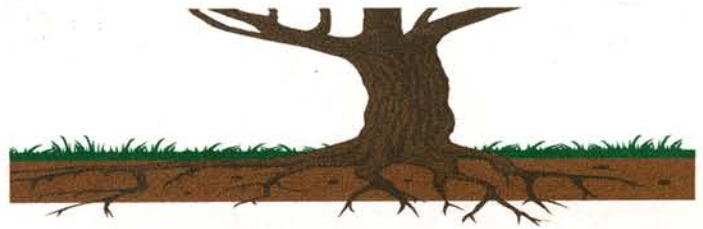


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NEWSLETTER OF SERVICE-EDUCATION-ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT-SCIENCE (S.E.E.D.S.), INC.
VOLUME 2

1996 YEAR END SUMMARY

"COMMUNITY IS LOCAL AND GLOBAL"

Dear Friends:

Welcome ! With this issue of ROOTS, we complete our second year of publication and fifth year of work. In reflecting on the success of the S.E.E.D.S. People-to-People Cultural Exchange Project and our very ambitious "20 For 45" Literacy Campaign, we realized that it was your outstanding work as volunteers that made all the difference. Your efforts were truly "louder than words". On behalf of our Board of Directors, thank you. You have reaffirmed why "Service" is the first word in our name .

In this issue we have summarized S.E.E.D.S. 1996 work and some of our plans for 1997. As promised, Gladys Okyere also shares some of her experiences and feelings from her 3-month visit to the U.S. and Canada. We hope the information is useful. Please contact us with any of your questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Wright

&

E Anthony Mackall

Co-Editors

"20 FOR 45" LITERACY CAMPAIGN SUCCEEDS

Thanks to the generosity of dozens of donors and the work of over thirty volunteers, the S.E.E.D.S. Start-A-Library Project's 1996 **"20 For 45" Campaign** has been successfully completed. Our goal was to collect, sort and transport **20,000 books** to Ghana for distribution to at least **45 schools** and other institutions. S.E.E.D.S. has met this target; actually identifying *over sixty community libraries, schools, colleges and non-governmental organizations (NGO's)* to receive the books.

In late August the shipment of 440 boxes arrived by freighter at the port of Tema; where it was received by Sandi Fonsi of the *Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT)* along with Jacqueline Wright and Gladys Okyere of S.E.E.D.S.. Mr. J. O. Twum- Barimah of the Ghana Education Service arranged transport of the boxes to a distribution facility in Accra, secured through Mrs. Margaret Benneh, Metro Education Director. Over the next several months, the pre-sorted "mini library" collections will be picked-up by representatives of (or delivered to) schools, colleges, NGO's, villages and towns from all of Ghana's ten regions. The overwhelming majority of recipients are located in the country's vast rural areas, where the need for books is greatest. With the completion of this distribution, tens of thousands of children and adults will have regular access to a variety of quality books for the first time. *(continued on page 2)*

"20 For 45" Campaign (continued from page 1)

The 20 For 45 Campaign received critical funding support from the *United Methodist Church (Global Ministries, World and Women Divisions)* and the Minnesota-based NGO, *Books For Africa*.

The *Zeta Phi Beta Sorority* embraced the Campaign as its own. Through a coordinated national effort its local chapters contributed well over 5,000 quality books of all types. They also paid substantial domestic mailing costs. Several thousand text, general reference and literature books were contributed by the following New York City-area schools: Public School 199 (Manhattan), Community Intermediate School 229 (Bronx) and Riverhead High School (Long Island). The Hamilton Grange Branch (West Harlem) of the NYC Public Library was central to the campaign; coordinating citywide library contributions and also providing a large, secure staging area for collecting, sorting and packing the books. WBAI's (FM) morning show, "*Wake-up Call*" got the word out and was responsible for recruiting a score of hard-working volunteers during the critically important final fortnight of the campaign.

Where The Books Are Going

Sixty-two schools and institutions across Ghana are slated to receive books from the "20 For 45" Campaign. They include 25 community libraries, 9 primary schools, 11 junior secondary schools, 8 senior secondary schools, 3 teacher training colleges, 3 universities and 3 Ghana-based NGO's. The distribution was largely based on the types of books that were donated.

The recipients were identified because they had heard about S.E.E.D.S' *Start-A-Library Project* and contacted us, or been recommended by one of our field contacts.

Africana Studies Collection Is Contributed To DuBois Centre

The highly respected *W.E.B. DuBois Memorial Centre for Pan African Culture* in Accra was the recipient of the S.E.E.D.S. *Africana Studies Collection*. This is a diverse collection of over six hundred books concerning Africa and the African Diaspora (or written by African-descended authors). It ranges from literary classics to political works; children's stories to art books; biographies to contemporary fiction, and ancient history to present day economic development. Assembled as part of the "20 For 45" Campaign, the collection was S.E.E.D.S.' response to a frequent claim by Ghanaians that books written about or by African Peoples are quite scarce in both urban and rural areas.

Named for the great African-American activist and scholar, the Institute is committed to education, literacy, research and the preservation of African cultures. Each year thousands of Ghanaians and foreign visitors use its resources. According to Remel K. Moore, the Institute's executive director, the Africana Collection increased its library by one third.

Some Keys To A Successful International Book Drive

- Detailed, flexible plan; realistic time frame (9 -12 months) and budget (w/ contingency)
- 80-90% of funding in place by month 2
- At least 15 reliable volunteers (div. of lab.)
- Variety of large book donors
- Secure storage/sorting/boxing-taping areas
- Capable internat'l freight consolidator to arrange pick-up and transshipment
- Reliable organization to receive, store and distribute books in the "destination country"

Remember... "Logistics! Logistics! Logistics!"

WE'RE OFFICIAL !

During 1996 S.E.E.D.S. became an officially registered NGO in Ghana. The completion of the registration process was necessitated by our decision to continue to do development work there. This *official* status enables S.E.E.D.S. to engage in all aspects of "in country" NGO work. Locally developed, operated and funded initiatives are now legal (as well as often quite practical). S.E.E.D.S. can now also function as an official recipient of large, donated shipments (books, school supplies, etc.) that require a qualified *local* agency to negotiate the cargo through customs.

S.E.E.D.S.' registration in Ghana was possible because of our core of reliable, locally-based volunteers. [This will be a standard S.E.E.D.S. operating practice in each locale.] "Thank you's" are in order to Sisters Margaret Benneh, Gladys Okyere and Brothers Eboe Quagraine and Geoffrey Gle, who join S.E.E.D.S. president, Jacqueline Wright as members of the *Executive Council*. All of these volunteers have made important contributions to our ongoing work.

PLANNING AHEAD...

S.E.E.D.S. is exploring the feasibility of extending the opportunity of its annual "people-to-people" visits to Ghana to a somewhat larger number of "non tourists" in 1998 or 1999. In each of the past five years, Jacqueline Wright has traveled throughout Ghana; visiting villages and rural towns as well as the cities. Usually accompanied by one or two other U.S. educators or S.E.E.D.S. volunteers, Jacqueline has visited schools; helped establish dozens of "starter libraries", and met with members of an agricultural cooperative. When she and her associates travel, they rarely stay in hotels; preferring instead private homes and 'bed and breakfast' accommodations. While this people-oriented approach is certainly not for everyone, it appeals to others as "a refreshing way to see Ghana and meet Ghanaians". The idea would be to offer 8-12 people a similar experience over a 3-week period. The July-August and December-January months would be most likely.

If such a trip to Ghana interests you, write or e-mail S.E.E.D.S., Inc. at the address(es) below.

"20 For 45" Literacy Campaign

Volunteers in New York City packing some of the 20,000 donated books for mini library collections in schools,...and villages across Ghana.



An Experience To Remember

During the Fall of 1995 and Winter of 1996 S.E.E.D.S., Inc. sponsored its first Cultural Exchange visit from Africa to the Western Hemisphere. Through the "Exchange" S.E.E.D.S. sought to extend its work promoting international understanding and cooperation. Gladys Okyere, a dance artist, educator, cultural worker and longtime S.E.E.D.S. volunteer from Ghana, was invited to participate. She not only accepted, but also helped plan what became the "S.E.E.D.S. People-to-People Study Tour" The following are excerpts from a Study Tour Report prepared by Gladys upon her return home.

I wish to first express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty and also to the S.E.E.D.S. Program for the rare opportunity to organise a Cultural and Educational Tour of the USA and Canada... with a minimum of resources. ...I believe that the opportunity was the result of my high spirit of volunteerism, hard work and years of commitment to the development of my nation, Ghana.

The tour, which began in early October and ended in early January, was enjoyable, inspiring, educational and thought-provoking. I visited eight states and Washington, D.C. in the US; and the province of Ontario in Canada. I was based in the New York City-Northern New Jersey area. I spent a week or more in rural Pennsylvania; the Baltimore-Columbia, Maryland area; the Raleigh, North Carolina-Myrtle Beach, South Carolina areas; and Ontario. We took some shorter trips to the "D.C."-Northern Virginia area. However, my overall experience meant much more to me than any listing of the many places I visited could express. It was the combination of the many interesting people that I met and the experiences we shared that made the tour so very special. People were warm and genuine; usually as interested in learning about Ghana or hearing my views, as I was of learning from them. I was hosted overnight by about ten different families. Some were old friends from home, or [from North America] that I'd met when they came to Ghana. Others were new friends that helped me feel right at home.

Our preliminary plan for my visit was basic. I was particularly interested in seeing schools, going into classrooms and talking with students and educators. I was welcomed into classes at large urban public middle and elementary schools in the Bronx and Manhattan; and smaller elementary schools in rural Pennsylvania, suburban North Carolina and Ontario. I got a sense of the possibilities and challenges of a huge [open] school with hundreds of pupils and few classroom walls; and also saw traditional structure blended with ungraded classes in a very small, church school in Baltimore. What contrasts! The teachers and pupils of all the schools were quite open, so I learned a lot. However, there is much that they want and should learn about Africa.

I also wanted to visit a variety of libraries since much of my recent work with our Education Service as well as with S.E.E.D.S. involves expanding and upgrading our [Ghana's] library resources and operations. We were able to visit or utilize several excellent facilities. They included: the Schomburg, Lincoln Center, Columbia University, Drew University, Indiana [Pa.] University and University of Toronto libraries. I am indebted to Mr. Amoyaw, Ms. Johnson and the other staff of the Hamilton Grange Library in West Harlem. Their willingness to explain things..., transformed my simple request to volunteer at the library for two weeks into a professional in-service experience. I got a valuable insider's view of the community outreach programs as well the cataloguing and filing systems of this well run member of the great New York City Public Library System. (continued on page 5)

An Experience To Remember (continued from page 4)

We were able to attend numerous social, educational and cultural meetings, programs, conferences and concerts. I was an invited dancer and speaker at some of these events. My presentations were most effective in intimate settings . One such enjoyable experience took place at the Maryland Museum of African Art [Columbia, Md.] where I involved children and adults from the audience as participants in a demonstration & lesson on Ghanaian education, dance and games. As circumstances would have it, the study tour coincided with some historic events and some personally meaningful experiences:

- *S.E.E.D.S., Inc.'s first annual board of directors meeting;*
- *useful sessions about the just-concluded Peace Train and the World Women's Conference in Beijing, China;*
- *the controversy and the love surrounding the Million Man March;*
- *the history and hope of the United Nations 50th Anniversary Celebration;*
- *my feelings of pride and humility at two programs during the U.N. Celebration, welcoming President Rawlings and First Lady Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings to New York;*
- *the commitment of two thousand activists at Teach-In 1 of the International Forum on Globalization to organize for a more equitable and sustainable utilization of the world's resources; and finally,*
- *my sense of "home" and purpose during the Sunday meetings and other gatherings with my U.S.-based countrymen.*

Again, it was the enriching "people-to-people" exchange of ideas that made my experiences so valuable; and the study tour so successful. It occurs to me, that S.E.E.D.S. must continue this important work. My resolve to keep working for human development has been strengthened by my clearer understanding that so many others around the globe share the same struggle. Dear friends, I welcome you to visit Ghana, meet our people and perhaps, strengthen your own resolve.

Gladys Okyere
[1996 March]



TOP: Gladys, outside the Maryland Museum of African Art...after her presentation.
BOTTOM: ...during entry procession of Cultural Event/Fundraiser for *Baako Ye*, Ghanaian literacy project. Held in Bronx, NY at Church of the Abiding Presence.

Service • Education • Economic Development • Science

PLANS FOR 1997

SERVICE: In 1997 S.E.E.D.S. plans to increase its U.S.-based community service work. Members of our Board will investigate and participate in existing mentoring programs. A formal recommendation regarding a S.E.E.D.S.-sponsored mentoring initiative will be made during the year. S.E.E.D.S. will also work on Afterschool Youth Enrichment Programs for a school and a community center in New York City. S.E.E.D.S. is currently working with 360°, a New York City music and community services organization, to plan youth oriented cultural events for the latter half of 1997.

EDUCATION: S.E.E.D.S. will continue its work in literacy and international education. The *Start-A-Library Project's* focus in Africa will be on helping to strengthen the 60 to 70 libraries in Ghana that we have previously assisted. Additionally, we will assess the feasibility of extending the Project to one more country during 1997. South Africa, Zimbabwe and Gambia have all been proposed by S.E.E.D.S. volunteers. While there is a significant need for literacy work throughout rural Africa, our decision will be based on a combination of supply, financial, socio-political and logistics considerations. If we assume an availability of appropriate books and sufficient storage, packing and shipping funds; then the critical determinant will be the "situation on the ground". To initiate the Start-A-Library Project in a country, S.E.E.D.S. must achieve all of the following:

- determine that there is a strong national commitment to literacy;
- identify a core of committed, local volunteers to coordinate operations, and
- establish a working relationship with at least one reliable, local non-governmental organization (NGO) that is able and willing to receive (through customs), store and/or help distribute the donated books.

In 1996 Jacqueline Wright and E. Anthony Mackall collaborated on an interdisciplinary middle school curriculum module on South Africa. The pair utilized the *S.E.E.D.S. Food for Learning™ Curriculum Format*, developed in 1994-95. Through this format, students learn about and correspond with similar age children of the counterpart country/culture. Through their standard subjects, students also learn about the location, climate, history and contemporary issues of the counterpart country. During 1997 S.E.E.D.S. also plans to sponsor the development of a middle school module on Ghana as well as preliminary curriculum outlines on Zimbabwe and Japan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: In 1994 S.E.E.D.S. in conjunction with the NGO, Africa Seed, funded a revolving micro loan (\$500) to a 15-village, women's agricultural cooperative in Ghana's Northern Region. Over the past two years, this enterprise of the Anufo People, has produced several harvests of groundnuts. The women have used proceeds from crop sales to service the loan, purchase educational materials and cloth and to develop a reserve for cooperative expansion. In 1997 S.E.E.D.S. plans to establish a larger, revolving fund; and annually assist two or three community-based enterprises. In addition to micro-credit financing, we will offer assistance in developing business plans and loan packaging. We will target initiatives in Ghana and/or South Africa that are feasible; benefit children and women, and promote both community empowerment and sustainable development. *(continued on page 7)*

Three S.E.E.D.S. Board Members: (l. to r.) Gladys Okyere, Vice Chairperson, Ghana Office; Dr. Edna Hill, M.D., Science & Health Committee, and Dr. Roxanne Hughes-Wheatland, Ph.D., Mentoring Policy Committee



PLANS FOR 1997 (continued from page 6)

During 1996 volunteers conducted a *Survey of Rental Housing Preferences* in Rochester, New York. The survey is an important element in a local community redevelopment effort. In conjunction with this effort, S.E.E.D.S. volunteers have been meeting with the United Church Ministries (U.C.M.), a consortium of churches in Rochester, to plan a development strategy. During 1997 we will continue to work with U.C.M. and other organizations to design and implement a viable affordable housing and community development strategy.

SCIENCE: Members of the board will investigate ways that S.E.E.D.S. can support community-based efforts to improve health services. The initial locale under consideration is Baltimore, Md.. Recommendations will be made during 1997.

Since its inception, S.E.E.D.S. has been concerned with environmental and ecological issues. During the latter part of 1995, S.E.E.D.S. volunteers participated in the International Forum On Globalization's historic *Teach-In 1*. In 1996 we have continued to study the troubling, rather profound effects that much of today's "global policies" (regarding economic expansion, industrial development, and commodity distribution and consumption) have had on our environment, the allocation of resources, and on human development. In 1997 S.E.E.D.S. will develop, and begin implementation of a set of practical organizational strategies that *promote environmental and ecological awareness and responsibility; and support sustainable development*. These strategies will address our work in both highly-industrialized and less-industrialized communities, regions and countries. We plan to focus on *youth awareness and responsibility* in our work in the U.S.; and on *sustainable agricultural, community development or health projects* in Africa.

1996 Fact Finding Trip to South Africa

Jacqueline Wright, president of S.E.E.D.S., visited South Africa for four weeks in July and August. She was one of 18 educators from around the U.S. who were awarded *Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminars Abroad Fellowships*. Traveling as a group, Jacqueline and her colleagues visited seven of the country's nine provinces. Along the way, she was able "to get a real sense of the people(s) of South Africa". Her many visits, meetings and discussions with a variety of South Africans, were useful in helping her to understand the social, political, economic and cultural dynamics of the country.

In her own words: *"South Africa was the experience of a lifetime. Like the U.S., it's a nation of stark contrasts. I saw the beauty of idyllic landscapes and modern, almost pristine cities in close proximity to vast shantytowns. I also saw more hope and determination than despair in this nation with millions of children whose futures are unsettled; and still lie precariously in the balance. ...The majority of the people continue to exhibit great patience and a spirit of Ubuntu (respect for diversity through justice, cooperation, peace and development) as they contend with profound social and economic inequalities."*

As head of an international development NGO, Jacqueline also exchanged information with many South Africans. She established relations—in several provinces—with NGO's and agencies involved in education & literacy, community empowerment and sustainable development. She even had preliminary talks with a number of prospective S.E.E.D.S. volunteers. Since returning, Jacqueline has continued to correspond with many of these contacts. Based on the success of her fact finding efforts, S.E.E.D.S. is exploring the feasibility of sponsoring literacy and micro-credit initiatives in South Africa. With the benefit of her experiences and the informational materials she collected during the trip, Jacqueline completed a middle school curriculum module entitled *South Africa: A Nation In Transition- A S.E.E.D.S. Food For Learning™ Curriculum Module*. [See "PLANS...1997"]

At the end of her visit, Jacqueline flew to Ghana; where she joined S.E.E.D.S. colleagues and other volunteers in preparing to receive the huge "20 For 45" book shipment.

In Pretoria...

At 2ND ANNUAL
WOMEN'S DAY...

A.N.C. Women rally during massive march commemorating their 1956 refusal to submit to carrying apartheid's hated passbooks.

