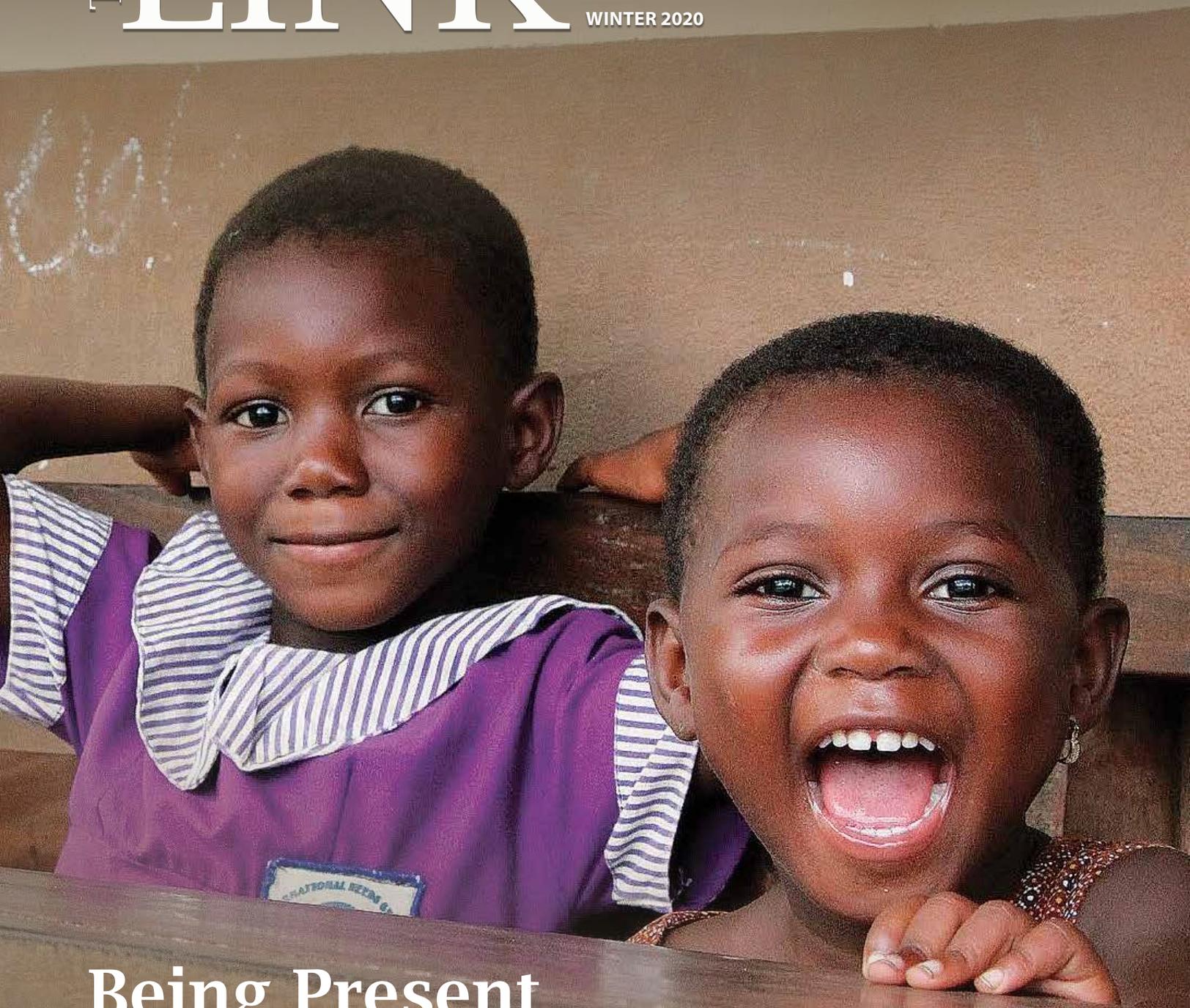


# THE LINK Newsletter

WINTER 2020

Letter From a  
Grateful Heart

Discovery  
Tours



## Being Present Where the Needs Are

Tammy Richmond

**Hi, my name is Tammy. I am a Canadian Registered Nurse.** In October 2019, I joined an International Needs medical team that was travelling to Ghana to hold health clinics in the Volta region. I was incredibly blessed to work with a great team of doctors, nurses and pharmacists from Canada and Ghana. There was joy, challenges, lots of smiles and plenty of special moments as we held clinics in communities that have little access to healthcare.

Before going to Ghana, I was unsure of what we would see and how we would provide care that would outlast our visit. It seemed like such a big undertaking. **How was our small team going to see and treat more than 300 people a day?** I collected as many donations of wound care supplies and medications as I could but it seemed inadequate for the number of people we were going to see. What if we didn't have the right equipment or supplies?



As these questions played over and over in my mind, the team received an email from our leader saying not to worry about these things, just be present. How did she know what I was thinking? Staring at the email, surrounded by a long list of things to collect and an already overflowing bag of medical supplies, I took a breath. **Be present.**

Those two words carried so much truth throughout our time in Ghana. Be present, as I looked into the smiling face of a child and dressed the wound he suffered a year ago but was unable to treat. Be present as I looked at the long queues of people, wondering if we would be able to see them all. Be present, as we faced challenges and heard of the many difficulties rural Ghanaians face to access healthcare.

Prior to one of our clinics we walked through the community observing their living conditions and water source. The visit was filled with happy children giggling as they fought for our hands and proudly lead us through the place they call home, dodging chickens and baby goats, weaving through mud brick homes and shelters. We walked down a long dusty path to their watering hole, passing mothers and children carrying water back to their homes. Their water source looked like a puddle - stagnant and milky grey in colour. It's the water they bathe in, drink and cook with, and it's the source of so many of their health problems. We walked back to the school to start the clinic, a little shaken and heavy hearted, more determined to help.

That day we saw hundreds of cases of Schistosomiasis, a disease caused by parasitic worms in the water. During the clinic, I triaged an 11 year old girl who complained of abdominal pain, ongoing fevers, and blood in her urine - all symptoms of Schistosomiasis. She asked, 'can you help me?' She was seen by the doctors, had the appropriate tests, and received the medications she needed. She came back to the triage room and from the window smiled and said thank you. At the end of the clinic, we had some time to spend with the students from the school. The sweet 11 year old girl was there. We played clapping games and she patiently tried to teach me to dance. We both ended up in fits of laughter and her smile during this moment was a thousand times bigger than the smile she gave me through the window. It was in that moment that I was reminded that being present is a big part of helping



people. Of course, as a medical outreach it was important for us to have a skilled team of health professionals and medications so that we could provide treatment. But it wasn't essential that we have all high-tech equipment to be able to make a difference. Our Ghanaian friends needed people who were willing to help. A tablet takes a few seconds to swallow, a bag of multivitamins will be finished in a week, but the benefits of having someone who cares lasts a lifetime. I am so incredibly grateful for this experience, for working with an amazing group of people and am looking forward to returning to Ghana in 2020.

## Days for Girls Restoring Dignity for Girls...Period.

**Days for Girls** is a global movement that prepares and distributes sustainable menstrual health solutions to girls who would otherwise miss school during their monthly periods. The nonprofit organization was founded in 2008 by Celeste Mergens. After visiting an orphanage in Nairobi, Kenya, she discovered that menstruating girls stayed in their dormitories for days, sitting on cardboard to absorb their flow, because they could not afford feminine hygiene products. This led Celeste to create washable, reusable pads, and provide the girls with a personal kit that would supply all they needed to continue their schooling with hygiene and dignity. **Today, the Days for Girls kits have reached 1.5 million girls in over 100 countries.**

Ancaster's chapter of Days for Girls began in 2014. Evelyn Hielema always liked sewing and made quilts and clothes for her family, until there was no more need for them. Evelyn shares,

“

I began searching the internet for ways that I could use my sewing for charity and came upon Days for Girls. I liked the work they did but wondered where I would get the flannel to make the kits. I put an ad on Kijiji saying that I was looking for free flannel and got a response the next day! A lady in the area had a small business making flannel pyjamas and said she had large amounts to give away. I could have it all! I took it as a sign and with a few friends, started sewing kits for Days for Girls. At the beginning, there were five of us. Today, we have 22 people involved, including my husband Syd who is one of the board members for Days for Girls Canada.

The group has made DfG kits for girls in Nepal, Lebanon, Guatemala, Ecuador, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. They have sent 260 kits with Mac Adhikary, International Needs' Director in Bangladesh, for the girls at Savar Children's Village. Thank you so much ladies for all your hard work on behalf of those who really need it. God bless you! ●



## GHANA

### Country History & Fun Facts

Ghana is considered one of the more stable countries in West Africa. Formerly known as the Gold Coast, Ghana gained independence from Britain in 1957. The country is a land of lowland hills. Lake Volta is the largest artificial lake in the world. It extends for over 320 miles and can be seen from space. Accra, the capital, is a large city with a population of 4.1m. Ghana has a very hot climate as it is near to the equator.

International Needs has partnered with Ghana since 1984 to provide quality education to children living in poverty in the Greater Accra and Volta region. Currently, there are nearly 5000 children enrolled in International Needs schools through IN's Child Assistance Program. This program ensures that children have all that they need to thrive in the classroom, including school supplies, nutritious food, and free medical care.

#### Fun Facts About Ghana:

- Ghana is the second largest producer of gold in Africa.
- Ghanaians love soccer and built a large soccer stadium in the capital of Accra. Soccer is the national sport.
- Ghana is the world's second largest producer of cocoa.
- Tourists visit Shai Hills to see baboons living wild at the edge of the savannah preservation.
- Ghana has a space program and launched a satellite in 2017!

### A Taste of Ghana

#### Fried Plantain and Bean Stew

This is a popular Ghana food made with beans and ripe plantain. It is very delicious and good for vegetarians. The preparation is quite easy. It is prepared by frying ripe plantain and preparing the beans stew with red oil, pepper and beans.

- 2 cups black-eyed pea or beans soaked over night
- 4 medium size tomatoes
- 2 medium size onion
- Pepper like scotch bonnet or red chili as required
- 1/2cup palm oil
- Momoni (optional)
- 1 tablespoon ground shrimp (optional)
- 4 - 6 plantains



#### Instructions

1. Cook the soaked beans till tender, set aside. Blend one onion, tomatoes and pepper together and set aside. Slice the other onion and set aside. Remove the peels from plantains and season with salt if you like, set aside.
2. Put palm oil in a saucepan, add half of the sliced onions and momoni if using. Cook till tender and the momoni melts in the oil. Add the blended onions, tomatoes and pepper. Add about 1/2 teaspoon salt and cook till thickened. Add ground shrimp if using and the cooked beans.

INTERNATIONAL NEEDS CANADA

DISCOVERY

TOUR

### Upcoming Discovery Tours

D.R Congo Discovery Tour	2020
Ghana Medical Tour	October 2020

For more information please contact Corrie Mulder at  
905.389.1118 or corrie@internationalneeds.ca

Discovery Tours offer a unique opportunity to witness first-hand the difference your contribution is making in the lives of the children and families you support. It also allows you to connect with your partners serving on the ground. Your gift is the fuel that drives their service.

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## Letter from a Grateful Heart

Dear Sponsor,

Thank you so much for the great work you have done in my life by supporting my education.

With much joy, I want to inform you that I have completed my course in carpentry and joinery. My family is so grateful for what I have attained. There are 11 children in my family and I am one of three who were able to finish their studies.

“When I have saved up enough capital, I will open my own shop and employ young people who have no work. I am also planning to represent youths on our town council as a counsellor. My dear sponsor, thank you very much for the great love, care, and support that you have given me since I started school. May the Lord reward you A LOT.

Your child,  
Godfrey ●



## >>> Prayer Corner <<<

### Items for Prayer

*“To get nations back on their feet, we must first get down on our knees.” • Billy Graham*

Please pray for those who live in rural communities in Ghana. **They have limited to no access to medical care.** This causes untold suffering. Pray that efforts will be made by the Ghanaian Government to ensure that all its citizens have access to good healthcare.

## Jemimah’s Joy

Jemimah beams with joy. She is realizing her dream and is so grateful for the support she has received over the years from her Canadian sponsor and her friends at International Needs Ghana. Jemimah shares,

“I grew up the firstborn in a family of five children. I had a passion for education and was praised by my teachers but

when I finished middle school, I found myself at home. I had no hope of going to high school because my parents could not afford it. Then a miracle happened! I received sponsorship through the International Needs Child Assistance Program. I was so happy to return to school! When I graduated from high school, I was accepted at the University of Ghana where I am presently studying Nutrition and Food Science. I am enjoying my studies very much and am so thankful that International Needs provides for my tuition fees and book allowance. I have come to learn that sometimes when God wants to bless you He gives you someone. That someone was my wonderful Canadian sponsor and International Needs. Thank you.” ●



“

### Items for Praise

*“Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” • Thomas Ken*

**Praise God for the work of Days for Girls.** Their kits enable girls to have the same amount of class time as the boys. Days for Girls’ kits have reached 1.5 million girls in 100 countries! Now that is cause for celebrating the goodness of God.

## ZACTS School Receives Special Honour

**ZACTS School for Orphans and Vulnerable Children has grown phenomenally since it opened its doors to 60 students in 2012.**

Today, there are 602 students attending classes at ZACTS and the school's good work has not escaped the notice of the Government of Zambia. ZACTS has been given the status of **"School of Excellence"** by Zambia's Ministry of Education. A wonderful achievement! The Rev. Eddie Jubisha, principal at ZACTS School, wishes to thank "our friends in Canada" for their continued partnership.

The people living in the school's surrounding area are subsistence farmers with large families, many of them supporting children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. The quality Christian education their children are receiving will help eradicate poverty in the region and promote economic growth. ●



## Buikwe Senior High has a Girls' Dormitory!

The construction of a 200 bed girls' dormitory at Buikwe Senior High School was completed and commissioned by the Director of Uganda's Ministry of Education, in June 2019.

The dormitory will provide the supervision and security the girls need to move forward confidently in their studies. A big thank you goes to Crossroads Community Church in Red Deer, Alberta and to those who supported the construction of the dormitory. **You are impacting the lives of hundreds of girls!**

“

A few years ago, this school was just a dream. All we had was a hill. Now we have a school and it continues to grow. The completion of the girls' dormitory will help us to continue promoting girls' education.” • Justice Miwanda, Director of International Needs Uganda. ●



## International Needs Ghana's New Executive Director

On October 1st, 2019, Cromwell Awadey was appointed as Executive Director of International Needs Ghana.

Mr. Awadey assumes the role with close to two decades of work experience with IN Ghana. He joined the team as a Research Officer and became the Head of Programs in 2011. He holds a master's degree in Geography and Resource Development, and a certificate in Mobilizing Assets for Community-Driven Development from the Coady International Institute in Canada. Congratulations Cromwell! May God bless you in your new role. Cromwell succeeds Edmond Vanderpuye who is now the General Secretary of International Needs Inc. ●

