CBE classes for cycle 5 begun in October in 4 Districts of the Upper West Region (Nadowli-Kaleo, Jirapa, Sissala West and Sissala East District) and one in Brong Ahafo Region (Nkoranza North District). The programme targets children from the ages of 8 to 14 years, who have never been to school or are school drop outs for various reasons such as financial problems, migration among others. In CBE cycle 5, a total of 3,800 learners have been registered across the 5 operational districts. The learners study basic numeracy and literacy skills from trained facilitators. Learners are given the necessary learning materials such as text-books, pencils, eraser, exercise books, sharpeners and crayons. Learners are expected to be transitioned into the formal school system at the end of the cycle (nine months).

A new cycle, Quarter 11 of the International Citizenship Service (ICS) implemented by VSO in partnership with ProNet North, started on 6th October, 2017 with the arrival of 15 volunteers (7 from the UK and 8 from Ghana), the lowest number since its inception in 2016 in the Jirapa District. The volunteers on arrival held series of meetings with their hosts and other relevant stakeholders to discuss, understand and learn the socialization processes of their host communities. The volunteers are placed in 3 communities, Nimbare-Kompori, Tizza and Mwofo for 12 weeks to undertake research, make an action plan and carry out projects/activities, according to the problems they identified through school visits and stakeholder dialogues within the community. A lot of positive impacts are expected at the end of this cycle as a result of volunteers’ enthusiasm.
**Progress Made in SANMARK**

As part of efforts to support the sanitation sector to scale up rural sanitation, and in line with the recommendations of the Rural Sanitation Model Strategy, UNICEF, the Environmental Health Sanitation Directorate (EHSD) representing GoG in partnership with select-ed districts and TREND/RUFINLIT initiated the SanMark Programme. The programme is designed to provide the requisite intervention in scaling up the uptake of sanitation and related services in 50 selected districts. The project implemented by ProNet, started with VSLA training for sanitation, in 3 operational Dis-tricts (Sissala West, Wa East and Daffiama-Bussie-Issa District). The training, which was carried out, would enable the team to understand the VSLA savings in promoting Sanitation in communities. These DA trained are expected to mobilize VSLA groups to practice Sanitation. Following this, 88 Latrine Artisan did benefit from an entrepreneurship training. The just ended Training will equip Latrine Artisans with the needed skills and knowledge on how to use latrine construction as a business. The capacity will also help them in their business relationship with sales agents and develop their business more than ever. The Project team will be following up to the VSLA group formation in the selected communities.

**Monitoring and Training Conducted in GROW**

Under Greater Rural Opportunities for Women (GROW) project, MEDA staff and field officers visited the project communities to monitor soya beans harvesting. The monitoring was conducted in the project communities within the Nadowli, Daffiaama-Bussie-Issa and Wa East District. Although the monitoring is still on-going, harvest in project communities seems to be fine and high yield is expected. In addition to the monitoring, alternative livelihood training for farmers was held in project communities. The training aimed to equip farmers with the skills to earn additional income. Farmers were trained on how to make pomade, powder and cleanser. Participants showed high concentration and commitment in the training, and willingly participated in all the activities.
Nisiratu Abubakari is a 22 year old single lady from Dupper Community and a GROW client. She explains how the GROW project benefited her and her 9 household members.

She said, “through the GROW project I was trained on soap making. After the training I established my own soap business. On average I make a weekly income of GHS 100.00 which I use to support my younger siblings who are currently in school.”

She added, “Ever since Mariam and Seidu (her siblings) enrolled into SHS and Training College, I have been taking a greater burden of defraying their fees and other school expenses. In the household, I contribute to buying ingredients on weekly basis to keep the family going on … so far, I have trained over 80 women on soap making and I have assisted over 20 of them with linkages to the materials and they have successfully established their own businesses.”

The GROW project has not only transformed Nisiratu’s life, but her entire household and at a much broader level.