**The Tale of *“Water Drinking”* in Galaka**

The Christian Council of Ghana piloted the Stepping Stones concept in 18 districts in Ghana with support from Christian Aid UK. Galaka was one of the selected communities in the Bawku West District in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

The stepping stones concept addressed issues of gender, HIV communication and relationship skills. Four gender related groups were formed – young men, young women, elderly men and elderly women groups. These groups met at selected times convenient for them and discussed sex and sexual roles peculiar to them. Issues of communication and gender relations were also discussed with the guide and the help of the group facilitator who had been trained for the purpose.

There was an opportunity however for all the groups to meet and also other members of the community. This was referred to as the Community Meeting and there the various groups had the opportunity to share with each other what they have learned from the intervention.

During this project it was found out that the men from that community do not work at all. The women go out to fetch water, farm, prepare the meals for the house hold, take care of the laundry, ensure the house is clean at all times, take care of the children and the needs of the men as well. The men on the other hand will sit down all day doing nothing. When they get bored, they meet under a tree in town and play a game called ‘draft’. The work of the woman is to do what she is told to do and that of the man is to tell what is to be done. Prying deeper, the information is that, that has been their way of life since their fore fathers generation so they only continue what they have seen and have been taught.

Two years later, a team went up on a monitoring visit to observe if the training had had any impact. It was observed that the women now knew their rights and stood firm by them. The women refused their husbands sex anytime they refused to help with work that needed to be done. Sex, commonly referred to as ‘drinking water’ by the people in Galaka is one of the major source of entertainment for the men. So it was very disturbing for the men when they requested for ‘drinking water’ and were told to help with chores first. Other times, the women just kept quiet and watched on when the men refused to work and when they requested for their ‘drinking water’, it was refused them In effect, if they refused to work, they were denied ‘drinking water’.

To quote one of the men popularly known as Mangos, ***“Our women don’t make us drink water and we are very thirsty, since we need water we now help them with their work. What do you say brothers”.***

It can therefore be concluded that there has been a behavioral change in the attitudes of both men and women in the Galaka community in the Bawku West district of the Upper East Region of Ghana

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