

CRAN newsletter no. 44 / December 2006

Dear CRAN friends,

in September we have had our Annual Meeting. Very dynamical and giving fine overview has been the presentation of a Diploma thesis, on which the situation of people in the region around Hohoe town has been by questions examined and valued. Of course just part of our friends could be around. So we are happy to present some extracts - with them we can imagine a bit about what people there have or need.

CRAN however is also involved in different region. Thus we include an article about Sanka village by the lady working there. Break-ups have been some years back, but we of course keep on supporting until now.

We are also happy that a word of greeting from Seth Adzadi guides our view on CRAN Ghana work in general. He has been assisting as a volunteer for long, he has lively seen a lot and can estimate results very well with best human view. How fine that CRAN work is professional but not only done by full-time staff.

Now this year is coming to its end, and church year has already started again with adjustment onto Jesus' birth. So we can very thankful for all support that has been giving this year, and at the same time wish that accompanying and help remain lifely.

What can you read from Ghana about Christmas: "On Christmas Day, when children go visiting in Ghana, they string around their necks some plain biscuits, and when they meet a friend or a member of the family, they brake off a piece as a sign of sharing and caring." So this is not about big gifts, but more about the sign to be with own another. Thanks so much and to all of you, as this gift is part of us and people there in Ghana. This may give big joy to all of us.

Hans Wallhäuser

Steve Ameyibor studied spatial planning in Dortmund. In order to get his degree he spent half a year in the Volta Region. With personal support from CRAN Volta Region he started his research from Hohoe about the human side of living in this area. In addition he later also researched quite a lot about the clients of Micro Credit. (Initially he had planned September to November 2005 for the evaluation but he stayed until March 2006 as the situation of the people and CRAN's ideas filled him with enthusiasm...) At our meeting in autumn he presented his paper and his experiences very lively. We take parts from it for this newsletter. If you are interested, you can read more on our homepage www.cran.org.

The basis was a representative survey on households:

What does poverty in Hohoe District mean?

What are the circumstances of CRAN's clients there?

For his research he prepared a questionnaire of 40 pages about the socio-economic situation of potential CRAN clients < can you imagine anybody here who answers so many questions? But there it worked out to a large extent>.

In the catchment area - that is the Hohoe District and the bordering areas - live about 200.000 people. About 650 of them were interviewed.

Fundamental results

Poverty in Hohoe District is the reason for:

- unbalanced nourishment
- poor healthcare system
- low quality of living conditions
- inadequate education / educational opportunities
- few household items

What does poverty really mean for the people?

What is the situation of food availability for your household?

- 14 % food available
- 40 % requirement per day met
- 32 % scare/restricted
- 13 % frequent shortages

Can you or any household member take advantage of health care treatment whenever they fall sick?

- 67 % yes
- 33 % no

What is your main source of energy for heating (i.e.) cooking in the household?

- 5 % electricity/kerosene
- 4 % gas
- 78 % firewood <you have to look for yourself>
- 13 % charcoal < others look for and process it >

Is there any person in your household who cannot read or write?

- 52 % yes
- 48% no

Are all children under 18 years in your household attending school currently?

- 68% yes, all of them

25 % some of them
6 % no, none

What items do you have?

2 % car
3 % computer
16 % refrigerator
29 % bicycle
82 % radio

What is the household's main source of income?

27 % salary/income
56 % farming
17 % other < different or not at all?>

How would you describe yourself as a farmer?

2 % commercial
61 % subsistence/surplus seller
37 % peasant/subsistence

Because of their limited possibilities quite a lot of people can imagine that credits may bring improvement < what mainly means Micro Credit>. On the basis of this questionnaire it is obvious that CRAN can help in various ways. In the Volta Region technical and educational help with regard to agriculture and Micro Credit offers are available. Of course other fields are also affected, but realistically seen there are restrictions as to staff and possibilities.

In face of people's needs and available offers Steve Ameyibor asked the participants about the effects. The "rich" are not the target of CRAN but the "poor". But only a smaller part and not all in this area of Hohoe are reached.

How do clients see the effects on their living condition by participating in CRAN's programme? Is there any positive impact?

Food	78%	Finances	63%	Water/energy	48%
School	69%	Savings	53%	Consumer goods	37%
Health	64%	Housing	48%		

You surely cannot reach 100%. It is important that there is a positive impact. Not everything runs in the most optimal way, but a lot is helpful.

The commitment of CRAN staff members as well as their kindness towards clients are often very helpful - especially for those that are to be reached.

Administration is not easy and may not always be optimal. The own growth (CRAN Volta Region always has more and more staff members...) probably always makes revision of the organisation of the team necessary. And evaluations..., such a help full of commitment from outside is very much appreciated.

We also as Friends Circle are grateful for this qualified and highly motivated help. "Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness; turn your ear to me and save me."(Psalm 71,2) - in the Bible this is a cry to God; the (poorer) people in Ghana ask also men for practical support and are glad about help.

Impacting Lives

I am so glad to have met Dr. Patrick Agbesinyale (whom I affectionately call Prof.) in 1993 and to hear him speak about CRAN and his vision. I instantly got converted to the ideals and have offered myself in various capacities and capabilities as a volunteer ever since.

After ten years, I am more convinced than ever that God has been with this organization. „So then, brothers, choose seven men among you who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and we will put them in charge of (the matter to help)“ (Acts 6:3). CRAN's rapid growth has given new meaning to that, with an emphasis on the idea that whatever is of God and from God shall stand. I feel satisfied for being part of almost all our projects, from Shama-Kedzi down to Abakam through Cape Coast to Liati-Wote.

It is heartwarming to know that children from these rural settings can now match up to urban areas in terms of academic output and sports. I can remember vividly one of my project tours to Sanka, when I took photographs of children drawing water from a pond after a heavy downpour. The red-earth-coloured water was to be used by their households for washing and bathing. My God! But today the people of Sanka can boast of pure, clean and safe pipe-borne water provided by CRAN, with the assistance of the British High Commission and the Ghana Water and Sewage Co-operation Limited.

Making education, vocational training and employable skills accessible to rural folk has really impacted the lives of our less endowed rural sisters who hitherto would have been bogged down or forced into single-handed parenting of malnourished children. They have seen the light and are now equipped for the challenges of life. Self-actualization is underway!

I have enjoyed my position as a volunteer and have been blessed through placing myself at the disposal of CRAN. I have marveled to see myself acting as a pressman, a photographer, a driver, a tour guide and what have you. If you ask what pushes me, it is the love of God and to bring this love to others also through our deeds and the joy of being of service to mankind. I thank God also for the CRAN Freundeskreis who have offered their Pfennige and Deutsche Mark (and later Cents and Euros) as well as their time and energies, their intellect and skills towards CRAN's existence and for its work. I can see CRAN growing into a giant multinational organization in the near future

Faith with deeds indeed. Praise be to God! God bless!

Seth Adzadi

(experienced volunteer, now student at Cape Coast University)

SANKA: Relief at Last

In 1995, representatives of CRAN first set their feet on the 'shores' of Sanka in the company of Mrs. Victoria Koomson, the Executive Director of the Central and Western Region Fish Mongers Improvement Association (CEWEFIA). Their main aim was to acquire some plots of land from the Sanka community for use for a community-based afforestation (forestry for income) project. The Sanka community led by their chief was very willing to grant CRAN and CEWEFIA land free of charge but requested help as regards the refurbishment of their then dilapidated kindergarten and also finding some permanent solutions to the community's age-old acute water problem., preferably through the provision of pipe- borne water for the community, a facility, which had never existed in the village over the several decades of its existence. Our only source of water for these years had been a dirty muddy pond which we had constantly shared with marauding livestock..

It was easier for CRAN to tackle the school project first, since education falls directly under CRAN's programme area. The old dilapidated kindergarten structure was quickly refurbished to give the school a habitable and improved status. CRAN also adopted the school and employed two teachers to assist. In addition, furniture, teaching and learning aids and other materials were and have since been constantly provided by CRAN for the kindergarten as well as the payment of the teachers' allowances, all which CRAN has been doing since 1995. These led to a dramatic rise in the number of kids admitted into the school. CRAN currently sponsors 11 children in Sanka through basic education under its Child Education Support Scheme (CESS).

In 2001, through the tireless fundraising efforts of CRAN-CUSO volunteer, Ms. Natalie Perkins, the British High Commission donated generously towards the funding of a pipe-borne water project designed by CRAN for the Sanka community. The community together with CRAN worked very hard to get the water project executed in a matter of weeks to the amazement of the donors and other stakeholders. The very day in September 2001 that the water project was commissioned represented a very proud day for all of us - the citizens of Sanka village. For many of us it was like a dream. We have seen good drinking water come to our village - Sanka during our life time.

Praise God!!! Water at last!!! Today, we (Sanka village) also have access to potable drinking water, instead of the red-earth-coloured water called 'Afomena', which we used to bath and wash with. Today, we are proud to say that when the taps are shut in Elmina and in the surrounding villages, people from those communities travel to Sanka village to fetch water. We owe CRAN loads of thanks and gratitude.

Do continue the good works and may your coast be enlarged.

*Miss Comfort Quayson,
Teacher and Community worker, Sanka*

Additional remarks from CRAN Ghana

The Tara Jane foundation is the friends of the Noble Friends charity UK who visited us this summer. During their visit, we commissioned the Musunkwa Kindergarten sponsored by the Noble friends and also took them to several other projects and they were so much impressed and before they left Ghana, they called Patrick (Agbesinyale) on phone and pledged further sum of money. In September, they asked Patrick to state specifically how we would like to use a fund. Maybe something will go into Micro Finance to capitalise the fund and the left over into social projects. This single gesture is one of the greatest things that has happened to CRAN in the year. We pray it materialise
soonest.

With our Micro Finance, George Tokpo (who has been assisting honorary for years) is now fully on board. There is much impact his presence has brought. Goerge had helped tremendously to put our loan performer data in shape both at Cape Coast and Hohoe and that has put us on our toes to look at our performance and improve on it. In July / August, we saw a positive trend of profits at Cape Coast. Hohoe recorded some lost for the past two months but with a new area manager, an old banker and a Micro Finance practioner sent to them, we hope for a positive trend starting this month. It is really exciting now the way our data is streamlined and everything is on course. We still have several groups that we are not able to meet, so further coming is most welcome.

With social projects, the Musunkwa Kindergarten is the only new project that took place within the year. The Shama Kedzi school was ripped of its roof during a very heavy rain. The District Assembly has promised 25 million (Cedis, 2.000 Euro plus) which is the estimate but you know the bureacracy in the system. We are still trusting that they do something about it before school re-opens.

<Remark by CRAN Germany: A promise does not mean quick needed help. So we are glad we have been able at once the reconstruction, to help the school children as definitely needed! >

Send our love to all, Doris Agbesinyale

