

# Welcome to Ullo

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Volume 2

Winter Travel Team

December 20th-22nd

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Joe and Zack lead the feedback session with staff of the current health center in Ullo after presenting the pre-construction drawings for the new health clinic.

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## Issue II Updates

- Arriving in Ullo
- Meeting the community
- Beginning implementations
- Water being held by Ullo Dam



Jennifer and Rebecca walk with kids in the community

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## Note from Dr. Maier,

A big news item is that the dam is holding water... It's a beautiful sight to hold... credit to our 2019/20 team for using survey equipment to develop recommendations to lower the spillway and the community for following through!!



Before picture featuring Jack Hanley with the 2019/2020 travel team.



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## Monday, December 20th

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### Mary Okkema

#### VP Fundraising, Materials Engineering

Hi everyone! This is Mary reporting on our first full day in Ullo. Today, we woke up around 7 am. We had a very relaxing breakfast on the front porch that consisted of fried dough balls with sugar, instant coffee, water bags, and a cool breeze. It was nice to have a relaxing moment after all the traveling. We have finally made it to Ullo, and now the real work starts.

Around 9:30 am, we walked a half mile up the road to meet with Chief Hassan, the interim Chief of Ullo. At the meeting, we met with him and the elders. We all introduced ourselves by stating our names, majors, and the project we are working on. Joe and Dr. Maier took over the talking from there on out, and Paul did the translating. Dr. Maier thanked the Chief and elders for having us in the community and informed them how excited we were to be back after 2 years.

Joe then went over what work is being done on the projects for the next two and half weeks. He also presented Chief Hassan with the clinic construction plans. After the meeting finished, we all headed down the road to start our tour of Ullo. We were followed by a herd of kids that insisted on holding our hands and carrying our water bottles.

The tour consisted of some important moments like Matt Butler finally uniting with his three water tanks (the first one being his favorite because it is the first one) and Jennifer performing her triage as the primary safety officer. Jennifer saved Libby's leg by skillfully applying a Band-Aid on a minor scratch. Some other highlights consisted of looking at the water pumps and tanks on the grounds of Ullo Senior High School, visiting the site of the new clinic, and walking over the dam in north Ullo.

At the end of the day, we had walked a total of 7 miles. We headed home and finished off the night with chicken, jollof, and steamed cabbage, which has become one of our favorite meals.

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# Tuesday, December 21st

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Matt Butler

Global Resource Systems

Live from Ullo-Dantie, Ghana on 21 December 2021...

It is the Iowa State Engineers Without Borders Chapter Winter 2021 Travel Team... Live!

\*Show fades in from dark\*

Whole team, except Jennifer, who was strangely up at 6am: groggily emerged from their rooms, brushed their teeth with bags of clean water, and enjoyed breakfast of sugar donuts. Rebecca meets with a representative from our partner NGO, Self Help International, on a sofa on the ground floor.

Matt Butler (To the community, Junior or Tall Matt), Jennifer, and Mary: depart the building with our partner in the community Zack in the best car in the area, a VERY dusty black GMC SUV with several pieces of loose exterior, to begin working on the rainwater catchment and irrigation system down the road at Ullo Senior High School.

Joe, Rebecca, Libby, and Matt (To the community, Senior, or Short Matt): Leave the house to tour the existing Ullo Health Clinic and identify what healthcare staff would like in the new clinic.

There are many great discussions with workers and the team heads back to the house about a half mile out of town for lunch of Jollof rice, red red (a bean dish), a new noodle dish, and chicken. Cut to Junior, Jennifer, and Mary: spend the morning understanding the construction of the irrigation system that will be going in the school garden. After working with several children and the “handymen” of the community Justin and Paul, the group also returns for lunch.

All: Depart from lunch, walking with the kids to our worksites.

Junior, Jennifer and Mary: Use all their sanity that remains after finals to cut HDPE piping and attach drip irrigation adaptors.

The task was difficult, but a very smart boy named Agape (Ah-gah-pay), good ol’ fashioned team bonding, and frequent visits from goats (Bo-ah in the native language Degaare [deh-gar-ee]) kept things light. Before long, materials are packed up in a nearby cement shed and the group heads back for dinner.

Joe, Rebecca, Libby, Senior: Avoid the huddle of children following them as they lay out yarn to signify the dimensions for the upcoming clinic. And then they lay out the yarn again. And again. Finally, the correct location was found and many people from the community were very intrigued! They return for dinner in the dining room and a debrief upstairs. All exit the scene to shower or meet with Dr. Maier and community members, except Matt

Matt: Looking into camera: “Well, might as well start on the newsletter.”

\*Fade to black\*



Matt B and Jennifer working with school teachers and students in implementing the second phase of the rainwater catchment system. The conversion of the never-used septic tank to a water cistern storing rainwater is now complete.

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# Wednesday, December 22nd

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**Libby Mullican**  
**VP Membership, Civil Engineering**

It is crazy to think we have been gone for almost a whole week now. All of us miss our friends and families, but we are having the best adventure in Ullo. We are finally getting into a routine which has calmed down all of our nerves leading up to the trip. This morning we started the day with one of the best parts about our routine: breakfast. After cleaning the sugar off of our fingers from the fried dough balls, filling up our water bottle with our new water disinfection system, and liberally applying sunscreen, we headed out around 9 am to start a long day of work.

One by one, the community children started to follow us as we made our way down the main road and to our project sites. Similar to yesterday, our team of seven split up to work on the rainwater catchment system, shea nut project, and phase one of the clinic. Matt B. finished leveling the garden next to the school for the rainwater catchment system. Jennifer, Mary, and Rebecca went to investigate the shea nut warehouse. On the clinic side, Joe, Matt D., and I continued to measure and indicate the locations of the foundational pillars for the six buildings scheduled to be constructed during phase one. The many tiny hands that helped along the way allowed us to finish just in time for the contractors to meet with our team.



Mary and Jennifer measuring out and marking piping for the micro irrigation system which will utilize rainwater collected from a portion of the school dining hall.

The morning seemed to fade fast and soon enough it was time for lunch. For lunch, we hosted the contractors and feasted on boiled eggs, rice, a noodle dish called “Yummy-Yummy,” and “Red-Red” (the team’s favorite dish). Following our meal, the clinic team continued our discussions with the contractors and staked out the main clinic building while the rest of the team returned to their projects. The afternoon went seemingly faster than the morning. If it were not for Zach, our group would have been late to dinner. Following dinner, our team finished the day with a debrief and plans for the upcoming days.

Despite some difficulties in the field, I would say each group thought quickly on their feet and made progress on their respective projects today.



Team members under Joe and Matt D's leadership staking out and squaring up the administration building on the new clinic site.