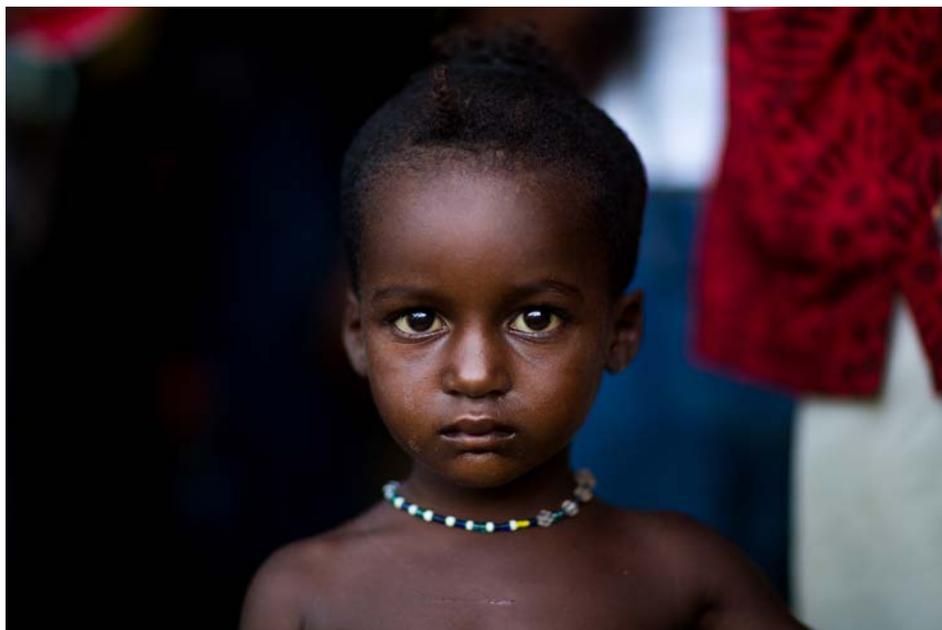




GRID Update

news from Northern Ghana



“We Thank God We Were There”

Dr. Jennifer Wilson, leader of the Ghana Health Team, shared daily updates of the team’s activities while in Ghana. One of her many stories came from the village of Yaara:

Iddrisu, a five-year-old Fulani girl, was our first patient in the nursing station. Somehow Nurse Leslie spotted her in a crowd of about 500 people. Iddrisu’s malaria test was positive, and Dr. Norman and our incredible nursing team had already started an IV, given Tylenol for a high fever, and injected her with antimalarials.

Now this tiny child had become unresponsive and was having a grand mal seizure. One of the things the local nurses have taught us here is that a child’s glucose level will drop precipitously in severe malaria. Iddrisu’s sugar level was 0.8, which is incompatible with life. As concentrated sugar was pushed through the IV and Valium administered, the seizure stopped and so did her mother’s wailing. By the end of day, the child was eating rice, walking around and ready to go home to the bush where this child lives.

We thank God that we were in that village on that moment of that day to save this little life. I don’t tell this story to pat ourselves on the back. We just did what we would have done in any emergency room back home. I tell it to remind us and remind our supporters that this region needs a hospital. We must help them.

More of Jennifer’s posts are at <http://bit.ly/1HmutRY>

Men, women and children in Northern Ghana have a brighter future because of the work we are doing together. Your gifts to GRID have made, and continue to make, a tangible difference for communities: children have a brighter future through the help of scholarships; families can escape poverty as their food supplies increase; and lives have been saved through the 2015 Ghana Health team’s efforts.

Education

Students in Ghana face many barriers to education. Your gifts have enabled them not only to overcome those barriers, but to catch a vision for how they can make a difference in others’ lives.

Food Security

Adequate nutritious food is key to enabling families to escape poverty. GRID’s partner in Ghana, NEA, is committed to improving and expanding food production in the area. Your generosity enables us to continually innovate and expand this sector, ensuring that more families enjoy the security of knowing where their next meal is coming from.

Health

The Ghana Health Team has completed their two-week mission, touching thousands of lives with their compassion and skill. Your donations have saved lives and changed the future for so many.

Thank you for partnering with us to create a better future in Northern Ghana.

Barriers to Education

There are very serious barriers to education in Northern Ghana.



Food Insecurity

Subsistence farmers need all available hands on the farm to help plant, weed and harvest. Sometimes students are pulled out of school for critical farming periods.



Girls' Chores

Girls have many domestic chores: carrying water daily for the family, carrying firewood, looking after junior siblings, cooking, washing clothes, and helping on the farm. This means that fewer girls get the chance of even starting school. And if they do, they still have to keep up with chores before and after school. Often they take a baby brother or sister along with them just so that they can attend classes.



Inadequate Schools

On top of all of this, in many of the villages, there aren't adequate teachers, books, or even school facilities.



School Fees

Secondary school costs families about \$500 annually, and university fees are about \$2000 annually. These fees are beyond the reach of farmers trying to live on \$1 a day. And they are impossible for students who have lost a parent.

Breaking Barriers

Thanks to your generous support, students in the Carpenter region and beyond have overcome these barriers. Thank you!

Help a Student, Change a Community

by Brenda Mensah

With your help, we have been able to help many young people overcome the significant barriers to education that they face in Northern Ghana. When students receive a NEA scholarship, they get more than the funds for their education: they get a network of support and the opportunity to work in our development programs. They emerge from school with a vision for changing their world.

The students you see in the photo below have completed either secondary school or university and have come back to work with NEA. Some of the secondary school students are awaiting their national exam results, which are needed for university applications, while others have completed university and are working in the various sectors, using their new knowledge and skills.



One of the young girls in the photo is from the Janga area. She lost her father when she was about 10 years old and was taken in by the extended family. She came to us because her family didn't want to send her to school. With your help, we were able to support her attending both junior high and secondary school.

A few weeks ago, she joyfully came to us with an envelope in her hands to show us her exam results. She passed all her courses well. She was full of thanks.

When we asked her what she was thinking for further studies, she quickly replied "Oh, I want to do nursing so that I can be one of the nurses in the hospital that is planned!"

Take another look at that photo. You've had a part in rescuing these young ones, helping them to reach their potential, and they too are now looking for ways to help others.

Sustainability from the Ground Up

Increasing food availability is essential to sustainable development in Northern Ghana. When families do not have enough food to eat, they fall deeper into poverty. Without good food, family members will become sick and unable to work. The family will spend what few resources it has to seek medical care for their sick. Children, and especially girls, will be kept back from school to work. Access to nutritious food changes so much for so many. That is why NEA staff work hard to continuously improve and expand food production.



Mushrooms

This venture started small, but in a very short time, we found that we could not keep up with the demand in the area. The mushroom building has recently been enlarged and can now accommodate 10,000 mushroom sacks from which a harvest is gathered daily. Plans are in place not only to increase production, but also for two of our staff to train how to prepare the spores needed for our own mushroom station as well as other local growers.



Crops

Despite unusual rainfall patterns this year, NEA's harvest was as good as the previous year. We are particularly thankful for this because our farms primarily produce seed for the next season. Local farmers, who had poor yields this year, will have an even greater need for good seed in the next planting season. We have been working with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture on new varieties of cassava and corn. These new varieties have shown very good yields per acre and plans are to increase the acreage of these varieties.



Aquaculture

Production of fingerlings for sale to other fish farmers and production of table size fish continues. Varieties produced are tilapia and catfish, and there has been steady progress in catfish production. Currently 25,000 fingerlings are ready to go out, and there is enough brood stock to meet the demand for more. Although we have started to make some of our own fish feed, plans for the coming year include refining the recipe and marketing the fingerlings further afield to include the three northern regions.



Piggery

With the completion of the Bui dam, and the exit of the builders, NEA lost one of its major customers for pork; however, since this was envisioned from the beginning, linkages had been made for the sale of pork elsewhere. In this sector also, it is a challenge to provide all the pork that is requested from customers. The manager of the piggery is confident that by March 2016 all of the pig pens will be full. At the time of the report there were 107 mid- to large-sized pigs ... and he didn't count the two new litters totaling 25 piglets!



Chickens & Eggs

The pilot poultry farm also started small with 500 layers and 500 broilers. In no time, we found the demand for eggs was also greater than the supply. Currently the farm has increased to 2000 birds but their customers still have to be scheduled for the days they can come for eggs since there isn't enough to meet all their needs. Plans are in place to triple that number in 2016.

And watch for news of our latest venture: rabbits!



2015 Ghana Health Team

The 58-member Ghana Health Team provided health care to 12,000 people in Northern Ghana: 6,000 patients were admitted to the clinic for care by the medical, dental, eye, or surgical teams, and a conservative estimate of 6,000 more people were “fast-tracked,” receiving vitamins, Tylenol, or deworming.

We are excited about the long-term impact that the team’s efforts will have on health care in the area. Seven Ghanaian health workers joined the team, enabling a transfer of skills. One of these, Eric, a nurse anaesthetist from Wenchi Hospital, joined the surgical team and worked with anaesthetist Dr. Tony Brown from Port Perry, Ontario.

Eric writes,

“ I consider myself blessed to have the opportunity to work with the team. Thank you so much and may God bless you. You have changed my life, my way of thinking and have given me the opportunity to update myself so as to render the best of services to my clients. You and your team received me, worked with me, ate with me, saw me as one of you, and showed love and appreciation towards me. I thank you for this. And I promise to show the same to all my patients.

Attached is a photo of me managing a 15-year-old boy with supplies Dr. Tony had given to me. The surgery was smooth and so was the anaesthesia. I used all Dr. Tony taught me and all, including my bosses, were astonished.

Thank you.



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Donate

www.grid-nea.org/donate

donate by mail: cheques/checks payable to GRID can be mailed to one of the above addresses

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.



Dr. David and Brenda Mensah