



# Caring for God's creation

*"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Genesis 2:15*

Far away from the United States, in the country of Benin, is a city named Allada.

In Allada, whenever a person needed to throw trash away, they would throw it into the street. If they had a candy wrapper, they would throw it on the ground. If they drank a bottle of juice, they would throw it on the ground. Just like in the United States, we can see the litter in the streets, but we can't always see the impact that it has.

With time, almost every street was littered with piles of garbage. During the rainy season, when streets flooded, the germs from the garbage spread into people's homes and caused sickness.

One day, a group from *La Casa Grande* had an idea. They wanted to stop the spread of diseases by picking up trash in the streets. So every day, groups of children from *La Casa Grande* picked up piles of garbage.

Soon they realized they couldn't do it alone. *La Casa Grande* worked together with the mayor of Allada and the city government of Burgos, Spain. They came up with a plan:

First they will clean up the random garbage piles in the streets, build a garbage sorting site, and develop a system of garbage collection in Allada's seven neighborhoods.

Then two times each week, trash collectors will ride three-wheeled bicycles house-to-house to pick up garbage.

At the sorting site, women will pick out what can be recycled, and things like egg shells and apple cores will be used to make compost for vegetable gardens and to make methane gas for cooking their meals.

By working together to pick up the trash, they will have a more beautiful city with less sickness. More importantly, they learned to care for God's creation and the people that God created.

## Questions for discussion

1. What stood out to you about this story?
2. In what ways were the people at *La Casa Grande* caring for God's creation?
3. Where do you see creation around you?
4. What ways can do you care for God's creation?

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you for giving us the beauty of nature all around us. Help us to remember to care for your creation in the plants and animals, but also in each person we meet. Amen.*



Photo by Paulin Bossou

**Community involvement**—Bienvenu Kadja (in the vest), the administrator and financial officer for *La Casa Grande*, collects garbage in city center with his colleagues.

## Our gifts can help support mission in Benin!

Mennonite Mission Network supports a variety of ministries in Benin. One of the primary ways that mission happens is by sharing the good news of Jesus through friendships and loving our neighbors. You can help them spread God's love by helping to send Mawuli, and other children like her, to training school. There's a saying that "when you educate a boy, you educate an individual. When you educate a girl, you educate a generation." Here are a few ways you can help both boys and girls in Benin:

**\$10** helps buy school books.

**\$25** helps a student attend one class for a semester.

**\$100** helps a student attend a year of school.

**Gift designation.** All gifts to support ministries in Benin should be sent to Mennonite Mission Network, PO Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370. Please indicate that the funds are for "**Mission Bank—Benin**" or "**Project #1820.**"

▶ For more activities and stories, visit [www.MennoniteMission.net/BeninMissionBank](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/BeninMissionBank).



God's big house in  
**BENIN**  
AND BEYOND

