



OVER 400,000 HELPED OUT OF POVERTY BUT STILL MUCH TO DO

Conservatively, in the past 23 years, we have helped over 400,000 of some of the poorest in the world to overcome the endemic poverty and deprivation - all for a few pounds per child.

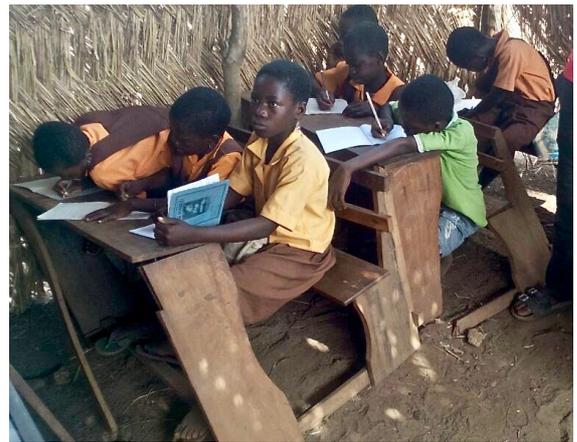
Our buildings - new and renovated - are approaching a hundred: schools... hostels for teachers....hostels for girls.....and so many toilet blocks! Plus income-generating loans....and desks....and libraries.and computers. The list of our achievements is long but there is still much to do - see the insert to this newsletter for the villages in desperate need of WULUGU help.

A welcome for the new desks at Kokpeng

Our involvement has always been about working closely with those who want to help themselves and their children to break free from poverty. Our deep friendships with the locals are not based on donor/recipient relationships - things would not work as well as they do if this were the case. But these friendships enable us to really understand what is needed and what is possible as well as enriching the lives of all who volunteer to help WULUGU to work.

Many thanks to you all, Lynne Symonds (Neesim Poanaba)

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Kochim Primary School "classrooms" 2017 - our help is needed to build a new school (see insert)

OUR NEW TREASURER'S VIEW OF WULUGU

It is now just over a year since I became Treasurer for WULUGU. Two things have amazed me during this time. Firstly, the realisation that money raised in Sterling in the UK and spent in Ghana goes much further than the same money would do here; not five times further, nearer twenty-five times further in some cases. Secondly, I have been amazed by what has been achieved both in the past and also in the last year.

With the help of our supporters, both individuals and grants, this last year alone WULUGU has been able to build a new Junior High School (Lukula page 6), complete another school where local funds had run out (Boamasas page 6), and a new Primary School (Koldani). This is in addition to carrying out major repairs to five existing schools and providing equipment to others. All of this sterling work is reported in this newsletter.

All this has been made possible by a small band of very enthusiastic people working together and with valued support of the communities that benefit. Many thanks to all who help, both here and in Ghana. *Harold Pond*

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HELP FROM WONDERFUL PEOPLE

Local fundraisers and helpers are the cornerstone of our funding. Our supporters and friends have again come up with some innovative and exciting ways to help this year.



Monkey dances for more education

Hugh, a Wymondham Rotarian and antique book and scientific instrument expert set his home up as a display area for a week. Hugh also has a collection of musical machines, including one with a dancing monkey. How tremendous that he uses these cheering instruments to help our work in Ghana. We are honoured.

Acupuncture helps both patients in UK and children get to school in Ghana

We were delighted, at Chinese New Year, to be contacted with a wonderful offer from a highly qualified Chinese medic, Dr Alex. Alex has a holistic approach to illness that many find very helpful. He kindly helped our work by contributing a proportion of his earnings for three months.

Fabulous Indian food helps us overcome the hunger caused by poverty

Aruna and Yashi organised an Indian Lunch together with a demonstration of how to wear a sari.

10 years on, Sue's latest 'big' birthday raises funds for WULUGU.

Last time Sue did this she was 10 years younger. She is still a youngster, brightening up lives here and in Ghana. Tremendous. (Sue shared a flat with Lynne while they trained to be teachers - a few years back!)

Street Party spreads happiness

Mike organised a street party and part of the proceeds were donated to WULUGU.

Enjoying Bridge and good company

Val has organised a winter bridge group of sixteen friends. Playing regularly they enjoy each other's company and at the same time support WULUGU.

Little Melton Mothers' Union

At a summer tea-party the warm-hearted ladies enjoyed cake and supported our work.



NORWICH CATHEDRAL ALMS COMMITTEE DONATION FOR DESKS

Since we began, we have benefitted from support from a variety of religious bodies, for which we are very grateful.

This year we were honoured to receive a grant from Norwich Cathedral Alms Committee, a special committee set up to distribute community giving at the Cathedral. This has been used to provide desks at Nagboo.



Samata Mahamadu - proud and busy with her new tailoring kit in Nagboo

ROTARY'S FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT

We are extremely grateful to the Rotary clubs, and individual members, who have helped us with our projects this year. Thanks particularly to those clubs in the North-East and Norfolk who have partnered with us for many years.

Grantham Kesteven Rotary continue to help us with their Trade Aid boxes - their tailoring kits have helped so many of our girls in their vocational training and then in setting up their own businesses. The difference this has made is spectacular.

This year ten more tailoring kits were safely delivered to one of our most recent schools: Karaga Vocational School.

Our new school at Nagboo, built last year, gave the community new hope, but the women still struggle to afford the most basic things, including food and school-wear. We were asked to make tailoring kits available for some of the women, to make it possible for them

to earn an income. This was an experiment for us but we are very pleased with the outcomes. The community are sending all their children to school now. The incomes for the women that come from using their Trade Aid kits are making life easier for all. Trade Aid are sending another greatly appreciated 10 tailoring boxes to help our Vocational schools.

In a thoughtful gesture, to celebrate his own 70th birthday, Wade Rowlett is donating a Trade-Aid Carpentry Box in memory of his father. He has written a letter to go in the box. The kit will help us tremendously and will be used by our Wulugu carpenter, John Nkansahto make his work easier.

ISABEL BUNTING: SUPPORTER AND TRUE FRIEND



Isabel Bunting was a true friend and supporter. We were fortunate that she agreed to be part of our management team and was a valued trustee. She died in January 2017 and we have received over £500 in donations in her memory. She had such wisdom and integrity, only speaking when she had something meaningful to say, and we were lucky to have her honest approach.

A PERSONAL NOTE FROM LYNNE

Many readers will be unaware that I am very lucky to be alive. The problem, a major heart rhythm disturbance caused by idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) that struck ten years ago, shortly after returning from Ghana and in the same week that I was dancing in an ice show (yes, really!) I won't go into detail here. After all, I was unconscious, my body cooled to prevent more damage - so I don't remember.

I have, thanks to the skill of medics, made a full recovery. I am told that this was against all odds. During my recovery time, WULUGU carried on regardless thanks to the teams in UK and in Ghana.

The point of this story is simple: in Ghana, there is no access to such tremendous medical help. Our co-founder, Karimu Nachina, died three years ago at a young sixty-seven because there was no heart angioplasty available anywhere in Ghana.

We have, in small ways, helped the fledgling medical school in Tamale (Northern Ghana) and we are improving health through education and the resulting poverty reduction. But with more help and income there is still much more we can do.

There are some examples in this newsletter of how friends have helped through fund-raising. We also need help, amongst other things, with writing bids, recording and publicising our work. Please call me if getting involved ever crosses your mind. I can promise you will never be bored and the reward is being part of truly life-improving team. *Lynne*

WULUGU - 23 YEARS IN A CHANGING WORLD

WULUGU is now 23 years old and we have achieved much:

- over 400,000 children helped to receive education
- over 6,000 students helped with vocational training
- 500 loans to mothers to help keep daughters at school and for business development
- over 40 schools built or renovated
- 1,000's of items of equipment: computers, desks, sewing machines, typewriters and looms

But the world has changed. When we began 'phones mainly did not work in Ghana. Letters were hand-written. We waited six weeks for a reply. The miracle is that anything was achieved at all.

Recently Lynne found a letter, dated 23rd January 1995, from Karimu Nachina (founding father of WULUGU who died in 2014) and head teacher at Wulugu school. At the time Lynne was a science teacher at a local Norwich school:

"I am very excited to hear someone is promising to raise moneyI feel links between my girls and yours will boost the morale of my girls and yours will learn of how people are trying to cope with very trying situations..... I have discussed with my home science teachers to write to yours so they will channel the letters through you. We really are in need and we will provide for the students what we can. The new hostel building is progressing steadily.

You wouldn't believe it but I lost as many as twelve girls through pregnancy last year alone. I want this building finished in record time for them."

Lynne comments:

"We exchanged letters as Karimu suggested and this still continues today in some schools. The hostel at

WULUGU has been packed ever since, and two more have been built.

At the same time as exchanging pupil's letters we were asked to help with much-needed books. Spare books were collected from UK schools and sent by the container load to Ghana. Many schools now have good libraries, the foundations of which are the WULUGU books collected from the UK. So this is how it all started."

This letter reflects our approach to involvement. We do not impose improvements or change. We listen to the communities, plan with them, and benefit from their honest interest and subsequent involvement. A recipe for success long-term and we know it works! *Lynne*



Where it all began: Lynne and Karimu in 2006 at the WULUGU library founded in 1994

THE RENOVATION CYCLE: THE HARSH ENVIRONMENT DAMAGES OUR BUILDINGS

We have reported in earlier newsletters how our school buildings are damaged by the harsh local environment: wind, rain, sun, termites, goats, cows and other village animals. We estimate that most of our schools will need to be on a ten to thirteen year renovation cycle. If renovation is not carried out the schools will fall into rapid decline, become unusable and impossibly expensive to bring back into commission.

We try to programme our renovation to avoid disrupting term times. This is crucial as, when a school closes for a while, many of the girls never return. The mothers get used to having them help with growing food, sibling care and carrying water.

During recent years we have taken advice and adopted, through our own experience, a strengthened building model and repair methods. We are proud that our schools are more resistant than many others. With relatively inexpensive and timely repairs we managed to extend the life of four schools in 2017, detailed below, at a total cost of £29,100:

Bawina Primary School

The Primary School at Bawina, built thirteen years ago, reached the stage of needing urgent repairs late last year. Bawina is a very neglected remote village in "overseas region" so-called as it is cut off by flooding for several months each year. There are two hundred and seventy children in the school at present, with equal numbers of boys and girls. We were very pleased to receive £9,000 funding for this, from Eagle Foundation, early in Nov 2016. Work was delayed by unusually prolonged rains, but began on 7th December and was complete by Jan 2nd 2017.

Tarabiat Primary School

We built this school in 2004 and it serves two hundred children with equal numbers of boys and girls. We were fortunate to be offered financial support for this project from INTO, a global charity, whose mission is to support projects that increase access to education and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Tarabiat needed repairs to walls, floors and windows and the doors need to be replaced by metal doors. The overall project cost was £7,100. The message below is from Solomon, our Ghanaian project leader, and demonstrate some of the challenges we face in working in such inhospitable and remote areas.



Damaged apron and foundations at Sayoo

"Works went on well with the local community supporting with food for the workers. Our building team have to live in the villages they work in so help with food is crucial. There are, of course, no shops!

We anticipated to get water supply from the women but, due to the farming season, they were all caught up in the farm work.

*Another challenge was the public announcement of the serious ill health of the Wasipe Wura**. This called for a cleansing of the town hence we had to break for a week."*

**The Wasipe Wura is the Paramount Chief (highest rank) of the Gonja Tribe (The main tribe in Tarabiat).

Sayoo & Nasyria Primary Schools

Sayoo and Nasiria villages were two of the first where we built Primary Schools back in 2003. Thanks to the generosity of Eagle Foundation we have been able to step in to make essential repairs costing £7,000.

Daboya Vocational School Hostel

The school hostel for the girls had suffered serious weather damage and needed urgent repairs. There are six classrooms and the girls hostel. We were fortunate to receive a grant of £6,100 for this work from TUSK.

Daboya, at Mole Game Reserve, is a community with a history of difficulties. Over 70% of the population live below the poverty line. The daily struggle to survive for the people of Daboya is often at odds with efforts to preserve and conserve Ghana's valuable savannah and wildlife populations. Years of basic human subsistence activities, including hunting and poaching and tree-cutting, have resulted in severe land degradation

and biodiversity loss. Education, particularly vocational training, provides the key to alternative sources of income, understanding the importance of conservation and preventing further environmental damage.

The unusually prolonged rains delayed the start of this work. As soon as the land dried out, the team were on site in January 2017. Daboya has a difficult history with tribal outbursts and killings. In early January 2017 there were some uprisings and panic due to chieftaincy dispute that meant our builders had to move immediately to safety until security forces stepped in to ensure peace.

The repaired hostel is now full, with 65 students.



Repaired apron and foundations at Sayoo



Naa Sheringa storm damaged roof 2016

STORM DAMAGE: WULUGU STEPPING IN WHERE NO-ONE ELSE WOULD HELP

Naa Sheriga Primary School, built in 2015, was badly damaged by unusually strong winds in late 2016. Regular schooling for the children was impossible. The head of the school, and elders of the village, had made desperate appeals without response. WULUGU was able to respond quickly, with the help of £14,000 funding from Eagle Foundation, and the school reopened for the new term in January 2017.

We used one of our tried and tested building teams for the repairs. The foreman reported:

"...the team had a very positive reception and locals helped with accommodation and food. New secure methods for strengthening the roof and attachments were planned and put into place. Any usable sections of the old roof were recycled by the villagers for chicken coups, repairs to mud huts and the like."

Pupil numbers have already increased to those pre-damage.

Until the current school was built in 2015, children learned under trees. Teachers were unskilled, education levels were poor. It was vital to the locals that this dramatic improvement was not lost by storm damage.



LUKULA NEW JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (JHS)

Lukula is typical of the communities we try to help: remote, a shortage of education facilities and a willingness in the local community to make things better.

Need and the Funding for a new JHS

An open-air JHS school was available in Lukula - weather permitting - for only 250 students. A further 250 students travelled or stayed 25 miles away at other JHS schools.

Sadly sending children, particularly girls, to stay with distant relatives usually means they end up working as virtual slaves and are not properly cared for. Daily travelling, often by bicycle, was the only option for many, but this is fraught with difficulty and particularly challenging in bad weather. These arrangements were far from ideal and many students were dropping out of the system.

The Ghana Education Service accepted the need for a new JHS, and already provided teachers for the 250 receiving open-air education. But in accordance with normal practice the Local District Assembly is supposed to build the new school. This was simply not possible for a very poor community with budgets stretched to the limits. This is where WULUGU was able to step in, together with funding from the Eagle Foundation, to provide a new three-classroom JHS.

Construction

Construction was planned to start late in 2016 but very adverse weather - another challenge for us in working in this often hostile environment - delayed the start with work eventually commencing on 2nd January 2017. The site, given by the Chief, was prepared and foundations dug and the reinforced apron constructed. The structure and the roof followed with completion of the classroom by 17th March 2017.

As is the case for all our school building the local community provides the labour as well as providing accommodation and facilities for our team. Much of this labour was provided by the village women who tirelessly carried the large quantities of water needed.

Outcomes

There are thirteen teachers covering Maths, English, ICT, Social Studies, Religion and Moral Education, Ghanaian Language and Design and Technology. Teaching ICT is tough as the school has no electricity, and being a long way from the grid is unlikely to have electricity for many years. We are exploring and helping with alternative solar energy sources so that ICT, so important for the future, is available to all.

The new school offers a life-line to a better life for several hundred pupils with a local accessible all-weather building that will last many years.



Boamasa before and after

BOAMASA SCHOOL: VILLAGE RUNS OUT OF MONEY

This is a sad story. Boamasa has never had a school, just some matting and branch temporary sheds. So the PTA decided to do everything they could. Parents all contributed and they really thought they could do it. But half way through the building, the money ran out. They pleaded for help and had such a good case WULUGU stepped in to complete the three-classroom school before the work they had done was destroyed by the weather.



Our new school windows crossing the Volta River

KOLDANI: AVOIDING A FOUR MILE CANOE TRIP TO SCHOOL

This remote village is beyond the Volta river but the nearest school, at Nawuna, is four miles away, involving a daily canoe trip. During the rainy season the river floods making this impossible and so the children miss four months schooling. The locals told us: "Down-hearted at their lack of progress, the pupils drop out and return to farming."

Some time ago the villagers themselves put up a three-roomed thatched 'school'. This is now totally dilapidated and unable to shelter the pupils or staff from the sun or the rain. They were desperate. So WULUGU, thanks to Eagle Foundation, is building a 3-room school on the edge of the village.

It is estimated by Ghana Education Services that a permanent school building will double the attendance to two hundred and fifty pupils and so we are looking for further funding to build three more classrooms and a toilet block. Another example of WULUGU helping those that are trying to help themselves.

NEW COMPUTERS FOR OUR VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS



Presentation of new computers to Savelugu Vocational School

An unplanned but extremely valuable meeting with this splendid charity brought a terrific offer of help with computers for some of our Vocational Schools. IT schools Africa is a UK-registered charity operating across four countries with a common vision to transform IT education in Africa. This facilitates children's education, enhances their job prospects and helps transform the wider economy: aims similar to WULUGU's

As a result we sent twenty-six machines to Ghana, loaded with relevant educational software, together with screens and leads.

Some of our schools, particularly Sawla, Walewale, Savelugu Buipe, are achieving amazing things in IT education. Teachers work so hard with limited resources and having good machines really motivates teachers and students.

It is important that our vocational girls, many who may have missed out on any early education and IT skills, can be given the chance they need to be part of the modern world. They are so keen and quickly learn and embrace new technology

LETTER OF GRATITUDE 21ST OCT 2017



Republic of Ghana

On behalf of Savelugu Vocational School, staff and students, I wish to express our profound gratitude to you for your kind gesture for presenting ten computers and accessories for the computer department.

We are therefore grateful to you for the donation and hope that this gesture would go along way in uplifting the school. May the Good Lord Richly Bless you abundantly.

Yours faithfully,

CRH
HARUNAH R. CYNTHIA
(ACTING PRINCIPAL)

OUR SUPPORTERS ARE GOLD-PLATED PEOPLE

We are lucky to have so many supporters to help us. One such supporter is Ross who recently sent us the following email:

"Do you get the feeling of constantly pushing a pea - or is it a boulder - up a very long hill? Perhaps when it all seems too much, as I'm sure must happen, you should pause and reflect with pride on all that you have achieved, and continue to achieve. You operate in such difficult conditions; changing local attitudes must be so difficult.... Hope that you continue to make useful progress in Africa - it must be so rewarding to see these young women progressing as a result of your initiatives."

WULUGU SHORT LISTED FOR CHARITY OF THE YEAR!

We were honoured and very surprised to be short-listed for the “Ghana UK Based Achievement Award (GUBA)” sponsored by UK-based Ghanaian companies. However, it was clear we had no chance of winning as this required large numbers of web votes from Ghana: an impossibility with the poor internet facilities in Northern Ghana.

Meanwhile, our teams in Ghana were glad to have been recognised by GUBA.

GHANA SCHOOL AID (GSA)

GSA is a tremendous organisation composed largely of dedicated people who were based in Ghana pre-independence.

This year they kindly gave us a grant to help with practical materials for one of our vocational training schools. Thank you GSA!



WALEWALE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL NOW 1,300 STRONG

Walewale was our first Vocational School for girls, opened in 2002 with just forty students. In the intervening years this, and our other vocational schools, have caused us some anxiety. Not least was the attitude of locals when the new ideal was “university for all”. However, today we are pleased to report that Walewale has 50 teachers and more than 1,300 students pursuing vocational training and education. Tuuli Linus, headmistress, tells us that:

“Many Graduates from Walewale are currently pursuing their education at the various tertiary institutions in the country. Others have the skills and qualifications needed for gainful self-employment eg in catering, fashion and design.”

The aim of the school is:

To promote excellence in Technical studies and career development in order to prepare students to enter and remain competitive in the global workforce.

VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS: TEACHER TRAINING PROGRESS

In Northern Ghana there is virtually no training available to trainers, teachers or heads working in the vocational sector. With our schools being so remote there are few opportunities to meet, exchange ideas and learn from colleagues. Three years ago we developed an innovative training programme.

- Listening to and discussing with local groups of teachers and students.
- Trialling two pilot projects to establish the content of the programme.
- Running two day hands-on training sessions involving students.

We’ve had lots of positive feedback:

‘I think I am a better teacher now. The mock-up sessions and observations we set up were so helpful’

‘At the start I was afraid. I nearly ran away. It has made me feel much better about my work and more confident and stronger’

‘In the end we could see that we were all helping each other. Our teachers work so hard. If we can help them, it must be good’

This three-year, very successful, training programme is now coming to an end. This was kindly funded by All Saints Educational Trust and The Ferguson Trust.



Students and their teachers learning together



WHY WE WORK SO WELL

Many find the extent of our achievements surprising, given the tremendous challenges of Northern Ghana. Our close relationships with the communities enables much more to be done with our limited funds. Through building education, tens of thousands have escaped from poverty. We still are dis-counted by larger donors, even with our unchallengeable track record. But we are so very fortunate, and really depend on, our loyal following of supporters who provide regular funding enabling us to help those who want to help themselves.



**eagle
foundation**

Wulugu project is privileged to be supported by The Eagle Foundation. They have helped us in so many ways. They are helpfully critical, taking time and care to work with us to ensure that their kind funding is put to the very best of use in ways that will help maximum numbers of the most under-privileged to permanently move from unimaginable poverty and distress. They are aware of the enormous obstacles involved in working in the most inaccessible and neglected

districts in Northern Ghana, and of the real dangers. We greatly value their trust and friendship, together with other caring partners who come back time and time again to help, including Rotary, INTO, TUSK.



INTO GIVING

There is still much more to be done and we would welcome suggestions of other funders who might enable us to achieve even more.

To all of you a big thank you!

Lynne

NEWS & THANKS FROM SOLOMON IN GHANA



“Elections

Ghanaians once again went to the ballot in December 2016 to elect a new President and parliamentarians. The contest was mainly between the two main Political Parties: the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress. NPP won the elections and promised that education would be free for all pupils up to Senior High School (age of 14years).

The election campaign promise is now being implemented. This will put pressure on Primary schools and Junior High schools throughout the Country as every parent knows that at least up to Senior High School, no child will pay any fees.

However, the School infrastructure is woefully inadequate. Government and Local District Assemblies with all the good intentions cannot meet the ever-growing demands. The surge of applications to WULUGU from communities for blocks is unbelievable and we will do our best to help.

2017 A fruitful year and hope for 2018

As you will see from this newsletter 2017 has been a fruitful and busy year for WULUGU.

We have a great team here all working assiduously to maintain the integrity and standard of WULUGU.

It is however a very challenging job to volunteer in this part of our world. The system does not allow you to have things sail smooth as we would have wanted especially when it comes to dealing with official bureaucracy.

The challenges however cannot override our successes chalked and we get a sense of fulfilment when we reflect and pass by some of our accomplished projects that have been success stories and the great feeling of inner joy to know that we have been part of that success is more reward than a “Billion dollars”.

We are looking forward to a much fruitful 2018 and want to take this opportunity to thank Neesim Poanaba and her team: Jane Scott, Janice, Trish, Harold, Leo, Roger, Mike and Mary at WULUGU, Eagle Foundation, and all our donors and partners.

We want to take this opportunity to thank you and wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy Prosperous New Year. “

Solomon Joseph Nachina **WULUGU Ghana Co-ordinator**

HOW TO CONTACT US

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