

# GHANA NATIONAL PROFILE FOR 2020/2021

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AKWAABA / WELCOME



<https://photos.app.goo.gl/KvqXXoN1zyAYG0FV2>

**We are very happy to welcome you to Ghana.**

The National Profile is a brief introduction about what you can expect during your exchange year. This will give you a basic idea about the Ghanaian society. Obviously this profile will not cover all the issues you may be curious about but if you read it carefully, it will be a step in the right direction.

Living in another culture might not be easy but with an open mind and a deep commitment as well as the effort of the ICYE-GHANA staff and co-workers who are eager to help you, you will surely have a rewarding experience. We are looking forward to meeting you and hope you are all set to experience Ghana.

Once again you are welcome- AKWAABA.

## **What is ICYE?**

A leader in international youth exchange programs with more than 50 years of experience

Long and short - term exchange programs for 2.000 participants annually

An international Federation of National Committees in 34 countries an international voluntary service programme promoting young people's active and global citizenship

An experience based programme to enhance young people's intercultural understanding and commitment to peace and justice

An international network coordinated by national offices and dedicated co-workers, who provide volunteers with the necessary orientation, training and support

The International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE) is an international non-profit youth exchange organisation promoting youth mobility, intercultural learning and international voluntary service. ICYE organises long and short-term exchanges combining home stays with voluntary service in a variety of community service projects in more than 34 countries around the world. >> [read more](#)

## **HOW IT WORKS**

ICYE is a Federation of Full and Associate Member National Committees.

National Committees are autonomous. They develop and run the program according to the needs of the youth of their countries, and following policies and guidelines prepared and adopted by the General Assembly of the Federation.

## **ABOUT US**

ICYE-GHANA joined the ICYE Federation in 1978, the first in Africa.

ICYE-GHANA is registered as a non-profit organization with the country's main body, The National Youth Organising Commission that oversees the running of youth programmes in the country. ICYE-GHANA is also listed with the Ministry of Social Welfare, a member of the Ghana Private Voluntary Organisation in Development (GAPVOD) who serves as the umbrella for NGOs.

Our goals are consistent with that of the ICYE Federation. Participants of ICYE are committed to and will work with others who are committed to:

justice for all persons who suffer from social, political, economic and personal injustice  
break through the barriers between cultures and peoples equality of cultures, nations and sexes etc

## **NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

The ICYE –GHANA National Committee is responsible for the running of the programme. The National Committee's responsibility include the following: promotion of the programme, screening and selecting candidates, organizing conferences and camps, looking for host families and projects etc. The members also serve as consultants to the exchangees, host families and work projects.

## **AFFILIATES**

The ICYE Federation is a participating member of the following international organizations:

- United Nations Economic and Social Council - ECOSOC (Consultative Status)
- United Nations Department of Public Information, DPI-NGO Committee

- UNESCO (Official Operational Relations)
- UNESCO NGOs Liaison Committee
- European Commission, Directorate General Education and Culture - Youth Unit
- World Council of Churches (working relations as international ecumenical organisation)
- Co-coordinating Committee of International Voluntary Service (CCIVS)

# Ghana's History.

In 1471, the first Europeans, the Portuguese, arrived in the gold producing regions of West Africa. They obtained so much gold in the areas between the rivers Ankobra and Volta that they named it 'La Mina', the Mine.

The British later called it the Gold Coast. In 1482, they built the Castle Sao Jorge da Mina at Elmina as a trading post.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the British and the Dutch were actively operating on the Gold Coast with the British controlling about half of the trade. The area became a Crown Colony of the Queen of England in 1874. By 1902, the British had annexed the whole of the Gold Coast.

The first half of the twentieth century saw an increase in the demand for change in the administration of the Gold Coast. After the Second World War, the attack in the colonial system was stepped up and its objective changed to a complete overthrow of the system that is, independence at all cost. The leaders took a firm stand against the continued economic injustice and the social discrimination to which our people were subjected under the colonial system.

Within a decade after the war, the colonial system crumbled. This was primarily the work of two political parties that emerged in the post second world war period in the Gold Coast - The United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) and the Convention People's Party (CPP) in August 1947 and June 1949 respectively.

Finally, on the 6th March, 1957, the Gold Coast became independent under the new name Ghana.

Ghana was the name of an ancient Sudanese Empire, which flourished between the 4th and the 11th centuries, controlling the gold trade between the mining areas of the South and the Saharan trade routes to the north and from where the Gold Coast majority tribes are believed to have migrated. On the 1st July, 1960, Ghana became a Republic with Dr. Kwame Nkrumah as the first President.



After independence, Ghana has had several changes in government. Regimes have been alternating between the military and the civilian population. So far there have been three constitutional governments and five military regimes. Presently, we are in the fourth Republic which was inaugurated on the 7th January, 1993 with Ft. Lt. Jerry Rawlings as President.



He stayed in office till 1996 and was hon. Agyekum Kufuor won the elections and he was sworn in as the President on the 7th January, 2001. His party, the New Patriotic Party won the Parliamentary elections as well. President John Agyekum Kufuor was re-elected for the second term in 2004 and he served till 2008 where there was another election. This time the opposition Party National Democratic Congress led by Professor Evans Atta Mills won power by a second round voting by the citizens. In 2016 another polls were conducted and the New Patriotic Party won after being in opposition for eight years.





The Current President, William Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo at his Inaugural Ceremony.

### **FLAG OF GHANA - WHAT IT MEANS**



The flag of Ghana consists of the colours Red, Gold, and Green in horizontal stripes with a five-pointed Black Star in the centre of the gold stripe. Red represents the blood of those who died in the country's struggle for independence. Gold represents the mineral wealth of the country. Green symbolizes the country's rich forest and natural resources. The Black Star stands for the lode star of African freedom.

## **CULTURE**

One's own culture provides the "lens" through which we view the world; the "logic" by which we order it, the "grammar" by which it makes sense.

Culture is central to what we see, how we are sensed of what we see, and how we express ourselves.

### **SOME CULTURAL PRACTICES OF GHANA**

#### **Greetings**

Greetings are very important in Ghana. When a person fails to greet, Ghanaians say he/she is not friendly or polite. Handshaking is the traditional way of either saying hello or greeting friends, relatives or strangers. A handshake is always preferred with the right hand.

#### **The use of the left hand**

We do not use the left hand to do anything especially before an older person. When we use the left hand people think we do not respect them. Our elders believe that the left hand is not clean. For example, it is not good to use the left hand to point something out to people, make a sign to call people. If we have to use the left hand because the right hand is busy, we have to say I'm sorry to use the left hand.

#### **Language**

In Ghana, we have about 46 languages. Nine have been written and are studied in schools. These are studied on the radio and television. The nine are Dagbani, Dagaare/Wale, Kasem, Gonja, Akan (Akuapem, Asante and Fante), Ga- Adangme and Nzema. The official language however is ENGLISH.

#### **Religion**

Generally, the Ghanaian believes there is God, but different Ghanaians have different ways in which they understand that there is God. There are three main forms of religion: Traditional, Christian and Islamic.

Ghanaians are very religious and take active part in their religious programmes. Regular worship attendance particularly on Sundays is the normal pattern for most ICYE host families





*A display by the Traditionalist.*



*A mosque*



*A church*

## The Extended Family

In every home, a father, mother and their children form a family. In Ghana, other relatives are also members of the family e.g. Aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents and grandchildren are included. We call this the extended family and exchangees are likely to see this in some host families.

## Basic Cross Cultural Principles

You will be embarking on a typical cross-cultural experience in which you will be exposed to different ways of thinking, speaking and interacting.

There are certain principles that will help you to enjoy a positive experience and avoid some of the possible misunderstandings that can occur in cross-cultural settings.

Ask, listen, observe and learn. Do not assume that what is normal to you will be the normal way of doing things or looking at things.

You are a visitor, therefore the responsibility is on you to accept the role of being a learner and showing the greatest respect for the local way of thinking and approaching whatever situation you are in with an open mind will be helpful to you.

Patience, tolerance and understanding cross-cultural situations are often filled with stress.

This stress comes from being in a setting, different from what you are used to.

The climate, the languages, the living styles and standards, and just about everything you experience will be different. Your obligation is to be patient, tolerating the differences.

Ghanaians will go great lengths to make you comfortable and take care of your needs; however, the responsibility is still yours to adapt to and accept situations in which you find yourself.

## **GEOGRAPHY OF GHANA**

Ghana has an area of about 238,537 sq. km (92,099 sq miles). It is bordered on the east by Togo, on the west by La Cote d'Ivoire, on the north by Burkina Faso, and on the South by the Atlantic Ocean.

There are a few mountains but several hills which rise to a maximum height of just under 1,000 m. the highest mountain is the Afadzato, which is 1500 m (5000 ft) above sea level.

Ghana lies in the tropical region with temperature ranging between 20 degrees and 32 degrees in the south along the coast and 24 degrees and 32 degrees in the north. The main rainy season occurs between April and July and the dry season spans October to February.

The Volta River, which has been damned at Akosombo and Kpong for the generation of electricity, is one of several rivers criss-crossing the country. The Volta Lake created as a result of the dam at Akosombo, is also the world's largest man-made lake. It is

navigable over a distance of about 400km (250 miles) with motor vessels plying its waters, carrying goods and passengers from the South to the North and back.

Ghana's population is about twenty million. The country is divided into ten administrative regions. They are Upper West, Upper East, Northern, Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Western, Central, Volta, Eastern and Greater Accra Region where the capital is situated.

### **PROGRAMMES**

ICYE Ghana has the following programmes:

- Long Term – Volunteering in abroad for a Year
- Medium Term – Volunteering for Six months
- STePs – Volunteering between one to four months in Ghana

### **VISA GUIDELINES.**

All exchangees coming to Ghana are required to have a valid passport and a visa. The visa must be applied for in the nearest Ghana Embassy or Consulate and this must be done before 31st May each year in order to avoid delays. Exchangees will have to apply for an ENTRY VISA for NOT more than TWO months (**not a one year visa**).

On your arrival to Ghana, you will be given 30 or 60 days at the airport.

At the Orientation Camp, those staying for six months will be given a Visa extension form and those staying for a year will be given a residence and work permit forms to fill, support letters from the ICYE GHANA office and Volunteers Passports will be attached to the filled forms and ICYE – Ghana will submit the forms at the Immigration Office on behalf of the volunteers when the 30 or 60 days given at the Airport has expired.

The Visa extension and the residence/work permit may take 2-3 months to be ready due to the bureaucratic system it goes through.

Exchangees are responsible for the payment of the Visa extension and the residence and work permit. The cost of VISA extension is GHC 50 per month and 300 Dollars for the Residence and work Permit.

ICYE Ghana will facilitate in the acquisition of visa, work placement, host family and contact person and the insurance for the stay of exchangees. All exchangees are insured against accidents and sickness. Please read your insurance manual given to you. Hospitals will be identified for exchangees to visit should they fall sick.

## SITE SCENES IN GHANA

### **GREATER ACCRA**

#### **CENTRE FOR NATIONAL CULTURE: HIGH STREET-**

Preserves and presents Ghanaian arts through exhibits, workshops and galleries. A major shopping centre for arts, crafts and local textiles.

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### **THE NATIONAL MUSEUM:**

Barnes Road –Established 1957 to preserve Ghana's historical treasures and that of other ancient African empire.

### **THE WEB DU BOIS**

**MEMORIAL CENTRE:** 1st Circular Road, Cantonments - Dedicated to the late Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, a great pan-Africanist. Incorporates his tomb, library, lecture, workshop and video facilities

### **KWAME NKRUMAH MAUSOLEUM & MEMORIAL**

**PARK:** High Street – Dedicated to the late Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first President. There is a photo Museum on his life and

Black star Square in Accra from a sky view.



Where the first President, Osagyefo Dr.Kwame Nkrumah was buried.



works.

## ASHANTI REGION

**The home of Ghanaian tradition.**

**THE CULTURAL CENTRE:  
CITY CENTRE, KUMASI –**

Incorporates Prempeh II Jubilee Museum, Cultural Craft, Anokyekrom, model Ashanti village and catering facilities.

**KOMFO ANOKYE SWORD**

**SITE: 10 minute's** walk from Kejetia roundabout – sword driven into the ground by Chief Priest Komfo Anokye in the 17th century signifying unity of the Akans. It is said that no person can remove it by his own strength.

**BONWIRE -20 km** northeast of Kumasi Home of Kente cloth

**OWABI BIRD SANCTUARY – 15KM** west from Kumasi – Winter home for variety of migratory birds

**LAKE BOSOMTWI -40KM** southwest of Kumasi – Natural circular lake believed to have been formed by the impact of a meteorite



The king of the Ashanti kingdom, Otumfour Osei Tutu II

## **BRONG AHAFO REGION**

### **BOAMA CLOTH MAKING:**

29KM from Takyiman  
Processing of cloth, the  
“kyenkyen”, from the bark of  
trees

### **BOABENG-FIEMA MONKEY SANCTUARY 22km**

from  
Nkoranza – Monkeys like the  
Colobus the Mona and many  
more are seen moving about  
freely in the village as early as  
9.00 am

### **KINTAMPO FALLS: 75KM**

north of Takyiman.  
A collection of several  
waterfalls flowing and  
disappearing underground  
and resurfacing 200 metres  
ahead.

### **YEJI PORT: VOLTA LAKE –**

Small but beautiful and scenic  
town with fishing as the main  
occupation. The port, 497km  
north of Akosombo, is also a  
link between the north and  
south.



The display of our beautiful Kente

## **NORTHERN REGION**

### **MOLE NATIONAL PARK:**

**130km west** of Tamale – The only developed national park with accommodation facilities. A wide range of animals including elephants, lions, antelopes, monkeys etc can be found



### **SALAGA SLAVE MARKET:**

**Salaga**, 60km from Tamale south east – market place for the Trans Saharan slave trade.

**TONGO ROCKS:** 10KM south of Bolgatanga ancient rocks with interesting geographical shapes perched on top of each other and making an eerie whistling sound when the cold, dry harmattan wind blows.

### **PAGA CROCODILE POND:**

35KM north of Bolgatanga-Burkina Faso border – At the pond the crocodiles can be enticed out with a live fowl and be stroked by those daring enough



## CENTRAL REGION

**CAPE COAST CASTLE:** Cape Coast Town From Dutch lodge in 1637 to Swedes Fort in 1652 and British Castle as well as seat of colonial administration form 1664-1877. Harbours West African Historical Museum.

**ELMINA CASTLE:** Elmina Town – Portuguese Fort, built in 1482, was the first European edifice in Africa south of the Sahara. Became Dutch Fort in 1637 and British Castle in 1911.



Elmina Castle

**KAKUM NATIONAL PARK:** 30km north of Cape Coast – Patchwork of rain forest of 360km including the Assin Attandaso Resource Reserve with medicinal trees, birds and monkeys. There is a canopy walkway.

**BRENU BEACH:** 15 minutes drive west of Elmina – 13km stretch of palm fringed virgin beach with cool and clear water. Has peaceful migratory bird sanctuary.  
The fish industry in Elmina



The Kakum Canopy Walkway



## **WESTERN REGION**

**It is always believe that the best comes from the west.**

### **BUSUA PLEASURE BEACH -**

25km off Takoradi-Tarkwa road – wide golden sand beach ideal for swimming with ultra modern chalets

## **EASTERN REGION**

**The home of power .This is the region that supplies electricity for the country.**



The Akosombo Dam

**THE VOLTA LAKE: 100KM** northeast of Accra- Largest man-made lake; incorporates the Akosombo Hydro –electric Dam and an inland port of the Volta River Authority that operates through its subsidiary, the Volta Lake Transport Company a north – south inland passenger/cargo as well as cross-ferry transportation and a cruise



The Volta lake

boat.

**ABURI BOTANICAL**

**GARDEN:** 40KM north of Accra- created in the 1890s as an agricultural research station, sanatorium and leisure resort. Has a wide variety of plants, flowers and trees from the tropical world.

**BOTI FALLS: HUHUNYA** near Koforidua – In the reserve of Huhunya is the seasonal Boti Falls with caves, cascades and umbrella rocks surrounding it.

**AKONNEDI SHRINE:**

**LARTEH,** 56km north of Accra- A local shrine with traditional healing practices, herbal medicine with psychic healing powers

**VOLTA REGION**

**VOLTA LAKE:** Borders



Eastern and Volta regions, spans over 400km north-south. Largest man-made lake, with facilities for cruising to Sogakope and Azizanya at the



Aburi Botanical Gardens

estuary where the Paradise Beach hotel offers facilities for all types of water sport

**TAFI MONKEY VILLAGE:**

**260KM north** east from Accra  
– sacred monkey sanctuaries with hundreds of species of monkeys in a tropical forest

**AFADJATO MOUNTAIN:**

260km northeast of Accra – Ghana’s highest mountain. 2905 feet high, ideal for climbing

**TORGBO FALLS:** 250KM

north –east of Accra. In the midst of caves and water pools

**WLI FALLS:** 20km south-west of Hohoe in the Volta Region. The most beautiful waterfall in Ghana all year round in the midst of the Agumatsa Forest. Ideal for adventure.

**UPPER WEST REGION**

**GBELLE GAME RESERVE:**

17km south of Tumu sanctuary for many endangered species of wild life like hippos, water-buffalos, elephants and birds of spectacular plumage.

## **SOME TIPS TO PACK YOUR BAG....**

We are very happy to welcome you to Ghana.

Living in another culture might not be easy but with an open mind and a deep commitment as well as the effort of the ICYE-GHANA staff and co-workers who are eager to help you, you will surely have a rewarding experience.

We are looking forward to meeting you and hope you are all set to experience Ghana.

Suggestion List for a "1 year Bag" to come to Ghana.

- ✓ A pair of shoe
- ✓ A pair of sandals
- ✓ Rain coat or umbrella
- ✓ Toiletries.
- ✓ Swimsuit
- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Sun cream
- ✓ 5- Pants. {Jeans} or anything casual or comfortable.
- ✓ 6-8 T- shirts.
- ✓ Touch light (is a must or important)
- ✓ Mobile phone {if applicable}
- ✓ Mosquito repellents {spray, cream, etc.}

We will advise you to have a good medication for malaria. However there are a lot of medications which are available in drugstores.

Apart from the camera, and the trekking or sport shoes, all that you need is available at a lower price in Ghana. We will advice exchangees not to bring along a lot of cloths since there are a lot locally designed African dress which can be worn in most functions at a cheaper price.

We wish you all the best and waiting to hear from you soon.

## **VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

ICYE Ghana would like to have a safe and rewarding experience. Below we have summarized some safety guidelines along with a recommended code of conduct to ensure that your trip is enjoyable and trouble free. We ask you review these points carefully and complete the form at the bottom; this is ICYE's way of ensuring that you have been provided with a suitable preparation for your trip. If you have concerns over any of the points below, please contact us.

### **GENERAL**

We are continually working to endeavour to raise safety standard and quality standard and will do our best to ensure that your stay is a testimony for others. However we do ask that you adhere to the following guidelines while you are in Ghana.

### **SAFETY IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

#### **1.1 Walking around area.**

You should be accompanied by a local person (a member of your host family, contact or from your project) when walking around the local area. We do not recommend that you walk alone especially at night. If you feel comfortable to walk around on your own, you do that at your own risk. When walking around, do not carry valuables or large sums of money. Refrain from carrying bags, cameras and jewellery as this can draw unnecessary attention and can make you a target for theft.

#### **1.2 COMMUTING TO AND FROM LOCAL AREAS.**

Public transport is the most easiest, cheaper and safe way of moving around in the country. There are three types of transport to and from the city centre. Namely, Troto, Shared Taxi and exclusive charter.

Most Ghanaian commute to and from their locality with the troto. It is not advisable to take the chartered taxi if you don't know where you are going.

However this troto does not have specific time of departing or arriving. It moves when the bus is full and arrives earlier when there isn't much traffic. It is not always on time and you should be alert and responsible when making use of the service. It is also a nice place or environment to making friends.

## **CONDUCT OF VOLUNTEER**

### **2.1 Within the local community, you should,**

Be respectfully or decently clothed at all time. That is, you should not be unnecessarily exposed to case attraction.

Behave respectfully and responsibly {do not drink alcohol excessively at the host family, project or the local community}

Refrain from drinking in public areas or portray inappropriate behaviours.

### **2.2 At the project the volunteers should,**

Report for duty on time and complete the necessary hours of volunteering for the duration of the placement.

Inform the project leaders in advance of any valid reason that will require you to be absent from the project on any particular day.

Refrain from forming intimate relationship with the project staff or host family members. This is strongly discourage and in certain cases may warrant dismissal from the programme.

### **2.3 At the host family/project, volunteer should;**

Have an initial session with host parent(s) discussing house rules and the programme Code of Conduct. It is important that you have open and honest conversation with your host family/project on the first day that you arrive about your likes and dislikes. This will eliminate any unnecessary discomfort or misunderstanding which may arise in the future.

No smoking in the house. If you are a smoker it's important to discuss this with the host and find out where it would be appropriate for you to smoke.

The consumption of alcoholic beverage is not allowed in the house/project unless you are given the permission to do so.

Laundry service is upon discussion with the host or project.

Curfew at host family /project. As per special arrangement with the host or the appropriate authority.

**CONFERENCES & SEMINARS.**

Volunteers are obliged to attend all camps and seminar that are organized by ICYE GHANA. Should there be any reason that will prevent a volunteer from attending any of the seminars or conferences by ICYE GHANA, the volunteer must inform the office of ICYE GHANA of the problem that prevents him/her from attending the conference and seminars.

NB: The only reason that will be accepted by ICYE GHANA to prevent a volunteer from attending the conferences and seminars is ILL HEALTH.

**CHANGING PROJECTS**

The exchangee who abandons or refuses the social project, because the geographical location of the project or any unjustified reason, will be send back to his/her home country. Should you experience any problem at your host or project, please inform your contact after which the contact will inform the office. We will then assess the situation and assist you in any way possible. Should any alternative project or host be the solution, please allow the office at least a month to arrange the move. Moving volunteers is subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed.

{FULL NAME}

SIGNATURE

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I/We have read and understood the ICYE Ghana hosting information booklet and

I hereby agree to abide by the above-mentioned programme rules and regulation laid down by ICYE GHANA for the full duration of my placement.

## BELOW ARE SOME BASIC TRANSLATION OF THE TWI LANGUAGE TO ENGLISH

### Greetings and responses Nkyea ne nnyeso)

Welcome	Akwaaba
Good morning	Makye/Mema wo akye
Good afternoon	Maha/Mema wo aha
Good evening	Madwo/Mema wo adwo
Good night	Ade nkye/Da yiye
Good bye (to guest)	Nante yie o!
How are you?	Wo ho te sen
I am fine	Me ho ye.
I am not feeling well	Mente ap)/Me ho mfa me.
Please give me some water	Mepa wo kyew ma me nsuo.
May I buy some bread	Mepa wo kyew met) paano.
Yes	Aane
No	Daabi
I want to buy a bunch of banana	Mepe se me t) kwaadu duro.
Come here	Bra ha.
Go	K).
Stop	Gyina/gyae.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/KvqXXoN1zyAYG0FV2>