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Wli Todzi Denied Clinic

Inhabitants of Wli Todzi, a farming community located on the summit of Wli falls in the Hohoe municipality of the Volta Region, are currently functioning without a clinic.

The village, which boasts a population of about 1,000 residents (this excluding the 1,500 individuals living in outlying areas), is instead relying on three health personnel: one attendant, who does not practice medicine, and two individuals versed in curative and preventative care.

These healthcare officials have been working in the area since August- two years after the construction of a UN sponsored clinic was halted.



The Municipal Chief Executive of the region has claimed that the construction ceased after the village was accused of “sharing out” their acquired building materials to neighbouring communities.

However, residents of the village have photographic proof that the allegedly “stolen” materials were not illegally sold to other communities, but are instead being stored in the village’s schoolhouse.

Residents of Wli Todzi explained that none of the building materials are currently being used, as workers are still waiting for iron and wood- two components necessary for the construction of the clinic.

Other villagers have claimed that the Contractor for the clinic, a senior government representative named “Sapon,” signed that the structure was finished while its construction was still in progress. He then left the community with the money originally intended for further materials and labour.

While the inhabitants of Wli Todzi have campaigned for the remaining building materials necessary for the clinic, the Municipal Chief Executive has continued to deny their appeals, based solely on the allegation that the materials were inappropriately distributed elsewhere.

Other government officials, such as the district health director, have orally responded to the villagers’ requests, promising to provide expert health personnel- but only once the clinic is completed.

Additional government outreach to the village has been limited, with officials only visiting Wli Todzi during elections.

As for the three healthcare workers currently dealing with the community's health situation, the absence of the clinic is not the only obstacle faced.

Because these healthcare workers are not residents of Wli Todzi, they must make a tedious, 50km trek up the mountain each week from Hohoe- a commute that lasts an estimated three hours if attempted by motor, ten hours by automobile.

The length of the journey is not merely attributed to the poor quality of the road- which has been subjected to both the elements and poor maintenance- but also to its intrusion into Togo.

This latter circumstance has proved to be a particular problem for the health personnel, whose commute is frequently stalled by the Togolese border patrol.

On one such occasion, Togolese officials unwittingly ruined vaccines intended for the people of Wli Todzi, by exposing them to sunlight during a search.

Due both to the difficulty of the journey and other obligations in the Agumatsa and Togolo communities, the health personnel can only reside in Wli Todzi for about five days a week (sometimes less).

The residents of the community, who lay claim to no vehicle of any sort, are often forced to descend the mountain via a 1,000ft path (much of which is vertical) should they need to visit the nearest clinic in Hohoe.

Such a descent proves to be extremely difficult for those with severe illnesses and/or injury, as well as those who are pregnant, elderly, or otherwise physically unequipped to make the journey.

The personnel's visits to the village often prove to be as frustrating as the commute, as the community cannot afford sterilization equipment or a midwife.

This lack of funds is not a result of the village's inability to foster raw material (the area has proven to be agriculturally prosperous since its inhabitation some 90 years ago), but rather its lack of roads.

Despite their abundance of products, the villagers are often unable to garner monetary profits because of their isolation from other communities.

In fact, the little profit that Wli Todzi acquires often comes from Togo, with the country being more easily accessible from the village than Hohoe.

Villagers in Wli Todzi have argued that if a more adequate road were paved, then they may be able to better do business with neighboring communities (particularly Hohoe), and consequently afford their own clinic and healthcare.

As of now, the government has neglected to finish neither the construction of the clinic or a more practical road, and no officials seem to have current intentions of (re)commencing such building projects.

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