

The Drum Carving Initiative

The Adaklu Youth and Education Committee (AYEC) is dedicated to increasing youth access to educational and vocational opportunities. AYEC recently initiated the Drum Carving Training Project, which provides four youth who do not have the ability to go to high school with training in carving traditional drums. The objective is to provide youth with vocational skills that can allow them to diversify their incomes. The initiative links up with the local eco-tourism site to sell products to travelers who visit their mountain. The initial seed grant for this program provided tools for the youth, and six months of training from a local carver. Their teacher, who is crippled with polio, is purchasing a wheel chair with the income from training.



Youth learning to carve drums with their teacher, Gabriel Attakuma.

The 2005 Volta Community Grants Competition

Bridge recently announced our 2005 Volta Community Grants Competition. The competition will award \$1,000 to three groups with the best small-scale ideas for reducing poverty while utilizing community resources. Our goals for holding the competition include: making new partners, funding good projects, learning about innovative ideas, and gaining name recognition in Ghana.

Strategic Plans Link Visions to Projects

Notre Dame University volunteers (below) are working with partner organizations this summer on developing and linking strategic plans with projects. We have long worked with partners on specific projects and how to put together proposals with tasks and budgets. Partners are now grappling with defining their missions. This is a key step that allows them to better identify new projects, as well as improve their ability to identify how projects fit in with their organizational objectives.



Kevin Overmann and Natalie Conellee facilitate a workshop with partners in the Volta Office.

The Baobab Project

A group of Teach for America teachers in New Orleans came to us with a great idea: expose their inner city students to village life in Ghana. Six months later, they had raised \$40,000 and were on a flight across the Atlantic. Many students faced their cultural heritage of the slave trade castles for the first time. They then spent two weeks in our partner villages learning about the strong community values and hospitality that Ghana is renowned for. They can now realize like never before the great promise of opportunity that America offers, a valuable lesson for those coming of age.



US high school students paint a mural of the world (top) with Taviefe students, and learn how to pound fufu (bottom) with caretakers.