

October 2013

Electricity Comes to Akrampa—Part 1

Dear Friends,

In this article, I am going to tell you how electricity has come to Akrampa. As I write this, the entire village is spotted with poles that are already strung with power lines, ready for homes and our mission school to connect to. It has taken more than 28 years for this to happen, and it is a dream come true! Akrampa, like a great number of small towns and villages in Ghana, has been passed by for years or not even regarded when it comes to the nation's resources. The government did not provide clean drinking water or a school for Akrampa, First Lutheran did. The people of Akrampa are still waiting on the government to provide a smooth access road up into the village, among other needs that would help with personal and community development. But finally, the electric has arrived!

Over the years, as the quality of life has improved in Akrampa due to the clean water and education, the villagers began to ask for more. They wanted to be like other towns and villages near them that have electricity. For instance, Bereku, the mother town, is only a few miles away, and they have had electricity for more than 19 years! Running electricity into the town was so expensive that we could never have done it alone. No town by itself has ever done such a thing. I have led several unsuccessful attempts, since 1999, on behalf of the villagers to get the Electric Company of Ghana to come to Akrampa.

Back in 1985, the government of Ghana joined forces with the World Bank to accelerate development across Ghana, with the plan that the entire country was to have electricity by the year 2020. This Memorandum of Understanding is commonly referred to as the Structural Adjustment Program. In this deal is a program called the "Rural Electrification Program" (REP) under which small towns and villages were benefiting. During the first 10 years everything did not run smoothly with this program, but by 1995 the plan was getting back on track. The World Bank controls the funding for this and the tender by which the contractors are paid. The current contractor working in Ghana is Welde Lamont, from the USA. Once the contractor finishes the main wiring, it is handed over to the government, who in turn hands it over to the Electric Company of Ghana. Then the Electric Company can begin the process of getting individual houses and buildings hooked up to the electricity. We will need your help to get the mission school connected to the electric poles.

Next month I will tell you more about this - and about the positive impact that electricity will make in Akrampa!

Blessings,
Pastor Ben