

THE WULUGU PROJECT

IMPACT REPORT

**LEARNING
TO BEAT
POVERTY IN
NORTHERN
GHANA**

“Before you came to our aid we had **no hope**. Our young girls ran across the border thinking they could be rich. They were **taken as slaves** and came home when they were so sick they could no longer work. They **came home to die**.”

QUOTE FROM HON. ISSAC MUMUNI DRAMANI
DISTRICT CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SAWLA DISTRICT, NORTHERN REGION, GHANA

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The WULUGU Project began in 1993 following a chance meeting between Lynne Symonds, a chemistry teacher in Norfolk, and Karimu Nachina, a head teacher from Ghana.

Lynne was touched by the stories of extreme poverty, the lack of education, particularly for girls, and of children kept at home because there was no money to buy an exercise book, pencil or school uniform. Lynne decided to do something: raising funds for Wulugu School, from which the charity took its name.

Karimu has continued to oversee and take responsibility for all our projects in Ghana.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER: LYNNE SYMONDS

From small beginnings in 1993 to the enormous difference we make today, our aim is, through education, to enable people themselves to tackle the devastating problems of poverty, malnutrition and disease.

We know and are known by those who can make a difference in their own villages, and who are ready to make the most of a chance to work in partnership with us to kick-start the changes they want to achieve. For over twenty years, with relatively small amounts of financial assistance, we have helped over 200,000 children to receive an education.

We have built new schools and hostels, repaired collapsed schools and provided furniture and equipment: over 3,000 double desks, many books, looms, computers, sewing machines and other equipment, team kits, bullocks and ploughs.

We have learned much in the past twenty years since our arrival in Northern Ghana: to only embark on projects that are initiated by locals and have the approval and blessing of community leaders and to keep a close eye on monitoring project progress and costs. Back in the UK we run an efficient office, using volunteers, ensuring that we achieve our aim of spending 98p for every £ donated, on the ground, changing lives in Ghana.

Our vision is to build on the foundations of local involvement and efficient management and make a reality the hopes of the local communities to make malnutrition, disease and poverty a thing of the past.

With your help we can make an even bigger difference in the future. I guarantee that, no matter how much you are able to spare, in time or money, you will make a real difference to a part of the world in desperate need of help.

I hope, that having read about our achievements, you will be able to offer your support: please contact us to make a donation or to seek further information - details on the back page.

Finally, I could not let this occasion pass without a big thank you to everyone who has helped us on this remarkable journey. We hope you feel proud to be involved.

With my love and thanks to each of you.

Lynne Symonds

TOP SIX CHALLENGES & OUR RESPONSE

CHALLENGE		OUR RESPONSE
Lack of suitable buildings	1	Build new and renovate collapsed schools
Harsh climate and scattered population	2	Build properly designed village-based schools
Encouraging girls to attend school	3	Provide safe accessible local schools, more woman teachers and loans to village women
Help teenage girls avoid the prostitution and slavery trap	4	Build Vocational Schools for skill based education for teenagers
More women teachers needed	5	Build safe hostel facilities
Helping the transition from skill based education to work	6	Provide business development loans

WULUGU'S ACHIEVEMENTS



Our 20-year journey includes:



200,000
children helped to receive an education



500
loans to mothers to help keep their daughters at school and Vocational School graduates for business development



40
schools built/renovated



1000's
of items of equipment: computers, desks, sewing machines, typewriters and looms

From ploughing fields to playing fields

2 schools and one village provided with bullocks and ploughs. The schools rent them out to raise much-needed funds for the school.

43 schools equipped with sets of team strips and footballs. A football kit increases pride in the schools and improves attendance of girls as well as boys.

1993

Lynne Symonds meets Karimu Nachina in Japan

1994

4 tonnes of books sent to Wulugu Secondary School

1995

Started building a hostel for girls at Wulugu School

1996

Set up Wulugu Project as a charity in UK
Lynne made Chief of Enlightenment of the Mamprusi Tribe



WULUGU SCHOOLS BRING ACCESS FOR ALL



Children start school when convenient: subject to family financial circumstances and accessibility of schools. Usually this means six to thirteen year olds in a village-based Primary School. Junior High Schools, often serving a cluster of villages, provide a further three years of education for those successful in the Primary Schools. Senior High Schools, based in the larger towns, are available for those going on to higher education.

Although there were a few Primary and Junior High Schools when we arrived in Ghana, they were often in a state of collapse, totally under funded and accessible only to those in the immediate locality. The result was that less than 1% of heads of households have any formal education.

The attendance by girls was particularly low and in many areas nonexistent as they could not safely access schools or were required at home for childcare or farm working. WULUGU believes that if you educate a girl you educate a family for life and set about a programme of building new locally based village schools, renovating existing schools and encouraging attendance by girls.

In some villages we have achieved 50% girls attendance. This has been achieved by providing more than just the means of education: we work closely with the local School Management Committees, we help train staff and provide equipment, help with maintenance and offer loans to women to support families so that they can send their girls to school.

WHERE WE WORK



WULUGU works in the Northern Region, the largest in area of Ghana's ten Regions. About three times the size of Wales it has a scattered population of about 3 million.

Northern Ghana has not even been formally mapped. Its single rainy season and long periods of drought, together with protracted flooding, make the region one of uncertainty in terms of agriculture and transport.

Our work is mainly in the areas aptly named as "overseas" where flooding cuts off access for many months each year. Tamale is the Northern capital 650km from Accra on difficult and dangerous roads. The harsh climate, the neglect of education, the remote location and the lack of many of the basic needs of society create one of the poorest places on earth.

GIRLS SAVED FROM SLAVERY

People have to survive so mothers push their daughters off to southern Ghana to work. This movement from north to south is popularly called 'Kayaye' and thousands and thousands of girls are involved.

Some work in menial jobs such as carrying goods on their heads from one place to another. Human traffickers with great promises of money lure many more girls.

On reaching Accra and other cities in the south, the girls are faced with numerous problems - lack of accommodation and food.

With no protection they are helpless and vulnerable and are driven into the hands of unscrupulous young men who offer accommodation and makeshift shelters.

Many girls work as prostitutes and are forced to hand over the money they make or face severe beatings. Many thousands of girls are forced into this trap with all the attendant risks such as pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

Some girls are sold by the traffickers to work in small shops or as servants to wealthier families. They are poorly paid and can be sacked without pay at the least mistake. Many sleep on the streets. Many more contract terminal diseases and barely get back to their villages to die.

"To turn the tide of this flight to the cities, WULUGU has built local Vocational Schools to give girls the opportunity to gain skills to support their families."

1997

Container load of money and books sent to Ghana

1998

Built Wulugu Primary school with traditional materials
Another container of educational materials sent

1999

Provided desks for 4 schools and bullocks for 2 villages

2000

With the help of a professional fundraiser, we made useful contacts in UK

TOWARDS SELF SUPPORTING VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS - AND BABY COMES TOO!



WULUGU recognised early on that formal education was only part of the need: there was a need to give girls hands-on training and employable skills. Vocational Schools are open to women of any age, usually between 17 and 23, with or without any previous formal education. We have so far built and equipped six Vocational Schools. It's a real lifeline ensuring that initial schooling is not wasted.

Francisca, head of Savelugu Vocational School, says:
"The intervention of WULUGU has helped reduce the rural-urban migration.....it has also reduced the number of school dropouts and created job opportunities for the youth and unemployed. It will reduce poverty and help eradicate the spread of HIV/AIDS since there is gainful employment. Socialisation at school, and the teaching of moral education and entrepreneurship will change lives drastically. We are trying to contribute in our own ways to help finance the development of the school by selling our products."

Most lessons are practical – and earn money to help keep the school going. Sewing and dressmaking departments often get contracts to sew school uniforms or make students dresses; the hairdressing department offers reduced charges to the girls and women of the town; the weaving and tie and dye departments make very good finished works which are sold; catering students also sell their wares.

The schools are not limited to young girls alone. They are open to women, some of whom come to school with their babies.

WULUGU has fully equipped the schools for practical training but also provides lessons on computer literacy, typing, basic literacy and numeracy. Hostel facilities are provided for girls from remote villages.

Hundreds have found employment or established their own businesses, often with micro business development loans from WULUGU. These confident young women are now able to make their own decisions and to ensure that they and their families have hope for the future.

A quote from a Vocational School student:
"I'm training in hairdressing. I like learning wig making. When I leave I hope I will have help to set up in my village. The people will pay me and I can help my mother with the family costs. But now I'm learning to write and about numbers. I was never in school before. I like the classes that teach me about food and keeping healthy. My mother wishes she had had a chance like this."



HOW WE CHANGE LIVES

Musah Ruth

"I am 23 years old and a qualified typist and computer literate having attended Sawla Vocational School. I am helping the education office to educate more children with my work..... I earn a salary which helps my mother and father to take care of my younger sisters and brothers....."

Mumuni Afisha

"I am 21 years old.....when Sawla Vocational School was built I got admission there and trained as a typist and computer literacy. I am now in Tamale Polytechnic doing Diploma in Business Studies. After this course I hope to continue with Higher National Diploma in Secretarial and Management."

Flavia Adan

"I am from Bowina and attended Buipe Vocational School to learn weaving and Batik tie and dye. I make the tie and dye material and I also weave cloth which has high demand and fetches a lot of money. With the money I made from these, I take care of my grandmother and also saving money towards marriage one day."

Bashar Iddrisus

"I am from Lukula. The beautiful primary school WULUGU built in Lukula encourage me to learn hard. Now I am in High School in Tamale but I owe my gratitude to WULUGU for providing the primary school block in Lukula."

Wuriche Imoro

"I am from Fufulso (Damongo junction) I am 22 year old.....I went to Buipe Vocational School where I studied dressmaking. I am back in Fufulso and easily the best dressmaker for women. During festivals I am usually overworked but I make enough money to take care of myself and support my parents. I have four apprentices whom I am teaching to also make dresses in future."

Fushieni Hadija

"I attended Bowina primary school and junior high school both built by WULUGU and I am now in the senior boarding school at Damongo and I am very safe to study. Before WULUGU girls had to stay with relatives and friends and it was not safe for them. Some became pregnant and withdrew from school others even died trying to abort their pregnancies. I hope to complete my studies and go to university and I will owe my gratitude to WULUGU."

2001

Set up our first Vocational school at Walewale

2002

Lead an International workshop in Accra to produce leaflets on HIV/AIDS for schools

2003

Lynne made Chief of the Gonja Tribe Supplied desks and roofs for 3 village schools Norfolk church sent drums to Kpasenkpe

2004

Built three new village schools and built Daboya vocational school More desks and roofs and helped with experimental garden at Wulugu

LUKULA: TURNING HOPE INTO REALITY



Lukula is typical of the many remote and difficult to reach villages in Northern Ghana where we work. The community lives in extreme poverty. Food is often short. Water comes either not at all or as destructive and long lasting floods. But the people here have real determination and hope that schooling for their children will bring a better future.

WULUGU has made this hope a reality. We have built and extended the Primary School that now accommodates almost 500 children with as many girls as boys. Currently we are building a Junior High in nearby Kpatarigu. This will mean that children can continue learning locally post fourteen. Previously this was not possible for the girls, as they could not safely live the fifteen miles away from home where the nearest Junior High was sited.

However just providing the teaching facilities is not enough – we need to ensure that teachers will come to this remote area. For many, the lack of a safe place to stay, basic amenities and little contact with the outside world, made working here unattractive. Recognising the need WULUGU has built a six-room block for teachers and the future for girls in Lukula looks even brighter.



WULUGU LOANS: A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

Our experience repeatedly reminds us that we have to look at the whole picture not just building schools. In 2006 we started providing “Loans for Mothers” to encourage girls to attend school. In 2009 we started providing “Micro Business Development Loans” for those graduating from our Vocational Schools. Loans are typically £50 for mothers and up to £150 for micro business development. All loans are strictly monitored and many have already been paid back, with interest.

Loans for Mothers

The effect of poverty is often borne more by women than men. They take care of the children and the men as well. With the coming of WULUGU several appeals for help were made by groups of village women: *“No one has taken any notice of our plight. All we want is a chance to help ourselves.”*

One response was for WULUGU to provide loans. The groups of village women we have given loans to are

astonishing. Most have had no schooling so sign their contract with a thumbprint. They are well organised, very strict, and pay back with interest and on time. They walk for miles in the stifling heat to visit us when we are in the area, full of joy and hope.

These loans give mothers confidence to set up small businesses in trading and agriculture and make it possible for them to send all their children, including crucially all the girls, regularly to school. Before this the girls, even the youngest, were kept at home to help with siblings, work on the land and market trading. We have made over 500 such loans available.

Micro Business Development Loans

WULUGU Vocational Schools provide the necessary skills but the challenge for WULUGU was to find a way to provide support for those leaving and setting up their own businesses. After a successful trial in 2009 we have made over twenty loans available to our students.

2005

Built 3 more village schools with teachers’ quarters
Built hostel for girls at Walewale Vocational School
More desks

2006

Set up ‘Loans for Women’
Built 2 village schools
First HIV/AIDS workshop for teachers at Walewale

2007

Built and equipped Vocational School and Hostel at Buipe
Set up pig farm at Wulugu Secondary

2008

Built and equipped Vocational Schools at Savelugu and Sawla with hostels
Repaired 3 collapsed schools
Set up more women’s’ loans



MICRO BUSINESS LOANS HELPING FAMILIES

Amina Wusa left Buipe Vocational School in 2009 at the age 20. A bright girl, with no previous education, she quickly responded to WULUGU's help with literacy, numeracy, health and nutrition skills and took a weaving and tie and dye course. On leaving Amina set up a weaving enterprise with the help of a £150 WULUGU loan. With her sales income she rapidly repaid the loan, to be passed on to another new graduate. We are told that:

'She helped her uncle to buy a two acre farm. He grew maize and, in the first year, produced sixteen bags of maize. Eight bags fed his family for the year and the

other eight he could sell to buy more seed and to care for the needs of his family. All six of his children are now at school regularly, even the girls.'

Amina and her family have moved out of the poverty trap and the future is now greatly improved.

Amshetu took a similar course to Amina's at Buipe Vocational School. With a small loan she set up a tie and dye business, buying plain cloth cheaply and selling it on with the colourful patterns that are so popular.

She has re-paid her loan and ploughs back the good money she makes into her business as well as helping her family. She has seven younger siblings and all now go to school.

WE ARE A DIFFERENT KIND OF CHARITY

We do not have any large offices. Volunteers in the UK and Ghana do most of the work. The money we spend does not come from expensive fund-raising campaigns, glossy publicity or advertising, but from small trusts and individuals who have faith that we will value their help and use it to maximum effect.

Although WULUGU'S budget is small compared with better-known charities, its impact on the lives of children has been profound, thanks mainly to the efforts of ordinary people in the UK and in Ghana.

WULUGU'S founder, Lynne Symonds, explains:

"WULUGU owes its success in part to the dedication of its supporters, who tirelessly fund-raise, strengthened by the knowledge that 98p of every pound goes to help people who are forgotten, largely due to their geographical inaccessibility. Those who work with WULUGU in Ghana walk tall because it has such a good reputation due to its refusal to participate in any form of corruption."

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

We work in close partnership with community groups, chiefs, local and regional government, Voluntary Service Overseas and through their representation on our Ghana board, other Northern Ghana based Non-government Organisations.

Community ownership and sustainability have been key principles that have guided our operations from the start. From the construction of Primary Schools, the major rehabilitation of schools, the establishment of Vocational Schools and teachers' quarters, we respond to requests from community leaders and seek whole community engagement.

School Management Committees perform core functions such as ensuring discipline among both teachers and pupils, acquiring land for the schools, managing the assets of the school and assisting teachers to obtain accommodation.



2009

Built 3 village schools and renovated 3 junior high schools

2010

Extended Sawla Vocational School
Built village school and repaired 3 junior high schools
Supplied 500 desks

2011

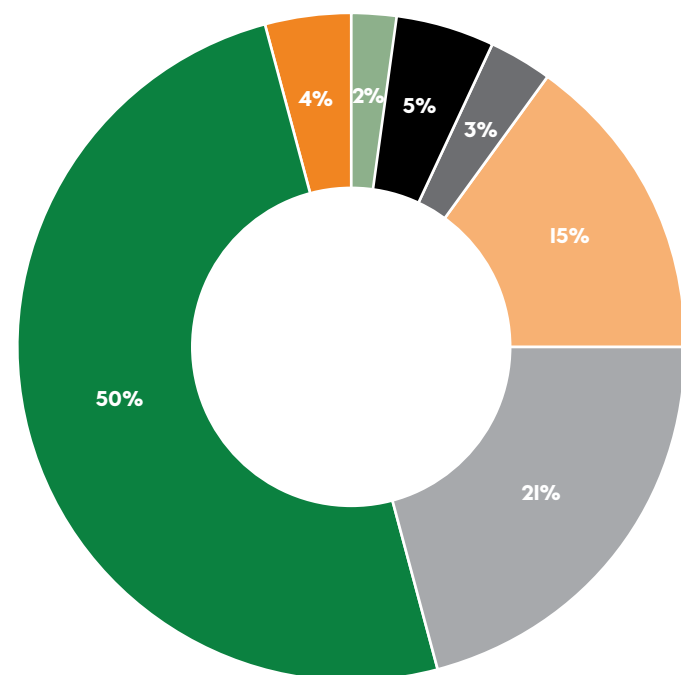
Built and equipped Karaga Vocational School and Hostel
Supplied 400 new desks
Built teachers quarters at Lukula

2012

Renovated Kpatarigu Village School
Built village and junior high school at Gbenfu with teachers quarters and latrines and gave loans to the women of Gbenfu

HOW WE LOOK AFTER YOUR MONEY

Our annual average income and expenditure over the last five years has been about **£95,000**. Our largest expenditure is for building works, all of which we have to do in a short weather window from November to June.



Our expenditure for the past five years has averaged about:

- UK administration
- Loans
- Teachers support
- Renovation and repairs
- Equipment
- Buildings
- Other

MAKING EVERY PENNY COUNT

We are very conscious that our many volunteers and donors have worked very hard to raise money and we pay particular attention to:

- value for money by working closely with local communities to identify and prioritise needs
- low construction costs by using volunteers locally in Ghana
- low overheads in the UK - all our staff are volunteers
- tight project programme and cost control locally in Ghana by our trained and respected volunteers
- vetting and monitoring regularly our business development and women's loans

WULUGU is proud of our low UK overheads and that every pound spent on the ground in Ghana is spent carefully on projects that make a real difference and change lives forever.



2013

Built a junior high school and teachers quarters at Kpatarigu
Continued maintenance on 8 village schools

OUR VISION

Our vision is to build on the foundations of **local involvement and efficient management** that we have developed over the past twenty years and **make a reality the hopes of the local communities** to ensure that, **through education**, malnutrition, disease and poverty are a thing of the past.

We have achieved much **but we still have much we want to do**. The demands for our expertise and life-changing partnerships are great. However those coming to us for help understand our **income is limited**

We would like to first make our **income more sustainable and regular** and second to **increase it**. We can then **progressively transform the future** for many more communities.

Of course we **will care for** and monitor existing projects. And, in the **next five years** we have been asked to:

- repair and re-open **10** derelict schools and build **8** new ones
- build **6** more teacher hostels
- build **2** more vocational schools for girls
- **greatly increase** the numbers of loans to women and graduates from our Vocational Schools.

CONTACTS

For more information on any of the topics in this report or to make a donation of time or money please contact us at:

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TOGETHER WE ARE BUILDING EDUCATION

www.wulugu.co.uk