

## Breaking Ground in Ghana

It was a bright sunny day. All of the dignitaries sat in the open air awaiting the arrival of the Chief of Otinibi. Everyone attending the ceremony felt the excitement of the chance to witness the groundbreaking ceremony marking the beginning of construction of the *Food for People* (FFP) center in Ghana, the third established by TPRF since 2005.

Miss Veronica Nakedy introduced the Chief after he arrived. He thanked TPRF for establishing the center in Otinibi and encouraged other non-profit organizations to help African communities in a similar manner. Grace Ninsaw, headmistress of the Otinibi School, next gave a welcoming address. She pointed out the positive impact the center will have on education in the area. Mr. Ben Modey, FFP Project Manager, said that the new facility will contribute greatly to the physical and mental development of children in the area.

For me, it was very exciting to watch the beautiful ceremony and to know that TPRF's *Food for People* program is really coming to Ghana. It was a colorful ceremony with dancing and drumming. The students acted out a short play to celebrate the occasion. The play was about a child who comes to school without breakfast. As a result, he sleeps in class. The school headmistress invites the child's mother to a luncheon and happily tells her about the *Food for People* program planned for the village. The mother is very happy and promises to fetch water to help build the project.

Shadrach Sowah, a class 4 student, comes to school from Adonteiman, a neighboring village. He normally leaves home at 7 AM on foot. When classes end at 2 PM, Shadrach walks back to his home with friends from the same village. For Shadrach, school is a place to study and socialize with classmates. He can't wait to join the line at the *Food for People* center when it opens. He considers his school very lucky to be chosen for the program.

Kobby, a shy class 2 student, lives in the village of Otinibi. He only has a short distance to walk to school after helping his parents sweep their compound. He hopes to be a lawyer and believes this will happen when more books are provided to the library. He, too, is excited about the *Food for People* facility coming to the area. It will enable him and his classmates to enjoy a consistent menu of nutritious food. Kobby expects that regular meals will help him significantly to study harder and learn more. Now, he is forced to spend hard-earned money to buy food from vendors because there is not enough at home.

Awo, an Otinibi parent, could not hide her joy. Wiping away tears, she said that the *Food for People* center will help with the difficult task of providing nutritious meals for her three children every day.

The Municipal Chief Executive noted that the project will empower the community economically. He

hopes that all of the female children coming to the center will take advantage of the opportunity to become great leaders in the community. In Africa, girls commonly take on responsibilities in the family and community that deprive them of the chance to get an education. With the guarantee of a good meal at school, many parents will see their female children attend classes regularly for the first time.

Lantey, an uncle and guardian of an Otinibi student, said that having a hearty meal each day will help the children to learn because, "a hungry man is an angry man." When the students are hungry, Lantey observed, their attention in class is limited. With the government providing textbooks and other educational aides, proper nutrition seems to be the biggest obstacle for parents and pupils.