

Creating new jobs and increasing environmentally sustainable economic activities for young people in Ghana

Country factsheet

Ghana's economy is improving, but youth unemployment is a concern. Rural life is threatened as traditional food production methods fail and more young people decide to leave for the cities. Accra and other major cities do not have the infrastructure to cope with a large increase in population.

Ghana facts and statistics

- Population: 28.21 million.¹
- Life expectancy²:
Women 64 years.
Men 61 years.
- Capital city: Accra.
- Area: 238,533 km² (a little smaller than the UK).
- Languages: English is the official language; local languages include Akan and Ewe.
- Coastline – Gulf of Guinea leading to the North Atlantic Ocean.
- Borders Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo.
- Currency: Ghanaian cedi.
- Major religions: Christianity, indigenous beliefs, Islam.
- Exports: cocoa, canned fish, fruit and vegetables, petroleum products, gold metal scrap, coffee.³
- President: Nana Akufo-Addo

The economy

More than half (60%) of Africa's population is under 25 years old,⁴ and unemployment is endemic. It is vital that young people are given opportunities to learn skills, use those skills in a constructive and entrepreneurial way, and earn a living.



This project will improve lives in Ellembelle District, Western Region, and Ayawaso East and Ablekuma South sub-metros in Accra Metropolitan Assembly.

The economic outlook for Ghana is moderately positive. Over the past 10 years, its real growth rate has averaged 7.4% and oil production is set to increase. It is ranked the World Bank's 10th most favourable country in which to conduct business in Africa and is a member of the World Trade Organization. It is generally seen as a regional role model. However, it has a large budget deficit and is classified by the International Monetary Fund as a country at high risk of debt distress.

Ghana's economy depends on relatively few commodities – gold, cocoa and oil – and so its economy is unbalanced and vulnerable to global price fluctuations. Its infrastructure is still relatively underdeveloped and lacks investment, and there are regular power outages.

Youth unemployment

Youth unemployment is a real problem in Ghana. Christian Aid Ghana's Country Manager Gifty Dansoah Appiah says that more than 250,000 young people enter the labour market in Ghana each year, but only 2% are employed in the formal sector. The majority work in the informal sector or are unemployed. This is the incentive for the our project, which aims to promote job creation and expand economic activities for young people.

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At the project launch, Alhaji Abubakar Saddique Boniface, Minister of Inner City and Zongo Development, noted that youth unemployment is a government concern. He said that the youth unemployment rate of 48% was a security threat to the nation, and that our project would go a long way to tackle unemployment and improve the standard of living among youth.⁵

The government is committed to strengthening the private sector to boost growth and development. Bright Wireko-Brobby, Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, said: 'It is our responsibility to build on existing synergies, strengthen collaboration and enhance linkages that would push towards job creation and skills development.'

It is hoped that innovative interventions to promote skills development, job creation and local economic development, as envisaged by our project, will help to tackle unemployment and improve the standard of living for young people.

Social inequalities – women and people with disabilities

Women are underrepresented and discrimination against those with disabilities remains a problem.

Ghana enjoys a stable political climate and is described as the most stable English-speaking country in West Africa. In December 2016, Nana Akufo-Addo was elected President after a peaceful election. The ruling party is the centre-right and liberal conservative National Patriotic Party.⁶

However, women are politically underrepresented and the proportion of women in Parliament is lower than the sub-Saharan African average – 13% compared with 23.5%.

The job inactivity rate for young women in Ghana is 17%, 6% higher than their male counterparts.⁷



Christian Aid's new project will provide women with the opportunity to discover how to diversify their business opportunities, and enable more businesses to become sustainable.

In Ellebelle District, 30% of the population live in the coastal region, where communities are heavily dependent on the fishing industry. Many traditional rules and regulations are biased against women, meaning that they have been marginalised and their rights and access to assets are restricted or denied. For example, they are unable to inherit land and are forbidden to access beaches to fish when menstruating.⁸

According to Human Rights Watch, there are about 5 million people with a disability in Ghana – more than one fifth of the population.⁹ Discrimination against people with disabilities, including those with mental health problems, is a problem and severely inhibits employment opportunities.

Our project aims to empower young women and people with disabilities, and work towards a more equal working environment.

Endnotes

- 1 World Bank, 2016.
- 2 World Health Organization, 2015.
- 3 'Overseas Business Risk – Ghana', Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2017, www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-ghana/overseas-business-risk-ghana--2
- 4 BBC Today, 21 August 2017.
- 5 EU, Christian Aid launches 946,000 Euro project, Joyce Danso and Priscilla S Djentuh, 5 May 2017, Ghana News Agency, www.ghananewsagency.org/economics/eu-christian-aid-launches-946-000-euro-project-116416
- 6 See note 3.
- 7 '48% Ghanaian youth jobless – World Bank', 12 May 2016, Citi 97.3 fm citifmonline, <http://citifmonline.com/2016/05/12/48-ghanaian-youth-jobless-world-bank/>
- 8 'Institutional settings and access to assets in rural coastal fishing communities in the Volta region of Ghana', Harrison Kwame Golo and Lawrence Odumah, *American Journal of Social Sciences*, 2015, 3(6), pp187-196.
- 9 'The country where disabled people are beaten and chained', Sophie Morgan, BBC, 28 July 2015, www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-ouch-33523742



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Project information sheet

The project

Growing Economic Opportunities for Sustainable Development (GEOP)

Currently, almost half of Ghana's young people are unemployed. In the coastal regions of the Western District and the sub-metros of Accra, the problem is exacerbated by increasingly poor fish yields, which means traditional job opportunities are becoming scarce. It is vital that young people, particularly women, are given sustainable alternatives for their livelihoods and that the flow of young talent abroad is stemmed.

Christian Aid and its partners are working across three districts in two regions in Ghana with the aim of promoting job creation, revenue mobilisation and expansion of economic activities for young people in an environmentally sustainable way. Your financial support for this project, Growing Economic Opportunities for Sustainable Development (GEOP), will be helping people aged 15 to 35 years old, particularly women and those with disabilities.

Economic opportunities

Young people will be provided with appropriate support, skills opportunities and financial capabilities to enable them to start and grow their own businesses or gain employment. This will include:

- Teaching business skills, eg, business plans, basic finances, record keeping, marketing and accessing finance.
- Vocational training and work experience linked with the local job market, eg, interior design, steel bending, air conditioning repairs, dressmaking, fashion, IT skills, welding, bakery, tiling, masonry and electrics.
- Giving start-up advice on various small business types, eg, bead and soap making, batik, virgin oil processing and baking.

- Teaching skills and techniques to enable diversification in rural fishing communities, eg, aquaculture, fish production techniques and pond construction.

Empowerment of young women

Women will be given the opportunity to discover how to diversify their business opportunities and enable existing businesses to become sustainable. This will involve:

- Training in leadership and management, financial literacy, and business registration and regulations.
- Training new woman welders and making the industry more attractive to them. Currently only 2% of those in the trade are women.
- Customer services training.
- Workshops on land tenure – a key area in which women are disadvantaged is being able to access land for their businesses, particularly in rural areas.
- Training on improving agricultural land and market access skills, particularly for growing cassava and sweet potato.
- Workshops on fish preservation and processing skills.



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Transparency

Citizens and metropolitan municipal and district assemblies will work together to ensure greater understanding of revenue spending and accountability for service delivery, including:

- Training to enable wider community understanding about how taxes are used.
- Monitoring public service delivery in areas most impacting business, eg, road building, dam restoration and clean water.
- Providing tools to monitor district tax revenue against expenditure, with a view to increasing accountability in the tax system.
- Encouraging regular interaction between young people and the state to dispel mistrust of the tax authorities.

Our aims:

- To create an environment for greater economic opportunities for 15-35 year olds, particularly those with disabilities.
- To reach young women in the informal sector to enable them to participate more effectively in economic opportunities.
- To enhance local authorities' capacity to mobilise revenue generation from non-state actors and the private sector.
- To enhance local authorities' capacity to improve service delivery accountability and effectiveness to be able to better integrate economic growth for citizens into local planning.

Our partners

- USCOND has specialist knowledge of working in Ellembelle District to enable and enhance local participation in economic development in coastal communities.
- The Ellembelle District Assembly will use its expertise to enhance collaboration between government bodies, local vocational industries, representational bodies, service providers and social enterprises.
- The Ghanaian Institute of Welding will provide training, equipment and accreditation in welding skills, leading to job opportunities in the welding industry.
- The GRATIS Foundation brings expertise in research and innovation, and will provide key training in agro-processing.



Project locations within Ghana:

- Ellembelle District, Western Region.
- Ayawaso East and Ablekuma South sub-metros, in the Accra Metropolitan Area.

Working together to enhance economic opportunities

As part of the project and based on learning gained from previous work, Christian Aid Ghana presented office equipment to the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) to revamp the Accra and Ellembelle Business Advisory Centres. The centres support the development and promotion of micro and small enterprises as part of this GEOP project.



Gifty Appiah (right), Christian Aid Ghana Country Manager, presenting the office equipment to NBSSI, entreated all GEOP project stakeholders to work together in diverse ways to give maximum support to enhance economic opportunities for poor communities.

Your impact

Your support of this GEOP project will help more young people in Ghana, particularly women and those with disabilities, to gain education, training and employment opportunities within the context of a more equitable, open and democratic society. It is hoped that:

- 8,734 citizens will benefit directly from training and job creation opportunities.
- The project will indirectly benefit more than half a million people in the project locations.

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We are raising £5,000
to increase economic
opportunities for young
people in Ghana.

Please join us.



We believe in life
before death

For more information about our partnership with UCSOND, Elembelle District Assembly, the Ghanaian Institute of Welders and GRATIS Foundation in Ghana through Christian Aid, please get in touch with your regional coordinator.

Visit caid.org.uk/partnerships or email us at CPartnership@christian-aid.org for more information.