



KickStart GHANA

Progress Through Sport and Education

KickStart Ghana

2016 – Pre-Departure Information Pack

Hello!

Thank you for showing an interest in volunteering with KickStart Ghana. Whether you are deciding whether to volunteer with us or are looking to sort out the finishing details of your trip, the following document is designed to provide you with a little more information on what you need to do before your departure, and a background on the country itself. A lot of the information provided below is taken from *Ghana - The Bradt Travel Guide*. This book contains plenty of interesting and useful information and can be purchased online or found in the travel section of bookshops.

KickStart Ghana

KickStart Ghana is a UK and Ghanaian registered charity/NGO. Our vision is one where the people of Ghana can fulfil their potential and have every opportunity to succeed. Our mission is to enhance the sporting and educational opportunities available to the people of Ghana.

We do this by investing in sport and education through grants, financial assistance for individuals and recruiting skilled international and local volunteers to work on our projects and learn from each other. We're passionate about the positive effects that sport and education can have on individuals and communities.

Ghana

Ghana has a reputation for being one of the safest, friendliest and most politically stable countries in Africa. Being known as amiable, affordable and hassle free as practically any country on the continent, Ghana provides an excellent destination for both first time and more experienced travellers. Formerly known as the Gold Coast, in 1957 Ghana was the first African colony to be granted independence in the post war era. With a population of roughly 25 million people the country is divided into 10 administrative regions. The capital city, Accra, is the largest city in Ghana and has a population close to 2 million (although population estimates vary greatly). Ho, where KickStart Ghana is based, is the capital of the Volta region, situated in the East of the country.

Time

Bisected by the Greenwich Meridian, Ghana is on GMT, meaning that British visitors will remain in the same time zone as at home (except during daylight saving).

Language



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English is the official national language of Ghana, widely spoken as a result of the country's long links with Britain. A total of 75 African languages and dialects are spoken in Ghana including Ewe (Pronounced *Eh-Way*), the dialect spoken in Ho. You will find it fairly easy to get by using only English in Ho, but it creates a good impression with people in the community if an attempt is made to use some indigenous phrases. For example:

Way-zo - Welcome (you will hear this a lot, whenever you meet new people).

Yooooo - Thank you for welcoming me.

Ef-wa - How are you?

Mai-fo - I'm fine.

Mai-fwa - I'm fine, how are you?

En-cor-dee - What is your name.

En-con-yna-na Dave - My name is Dave.

Ak-pey - Thank you

Ak-pey ka ka ka - Thank you very much (The more 'kas' you add on the more thankful you are!)

Climate

The proximity to the equator and low altitude gives Ghana a tropical climate. Daytime temperatures are high throughout the country, approaching or topping 30°C on most days. Due to its equatorial location, Ghana does not experience strong seasonal changes such as those in the UK. Temperatures are reasonably consistent throughout the year, with the main seasonal factor being rain. This falls almost exclusively during the European summer months of April to September, peaking in May and June.

Money

The currency in Ghana is the Cedi (¢, pronounced "seedy") and currently has an exchange rate of £1 to every GhC5, although this can fluctuate. Cedis are not obtainable in the UK and can be acquired at various banks or private bureau de changes (forex bureaus) in Ghana. Traveller's cheques are mainly only exchangeable in Accra, with many forex bureaus only accepting cash. The main banks in Ghana are Barclays, the Commercial Bank of Ghana and the Standard Chartered. A mixture of cash in the form of US \$ or UK £ (as they are easier to exchange) and a Visa cash card are recommended. Previous volunteers have used Post Office travel cards as well. There are cash withdrawal machines in Ho and other major towns in Ghana.

Food and Drink

Among the great many starch-based staples you're likely to encounter in Ghana, the most popular are *fufu*, *kenkey*, *banku*, *jollof rice*, *red-red* and fried yam or plantain. *Fufu* consists of cassava, plantain or yam mashed to a pulp then cooked with no water to form a very gooey ball that's normally served with a light soup or sauce. *Kenkey* and *banku* are similar to *fufu*, except they are made of fermented maize. *Jollof rice* is a tasty combination of rice with meat cooked into it and *red-red* is a bean stew often served with fried plantain. Local food can be found locally in Chop Bars around towns. The food that will be



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provided in the volunteer house normally consists of pasta, rice and a small amount of meat with each meal. However, it is very easy to accommodate particular tastes or allergies so please let us know of these before departure.

Small bars (known as *Spot Bars*) serve drinks and can be found at regular intervals. Water in Ghana is often served in 'pouches', with the safer, treated water being sold with blue writing on them. Soft drinks (known as *minerals*) cost around ₵1 and include Coca-cola and Fanta. Local beers include *Star* and *Club*. *Akpeteshie*, a strong local spirit, can also be found for those who want something that will really warm their stomachs!

For further information on Ghana please refer to the [National Geographic website](#).

KickStart Ghana in Ho

As previously mentioned, KickStart Ghana is based in Ho, the regional capital of the Volta region. Having operated in the town since October 2008 the organisation has supported several projects. Our volunteers have donated thousands of hours of volunteering to:

- football coaching
- reading sessions
- educational games at children's summer clubs
- teaching/assisting teachers at schools and kindergartens
- teaching PE lessons.

Our grants and volunteer activities have led to:

- The continuation of Dynamo Football Club with under 12s, 14s, 17s and a men's team entering local leagues and tournaments
- Establishing a girls football team at Dynamo FC
- A grant to Dynamo FC to provide expenses for Ghanaian volunteer coaches
- Financial assistance for Ghanaian coaches to attend training course
- A grant to St Cecilia School to run a summer school for 80 year 6 students in 2013 and 2014
- A grant to St Cecilia School to run a summer school for 160 year 6 and year 8 students in 2015
- 6 classrooms and a toilet facilities being painted inside and out at St Cecilia Kindergarten
- A new perimeter fence for the St Cecilia Kindergarten
- 8 classrooms painted inside and out at St Cecilia School
- The renovation of footpaths between classrooms at St Cecilia School to ensure the safety of students and teachers



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- 8 classrooms and 4 toilet blocks renovated and painted inside and out at the Regional Model School. This included new windows to ensure water cannot leak in during the rainy season
- Completed renovation and painting at St Phillips and the SDA School

KickStart Ghana is also grateful that generous volunteers have donated arts and crafts equipment, books, sports equipment and other classroom materials.

Volunteering with KickStart Ghana

Below we have tried to answer some (although most likely not all) of the questions you will undoubtedly have before beginning your experience in Ghana.

What work do I need to do before I arrive in Ghana?

It is absolutely essential that you start to plan for your placement before you leave for Ghana. If you are on a sports or educational placement then please refer to our training guide and start making plans for the sessions that you intend to take. This will ensure that when you arrive in Ghana you can hit the ground running.

Do I need to bring materials with me to support the work I do?

You do not have to bring any additional materials with you on your trip to Ghana. However, you may feel that the activities that you may have planned may require some extra equipment. For example, simple arts and crafts sessions could be conducted using just some paper and a set of crayons. Despite this, we wish to emphasise that you should not go to a large expense, as you have already contributed with the money that you have donated. A useful way of collecting materials may be donations from friends, family and even local schools. Don't forget that you can buy items such as paper and pens in Ghana.

With football coaching, the money that you contribute through fundraising for KickStart Ghana helps to pay for materials such as balls, cones and bibs, as well as administration costs for the teams to play in the local leagues. However, any additions to this would be more than welcome, such as any old football kits or boots, no matter how old or what size.

Where will I stay?

During your stay you will be staying in the KickStart Ghana house with other volunteers. The house provides dorm style accommodation and is close to various spots, internet facilities and banks. Your placements will be just a short taxi ride away, usually costing around 50p a journey.

The housing complex is a family home so expect to see other people when you are living there. Everyone is extremely welcoming and used to volunteers coming and going so we ask



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that you make an effort to get to know people that are there.

Who else will I be with in Ghana?

During the summer months we often have many volunteers arriving and leaving Ghana, so it is very likely that there will be other volunteers working on our projects at the same time as well. We will also have a number of Ghanaian volunteers. Besides these volunteers our Director, Daniel, Secretary, Coco and our 2016 Volunteer Coordinator will be on hand to help manage your work and induct you. They are all experienced in managing volunteers and are there to help you if you should need it. Please ensure that you speak to them if you have any questions.

What can I do with my time off?

The Volta Region offers many affordable tourist attractions, such as the monkey sanctuary in Tafi Atome and the nearby Wli Falls. Further afield you could venture to the historic slave castles at Cape Coast and Elmina or catch some sun on one of the many beaches on the coast.

If you wish to stay in Ho during your time off, there are three swimming pools available to use for a small fee and the local Adaklu Mountain provides a challenging but rewarding climb.

What is covered in the donation I make to KickStart Ghana?

Due to the nature of our organisation, fundraising from volunteers makes a big difference to the impact we can make. This donation helps us to fund the work that we, with the support of our volunteers, carry out. It also covers the following costs of your trip:

- Pre-trip support
- Airport pickup when you arrive
- Airport drop-off when you leave
- One night's accommodation at a hotel in Accra on your first night
- Transport from Accra to your project in Ho and back to Accra at the end
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner each weekday
- Accommodation for your entire stay
- Arrival orientation
- 24-hour in country support
- The use of a safe in the house for personal belongings

However, volunteers are responsible for arranging their own:

- Flights
- Personal insurance (e.g. health insurance, insurance for belongings)
- Visa
- Vaccinations



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- Phone Calls
- Internet Access
- Meals at the weekend
- Personal travel during time off

What do I need to do before I leave?

There are a number of tasks that need to be completed before you will be ready, and in some cases allowed, to enter the country. You will need to:

- *Book Flights* – Flights can cost anything between £400-£700+ and depend on whether the airline you fly with stops off in another country or flies direct to Accra. Price comparison websites such as *Opodo* can be useful in identifying the cheapest flights. Examples of airlines that fly to Accra are BA, KLM and Turkish Air.
- *Apply for visa* – A visa will be needed to enter the country. These are attainable from the Ghanaian High Commission in London and costs approximately £40 for a single entry visa. The appropriate form and a guide to completing it will be provided to you by KickStart Ghana.
- *Register with Foreign and Commonwealth Office* - <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/Locate/>. The website explains why this is helpful and also provides some good general travelling advice.
- *Personal Travel Insurance* – This is a must as it provides cover in the case of medical emergency and also theft. This can be obtained from companies such as Direct Travel Insurance (0845 605 2500) or STA Travel (0871 230 8571).
- *Finalise inoculations and acquire malaria tablets* – There are a number of different inoculations that you need to have before travelling to Ghana as well as buying enough malaria tablets for your stay (and the period after you leave, where appropriate). It is a requirement on entry to produce a certificate stating that you have received your Yellow Fever vaccine. There are also some optional injections that you can have, such as Rabies. The best way to tackle this situation is to book an appointment with a nurse at your local GP and they will be able to provide you with all of the information you need. Malaria tablets need a prescription to be bought, and your nurse will provide information on both price and the various types of medication available.
- *Money* – As previously mentioned a mix of cash and another method to withdraw money in an emergency is advised. A credit/debit card is ideal but some banks charge for withdrawal abroad so it's best to check with your bank before leaving. We can help to advise you of appropriate amounts before departure if you wish.
- *Sign terms and conditions and make donation* - We require a signed hard copy of the full terms and conditions that we supply to you. This can be returned to:

KickStart Ghana
Flat 2
2 Recovery Street
Tooting Broadway



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London
SW17 0DL

If you wish to pay by cheque this is also the address to reply to. If you wish to pay online our bank details are:

KickStart Ghana
Sort Code: 56-00-13
Account No.: 23335025

- *Return the personal details form* – We need several important details from you. This form can be completed in an online form and emailed to us.
- *Buy specific travel equipment* (examples of what you might like to take with you are provided at the end of this pack)

What happens when I arrive?

A typical itinerary is as follows:

Day 1: When still on the plane you will need to fill out an *embarkation form*. On this you will need to provide personal details about yourself and provide 2 addresses (the same addresses you supplied on your visa application form). As you step off the plane in Ghana you will first have to pass through customs so that your passport, visa and Yellow Fever certificate can be checked. You will also have to hand in your completed embarkation form. After this you will collect your luggage, which may be subject to a search by airport officials. When this has been completed you will emerge into the arrivals area where a KickStart Ghana member of staff will be waiting for you with a KickStart Ghana sign. The evening of your arrival you will grab some food and stay in a local hotel.

Day 2: You will make your way to Ho after breakfast on a *tro-tro*. After arriving in Ho you day will be used as an induction to the town and an orientation meeting with a KickStart Ghana member of staff.

Day 3: You will begin your volunteer placement today. On your first few days you will be paired with a member of KickStart Ghana staff or an experienced volunteer

What do I do if I have any more questions?

If there is anything you wish to ask us, no matter how small a detail you may think it is, then please drop us an email at info@kickstartghana.org and we will try to deal with your query as soon as possible.

Travel Equipment



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The list below provides examples of equipment you may wish to take with you. If you are unsure about if you may need a particular item then we are more than happy to answer any questions.

- Passport and other documents
- Clothes that are suitable for the project, country and weather
- A lightweight waterproof jacket
- Light long sleeved t-shirt/jumper (to protect from mosquitoes)
- Suitable shoes - walking boots, sandals, flip flops etc
- Swim wear
- Sleeping Bag Liner (sleeping bags will most likely be too hot)
- A towel
- A torch (always handy just in case)
- Toiletries
- First Aid Kit (from bandages to Paracetamol. It can be good to buy a first aid kit with medical needles included)
- Insect repellent / mosquito net
- Medication
- Sun hat/glasses/lotion
- Travel wash
- Camera (plus batteries and charger)
- Day pack/small rucksack
- Books/music/games
- Ear plugs
- Diary