



MY THANKS - A CHALLENGING YEAR

This year has been challenging with so many in need across a changing and uncertain world. Despite this we have managed significant investments in two schools, contributed to the cost of materials for Vocational Schools and built two boreholes.

I am particularly proud to report that a group of former female pupils of Lukula schools, built many years ago by WULUGU, have stepped forward to start a community based basic healthcare service. The girls are all now qualified health care practitioners and want to use their expertise to improve health for their home district. We, together with Kitchen Table Charitable Trust, are delighted to offer our assistance for this self-help forward thinking group (see page 5).

We need and appreciate everyone who is part of our support team. There are far too many organisations and individuals for us to mention separately - and several supporters much prefer anonymity.

A big thank you to all for your support. *Lynne Symonds*

[Our success really is down to the incredible dedication of our volunteers in Ghana and UK](#)

WHY WULUGU WORKS

We have always worked in equal partnership with those who will benefit - from women’s groups to MPs. Professor Hamza Adam, MP for Kumbungu sent a message recently. It shows the depth of co-operation of the locals and how much our work is appreciated:

“...we are most grateful for the numerous school blocks and the opportunity to work closely together as we, in our little way, mobilise the community to support with water, food, accommodation, digging and gravelling. We thank you for the opportunity.

Most importantly, your support with so many bore holes has alleviated the pressing water needs. I must assure you that we are grateful beyond words and will do all we can to protect and maintain these projects.

I know your work is daunting and resources are a serious challenge. On behalf of the chiefs and people of Kumbungu and on my own behalf please accept our sincere thanks and gratitude....”



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GREETINGS FROM SOLOMON OUR BRILLIANT LEADER OF OUR WORK IN GHANA

Time flies. All too soon Christmas is almost here again reminding us of the hope we have in the anticipation of seeing our loved ones and sharing with each other. This hope is anticipated every year by one and all. In the life of WULUGU, it is a time to reflect on the uncertainties that engulf the needy.

Sadly, and without warning, Covid-19 changed lives. For us, it both increased the need as well as reducing our capacity to meet the unfulfilled needs. Perhaps understandably it seemed to cause donors to limit and redirect their priorities so reducing our funding. Then, when we thought Covid-19 was giving way to a new hope, the Russian-Ukraine war raised its ugly head. Sadly followed by turmoil in other parts of the world.

Despite the problems, WULUGU as always through hope, is still putting smiles on the faces of communities in need. Recently, over 200 desks were provided for schools without desks and two dilapidated schools were completely renovated for a community previously without hope. Many remote and neglected villages are still hopeful someday, somehow that they will get their fair share of projects that are so badly needed and they so deserve.

On a personal level my wife Jane is being promoted and will be Director of Education for the Girl Child Education in the Northern Region. Our family have proudly been able to put this into practice for many years, making Jane extremely well experienced and qualified for this vital role, thanks to our family's involvement in this sector of which we are very proud.

Meanwhile, our eldest daughter, Pearl is fortunate to be sitting her International General Certificate of Secondary Education exams. Coincidentally we have recently opened a school named after a lady named 'Pearl' in the UK and funded by her family.

The hope of achieving quality education for our underprivileged is increasing. Through the coming year and beyond, we are hopeful that better days will come and that a new dawn will bring this hope with more projects to put smiles on the faces of more needy children.

Our sincere thanks go to our benevolent donors who sacrifice a great deal to continue to bring this hope to these deserving communities and children. Also to Team UK for your continued patience and hard work in making all these wonderful things happen to brighten up the lives of those in need.

We send you all greetings at this Christmas time as we wish you a blissful and Merry Christmas followed by a prosperous new year with a new hope in the coming year.

Solomon Nachina

MANY MORE DESKS ARE NEEDED

A classroom without desks doesn't help pupils to learn. Particularly older students who really need something to write on and a seat. There is always a shortage of desks in Northern Ghana.

This year we have provided a magnificent number of desks, thanks to Tony, one of our most helpful supporters, together with Seaburn Rotary Club in Sunderland.

To make the desks, wood has to be transported up country to Tamale as little is available in the North. They are then put together by our carpenters. If the school they are going to is a difficult journey from Tamale, the desks are assembled on site rather than making them in the city.

Our desks are tough and durable costing less than £30 each. Funding is always needed - if you can fund just one desk it helps - please contact us for further information and how you can help.



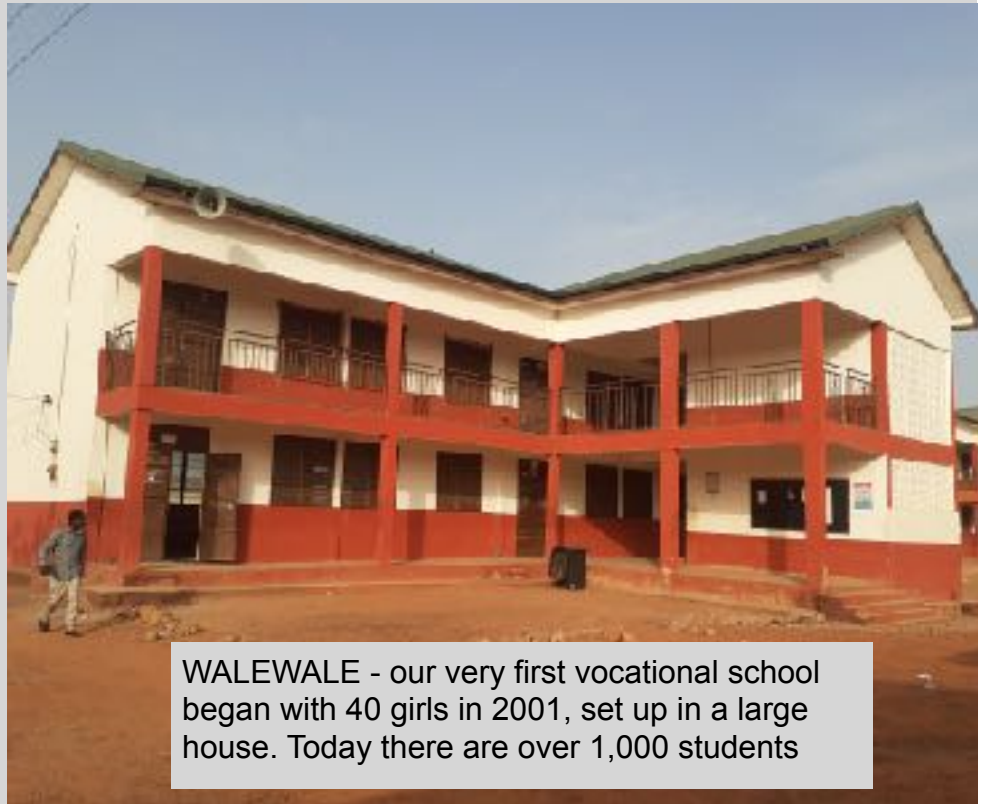
VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

All Saints Educational Trust (ASET) have generously continued to help our girls in our Vocational Schools. Many of these girls have been brought back from working in menial jobs such as cleaning, where they were often treated as slaves. They were fed, slept on the floor and paid very little if at all. Many were illiterate with a bleak outlook for the future. We are proud that, over many years, we have transformed lives for countless girls.

Ghana is encouraging more students to take up vocational training courses rather than academic education, as practical skills are seen as the best route to improve themselves and to contribute to their communities. This has meant a major increase in students enrolling for our Vocational Schools. Unfortunately, the funding from the government for this has been insufficient for the practical experience and training they need. Theory is cheaper, but of little value without practical experience.

The schools do their best to help themselves by selling the products of catering, tailoring and batik lessons. This covers part of the raw material costs, but only part. Without ASET support things would be even harder so we are enormously grateful to them.

If you would like to help us with our vocational training work, we would be more than grateful. It ensures that girls are not consigned to lives of poverty. They marry later and have fewer children and are more able to feed them properly.



WALEWALE - our very first vocational school began with 40 girls in 2001, set up in a large house. Today there are over 1,000 students



VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS - RESEARCH BY UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA

We are fortunate that two post-graduates from the University of East Anglia are working to evaluate the long-term benefits of our Vocational Schools and boreholes in relieving poverty. The outcome of this research will assist WULUGU in its future plans and how we can best offer support to the many who wish to improve their lives.

This work is at an early stage, but Marina, one of the researchers says:

“...In my inspiring catchup with the principals at Walewale Technical School and Buipe Technical Institute, it was great to hear about the dedication of the teachers and of the students excitement and desire to learn in vocational schools which teach them the skills they crucially need in their futures. The skills taught, such as electrical engineering, construction, fashion design (and many more!) have encouraged many students to continue into higher education after studying at Walewale and Buipe. Many go on to set up their own businesses giving them greater independence and control of their futures....”

We are delighted that another student at the UEA is hoping to help us with the task of finding and applying for funding for WULUGU projects.

WULUGU RESPONDING TO THE NEED FOR CLEAN WATER TWO MORE BOREHOLES BUILT IN 2023



Scrapes dry out and become polluted.

WULUGU has reported in previous newsletters the success of boreholes to provide clean water for washing hands, as part of the prevention of transmission of Covid. Delighted villagers report that the boreholes have changed their lives - making easy access to clean water without carrying water from distant scrapes and wells.

But benefits are more than just Covid prevention and access to clean water. The clean water reduces the threat of diarrhoea, the main preventable cause of childhood deaths and other waterborne diseases like typhoid and cholera and malaria, whose mosquitos flourish in the open water 'scrapes' previously used for drinking water.

Covid is still knocking on the door of many villages in Northern Ghana, with very limited health care and very few vaccinations. Many villages are still in need of fresh water. WULUGU carefully vets every application for a borehole. A survey is first carried out. Each borehole is different: ease of access and location, electricity supply availability and geology are investigated.

If a borehole has been proven as viable the drillers move in with their drill, mounted on the back of a heavy truck also carrying the pipes to line the bore hole and a shiny stainless steel pump. They can bore, line and install a pump in about three days. Finally the water is tested for quantity, quality and purity before the next stage.

WULUGU builders accompany them to build the superstructure above ground. A 10,000 litre black poly tank is mounted on a block to store the water and simple pipework leads off it to a row of five taps fitted to a tiled wall. The whole area has a concrete base to stop spills from making the area muddy and unhygienic.

We are so grateful to all those who have made this possible. The latest two at Naamu and Kalbe, funded by Kitchen Table Charitable Trust, helped divert the spread of typhoid fever.

Naamu is a deprived community in the heart of the Salaga area which was, for many years, the centre of the slave trade in Northern Ghana. Many villages are still recovering from this. Inhabitants are farmers who cultivate yam and maize. The water situation in the area was dire especially in the rural communities where health facilities are non-existent.

Kalbe is a market centre and a hub for eighteen communities for trading of farm produce. The people are mostly peasant farmers and small traders. The women engage in shea butter production. They badly needed clean water.

The communities are so very grateful and the following quotes are typical of the many testimonials we receive:

“...not only solved our water problem, it has also reduced the number of sick cases especially among the children...the girls go to school early as they can fetch all the water they need the previous evening and not have to trek to the the dugout dam....the day I saw the water coming from the ground, I knew hope and a bright future was here for my remaining days on earth....our shea butter production can be done under clean good water to boost its hygienic quality....the borehole has made life and livelihood very meaningful as our young women can use clean water to cook and provide good drinking water for their families.....”

Clean water, taken for granted by us in the UK, is lacking in most of the villages in Northern Ghana.

We would be pleased to hear from individuals, or larger donors, if they are able to help with the financing this basic need for clean water.



RECOLLECTIONS BY LYNNE OF BEING “CROWNED” A CHIEF

While my husband was watching the coronation he reminded me of my first Chief making “crowning” ceremony (called “enskinment”). It lasted five days. Involved tough travel, very rough accommodation, heat stroke, thousands of people, beautiful hand-woven robes, numerous dancers and drummers and a reporter from The Times who told us he had never ever had such a tough time even with all the dangerous assignments he had carried out. He also collected a bladder parasite (not my fault).

My throne was made from huge goat-skin cushions (hence the term “enskinment”). My coronation feast was the raw innards of a just-slaughtered goat, brought in ceremony to me on a tray to select which organ I wanted them to prepare for me.



Lynne’s celebrations in Ghana on her 20th anniversary of enskinment in 2016

I was, and am, the only white woman chief of the Mamprusi people. Mamprusi are the second largest tribe in Ghana with amazing history. They live proudly in North Ghana in the Mamprugu Kingdom. The people are amongst the poorest and most deprived in Ghana - indeed in much of Africa. My tribespeople work hard to overcome the relentless poverty and are well aware that education, particularly for girls and women, is the most effective route forward. The people are clever and strong, but often live without proper medical care and insurmountable challenges to their attempts to make better lives for their children.

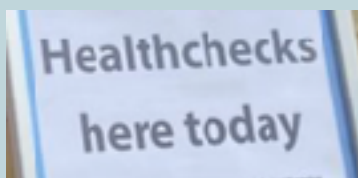
Over the years we have built a precious relationship of mutual trust and respect. The charity we set up 'The Wulugu project' is regarded by many as the most effective education-based charity in North Ghana. It is known for overcoming the norm of corruption and has built or substantially re-built almost one hundred schools. Its work in bringing uneducated girls and women back into vocational training has been used as a model of good practice in tackling slavery. It has an award from the world churches for helping keep peace.

I travelled back through Heathrow with piles of animal skins and my throne. They let me through!

STOP PRESS! As we went to print we were delighted to hear that Jane Scott, our Chair accepted the well deserved honour of being enskinned as village chief at Kanshegu. Her title is Maligu Napas. We are so very proud of her and look forward to hearing about the ceremony. (see page 8 for information about the UK team visit in November 2023.)

HEALTH TEAMS

Professionalised basic health care is lacking in Northern Ghana.



We were surprised this year to receive a request from a group of Lukula girls, who are qualified health practitioners, for assistance with setting up a community based basic healthcare service.

The first primary school established in the area was started in Lukula by WULUGU. In recent years it has produced a range of health professionals: eight medical doctors, sixteen physician assistants, twelve midwives, twenty four nurses and many other health personnel. Now they want to use their expertise to improve health for their home district.

Their plan is to provide a screening service for the most common diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, hepatitis, malaria and anaemia.

There is a population of over two thousand of which about one thousand are over fifty years and challenged with aging ailments. But the lack of basic check ups for preventable diseases often result in unnecessary complications and early deaths.

Kitchen Table Charitable Trust have kindly and generously agreed to help to set up a basic health facility. However, we would be extremely grateful for any funding to help support the purchase of consumables needed for this service - from basic needs such as paracetamol, bandages, syringes and test kits to drugs necessary for diabetes etc.

WULUGU HAS BUILT MANY SCHOOLS, VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS, HOSTELS FOR WOMEN TEACHERS AND GIRLS AND MORE RECENTLY TOILETS

Our work has continued in 2023 with Kpambegu and Vogu benefiting from WULUGU work.

Kpambegu Kpambegu Primary School needed urgent repairs to bring it up to a modern standard. Parents had been keeping their children at home because of the school being unsafe.



Kpambegu - before renovation



Kpambegu - after renovation

This has been a difficult year, with much to do, against a temporary drop in funding. We were delighted that The Clive Richards Charity generously stepped forward to part fund this project.

Kpambegu is fortunate in having had a school for nearly twenty years and has seen the positive benefits in poverty reduction and better health through education. The Chief, elders and parents have been very supportive of education and improving the lives of residents and their families.

The repairs needed were substantial and, once started, proved more extensive than expected. They included replacing broken wooden doors and windows with modern metal ones (weather and termite resistant), repairing cracked walls and building an apron around the building to protect the foundations from erosion by weather.

Vogu has never had a real school. Vogu is an extremely neglected rice farming community - forty percent have had no education. They had only a make-shift pavilion and held classes under the trees. In 2012 the PTA decided to take the matter in their own hands and began to build seven classrooms and a teacher/store room. Sadly, and predictably, their funds ran out approximately half way into the work. The rooms were part-built and unusable. Without a school there was little hope of children ever catching up to enable them to move from poverty.

The whole district has been uplifted by this renovation work, funded generously by Fondation Eagle, and parents are feeling more certain and hopeful about the future for themselves and their children. They know that proper completion of the Primary School means that their children can transfer to Junior High where they will be able to study for the examinations that lead to Senior High. They know that this route is a permanent road out of poverty.

Long term, many thousands will benefit directly, and many more indirectly. The PTA and Ghana Education Service will make sure that buildings are well maintained. Our work with many similar communities demonstrates that families respond to a 'real' school by regularly sending all their children, including all the girls, to school.

An additional benefit, thanks to Fondation Eagle, is clean water from the new village borehole.



Vogu - before - lessons under the trees



Vogu - learning is tiring in our new school!

UPDATE ON SCHOOLS COMPLETED IN 2022



The children are making the most of their splendid new opportunities thanks to the kindness of the Clive Richards Foundation

Fuo Ame Zion Last year we reported on plans to rebuild the Primary School and build a new Junior High with the help of The Clive Richards Foundation. The project is now complete and the children are making the most of their splendid new opportunities.

Several letters of appreciation record thanks from the local community:

“...I stand on behalf of all mothers of children who attend Fuo Zion to say thank you for proving to us that the poor also deserve better...without much to say I can only say thank you Wulugu Project for the gift of good environment of learning for our children....we the community people remain grateful to you forever...”

Kakoshi-Chokosi School - possibly the most wonderful gift ever. This amazing new school was a gift to David Hicks from his family. He knew nothing about it until he was presented with a book outlining the project from start to finish. It is impossible to imagine how David felt when he saw the photos of the completed school, with his name on the sign board.

The opening ceremony attracted all the peoples of the Savannah region, including the former President John Dramani Mahama. We were told: “his presence was a great inspiration and motivation for the young school children and seeing members of the current government and the past government together at the function was a good eye opener to understand that politics should not create bitterness and enmity”.

Eleven trees were planted around the school. The former President planted one as well as the member of Parliament, the DCE and the Director of Education.



SCHOOLS & FUTURE URGENT NEEDS

There is always so much to do. It costs around £55,000 to build a school. Some kind supporters have done that in memory of a loved one or as a splendid gift to a family member. These are wonderful but rare.

These are schools in desperate need of our help:

Matalope - badly needs a new school. Cost £50,000.

Pong Tamale Primary - a new school. Also needs a toilet block. Cost: £55,000.

Zagyuri - needs a new Primary school. Cost: £54,000.

Kpalyogu Primary School - a very remote community of fishermen and fishmongers along the banks of the white Volta - they badly need a building - all lessons are outside.

Zaguri - a village of peasant farmers and women who produce shea nut and butter - needs a new school. Cost £54,000.

We really need many people to help us in any way they can if we are to help more of the most deprived communities move out of poverty. Your support is invaluable to us.



Trade-Aid, run by the Rotary Club of Grantham and Kesteven, has come to our aid again with more Trade-Aid boxes for our Vocational Schools.



Students at our Vocational Schools benefit from learning to read and write and understand the basic numeracy that is needed for them to run their own small businesses. They also have lessons in entrepreneurship, basic computer skills, catering and tailoring.

Trade-Aid boxes provide the practical tools necessary to supplement their learning and ensures that students can set up their own business or obtain local work to support themselves and their families.



STOP PRESS!!! - Covid impacted most things including the usual biennial monitoring trip from UK. However, in November this year Jane Scott (Chair) and Lyn Haynes (long-time friend of WULUGU) managed a visit to Ghana.

They were welcomed at schools, inspected boreholes and held productive meetings with the Municipal Chief Officer for Savelugu, the MP for Salaga and many other local chiefs and PTA members.

Jane says: "Schools are about children: they were buzzing which was evidenced when they danced, sang, read poetry and presented speeches, with great aplomb. They really appreciate the opportunity that having a secure building for teaching and learning will have on their lives."

ANNUAL REPORT FROM OUR TREASURER HAROLD POND

This year we have been fortunate to receive a matching grant from The Clive Richards Charity which when added to our own funds has enabled us to carry out major repairs at the Primary School in Kpambegu. Our thanks also to All Saints Educational Trust for their grants for Vocational training. In addition, we have received further generous donations from one of our regular supporters which have enabled the further provision of desks, which are always in great demand.

Our ongoing thanks to all our generous supporters who have again enabled us to provide such greatly needed help to some of the poorest people in the Northern part of Ghana. Some of you are now supporting us by monthly standing order payments which greatly help us to budget our expenditure. Total standing order receipts are usually in the region of £700 per month.

If you do not already support us in this way, please consider doing so. Our bank details are 60-24-52 14643936 The Wulugu Project.

The 100 Club was relaunched in 2020 and a draw is made annually. If you wish to join, subscriptions are by standing order or online payment, either at £5 per month, or £60 annually. Please show "100 Club" as the reference. We hope that you may wish to join this new scheme and make it successful.

Some of you are still paying standing orders at the old 100 Club rate of £12 per annum. The old scheme was wound up in 2022 and any £12 amounts received since have been treated as donations.

Pay Online or By Cheque? Donations made online direct to our bank account or by standing order are the simplest method but of course cheques are still acceptable should you prefer to donate in this way. Donations can also be made online via our website using CAF Donate. Our website gives you more information on our work.

Address for postal donations is: The Treasurer, The Wulugu Project, 13 Fern Drive, Cringleford, Norwich NR4 7JT

HOW TO CONTACT US

We can be contacted at WULUGU Project, Church Farm, Great Melton, NORWICH NR9 3BH Phone: 01603 810748
E-mail: wuluguproject@gmail.com or The Chair, Jane Scott Phone: 01603 453750