

# Heading to Accra

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Volume 7

Winter Travel Team

January 4th-6th

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The team in front of the beautiful house Zack is building for his family in Tamale where he lives and works.

## Issue VII Updates

- Final reports and recommendations
- Saying goodbye to Ullo
- Visiting Zacks home and clinic in Tamale
- Heading to Accra



Our team reports to the chiefs, elders and community members of the Ullo Traditional Area what's been accomplished during the past two and a half weeks as well as follow up recommendations and next steps.

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# Tuesday, January 4th

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**Matt Butler**  
**Global Resource Systems**

Hello again faithful readers,

It was a slower day today in Ullo, but that didn't stop me from observing the visitors from America. I awoke from my sleep to the sunrise around 6:00 and began munching on breakfast around the high school grounds. Soon, a car carrying the team pulled into the drive and dropped off a tall, very handsome-looking student (Matt Butler). He spent the morning discussing the recent rainwater catchment project with the high school agriculture instructor. The instructor appeared very thankful and excited for future projects. They were both sad to part ways after working together for so long, but I was very happy to keep grazing as I sauntered to the site of the new clinic. There, the rest of the team spent the morning installing the sign for the upcoming clinic. The students swung lots of pickaxes and hoes and poured cement around the posts. It provided some good entertainment for me as I lounged under a nearby Shea tree. Soon, they all left for lunch, speaking about making a strange food called "spaghetti" for the ladies of the community that had cooked for them during the trip. I can only assume it went well because I heard no complaints from the ladies or Maleek and Hakeem, the boys who tried the dish. After lunch, most students stayed at their house until I found them seated at the chief's palace, discussing their projects with the chief, elders, and Senior High School staff. They were all wearing shirts, skirts, or dresses made with a green Ullo Senior High School fabric donated by Chief Hassan, and they looked very sharp. The community leaders were very excited and the students ended the two hour meeting with some dancing with the women of the community. I retired to a nearby grass patch for my dinner and the Americans returned home for a final fancy dinner served outside.

As night fell, I was beginning to rest, but the Naasalba (white people) returned from their dinner to project a film to the community near the palace. Over 100 community members came to watch fight scenes from a few Asian movies. This made the community members especially excited to see Joe. As the movie concluded, most members of the community dispersed quickly, while some stayed behind to say goodbye to the Americans. Within 30 minutes they all returned home and I returned to my grass patch at the school. Tomorrow, the Naasalba will depart and I will stay to search for more grass until they return again.

Thank you for entertaining this old goat.

Until next week kind readers,  
Bernard the Goat



Farewell to Ullo!



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# Wednesday, January 5th

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Rebecca Crawford  
Global Resource Systems

This morning, the 2021-2022 EWB-ISU Winter Travel Team rolled out of Ullo around 9:15 AM. Wake up was bright and early to pack some last minute things and finalize some of the cleaning around the house. We all sat and enjoyed our last cups of instant coffee while reading and relaxing.

Several of us on the trip decided to read *Dune* by Frank Herbert; my personal goal was to finish the book before leaving Ullo. And I am happy to report I did just that! Fortunately, I do still have a couple more books to tide me over the last few days we are in Ghana! While saying our goodbyes, there were lots of pictures and minimal tears. Every single person on the travel team was impacted by at least one person in Ullo. If you were to ask anyone, they would tell you that the trip would not have been the same without Paul, Justin, Agape, Ferdinand, Chief Hassan, or Immaculate - just to name a few. The conversations we had and the way our worldviews have changed will stay with us for the rest of our lives. It is almost impossible to take a trip or do the work we did without having some deep part of you change. We have recognized the privilege we all have, by growing up in the United States, being able to attend Iowa State University, or buying all the Don Simon and Chic Chocs we could want. Recognizing this can be overwhelming - maybe you start to wonder what you are even doing or what kind of impact you are really leaving. I have learned that there is a balance to it - I have to be aware of the privilege and power I have, and then learn how I can do the most good with it that I can.

I wish there was a right answer to it; I wish the topic was more black and white. But it's not, and all I can do - all anyone can do - is to keep pushing yourself to learn more.

I am a big reader and I believe that by reading we change ourselves and thus change the world; one book that has been on my list for quite some time is "The Bright Continent" by Dayo Olopade. This book illustrates how, even though there is poverty throughout all of Africa,

-this is also a resource rich, beautiful country filled with so much potential; which we tend to miss out on. On our way to the hotel at Sawala View Lodge, we stopped at a hospital the contractors for our clinic were working on. This is a clinic that began construction seven years ago. It was an out-of-country religious organization that gave the initial funding, which unfortunately ran out before the project could be finished. Money for the project is sent in intermittently, when the funding becomes available; the project is progressing, although very slowly.. Some interesting things we noted about this clinic is that it is being built as a two-story building - which is not a traditional Ghanaian design; furthering showing us that it is someone from out of the country building the hospital. It reminded us of the importance of working with Ullo to ensure the designs and layout are consistent with other buildings and architecture in Ullo. The rest of the afternoon came with more meetings with the contractors to discuss materials and designs of the clinic. Most of which happened over lunch in Wa. After lunch, we continued on our journey to Sawala View Lodge. We had dinner together at the restaurant and then went right to bed in prep for our early morning departure to Tamale! About a week before leaving Ghana, I had a conversation with fellow traveler Matt Dunning. We were talking about the upcoming trip and what we expected out of it. Matt said that he would be coming back a completely different person; and I think that is a true statement for every single person on the travel team. We were all impacted and affected by the people we met and the projects we worked on. I do not think a day will go by when I do not think of the kids who were constantly around us. I will always hear "chewing gum?" when I see a pack of gum in the store (if you know you know). We will wonder what Paul or Justice would do when faced with a problem to solve. We are more aware of the resources we are using in our day to day life. Personally, I was very nervous to come on this trip, I was not sure of my purpose on the team or how I could contribute to the projects. But I have learned so much, both about engineering, myself, and the entire team. I am so blessed to have had this opportunity and will take what I learned with me for the rest of my life.

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# Thursday, January 6th

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Libby Mullican  
Civil Engineering

It was a beautiful morning in Sawla. There was a slight breeze as our team ate breakfast on the rooftop of the restaurant. Not long after finishing our meal we all packed into the van to complete the next leg of our journey. About three hours and many speed bumps later, we made it to Tamale.

Once in Tamale, we visited the clinic that Zach works at before stopping for lunch. After three weeks of being spoiled with traditional Ghanaian dishes, we decided to opt out for something more American: KFC. Nothing like having an American classic in the middle of Ghana. We stopped by Zach's property where he was building a new house and had the pleasure of meeting his wife and son. Around 3 pm we arrived at the Tamale airport to board our plane to Accra. After about an hour flight, our driver Mike was standing outside the terminal ready to pick us up. Even though our car ride was only about 30 minutes. We spent the entire time debating on where we should order pizza from and what kind of pizza we wanted. Finally we made it to the hotel where we were to meet George's family. At this point our dinner plans were all over the place and everyone was hungry. We ended up eating at the hotel restaurant and going to bed shortly after. Other than that, everyone is excited to do some tourism this weekend before going back home.



A fruit stand in Wa, the capital city of the Upper-West Region of Ghana.



In Zack's office at Kalpohin Health Clinic in a poor neighborhood of Tamale. Zack is the highest medical officer and oversees eight other health facilities in the area.

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