

WOMENSTRUST

Spring 2011 Newsletter

This past year WomensTrust put in place the building blocks for a great future: we recruited the leadership in Ghana required to take us to higher levels, and we connected to more people who believe in our approach and want to help. These gains further our mission of supporting women and girls as they endeavor to protect, educate, and sustain themselves and their families.

Partnering for Scale

We continue to increase our visibility and outreach with a growing network of organizations sharing similar missions. One in particular stands out -- Women's Empowerment International (WE), a San Diego-based nonprofit committed to "education, to mutual communication, and to furthering the worldwide effort to alleviate poverty." They honored us with a \$20,000 microlending grant after a rigorous vetting process. A contingent from WE will visit Pokuase in



September, and we hope to expand our relationship with this highly professional group.

We have also inspired interest among London's large Ghanaian community. A supporter who organized an intense one-month grassroots campaign hosted Gertrude Ankrah, our Program Development Director in Pokuase. They called on Ghanaian churches and other grantmaking institutions, including the highly visible UK Big Lottery Fund where we have a promising chance to win a grant.

Of course our partnerships with individual donors are the life-blood of WomensTrust and continue to grow and expand along side our programming. We hope you will continue to collaborate in our success – you make all of it possible!



Strengthening Oversight

At the helm of WomensTrust in Ghana is Wilma Longdon, who became Executive Director on February 1 with a personal goal of impacting the forward-progress of her country. Wilma has worked tirelessly since then on tightening and streamlining our operations, strengthening our relationships in the community, developing our board in Ghana and strategic planning. To have a talented Ghanaian woman assume this position marks a turning point for our organization.

Wilma is fully supported by her counterpart in the U.S., Kristen Ash, who has advanced to Associate Director, expanding her role with three years of experience at WomensTrust as Program and Communications Coordinator.

On the Home Front

WomensTrust has a new home -- two, in fact. One is our website, designed pro bono by Melanie Doherty, a graphic designer and supporter from San Francisco.

In addition to a new logo, you will find links to recent videos, as well as client profiles and photographs. Perhaps even more exciting is our new physical home, at 276 Newport Road, Suite 214, in "downtown" New London, NH. Visitors are always welcome at either place.

www.womenstrust.org
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Encouraging Confidence and Success

One of many success stories for the year is that of Margaret "Peggy" Saanuo, to whom we introduced you in 2010.



Through our Continuing Education Program and with a scholarship granted by Sant Bani School, Peggy traveled from Ghana to enter high school in Sanbornton, NH last fall. She has flourished there, using this opportunity to achieve her dream of attending medical school and becoming the first-ever female cardiologist in Ghana, then opening a health clinic in her home community of Pokuase.

Peggy will return to Pokuase for the summer to work as a volunteer tutor for other girls in the WomensTrust education program, sharing her many skills and talents before returning for her senior year at Sant Bani.

Our Supporters are Our Advocates: A message from donor Joan Lambert

I give to WomensTrust because I believe that the best way to fight poverty is to empower girls and women. That is what WomensTrust does. Even better, it accomplishes its mission in a grassroots, organic way, by asking local people what they want, then supporting them with education, healthcare and small loans as they take charge of their lives. The growth spreads from one woman, one family, to the next, one village to the next; with the hope that eventually the whole country finds its own way out of poverty.

I have learned that when you educate a girl or help a woman to start a business, the whole village benefits because girls and women use their new skills and invest their new earnings in their families and communities. Poverty, violence and birth rates go down. Nutrition, health, economic stability and educational levels go up.

Joan Lambert, an author, teaches a course on "Empowering Women Across the World" at Colby Sawyer College's Adventures in Learning program.