



Ghana

Republic of Ghana

Africa

Geography

Area 238,533 sq km. Grasslands in north, farmland and forest in south. Centre dominated by the 520-km-long Lake Volta, Africa's largest man-made lake.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	24,332,755	2.11%
2020	29,567,415	1.89%
2030	34,883,758	1.59%

Around 70% of the population live in the southern regions.

Capital Accra 2,341,882. **Other main cities** Kumasi 1.8 million; Tamale 361,000. **Urbanites** 51.5%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 38%. **Life expectancy** 56.5 yrs.

Peoples

About 100 ethnic groups.

Guinean/Kwa 69.2%. Five major groupings in centre and south.

Akan 40.9%. 10 groups, largest: Ashanti 14.2%; Fante 11.3%; Abrong 5.2%; Akyem 2.9%; Akuapim 2.6%; Kwawu 2.0%; Wassi 1.5%.

Ewe 11.1%. In southeast.

Ga-Adangme 7.3%. Dangme 3.9%; Ga 2.9%.

Guang(13) 3.6%. Gonja 1.1%; Awutu 0.8%.

Gur 25.6%. 29 peoples in 3 major sub-groups in the north. Larger groups: Southern Dagaaba 4.9%; Dagbamba 3.6%; Frafra 3.6%; Konkomba 2.4%; Kusasi 2.0%; Mossi 1.5%; Mamprusi 1.1%.

Yoruba 1.6%.

Other 3.6%. Bissa 0.8%; other African, Westerner, Asian.

Literacy 54.1%. **Official language** English. **All languages** 84. **Indigenous languages** 79. **Languages with Scriptures** 12Bi 28NT 35por 28wi.p.

Economy

Agricultural products (especially cocoa and timber), gold and tourism are the main revenue sources, but

all are subject to external factors and fluctuations. A new lake and hydro-electric project on the western border are being developed. Foreign aid accounts for 10% of GDP. A fertile and once-prosperous land with rich natural resources, Ghana now struggles with poverty – 79% of the population earn less than \$2US/day. Once-rich tropical forests have been over-logged, and soil degradation and unreliable rainfall impoverish northern farmers and fuel migration. But a stable political context and good infrastructure hold promise for greater improvement.

HDI Rank 152nd/182. **Public debt** 53.8% of GDP. **Income/person** \$739 (2% of USA).

Politics

Independent from Britain in 1957. Nkrumah's "socialist" experiment was a disaster. There have been five military regimes since Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966, but since Rawlings' presidency in 1992, the stable transition to multiparty democracy prevails, with several elections praised as open and orderly. Ghana plays a positive regional and continental role in diplomacy and peacekeeping.

Religion

Secular state with religious freedom since 1992. Traditionally peaceful relations among Christians, Muslims and ethno-religionists seem to now hang in the balance with aggressive outreach by Muslims. Widespread overlaps of religious practices and beliefs, and contradictory claims of numbers of faithful, make exact measurement of affiliates impossible.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	63.40	15,426,967	2.2%
Muslim	23.79	5,788,762	3.6%
Ethnoreligionist	12.50	3,041,594	-0.9%
Non-religious	0.21	51,099	5.3%
Baha'i	0.10	24,333	2.1%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	60	25.74	6,264,000	3.9%
Independent	161	22.15	5,389,000	3.7%
Anglican	1	1.25	305,000	2.1%
Catholic	1	12.04	2,930,000	1.8%
Marginal	12	1.56	379,000	3.8%
Unaffiliated		0.66	161,000	-30.2

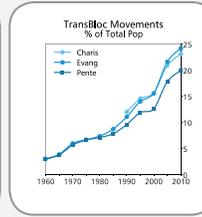
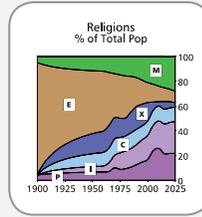
Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	2,000	1,550,265	2,930,000
Church of Pentecost	I	13,300	1,094,595	1,620,000
Methodist Church	P	3,100	1,246,154	1,620,000
Assemblies of God	P	2,150	746,354	1,433,000
Presbyterian Ch of G	P	2,250	451,667	1,355,000
Seventh-day Adventist	P	1,161	375,000	768,750
New Apostolic Ch	I	1,272	254,444	458,000
Anglican Church	A	598	152,500	305,000
Apostolic Church	P	2,043	194,085	291,128
Ch of the 12 Apostles	I	570	114,000	285,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	1,477	96,000	259,200
Afr Faith Tab Ch	I	1,420	162,400	203,000
Musama Disco Ch	I	1,564	86,000	172,000

Afr Meth Episcopal Zion	I	421	105,333	158,000
Divine Healers Church	I	950	47,000	142,410
Apostles Revelation	I	570	68,500	137,000
Ghana Baptist Conv	P	617	74,000	123,580
Evang Presbyterian Ch	P	273	39,000	118,170
Ch of Christ, Spiritual	I	323	92,000	115,000
Churches of Christ	P	330	42,273	93,000
Deeper Life Bible Ch	I	781	39,048	82,000
Other denominations[214]		11,478	1,501,724	2,598,011
Total Christians[235]		48,648	8,532,342	15,267,249

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	24.2	5,879,102	4.5%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	23.1	5,611,790	4.2%
Pentecostals	19.9	4,839,867	4.4%

Missionaries from Ghana

P, I, A An estimated 2,000; one denomination has 70 mission fields; one Charismatic church has 50 fields.



Answers to Prayer

- 1 The relative stability of Ghana**, while not perfect, stands in contrast to the fortunes of its many troubled regional neighbours. Ghana is an example of how a multi-ethnic and multi-faith nation in West Africa can remain largely at peace. Praise God for this and pray that peace might continue to set deeper roots.
- 2 Ghana enjoys both a rich Christian tradition** and the emergence of many new churches. Many of the traditional denominations such as Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican have a vibrant spiritual life, while African Independent Churches (AICs) also grow quickly.
- 3 Evangelism among the unreached**, especially the northern peoples (in the north, and northern migrants in the south), is increasing as indigenous churches adopt the challenge of the unevangelized in their midst and send missionaries of their own. The Ghana Evangelism Committee was instrumental in catalyzing this movement.
- 4 The continued surge to translate Scripture** into written and audio formats is a powerful driving force behind recent church growth and discipleship. Only five languages had the Bible in 1965; now the majority of Ghanaians have at least the New Testament in their mother tongue. The work of Ghana Institute of Linguistics Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) and UBS is crucial to this. Every language in Ghana still needing a Bible translation has a work in progress! Hundreds of churches have been planted largely due to people's response to newly translated Scriptures in their language.

Challenges for Prayer

- 1 The rocky first decades after independence** finally gave way to sustained democratic rule in the 1990s. The solid education system and sensible constitution, both designed to be pan-ethnic, played strong roles in that process. While avoiding large-scale civil war and genocide, Ghana has still been witness to violence along both political and ethnic lines; no country is safe from human sinfulness. Some 47% of Ghana's college-educated citizens live abroad, hampering Ghana's development and prosperity. Pray that those in government might rule with righteousness and wisdom, seeking guidance from God and not from human philosophies or the spirits.
- 2 Christianity has long been established in the south.** About 63% of Ghanaians call themselves Christian, but many have only a tenuous link to a church, and attendance figures rarely top 10%. African traditional worldviews and practices too often lie beneath a veneer of Christianity; this dual spirituality is the greatest challenge to the Church in Ghana. The formality and foreignness of many older churches have stimulated rapid growth among

some AICs and charismatic churches, which instead offer excitement, involvement and healing, but not always salvation by faith. Pray that the true gospel may shine into the hearts of those who call themselves Christian but who are not born from above. Pray for a decisive break from all fetishism and occult bondages, and that true liberty in Jesus is found.

3 Pray for a Christian vision for the nation. Although statistically Ghana enjoys a strong Christian presence, reality presents a much more significant challenge. The GEC conference in 1989 not only set ambitious evangelistic goals, but it also offered great insight into the real evangelistic status of Ghana. These are continuing prayer challenges:

- a) *The 1.7 million who call themselves Christian* but have no link to a church.
- b) *The millions of Christians who may attend church* but whose worldview and values more reflect traditional animist beliefs than biblical truth.
- c) *Church planting throughout the nation*, but especially in the north. There is significant impetus through the GEC and National Church Survey of 2007-08. Thousands of villages in Ghana remain unchurched. A third NCS is due out in 2010.

4 Mature Christian leaders remain at a premium. As churches multiply, biblical faith is challenged and doctrines become confused. Compared with some other countries, however, Ghana is blessed by the number of training institutions. Among the many schools are Christian Service University College in Kumasi started by **WEC**, Maranatha University College (**SIM**), Ghana Christian University College and Good News Theological College & Seminary. There are over 30 other accredited denominational and interdenominational Bible schools as well as a range of TEE and lay training programmes run by different denominations and agencies, including a growing number in the AICs.

5 The missions vision of the Ghanaian Church has grown, as have agencies and workers. The commitment of southerners to sacrificially reach out to northerners is increasing. There are a number of significant movements worthy of prayer:

- a) *Missions training* is given by several organizations and institutes – CSC and Maranatha as well as Africa Christian Mission, Ghana Evangelical Missionary Institute and GlobeServe Ghana.
- b) *Christian Outreach Fellowship*, with more than 50 missionaries working among Ghana's least-reached peoples. Torchbearers (12 missionaries) and others are also good examples for Ghanaian indigenous missions.
- c) *The Church of Pentecost* has sent church planters to many countries in West Africa and in Europe, especially to the Ghanaian/African diaspora there.

6 Young people remain key in the efforts to bring revival to Ghana. Over 40% of the population are under age 15, but specific efforts to reach them are insufficient, despite their spiritual openness. This is particularly the case outside the major cities. In the villages, Islam and African traditional religions tend to hold sway. Pray for the impact of SU in secondary schools; GHAFES(**IFES**) (10 workers), Navigators and **CCCI** in universities and colleges; and **CEF** among young children. Pray for the conversion and discipleship of a new generation of Christians who will make an impact in the religious, cultural, political and economic life of Ghana.

7 Missionary personnel are still needed to serve as Bible teachers and trainers, Bible translators, in support roles and even as pioneer evangelists. A key area for prayer is for healthy, helpful partnerships between indigenous church leaders and missionaries. Pray for missions serving the Lord in this land; the large are: Mercy Ships, **SIM**, Pioneers, **WEC** and **GMS**.

8 Islam has set out to conquer Ghana and is making serious headway. The number of Muslims has grown significantly through birthing, immigration and conversion (especially Muslim men marrying non-Muslim women). Now, the majority of Muslims live in the seven non-Muslim southern regions. Mosques are springing up everywhere, and Islam is becoming a dominant force in the political scene. Education is one area of Islamic attention: founding Islamic educational institutions in Ghana and offering scholarships for promising young Ghanaians to study abroad in Muslim countries. In Muslim areas, religious tension and persecution of non-Muslims are increasing. Despite this, significant numbers of Muslims, including imams, are finding Christ as their Saviour. Pray for loving witness by believers and for the Holy Spirit to win many more Muslims to Jesus.

9 **The less-evangelized peoples of Ghana** remain quite receptive to the good news. Both Ghanaian and expatriate workers are needed for the harvest. In most, less than 2% are Christian of any variety, though few have no Christians. Churches are usually small, and leaders generally have only the most basic training. Pray for:

a) **The Gur people cluster**, who live mostly in the north. Among the more populous of these 29 northern peoples, only the Wala have a large Christian minority, and only the Mossi have a significant evangelical population at 12.5%.

i *The traditional peoples* are a complex medley of small population groups that are often scarcely touched by the gospel. ECG/WEC is planting churches in this area; response is growing among the Birifor and Konkomba. Pray for greater church growth among the Sisaala (SIM), Kasena, Mamprusi, Bulsa (SIM) and Frafra (SIM, AoG, WEC). Response is slow among the Bimoba, Kusasi and Tampilma (AoG and Lutheran). Several smaller groups still have no expatriate or Ghanaian missionaries reaching them.

ii *Muslim peoples* are traditionally much more resistant to the gospel. These include the Dagbamba (AoG, SIM, IMB, WEC) with 1% Christian, the Wala (Baptist Mid-Missions), the Kotokoli and Fulani. There is a new openness among the Dagomba in the SIM areas, with new churches being planted.

b) **The Guinean/Kwa people cluster**, some of whom have been minimally impacted by the gospel. Among them are the Muslim peoples: the dominant Gonja (3% Christian, WEC), Anufo (2% Christian), and the animist Chumburung (8% Christian) and Gikyode (4% Christian). These peoples live in the northern or Volta regions of Ghana.

c) **Two Mande peoples, the Bissa and the Ligbi.**

d) **Immigrant peoples**, most strongly Islamic in culture. These would include the highly influential Hausa people, whose culture shapes much of West African Islam, as well as the Yoruba, Mandinka and Bissa peoples.

10 **Less-evangelized sectors of society:**

a) **The cities** have grown by absorbing many ethnic groups. The more than one million northerners in southern cities easily turn to Islam; Christians are now mobilizing to share the gospel with them. Some churches of northerners exist in the south, but they are few and not evangelistic in nature. Pray that both Ghanaian and expatriate workers may be used of God to increase the number of northern-language congregations in the southern cities – this work needs to be deliberately cross-cultural.

b) **Trokosi** (girls enslaved by fetish priests) number as many as 20,000, mostly in the Ewe and Dangme peoples, as a part of traditional religious practice. It was made illegal in 1998. Several ministries to trokosi women see great responsiveness to the freedom offered in Christ (Every Child, International Needs). Great courage and faith are required to openly oppose this practice, since fetish priests wield significant spiritual power.

c) **Street children** number over 30,000 (possibly that many in Accra alone). A host of ministries work with these needy children, who usually are abandoned or orphaned.

11 **Christian help ministries for prayer:**

a) **Bible translation** has made great strides over the last 30 years; GILLBT/WBT and The Bible Society are presently working on 34 language projects. Already 20 languages have a NT due to GILLBT's work.

b) **Literacy programmes** have often been too slow, too late and too limited to make good use of newly translated Scriptures. Pray for many literacy programmes now underway, that they may inspire both young and old with zeal for reading. Pray also for:

i *Use of audio cassettes* in 67 languages where literacy is low. GRN has a wide range of languages and programmes for precisely this. Audio material such as Faith Comes By Hearing is vital for the many oral cultures of Ghana.

ii *The Bible League's church-planting literacy project*, successfully used to help plant churches in some areas.

- c) **Literature.** Pray for the importation and distribution of Bibles (Ghana Bible Society with UBS) and of Christian literature, by agencies such as Book Aid in the UK and the indigenous Challenge Enterprises/**SIM**, which handles the great majority of all Christian literature in Ghana. Christian bookstores in Ghana number a mere 15. Africa Christian Press publishes a range of Christian books for Africa-wide distribution. Problems are enormous in running an economically viable, indigenous publishing ministry. Bible Correspondence Courses have been most successful (**SIM**, GU/**AoG**).
- d) **Christian films** are used with great effect. The five mobile “cinevans” of Challenge Enterprises/**SIM** have a total audience of over 1.5 million annually. The JESUS film is in use in 34 languages with four more in progress; it is a key to the annual Church Planting Project, coordinated by the GEC. Book of Hope's *The GodMan* is another film with widespread exposure.
- e) **Other media.** Radio, TV and websites are all areas where Ghana's indigenous churches and ministries are beginning to flourish in their ability to both evangelize non-Christians and encourage and disciple believers.