



We are trying an experiment. We are proposing that ordinary people can come together regularly and work together on projects that will benefit impoverished communities in tangible ways. We are saying that by providing motivation, education and much needed resources, we can transition a slum in Accra into a self-sustaining residential community with reduced infectious disease epidemics and regular access to health-care, education and social services for children and adults alike.

We have started this experiment with Glefe, a very deprived community to the west of Dansoman in Accra. Glefe's population is predominantly young, with a median age of 22. A University of Ghana Medical School study found extremely poor sanitation and high rates of malaria, gastrointestinal illnesses and other febrile diseases within this community, especially in infants and children under 5. Inhabitants of the village primarily pay for health-care out of pocket but are unable to afford it.

Our very first Screenathon in 2010 provided a day of screening and health consultation for residents of this settler community. We made available essential education on disease prevention while treating cases of malaria, diarrhoeal and respiratory illnesses among others. We also provided screening for chronic conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes. We delivered basic care at the event and transferred complex cases to a local polyclinic. In addition, we educated the community on the availability of the National Health Insurance Scheme and registered over 200 members of the community in the scheme. All services at Screenathon were offered free of charge.

This year's Screenathon will be held on Dec 29, 2011. In line with our focus on Maternal and Child Health, Screenathon will incorporate HIV testing into our priorities for health resources in Glefe and will work with the Korle-Bu Blood Bank to establish a reserve for maternal emergencies. Since sanitation and malaria are major problems affecting the Glefe community, Screenathon is happy to work with REACH's [Clean Water for Life](#) and [REACH Against Malaria](#) projects to improve these areas.

Overall, in line with millennium development goals 4, 5 and 7, REACH hopes to achieve significant improvement in maternal and child health and in lives of slum dwellers in Ghana. For more information on Screenathon or to volunteer for the project, kindly send an email to screenathon@reachghana.org.

Representatives for Equal Access to Community Health-care (REACH-Ghana) is a non-profit corporation with a membership of over 100 young people who have committed to contribute to improve health-care in Ghana through research, education and community based health-care delivery initiatives. The organization is proudly advised by experts in the medical and public health fields such as Paul Farmer, the Maude and Lillian Presley Professor of Global Health at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Isabella Sagoe-Moses, National Child Health Coordinator at the Ghana Health Service, and Dr. Andrew Arkutu, former Director of Country Support for the United Nations Population Fund.