

TeachAManToFish Volunteer Program Gate of Hope Foundation - Ghana, West Africa

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Introduction

Have you ever wanted rather than giving donations, to do something a little more 'hands-on' to help make a difference?

For volunteers who are looking to escape from the comforts and routines of their world to assist the poor and the disadvantaged in society then Ghana represents a great option.

Ghana is a country of beautiful landscapes, huge smiles and great possibilities. The people are extremely friendly and hospitable and Ghanaians are proud of their culture and love welcoming people from outside to integrate and mix in with their local customs and way of living.

In short, it's a fantastic place to experience Africa's culture and take part in an international volunteer program.

GAHOF volunteer projects are based on the idea of providing service to disadvantaged people and communities. It is also about exchanging knowledge and cultures, both for the locals and for the volunteers.

The country has an air of excitement as people strive for achievement and improved quality of life. It is a country that is full of hope and optimism.

The sound of energetic tribal language being spoken around you will assure you, you have landed in Africa.

In Twi language **Akwaaba** means welcome. In Ewe they say **Woezor**.

Is volunteering for you? Here's what they said about us:

"Volunteering in Ghana was the best experience of my life. The friendly people, the fantastic travel opportunities and the friends I made along the way made it unforgettable."
Robert Jones

"It's totally eye-opening seeing what some of the children have been through. If all you do as a volunteer is make the children smile, I reckon you've done a good job."
Rachael Boyce

"I felt so welcome and really enjoyed experiencing a different way of life. I worked on a teaching project, we had a lot of freedom to teach what we wanted and how we wanted."
Alice Richens

Project Areas

GAHOF needs volunteers to help in a number of areas:

- * Education
- * Healthcare
- * Agriculture
- * Environment
- * Gender Inequality

Education

The standard of education in some first and second cycle institutions in Ghana is falling gradually leading to poor results and below average grades at the end of their courses.

GAHOF needs volunteers who will teach the following subjects in Junior and Senior Secondary Schools: (1) English Language (2) Mathematics (3) General Science and (4) Visual Arts.

Agriculture

As is typical in most of Africa, more than half of the population in Ghana earns its livelihood from farming. Often primitive methods are used to farm the land and rear animals.

Job Description:

Depending on the volunteers' preferences, they can choose to combine teaching and practice of agricultural science subjects or focus on practical work only.

Subjects covered include;
(1) General Agriculture (2) Crops and Horticulture (3) Animal Science (4) Physics/Chemistry.

Agricultural Practical Work:

1. Grasscutter¹ rearing using improved methods
2. Construction of modern grasscutter cages
3. Organic farming and pest control using local materials
4. Agricultural research
5. Training of farmers in the field using improved methods.



Environment

Ghana's forest covers 26% of the country. In less than 50 years Ghana has lost over 90% of its forest through excessive tree felling and wild bush burning leading to environmental degradation.

Each year Ghana continues to lose an alarming 1.9 million hectares of forest.

To combat this loss, and to protect bio-diversity, we need volunteers who can educate communities and schools on environmental protection, conservation, and afforestation.

Job Description:

- * Educating communities and schools on the need of environmental conservation and afforestation.
- * Nursing seeds as part of afforestation efforts
- * Line and pegging (demarcation of the plant base for planting)
- * Establishing woodlogs for use as alternative energy
- * Beekeeping and construction of beehives.

Gender

Women's Group Development and Educational Project

There are also women groups which a volunteer can be attached to help in their training and development. Normally volunteers attached to these groups would have to organize resources to supplement what the organization provides, however this is not mandatory.

¹ The grasscutter, also known as the African groundhog, is a large rodent which is greatly appreciated across West Africa for its meat. Bush burning to force the animals out is a common practice and greatly damaging to the environment. For this reason domestic rearing of grasscutters not only brings communities economic gains, but environmental ones.

These women groups are normally in rural communities which are deprived in a lot of ways.

Training includes:

- * Batik Tie and Dye
- * Textile Designing
- * Beads making
- * Pomade making
- * Soap making

Food Preservation & Catering

- * Smoking of fish (oven built)
- * Smoking Pork meat (oven built)
- * Turning Red/Chili Pepper to powder for export
- * Cassava processing into Gari (cassava flour)

Healthcare

The United Nations, through the World Health Organization (W.H.O), advises that Public Health education is one of the most important prerequisites for good health, and yet in much of the world it is also an area that is sorely neglected.



Small rural and urban clinics have a shortage of healthcare professionals of various specialties - particularly those with public health backgrounds.

You may be asked to help teach some basic principles of public health, vaccinate children, check blood pressure, perform basic physical examinations, or diagnose diseases.

This is a challenging assignment for many reasons. There are not enough medicines to meet the needs of all the local people. The equipment, supplies, tools and facilities that you take for granted in your day-to-day work may be non-existent locally.

The local healthcare staff are dedicated and professional, but they are few in number, have limited health education, and work under extraordinary difficult circumstances.

Program Overview

Arrival at the Airport/ 3 Night Stay Accra

We will pick you from the airport and take you into Accra, the capital of Ghana, where you will have three days to acclimatize before starting on your placements.

Introduction Week

Some people can find volunteering in another country a bit of a culture shock, so rather than start work right away we think it is best for you to first feel at home, relax, adjust to the different climate and learn a few things about Ghana.

The introduction week includes a general orientation and as well as a short tutorial on the local Ghanaian language. After that an agreement form will be signed. During this period, you will start your voluntary work and live with your host family or in a nearby hotel.

After the Introduction Week

During the first few weeks of your placement there will be regular meetings to evaluate your progress of work and provide you with any help if require so. This process is designed to ensure that you both enjoy your voluntary work, and that it meets your expectations.

If you are interested we can also, besides your main volunteering project, provide opportunities to work on other projects such as AIDS awareness campaigns, health education as well as other programs.

Requirements

GAHOF has no standard requirement regarding education or work experience. However we do expect you to have an open mind and genuine interest in the culture of Ghana and in the project you choose to work for.

The minimum age for participation is 18 years old.

Volunteer Projects in Ghana

Volunteer program placements are currently available in Greater Accra (the capital) and in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Time

Volunteers are accepted at any time of the year

Communications

Ghana has good communications system, making it easy for volunteers to bring and use their own GSM phone during their stay.

Accommodation

Volunteers will have their own room. There are water, electricity and toilet facilities as standard, however sometimes water may be supplied from local boreholes.

Food

Depending on your preferences you have the option of eating with your host family, cooking your own meals, or eating in local restaurants.

If you decide to cook yourself, please do offer to reimburse your host family for other expenses used for cooking.

Ghanaian people take great pride in their traditional dishes, so we are always happy if volunteers choose to eat our local foods.

Length of Stay (minimum & maximum)

Minimum duration: 4 weeks

Maximum duration: 20 weeks

Programme, Contribution & Duration

<u>Duration</u>	<u>Contribution²</u>
4 weeks	£300 (US \$600)
8 weeks	£550 (US \$1,100)
12 weeks	£750 (US \$1,500)
16 weeks	£900 (US \$1,800)
20 weeks	£1,100 (US \$2,200)

What is included

- * Pick up from airport in Accra
- * 3 days orientation
- * Accommodation
- * Meals and costs relating to your host family
- * Seminars on culture, safety etc.
- * Tour of Accra

² For some it may seem strange to have to pay in order to work for free. However, it is necessary to charge a small amount in order to defray costs of the workplaces and the families where the volunteers live as well as program administration. We are aware of the fact that many volunteers do not have a lot of money and we therefore always endeavor to keep this contribution to a minimum.

- * Certificate of participation
- * Development project contribution
- * Program administration

What is not included

- * Flights
- * Travel insurance
- * Tour of places of interest
- * Extra activities not on itinerary

How To Apply

If you're interested in applying to volunteer under this scheme and would like an application form - or if have any questions about this program - just e-mail: volunteer@teachamantofish.org.uk