

IHDN NEWSLETTER

International
Health and De-
velopment Net-
work
(IHDN)

"Thanks for
helping make a
difference"

June 1996

Volume 1, Issue 1

Helping
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New Medical Missions Organization in Springfield

A new Medical Missions Organization that seeks to provide a unique approach to medical missions in developing countries has been formed in Springfield, Illinois.

This organization named International Health and Development Network (IHDN) was incorporated in the state of Illinois on March 25th, 1996, as a not-for-profit corporation.

The primary focus of IHDN is to develop a sustainable Primary Health Care ministry using the earthly work of Jesus Christ as a model. IHDN seeks to improve the physical, mental emotional and spiritual well-being of

individuals in communities, especially in developing countries. IHDN will provide, in targeted communities, humanitarian assistance, education and a health clinic. IHDN will also engage in research on issues of health, family life, conflict resolution and Christian values. There will be emphasis on community participation in project development and implementation. IHDN will associate with similar charitable organizations and individuals to advance its work, to the glory of God. Membership is open to all who support our goals.

The Board Members are:

1. President

Edem S. Agamah, M.D.
Hematologist/Oncologist,
Central Illinois Hematology
Oncology Center and Clinical
Assistant Professor, Dept. of
Medicine, SIU School of
Medicine, Springfield, IL.

2. Vice President

Kwesi Dugbatey, M.D.Ph.D.
Health Policy Analyst and
Assistant Professor, Dept. of
of Public Health, St. Louis
University, St. Louis, MO.

3. Secretary:

Maxine Bradrick RN, FNP
Retired Health Officer in
charge, Dept of State, US Em-
bassy, Ghana & Mali.
Now in Bakersfield, CA

IHDN brings Health Fair to a village in Ghana

A three-member IHDN medical missions team led by Dr. Edem Agamah undertook a 4-week medical missions trip to Ghana, West Africa in April 1996.

The major highlight of the trip was a Health Fair that was organized at a Ghanaian village, Agbozume. This village is located in the southeastern part of Ghana and has a population of over 10,000 people. Like most villages Agbozume has no physician. About

149 out of every 1000 children die before the age of 5 years. About 78% of these children are not immunized. Because community participation in funerals of departed ones is a major activity in most parts of Ghana, the IHDN team developed a life-giving program. A 2-day health fair was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, a newly formed village health committee, local churches,

chiefs and volunteer groups on April 8th & 9th. Medical staff including two physicians and a dentist were recruited from Accra, the capital city. The Christian Medical Resource Foundation (CMRF) provided the two physicians and resource personnel to assist with praying and sharing of the gospel. CMRF is a christian medical outreach organization based at the 37 Military Hospital, Accra.

IHDN brings Health fair to a village in Ghana

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The Health Fair was attended by Torgbui Hor II, Chief of the Somey Traditional Area (Agbozume is in this area). Dr. Ahedor, Director of District Health Management Team read a speech on behalf of the Regional Director of Health, Dr. Nyonator. Ms. Jane Duwor, District Chief Executive, opened the fair. The opening ceremony was preceded by the reading of Bible passages on the Health Care ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was an exposition on the parable of the talents from Matthew 25:14-30, presented by Dr. Agamah.

After the opening ceremony, information on demography and medical histories was obtained on the villagers using a questionnaire.

Blood Pressure screening

Over 500 villagers were screened for High Blood Pressure during the two days. Out of these, 18% were identified as hypertensives, with some BPS over 230/130! There were young adults in their early 40's with recent histories of stroke who

did not know of their hypertension. The mission team took along over \$30,000 worth of medications, including antihypertensives. These were dispensed free of charge to the villagers. Most of the newly diagnosed hypertensives started enjoying a great deal of physical well being. One of them said "I can't remember the last time I felt so good in my life. Your American medicines are very potent, what will I do when you leave? Could you please let me have some more medication? I am ready to pay anything you ask for them." Evidently the need to provide follow up care to these patients is a matter of urgency.

Immunization

Children who were not previously immunized or under immunized received their immunization at the Health Fair. The IHDN team had observed that it is not known or required by school authorities to check the compliance of immunization of children before entering school. Accordingly, the team made a proposal to the District Chief Executive. As a result of this, a new legislation has been proposed to make completion of immunization mandatory prior to enrollment in

kindergarten. IHDN will assist in monitoring the compliance with this legislation.

Christian Family Life

A seminar was held on God's plan for the family by Ms. Vivienne Dawkins, RN, and Mrs. June Agamah who were part of the IHDN mission team. Topics discussed included family planning and relationships among spouses and children.

Jesus Film Outreach

The Jesus Film translated into the local language, Ewe, was screened on the evening of the last day of the health fair. Over 100 people gave their lives to the Lord. These new believers will be disciplined in collaboration with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. IHDN has also provided resource materials including Josh McDowell tapes and book on "Right from Wrong" to be used for discipleship training.

The Chief gets two Bibles

The IHDN team visited Torgbui Hor II, at his palace to present two copies of the Holy Bible, one in English and the other in Ewe, the local language. The team also presented 12 bottles of soft drinks, e.g. Coca Cola and Sprite.

New Medical Missions Organization in Springfield

Board Members contd.

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Treasurer

4. Ms Mona Sue Heberlie
Office Manager, Central IL Hem/Oncology Center, and Co-owner Hydraulic Manifolds, Springfield, IL.

5. Vivienne Dawkins, MSN
Assistant Director, Maternal and Child Health Center, Cook County Hospital, Chicago, IL

6. Richard Donlon, M.D.

Internist/Pediatrician,
Christ Community Medical Center,
Memphis TN (Medical Electives in
Ghanaian Mission Hospital-1989)

7. Greg Ekbohm, M.D.

General & Vascular Surgeon,
Milwaukee, WI (Prisons Fellowship
Missionary to Ghana-1986)

8. Solace Lotsu, MD

Pediatrician, St Joseph Hospital,
Chicago, IL

9. Mokenge Malafa, MD.

Surgical Oncologist, Assistant Prof
of Surgery, SIU School of Medicine,
Springfield, IL

10. Mr. G.R. Peshak

Businessman, Lake Forest IL

11. Marilyn Rogers, RN

Oncology Nurse, Central Illinois
Hem/Onc Center Springfield, IL

IHDN brings Health Fair to village in Ghana

Chief celebrates 25 years

The visit of the IHDN team to Ghana coincided with the 25th Anniversary celebration of the leadership of the chief of the Somey Traditional area, Torgbui Hor II. The team participated in the open air durbar that included African traditional drumming and dancing. Because of the importance of this celebration to the community there was a representative of the president of Ghana at the durbar. Since the chief's anniversary and IHDN's Health Fair coincided, there was mutual agreement to incorporate the Health Fair as part of the celebration.

School under the shed

The IHDN team visited the local schools. These schools are held under sheds made with grass roofing to shield children from the sun and rain. These children do not have their health profile examined prior to enrollment. There is a lack of basic text books and other resource materials to stimulate the intellectual development of these children.

Garbage for road repairs

Most of the roads in villages are not paved. Accordingly they suffer from soil erosion over the years.² Because of ignorance and the lack of resources these roads are being repaired with household garbage. This practice is so widespread that it has become acceptable. No wonder these areas have a large population of houseflies, which are likely to transmit disease.

The IHDN team used the occasion of the Health Fair to point out the health hazard posed by this practice.

Teaching slides donated to Medical School

The Hematology department of the University of Ghana Medical School was presented with over 100 teaching slides when the IHDN medical mission team visited the department during the recent trip to Ghana. The slides were received on behalf of the department by Dr. (Mrs.) Harriet Kwako. These slides came in handy to assist in the teaching of medical students who are preparing

for their final exams in Hematology. Because of inadequate resources, including microscopes and visual aids, the teaching of Hematology could be tedious. For faculty that is already over worked nothing could be better than these slides which will assist them tremendously. The slides cover most aspects of basic hematology and hematological malignan-

cies.

Also donated was medication worth \$4,800 to aid in the recovery of patients after chemotherapy administration. The leader of the IHDN team also gave three lectures to the medical students. Most of these students lack basic textbooks and as one of them said they "make photocopies of what they think is important to study".

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Health Clinic for Ghanaian village

Following the visit of the IHDN team to Ghana, it became clear that there is a great need for external support to be able to follow up on the patients seen during the one-month mission trip. Accordingly, a Health Clinic is being planned for Agbozume, the first project site of IHDN. The plan is to recruit a project director to man the clinic and also implement the community health programs of IHDN. Because of the poor infrastructure and the low standard of living in the village, most people would not want to work in the village.

However, IHDN would like to provide adequate incentives to people who make the sacrifice to work in the village.

IHDN needs to raise about \$56,000 during the first year to support its projects. This includes one time capital of \$37,000 for procurement and shipping of equipment and a truck to Ghana.

Your gifts to IHDN are very much appreciated. You will be added to our network and receive our quarterly newsletter. We also welcome your questions, comments and suggestions. Let us read from you. Please write to us today.

IHDN branch in Ghana

The first overseas branch of IHDN has been formed in Ghana. This was the result of the Health Fair organized recently. A 6-member interim board has been formed.

These are

Mr. Ben Agamah, Retired Banker- President;
Dr. Ama Abbam, Ophthalmologist- Vice President;
Mr. Kofi Agamah, Ghana Bible Society Youth Officer-Secretary;
Mrs. Esther Addison, Senior Nursing Officer-Treasurer;
Mr. Leke Gedzah-Pharmacist;
Mr. Johannes Gameklu-Administrator.

IHDN welcomes the interest and support of friends like you as we seek to make a difference in the developing world. Please make your tax-deductible gift to IHDN (217) 787-6530 ph 698-3853 fax ihdn@aol.com