

We are so lucky to have all of our supporters – and I hope you know how very much we need and value your help. We couldn't manage without you. And many of you have become our friends. My thanks to you all. *Lynne Symonds*

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS 2011

We have built at:

- Karaga - our sixth Vocational School and provided all the equipment.
- Lukula, our very large primary school, simple accommodation rooms for teachers.
- Kalinka a village school.

We have completed repairs at:

- Miepegu village school.
- Kpatorigu (near Lukula) and rebuilt most of the school.

We have supplied:

- a vehicle: strong and robust to withstand poor tracks and floods.
- catering equipment for Walewale & Karaga Vocational Schools.
- desks to neglected primary schools at Sakpega, Zooyiri, Skpala, and Mempeasem, that are all 'overseas' (these are large remote areas frequently completely cut off by floods - other charities do not attempt to go there, so our involvement is vital).

Funding, sponsorship and partnering:

- Continued to recycle loans to five women's groups, enabling more women to send all their children to school and move their families out of poverty.
- Funded loans of sewing machines, to seven graduates from Buipe and Daboya Vocational Schools and set up a better system to monitor their progress.
- Received funding to replace some sewing machines at Daboya and Walewale.
- Have promise of Funding towards a three-classroom school at Gbenfu Village School.
- Strengthened our partnership with other Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs).



Congratulations to our patron Oona King who now has the title 'Baroness King of Bow'.

Gordon Bennett

.....yes, that's his name! A Sunderland Rotarian. His club made a generous donation to kick-start our funding for the new girl's hostel at Karaga. I was talking to Gordon about the problem of roof damage, caused by high winds and storms. His expertise is building and he has produced details of some easy to action changes that our builders in Ghana are trying out. Well done Gordon—you should feel very proud. *Lynne*

STOP PRESS;!!!!

FUNDING FOR HOSTEL AT KARAGA VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

The Eagle Foundation, the generous foundation that helped us to build the vocational school at Karaga, is funding a hostel for girls.

Together we are building education
www.wulugu.co.uk

Patrons: Baroness Chalker of Wallesey Baroness King of Bow Baroness Shepherd of Northwold

A reflection on our work.....by UCL PhD student Raphael * from Ghana.

We have heard about poverty in Africa through the media. We see pictures and photographs and have heard stories recently about Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan. In fact, people there are not just living in poverty, they are right in its grip. This is what we call the poverty trap.

This situation is real. I have lived and experienced it. As a child in a family of 11, I was restricted to less choice. The family shared one room and ate the same food for lunch and super. I had one shirt at times, for church and other outings. Being in the poverty trap is like being chained, bottled and sealed in poverty. Afflicted with hunger, poor hygiene, nakedness and disease, you cannot do anything to free yourself and escape it. You feel ashamed, unconfident, demotivated and unlucky to be born in Africa.

One might wonder “why not work hard to escape this situation”? Yes, this good question needs to be answered. Some things are beyond the control of the poor: drought, flooding, politics and war. That is why they feel unlucky. The chains need to be broken, the glass bottle finally smashed. They need to be empowered and liberated from the claws of extreme poverty by someone from outside their environment.

Empowering and liberating people from the poverty trap doesn't just mean sending them food today and leaving them hungry tomorrow. Education is the key. I was empowered and motivated by education: my parents had to sell treasured inherited family jewellery to send me to secondary school in the city, but as a result I gained a scholarship to University of Humberside and am now a research student in London, where I live with my family. Education gives hope and opportunities to the needy and desperate poor. They know education is the key to unchain them.

Wulugu is not bureaucratic – the workers are volunteers so no money is spent on wages, and Wulugu consults the beneficiaries of their projects before deciding where the funds will go.

Parents, especially women need to be empowered to break the chains of poverty that bind their families.

This is what Wulugu project is doing in Northern Ghana. According to the International Fund for Agriculture and Development, this part of the country has about 87% living in poverty. As a research student in poverty and rural development, I have been following the works of Wulugu for a year now, and am amazed at how the project has managed to establish and renovate 30 schools. Most importantly, they have opened six girls' vocational schools which give girls the skills they need to earn their livelihoods. Millions of dollars are spent by international development agencies in developing countries every year, but I can confidently tell you that bureaucracy wastes a large percentage of this amount. Funds are also sometimes misdirected to projects that don't benefit those they aim to help. This is not the case with Wulugu. They would greatly appreciate any little help you can give.

Wulugu project holds the key to unlock the chains of poverty in Northern Ghana.

In recognition of their appreciation, the people of the area have appointed the founder, Lynne, a 'development queen' – a traditional title equivalent to Minister for Development.

**Raphael Aidoo is a PhD student, studying the impact of Development Chiefs in Ghana—and Lynne as Chief of the Mamprusi and Gonja peoples, together with our work, form part of his research.*



PHOTO A: Youngsters waiting for school at Gbenfu
(You can buy this photo as a card - see later)

LEARNING IN THE FRESH AIR IS GREAT FUN!

However, the sun is often too hot to bear and there is no shade from trees. With no shelter classes are cancelled by wind, rain or dust storms. The following article on Gbenfu illustrates how important teaching buildings are for effective education and the need for Wulugu to raise funds and invest in buildings.

Raising funds for Gbenfu School

When we visited Ghana in 2010, a delegation from Gbenfu village travelled a very long way to appeal to us to help in their village. While Ghana is doing what it can to improve education, it is often 'Wulugu Project' that can actually deliver in these most inaccessible districts.

Karimu Nachina, our Project Coordinator (unpaid) in Ghana says:

'Gbenfu primary school was opened in 1961 but since then the students have been studying under sheds made out of grass. Ten years ago they erected a 3 class room pavilion for them. The locals built mud walls to close up the pavilion but these walls constantly break down during the rains.

When the Gbenfu people heard that Wulugu project was building a vocational school in Sawla in 2008 and I was in charge, they sent a delegation to me inviting me to come and see the school which I had started in 1961. I saw that the school had no building but had 6 classes P1 to P6 with a total enrolment of 362. They put in a formal application to Wulugu Project for at least a 3 class room block. Since then they keep reminding us every year and still pleading for the class room block.

The plight of the pupils becomes very pitiful during the rainy season; with the slightest sign of cloudiness, classes are disrupted and the children run home so I highly recommend that if we can get funding it will be better to give them a 3 class room block with furniture.'

We need £14,000 to build, furnish and equip this school. It will transform the lives of the children and their families and give real hope for the future. Our track record clearly shows that where we make schooling more possible, numbers of girls attending regularly improve dramatically. In our corner of the world we are successful in moving towards meeting The United Nations Millennium Development Goals. With more funding we could do much more.

Help from out of the blue

My name is Becky Zhao and my friend is called Priya. We go to James Allen School in London. In June 2011, we were given the chance to be part of a project on the website www.thebiggive.org.uk/. We had to choose a charity on the website, and make a presentation on it explaining why it is a worthy cause. As you have probably guessed, the charity we chose was the Wulugu Project; but we focused on one of their particular projects, Returning girls from Slavery in Northern Ghana.

We were really taken with all the aspects of the charity, and really felt for the stories of the girls that had been helped. I managed to get in contact with Lynne Symonds. Eventually, we won the top prize, and managed to get a good amount of money (£100) for this charity. I am grateful for Lynne's help and am happy me and my friend could make a difference.

Wulugu Project is registered with The Big Give Organisation, set up by Alex Reed, for a number of projects so do 'look us up' and direct your friends to the site. We were able, two years ago, to match-fund some donations through this site to the benefit of Wulugu Project. I understand that each time our site gets a hit it raises our profile so if you have a moment do please check us out.

Update on the Wulugu 100 Club

The 100 Club steadily goes from strength to strength even in these times of economic downturn. We are now 125 strong, with most members paying by standing order which saves us further postage for reminders. We had four draws throughout the year and some members kindly reinvested their winnings in further numbers! For just £12 per year you too could be a winner. Anyone interested in joining can contact me at: Whitehouse Farm, South Burlingham, Norwich NR13 4EU (01493 750391)

I look forward to hearing from you if you are not already a member of this method of supporting the Wulugu Project. (or complete the form at the bottom of this newsletter)

Mary D Williams (marydwilliams@hotmail.co.uk)

A Personal Journey by Martin Ephson in 2010*

My relationship with Wulugu goes back almost 15 years, when a Norwich based business associate of mine put me in touch with Lynne Symonds. Lynne's story of helping educate the most vulnerable children and adults in one of the poorest regions on the planet was compelling.

Despite scarce resources, Wulugu has grown from a single school project to 18 primary schools and 6 vocational schools, benefiting over 8,000 pupils at any one time. Over the last three years our charity, 'The Martin and Eugenia Ephson Educational Trust', contribution has been the extension blocks to 2 primary schools and 1 vocational school, plus the provision of hundreds of locally produced desks. Clearly it was time to get down to Ghana, visit the schools and meet the people.

Last November, after much planning, my friend Tom and I arrived via in Tamale, Ghana's northern capital and our base for the next few days. Met by Karimu, the face of Wulugu in Ghana, we were immediately won over by his easy going charm, which belies the formidable organisational skills of the retired regional Educational head. That evening, over a dinner of simple but delicious local stew and yam, we learnt about the myriad of difficulties to be overcome, about the people and even politics of the Northern region.



Marcelena Ada: Head of Sawla Vocational School

By 6am on day 2 we were on the road to Sawala in two 4x4s, laden with a huge supply of water to see us through the 40C heat. The road quickly deteriorated into a dirt track and after five bone shaking hours we arrived at Sawala Vocational School, a boarding school for 180 girls. What a wonderful surprise it turned out to be. The welcoming headmistress, Marcelena, proudly showed us around her well ordered school departments (dressmaking, weaving, printing, hairdressing, IT and catering).

Back in Tamale it was early to bed, in readiness for the following day's 6am departure. Similar roads to the previous day took us on a circuitous route to Lukula, a primary school with a new classroom block built in 2009. We were met by hundreds of children, ranging in age from 3 to 15. We were then treated to a full durbar with village chiefs and elders. After much drumming and dancing we were on our way back to Tamale with wonderful gifts including live guinea fowl!

It's not often one drives for many hours without meeting another vehicle, but that's what happened to us, although we did meet a lone motorcyclist. The rider had been dispatched from the village of Bupe with gifts for us. Why, because we had contributed to a classroom block extension in 2008, but had been unable to visit due to floods.

This wonderful gesture of appreciation, along with the welcome we got wherever we went, summed up the incredible level of gratitude that these communities have for our collective efforts to make a difference to their lives. We left Tamale in awe of Karimu's and Wulugu's achievements determined to do more for the charity and humbled by the wonderful people we met.

**Martin is a long-term supporter and critical friend of Wulugu.*

Now Lukula Teachers have Somewhere to Live

Being a teacher in Northern Ghana is not an easy option. For women, the challenges of lack of a safe place to stay, together with absence of any basic amenities and little contact with the outside world, make working here an unfavourable option.

But how can we continue to reverse the trend of low school attendance by girls without any role models? It is important to remember that less than one percent of all heads of households have any education, so there is no tradition of schooling, particularly for girls.

We have been very fortunate to have had further help from Martin, who recognised this problem during his visit (see above) Now there is a new six-roomed block for teachers, and the future for girls in Lukula looks even brighter . Thank you Martin.

Desks and more desks

A very supportive partner charitable foundation that had helped us with a great deal of life-improving changes continued their support this year. We are constantly asked to make derelict schools reusable—and it is something we do very well. In 2010 we rebuilt 4 Junior High Schools at Yaraga, Kuboro, Wantania, and Kalinka. (Junior High Schools provide the link for some children from the basic 6 year village schools to gain 4 more years education and a chance of a scarce place at a Senior Secondary School or a vocational school.)

In 2011 we used their generous donation to provide desks for some of the many village schools, some repaired by Wulugu and some ignored by government, that really needed desks. Sakpega, Zooyiri, Skpala and Memspeasem are all very remote villages known to be 'overseas'.



The fifth school we provided desks for was Buipe Academy Junior High School, which we had built in 2008 but been unable to afford desks for the whole new school at the time.

We built over 500 desks with this donation. That's a seat for over 1,000 students this year and for many years to come.



All Saints living up to their name!

Our six vocational schools for girls provide a long-term route out of poverty for some of the most neglected communities in Northern Ghana.

But apart from building and staffing, we need a good supply of equipment for all courses. Equipment needs mending and replacing and increasing as the numbers of girls increase and expendable materials have to be available. While some of this is made possible by careful management, we do need to fund all our courses.

We would like to thank sincerely the Trustees of 'All Saints Educational Trust' who have supported us staunchly for several years. It is no understatement to say that they have helped us to improve lives for hundreds of girls and their families.



PHOTO B: Friends enjoying sewing at Savelugu Vocational School
(You can buy this photo as a card - see later)

Wulugu Cards (PHOTOS A, B and C)

This year we are printing 3 cards that you can see in this newsletter. They are: A - "Youngsters waiting for school at Gbenfu", B - "Friends enjoying sewing at Savelugu Vocational School" - C "Proud to be training at Savelugu Vocational School". They are 6" by 4" on stiff white card with no message inside and we will sell them at £4.00 for 10, posted without envelopes. Hopefully you might find them useful throughout the year to show your friends a snapshot of what Wulugu Project does.

Please send a cheque (payable to Wulugu Project) and your selection to: Jane Scott, 8 Camberley Road, Norwich NR46SJ



PHOTO C: Proud to be training at Savelugu Vocational School
(You can buy this photo as a card - see above)

Friends

We are so lucky to have so many friends in UK who help us with their time as well as their money. There is a growing army of book sellers, jam and biscuit makers, artists, musician, and quizmasters. Speakers who direct their professional fees Wulugu's Way. Friends who remember Wulugu at their celebrations and at their passing. Friends who generously give of their skills. Together we have achieved such a lot.

How we helped another school back to life....

January 2011: Wulugu Project asked to restore Kpatorigu school

Our application to donors explained that Kpatorigu is about 52 miles West of Tamale, but distance needed to cover to reach this is much greater as the route is convoluted due to the Volta. The road is a very poor lorry road, but we have much experience of working in this region.

There is no electricity. The nearest other primary school is 10 km away.

Three of the rooms had no roof and needed to be replaced. All six rooms needed to be plastered and re-floored. The shutters which were broken beyond repair had to be replaced by designed block windows. The doors had to be changed. The school had no toilets as is common practice in all other schools in the district.

Much of the labour would be local and Wulugu Project is seen as a good 'employer' as, though we only pay the going rate for the job, when the job is well done, we do pay promptly. Work finished is paid for within 2 weeks. This is almost unheard of in Ghana. The parents were expected to provide all the unskilled labour and water for the project.

In the future we hope to provide dual desks for this school.

June 2011: 'Kitchen Table Trust' generously stepped in to fund this work

Our masons and carpenters worked quickly to ensure that the children could get back into school as soon as possible. For girls, a collapsed school often means the end of their education, as they are sent to help with growing food, selling, or helping with siblings. Now they are all back in school and numbers are continuing to grow.

We are thrilled with the repairs we have made to this derelict primary school at Kpatorigu. We can do this at very low cost as we are able to negotiate strongly with the craftworkers and suppliers—and we don't do corruption!

As with most of our projects, this school is so distant from any major centre, and so tough to travel to, the normal sources of support do not exist.

WULUGU MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE...a fivefold increase in pupils enrolled between 2007 and 2011!

The enrolment figures for eleven of our schools in 2011 was 3,340 compared to 576 at the same schools in 2007. Of the 3,340 pupils about 50% are girls.

A Flourishing School: Walewale Vocational School (The very first Vocational School we opened in 2004)

Working in such difficult and neglected districts is both challenging and a bit of a roller coaster experience. Our first vocational school for girls is a prime example of this—but, as always, we listen, learn, improve and usually triumph.

This school is greatly improved recently, largely due to an excellent new head John Razak. He is introducing more courses and persuading colleagues from other schools to come and teach after class. He contacted World Vision who dug a new bore hole and who are advertising the school in 'overseas' areas and will, we hope, sponsor students. ("Overseas" areas are so named as they are completely cut off during the rains. We do much of our work here.)

The teachers are all being paid—not the norm. The school is registered with the National Vocational training Institute and Ghana Education Regional Office.

Girls are well taught and very happy with school and hostel. They do apprenticeships in dressmaking and typing. A church has given the school the job of making dresses for their Choir! We are starting a very popular catering course here so that girls can learn about food, nutrition and storage and cooking, presentation and service.

45 girls, age 16-28, are currently in the hostel—electricity and fans working. Some are illiterate but being helped. Some of the girls are married—the head talks to husbands re the benefits of education to the whole family.

Where it all began—Wulugu Secondary School

This is where our work started—and 'Wulugu' village gave us our name. This may have been a mistake as some still think that we only work in Wulugu—unaware of the life improvements we have made for hundreds of the remotest villages where the most neglected peoples struggle to simply exist.

Our work is often catalytic—promoting and encouraging more—and Wulugu Secondary is a testimonial to this. We have helped over the years with repairs, desks, computer equipment, sports equipment, an experimental garden and pig and rabbit unit. The school is central to many community activities, including those aimed at health improvements.

We built our first hostel for 120 girls here, back in 1996. It has been packed ever since and now the PTA had doubled its size! The school is building a boys hostel and new classrooms. A new library is being built—will this mean the end of the 'Lynne Symonds' Library? (For many years the best in the region—with books supplied by 'Wulugu')

The new, since 2009, headmaster James Amassa Senna approaches his role with much enthusiasm. He is very proud of his students and his school. There are now 987 students in the school, 40% of whom are girls.

There are some difficulties for the students as they have to bring or buy food and are often hungry especially at the end of the season, but it is good to know that World Vision and Camfed and The Commonwealth Education league are supporting some girl students.

OUR FINANCES

During the financial year ending 30 April 2011 we invested £119,000 directly in our work in Ghana. Our UK expenses were only £1,700. The year before we invested £57,000 and our UK expenses were £1,400.

97p... the amount we aim to invest directly in Ghana for every £1 you donate.

For every pound you donate to Wulugu Project, we aim to invest at least 97p directly to our vital work of building education in Ghana.

Wulugu is very proud that so much of our money goes directly to Ghana and so little on UK administration.

Forthcoming Events

30th November 2011: Bumper Book and Classical CD sale at 8 Camberley Road, Norwich.NR4 6SJ (10.00am -8.00pm) Refreshments available all day. Entrance free.

19th February 2012: Quiz at Hethersett Old Hall School. 7.00 for 7.30. Including drink on arrival, 2 course hot supper and coffee. Teams 6-8 Tickets £12.

24th November 2012: Wine Tasting Evening with Paul Tholen, Master of Wine at Hethersett Old Hall School. Details to be announced.

Book sales at North and South Burlingham and Mannington Hall throughout the year.

TO MAKE A DONATION OR JOIN OUR 100 CLUB

I wish to contribute to the Wulugu Project.....

I wish to join the Wulugu 100 Club (membership £12).....

I enclose cheque for £.....(made payable to Wulugu Project)

Name and address:..... E-mail:.....

.....

..... Phone No:.....

Are you a UK taxpayer? If so, every £1 you give could be worth £1.25 to us, helping to fund vital work at no cost to you. All you need to do is tick this box. Yes! I would like the tax to be reclaimed on any eligible donations. I confirm that I pay an amount of UK income or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that Wulugu will reclaim.

giftaid it

For information on any of the topics in this newsletter or to make a donation of time or money please contact the Wulugu Project, Church Farm, Gt Melton, Norwich NR9 3BH, visit our website or 'phone the Chairman on 01603 453750

Together we are building education

www.wulugu.co.uk

The Wulugu Project is the operating name of the "Wulugu Project Ltd" a company limited by guarantee. Registered in England & Wales: registration number 5381114