



WORLDwrite

IYEP

WORLDwrite is planning a unique exchange for volunteers up for a challenge



UK Ghana Exchange 2004/2005

Our charity will take up to forty volunteers to Ghana, provide them with a crash course in film-making and set them off on a journey to ask Ghanaians what's holding back development and investigate the impact sustainable development policies have had.

The first African country to gain independence, Ghana was once the world's leading exporter of cocoa and one of Africa's leading economies. Today it's taken on what's known as Highly Indebted Poor Country Status (HIPC)-a World Bank programme providing debt relief but with strings attached. We'll investigate the impact these policies have on everyday life and record our findings to produce some assumption busting films for schools, colleges and local screenings.

With visits to NGO's (more numerous in Ghana than elected officials), we'll examine Western funded community projects from bee keeping to batik, which are promoted as the best means of empowering the poor. These schemes are now considered essential components of what's known as a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), a HIPC directive.

The jam-packed itinerary will be guided by WORLDwrite's partners, the IYEP Ghana (International Youth Education Programme) and Ghana's first independent film school the ASA (Academy of Screen Arts). Volunteers will spend time visiting subsistence based villages, plantain fields, cocoa plantations and visit the few existing industries such as multi-nationals Valco and Nestle to discover what Ghanaians want for their country.

The visit will be punctuated with discussion on sustainable development, citizenship, globalisation and its relevance today. We'll consider the emphasis on 'basic needs' being met and what has happened with the introduction of UPE (Universal Primary Education). Filming on route, every opportunity will be taken to record Ghanaians' interests and aspirations to form articles, films, videos, websites and education packs as teaching materials for UK schools and colleges.

Key opportunities will include visits to open cast gold mines where debates on environmental conservation versus industrial development loom large while villagers appropriate plastic sheeting from sites to create waterproof shelter from the monsoons. Volunteers will learn the history of Ghana once known as the Gold Coast and a centre of the slave trade with visits to the infamous slave castles of Elmina and Cape coast. A chance to examine afresh discussions on reparations for slavery.



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Ghana is a politically stable republic and renowned for its hospitality. Yet it remains off the Western tourist track despite beautiful beaches, where fisherman haul their catch by hand and villagers will cook you crayfish for 30p. Do Ghanaians want it to stay this way? What's happened to the villagers who once made a living on the Mole game reserve by hunting but are now banned while the Elephants roam free? With English as a second language, asking key questions will not be hard for students willing to probe and not just hear what they want to hear.



Rich in a dazzling array of cultural traditions, partners will help us examine the powerful hold religion has, investigate traditional crafts, the pittance paid to Kente weavers, music, dance, and not least African film. Will a more globalised world put paid to traditional songs or Ghanaian drumming? What do young people do without TVs and up to the minute ICT? Are the amenities of modern life shunned or longed for? What do Ghanaians make of atheism, the war in Iraq, child labour or nuclear power? With three weeks on the move there will be much to learn and plenty to take on board.

En route we'll make lots of new friends and get a real insight into everyday life.

Exchangees will find they are millionaires in Ghana, carrying plastic bags full of cedis to the pound and may well find the poverty shocking, but this exchange is not about pity. Volunteers will not stay in compounds or mud huts. Poverty is something to be understood and challenged. We believe 'living it' changes nothing.

It's an opportunity of a lifetime for volunteers but not for the faint hearted. It requires rigorous preparation and fundraising. We'll also have to fund a return visit by Ghanaian students to ensure our partners equally benefit. Unlike volunteer placements, it's not an opportunity to teach Ghanaians but to learn from Ghanaians. It requires an open mind, a commitment to reporting back and a belief in equality.

If you think you can cope with a project this demanding, fill in the application form and send it to the WORLDwrite Centre straight away!

For more details phone 020 8985 5435 or email world.write@btconnect.com. We are also keen to hear from sponsors and hope to ship a container load of film equipment to assist our aspirant partners.



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WHO WE ARE

WORLDwrite is an education charity, Reg No.1060869 United Nations D.P.I accredited NGO and DfES registered NVYO. WORLDwrite challenges prejudice by providing a unique opportunity to understand the world through exchanges. WORLDwrite has a record of questioning conventional wisdom, putting people first and inspiring global links.

Established in 1991 the charity is run by volunteers who share a commitment to equality for all. WORLDwrite has a centre in East London, newly developed film facility and training courses for volunteers interested in global issues.

Co-Directors are Ceri Dingle and Vivien Regan

WORLDwrite volunteer Centre, Millfields Lodge, Millfields Road, London E5 OAR

www.worldwrite.org.uk

OUR EXCHANGE PARTNERS

SUPPORT THE ASA ACADEMY OF SCREEN ARTS GHANA

The International Youth Education Program (IYEP) identified training within Screen Arts — acting, directing, script writing, producing, editing, critical analysis, etc. — as a vital area of need within Ghana, and as a result founded the Academy of Screen Arts (ASA), in East Legon, Accra. Opened in 2002, this is Ghana's first independent film school.

Presently in Ghana, the National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI) provides training for technical personnel, and the School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana teaches stage acting and technical skills. Both of these institutions are complemented by the ASA, which is focusing specifically on film and television acting and technical skills.

The Ghanaian film and television industry is growing; however, the restricted annual budgets of African governments slow this growth. If Ghanaians could make films about Ghana and have them viewed internationally, it would improve global awareness of Ghana and Ghanaian culture world-wide.

It takes quite a lot of money to obtain the kind of technology required for a screen arts training school. Similarly it takes money to train the actors and actresses who ultimately make the movies that we see. Your help is needed. The Academy of Screen Arts is currently developing a video/media library and is requesting production equipment to aid in student production. The ASA would appreciate donations of new or used VHS video tapes and films from Africa and the African Diaspora, classic European and American films, and Asian and Middle Eastern Cinema and new or used books and magazines addressing film production, cinema studies, media and culture/mass communications and African and African Diaspora studies. Donations of new or used production equipment, including audio, lighting, cameras (PAL format only) and post production software, would also be greatly appreciated. While the mentioned gift-in-kind donations are preferred, financial donations are also welcomed.

WORLDwrite is keen to support this aspirant project to help ensure Ghanaians have the same chance to make film and TV as UK students do. For financial contributions, please visit www.screenartsghana.com/fundraising. Gifts-in-kind donations can be sent to: The Academy of Screen Arts, 1 Cola Street, East Legon, P.O. Box GP 14350, Accra, Ghana, West Africa. Or contact WORLDwrite at the ASA Appeal, WORLDwrite Volunteer Centre, Millfields Lodge, Millfields Road, London E5 OAR. For more details phone 020 8985 5435 or email WORLDwrite at world.write@btconnect.com.

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GHANA: GENERAL FACTS

Ghana is situated on the West Coast of Africa. It is 92,000 square miles in size and is just a bit smaller than the United Kingdom, which is 93,000 square miles in size. Ghana's population is 18.4 million (Economic Intelligence Unit, Ghana statistical service, 2000), less than a third of Britain's which is 59.8 million (2000). The capital, Accra, is Ghana's largest city, with a population of 1.7 m (2003), small compared to major cities in the UK. For example, London has a population of 7.1 m, Manchester 2.5 m and Birmingham 1m. The six other major cities in Ghana are Kumasi (1 m), Tema (0.7 m), Tamale, Takoradi, Cape Coast and Sekondi. Ghana has an average population density of 82 people per sq. km, compared to 242 in the UK.

There are 75 ethnic groups in Ghana. The largest group in the Akan. The Akan make up 44 per cent of Ghana's population. The Akan include two smaller groups the Fante and Ashante. Of the other ethnic groups, the Ewe make up 13 per cent, the Mole-Dagbani 16 per cent and Ga 8 per cent. English is the official language. The three major African languages are those spoken by the Akan, the Mole-Dagbani and the Ewe. The overall literacy rate is around 65% and life expectancy at birth is 57 years (accounting for the high infant mortality rate of 56 per 1,000 live births) compared to the UK literacy rate of 99% and life expectancy at birth of 78 years (2002).

Ghana has 504 km of coastline on the Gulf of Guinea on Africa's Atlantic seaboard. Its neighbors are the Cote d'Ivoire (which means "Ivory Coast") to the west, Burkina Faso to the north and Togo to the east. Lake Volta in Ghana is one of the world's largest man-made lakes. It was made by putting dams in the Volta River system. The land rises to the west of the Volta River Basin to form the Ashante plateau, and to the east to become the Akwapin Tote Mountains. The highest point is Mount Afadjato, which is 880 m above sea level.

About one tenth of the country is cultivated with 110 sq. km of irrigated land (1998), and one third is covered by evergreen and semi-deciduous tropical forest. The climate is equatorial on the coast with high temperatures and increased humidity in the southwest and dry heat in the southeast. There is hot savanna in the north and the southern and central regions (around Kumasi) have two distinct wet seasons (May-June and October). Further north there is one wet season (July-September). In the north the Harmattan wind blows throughout the dry season.

At the time of independence, Ghana was the world's leading exporter of cocoa and one of Africa's leading economies. Ghana is mostly an agricultural country. Cocoa production is the biggest agricultural export. The other cash export crops are coffee, bananas, palm kernels, copra, limes, cola and shea nuts. Food production is based on the farming of maize, millet, sorghum, rice, cassava, tato, yams and plantains. Together, agriculture, forestry and fishing (especially tuna) make up 35.3 per cent of Ghana's Gross Domestic Product or GDP (World Bank database, 2000).

There is some small-scale local industry: rubber, cotton, oil palms, and kenaf are processed by local manufactures. Gold has overtaken cocoa as Ghana's chief export earner, and in 2000, Ghana mined 72,080 kg of gold. The principal mine is situated at Obuasi, operated by the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, which is owned in most part by Lonrho PLC, a British multinational company. Diamonds are mined at Akwatia, bauxite at Awaso, and manganese ore at Nsuta. Ghana became a petroleum producer in 1978. Only a small percentage of oil is refined, and a similarly small percentage of bauxite is processed into aluminum, both at Tema, using power from the hydroelectric dam at Akosombo.

Ghana is officially known as the Republic of Ghana. It is a unitary republic. It has a written constitution, which is modeled on the American constitution. In 1992 Ghanaians voted in a referendum to adopt the new constitution. Two hundred members of parliament are elected by universal suffrage every four years. Jerry Rawlings was the president of Ghana from 1992 to 2000. John Kufuor of the National People's Party (NPP) heads the present government.



GHANA: TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ghana has 953 km of railway (2002) currently undergoing refurbishment. Railway lines connect Accra, Tema, Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi and the mining areas, and are used for transporting heavy freight. Paved roads now connect most of the main towns and cities, though the quality of these depends on their age and their importance. There has been a massive effort to improve roads in the last five years. Some foreign aid has helped. There are now good quality roads on the Ghana section of the Trans-Africa Highway running between the Cote d'Ivoire and Togo borders via Takoradi, Cape Coast and Accra; the Kumasi-Cape Coast road which has recently been rebuilt with aid from Japan; and the Kumasi-Tamale road. Most people rely on motor transport to travel any distance. Ghana has a total of 38,940 km of highways of which only 9,346 km are paved (2001). Comparatively, to understand the level of development the Ghanaians aspire to, the UK has 0 km of unpaved highway out of a total 371,603 km.

Mammy-wagons carry large numbers of people to work in town from outlying villages. Mammy-wagons are wooden frames on a lorry chassis. Often they have names on their headboards like "No Worries, Time Changes"; "Allah Lives" and "The Lord is My Fortress". The Mammy-wagons are being replaced by coaches and buses, which carry people, often packed in like sardines, over longer distances. Taxis carry people around the towns and cities. Trucks carry freight to and from the ports and between the towns and cities. People who can afford it buy their own cars, and large hoardings advertise off-the-road vehicles. You need these kinds of vehicles to survive the terrain beyond the main, paved roads. Ghana has 8 motor vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants compared to 418 per thousand people in the UK (1998).

Ghana has 12 airports of which only 6 are paved and only one of these is over 2 km long (2000). Ghana has two ports at Tema and Takoradi, 6 ships including 2 petroleum tankers and four refrigerated cargo vessels (2000). Ghana has 1,293 km of inland waterways.

The telephone network does not reach the main towns and cities. But there is a growing market among entrepreneurs and the better off for the mobile phones advertised on large billboards around Accra and Kumasi. The recent expansion of information and communications technology has led to some improvement in the availability of these facilities in Ghana. Ghanaians have 4.4m radios (1997), 18 FM and 3 short-wave radio stations (1999), 1.73 m televisions (1997) and 11 broadcast TV stations (1999). There are 30,000 Internet users in Ghana (2002) compared to 15.4 m in the UK.

Life in Ghana, for people living in the urban or rural areas, is not easy. The low level of development means that most people do not have access to many of the things that people in the UK take for granted. Things like electricity and running water or health care and education are hard to come by in Ghana. Anyone who visits Ghana, however, will be struck by the optimism that Ghanaians have for their country. They want Ghana to become a modern, developed country. The names on the stalls that line the roadsides express the Ghanaians' hopes for the future: Success Brings Happiness Saloon, Cheese Juliet Beauty Salon, and Engineering Enterprises Ltd.

Sometimes we think that people in the underdeveloped world are better off without modern technology. But not many Ghanaians think so. They want access to computers, mobile phones, good cars and other forms of high technology as quickly as possible so that life can become more than just a struggle for survival for the vast majority of people.



A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF GHANA

Ghana derives its name from the Ghana Empire of the eighth century. Between the 12th and 16th centuries, the main immigration into the area that forms modern Ghana occurred and the Akan states were established. In the 15th century the Mande people formed the states of Dagomba and Mamprusi. In 1600, other Mande-speaking people formed the kingdom of Gonja. The Asante formed their state, based on Kumasi, in 1680, from where they controlled all the gold-producing regions.

The Portuguese arrived on the coast of present day Ghana in 1492 attracted by rumours of gold. They called their trading fort 'Sao Jorge da Mina', or St George of the mine, now known simply as Elmina. Over the next three centuries the English, Dutch, Swedes, Danes, French and even the German Duchy of Brandenburg joined the Portuguese in setting up castles along the coast to trade in gold and slaves with interior states like the Asante. In 1661, the Danes built Christiansborg castle in Accra. From 1650, slaves became West Africa's main export. The British outlawed slave trading in 1807 and the institution of slavery from their colonies in 1834, marking an end to a nefarious era. But Africa's problems were far from over. In 1823-24, the British fought the First Asante War. British troops under Sir Charles MacCarthy were heavily defeated.

In the 1870s the scramble for Africa began in earnest. The European powers and the British aimed to consolidate their control over the 'Gold Coast'. In 1873, they fought the Second Asante War and burnt down their capital of Kumasi. In 1884 the Germans seized neighbouring Togoland and the Cameroons. In 1895-96 the British saw action again in the Third Asante War, which ended with the exiling of the Asantehene (King) to the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean. From 1898 through to 1927 the rail network in Ghana was built and expanded. The Asante fought the Fourth Asante war when the British governor demanded their Golden Stool (throne) in 1900, provoking an uprising. He didn't get the stool, but Britain formally annexed the Gold Coast as a colony when the short war was over.

During the 1900s production of the newly introduced cocoa plant from Latin America added to the Asante's wealth of gold. In 1924, the British permitted a much-tamed Asantehene to return from exile and the British restored him to the stool in 1935. Two years later, a cocoa boycott, organised by chiefs against British chocolate refiners like Rowntrees and Cadburys, broke out. During the second World War, the Gold Coast became crucial to the British war economy as its supplies of cocoa for making chocolate were traded with the United States in return for war materials.

After the Second World War, Africans wanted to be free from the European empires- including the British Empire. They campaigned for 'Pan-African Nationalism', which meant independence throughout Africa. In 1945, the future leader of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, organised the Pan-African Conference in Manchester, England. In December 1947 Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast to campaign for freedom from the British Empire. Ghanaian businessmen boycotted foreign imports- they refused to buy goods from Britain. Ghanaian soldiers who had fought for Britain in the war held large demonstrations against British rule in Ghana (January-February 1948). Nkrumah was accused by the British of stirring up trouble and was arrested (March-April). The following year, Nkrumah founded a new political party, the Convention Peoples Party (CPP). The party wanted Ghanaian independence from British rule and the party won the elections.

The British authorities tried to trick the Ghanaians out of independence in June 1954. They secretly supported a rival party to the CPP: the National Liberation Movement (NLM). The NLM party was for Asante people first, all others second. The NLM wanted to divide Ghana, so that the Asante had their own country. The British thought that if they could not rule Ghana, it would be better to break it up into pieces. But the trick did not work. On 6 March 1957 Ghana won Independence. It was the first black African country to become independent from European colonisation.



GHANA POST-INDEPENDENCE

At independence, Ghana was the richest black African country outside of South Africa. Nkrumah wanted to ensure that Ghana and Africa would remain independent. To be really independent, Nkrumah knew that Ghana would need a strong economy. He built up state farms and industries, promoted the export of cocoa, and expanded access to healthcare and free education. By 1966, the impressive Akosombo dam was finished and Nkrumah opened the Volta River project. The giant project was designed to provide electricity for an aluminium industry, as well as for domestic purposes. Nkrumah was out of the country trying to stop a war between Vietnam and America when the army took over the country on 23 February 1966. He retired to live in Guinea, and died of cancer in Bucharest, Romania on 22 April 1972.

In the seventies, junior army officers were angry about corruption and dictatorship in Ghana. They started plotting to take over the country from the army generals. Their leader was Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings. On 15 May 1979, junior officers including flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings were arrested. But the army rebelled and rescued Rawlings from prison on 4 June. Rawlings had the generals shot. Then he returned the country to civilian rule on 24 September 1979. On 31 December 1981 Rawlings led another army takeover. This time it was Rawlings who was taking over from the civilian politicians. Rawlings was very radical at first and wanted Ghana to join forces with Libya and their leader Muammar Gaddafi. His policy was very anti-Western at first, but he soon chose a more conservative path.

Rawlings agreed to open talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) about Ghana's debts in August 1982. The IMF said that Ghana would have to reduce government spending. In April 1983 Rawlings did as he was told and cut spending in the budget. This made the vast majority of Ghanaians a lot worse off. By 1989 many Ghanaians were angry about the government cuts. They were angry that the IMF was telling their government what to do. The IMF was making them even poorer than they already were. Rawlings started a programme to soften the blow of the IMF cuts in 1989. The Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (Pamscad) was a series of local community projects. Ghanaians thought that at least Rawlings was trying to do something for them and in November 1992 he was elected president of Ghana with 58.3 percent of the vote. The people who ran the IMF were very proud of what they had done and considered that Ghana was a model of good government in Africa. But ordinary Ghanaians were not so pleased. Poverty led people to fight each other over resources. In February 1994, one thousand died in ethnic clashes in the Northern Territories. Many of them were so desperate that they were willing to risk their lives to try to stop the policy of the government and the IMF. In May 1995, 100,000 Ghanaians demonstrated in the capital Accra. They wanted Rawlings to stop doing what the IMF told him to do. On their banners they had a slogan: 'You may as well kill me now.'

Ghana continues to have, as it has since the early 1990s, some of the closest technical and favourable creditor support from the IMF, World Bank and other bilateral official creditors. Ghana has arguably been moulded closest to the IMF's policy prescriptions of all African 'client' countries. In many ways, the country has become the 'test pupil' for the new orthodoxy of development policy under a typical array of development challenges facing an African economy. Some Ghanaians feel that Ghana has been used as a guinea pig for a succession of disastrous World Bank policies. The success or otherwise of Ghana is itself a test of the whole efficacy of IMF and World Bank development policy, with the rest of Africa and those involved in the wider development field watching closely. The results have not put serious development on the map in Ghana.

The election of John Kufuor as president in December 2000 marked the end of the turbulent 'Rawlings years' and the dawning of a new political era, with the once dominant National Democratic Congress (NDC) a shadow of its former self. For the first time, Ghana's electorate had replaced one elected civilian president with another. The electoral process was hailed as an example to other fledgling African democracies as Ghanaians voted peacefully and the elections were conducted fairly.



CHRONOLOGY OF GHANAIAN HISTORY

Date/Century

8th-12th C	Ghana Empire, 500 miles northwest of modern Ghana
15th-17th C	Mande and Asante establish Akan states – wealth based on gold and slave trading
1471-1482	First Europeans arrive on the coast attracted by rumours of gold; Portuguese build Elmina Castle
1500-1800	English, Dutch, Swedes, Danes, French and even the German Duchy of Brandenburg join the Portuguese in setting up castles and forts along the coast to trade in gold and slaves with the interior states such as the Asante. Slave trade peaks in 18th century at 5,000 slaves per year
1661	Danes build Christiansborg castle in Accra
1697-1745	Rise and consolidation of Asante Empire; by 1800, Asante control area larger than modern Ghana
1807	British outlaw slave trading, Campaign succeeds in 1860's
1823-1824	British troops under Sir Charles MacCarthy defeated in the first Asante war
1834	British ban slavery from its colonies (Aug)
1863	Battle of Bobikuma, Britain defeated
1870s	'Scramble for Africa' by European powers begins. British aim to control the 'Gold Coast'
1873-1874	British burn down capital of Kumasi in second Asante war; Dutch withdraw and British proclaim coastal area a crown colony
1878	Cocoa introduced to Ghana
1895-1896	British exile the Asantehene (king) to the Seychelles in the third Asante war
1900	British governor demands the Golden Stool (throne) in the last Asante war. Britain makes the Gold Coast a colony
1900s	Production of newly introduced cocoa plant from Latin America adds to Asante wealth
1909	Kamei Nkrumah born on 18 September
1914-1918	Gold coast Regiment serves with distinction in East Africa
1924	British permit the Asantehene to return from exile
1935	British restore the Asantehene to the stool
1937	Cocoa boycott organised by chiefs against British chocolate refiners like Rowntrees and Cadburys.
1939-1945	Gold Coast becomes crucial to British war economy as its supplies of cocoa for making chocolate are traded with the United States for war materials; Gold Coast African forces serve in Ethiopia and Burma
1945	Pan- African Conference organised by Nkrumah in England
1947	Jerry Rawlings born; Nkrumah returns to Gold Coast
1948	Boycott of foreign imports turns into mass uprising against colonial rule (Jan-Feb); Nkrumah arrested (Mar- Apr)
1949	Nkrumah founds Convention Peoples Party (CPP) based on African nationalist programme (Jun)
1951	CPP wins general elections by two-thirds majority
1954	British back formation of Asante led National Liberation Movement (Sep)
1957	Ghana becomes the first black African country to gain independence on 6 March
1960	Plebiscite creates a republic with Nkrumah as president (Jul 1)
1966	Volta River project opened by Nkrumah (Jan) following protracted international negotiations; Successful, CIA-supported army coup against Nkrumah forces him out of power (23 Feb). He retires to Guinea
1972	Nkrumah dies of cancer in Bucharest (22 Apr). Second Republic constituted
1979	First Rawlings coup against corrupt army generals and civilian politicians. Air Force officer Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings is arrested in first attempt by junior officers to seize power (15 May) Rawlings hands power back to civilian politicians (24 Sep). Third Republic constituted
1981	Second Rawlings coup (31 Dec). Brief radical pro-Libya period
1982	Rawlings agrees to open talks with IMF (Aug)
1983	IMF effectively takes command of Ghanaian economy. First imposed austerity budget (Apr)
1989	'Pamscad' inaugurated- Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (Jan)
1992	New constitution based on US model approved 28 April
1992	Rawlings elected president of Ghana with 58.3 percent of the vote (Nov)
1994	One thousand die in ethnic clashes over land ownership in Northern Territories (Feb)
1995	100,000 strong demo in Accra against pro IMF policy of Rawlings regime (May)
1996	Rawlings re-elected as president for second and last term
2000	John Kufuor elected president with 56.7% of the vote (Dec)
2001	Petrol prices rise by 60% as government removes fuel subsidies



URBAN GHANA

Most of Ghana's population live and work in rural areas. Only a little over a third of the population lives in urban areas. The capital, Accra, is home to about 1.7 million people and the region around Accra (Greater Accra) is the most densely populated in the country with 1,781,100 people in 2592 sq. km. The other major urban areas are Kumasi (385,200), Tamale (151,100) Tema (110,000) and Sekondi-Takoradi (103,600).

Most towns are in the south of the country, in the triangular area formed by Accra, Takoradi and Kumasi, where the population density reaches 400 people for every square kilometre. The average population density nationally is 85 people for every square kilometre (FAOSTAT database). But in the rural north, there are 17 people for every square kilometre and in Volta Basin there are only ten Ghanaians for every square kilometre. Nearly half of all town dwellers live in the two largest towns of Accra and Kumasi. Nearly two-thirds of the urban population live in slums or shantytowns. What follows is a description, based on personal experience, of four very different cities and towns, followed by a description of rural life.

Urban Life: Accra

Accra stretches along the Atlantic coast and north into the hinterland. It was originally built around the port. Its architecture ranges from large and elegant 19th century colonial buildings to skyscrapers and apartment blocks made of concrete, glass and steel in the 1970s.

Since the 1980s, there have been fewer new buildings built and the older ones have not been repaired because of financial cutbacks under the structural adjustment plan. Since the early 1990s a number of new buildings have been built, including the new multi-storey Novotel which is French-owned. There is also an impressive new national theatre that was built with help from the Chinese.

The centre of Accra contains the main banks, the large department stores, the Cocoa Marketing Board headquarters and the government ministries. The central Makola market is very big and very busy. Market women sit under huge straw hats, with babies strapped to their backs, behind piles of tomatoes, yams, beans, plantains, groundnuts, and rice and basins of dried salt fish or raw meat.

The residential areas are in the North and West of Accra. In the wealthy areas tree-filled gardens and bougainvillea-covered walls surround two storey houses (including some elegant colonial houses on stilts, with wide verandahs). Many of the middle range homes (mainly occupied by government workers) are corrugated roof concrete bungalows, surrounded by scrubby grass and hedged by trees. On the outskirts of Accra some concrete blocks of flats have gone up to house the growing population.

But most people still live in the poor shantytowns, which have grown up around the edges of the city. Homes in the shantytowns are crowded and cramped. These houses are mud-built huts and shacks made from any materials to hand. They are made of sticks, palm fronds woven into screens, sheets of corrugated iron, cut-offs of plywood and concrete breeze blocks. The shantytowns are like mazes with muddy lanes where goats, chickens and dogs scrub for scraps.

The dusty roads leading into central Accra are lined with open-fronted shacks and stands selling everything from cooked food, trousers and haircuts to concrete blocks, electrical goods and furniture. Most shacks have colourful headboards advertising the name of the enterprise. These are some examples of the shop names Jehovah-ja Beauty Salon, Put our Trust in Jesus Tailoring, Success Brings Happiness Saloon, Delirious Pot Chopbar and Amazing Grace Block Moulding Ltd.

Women sit at the roadside with their babies strapped to their backs and basins of oranges, yams and plantains for sale in front of them. Known as the 'informal economy,' this is how most of the people in the shanty towns make a living.



Urban Life: Kumasi

Kumasi is very different from Accra. It is in the centre of the Ashante region, among the hills and now depleted forests. Its centre seems both older and more concentrated than Accra's.

The narrow streets climbing the hills with their 19th century three and four storey stucco buildings are like streets in Spain or Greece. The ground floor rooms have shutters that go all the way up to the ceiling. In the day the shutters are open to the street. Inside you can see clothing and hardware stores, workshops, offices and small banks through the shutters.

Kumasi market is the largest in Ghana. The market stretches across the valley floor, along the main railway line. You can buy just about anything in this market from renovated hand-turned sewing machines, charcoal-heated irons, plastic or leather shoes, plugs, nails, buttons, blocks of thick yellow soap, belts, gaily coloured wax print cloth. You can also buy fruit, vegetables, fish and meat. The market is a maze of stalls run predominantly by the market women. In the rain the unpaved ground underfoot gets very muddy.

Kumasi is the centre of the wood-processing industry. Trucks laden with thick long trunks of hardwood trees drive around the city to the timber yards and mills on its outskirts. Kumasi is the cultural centre of the Ashante. Traditional Ashante craftworks are made in Kumasi for tourists and to export. The Ghana National Cultural Centre is a large park near the centre of the city, with workshops where traditional crafts are carried out. These traditional crafts include weaving kente cloth, casting bronzes, wood carving and making pots. At the Ghana National Cultural Centre you can see all of these handicrafts being carried out in front of you.

In the villages surrounding Kumasi, people continue to produce traditional craft products for the tourist and export trade. The villagers also sell luxurious kente cloth robes to Ghanaians who are better off. These robes are worn at special occasions and ceremonies. Wealthy Ghanaians also decorate their homes with traditional crafts.

Urban Life: Cape Coast

Cape Coast, the capital of Central Region, was originally a trading post. African slaves were sold there for sale in America. The most impressive building is still the 17th century castle of the slave traders. Its walls are many feet thick and covered in whitewash that glares in the sun. Slaves were imprisoned there before they were put in boats bound for America, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Until recently the castle was used as government office. It has now been renovated and turned into a national museum on the slave trade.

The town, like its neighbour Elmina, is very beautiful. It overlooks the vast Atlantic Ocean. Its beaches are fringed with palms. It could be a tourist attraction and most of Ghana's tourists



go to Cape Coast. But there are not enough hotels or facilities to attract more people and the area is quite poor.

Fishing is the main occupation of the local population. Elmina, at the mouth of a lagoon has a sheltered harbour dominated by a castle built by the Portuguese, where the deep-sea fishing boats are docked. Canoes and fishing nets line the beach along Cape Coast and the flat sandbanks at the mouth of the lagoon at Elmina.

In the early morning and evening the canoes paddle out through the heavy surf and return, surfing on the crest of the waves laden with fish which is immediately sold to the local market women who crowd the shore as the canoes return. Most of the fish is salted and dried, strung out between palm trees, making a strong smell.

Some people live above the shops and in flats in the centre of Cape Coast but many people live in the mud and palm huts, or concrete bungalows and houses which spread out from the centre, surrounded by small fields of maize and vegetables, plantain trees and tall coconut palms. Government officials and wealthier people live on the ridges encircling the town – in two storey houses built in colonial times or in more modern concrete bungalows and houses.



Urban Life: Tamale

Tamale is located in the sparsely populated and drier Northern Region. The surrounding terrain is flat and dusty (except in the rainy season) with acacia scrub and yellow grassland. The main street is the only one that is paved. It is lined with concrete one- and two-storey buildings, mud and concrete huts, which spread back in a maze of little lanes and courtyards.

The town is more like an overgrown and crowded village, with goats, dogs and chickens rooting around for scraps, and herds of bony cattle strolling along the streets. The drains are very basic and only the modern buildings have running water and electricity. Billboards around the town tell people to keep Tamale tidy and not throw litter in the streets.

This area is dominated by NGOs who have taken over many government services from social services to health care.



RURAL LIFE IN GHANA

Villages surrounding the towns and cities supply the markets and roadside stalls with produce to sell. Many people have moved to the towns mainly to find work. But most of these people still maintain strong links with the country. The country is important to them both as a source of food and because of family ties.

The style and appearance of villages depend on where they are located. In the more lush south the huts cluster beneath the trees and are surrounded by bushes and banana groves. In the savannah land of the north they are stark and unprotected in the hot sun. Round, thatched mud huts encircle open courtyards where many of the daily chores are done. There people gossip sitting on wooden benches or the ground. Along the coast the huts are more likely to be made of screens woven from coconut fronds, and spread out underneath coconut palms. Prosperous villages have several concrete one or two-room bungalows.



In the rural areas village life remains primitive. Few people have running water or electricity in their homes. The national grid, with electricity from the Volta Dam, is gradually being extended to more of the country. Women and girls still pound cassava and maize with heavy mortar and pestles, as they have done for centuries. Water is carried in buckets and pots on their heads from the nearest standpipe or stream. Washing is done entirely by hand and cooking is usually done over an open fire in the courtyard. Fifty-nine per cent of the Ghanaian work force is in agriculture and almost everyone living in rural areas is involved in farming. Some people work on large cocoa farms but there is very little large-scale farming and most of the land is divided up between families. The families farm their plot with hand implements that have been used for generations. There is very little modern machinery. Even when it is introduced it may fall quickly into disrepair because of the problems of running and maintaining modern machinery in isolated and impoverished rural areas.

On market days people travel many kilometres to bring their produce to sell and to buy things they cannot grow. Mammy-wagons laden down with people, animals and goods for sale travel along dirt tracks. In market towns such as Kpandu, on the shores of the Volta Lake, people also arrive by rickety, overladen boats.

At the market, dried fish, tomatoes, plantains, groundnuts, chillies, chickens and goats from the countryside are exchanged for tools, colourful cloth, soap powder, plastic and metal pots and pans from the towns. Hordes of vultures gather along with the people to scavenge what they can. Most of the villages are prettier and cleaner than the squatter towns that surround the cities. But in villages access to the benefits of modern life is much more limited. Conditions in the towns, though far from good, are considerably better than conditions in the villages. Ninety-three per cent of the urban population has access to safe drinking water, compared to 35 per cent of the rural population. Sanitation and health provisions are twice as good in the towns as in the countryside.

The infant and child death rates are also lower in the towns. Village dwellers are unlikely ever to see a doctor and rely for medication on roving salesman who pass through the villages on their bicycles with a caseful of medicines strapped to the saddle. They sell aspirin, quinine, antibiotics and ointments. It is estimated that only 45% of the rural population have access to healthcare.



GHANA'S POLITICAL SETUP

Ghana's 1992 constitution, based on the US model, provides a multiparty presidential system. Executive power rests with the president, who is also commander in chief of the armed forces. The president is elected by universal suffrage for a period of four years and can serve a maximum of two terms. The president appoints a council of ministers, subject to approval by parliament. A 25-member council of state, comprising presidential nominees and regional representatives, and a 20-member National Security Council act as advisory bodies to the president. Legislative power is vested in a 200-seat unicameral parliament, which is elected every four years.

Ghana is divided into 10 regions for administrative purposes, with each region divided into districts. The local legislative and executive body is the District Assembly, made of all towns and villages in the district. Traditional courts, situated within local political structures, also exist to administer customary law, which has continuously evolved over the centuries of each ethnic group's existence.

Ghana's legal system was founded on the English legal system (common law). Over recent years, Ghana has been examining the possibility of adhering to the body of OHADA law and it is looking increasingly likely that the country will go down this route, which would align its legislation with that of its neighbours.

As multiparty politics takes root, ethnicity is set to play an important role in political life. Jerry Rawlings, the erstwhile coup-leader who had dominated the political scene in Ghana for two decades, took an accommodating stance with regards to chieftaincies in rural areas and nurtured good relations with traditional authorities. Of the approximately 75 ethnic groups in Ghana, the Asante are the largest and strongest single group. Their chief, or Asantehene, holds considerable sway and was received at Buckingham Palace by the Queen in April 2000. Relations between the Asantehene and the presidency are carefully orchestrated: the Asantehene was required to visit the president immediately before and after visiting the UK. Voting patterns in regional areas often follow the lead set by chiefs.

Ghana is considered a stable country in a region savaged by internal conflict. However, from time to time, ethnic rivalries have imploded and led to street battles and even deaths. These have occurred most frequently in the north of the country and in April 2003, the Ghanaian parliament voted unanimously to extend a state of emergency enforced in the northern region of Dagbon. Other countries in the region—like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and even traditionally stable Cote d'Ivoire—have had much worse problems and in comparison, Ghana has very few internal or external security issues.

Ghana has a long history of military intervention in politics, although there is little threat of its recurrence. Since the advent of multiparty politics in 1991, the government has sought to professionalize the army and the subsequent December 2000 election, which brought the country's first change of president and government through the ballot box, appears to have sealed Ghana's place as one of Africa's mature democracies. Elections held that month were always going to be a test of strength for the political system as they marked the exit of Rawlings. In 2000 his tenure came to an end when he completed the final year of his second term in office — the maximum permitted under the 1992 constitution. Turnout was high in both rounds of voting and, on the whole, the process was conducted without incident and with very little violence to mar the result.

In his efforts to lay to rest the legacy of his predecessor, President Kufuor inaugurated a South African-style Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate allegations of human rights abuses during Jerry Rawlings' tenure as military ruler. Jerry Rawlings has accused Kufuor of conducting a 'witch hunt' against former ministers and of seeking to discredit the former president. Only a few months into his presidency, Kufuor retired a number of top military officers in an attempt to assert his authority over the national security forces. In February 2001, the new government also announced plans to draft a code of conduct for incoming ministers and to establish an office of accountability within the presidency.

Corruption is a preoccupation for citizens in many developing countries and Ghana is no exception. It is also a major preoccupation of many NGOs and Northern politicians and reinforces anti-Third World prejudice. Westerners often blame developing countries' poverty and lack of development on corruption. This is a poor excuse for failing to fight for the serious development countries like Ghana need to achieve global equality.



WORLDwrite

IYEP

If you think you would like to take part in Ghana Exchange 2004 please fill in this form straight away and post it to WORLDwrite, Millfields Lodge, 201 Millfields Road, London E5 OAR. Volunteers working on the project and fund raising progress will determine who goes.

Name Address

..... Postcode

Telephone E-mail

Date of Birth..... Guardian's Name

School/College/Occupation.....

Address

..... Postcode.....

Exam Dates (if appropriate)

Medical Problems Diet

Special Needs

Passport No..... Type of Passport

Why would you like to take part in the Ghana Exchange 2004?

(This may get you a sponsor and may be used to get you some publicity along with your photo!)

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Please list all skills you believe will assist in your participation

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Do you have any fundraising ideas? Have a look at the ideas page or write your own ideas down. Everyone has to raise exchange costs, so you'll need to get cracking! Make a list here

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UK Ghana Exchange 2004 2005



FUNDRAISING IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN MAKE OUR EXCHANGE TO GHANA A REALITY



Every participant will need to raise a lot to take part. At least £1750 should cover all film, set up costs and airfares, accommodation, internal travel and food as well as paying for Ghanaian partners to travel with us. It sounds like an impossible amount but with some consistent work and a little imagination it is perfectly possible.

You can break it down and raise some each month. You might be able to raise it all in one go, with a non-uniform day or event at school or college, a benefit, a big raffle, or through company sponsorship, celebrity backing or, if you are lucky, a grant! Lots of people will help with fundraising, fellow students, colleagues, family and friends, if you ask them. They may

have some new ideas as well; get them to join in and help you! After all, this exchange is not a holiday. Rather, it is an opportunity to learn first hand the truth about life in Ghana and to challenge misconceptions in the West. Everyone and anyone who believes in making equality and development count will support you.

These are some tried and tested ideas for fund-raising. You may find that you have some better or brand new ideas. Be ambitious, plan carefully and pass on your most successful ideas, big or small, so that everyone can use them. We have to raise an enormous amount, so there is no time to waste.

Events Festivals, fetes and benefits can be great fund-raisers but need a fair amount of organisation. Plan ahead and get lots of people to help you. Local bands will often do benefits. However, publicity is essential to making these a success. Make sure the local press or 'what's on' guide know about it. Auctions and jumble sales need to be planned well in advance, as they require a good central venue and lots of donated items. Keep your outlay on these to an absolute minimum or you can end up out of pocket. Other good events have included pub quizzes, non uniform days at schools, car boot sales, cake sales, cabarets, plays, comedy nights and all manner of performances which require selling tickets. Small local events, such as collecting days at school, college, a local university, a big supermarket or theatre, or hosting your own dinner, can be organised very quickly.

Sponsored anything What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing? What would you like to try? What would other people like to see you try? Ask yourself these questions and then draw up a 'sponsor me' sheet. Ask everyone to sponsor you, set a date and do it! Effective sponsored activities have included: swimming, parachuting, walking, fun-runs, football, bungee jumps, eating, silences, giving up bad habits, kiss-athons, club-athons, dance-athons, singing, cycling, sit ups, rowing, riding, juggling and board games. Virtually anything goes! And remember, these are great ways to inform lots of people about the exchange.

Tournaments These can be a good laugh and a great way to get everyone you know involved in helping to fundraise. There are so many things, not just sporting activities, you can turn into a tournament. You need to get lots of people interested. So, set a date, charge a small participation fee and decide on a prize, either a donated one, a cup or medal, or perhaps, a small proportion of the money you raise from the tournament.



Appeals Radio and local newspaper appeals ensure that the local community knows what you are doing. You will need a short press release, a photo for the press and make sure you have a phone number you can give out. You can appeal for money directly, or for raffle prizes, or for participants for a sponsored event. You can also ask DJs to announce an appeal for the Ghana exchange in local clubs and take a collecting tin around afterwards.



Company sponsorship It is often easy to get sponsorship from local companies if you know someone who works there who will be sympathetic. You will need a letter explaining what you are doing and you can show them the Ghana Pack. They might want something in return, some public acknowledgement for example, so make sure you inform the London Centre if they expect to feature in national publicity and promotional material.

Develop a product Perhaps you can develop a Ghana exchange 'product' to help raise funds but remember, you have to raise the outlay to make these t-shirts, baseball hats, car stickers, scarves, ties, armbands, even a compilation CD!

Grants Some individuals may be eligible for a grant according to where you live and your home circumstances. Check for details with your school or college and phone your local council or authority to see if there are any you could apply for.

Earning Funds You may prefer to try and earn your costs. Some supermarkets will allow you to fill shopping bags at check out desks and ask shoppers for a charitable donation in return. Car washing in a large car park can also be lucrative. There is nothing to stop you from just saving up if you have a job that makes this possible. The possibilities are endless, just a little imagination and organization and you can pull anything off! Do not fear. You can depend on our support to help you see it through.

Festivals Every year WORLDwrite hosts marquees at all the major festivals; Glastonbury, Womad, Reading and more. They are a great fundraising opportunity and great fun, although we have to raise the cost of the pitch, transport and marquees. You can attend the festivals with WORLDwrite to raise your own Ghana exchange funds, or just come and join in and help everyone else.



IDEAS SHOP

Below you will find a list of one-hundred and one fundraising ideas

- * Fete
- * Barbecue
- * Coffee morning
- * Pop concert
- * Exhibition-art
- * Disco
- * Dinner Do
- * Musical recital
- * Fun run
- * Sponsored walk/run/swim/cycle ride/bowling/stop smoking
- * Fashion show
- * Mini-marathon
- * Collecting boxes (try local shops/pubs)
- * Jazz evening
- * Ask a local artist/potter to donate a % of sales to charity for 1 day, week etc.
- * Rich/poor lunch
- * Pub collection/quiz
- * Food tasting
- * Musical evening in prestigious location
- * Bike sales
- * Bike exchange
- * Jewellery cleaning
- * Fair
- * Wine tasting
- * Tombolas
- * Competitions with entry fee: scrabble or crossword
- * Egg & spoon race or 3 legged race
- * Swear boxes in offices/shops
- * 'Guess how many' in jar type competitions
- * Sponsored diet/haircut
- * Barn dance
- * Garden party
- * Talent show
- * Car wash
- * Pub crawl
- * Country & western nights
- * Old time dancing
- * Golf tournaments
- * Dog walks
- * Sponsored silence
- * Bingo teas
- * Makeover party
- * Floral art demonstration
- * Posh lunch
- * Auction of talents
- * Gardening auction
- * Ironing auction
- * Jumble sale
- * Treasure hunt
- * Theatre performance
- * Car boot sale
- * Fancy Dress Competition
- * Film show
- * Puppet show
- * Fancy dress ball
- * Bring & buy sale
- * Sing-athon or dance-athon
- * Raffles
- * Auction
- * Charity cricket/football/tennis/hockey match
- * Craft fair
- * Gourmet evening
- * Teddy bears picnic
- * Special church service-attach to a function i.e. meal concert
- * Cheese tasting
- * Antiques roadshow
- * Ebay sales
- * Book/record/plant sale
- * Temporary shops
- * Cooking auctions
- * Wedding dress exhibition



GHANA HEALTH FACTSHEET

Travel health depends on your pre-departure preparations, your daily health care while travelling and how you handle any medical problems that do develop. While potential dangers can seem quite frightening, in reality few travellers experience anything more than upset stomach. Below you will find some advice on how to prepare for the Ghana exchange. However it's only a guide and after reading this you should go and see your GP who can answer your questions more fully.

Immunisations For medical advice on vaccinations and supplies you should always start with your own GP. Your GP or practice nurse will advise you of boosters you may need according to your records. Generally if you are under 19 years of age and still in full-time education you should be able to receive the immunisations for free. Jabs for Hepatitis are sometimes charged for and you may need to go to a local travel clinic for this.

The Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London is a useful reference point. They have a travel clinic, which will provide you with up to the minute advice. The Hospital for Tropical Diseases is at Mortimer Market Centre, Capper Street, London WC1E 6AU. Country specific information is available on the Healthline (09061 337733). A consultation in the clinic by appointment can be made on 0207 388 9600 for which a fee is charged unless vaccines/medication are purchased. Give yourself plenty of time (around six weeks) to receive all the immunisations before you travel. It's not a good idea to leave everything until two weeks before your departure. The immunisations will work best when you leave the necessary amount of time between each vaccination.

The Yellow Fever vaccination is required and the following immunisations are highly recommended: Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Polio and Tetanus.

Yellow Fever You must receive the Yellow Fever vaccination, otherwise you will not be allowed into Ghana. When you enter Ghana you need to produce an international certificate that says you have received the vaccination: it's an entry requirement like having a visa. You won't be able to receive this vaccination from your local GP. You will have to go to your local Community Health Clinic, a travel clinic or hospital for tropical diseases where a qualified medical officer will give you the injection and sort out the international certificate for you. The vaccination costs approximately £40-45, but you are protected for ten years.

Typhoid Typhoid is a disease you can catch from contaminated water or food. It's a very nasty disease to catch; thus, it is strongly recommended you be immunised against it. There are now two ways in which you can receive the vaccine: with an injection or orally. The oral vaccine protects you for one year and the injection can protect you for up to three years if you have a booster. The injection does give you better protection, but some people are put off because there is a small chance you could experience flu-like symptoms for a few hours after the injection. Discuss it all with your GP.

Hepatitis A This is not the hepatitis we hear talked about in the same breath as HIV and AIDS. Full-blown Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Hepatitis A can affect anyone and is often carried through contaminated food and water. Good personal hygiene and proper sanitation can help prevent hepatitis A. Vaccines are also available for long-term prevention of hepatitis A virus infection. There are two different types of vaccines: Havrix and Gamma Globulin. Havrix protects you for one year or ten years if you also have the booster. Gamma Globulin only protects you for 2-6 months and Havrix is considered more effective. However it could depend on whether your GP is fundholding or not as to which vaccination you will be offered.

Polio and Tetanus You should make sure you are up to date with these immunisations. If you are not, go to your GP to get a booster.

Other Immunisations

The immunisations listed above are the ones recommended for travellers going to Ghana for a short period of time and who will be staying predominately in urban/developed areas. There are other immunisations that are taken by people before they travel to Ghana, but these tend to be for people who will be travelling to rural areas and staying in Ghana for a prolonged period of time. So generally immunisations for rabies, meningitis, hepatitis B and encephalitis aren't needed. However, talk to your GP in case he/she thinks you are in a high-risk category for these diseases. Nowadays the cholera vaccination is no longer recommended by the World Health Organisation.

Malaria If you mention going to Africa this is probably the one disease everyone will associate with the continent. I'm sure we've all seen the World in Action type programmes reporting on people who have been on holiday and then died from malaria. However we should get things into perspective. There is a very rare form of malaria which can prove fatal if it's not treated fairly quickly, but the number of cases are minute. Many Africans do die each year from malaria, but this is because, unfortunately, many of them do not have access to the very quick and simple treatment available and they are unable to afford any type of prevention. It is true that malaria is virulent in Ghana, but if you combine the forces of taking anti-malarial tablets with some simple preventive measures, the risk should be minimal. In all of our previous exchanges, no one has caught Malaria

Mosquitoes One of the best ways to avoid catching malaria is to make sure mosquitoes don't bite you. Here are a few simple tips to follow so you make sure you get as few bites as possible?



The right clothes Totally cover your skin when it's dark, i.e. between dusk and dawn. Long sleeved shirts and long trousers or skirts are essential. It is a good idea to wear socks over the top of trousers even if it's not necessarily attractive, fashionable or cool (in the heat sense). It's much better to stick to light colours, as wearing black or darker colours attract mosquitoes.

The right repellent The best way to avoid mosquito bites is to use an excessive amount of very strong mosquito repellent on your skin. Apply it all over your body but remember to pay particular attention to your ankles, neck, wrist and elbow areas as this is where many bites tend to occur. As mosquitoes are most active from sunset it is good to be prepared before that. Try to get into a routine, cover up and put repellent on before they come out to play. Strong mosquito repellent should have a high concentration of the chemical that is called Diethyltoluamide, or Deet, even up to 35% (feels a bit like paint stripper when you apply it but nothing would want to bite your skin with it on.) The best are either Ultrathon or Jungle Fever, which you can buy at Boots or at the Youth Hostel Association shops and at travel clinics.

Another alternative is Neat 100% Deet, which can be applied to wristbands and ankle-bands such as those worn by tennis players. DEET dissolves plastics so avoid leakage and keep it away from cameras, watch straps and plastic bags. Lotions are better than sprays as sprays tend to evaporate fast and can prove expensive.

The right room Spray your room a couple of hours before you go to sleep with a fly spray or use a mosquito coil. Mosquito netting on the windows are the best solution, but not all hotels/guest houses have them. Always sleep under a mosquito net. The best are impregnated nets but they can cost from around £40.00. Do try and borrow one and soak it in permethrin or try Campus Travel, YHA and camping shops for the cheapest, but preferably impregnated nets.

It is worth investing in a good-sized net - there is no point sleeping under the net if your feet are sticking out. Another good idea is to get a sheet sleeping bag, which is simply a double sheet folded over and sewn up the two sides. Instead of buying one you can make one yourself but make sure that the sewing is very secure and without holes. You can also dip your sheet sleeping bag in permethrin before travelling.

The right smell Avoid wearing perfume or aftershave as this attracts the mosquitoes. Instead try taking Vitamin B Complex tablets or Garlic tablets, which, some claim, make the skin and blood taste horrible for mosquitoes.

Malaria Tablets Taking anti-malaria tablets is essential for travelling in Africa. All participants must take a form of anti-malarial treatment in order to go on the exchange. For Ghana, the first choice tablet is Mefloquine, brand name Lariam. The second choice is Chloroquine (brand name Avloclor) used in conjunction with Paludrine, which is also known as Proguanil. However in recent years some strains of malaria in West Africa have become resistant to this combination, which is why Lariam was developed. While some people have mentioned a malaria injection, this is still being developed and is not yet available. You should discuss your choice with your GP as well as the possible side effects of taking Lariam tablets. As with any medication, everyone reacts differently but a number of people have experienced nightmares and hallucinations on the day of taking the tablet, feel depressed or had upset stomach. Lariam should not be taken by anyone with a history of depressive illness. The best way to deal with any possible side effects is to be informed about them. You will have to pay for your anti-malarial tablets even if you are usually entitled to free prescriptions. This is because anti-malarial tablets, which are to be used as a form of prevention, are only available on private prescription. Lastly, read the instructions that come with the tablets. You usually have to begin taking the tablets before your travel and you carry on taking them for a few weeks after you return.

There are no anti-malaria tablets that are 100% effective (Lariam is reputed to be the most at 88%), so even if you are taking tablets you still can contract malaria. With most types of malaria, the disease may need three weeks to incubate. However, there are certain strains, such as cerebral strains, which develop in 24 hours and these are in fact the most dangerous. If you were to contract malaria you would very quickly develop flu like symptoms, a high temperature and feel absolutely awful. If you feel unwell after returning to the UK it is vital that you seek medical attention. A walk-in service is available at the Hospital for Tropical Diseases during working hours (9am-5pm Monday - Friday). At other times (nights or weekends), emergencies should report to the Accident and Emergency Department of University College Hospital, London WC1E 6AU, where they will be seen by the on-call team from the Hospital for Tropical Diseases. If your illness is not an emergency, your general practitioner should send a referral letter requesting an appointment to the Hospital for Tropical Diseases (address above, fax number 020 7380 9761). If you have any doubts while in Ghana please contact the group leader as soon as possible. Malaria tests and treatments are extremely efficient and fast working in Africa, provided that the symptoms are recognised in time.

Tropical Ulcers This is a kind of infection that can start from something as simple as a scratched mosquito bite. The bite becomes infected and then a virus gets into your blood, which causes ulcers to pop up all over you, particularly on your legs and feet. Once you have it, it is very difficult to get rid of and ends up leaving nasty scars. The best advice is not to let any cuts or spots become infected and this is simply a matter of keeping them clean and covered with a plaster. Even the smallest spot or cut should be kept clean and covered up.

Diarrhoea Most visitors to Africa get some degree of upset stomach because of climatic and diet changes, but this should disappear after a day or two. It is important to wear sunscreen, drink only sealed or bagged bottled water or processed drinks (avoid ice cubes or fruit juice that is watered down) and take your anti-malaria pills. Avoid salads, undercooked meat, eggs and food exposed to flies or purchased from street vendors.

If however you catch a virus, you will need to be treated with antibiotics. It is important that you know before you go



abroad whether or not you are allergic to antibiotics. Avoid taking Imodium/arret unless you are going to be sitting on a bus all day long, as this simply has the effect of being a cork and can aggravate the problem in the long run.

Potentially the most dangerous outcome of diarrhoea is dehydration as your body loses large amounts of salt and water. When suffering from diarrhoea your body cannot process straight salt and water so it is necessary to take them together with sugar. You can buy rehydration sachets at chemists but they are fairly expensive. You may also make up your own fluid, which contains 1 part salt and 3 parts of sugar in a glass of water. Too much salt can be dangerous, however; too much sugar doesn't matter. If the fluid tastes too salty make a new one.

The same effect is achieved with a sugary drink and a salty accompaniment e.g. Coke and a bag of salty crisps. If you are suffering from diarrhoea, drink plenty, avoid eating dairy products, and continue eating, but only light non-fatty easily digestible meals and soups.

Other Health Tips These are just some general health tips gained from travelling in Ghana. They may seem obvious to you, but there is no harm in just mentioning them. It is vital that you follow a rigorous and fastidious cleanliness routine to stay well. Constantly use a non-perfumed antiseptic soap if possible.

Swimming Swimming in lakes and rivers is very inadvisable because of Bilharzia (Schistosomiasis). Bilharzia is a disease that can be caught from worms that live in snails at the edges of rivers and lakes. Even brief contact can lead to infection. If you do have any contact with lake or river water towel yourself off vigorously before worms can get into your skin.

If you catch Bilharzia you probably won't know it until you are back in the UK, but the symptoms include a general feeling of unwellness, abdominal pains and blood in your urine. Once identified, Bilharzia is very treatable with one dose of Praziquantel.

Water Don't drink the tap water, drink bottled or bagged water or take water purification tablets with you. Do not buy bags of water from street vendors. Make sure bottled water has a sealed top and is clear. Some hostels re-use water bottles and fill them up with tap water. Remember that many of the diseases you could catch in Ghana are water-born. Therefore, it's advisable to be extra careful.

Eating Make sure you eat regularly and well. Even though the time you will be travelling is at the end of the rainy season this doesn't mean it is constantly raining. It is still very hot and humid. Ghanaians will tell you that you should eat a lot to keep your strength up. One of the easiest ways to fall ill is when you are not eating properly.

Dehydration Make sure you drink plenty of fluids (and that doesn't mean beer). Drink plenty of water so you don't become dehydrated. However a cautionary note, sip rather than guzzle the water when you are travelling, otherwise you will have to stop to wee in the bush every five minutes. Do not share bottled drinks, you can easily spread stomach bugs.

Medication If you take any special medication make sure you take enough with you to last the entire trip. There are pharmacies now in Accra that stock drugs imported from Europe and America, but the choice is limited. In the same way don't be worried about the medical facilities in Ghana too much. Although they don't have many staff, they go through the same rigorous training, as you would find in any Western country.

Contact lenses Make sure you have a spare pair with you. You must be extra careful while cleaning them: ensure your hands are clean (antiseptic baby wipes are preferable to water), and don't rinse your lens case with anything other than bottled water. The alternative is to buy daily contact lenses, ask your optician for advice.

Toilets It sounds obvious but it is extremely important to wash your hands every single time you go to the toilet. Not doing so, can spread disease. Use antiseptic wet wipes such as Dettol in the absence of water. If there is water, you must use some kind of soap/ detergent/ disinfectant as well.

Animals If you come across any animals the best attitude to take is that you are invading their territory. Most wild animals are rather scared of humans and would not by choice get very close. If you do go walking in the bush/ green areas walk very purposefully and make a lot of noise with your feet. This will ensure that anything that is in your path will dart off before you even have a chance to see it.

Dental Checks It will be advisable for everyone to have a dental check-up before travelling because injections while you are away could carry a risk of infection. Dental problems have a habit of arising when you are in the middle of nowhere! It is worth sticking a tube of Bonjela or a little oil of cloves in your bag to numb tooth/gum pains.

Medical Facilities Medical facilities are limited, especially outside Accra. Malaria is common, so are other tropical diseases. Travellers should be aware that evidence of and/or assurances from most insurance companies would not be accepted as a settlement of medical expenses in Ghana. Health officials often request payment for medical services immediately. Everyone should take a small medical emergency fund.



TRAVEL TIPS AND EXTRA ADVICE

If an award were given for the country with the friendliest people in West Africa, Ghana would be a strong contender... especially if budget travellers were doing the voting. Still it is better to be prepared – you will find below a few tips that will help you to enjoy the trip better.

Entry Requirements

All visitors to Ghana must possess valid passports issued by their home governments. Furthermore, all passports must have at least 2 months validity. Ensure yours is not about to expire. British passport holders require visas prior to arrival in Ghana. Overstaying without the proper authority is a serious matter and you could be held in detention or refused permission to leave the country until a fine is paid. For further information on entry requirements participants can contact the Ghana High Commission, 13 Belgrave Square, London, SW1X 8PN; (tel: 020 7235 4142; fax: 020 7245 9552). For passport and visa information, contact the Ghana High Commission, 104 Highgate Hill, London, N6 5HE; (tel: 020 8342 8686 or 020 8342 7550; fax: 020 8342 8570).

Visas may be granted for single or multiple entry. A single-entry visa will cost approximately £30 and a multiple-entry visa will cost approximately £40. Visas are valid for a period of three months and must be utilised within three months of the date of issue. Visas valid for up to one year may be granted for specific purposes.

Application requirements: (a) Valid passport. (b) Completed entry permit application form. (c) Evidence of return ticket and/or a letter of guarantee from a company in support of the application (the letter should explain the nature of business the applicant will be conducting in Ghana) WORLDwrite will provide everyone with these. (d) 4 passport-size photos. (e) Registered or recorded self-addressed envelope. (f) Fee (payable by cash, postal order or bankers draft).

Working days required: 3 for personal, 10 for postal applications. It is a good idea to submit your application and passport in person and get a receipt rather than posting it. You can download the application form from the official website of the Ghana High Commission at <http://www.ghana-com.co.uk/>.

Airport tax: A departure tax may be payable. For further information, contact the Ghana High Commission. Rates are subject to change without notice.

Money Exchange: We will ensure there is time for you to change money. Foreign currency can be freely exchanged at any FOREX (Foreign Exchange Bureau) in the country. There are several foreign exchange bureaux in all the major towns and cities. FOREX bureaux tend to give better rates for large-denomination bills than banks normally do.

Most FOREX bureaux have money-counting machines but always make it a point to count your money before you leave the premises, as mistakes cannot be rectified later. Exchanging cash other than at a Forex bureau is not advisable. You will end up carrying bags full of cedis, so change what you need once a week. Travellers cheques are difficult to change so only take some in case of an emergency.

A few banks only give cash withdrawals against Visa and MasterCard, minus a commission and quite a fee for the approval telex. This is not a reliable way of getting cash and can take you all day.

Shopping: When shopping it's a good idea to go with one of our partners who knows their way around the market/shops as you may understandably be charged twice the normal price and may get lost.

Mind Your Ghanaian Manners

Dashes (tips) are a way of life in Ghana. A dash is a tip that may be requested by anyone from baggage handlers to youngsters who may run errands for you. Seen as gifts, dashes will ease your way through Ghana immensely, and are usually about 5,000 cedis (34p). This is a developing country and exchange participants will be "millionaires" by most Ghanaian standards so don't get carried away handing out money but don't be mean or get into an argument either.

When taking photos or filming always ask the person beforehand, and you may be asked to give a dash as well.

Always shake hands and pick up food with your right hand, since the left is used to perform other personal functions. Furthermore, shaking hands with your left hand is simply considered rude.

Visitors to remote villages or shrines should visit the local elder, taking a small gift such as a bottle of local Schnapps. Learning a few words of Twi (akwaaba means welcome) is common courtesy. But remember while most people in Ghana understand Twi there are 40 other languages.



WHAT TO PACK

General

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Vaccination certificates (there will be no check-in at Heathrow without these)
- ✓ Photocopies of the above
- ✓ Small rucksack or day bag
- ✓ Phone chargecard or mobile usable in Ghana (if you have one)
- ✓ List of names & addresses of everyone that has supported you—you must send all of them postcards to prove you went
- ✓ Mosquito net
- ✓ Sleeping bag
- ✓ Sheet sleeping bag (you can dip this in insect repellent)
- ✓ Camera (film and batteries)
- ✓ Torch & spare batteries
- ✓ Travel alarm clock
- ✓ Paper or notebook and supply of pens
- ✓ 1 large or 2 small towels
- ✓ Sunglasses
- ✓ Sun hat—if you wear one
- ✓ A copy of your travel insurance documents
- Toiletries**
- ✓ Hairbrush or comb
- ✓ Soap (in soapbox) or shower gel
- ✓ Flannel or sponge
- ✓ Shampoo & conditioner (essential in the sun)
- ✓ Toothbrush (in a box)
- ✓ Toothpaste
- ✓ Deodorant (non perfumed)
- ✓ Sun tan lotion
- ✓ Sun block for face
- ✓ Antiseptic wet wipes (Dettol)
- ✓ Moisturising cream (non-perfumed)
- ✓ Tampons or sanitary towels (don't go overboard as these can be bought in most towns)
Any more than this will be unnecessary luxury.
- Medical**
- ✓ 2 supplies of any medication that you regularly take (inhalers etc)
- ✓ Small variety pack of plasters
- ✓ Travel sickness tablets (journeys are long and roads are bumpy, if you suffer from nausea—be prepared)
- ✓ Pain killers (aspirin, paracetamol or ibuprofen)

- ✓ Anti-malaria tablets (co-ordinators will have a much fuller tropical medicine First Aid kit.
- ✓ Anti-histamine cream (for itchy bites) e.g. Eurax
- ✓ 2 lots of insect repellent (with high "Deet" content)
- ✓ 1 packet anti-allergy pills (e.g. Piriton)

Clothes

- ✓ 1 warm sweatshirt
- ✓ Waterproof jacket (those thin plastic ones)
- ✓ Swimming costume
- ✓ 3 pairs of cotton socks (3 pairs is enough but you must wash them!)
- ✓ 2 pairs of shoes
- ✓ Underwear
- Do not take an excessive amount of clothes. You will feel really stupid carting a really heavy bag full of unnecessary clothing. Hand washing clothes is part of everyday life. Rather than taking 21 t-shirts, take 3 or 4 and wash them every couple of days. The same goes for underwear.
- ✓ 1 reasonably smart outfit (It is important that you have at least one for when you meet important people)
- ✓ Long sleeved, light, white clothing is a must for dusk when the mosquitoes are about
- ✓ For the girls—long skirts are very good because they are cool, colourful, and respectful—skimpy vest tops are not really appreciated
- ✓ If you are taking a rucksack, put all your clothes into plastic bags before you put them in your pack
- Gifts**
- ✓ You must bring at least 2 small gifts for your partners, e.g. nice smelly stuff, miniatures, marmalades, pens, notebooks, books, walkmans
- ✓ Personalised business type card—everyone will want your address so a supply of printed cards are a good idea
- Money**
- ✓ Bring cash rather than travellers cheques. You should take a minimum £150 pocket money for gifts, phone calls and emergencies
- Emergency Details**
- ✓ You will be provided with an emergency contact list, you should carry one with you and leave a copy with your parents or someone you trust



WORLDwrite

IYEP

BECOMING A WORLDWRITE VOLUNTEER

WORLDwrite needs volunteers to participate in and help plan and organise all of its projects. The possibilities are enormous and jobs endless. You don't need skills; you do need aspirations. Try your hand at celebrity appeals, press and PR, updating the website, fundraising, refurbishing, administration, film making, school presentations, events organising, research and more besides.

We are all volunteers here and we know how precious everyone's time is, so volunteering with WORLDwrite means doing what you want to do, when you want to do it. The decisions are always yours. We don't want CVs, we don't have application forms, we can't afford flashy mail-outs and we can't pay anyone. We can promise a good laugh, a passionate team, a global perspective and a challenge for everyone.

If this is you...

- ✓ You won't look out of place in a mosquito net
- ✓ You will look beyond the standard arguments and can't stand ignorance
- ✓ You can stand for hours at an Indian railway station
- ✓ You don't think it's all about you and a better CV
- ✓ You do think this is all about a better way forward
- ✓ You know how to samba at a push
- ✓ You know how to push when it matters
- ✓ You get things done when it matters
- ✓ You don't get undone when it doesn't

You should get involved!

WHAT WORLDwrite OFFERS

Activities As a project that is driven by the enthusiasm and initiative of the volunteers there are many and varying activities to get involved in. Some of these include administration, publicity, press work, giving school presentations, conference organising, running workshops, company appeals, research and surveys, fundraising, approaching celebrities and internet links.

Flexibility A volunteer's working day can involve any hours between 11am and 10pm. This is to allow volunteers who work or go to school/college to contribute to the project in the evening. Volunteers are free to pursue their areas of interest with help and advice from project workers.

Resources For each project volunteers working on the project generate resources. Assistance is provided in the form of information on funding bodies, resource centres and individuals who may be able to help financially, technically or academically.

Decision Making Regular meetings are arranged to review work strategies, set goals and assist volunteers with any difficulties encountered. Volunteers are responsible for their project, make decisions in action meetings and are accountable to the management committee and the WORLDwrite trustees.

Skills Development The work on WORLDwrite projects requires a number of skills. All volunteers have ample opportunity to develop their skills both by working with experts or learn as you go. Furthermore, the practical involvement in several activities allows volunteers to develop and acquire new skills.

Education WORLDwrite is committed to a high level of critical debate. Over the last year conferences, workshops and debates organised and hosted by WORLDwrite provided a rich diversity of ideas and opinions. These forums exposed the audience to the views of academics and development workers, other volunteers and students. The discussions have sought to go beyond popular presentations in the pursuit of clear, honest discourse.

WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN OFFER

Expertise If you have an area of expertise in development or politics, your skills will definitely be very useful on our project. We require experts in the area of the media, conference organising, who are computer literate or who have a flair for hob-nobbing with celebrities.

Commitment If you are committed to equality, North and South, and want to ensure that young people have a broad understanding of world affairs, we can help make your efforts count.

INTERESTED? Visit our website at www.worldwrite.org.uk and read our critical charter on sustainability. Complete and return the attached Volunteer's Profile Sheet to: The WORLDwrite Centre, Millfields Lodge, 201 Millfields Rd, London E5 OAR or e-mail WORLDwrite at world.write@btconnect or phone 020 8985 5435.

UK Ghana Exchange 2004 2005



VOLUNTEER PROFILE

NameAddress.....
Postcode.....
 Tel.....E-mail.....
 School/College/OccupationAge.....

Areas of interest

- Administration
- Fundraising
- Media work
- School presentations
- Public relations/promotion
- Event/activity organisation Skills
- Communication skills
- Fundraising
- Typing
- Computer literacy
- Marketing/publicity
- Research

Availability

- Daily
- Weekly
- Twice a week
- Other, please state

Other Information

.....

**Please return this portion of the form to: The WORLDwrite Centre,
 Millfields Lodge, 201 Millfields Rd, London E5 OAR**

UK Ghana Exchange 2004 2005



WORLDwrite



BECOME A FRIEND OF WORLDWRITE

If you become a friend of WORLDwrite you can help ensure the success of the Ghana Exchange 2004. Please make a generous donation either by completing the standing order instruction below or by cash, cheque or postal order made out to WORLDwrite.

Please send your cheque, postal order or standing order instruction to:

The WORLDwrite Centre, Millfields Lodge, 201 Millfields Rd, London E5 OAR

I would like to become a friend of WORLDwrite

NameAddress.....

.....Postcode.....

TelE-mail

Bank Name.....Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Sort CodeAccount No.

Please debit my account by £ea. month quarter year

Starting.....

Signed.....Date.....

OFFICE USE

To the credit of WORLDwrite

Address

The WORLDwrite Centre, Millfields Lodge, 201 Millfields Rd, London E5 OAR

The Co-operative Bank

Account No.: 50071380

Sort Code: 08-90-01

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The WORLDwrite Centre, Millfields Lodge, 201 Millfields Rd,
London E5 0AR. Tel 020 8985 5435

Email WORLDwrite at world.write@btconnect

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