



**CHRISTIAN RURAL AID NETWORK**  
**FREUNDESKREIS e.V.**

CRAN Freundeskreis, H. Wallhäuser, Roermonder Str. 110, 52072 Aachen

**Cran Newsletter No. 26/ August 2000**

Dear Friends of CRAN,

This issue is introduced by two photos: new school equipment causes enthusiasm among teachers and pupils - naturally, with different focal points.

The contents of this issue are:

- A personal statement from the school headmaster Mr. Godwin Ledi
- News
- Some thoughts about economic development
- Some noteworthy questions concerning the general approach of western aid for the South.
- And the invitation for the next CRAN autumn meeting on October 28th in Siegen.

The questions, which are open to discussion, will perhaps result in an exchange of ideas among the Friends of CRAN -and perhaps even in letters to the editor. I wish to all our readers a good summer and late summer time.

*Hans Wallhäuser*





Dear CRAN friends!

My name is Godwin Ledi, and I am forty years old. I was born in a polygamous family to a renowned fetish priest in Agbozume (Volta Region), which is well known for Kente weaving. I am the third born of my mother's five children. Due to the large number of children under the care of my father, most of his children could not go to formal school. I was adopted by one of my uncles who was a cocoa farmer in the central western part of Volta Region. He sent me to elementary school and I passed out with Middle School Leaving Certificate in 1976. I attended secondary school up to the third year, and I was compelled to drop from school due to financial constraints, for my uncle died abruptly and there was no one capable to sponsor my education. In 1981, I joined a cousin of mine who is a carpenter, and I was trained three years, and I passed out as a professional furniture maker. I worked with him under very meager salary for two years.

In 1985, I met a young lady called Janet, a trader, and I married her according to our customary rites. We are now blessed with three kids, one boy and two girls.

While I was working with my cousin, I was the same time doing private studies. Before I entered secondary school, it was my ambition to become a great educationist in future but my ambition was not fulfilled due to the sudden death of my uncle. With the help of my wife, I wrote GCEO'level as a private candidate which I passed, and this qualified me to enter teacher's training college. From 1988 to 1991, I visited Saint Francis College in Hohoe (Volta Region).

In 1987, my wife was converted to the Church of Pentecost. Through her Bible lessons with me and the same time with my colleagues at college, I gave myself to Christ in June 1991, and I was baptised to the same church as my wife.

After my training, I was posted to in Assin Adadientem Presbyterian Church in Central Region. I taught there for five years and occupied office as Assistant Headteacher till 1996 when I was posted to Abakam CRAN school as Headteacher. My ambition is that if I get a sponsorship, I would enter one of the universities of the country and read education, French and Ewe. I was moved since the early school days to become a teacher for teachers are highly respected in our communities. Above all, it is a noble profession and expose one to so many individuals.

The school at Abakam has tremendously improved the life of the whole community, In 1996, when I first arrived in the village, I saw so many strange and queer lives and behaviour with both the kids and their parents. The whole environment was dirty, no proper health care for their kids as well as themselves, frequent disputes among the families and relatives and above all idol worshipping which was so popular among them are now reduced. Through the school, the type of education we are giving to the children, the talks by my able staff of teachers and I myself are giving them and at times how we organise the children in activities like clean up campaigns, a healthy atmosphere is now reigning in the village. Some of the parents become aware of giving quality education to their kids for the bettermost of their future is very important. For that matter some of them now accept practising family planning so as to have the number of children they can cater for. Most parents have accepted Christ Jesus as their personal saviour and Lord. The children now go to Sunday schools every week and other prayer meetings and Bible studies.

In fact, my teachers and I myself are trying to make the school one of the best in the Cape Coast municipality. Of course, we are achieving the results which are very encouraging. My dream is to improve this by good supervision, sound discipline, good pupil-teacher, teacher-teacher, teacher-headteacher and school-community relationships. With the above strategies, I believe the school would achieve high academic standard and will attract kids to come and attend the school.



Pertaining to the problems facing by our sister school at Shama-Kedzi, I hope the following strategies should be adopted so as to attract teachers to go and teach there:

- Teachers quarters should be built to ease teachers' accomodation problems.
- Means of transport should be provided to teachers who accept posting to that place by giving them one bike, '. This is important because there is no bank, no post office, no hopsital and some other social aminities, and one must always walk to the next town for seervices
- Incentive packages should be provided to teachers there from time to time either in kind or cash

If these strategies are put in place, the heart of more teachers would be won to teach there without a problem.

*Godwin*



## News

A. The Abakam secondary school passes through a construction phase at the moment. The construction workers team from Ho, who has already helped CRAN in construction works before, is in action again. So we hope that the works get ahead smoothly and in time.

B. The second-hand VW-van arrived in Ghana. In spite of several negotiations, it was unfortunately not possible to be exempted from import charges given our status as an aid organisation. Therefore, additional money was to be paid to make the transfer of the urgently needed car possible.

C. Nicole Visser came back to Germany after about nine months in Cape Coast, where she worked at the kindergarten and school apart from her activities for other Christian projects. After such a long time, relationships have been established: The 25 children in the group become Evelyn and Kwesi and the others, with names, families, backgrounds and even fates. "I called you by your name, you belong to me." When God speaks in this way, he knows the individuals and their lives. Such an experience has the more impact, the closer the contact is. (Following this idea, the wish of Mr. Ledi to construct teacher housings in the village and to live near the children and their families is very purposeful - see the extract of his letter's annex below). We thank Nicole very much for her commitment. Maybe she is going to travel back to Ghana soon.

D. In the first half of the year, one focus of our work was the improvement of the school equipment, especially in Abakam. For this purpose, many things could be purchased with the help of earmarked donations. The old swing had become a mere frame for a long time. Now there is a new seesaw and a little round-about, which is very much occupied by the children. To store material, there are some more cupboards. They were filled with several sets of textbooks and posters, water-colours and colours for posters. In addition, bibles for children were purchased. A detailed list will be supplemented later.

E. The Dutch organisation CORDAID has acted upon CRAN's application for more financial support for our micro credit programme. After submission of many documents, follow-up of various contacts and a personal visit of Patrick Agbesinyale in Den Haag, an approval followed. A sufficient credit for capitalising the programme will be given, along with financial support for its technical and administrative improvement, which makes it possible to expand the programme considerably. This is an outstanding acknowledgement of CRAN's programme approach and already existing programme implementation. Taking the implementation steps to expand our micro credit programme in an appropriate way will therefore be an important focal point of our work within the next months. Everybody who can help in getting technical equipment is invited to co-operate.

F. The Board Members Wolfgang Bruessler and Hans Wallhaeuser will stay in Ghana from the 11th to the 30th of August. The programme contains visits to all project sites, to the communities and the contributors. Computer-related help in designing the database for the micro credit programme will eventually become necessary.

G. Beginning on the 13th of August, a new one-week Youth Camp will be conducted in Shama-Kedi. As part of the Camp, the construction works for the secondary school will be continued.

H. Thinking of how CRAN could help in the future to improve the school projects, Mr. Godwin Ledi writes in the annex of his above mentioned letter: "When I think of the problems our sister school in Shama - Kedzi has to suffer from, I suggest the following helping measures:

- Construction of teacher housings to improve the housing situation.



- Provision of transport facilities (bikes or mopeds?), because there is no bank, no post office, no hospital or other service facilities, so one has to walk to the text city.
- Extra salaries could be paid from time to time, be it in the form of goods or of money.

With these measures the hearts of further teachers could be won, motivating them to teach in Shama - Kedzi with greater commitment."



## Financial mathematics

Don't worry, this does not deal with formulas. Rather it is meant to improve understanding. Or to put it better: to evoke questions. The results of financial developments might be questionable. The Europeans are surprised about the development of the Euro. Why does its value decrease continuously against the US-Dollar (and by the way against the Yen, too), though there are no clear indications that the European economy promotes poor compared to other countries?

Let us have a look at Ghana's currency in contrast. From January 1998 to January 1999, it decreased only 3% against the US Dollar. However, our partners in Ghana complained of a permanent critical economic situation. This assessment has not changed in the following year. The decrease of the Cedi amounts to 52% from January 1999 to January 2000 this time. However, there is silence when it comes to the economic reasons of this misrelation. Financial control of abstract powers? Punishment for the purchase of a presidential plane which does not fit into the image of an IMF model schoolboy? Lack of interest in the development of countries which do not attract the international attention as much as the Asian billion heavy debtors do? I do not know the answer either. Opinions are welcome...

In 1998, a ton of cocoa from Ghana was sold for 1600 US\$. In 1999, it could only be sold for half of the money. One barrel raw oil cost 11 US\$ in 1998, a year later it had to be purchased for twice as much. Factor four against development. The increased oil price results in a difference of 14 Pfennig per litre in Germany. For 100 kilometres, this amounts to a value comparable to the price of a bar of chocolate. But: The Ghana people cannot save money this way - they do not eat chocolate.

Fair trade - redemption dream? A (German) Frontal magazine TV report aired in April has made this dream blow out. According to the report, fair trade is only a marketing strategy which does not lead to improvements for the rural producers. Though counter-statements by TransFair and Gepa could set right some aspects, they could not prevent the damage for their image and for their surplus. In the end again, the producers suffer most from this damage. Even the consumer has not learned more: He cannot judge better than before.

A dream is to be dreamed - or given up. Isn't it the same ancient dream of justice, demanded by the prophets in ancient Israel, carried to extremes by Jesus Christ in his Sermon of the Mount, written as brotherhood on the flags of the French Revolution. Let us be frank: which exchange rate seems to be appropriate for us? Couldn't we afford to eat chocolate if a bar would cost more than 1 Mark as it did 20 years ago? Which argument speaks against fair trade apart from the right of the strongest?

CRAN provides social repair work. Not much enough against all the world's impediments? As long as there are no better alternatives, it is the best way to follow God's demand to act in His name. Let us be awake and aware of actions and statements which displace and distort the idea of "justice".

## Money to give away

What is the sense of development aid? Or, how does it make sense? And even more important: Can this need be overcome some day? The following extract of notes deals with these topics of basic interest. They were written by a family who has worked for three years in Goma (Kivu, East Congo) at a project of the Joint Evangelic Mission (Wuppertal, Germany).



"In recent times we ask ourselves more and more frequently how long it will remain necessary to give away money for development aid. This form of aid has led to the success that, within the past 30 years, local cadres have been trained how to administer foreign money perfectly - and how to really spend it for helpful projects. This is valuable and is often overlooked by European organisations. But on the other hand, it has led to a wide-spread apathy and decrease of own initiatives for the establishment of development projects.

We work in the east of Congo. It is one of the potentially richest regions in the world, where a spade is enough to find mineral resources, and where fertile soils make it possible in large regions to harvest two to three times in a year. In Kivu, even education has a high standing, and therefore the proportion of people having reached the A'level or having studied is relatively high within the total population. Why then is the region underdeveloped in such an extent that money donations are still needed (and I do not doubt that)?

The colonial time - argument should be superannuated in the meantime. Until today Congo's era of independence has lasted approximately as long as the era of colonial occupation did before. Secondly, other countries in Asia have shown that a colonial past does not necessarily mean an impediment for development. ... There are external reasons for war: mineral resources of international interest, regional conflicts with real or pretended ethnic backgrounds ... and besides, one can be sure that during the war, or after it at the latest, ample international aid will flow to rebuild what was plundered or damaged before. In this respect, the own people may be damaged for only a short time.

So the question becomes more and more harassing: how can we help the sisters and brothers in Africa in an effective and sustainable way? Is it really the right way to give money, and be it for the best purposes such as schools? Or wouldn't it offer a much better chance for sustainable development to promote fair trade of mineral resources and semi-manufactured products? And if yes, what is fair trade? How to transform giving money into co-operation in trade, without doing harm to the people within the transformation phase? I do not know the answers to these questions, but we must strengthen our longstanding efforts to find such answers, without forgetting the daily co-operative work with our partner churches."

Ghana and CRAN are in a different situation. However, the questions and possible solutions are of an outstanding interest for us, too. Will this be able to provoke a discussion among us? Letters or Emails from readers are welcome. The topic will be raised again later this year.



## Invitation to our CRAN autumn meeting

Our next meeting does not take place in Dortmund as usual, but in Siegen, which makes it easier for our friends in that region to participate. As the time is in October, Wolfgang Bruessler and Hans Wallhaeuser will be able to present a detailed report about their travel to Ghana. Furthermore, Patrick Agbesinyale will be in Germany again to join us:

Saturday, 28th October

Gemeindehaus (parish hall) Bleichweg, Siegen

- 3:00 p.m.        Opening with informal conversation, having coffee and biscuits
  - 3:30 p.m.        Travel report Ghana with slide illustration  
                      subsequently discussion of the present developments at CRAN Ghana
  - 6:00 p.m.        Snack
  - 6:30 p.m.        Talk concerning the future activities of CRAN Germany
- Prospective end: 8:00 p. m.

Registration and directions: [hw@cran.org](mailto:hw@cran.org)