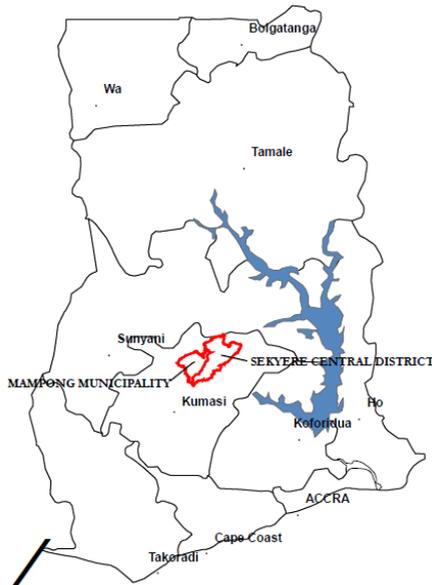


# Ashanti Development Volunteers Guide



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# *Volunteers' Guide*

This guide aims to provide prospective volunteers with a little more information than is provided on the website.

Volunteers for Ashanti Development will stay in purpose built accommodation, commonly known as 'the clinic' because it is built above the community health centre. The clinic is in Gyetiase, a small village 3 miles from Mampong in the northeast of the Ashanti Region.

Gyetiase offers a rare and fantastic opportunity to become part of a rural West African community and learn about their customs, language and beliefs.

It is a challenging experience due to Gyetiase's remoteness and the cultural and language differences.

However, the villagers will show their gratitude in every way they can and make you feel very welcome.

## *About Ashanti Development*

Ashanti Development ([www.ashanti-development.org](http://www.ashanti-development.org)) is a charitable company, set up in response to the concerns of Ghanaians living in London about the terrible lives led by people in their home village.

In London it is governed by a board of directors. Day to day matters are dealt with by a management team consisting of:

- Martha Boadu, a community leader, who comes from Gyetiase
- David Williamson, a water engineer who has worked for many years as a WaterAid volunteer.
- Penny David, a retired management consultant;

Ashanti Development (Italia) is our sister organisation, based in Bologna.

Partly because we were set up by Ghanaians, we have excellent relations with local people. We communicate with and consult them constantly and they make enormous input to our projects. For example, in June 2007, over two hundred local people worked free of charge every day on the clinic site, providing the all the unskilled labour needed to build it.

Ashanti Development always starts working in a village by making a study of its situation, institutions and needs. If you are interested, you will be able to find copies in the clinic.

We go on to provide some or all of the benefits listed below.

Ashanti Development's objective is to work with all the villages in the Mampong Municipality and Sekyere Central District (i.e. two local authority areas) of the Ashanti Region, in terms of:

- a. clean water and sanitation, training in health and hygiene and strengthening village institutions to the point where they can maintain the improvements without outside help;
- b. eye care and some primary healthcare provision;
- a. education, including delivering teacher training and helping children, particularly with English and literacy;
- b. economic development including farm support and microcredit.

We are a volunteers' charity and pay no salaries or wages to anyone outside Ghana. Nor do we make any profit out of visiting volunteers, but are very grateful for their help.

In 2013 we were working or had finished working in over forty villages.

While you are in Ashanti, if you can think of ways to improve our work, please tell us. And if, when you return to London, you'd like to remain in contact or possibly even to help us in the longer term, we would welcome your support.

## Visa Requirements

You will need a visa to enter Ghana. In the UK you apply by visiting [www.ghanahighcommissionuk.com/](http://www.ghanahighcommissionuk.com/) and filling in the application form. This will then need to be printed, completed and posted to the High Commission in London with your passport and a fee. Allow at least one month for your application to be completed. You can use the following two names for your visa:

Mr Nicholas Aboagye, Ashanti Development Clinic, PO Box 32, Gyetiase-Nsuta Ashanti Region Ghana Mobile +233 (0)241 994298	Mr Kwabena Poku-Dwumoh PO Box YK876 Kanda Post Office Kanda Estates Accra Ghana Landline +233 (0)216 60479 Mobile +233 (0)208 117869
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Even if you buy a three month visa, current Ghanaian policy is to grant entry for only 60 days. If you are staying longer, you can extend your visa for a fee (GH¢20 per month in 2009), and this can be organised in Kumasi and other major cities. Alternatively you can purchase a multiple entry visa which allows you to visit neighbouring countries so will get a 'new' 60 days upon returning to Ghana.

On the flight to Accra you will be given an immigration form to fill in. Under 'Purpose of Journey' tick the box for Tourism. If you tick Voluntary Work, you will need a supporting letter from Ashanti Development.

## *Things to take*

Don't even think of going without malaria tablets. You will need to start taking some types of tablets several days before you travel. Other prophylaxis may need taking for up to four weeks after you come home. It is also wise to wear long sleeves and trousers to protect against mosquitoes if you walk outside in the evening. For further information about malaria, see the 'Health' section.

Light clothes, including long-sleeved tops for the evenings, are recommended. Shorts are OK for the young, not approved for more senior people. Cut-offs are fine. You don't need a lot of clothes, since washing and ironing will usually be done for you every day. Other items you will find useful are:

- Mosquito repellent
- Sun cream, sun hat, dark glasses
- Toiletries (these can be bought in Ghana but not in the village)
- Bacterial hand-cleaner foam (as used in hospitals)
- Something to wear for village parties
- Sandals or light closed shoes
- Light raincoat or sturdy umbrella (for rainy seasons)
- Towel
- Torch (the electricity supply can be sporadic) – a wind-up torches or rechargeable batteries are useful
- 

If taking electrical equipment (such as a laptop) you will need something to safeguard it from power surges. The current in Ghana is 220 volts; plugs in the clinic and in Kwabena's home are three pins as in the UK, but it's best to take a multi-adaptor if you're going to stay anywhere else.

There are books to read at Gyetiase. We appreciate it if you can leave behind any you bring and finish reading.

Mosquito nets are also provided but you are welcome to bring your own or you can buy one for just a few cedis in one of the Mampong pharmacies.

The clinic has sheets and bedding.

It's cheapest to use a local mobile telephone and the signal is good across most of Ghana. Ashanti Development has a mobile which you may borrow. Kwabena will give it to you when you arrive in Accra or you can buy a new SIM card in Ghana (GH¢2 in 2013) and use it in your own mobile (provided any SIM card can be used in it).

Ashanti Development's mobile phone number, which you can give to your friends in advance, is 00233 (0)241 934890.

The international dialling code for Ghana is 00233. You will need to use this if you are ringing Kwabena from the UK or a UK mobile.

## *Travelling to Gyetiase*

Gyetiase, our headquarters village, is located about 3 km from Mampong, which is 40 km northeast of Kumasi. The journey involves a flight to the capital city, Accra, followed by air or road travel to the second largest city, Kumasi. This is followed by a final 40 km road journey, the last 3 km of which are on a dirt track.

### **Flying to Accra**

British Airways fly directly to Accra from Heathrow. We can sometimes get concessions with BA. Flights from other UK airports will require a connecting flight, usually through the airline's home hub. These include: Alitalia (Rome), British Airways (Heathrow), Iberia (Madrid), KLM (Amsterdam), Lufthansa (Frankfurt), TAP Portugal (Lisbon) and Turkish Airlines (Istanbul). Prices of flights vary considerably according to season, with the most expensive being July, August and December.

You will land at Kotoka International Airport in Accra (airport code ACC). If you let us have your flight number and arrival time, we will arrange for you to be met by Kwabena Poku-Dwumoh. He has never failed to meet an arriving volunteer, but to be on the safe side you should have his contact details.

Mr Kwabena Poku-Dwumoh 22 10th Estate Road, Kanda Estates, Accra Landline: 00233 (0)216 60479 Mobile: 00233 (0)208 117869 email: <a href="mailto:Kadusco@hotmail.com">Kadusco@hotmail.com</a> Facebook: Nana Kobby Poku-Dwumoh
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## **Accommodation in Accra**

Kwabena will either put you up in his own house and his wife, Joyce, will provide meals for you, or if you prefer he will deliver you to a hotel. You can give him your money to change and he will drive you to any meetings or drop you off at your departure point to Kumasi. He will also arrange for you to be met at Kumasi if we haven't already done this from London.

Kwabena's home is not a hotel. He offers a warm welcome, honesty and a chance to stay in a Ghanaian home. The rates he charges are low, but he may ask you to wait while, for example, he takes his children to school.

You must pay Kwabena £15 per full day. This covers his costs for meeting you at the airport, providing three meals, driving you round or changing money for you, and delivering you to the bus station or airport for your onward flight. If you only use some of these services, you must pay Kwabena a fair proportion of £15.

## **Accra-Kumasi**

Kwabena can take you or direct you to either the bus terminal for Kumasi or the domestic departure building of Kotoka Airport.

The bus is air-conditioned (with scheduled comfort stops). It will take you to Kumasi for around GH¢25 (2013 price). Although the road to Kumasi is fast improving, the journey still takes around five hours (in 2013), and to get to Gyetiasie you should allow at least eight, and start early in the morning.

Flights can be booked with Citylink [www.flycitylink.com](http://www.flycitylink.com) and Antrak Air [www.antrakkair.com](http://www.antrakkair.com). Each fly about three shuttles a day to Kumasi from Kotoka Airport's domestic flights building. The return flight in 2011 cost £115 and you can get no increase on the weight allowance, which is fixed at 20 kg.

## **Kumasi-Gyetiase**

At Kumasi Airport or Bus Station, we can arrange for you to be met by Adu Kwakwu.

He too has never failed to meet a volunteer.

His mobile phone numbers are:

Mr Adu Kwakwu 00233 (0)208 274162 00233 (0)277 400422
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He will drive you to Gyetiase for GH¢60-70 (about £20-23 in 2013 prices) and, as for Kwabena, you can ask him to stop in Kumasi and change money for you.

Alternatively, you can take a taxi from the airport to the bus station, (Kajetia Station, next to the world famous market, the largest in West Africa) and then take the trotro (local bus) to Mampong, followed by a taxi to Gyetiase. The trotro leaves when it is full – waiting time is usually less than 30 minutes – and takes up to 2 hours to reach Mampong. In 2013, it cost GH¢7.50 (about £2.50) per person but you won't be ripped off - Ghanaian trotro drivers are very honest. A taxi from Mampong to Gyetiase cost GH¢5 in 2013.

## *Gyetiase and Tadiesa*

Gyetiase (pronounced *Jay-tee-ah-see*) has a population of around 1,300 and Tadiesa (pronounced *Tad-ee-eh-so*), its sister village located 600 m away, has a population of around 700.

Some 40% of the population are under the age of eighteen. The people are subsistence farmers and cultivate cassava, maize, plantain, groundnut (peanut), yam, tomatoes, okra, and cow peas. Bananas, pineapples, mangos and oranges are also grown widely in the area.

There is a kente cloth weaver in the village who uses a home-built loom and Mrs Meano will demonstrate how to make African soap on request (you need to give her some money for this, and possibly buy some soap).

There are seven churches including one traditional religion, led by the witchdoctor (or 'fetish priest'). Since 2006, two 'pubs' (known as 'spots') have opened, and quite a number of small, often tabletop, shops.

Ghana generally is very safe, apart from road safety, and it is safe to walk around Gyetiase at any time. At night you will need a torch even when there is power for the street lights (the fireflies are fantastic but not bright enough). You will probably find yourself escorted by a little train of interested people, who want to talk to you. By day, the children will follow you everywhere. If you get tired of being followed, tell them firmly to go away. They are (usually) very obedient.

During the 1990's there was a large amount of economic migration from Ghana to Cote d'Ivoire. Many of the promised jobs did not materialise so some women found work as prostitutes. Under these circumstances, a large proportion of women contracted HIV/AIDS whilst in Cote d'Ivoire but returned to Ghana to be cared for by their family. In a recent survey, Mampong Municipality was identified as having the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate in Ghana.

We already provide some support and medication to some of these women and men and hope that, when the clinic is fully licensed, we will be able to do a lot more for them.

## *Accommodation*

You will stay in purpose built accommodation, commonly known as 'the clinic' because it is built above the Gyetiase community health centre.

To stay in the clinic costs £50 per person per week. This includes food, drink, wages for the cook and caretaker (who will wash your clothes too), electricity, water and interpretation. Please only pay this money to Ashanti Development in London or to Nicholas Aboagye in Gyetiase. We will employ staff at the clinic for you so **please do not pay anyone for anything during your stay.**

The villagers are hugely grateful to volunteers, but it is best not to offer temptation so keep your bedroom door locked.

The clinic rooms are big, clean and cool and have mosquito netting over the windows. They should be sprayed regularly against mosquitoes, but it's best to check that this is happening. There are beds and bedding but little furniture.

Bathrooms have showers and lavatories which are supplied by the Gyetiase/Tadiesa water supply (installed by Ashanti Development). The tanks can only be filled when there is electricity, so please use the water sparingly, particularly because the clinic is the only building in Gyetiase to be supplied directly with water. All other homes must collect water from the tank near the village square.

We will only give you bottled water to drink. The water in the bathrooms is clean but can cause mild stomach upsets if you clean your teeth in it, so best to stick to the bottles.

Gyetiase was attached to the electricity mains in early 2010. In case of power failure, there is a diesel generator which can be used as a back-up.

A mobile internet dongle and laptop are available in the volunteer accommodation. The connection is fairly slow but useful for quick emails, etc.

Internet cafes are rare in Mampong (often closing down a few months after opening) but, when available, they cost around GH¢0.80 an hour. The computers are faster than the mobile dongle but can also be very slow.

Kumasi internet cafes are slightly faster and slightly cheaper.

## Food

There is a kitchen and gas cooker in the clinic and a fridge for cold drinks. Unless you're a long-term volunteer, we recommend you use our cook as she will save you a lot of time.

Most people in Gyetiase live on a diet of beans, groundnuts, egg, fish, yam, plantain, cassava, rice and some fresh fruit and vegetables. Meat and bread tend to be relatively expensive so are only eaten on special occasions.

Typical Ghanaian dishes include a spicy, tomato-based stew or soup with: fufu (mashed cassava and/or yam and/or plantain), banku (maize flour dough), boiled yam, boiled green plantain, rice or red-red (ripe "red" plantain with beans). Kenkey is similar to banku but cooked in a maize or plantain leaf and left to cool.

Many sorts of tinned food are available in Mampong along with tea, coffee and other drinks. Kumasi will have a larger variety of similar products.

We have made a rule that staff should not routinely eat with volunteers or ask to share their food. If the villagers bring you presents of food – fruit or vegetables, for example – you may like to give some to the staff, but shouldn't feel pressured.

# Money

The currency is the (new) Ghana Cedi (GH¢). In mid-2013 the exchange rate was around GH¢3.5 = £1, but it fluctuates widely. Inflation in Ghana is also high (around 12% in August 2013). The cedi was redenominated in 2007, with ¢10,000 in old currency = GH¢1. This can be confusing, especially when traders quote the old price and neglect to say the 'thousand'.

It is illegal to buy/sell cedis outside Ghana and nor can you take over GH¢5 out of Ghana. You can exchange money at the airport but the rate isn't good. Bring sterling or dollars and change them in Accra or Kumasi or ask Kwabena or Adu to do this for you. Notes in £10 and £20 denominations are easier to exchange than £50.

You can also get money out using Visa (MasterCard is more difficult) at a cash point in Accra or Kumasi but you may only be able to get £40 at once (although you can put the card in as many times as you want).

We advise you not to rely on MasterCard, Cirrus, Maestro or American Express. Credit card fraud is a problem in Ghana, so it's best to use cards only in an emergency or in a reputable bank (you need your passport for this and it takes about an hour). We recommend you contact your card provider to establish how they will support you overseas and for advice on card security.

Travellers' cheques are accepted in some foreign exchange offices and can only be changed at Barclays (in Kumasi) so are probably not worth the bother.

## *Ashanti Development Staff*

Nicholas Aboagye heads our project work. He lives in the clinic. He speaks English and should be your first port of call for any problems. Sometimes he takes volunteers to help him in the villages and he is always ready with help and advice.

Diana Owusu is a Clinic Assistant who runs our Hardship Fund. She has special responsibility for helping volunteers and will act as interpreter when needed.

Elizabeth Achiaa works with district health care workers, primarily with babies and young children.

Kwadwo Seth (pron. Kwojo) is the clinic caretaker and does the cleaning and washing.

Alex Adjei is the librarian based in the primary school.

Esther Achiaa works for us only one day a week. She has special responsibility for the National Health Insurance scheme.

Esther Pwaberi is on secondment to us from the local authority. She is in charge of the Ghanaian end of school twinning and does some microcredit work.

You may come across some of our microcredit workers in the villages.

Elizabeth Amponsah prepares free school meals for children under five and is also the cook at the clinic.

We also sponsor two teachers.

We will employ staff at the clinic for you so **please do not pay anyone for anything during your stay.**

**Nor is it a good idea ever to give money direct to people in the villages. We recommend you ask Nicholas if he would do this for you.**

## *Government*

Most of the land in Ghana is owned by tribal chiefs. Each village has a hereditary chief who owes allegiance to the paramount chief who, in our case, resides in Nsuta. At the top of the ladder is the Asantehene (Ashanti King), who lives in Kumasi.

Women also feature in this system. Each village has a queen mother, who has responsibility for appointing the chief.

The government allows the traditional system to exist in parallel to a more democratic system of local government, modelled on the British system.

An elected unit committee acts as village council and (in our case anyway) works well with the chief.

The committee elect one of their number as the assemblyman, in other words the local authority councillor, who sits on the Sekyere Central District Council at Nsuta.

Village women have very hard lives and few rights, but Martha has managed to persuade the Gyetiase Unit Committee to include three women among its number.

Due to tribal disputes, Gyetiase has two chiefs. (Best not ask which is more important).

## *Dos and Don'ts*

Please remember that **interpreting words** into another language is often not equivalent to interpreting meanings.

At best, people tend to take what is said to them literally but a statement like 'Your baby's lovely. I wish I could take it home with me' is likely to be translated into something like 'I'm going to adopt your baby next time I come to Gyetiase' which can raise enormous hopes and fears.

Also, remember that our presence in Gyetiase is most people's one hope for the future. Any complaint you make will be magnified in the eyes of local people through fear that we should leave. Further, people are inclined to believe whatever we say because they don't always take account of the fact that some Europeans are good, some bad. For them, we are all good.

Your behaviour is important. The villagers would be shocked by drunkenness or promiscuity.

Nobody minds you taking **photos**, in fact they really like it. Still, it's nice to ask.

If by chance you are brought a **sick child who is gravely ill**, possibly from malnourishment, it should be taken straight to Mampong Hospital. Ashanti Development will always reimburse any expense.

In Ghana, practising **homosexuality** is a capital offence. In 2008, a gay man was hanged. If you are gay, please give no indication of this to anyone and please do not tell anyone, however sympathetic, as this would be a source of shame to our hosts.

We understand that this is not a recipe for improving basic human rights in Ghana, but at present homosexuality is not an issue we want to add to our list. If you personally would like to address it, please talk to us and maybe we'll be able to work out a project together.

Please **don't kiss** in public – even if it's only on the cheek and even if you're married. It's thought to be very shocking!

We are trying to reach an understanding with the villagers about presents. We tell them that it is against our culture to ask for presents and can even cause offence, so we'd really rather they didn't ask us or our friends for anything.

The flip side is that we ask you please not to give them anything – old T shirts, mobile phones, food, books, anything.

If you have anything you don't want to take home with you or you want to give as a present, leave it in the clinic for us to deal with or give it to Nicholas. Without this rule, our lives would be made miserable by beggars.

Unless you have close links with a village – you may possibly be working there – you should not stop and walk around in it without being accompanied by the relevant assemblyman.

Don't wander off into the **bush** by yourself. You may get lost and, although the villagers ate almost all the animals years ago, they left the snakes.

Ashanti Development set up a **woodcarving** school a few years ago and today we market the produce in London. If you would like to buy the woodcarvings or kente strips which are displayed in the clinic, please do so only through Nicholas. He will negotiate a fair price for all concerned.

Ghanaians are very tactile. Although Gyetiase and Tadiesa have had health and **hygiene** training they probably don't follow it closely. So please be careful to wash your hands before eating; better still, use your can of anti-bacterial foam.

You need to **drink** more than you can imagine. The most common sicknesses we have suffered are constipation followed by diarrhoea. Make sure you produce a good flow of water at least twice a day! It's a good plan to keep a bottle of water near you during the day, and particularly if you go travelling.

Within a few hours of your arrival, Nicholas (who normally comes to welcome you) will send a message to the **chiefs** (or elders if the chiefs aren't available) to ask if you can come and see them. When they are ready, you will be taken to where they are sitting in a circle with the elders. Normally there will be between ten and fifteen people.

You walk round in an anticlockwise direction, shake each one by the hand and say "ε te sen?" (pronounced eh-teh-sane), i.e. how do you do? Then the chief may ask you through an interpreter – "Who are you and what is your mission?" even though he knows perfectly well – this is a ceremonial question. So you answer, then you get a speech of welcome through the interpreter, then they all get up and shake your hand and you're home and dry.

Please don't make any **promises** (e.g. of grants, study and medical equipment, etc.) which you are unable or are not wholly determined to keep. In particular, please note that promises of jobs in the UK are worthless unless accompanied by airfares and work permits, which are next to impossible to obtain for the people you meet. Promises from Europeans are almost always believed, and if not kept can literally ruin lives and relationships. Don't make any.

## Health

For general recommendations, as well as medical information on Ghana, visit [www.masta.org](http://www.masta.org).

Malaria tablets are essential; speak to your doctor before travelling to get a prescription. Even when taking the prophylaxes it is possible to get malaria, so mosquito nets and insect repellent are also a must. The early stages of malaria are similar to flu, so people may not seek medical help. But caught early enough, malaria is almost always treatable.

Three in four cases of malaria cases among people returning to the UK consisted of falciparum malaria, a potentially fatal form endemic in West Africa<sup>1</sup>. Over one in two cases are of people who have recently travelled to Nigeria or Ghana, some of whom have not taken antimalarial drugs because they believed they were already immune.

The worst thing that will probably happen to you in Ghana is bad diarrhoea or constipation. Ask your doctor for a prescription for CIPROXIN or another antibiotic for diarrhoea, and take electrolytes.

Be very careful not to get sunburned. Hats and sun cream are essential.

Do not drink tap water – only drink purified (sold in bottles and bags) or boiled water. Bagged water is only purified if the bag is sealed and marked with the manufacturer's logo and you should try to squirt it into your mouth without letting your lips touch it. Unpurified bags are usually tied with a knot. It is a

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<sup>1</sup> The Guardian 4 July 2008

sensible precaution to make sure the plastic seal is intact before opening a bottle of water.

For any short term emergency, visit Mampong Hospital. It isn't particularly pleasant but the doctors can administer emergency treatment. If you've got time, it's better to go to Kumasi.

You can always ring Ashanti Development in London for a doctor's advice. There is usually some medicine in the clinic and we can tell you how to access via Nicholas.

Here are the numbers of two UK-based doctors whom you can telephone in case of trouble.

Dr Helen Booth: 0044 7739 001456

Dr Ashkan Khalili: 0044 7908 540070

## *History and Legends*

We hope some volunteers may wish to work in outlying villages recording their histories and local legends. There is a Dictaphone in the clinic (speak to Nicholas) to help with this.

There are some 220 communities in Mampong Municipality and Sekyere Central District, many of whom were refugees from 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century tribal wars. Some originally came from great distances, often outside today's national boundaries. The Gyetiase tribe itself were refugees from the coast.

Many of the communities are isolated on hilltops and, since communications are very bad (poor roads, no donkeys or bicycles) we assume that they will have their own legends and history and have developed in different directions.

There is a danger that when we start to work with them, they will forget their roots in the rush for development.

We therefore aim to invite some people to spend time researching the history, legends and customs of some of these communities and so to ensure that they are not forgotten. The result can be printed, and a copy given to the village concerned with another lodged in the library at Gyetiase. In the longer term, they will be placed in the museum of local culture which we plan to build there.

## *Travelling Opportunities*

It is relatively easy and safe to travel in Ghana and most tourists you'll meet are aid workers. In the clinic there are several Bradt travel guides to Ghana to help you plan.

Kumasi is about two hours away and has the biggest market in West Africa. You might want to visit the Cultural Centre Museum between the market and the hospital and the Asantehene Museum which is located in the Ashanti King's Palace.

Not far from Kumasi is Lake Bosumtwi, an incredible fresh water lake, formed following a collision with a meteor. It is great for swimming and cooling off.

Boabeng-Fiema monkey sanctuary is close Techiman. If you leave early, you can get there and back in a day, taxi hopping via Ejura.

Closer to home, you might like to visit the bat cave near Kwamang. Just turn up in town and ask around. The chief will organise for someone to take you there but you'll need a bottle of schnapps for the god of the cave (and the guide!).

Atwea Mountain, a local religious pilgrimage trail is also a nice walk with great views of the escarpment on a clear day.

For longer trips, Elmina should be high on your list – it has the oldest European building in sub-Saharan Africa which is now a museum about slavery. It is also very picturesque. You will need a coach, bus or trotro from Kumasi or Accra to Cape Coast, then a taxi to Elmina.

You generally don't need to book hotels in advance in Elmina. However, if you want to do this the Bradt guides have the most up to date contact details.

Alternatively, our friends the Sabre Trust, an education charity in Elmina, control access to a Ghanaian family home where rooms are rented (in 2009) at GH¢8 per head per night. They are fairly basic (in fact rather like those in the Gyetiase clinic), each with twin beds. To book, ring Sabre Trust Director Aubrey on 0247 919 469

A bit more up market is the Elmina Bay Resort, a new hotel run by Ben and Suzi Idun (friends of Aubrey of the Sabre Trust).

Directions: Turn off for Coconut Grove Hotel and Ediman School, Elmina. Continue along the laterite road for 1.5 km.

Telephone: 0541 614812  
0205 660670  
0285 240202

Website: [www.elminabayresort.com](http://www.elminabayresort.com)  
email: [elminabayresort@gmail.com](mailto:elminabayresort@gmail.com)

## *Coming Home*

Many volunteers to Ashanti come home with a strong desire to continue helping the villages. One, for example, now runs a scheme seeking sponsors for Ashanti children and their families for National Health Insurance. Another has collected funds to build a clinic at Adutwan. Others send second hand textbooks or teaching materials to Ashanti schools. Some run research projects, for example on solid waste disposal. One organises a project to give mosquito nets to very young babies. We have a tree-planting project and a hardship fund for malnourished babies and poor families. We offer an information service to Ghanaian groups based in London, and for European NGOs based in Ghana. Some volunteers organise fund-raising events – and so on.

If you share this feeling, there are many things you can do. We'd be happy to help you organise a project of your own, or just talk about any ideas you may have.

We would also be very grateful for any donation you wished to make, whether toward our general costs or to any of the projects listed about. In particular:

- if you made any special friends among the villagers, you might want to think about buying their whole family National Health Insurance. It only costs £52 for one year's coverage.
- or you might want to buy some mosquito nets for babies.
- if you're really broke, you might consider planting a few trees – cost is around GH¢0.50 per tree.
- or you might like to contribute to the cost of free school meals.

As we are a volunteers' charity, you can be sure 100 percent of the money goes straight to the villages.

Please also email us and sign up to our newsletter.

But above all, we hope you will take away a good memory of your time in Gyetiase.

# Appendix

## Self-Catering

We asked one of our volunteers to write something about self-catering for this guide. He wrote the following before electricity came to Gyetiase:

*"I generally eat two meals a day: breakfast and an early evening meal. I do this because I am usually in bed by 8.30 and I don't use the generator so like to cook in daylight hours. I generally spend around GH¢2.50 (£1.50)<sup>1</sup> a day. Most of the food I eat is 'stew' (ratatouille-type sauce) with yam, plantain or rice. It is a fairly typical meal for Ghanaians.*

*I don't eat meat which is relatively expensive, but fish is pretty cheap. In theory all ingredients could be purchased in Gyetiase, which I try to do as much as possible. However, fresh items are usually poor quality and not always available, so I do a weekly shop at the markets Mampong (Wednesday) or Nsuta (Thursday) and top this up from Gyetiase or again Mampong or Nsuta. There is always somewhere open, whatever day of the week. Fruit is also widely available and delicious.*

*When I'm feeling lazy I go to a 'Chop Shop' (a roadside stall selling food) in Gyetiase, Mampong or Nsuta. You can get a good meal for between GH¢0.50 and GH¢1.00 (30 and 60 pence)<sup>2</sup>, including local specialities like fufu, banku and kenkey."*

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<sup>1</sup> Prices for May 2009, GH¢ prices in July 2013 were around double

## *Volunteer Teachers*

The entire school syllabus for Ghana can be found at [www.niess.giv,gh/syll.htm](http://www.niess.giv,gh/syll.htm), though few children attain the standards set down.

If you are going to Gyetiase to teach, you will either work in the local schools, that serve both Gyetiase and Tadiesa, or you will commute by taxi or bicycle to one of the outlying villages such as Bimma, Dida or Bonkron.

The following is the class structure in Gyetiase/Tadiesa

<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>Primary School</b>	<b>Junior High School</b>	<b>Senior High School</b>
KG1	PS1	JS1	S1
KG2	PS2	JS2	S2
KG3	PS3	JS3	S3
	PS4		
	PS5		
	PS6		

Ashanti Development provides free school breakfasts and lunches to Gyetiase and Tadiesa children in the Nursery School and KG1, KG2 and KG3.

The kindergarten was built in 2000, with funding provided by Martha Boadu's church. It was intended primarily as a means of looking after the children while their parents were working. In 2005, it was given to the state. The Primary and Junior High schools have recently been rebuilt by Ashanti Development. The Senior High School is in Mampong.

Children are proud of their schools and come early to sweep the classrooms and regularly tidy up the wider compound. There are no doors and no glass in the windows – do not be surprised if a chicken wanders through the classroom while you are mid-sentence!

The Primary and Junior High schools are free, but parents must pay for uniforms and text books. Schools receive a 'capitation grant' of around £1.50 from the state and this is topped up by parents.

The children are cheerful, well-disciplined, friendly, helpful and responsive, but it is important to remember that they are often tired (having got up early to deliver wood, collect water and sweep the compound) and hungry. The school day starts at 8am and finishes at 3pm (sometimes 2.30pm) and each lesson lasts 35 minutes.

Most subjects are taught as 'double periods' so you need to plan for a 70 minute lesson. The children have only two short breaks within the school day, the first of 20 minutes and the second of 15 minutes. It is quite a tiring schedule for both students and teachers alike!

They greatly appreciate having volunteer teachers in their classroom, but often struggle to understand our accent. There is a wide range of ability between students in each class. Because Western teachers often use more interactive classroom methods such as drama, role-playing, drawing, games and debating etc., the students often get over-excited and become very talkative amongst themselves.

It is important to encourage students to speak English in the classroom. Motivational rewards like stickers (from suppliers like Classroom Capers: ([www.classroomcapers.co.uk](http://www.classroomcapers.co.uk)) work well, but it is important to differentiate questioning so that everyone is encouraged to participate. The students respond well to praise, and especially like you to write 'Excellent' beside their work!

The children are very keen to please, and so will copy answers from each other in the hope of getting the right answer to make the teacher happy, rather than struggling with a task independently. It is important to try to utilise this communal spirit positively by encouraging group work or paired work rather than getting frustrated with what appears to be cheating or laziness. The students sit exams at the end of their third year in Junior High School; although most of them pass, many parents cannot afford to send them to Senior High School.

Before you leave for Ghana, it would be helpful to prepare some lessons and resources to take with you, as it is difficult to do this in Gyetiase. If you would like to discuss this in more detail, please email initial queries to Kathy Rees ([kathyjrees@yahoo.com](mailto:kathyjrees@yahoo.com)).

The primary school teaches:

1. English language
2. Maths
3. Natural science
4. Creative arts
5. Ghanaian language
6. Physical education

It has the following teaching materials in stock:

- Gateway to English for Primary Schools
- Bridge to English (learners' book)
- Primary Mathematics books 1-6
- Ghanaian language readers
- Syllabus – all subjects
- Exercise books
- Library books.
- Blackboard
- Cardboard
- Crayons
- Chalk
- A3 paper

The Junior High School teaches:

1. Mathematics
2. Social Studies
3. English language
4. Science
5. Optional Basic design and technology (BDT)
6. Optional Information Communication Technology (ICT)
7. Optional Agricultural Science
8. Optional Religious and moral education
9. Optional French (although this is on the curriculum, there is no French teacher at the school)

They have all materials necessary to teach the syllabus, but lack:

- Teaching learning materials (sic)
- Sporting materials and equipment
- Science equipment
- Computers
- Laboratory

## *Volunteer Health Workers*

The clinic at Gyetiase is in the process of being registered and licensed. It will therefore eventually have its own Ghanaian nurse, and regular visits from a Ghanaian doctor.

It will provide some primary health care with a special emphasis in diseases needing long-term treatment. It will also provide a specialist eye centre, under the provisions of the Vision 2020 initiative, for a much larger area, possibly the whole District.

The aim will be for our eye health workers to keep patient records and ask the eye surgeons from Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi to come and perform cataract operations when they have enough candidates. Similarly, they will keep details of people with other conditions and treat some themselves while referring others to Kumasi.

Until these arrangements are in place, and at the urgent request of local people, UK doctors occasionally visit Gyetiase and carry out one-off clinics. These visits may continue in the long-term, with the intention of updating the training of local medical staff.

If you're a doctor wanting to practice in Ghana, you must bring your medical certificate. In theory, until the clinic is registered, you must obtain a licence to practice in Accra, the cost of which recently rose from GH¢15 to US\$400. In practice, we can probably obtain a waiver for you.

As soon as the clinic is registered, the Local Authority will apply for a waiver for all our doctors from the UK. We will also then be able to reclaim the cost of treating patients covered by National Health Insurance.

# Vocabulary

Here is a quick guide to Asante Twi and Ghanaian English. We hope it will help you to be understood around the village or at market when greeting people. There are three columns below: phonetic pronunciation, English [with literal translation] and Twi.

The phonetic pronunciation sounds are as follows:

- a hyphen separates syllables
- a space separates words
- ah, eh, ih, oh and uh are short sounds pronounced like the respective letter in back, empy, him, top and bunch
- oe is pronounced like the sound in toe
- n at the beginning of a word is pronounced like the n of nose

Numbers are not so important to learn because English numbers are used by everyone.

## Names

Everybody is given a name depending on the day they were born:

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Male	Kwasi	Kwadwo	Kwabena	Kwaku	Yaw	Kofi	Kwame
Female	Akosua	Adwoa	Abena	Ahua	Yaa	Afua	Ama

## Greetings

Greetings in English, being the official language of Ghana, are understood by nearly everyone and are very commonly used between Ghanaians, but they also speak Twi...

<b>Pronunciation</b>	<b>English [with literal translation]</b>	<b>Twi</b>
<i>Ak-wah-bah</i>	Welcome	Akwaaba
<i>Mar-chay</i>	Good morning	Maakye
<i>Mar-hah</i>	Good afternoon	Maaha
<i>Mar-djoe</i>	Good evening	Maadwo

## Responses

You do not say good morning or thank you back in return to a greeting and the response depends on who you are talking to.

<i>Yar ay-jah</i>	(to an elder man)	Yaa Agya
<i>Yar eh-nah</i>	(to an elder woman)	Yaa Ena
<i>Yar nee-yah</i>	(to a peer or younger)	Yaa nua
<i>Yar</i>	(to anybody)	Yaa

## Partings

“Bye bye” is by far the commonest parting phrase and a good way to rid yourself of children if necessary!

<i>Nanty yee-yay</i>	Safe journey [walk well]	Nantew yiye
<i>Dah yee-yay</i>	Good night [sleep well]	Da yiye

To add confusion, to be friendly you can add ooooh to the end of words. So maakyeo (*mar-chay-ooooh*) is a friendly way of saying good morning; da yo (*dah yooooh*) of saying good night.

## Common Phrases

<i>Woe hoh teh sane?</i>	How are you? [Yourself sits how?]	Wo ho te sen?
<i>Eh teh sane?</i>	How are you? [It sit's how?]	Ɛ te sen?
<i>How are you?</i>	How are you?	
<i>How is it? or How?</i>	How are you?	

<i>Me hoo yeh</i>	I am well [Myself is good]	Me ho ye
<i>Me hoo yeh paaah</i>	I am very well [Myself is good genuinely]	Me ho ye pa
<i>Eh yeh</i>	I am well [It is good]	Ɛ ye
<i>I am fine or Fine, fine</i>	I am fine	

<i>Yeh fray woe sane?</i>	What is your name? [We call you how?]	Ye frε wo sen?
<i>Woe din dee sane?</i>	What is your name? [Yourself named for how?]	Wo din de sen?

<i>Yeh fray meh...</i>	My name is... [We call me...]	Ye frε me...
<i>Me din dee...</i>	My name is... [Myself name for...]	Me din de...

<i>Me-pah woe choe</i>	Please [Myself begs yourself]	Mepa wo kyew
<i>Me dar say</i>	Thank you [Myself thanks]	Me da ase
<i>Me dar say par</i>	Thank you very much [Myself thanks genuinely]	Me da ase pa
<i>Moe me dar say</i>	Thank you so much [Well done, myself thanks]	Mo me da ase
<i>Men dar say</i>	Don't mention it [Myself, don't thank]	Men da ase
<i>Kah frah</i>	Sorry	Ka fra
<i>Deh-bee</i>	No	Daabi

<i>Woe koh hane?</i>	Where are you going? [Yourself go where?]	Wo ko hen?
<i>Me koh...</i>	I'm going to... [Myself go...]	Me ko...
<i>...clinic</i>	... clinic	
<i>... Mampong</i>	... Mampong	
<i>... fee-ay</i>	... home	... fie
<i>... nn-sue-oe</i>	... fetch water	... nsuo
<i>... ah-fwoam</i>	... the farm	... afuwm
<i>Koh</i>	Go	Ko
<i>Brah or Blah</i>	Come	Bra
<i>Koh-bra</i>	Return [Go-come]	Ko bra
<i>I'm coming</i>	I will be back (could be seconds or hours)	

There are a few words for yes, but sounds are used more often:

<i>Clicking tongue</i>	Yes I understand	
<i>Aye</i>	I agree	
<i>Uh-huh</i>	Good you understand	

## *Emergency Contact Details*

Nicholas (Gyetiase): 00233 (0)241 994298

Kwabena (Accra): 00233 (0)208 117869

or 00233 (0)216 60479

If you borrow an Ashanti Development phone with Ghanaian SIM card, you will have one of the following numbers:

00233 (0)241 934890

00233 (0)542 301766

Penny (in London): 0044 (0)207 837 3172

0044 (0)7713 743 398



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