually takes two to completely fill.)

This year NEA will start training fish pond managers in Teselima, preparing to stock the pond with fingerlings after next season.

Thank you for your gifts that have made it possible for us to start building village ponds.

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**.

Shea Butter Production



Each month, about 600 women from eleven villages in Northern Ghana ship thirty-eight metric tonnes of shea butter to BodyShop, which pays them a fair price for the product.

The BodyShop also pays NEA to pick up the shea butter and monitor it for quality. Women bring the shea butter in large calabashes, which are weighed and recorded for payment. Then the shea butter is separated and kneaded into 25kg packages, which NEA checks for any foreign materials.

These packages are loaded onto NEA's truck and taken to the Tema port for shipment. The BodyShop pays NEA for this transportation service.

The BodyShop also pays a premium on every kilo of purchased shea butter. This additional money goes into a

special development fund. Women's groups from the eleven communities apply to use these funds for community projects in their villages. The women's projects are supervised by the fund's Board.

Some of the projects initiated by the shea producers include drilling wells, building schools, building clinics, daycare centres, community toilets, and scholarships. Both the women and their communities benefit from the shea butter business.

The truck that we use to facilitate this industry was donated to NEA several years ago. It is a gift that has given so much to so many. We — and the shea butter producers of Ghana — are thankful for your support with each load that heads to port.

In one year of shea butter production ...



\$1,025,000

earned by 600 women shea butter producers



\$350,000

additional revenue for development projects in the producers' communities



\$220,000

to NEA for quality control and transportation (funds are used for more development projects)

A Princess is Born

Through the Leyaata Project, GRID and NEA are reducing mortality rates among mothers in childbirth and newborn infants. We have seen so much progress as the neonate mortality rate has dropped by over two-thirds since 2012.

This year we were painfully reminded of the challenges that remain.

Cecelia was expecting her baby, and she did everything right. She received antenatal care and went to the nearby clinic when it was time for the baby to be born.

Unfortunately, the only midwife staffing the clinic was away for work-related reasons. Cecelia's unexpectedly complicated birth was attended by someone who had only a few months' training.

Her baby, a little girl named Princess, survived the birth; however, Cecelia soon started haemorrhaging. Her husband quickly arranged for transportation to the nearest health facility, only to have Cecilia die on the way there.

In the midst of their grief, NEA staff quickly acted to ensure that Cecelia's newborn baby survived. Generous friends in Canada donated



baby formula and clothes, and a team of volunteers brought those to Ghana for little Princess.

In Northern Ghana, babies whose mothers die in childbirth are regarded as a bad omen. But because of all of the care that has been provided for Cecelia's baby, she has moved from being a bad omen to being treasured as a little princess!



Mr. Yeboah with this year's peanut harvest

Bountiful Harvest

by Abraham Sayibu

Mr. George Yeboah is the Director of Agriculture for NEA in Carpenter. He has worked with NEA for the past eleven years and has a wide range of working experience in this sector.

His contribution to NEA's vision of reducing extreme poverty and hunger in Northern Ghana is phenomenal. Under his leadership an impressive variety of crops are grown - cassava, ginger, corn, beans, peanuts, bananas, plantain, and an assortment of vegetables.

This year, because of the the blessing of adequate rainfall and the hard work of Mr. Yeboah and his staff, over 160 bags of peanuts were harvested. Apart from reducing poverty through income generation, peanuts are used to enhance good nutrition (increase protein levels) of people within the catchment area.

As well as working to provide physical food, Mr. Yeboah is contributing enormously to the spiritual growth of people in the area. He is currently pastoring two churches in Tinga and Jama.

NEA Staff Profile: Akosua Somuah

by Yaw Adu-Gyamfi



Akosua Somuah

Akosua Boadiwaah Somuah Adu-Gyamfi is the Coordinator for NEA's Leyaata project, which is reducing infant and maternal mortality in 82 villages in northern Ghana.

She was educated at the Catholic University of Ghana where she obtained a BA in Economics and Business Administration in 2007 and an MA in Governance and Sustainable Development from the University of Cape Coast in 2012.

Prior to joining NEA, Akosua worked as Regional Research

Coordinator on a Ghana Law Reform Commission Project to document and codify traditional land law to reduce incidence of conflicts.

Since January 2012 she has led the implementation of the Leyaata Project, building strong relationships with volunteers, community leaders, and medical personnel. Through her hard work, nearly 6,000 new mothers have been registered and regularly visited by trained community health volunteers.

Akosua has learned a lot with the Leyaata project, and some of this new knowledge was of immediate benefit when she herself became a new mother! Her healthy son was safely born in Carpenter. Akosua declares that she had a stress-free pregnancy and childbirth due to experience gathered working on the Leyaata Project.

Akosua lives with her husband Yaw, who is NEA's Malaria Control Coordinator.



A Timely Referral and a Healthy Baby

This 40 day-old baby was having difficulty in breathing and was referred to the Bamboi Health Centre. The midwife there cared for the baby and taught the mother how to avoid it happening in the future. The little one is now breathing well and is very healthy.

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