

## **WHD activities in Kumasi, Ghana, the home of the Ashanti ProCor Project to increase CVD knowledge and practice among health workers.**

We had a very successful WHD. Our sponsors were ELAC, Cocoa Processing company LTD, The Cardiothoracic Center in Accra Ghana, Prudential Bank Limited, GTV, TV3, Kapital Radio, Kessben FM, Luv FM and the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly. The organisers were Dr Collins Kokuro (Chairman, Ashanti Region WHD planning committee), Emmanuella Naa Deedei Tagoe, Dominic Badzi, Ramsis Mills, Kwaku Appiagyei, Gifty Tei, Denis Amoh Mensah, Fedeli Atiasi- all medical students, Dr Sarfo-Kantanka and Dr Yaw Apem Amoako with support from Dr Doku of the Cardiothoracic center, The Regional Health Directorate and the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly. We have four working groups (Radio Programs, Churches, Cooperative and WHD teams).

Two weeks to the day, we had radio programs in the Ashanti Region, educating the populace and workers about the need to have workplace wellness programs. We educated the people about the strategies that can be put in place to ensure successful workplace wellness programs, the need to have such programs and how to monitor the success or otherwise of such a program. We had a lot of call-ins from various workplaces including the banks, schools, trading companies, supermarkets and markets.

We visited some workplaces and had a one-on-one discussion as to the need to have a workplace wellness program and why the WHF has selected "WORK WITH HEART" as the theme for this year's WHD. We gave material that we downloaded from the WHF website to such companies and directed them to visit the website regularly for updates.

We visited in all 8 big churches (Catholic, Methodist, Anglican, Charismatics etc) and also educated them on the need to "WORK WITH HEART" and how even the churches can encourage their members to practice healthy life styles and help prevent cardiovascular diseases and NCDs in general. We backed our campaign with materials from the WHF and other cardiovascular health promotion materials.

We visited the Kumasi Prisons, the Ashanti Regional Police Headquarters, The Ashanti Regional Fire Service and the Northern command of the Ghana Arm Forces and tried to convince the superiors and commanders as to the need to ensure that there are workplace wellness programs in place for their officers and men.

On the 26th of September 2009, we had our world heart day walk. There were about 1200 (one thousand two hundred) participants for the walk (out of an expected 2000) with people coming from the schools, cooperative entities (the banks, insurance companies, radio stations, market, trading enterprises etc) some in their cooperative T-shirts for cooperative identification. We had about 150 people from the Police, Military and the Fire services also in their uniform. Then there were participants from the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) of Ashanti Region, the Ashanti Regional directorate of the Ghana Health Services led by the Deputy Ashanti Regional Director of Health Services (Dr Joseph Odure) and the Regional Director of Nursing Services (Mrs Theresah Acheampong), and from Members of the Ashanti

Regional Keep Fit clubs Association.

The walk started at 6:20 Am from the Kumasi Central Post Office, through some principal streets and ended at the Kumasi Jubilee park, a total of about 10 (ten) Kilometers with a public address van in front of the walk, educating people about the team for the WHD and the need to stay healthy and practice healthy life style. We hired two brass-bands to provide some music whiles we work.

At the Jubilee park, the participants were taking through an exercise drill, led by a commanders of the Ghana Police and the Army with some assistance from the Ashanti Regional Keep Fit clubs Association.

We provided fruits (oranges, melons ) and pure fruit juice for the participants. There were two addresses, one on "why the work place" by Dr Joseph Oduro, the Deputy Director of Health Services in the Ashanti Region and another by Dr Yaw Apem Amoako of the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi on tip bits on organizing a workplace wellness program. Dr Collins Kokuro then took the participants through activities of the WHF and the previous WHD celebrations and their themes.

The program was a success and we are now going to put in place, follow up strategies to ensure that, at least the workplaces that we visited initiate and maintain their own Workplace Wellness Programs.