



Enhancing child Nutrition through Animal source food Management (ENAM)

• Edgar Akuffo-Addo

• Cornell University'16

• Ghana

• May 2014- Aug 2014

GOAL

To increase maternal and young children's access to animal source food and protein for improved nutrition. This will be achieved by providing a cheaper source of animal protein to mothers through a sustainable animal source.

WHY ENAM? *Enam is a twi word (Ghanaian language) for meat.

The future of the Gushegu District of the Northern Region of Ghana is under serious threat, as the majority of its children (one out of every three children) between one and five years of age are being hit by the high incidence of a form of malnourishment, popularly known as "Kwashiokor". Kwashiokor is a protein deficiency characterized by edema, irritability, anorexia, ulcerating dermatoses, retarded motor and cognitive development and an enlarged liver with fatty infiltrates. Peace is not merely the absence of war, but the presence of justice and care for humanity. The Gushegu district is facing a different form of Genocide- they are starving to death. We can bring peace to this province and end this deficiency by providing protein sources to these children and their families.

PROJECT

Brief Description- Community Poultry

The project will involve the establishment of a poultry farm that will provide subsidized source of protein to the Gushegu Community. This subsidized source of protein will make animal protein readily available to pregnant women and children. A poultry farm will be ideal to serve the community efficiently; the eggs from the poultry together with the poultry meat will meet the district's population, since they are both complete protein.

PHASE 1: Project Development and Preparation (Ongoing); 23rd January 2014- Present

- (a) A land has been successfully procured at a subsidized price for the project.
- (b) Partnership agreement with the University of Development Studies has been successfully reached- we are awaiting documentation from the institution.

PHASE 2: Design and Construction (2 weeks); 4th July 2014- 13th July 2014

Architecture students from the University of Development Studies, Ghana, will volunteer to help build the poultry structure. A partnership has been developed with Global Success Fellowship to enable us access youth volunteers in the Gushegu District. This will be the perfect avenue for the youth volunteers to come together and discuss issues regarding peace as we go about our daily activities of building the poultry structure. This project will also serve as a technical experience for the student volunteers as they harness what they have learned in school on the field.

PHASE 3: Rearing Chicks (12 weeks); 18th July 2014- 18th October 2014

This is a 12 week period where the chicks will be reared. In the first week, 25th August- 28th August, I together with the student volunteer team will create awareness about the program and encourage the natives on the need for peace and education. This will be done through community partnership with local churches and at the local market place. At this stage, a database of all potential beneficiaries will be created, this will enable us track our impact and development over time.

PHASE 4: HARVEST, DISTRIBUTION & Educational Outreach; 22nd October 2014

A database with the names of beneficiaries will enable us keep track of the children in each beneficiary household. Before every distribution of the poultry animals, the beneficiaries will have to attend a one-hour peace session. At this session, a representative from the University of Development Studies will address the women on the need for peace and education. For a household to continue enjoying the privileges of the ENAM project, they will have to meet the requirement of ensuring that their children are enrolled in one of the local schools. School at the Primary level comes at no cost in Ghana. Future development will include developing a system to check on the children's attendance.

PHASE 5: Sustaining the Project

This project will not just give things away. Half of the poultry produce will be subsidized and in some cases will be free to pregnant and lactating women, while the other half will be sold in major cities for profit. Profit made from the ENAM project will be used in developing the Gushegu district- improving the educational system and tackling other grass-root problems that hinder development. This approach of recycling funds will enable us to continue running the poultry unit without the need of an outside funding.

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Confirmed Partners, volunteers and Faculty:

Global Success Fellowship: A registered non-profit in Ghana that is geared towards educational reform and social change in Ghana.

University for Development Studies (U.D.S): The only Government University in the Northern Region, few miles from the Gushegu District. The Student government has agreed to provide student volunteers for the project. Students from U.D.S will also take on the project after the Cornell team leaves Ghana.

Professor David Levitsky- Professor, Division of Nutritional Science, Cornell University: An advisor of the project who provides us with feasible ways to achieve maximum impact at a reduced cost.

Dr. Joseph Frimpong Adomako- Professor of Agriculture, K.N.U.S.T, U.D.S: A grounds project advisor who made the connections and ensures the logistical feasibility of the designed project. He brings experience from small scale farming which he developed in his university.

Rachel Yull- Project Assistant, Cornell University, Africana Studies: A student at Cornell University who has volunteered to embark on the trip for the project.

Student Volunteers: 8 student volunteers have been confirmed by the U.D.S student government. This number seems right for the project. More volunteers will be explored in the District by Global Success Fellowship if needed.

Gushegu District of Education: The District of Education has agreed to work with us on improving school attendance. We have been authorized access to the school-attendance register of the local schools we will be working with.

OUTCOME

- (a) Animal source foods intake in young children has been associated with improved dietary quality and growth outcomes. The Enhancing Child Nutrition through Animal Source Food Management (ENAM) project will provide income generating activities, development services and nutrition and health education to caregivers and pregnant mothers. This program will also provide a means for other organizations interested in maternal care and child health to get in contact with mothers and children. The structure that will be built will be the perfect avenue for intervention to problems that face maternal and child health development.
- (b) This project will not see an end to just a deficiency, Kwashiorkor but also help produce better informed local citizens since profits from the project will be used to provide the educational needs of the society. This approach utilizes the idea of recycling funds.
- (c) The development of the community through the ENAM project will be a vehicle that will drive and instill peace into the little ones and the community as a whole, since most uprisings are in the North.
- (d) The project will also be a source of employment for locals and chicken droppings will serve as a source of fertilizer for local farmers, many of who cannot afford fertilizers
- (e) This project will also pave way for future solutions to environmental problems, feathers from the birds can be used to produce biodegradable polythene since plastic bags are a major source of land pollutants in Gushegu and Ghana as a whole. This will be important for community and environmental sustainability.

Motivation: Most of the civil insurgence that occurs in Ghana most often happens in the Northern sector. Children often get involved in these uprisings as child soldiers. The best assurance of peace is a well-informed and a healthy-minded youth. This project will also be a learning experience for the locals that peaceful collaboration is a tool that yields mutual benefits and development.

Biography- Edgar

I am a sophomore majoring in Human Biology Health and Society. My current work as a member of the research team of the Cornell University Micronutrient Initiative/ Cornell Prenatal Ca Supplementation (MICA) has made me acutely conscious of the distressing effects of nutritional deficiencies. This has awakened me to the immediate importance of crafting keys to the health issues that plague those of lower socioeconomic status in both the urbanized and the emergent world. On a service trip in Ghana to the Gushegu District, there were stick-thin kids on the verge of starvation seemingly everywhere. Those images were seared into my brain. I want to walk on the same street in the near future and not see any child begging for food but in school receiving an education.