

Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM)

MOTTO: TRUST IN GOD

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2014 Annual Report

WOM's Vision

Widows and orphans without tears and intimidation

WOM's Mission

To initiate and facilitate processes and program to empower widows and orphans economically, socially and spiritually



A section of widows from the three northern regions of Ghana during the international Widows day celebration

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Acknowledgements

We want to acknowledge Action Aid Ghana, St. Paul e V, Accra Community Church, Church of Pentecost, BUERGER Committee Stein Hagen, EDIAF, Amnesty International, World Vision, Tree Aid, Coady Institute, CIKOD, UDS-Wa campus and Mrs Limann for making it possible for us to work this year. It is their contributions that has enabled the hard working staff of WOM to carry out the good work in 2014. To all our individual donors/contributors who wish to remain unknown, we say God bless you all. To WOM's Board members, staff, volunteers and students on attachments, we will forever be grateful to you for being committed to this wonderful course. May the good Lord give us strength to continue the good work in 2015.

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Abbreviations and meaning of some words

AAG.....Action Aid Ghana

COP.....Church of Pentecost

CIRM-----Community Institutional Mapping

DOVVSU.....Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit

MOFA.....Ministry of Food and Agriculture

SDF.....Skill development Fund

WOM.....Widows and Orphans Movement

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1. Introduction

In 2014, all planned as well as unplanned activities for the year 2014 were successfully implemented. Though there were more challenges this year as compared to previous years, WOM in her own capacity through her internally generated funds, was able to carry out a lot of projects on her own. This, we are proud of, because it indicates that if we continue like this we can actually reach our goal of being sustainable in future. Notably among them was that, WOM finally obtained market for the baobab oil that was being produced after having to stop production severally due to the unavailability of market. This project will directly put a minimum of **GH¢32,000.00** cedis in the pockets of widows in six districts within a maximum of 3 months. WOM is hoping that donors, partners, collaborators and investors will support us fully develop the project to expand the beneficiaries.

WOM is ever grateful to her wonderful partners, donors, collaborators such as Action Aid, SDF, St. Paul e. V, Mr Joachim and his team, among others, the wonderful staff of WOM, and every individual who made it possible for us to carry out all these interventions. May the good Lord Bless us all.

2. Background

The widows and Orphans Movement (WOM) is a Nongovernmental organization which was formed in 1993 in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Its mission is to initiate and facilitate processes and programmes to empower widows and Orphans economically, socially and spiritually.

2.1 Current Programs

- *Human's Rights*
 - Advocacy against negative widowhood rights
 - Unpaid care work and sustainable agriculture
- *HIV/AIDs*
- *Orphans Education and skill acquisition*
- *Economic empowerment*
 - Shea butter processing; pomade making; craft; etc
- *Income Generating Activities (pomade, Craft, Farming, oil extraction)*
- *Micro Credit*

2.2 Permanent Staff of WOM

No	Name of Staff	SEX	Office
1	Fati Abigail Abdulai	F	National Director
2	Betty Ayagiba	F	Founder
3	Esther Ayoogo	F	Sponsorship officer
4	Gifty Abalansah	F	Micro Credit officer
5	Felicia Anambire	F	Project Officer
6	Jonathan Alaataba	M	Accountant
7	Hana Nyaaba	F	Micro Credit officer
8	Hegelar Badumah	M	Project Officer
Students on Attachment			
1	Matha Adongo	F	Attachee to Accounts
2	Lovea Naya Moor	F	Marketing Officer

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Supporting staff

WOM also has 10 supporting staff, 8 of whom are males and 2 females. They are (2) tractor operators, 2 baobab oil extractors, 2 sweepers, 3 watchmen and a driver.

3. Formation of New Groups

Three new groups were formed in Talensi district whiles, one was formed in the Kasena Nankane district. 5 groups that were inactive in the Bolga municipality were also re-activated.

4. Collaborators

WOM still holds collaboration in high esteem in all work she does. She therefore continues to work with other NGO's and CBO's to facilitate learning and sharing. Review meetings with other partners are held regularly to ensure that, the interventions carried out are tailored made to the constituents we work with. Again, WOM does well to attend workshops where new friends are made. WOM has good working and social relationships with her internal and external collaborators. At grass roots level, WOM has a very good and strong relationship with the Chiefs, Tindanas (land owners), women leaders and the youth. This year WOM participated trainings in Zambia as well as to Rwanda. WOM hopes to maintain its current network as well as robe new one into her networks in 2015.

4.1 Partners, Donors and collaborators and their areas of intervention

No	Name	Location	Relationship	Purpose
1	Action Aid Ghana	Zebilla	Partners	Women's Rights (Advocacy and economic empowerment)
2	Skill Development Fund	Accra	Donor	Skill Training
3	EDAIF	Accra	Donor	Mango Plantation
4	Amnesty International	Tamale Office	Partner	Domestic Violence
5	St Paul e V	Germany	Donor	General Activities
6	BUERGER KOMITTEE STEINHAGEN	Germany	Donor	Administration
7	GSMF International	Accra	Partner	HIV/Aids
8	ADDRA	Bolgatanga	collaborator	Technical Advice on Mango project
9	NETRIGHT	Accra	collaborator	Net working
10	Global Doctors for Choice	Bolgatanga	collaborators	Health of women
11	Shea Network Ghana	Accra	collaborators	Shea (economic empowerment)
12	Coady Institute	Canada	collaborators	Staff development
13	University of Development Studies	Wa	Collaborator	Technical advise
14	CIKOD	Wa	Partners	Staff development
15	Tree Aid	Tamale	partners	Legalisation of groups
16	Christian Taylor	Canada	Fund raiser	Education project
17	Church of Pentecost	Accra	collaborators	Education and skill training

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5. PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED

5.1 WOM-Action Aid Activities

Action Aid Ghana (AAG) and WOM have partnered over a 13 year period. In 2014, the partnership was working to ensure that “*women and girls controlled their bodies’ accessed economic alternatives*”. As part of this broader objective, several interventions are employed to attain success. These include:

- **The women’s rights to sustainable livelihood project**, which aims at recognizing, redistribute and reduce unpaid care work which is mostly carried out by women to ensure they have time for leisure, engage in paid work as well as reduce drudgery associated with the work they do. The activities included:
 - Supported REFLECT circles quarterly to enable them meet twice a month by providing logistics and technical support.
 - Motivated REFLECT facilitators by providing a packet of roofing sheets and half pieces of cloth for 30 people.
 - Trained 26 community livestock volunteers
 - Organised community sensitisations on women unpaid care work
 - Organised dialogue meetings between women small holder farmers and duty bearers on community needs
 - Organised sensitisations and trainings on sustainable agriculture such as composting, green manuring, etc.
 - Supported 5 groups farm an average of 8 acres of maize and soy beans in 5 communities by providing improved seed, fertiliser and organic manure.
 - Trained, procured and distributed 314 nanny goats to 157 women in Talensi and Nabdam Districts with support from MOFA.
 - Supported 2 girls club plant and maintain 100 seedlings of acacia to not only protect the schools but also serve as wood lots for community groups.
 - Supported 450 women and 150 men to fill and complete Diaries to track changes in their time use



Winkongo group happily showing their farm produce

- **The supper Donor Project**, which focuses on economic empowerment of widows. The activities under this project included:

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- Trained 80 widows from 20 communities in bread baking and soap making
- Organized entrepreneurial and business management training for 80 widows
- Provided start-up capital for some women trained.

- **Advocacy on dehumanizing widowhood rites**
 - Held a planning meeting with 20 Chiefs, queen mothers and ritualist on strategies to employ at Regional house of chiefs for a royal proclamation to stop dehumanizing widowhood rites.
 - Monitored interventions

- **Sponsorship**, is how AAG and WOM raises funds to carry our planned activities for any given year.
 - Child profiles of children were collected, child messages, follow-up on photo updates and sensitization of communities were carried out. 75 Committee members were also trained on quality message collection. In all 966 messages were collected.



5.2 WOM-Christine Taylor- Education Project

Christine Taylor is a former volunteer of the Widows and Orphans Movement and raises funds yearly to support needy orphans stay and start school. This year 33 orphans were supported with the funds raised. May the good Lord continue to bless her.

Categories of students supported

	VOCATIONAL	BASIC	J.H.S.	S.H.S	TERTIARY	TOTAL
MALE	1	3	10	3	5	22
FEMALE	5	1	2	2	1	11
TOTAL	6	4	12	4	6	33

5.3 WOM-Church of Pentecost (COP)

The Church of Pentecost has supported WOM for a long time now. This year WOM wrote to the COP for support to celebrate the international Widows day which comes off on the 23rd of June of each year. The funds was released in September after the celebration. The Bible says all things work together for good for those who love God. September is a period when students are starting a new academic years and are expected to pay their fees. The staff of WOM are usually very uncomfortable due to our inability to meet their needs.

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WOM therefore used some of this money to:

- Support forty children to go back to school. 20 of whom were in basic and junior high schools, 14 in the Senior high schools; 6 at the tertiary institutions.
- WOM also used part of the funds to Train 14 women in bee keeping and the fourteen boxes that were provided by Tree-Aid Burkina Faso to start Bee Keeping was distributed to participants.
- Monitored the intervention carried out.



Widows from 6 communities learn bee keeping and receive beehives.

5.4 WOM-St Paul e V

St Paul e V had been our back bone after AAG in funding. In our early years we had a development worker from Germany who was working with German Development service called Al-Muth. The mother who is a widow visited her and when she saw the plight of widows and orphans in Ghana she went back and informed this group who have been funding us for more than ten years now. They never dictate to us what to use the money for. If not for their support we would not have been able to celebrate the international widow's day this year. With their support we were able to support eighteen drop out girls to learn various skills this year by paying the trainers, buying some equipment and materials needed and paying examination fees. Six (6) girls are being trained in dress making six (6) in cloth weaving and six (6) in hair dressing. The cloth weaving is a one year training, while the rest are 3 years. so some are now anxiously waiting for us to pass them out and support them with funds to start their own businesses.

❖ Widows Day Celebration

WOM wrote to the Church of Pentecost for support to celebrate the day. However, the support was released late. Hence, Part of funds given by **St Paul e V** from Germany was used to mark the day. Theme for this year's celebration was **'The widow has the right to inherit her husband's property'**. With Ply-cards that read: my husband' property is mine; my father's property is mine; I have a right as a widow; etc., the widows marched through the town of Bolgatanga. The speakers were Miss Abigail Fati Abdulai, The Regional Minister (Dr. Avea Nsoh), Mrs Aberese-Ako of Ministry of Children, and DOVVSU.

The day was used to sensitise more widows on their rights and were they could go to seek redress. With the help of the Regional health Director, Dr Awoonor, Widows had their weight, BP and HB checked and some blood tonics given free to them. Also slight used clothes donated by individual were shared to the most of them. The widows' day is now like a Christmas day to the widows. This is the day they meet friends from near and far, make friends

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and are encouraged. At the celebration WOM had the opportunity to display all her products including the Baobab seed oil. Over 500 widows participated in the celebration from the Northern region, upper west Region and Upper east region.



Dr. Avea Nsoh, The upper east regional minister delivering his speech during the international widows' day celebration

5.5 WOM-BUERGER KOMITTEE STEINHAGEN

This year, the organisation' KIA truck which was donated by EDAIF broke down .This is the truck we use to go round and collect baskets from our weavers when we have basket orders, It is used to convey people and inputs to the farm as well as carry Baobab seed to produce baobab oil. It was therefore a big relief when Mr Joachim Schreiber supported the organisation with one thousand euros (€1,000.00) to carry out the repair works that was related to the engine of the truck. Last year they were the same people who helped us to fence our mango farm.

5.6 WOM -World Vision small ruminants' project

In 2013, World vision supported WOM with three thousand six hundred cedi (Gh¢3,600.00) to train and purchase two nanny goats each for twenty women in two groups. Unfortunately, due to equally important work, this could not be carried out as of December. In December the prices of the goats are so high so it was decided that this would be done in 2014.

This year, though it was not December, the prices doubled because of the economic crisis in the country. The fall of the cedi and inflation affected every sale. Never the less we were able to buy for the groups (Tongo and Yakote). A promise is a promise hence funds was adding to carry out the activity. They have each signed an MOU to transfer 2 nanny goats to identified members of their groups after 2 years.



10 widows receive 2 nanny goats each.

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5.7 Regional Peace Council

The Founder of WOM was elected by the Pentecostal Churches of the Upper East Region to represent them in the Regional peace council. The Regional peace council was inaugurated on the 12th of June, 2014. This council is made up of thirteen members. Ten men and three women. Immediately after the ceremony, the Municipal Assembly referred a long time conflict dispute to the peace council. A sub-committee was formed and Madam Betty was part of the sub-committee to settle this conflict. By His grace peace have been restored in Yorogo.

5.8 WOM Receives her 7th Award

In 2014 WOM won an award from Northern Business excellence award. This is the seventh award and was given to us in recognition for our outstanding entrepreneurial spirit, innovative purpose and leadership towards the economic transformation and industrial development of Northern Ghana. WOM dedicated this award to all her partners in development.



Betty Ayagiba (Founder of WOM) in a pose with the plaque

5.9 WOM-Skill Development Fund (SDF)

WOM was one of the beneficiaries of the SDF in 2012. The project was supposed to be a year's project. WOM received the 2nd tranche in 2014 and is yet to receive the 3rd tranche.

This year the funds was used to trained the Asonge, Zabsua, Kandiga, Binaba, Shia and Pusu-Namongo widows groups in quality pomade making using Shea butter. We wished the funds were release early so that we complete the rest of the training in quality Shea butter training and entrepreneurship.



Pusu namongo (left) and Kandiga widows group learn how to make pomade using Shea butter

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5.10 WOM-Swiss hand

Swiss Hand is a donor organization in Switzerland that focuses on Micro credit. WOM has been collaborating with Swiss-hand for more than ten years. Twenty to twenty five (20 to 25) widows benefit from this project every month. This year about **217** widows benefitted a total of **GH¢97,350.00** from this micro credit scheme. This year, two of Swiss-hand's officers visited WOM and also visited a few clients and were impressed at how the scheme was positively changing their lives. Hitherto, widows could not access loan from the conventional institutions due to policies from those institutions that were unfavourable to vulnerable groups. WOM with support from SWISSHAND also audited the project.

5.11 WOM-GSMF International

GSMF International succeeded in getting funding from Ghana Aids Commission to sensitize Drivers, immigrants and traders along the Tema- Paga corridor. WOM is one of the beneficiaries to sensitize Long vehicle drivers, immigrants and traders on HIV/Aids. Ten youth were selected by WOM and were trained by GSMF. The project is a one year project and will end in May 2015 The progressive report have been send to them and the activity is still on going. However WOM has already exceeded the number of people that were to be reached (1000) and is in excess of about 500.



5.12 WOM-EDAIF

To ensure sustainability of our interventions, WOM with support from EDAIF started a Mango plantation in 2010 at Sakote in the Nab dam district of the Upper East Region of Ghana. This support though not sufficient to fully maintain the farm, is appreciated. In 2014, there were about one thousand mango seedlings on the farm. To add up to the very expensive cost of maintaining the place, thieves stole the borehole pump that supplied water to the whole farm for the second time in November, 2014. Though the case was reported to the police and upon a tip off, one of the thieves was arrested, the retrieved pump failed to work when it was re-fixed. The organisation has since spent almost GH¢3,000.00 and still needs a new pump to ensure constant supply of water to the farm. WOM is also ready to pursue the case in court to ensure the thief (ves) is duly punished.

5.13 WOM-CIKOD

WOM in partnership with CIKOD, formed and trained a 7 member Community institutional resource mapping (CIRM) team at Baare to enable them gather indigenous knowledge of their community and subsequently inform the various value chain being developed within the community.

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A member of the CIRM team, mapping out Baare community

5.14 WOM

In 2014, WOM continued to produce and sell Shea butter pomade, baskets, baobab juice, baobab toffee and Baobab oil to support administration, as well as provide food, shelter, help widows and orphans register under the National Health Insurance Scheme, get medical attention when they are abused, among others.

WOM sold 476 kilogrammes of Baobab oil and plans on re-investing the profits in the production for the year 2015. However, WOM will still need extra funds to get this industry fully running. The production of Baobab oil, serves as a source of income for many of the widows. This is because they collect the fruit, and sell both seed and powder. A kilogramme of both seed and powder sold, is equivalent to the minimum wage of GH¢6.0 recommended in Ghana. Hence investment in this sector has a great impact. This project will directly put a minimum of **GH¢32,000.00** cedis in the pockets of widows in six districts within a maximum of 3 months. WOM is hoping that donors, partners, collaborators and investors will support us fully develop the project to expand the number of people who benefit.

MICRO-CREDIT: WOM started this scheme to support widows who were no longer qualified to benefit from the SWISS-HAND micro credit scheme but did not want to do business with the banks. In 2014, 74 women benefitted and a total amount of GH¢57,850.00 was disbursed. The repayment percentage is 95% for the year.

ROOFING OF SHELTER: WOM was also able to roof the three rooms that are meant to serve as a shelter for abused women and children in the region. This is the only shelter in the three Northern regions of Ghana and WOM hopes that she is supported to complete the project and make the environment very comfortable for abused widows and orphans, as they are temporarily kept in this safe house and trained in various skills.

Vehicle maintenance: WOM also worked on the engine of the old-pick-up and bought tyres for the new pick-up.

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WOM also supported Baagazee with some funds and with labour from the Wakii widows group, to reconstruct her collapsed building. Happy Bagaasee in front of her new structure.

Domestic Violence

This project is the heart beat of WOM because of the numerous abuses widows go through when they lose their husband's through no fall of theirs. Widows are labelled as witches who have killed their husbands. The late husband's brother inherits the property of the widows' husband. Some widows are sacked from their husband's houses. They are made to pass through a lot of unnecessary disgraceful practices in the name of culture. In 2014 reported cases of violence were twelve and only two were referred to DOVSU (police) the rest was resolve by WOM. Assessing justice by most of the widows is still a great challenge due to the fact that the police is still under resourced and quite a number of communities are still lack offices. Mostly widows are unable to bear the expenses associated with seeking justice. 70% of the cases were still land cases. Below is a success story from our work

WOM successfully facilitated processes that lead to Atipoka Akenzure of Kandiga regaining six cows that were originally hers but seized by her nephew. Her nephew sacked her from her husband' house and she was living in the market. The chief as well as the police were unable to resolve the case. Upon WOM' intervention saw to the widow receiving her cows after 7 years of abuse.



Atipoka Akezure of Kandiga and her six cows

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6. Challenges

- ❖ WOM currently needs three (3) motor bikes to enable her carry out her work, effectively and efficiently at the communities.
- ❖ WOM continually needs more hands to support the work but her current income is still less than the workers' salaries.
- ❖ WOM is spending more on the farm than what is given by donors.
- ❖ The absence of a simple farm house for the caretakers at Sakote increases the cost of maintaining the mango plantation.
- ❖ WOM still needs a new borehole pump to ensure that there is a constant supply of water to the mango seedlings.
- ❖ Most of WOM's computers are spoilt and cannot be repaired. The absence of new computers to facilitate the work greatly affects work.
- ❖ WOM still need' two staff with backgrounds in marketing and agriculture to handle her business and Agric sector. However, the organization is currently unable to pay for the services of these people.
- ❖ It is also a great challenge paying for salaries of support staff.
- ❖ There was an order for all to move their shops out of the ministries area. Hence WOM moved her side-by-side shop to Pusu-Namongo and needs to work on the shop to make it usable again.

7. Achievements

- ✓ WOM won her seventh Award.
- ✓ Harvesting 42 bags of maize and five bags of beans in 2014.
- ✓ Increase in production and sale of Shea butter and Shea pomade.
- ✓ WOM was able to pay all her support workers with her own generated funds.
- ✓ WOM was able to settle 10 difficult cases of violence against widows.
- ✓ Most widows groups were able to access lands for farming in 2014.
- ✓ Three rooms of the uncompleted shelter was roofed
- ✓ 476kg of baobab oil was sold and re-invested.
- ✓ 177 women received 2 nanny goats each and ready extension services. etc.

8. PLANS FOR 2015 (Way Forward)

WOM intends to expand her work around the baobab; build the capacity of her staff to make them more effective, build more networks with individuals and organisations in 2015, as well as raise more funds to address most of her challenges.

9. Conclusion

The year 201 has been a difficult one. However, WOM still chokod successes that she is proud of. It is WOM' continues prayer that 2015 becomes brighter than 201. To all our Donors (those who like to be unanimous and the known ones), Partners, collaborators, well-wishers we say thank you

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