Title of Project: Exploring ways to eradicate the stigma, segregation and violence against women accused of witchcraft in Ghana.

Investigator: Dr. Kwadwo A. Okrah

Introduction:
The research was purposed to investigate and suggest solutions to the violence and stigma attached to accused witches and their children in schools and society in the northern part of Ghana.

With the grant from IUSB, I was able to:

1. Explore the humiliation and segregation accompanied by witchcraft accusation in the northern part of Ghana, and the prejudice, discrimination and the possibility of annihilation it has created
2. Explore some interventions through the political institutions and relevant ministries - education, gender, culture and other traditional/cultural leaders to provide a convincing approach to ensure the enjoyment of basic rights of all citizens.
3. Offer recommendations and efficient methods of protecting the rights of women and children.

Research activities While in Ghana: A chart and data of interviewees:

I traveled to the main research sites of Accra, Tamale and Gambaga. I interviewed the following participants selected from politicians, educators, administrators, traditional/cultural leaders and accused witches.

Focus groups and interviewees are represented in the chart following:

A total number of 57 people were interviewed and the distribution is given in the table below. Out of 130 inmates, 20 were selected for interviewing. This does not invalidate their views; they reflect the general view of the women accused of witchcraft.

The people interviewed included the chief of Gambaga traditional area, ministry of gender, children and social protection, ministry of culture, members of parliament, Domestic violence and victims support unit (working for the protection of human rights, women’s issues and cases of domestic violence, the office of the first lady, and the state protocol office. The indigenes were interviewed based on convenient sampling to select the category of the people.
Categories of participants:

**Focus group:** females N= 5, males N=5, chiefs/cultural leaders N=5, Administrators N=4, educators N=9, politicians N= 6, pastors n=3, witches= N=20

**Activities:**
Between June 30 and August 16, 2014 I traveled to Ghana to meet the research participants. I collected data by face-to-face interviews individually and by focus group. Two research assistants supported me in my travels, with recording, transcription and advanced organization for traditional protocols.

During the period of my stay in Ghana - I organized initial meetings and interviews with relevant government ministries and some political leaders in Accra-Ghana (as shown in the chart above). Before I left for Tamale and Gambaga in the north I granted a radio interview to explain the purpose of the research and announced my travel to the northern Ghana to see the situation first hand.

I traveled to Tamale and Gambaga, where I spent a week observing and interviewing participants at the witch camp and around the town.
I returned to Accra to follow up on interviews for confirmation and to solicit recommendations and efficient methods of protecting the rights of the women and children at the witch camp.

**Difficulties:**
Contrary to expectation, I did not encounter any difficulties in the data collection for the interview. All the interviewees were ready and excited about the project. They willingly granted interviews; in fact it struck me as a project whose time was so ripe and needed someone to undertake the task! Most surprising to me was the chief and guardian of the witch camp and the witches themselves who were together as a family and requested me to indicate to the government their needs. The ministries, educators, teachers and the corridors of political power including the first lady, were all ready to help alleviate the problems of the camp as a temporary measure and, eventually to abolish it. However,
they all agreed that the abolishment of the witch camps should be gradual to ensure a smooth transition of the accused witches into their own families and society.

**Product coming out of the project:**
The finished product of the project was presented at the 2014 (57th) Annual National conference of African Studies Association held between November 20th-23rd, 2014 at Indianapolis under the theme: Rethinking Violence, Reconstruction and Reconciliation. The project was recognized for its relevance, timeliness and academic and educational import. Subsequently a publishing company, The Edwin Mellen Press Ltd., Lampeter, Ceredigion, Wales, UK, has accepted to publish it as a stand-alone monograph publication for scholars and libraries.

With some modifications, it has been accepted for a book chapter publication in the series, *African traditional and oral literature as pedagogical tools in Content Area Classrooms: K – 12.* By Information Age Publishers: Charlotte, NC.

I have incorporated the findings in the IUSB E201 (Multicultural Education and Global Awareness) syllabus. I have also presented and discussed at a Global education workshop. I would also present the findings of the project at The African Heritage Studies Association Annual Conference in November 3-4, 2016, at Washington DC. The title of the paper is “The dynamics of gender roles and cultural determinants that persuade or dissuade African women’s desire to participate in modern politics.”

**Conclusion:**
I wish to state that the project is complete and, I am very grateful to the IUSB FRD committee for supporting this project.

Thank you!