

Ghana



About the Country

Ghana, an English speaking country, lies in the most southern part of the West African coast, surrounded by the Atlantic and its French speaking neighbors (Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, and Togo.) Previously an influential African Empire and then a British colony, Ghana gained independence from the UK in 1957. It was the first sub-Saharan nation to achieve autonomy from colonial rule. Ghana was also the first place in sub-Saharan Africa where Europeans arrived to trade - first in gold, later in slaves. Archaeological evidence shows that humans have lived in present-day Ghana from about 1500 BC. Today, Ghana is a model of democracy for the continent and the world.

Education

Ghana has one of the highest school enrollment rates in West Africa, with 84.3% of school-aged children attending school. The ratio of girls to boys within the education system is about 1:1. This is a contrast to many countries in the region where girls are much less likely to have the opportunity to attend school. Nonetheless, there are still about a half a million children who are not in school due to lack of resources, text books being a key example of such a resource. All classes in Ghanaian schools are taught in English. Ghanaian students have more educational opportunities than many of their neighbors. For example, Ghana boasts eight public universities while next door, in Togo, there are only two. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (named after Ghana's former president) is considered to be one of the best universities for science and technology in the region.

The African Library Project

In 2011, the African Library Project developed a partnership with the Michael Lapsley Foundation (MLF) in an effort to found libraries in rural Ghana. Each community provides the space, furniture and staffing for a library while ALP provides the books and coordinates book distribution. Ghana's Members of Parliament and other government officials sponsor libraries in their district. MLF trains the teacher-librarians and together, ALP and MLF evaluate and monitor the libraries—349 libraries as of 2017!

Quick Facts

- Ghana has a population of about 27 million people.
- The overall adult literacy rate is 76.6%. The rate for women is lower than that of men: 71.4% vs 82%.
- Ghana has one of the lowest rates of HIV/AIDS in the region: 1.6% among adults aged 15-49.
- Ghana is home to over 100 different ethnic groups. About 47 unique local languages are spoken although English is the official language.
- Ghana is the world's second largest exporter of cocoa. Rich in many other natural resources, Ghana is also recognized for its oil, gold, timber, electricity, diamonds, bauxite, and manganese.

