

July 2004

International  
Health and  
Development  
Network

"Thanks for  
making a  
difference."

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# IHDN News

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## Message from the President

### **A promise made is a promise kept**

In this edition of the newsletter, we describe our journey in helping with the provision of hemodialysis services to the people of Ghana. Three years ago we promised to help the people of Ghana by providing hemodialysis machines. It was quite difficult seeing the folks suffer from kidney failure. We knew that our commitment to the project was firm but our resources were weak. By God's grace we were able to purchase five hemodialysis machines, then refurbished and shipped them to Ghana. We thank the Lord for helping us accomplish this. We also thank all who supported us. We do not make a lot of promises but when we make one, we make sure we keep it, for His Glory.

Our journey continues. We are going back to Ghana at the end of the month for the eighth mission trip. We are visiting the 4 villages we visited last year. Our team will work in partnership with medical and non-medical volunteers from Accra, the capital city of Ghana. We will also assist the villages in identifying their needs. We will explore potential ways of helping them. We are excited about our future plans to purchase land and build a new clinic and project site in Ghana. We are also encouraged by the people who believe in our mission and continue to support us. May the Lord bless you all. Have a great summer.

*Edem Agamah, M.D.*

**IHDN welcomes the interest and support of friends as we seek to make a difference in the developing world. Please make your tax-deductible gift payable to IHDN. To donate non-cash items, or to volunteer, please contact us. Thank you.**

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## IHDN Sends Hemodialysis Machines to Ghana

Join us in thanking the Lord for helping us ship five hemodialysis machines to Ghana in May. These machines were shipped together with other medical supplies in a 40 ft. container. We thank all of you who participated in this project. We especially thank the Memorial Medical Center for providing de-ionized water source for servicing the machines. We also want to give special thanks to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center, Chatham IL for helping with the transportation, packing, crating and shipment of the items sent to Ghana.

You may recall that in 2001, IHDN hosted Professor Michael Mate-Kole, Chief of Nephrology from Korle Bu Teaching Hospital. During his visit, he appealed for help with getting new hemodialysis machines for this hospital, Accra, Ghana. We purchased five used Fresenius hemodialysis machines and then refurbished them. These machines, which work like new, will be a major addition to the Hemodialysis Unit at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital. There are only eight functional hemodialysis machines in Ghana; soon they will have thirteen.

The cost of a new hemodialysis machine is about \$15,000. Poor countries have to choose between buying vaccines for children and buying hemodialysis machines. Most of the time, buying vaccines wins. So people with catastrophic illnesses like kidney failure die for lack of resources. In our humble way we hope to change that in Ghana. We also purchased some supplies to help perform hemodialysis for 20 people. We have spent about \$10,000 so far for this project. We have raised only about \$6,000 and we need your help to pay for the rest of this project. We thank all of you for your support and interest in this project in advance. May God bless you.

Kidney failure is not uncommon in Africans. Uncontrolled hypertension is one of the most common causes of kidney failure among Ghanaians. We see the hemodialysis project as an extension of our hypertension and anemia control project. We hope that patients who have kidney failure from uncontrolled hypertension or hemolytic anemia from malaria will be helped by our donation of the machines.

## IHDN to build New Clinic in Ghana

The IHDN board has approved a proposal for the clinic in Ghana to be relocated at a new site. Presently, the clinic is housed in the first floor of Mr. Ben Agamah's house. We have not been asked to leave but we feel that after 8 years of existence and ministry presence in Ghana, we need to move on and develop our own clinical and ministry site. We are therefore going to purchase land in a village close to Agbozume and build our Ghana project site. Our prayer is that our new building will allow us to serve the people of Ghana much better. We thank Mr. Ben Agamah for sacrificing his comfort and privacy and allowing us to use his house for the clinic and project site. May the Lord bless him.

## Do You Like to Build Things?

With the upcoming land purchase, we are proposing a two-week winter mission trip to Ghana from late January to early February 2005. We are recruiting volunteers with knowledge and expertise in construction to help us with the initial phase of our building project. Please contact us if you or someone you know might be interested in this adventure. If all goes on well, there will be an additional two-week summer trip in 2005.



## Baby Steps and Batik

One of the movies that I enjoy is a comedy called "What About Bob?" In it Bill Murray plays Bob, a multiphobic hypochondriac. He rarely leaves his apartment because of all of the "dangers in the world." Then he starts seeing Dr. Leo Marvin (Richard Dreyfus). Dr. Marvin is mainly concerned with promoting his new book entitled *Baby Steps*. Through some very funny interactions, Dr. Marvin encourages Bob to take "baby steps" and to take a vacation from his problems. As he follows the doctor's orders, we hear him reminding himself to take baby steps. In other words: Tackle one small thing at a time until you reach your larger goal.

As an IHDN board member, I have witnessed the joy and frustration of "baby steps" in Ghana. Last year I was involved with helping the women in Agbozume develop a batik (tie and dye) business. We have tried several ways to help them sell their goods, but have not yet developed a sustainable market. We have explored import and export laws. We have provided a training course on "Biblical Business Basics."

Are the women now operating a thriving batik business? No. Does that indicate that this project was a failure? No. Are we still exploring ways to help them develop this business? Yes. Are we closer to understanding what does and does not work in Ghana? Yes.

By seeking God's guidance and direction, we remain committed to taking the baby steps needed to improve the quality of life for all of God's children.

*Rhonda Miller, IHDN Board Member*

## Eighth Mission Trip to Ghana

IHDN is sponsoring the eighth Ghana mission team. The members of the team are as follows:

### July 31-August 20, 2004

Dr. Edem Agamah  
Mrs. June Agamah  
Ms. Akpene Agamah  
Ms. Alikem Agamah  
Ms. Aseye Agamah



### August 2-September 1, 2004

Mr. Kwabena Adomako



These teams will be involved in medical outreach clinics to Nogokpo, Kpedzakope, Lotakor and Vome Battor. We will be using the Jesus Film in the local language, Ewe, for evangelistic outreach in these villages. We are recruiting both medical and non-medical volunteers from Ghana to assist with the work. We will also continue with our training in computer science, Christian leadership, Christian Marriage, Family life and community development. Please pray for good health and traveling mercies for our teams. Pray for Ghana and the people we seek to help that in all these efforts, people will experience God's love and come to a living relationship with Him.

## Are People or Dollars More Valuable?

by Dr. Edem Agamah

I recently asked a prominent African university professor this hypothetical question: "Assuming I could provide people or dollars to help build your country, which would you choose?" He quickly responded that he would prefer dollars over people. Even after I clarified that the people being offered are knowledgeable, highly motivated, hard-working, honest men and women of integrity, willing to serve to their God-given potential, he still thought getting dollars was better. He explained that if he has dollars, he can employ the people he needs and pay them very good salaries to get the job done.

This illustrates something I have noticed many times: Most people, especially those in the developing world, think all their problems would be solved if they had enough dollars. And it is true that with dollars you can pay for goods and services. You can also find some good workers and pay them top salaries. Unfortunately, someone else who is willing to pay even higher salaries can recruit your very good employees. This is an accepted practice in many business situations. It is not so good for the development of a community or a nation. There is nothing comparable to a group of knowledgeable, highly motivated, hard-working, honest men and women of integrity. Such people can work to create wealth (and dollars). They are more likely to believe in their dreams and willing to sacrifice to fulfill them. They will be more loyal to the cause and rise above any distractions that might occur.

It is very hard to identify people like that in the world today. It is equally hard to find large sums of money for work in the developing world. The best-case scenario is to have a hybrid of the two. Bring in some dollars (seed money), and also bring in the right type of people. For development work we need to teach, train, and demonstrate to the people we are helping. Teach them about values, and help them use their talents to do things for themselves. With your financial contributions to IHDN, we have been able to achieve considerable results. We have done this on shoestring budgets. This is a tribute to our volunteers and to the people who supported us. Above all, we thank the Lord for blessing our efforts.

Our experiences have taught us that people are more important than things. Jesus was born to save us from the bondage of sin and give us eternal life (John 3:16-17). Let us therefore value people more than dollars.

### Road Construction & Sanitation Project

While we are in Ghana we plan to meet with the community leaders of Agbozume to recruit more community participation in the road project. We need to extend the road to the homes of the chiefs of Agbozume and Klikor. Please visit [www.ihdn.org](http://www.ihdn.org) for pictures. The first phase of the project is the 0.6km road, which is about 80% complete. With the completion of this road the mood and general outlook of the people of Agbozume has been elevated. Please pray with us as we continue to extend our work in the village.

### How Can You Help?

- \* **Pray for IHDN and the mission team**
- \* **Volunteer to serve domestically or abroad**
  - **Administrative tasks and mailings**
  - **Packaging goods for shipment**
  - **Transporting the team to the airport**
  - **Teach computer science in Ghana**
  - **Refurbish donated computers**
  - **Use your medical skills to serve in Ghana**
- \* **Make a tax-deductible donation**
- \* **Assist in securing corporate donations**
- \* **Follow where God leads you**

## **Thank you**

### **Memorials Received**

IHDN received donations in memory of the following:

Mrs. Martha Flynn

Mrs. Cara Schlorff

Mrs. Norma Ouelette

We thank all who contributed in memory of these loved ones. These contributions will be used to save lives of the poor and needy in Ghana. God bless.

**IHDN is recognized as a 501(c)(3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service and is listed on Guidestar.org. IHDN relies 100% on the generosity of people like you. The board members and officers are not compensated for their work.**

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