

Blogs: (Cont. from Page 4, Column 2)

room and kind of a little sitting area with couches, coffee table and book cases. Comparatively, my host family had quite a nice house - I think this is somehow related to their association with the Chief. From what I could best understand, my host mother was the niece of the Chief...but the nature of relationships and familial terms are very blurred here. Everyone is everyone else's sister, uncle or cousin. So sometimes you just have to guess.

November 16: The homes in our village are constructed with either mud brick or cement walls, and have either thatch or tin roofs. Most homes are arranged in a sort of compound layout, with a center area where family members will do the washing, cooking, drying and sorting of crops from farm, etc. Our village is almost entirely farming-based. The men and women both 'go to farm', as the phrase goes. They leave early in the morning, and start coming back around 2 o'clock, with some staying later into the afternoon and evening, and even some sleeping for nights at a time at their farms. The farms reach out in all directions from the center of the village. I think most people walk, on average, about 20-30 minutes or so to get to farm, but some are quite far off. I have purchased tall rubber 'Wellington' boots, so I am now equipped to 'go to farm'. My counterpart promises I can go with him next Saturday. He said I can be in charge of gathering fire wood. I don't think he trusts me with the actual crops... rightfully so. ★

FOG Donates \$400 to Health Awareness Project in Ghana

Submitted by Ken Autrey

The most recent FOG donation for a PC-related project is a \$400 grant for a program coordinated by PCV Allison Terry, who is posted in Tamale. The program involves a team traveling to a number of towns in the Northern Region and educating citizens about HIV/AIDS. The FOG grant will be spent for the temporary services of a nurse to travel with the team. Others affiliated with this project are photographer Peter DiCampo and filmmaker Alicia Sully. Both were featured in recent issues of Talking Drum, and both are former Ghana PCVs.

To learn more about this project, you can view a brief YouTube video explaining the project, including footage of filmmaker Alicia Sully, photographer Peter DiCampo, and project coordinator PCV Allison Terry, at the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUm9sEjfQ7E> ★

Microfinance Creates Businesses and Jobs in Ghana

Submitted by Jason Hahn

Madam Akosua Amoakoa, is a perfect example of how microfinance really makes a difference. Madam Amoakoa supports her family with a fresh fish trading business today because of the work of Sinapi Aba Trust (SAT), a Ghanaian microfinance institution. Madam Amoakoa used three cycles of loans to build her business starting with a loan of \$77 and now growing to a loan of \$168. She has used the loans to increase her working capital and, in doing so, tripled her income from \$6.60 a week to \$20 a week.

Madam Amoakoa's business has also grown to the extent which she can employ another person to assist her. Sinapi

Friends of Ghana Newsletter

Aba Trust is one of Ghana's premier microfinance institutions. It has approximately 74,000 borrowers and \$19.5 million in assets. In addition to microcredit loans it also offers its clients savings accounts. Sinapi Aba Trust is part of a large and growing microfinance sector in Ghana. According to MIX Market, a well-respected source of information on the microfinance sector, Ghanaian microfinance institutions have more than \$85 million in outstanding loans to 213,000 borrowers.

These borrowers are creating businesses, employing workers, and paying taxes. If you're interested in learning more about Madam Amoakoa and how you could invest in Sinapi Aba Trust, and other Ghanaian microfinance institutions, through MicroPlace, a social business with a website at microplace.com that enables investment in microfinance institutions from around the globe and provides both a financial return along with a great social return - helping people help themselves out of poverty.

Editor's note: The author is a RPCV '99 from Niger where he started a group-led savings bank in his village. He is currently a MBA student at the University of Washington and a marketing intern at MicroPlace. ★

FOG Treasurer's Report: 1/1/09 - 6/30/09

Submitted by Debby Prigal, Treasurer

Beginning Balance on 1/1/09	\$5,190.07
INCOME	
Membership Dues	\$387.50
Total Credits	\$387.50
OPERATING EXPENSES	
NPCA Affiliation Fee	(\$100.00)
Winter 2009 Newsletter	(\$114.74)
Spring 2009 Newsletter	(\$97.57)
Total Expenses	(\$312.31)
Closing Balance as of 6/30/09	\$5,265.26

National Geographic: An American Family visits Northern Ghana

Submitted by: Roger Myers

Follow this link for an hour-long National Geographic Channel program on a family of four from Birmingham, Alabama who spent their vacation living with a family in northern Ghana:

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/channel/videos/feeds/co-seo/Full-Episodes/All-Full-Episodes/Worlds-Apart-Birmingham-AL-meets-Ghana--Full-Length-2.html> ★

Offer of Accommodations in Accra

I am an ex-PCV Samoa '84-86, living in Accra. My wife and I are happy to open our home up to current PCVs or RPCVs visiting Accra - we have a spare room and can host for a few days. Feel free to distribute my contact information. We can also be found on couchsurfing.com.

Jonathan Kahn

Mobile: +233 26 300 2000

Email: jonathan.kahn@ericsson.com ★

Winter 2009



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NPCA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Membership dues and contributions may be tax deductible. Consult your tax advisor.

For FOG membership only, enclose a check for \$15 Payable to Friends of Ghana and mail to:

Debby Prigal, Treasurer
1625 Q St. NW, #207
Washington, DC 20009


The Talking Drum
Newsletter of the Friends of Ghana
c/o Susan Caster
310 Bloomfield Ct.
Roswell, GA 30075

