



GRID Update

news from Northern Ghana



Oh, Canada!

This year marks a special one for Canada as it celebrates its 150th anniversary as a nation. In honour of the occasion, we at GRID and NEA are reflecting on some of the ways that Canadians have made a difference in Northern Ghana. If you are one of our readers who doesn't live in Canada, please indulge us here ... and consider yourself an honorary Canadian as you read this. This is for you, too.

Thank You, Friends

by David Mensah, NEA Executive Director

At this moment in Canada's history, we want to declare our appreciation to the Canadians who have made enormous contributions to our development program in Northern Ghana.

NEA's first connection to Canada came through a young Canadian volunteer, Allison Armitage, who donated her bicycle to us when she returned home. We used that bicycle to distribute bread to widows and orphans in the streets of Tamale! It was also Allison who told me about education opportunities in Canada and even sent me application forms!

I am thankful for the Canadian universities that I passed through, which helped to equip me for the work God had planned for me in Ghana. I'm equally grateful for all the friends and partners who have joined in along the journey.

Our work in Ghana began at a time when the Canadian government was looking to support initiatives involving Canadians. For the past thirty years, the Canada's development agency has remained committed to working through partnerships to see people's basic needs met in a sustainable way.

I am thankful for the over one thousand Canadian volunteers that have come to put their skills to use - whether in

teaching, building or providing medical care.

And I'm thankful for the Canadians, from coast to coast, who have prayed fervently and given generously over all these years to positively impact life after life in Christ's name.

With the support of our international friends, we have seen food security increase in our program areas. Together we have prevented needless deaths through our health interventions. And the good news of the gospel of Christ has been preached and lives have been transformed.

Thank you, Canada, for your support over the years and the voluntary spirit of your daughters and sons that you have sent our way.

Canada's Global Impact

Canada's official development agency has provided financial support to our projects since 1987. Our very first project, a community-based integrated development program in the remote area of Janga, received funding support from what was then titled the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). (Today the agency goes by the name of Global Affairs Canada, or GAC).

In the three decades since, the Canadian government's development funding agency has changed its strategic priorities and even its name. Through these changes, what has remained constant is the agency's willingness to support some of our most innovative projects and their subsequent expansion as they proved successful. Thanks to Canada's international development funding support, GRID and NEA have been able to launch many initiatives.



Farmers in Janga grew productive tomato gardens.

Community Development in Janga

The community of Janga and fourteen surrounding communities were helped to meet their food, educational, and health needs. Canada supported women's peanut farming co-ops, tomato farming, clinic expansion, school buildings, and environmental projects.

Aquaculture Program



NEA's aquaculture program was launched with Canada's support.

Canada supported establishing a centre for a one-of-a-kind aquaculture enterprise in Northern Ghana. Today this program continues to supply communities with fish stock, as well as generate funds for ongoing development work.

Waterway Protection

NEA has organized the protection hundreds of kilometres of the Black Volta River from environmentally hazardous fishing methods. This has revived fish stocks, providing a more secure livelihood for those who depend on fishing.

Livestock and Poultry Programs

NEA has established thriving livestock programs that involve cattle, sheep, goats, pigs ... and ostriches and emus!



With Canada's support, NEA started several animal and poultry programs.

Saving Babies and Mothers

NEA's work has significantly reduced the number of newborn deaths in 160 communities by training community volunteers, providing skills-based training to health workers, and equipping local health facilities. This initiative, the Leyaata ("Rescue Us") program, is ongoing today.



Babies are surviving and are healthier because of the GAC-supported Leyaata Projects.

Volunteer Teams from Canada and Around the World

Over the years we have had many volunteer teams join us in Janga and Carpenter to help in various capacities. Our first team from Tyndale joined us in 1992. Since then, several churches in Canada and the US have joyfully come alongside us — even in the heat! — to build a warehouse, clinic, school and church buildings. These partnering churches have also sent us pastors who can train our local leaders. We are so grateful for each team and volunteer who has been moved to share in this work with us.



November 2007



November 2008



November 2009

A Decade of Health Volunteers

In 2007, Dr. Jennifer Wilson and a team of about 25 Canadian health volunteers traveled to Carpenter to support GRID and NEA's programming. At that time, none of us dreamed that this would lead to a regular health team comprising volunteers from Canada, United States, the UK, and Europe. Almost every year since then, we have welcomed a team of dedicated, compassionate volunteers from around the world who have joined with us in providing the very best of health care to those who need it most.

Plans are in motion to host a ninth health team at Carpenter in November. We have been overwhelmed with the volunteers from around the world who have stepped forward to come and work with us in Ghana. This year is our largest team yet: our Canadian contingent alone is 47 members strong, and another 20 professionals are joining from various places around the world. Thanks to the Canadian Jericho and Makbraneth Foundations, who are providing a matching donation to the team's fundraising.



November 2010



November 2011



November 2016



November 2015



April 2013

Faithful Friends and Partners

We cannot talk about Canadian commitment to our work without mentioning the members of GRID's Canada and USA Boards who have served so tirelessly with us over the years. These men and women have fearlessly visited our program areas in times when the accommodation offered few of the comforts of home! They braved the heat and unusual food and cultural differences with cheerful hearts and a desire to join what God was doing in this corner of the world. All we can do is say a heartfelt "thank you" to these faithful friends.



Former board members Doug and Ella Porter in Janga in the early years.

The GRID and NEA Boards in Ghana



Doug and Virginia Webster trained pastors and lay leaders in Carpenter.



Brigitte (pictured here with a patient) and Jacques Lapointe have served with several health teams.

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Donate

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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