

## **Ghana**

### **Republic of Ghana**

The colony of the Gold Coast and the mandate territory of Togoland were amalgamated to form a single state under British rule. In 1957 this became the first colony in sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence – as the Republic of Ghana.

Located on the Gulf of Guinea between Côte d'Ivoire and Togo, Ghana has a surface area of 238,533 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of almost 25 million (CIA World Factbook, July 2011). Ghana was formerly known as the Gold Coast because of its gold production. Today it is also one of the world's biggest cocoa producers.

Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in Ghana in December 2008. They were transparent and fair and were won by a small majority by the opposition National Democratic Congress party (NDC), ushering in the third peaceful change of government since the country's first democratic elections in 1992. Ghana is deservedly held up to the rest of Africa as a model of successful democratisation. The government is pursuing a sound economic and social policy and has set down its priorities for poverty reduction and economic growth in the Ghana Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II).

### **Political situation**

The Dutch embassy in Accra serves Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. An estimated 800 Dutch nationals currently live in Ghana. Some 20,000 Ghanaians are legally resident in the Netherlands.

### **The economy**

With a per capita income of USD 1,600 (2010 figures), Ghana is classified as a low to middle income country. It ranks 130th out of 169 countries in the United Nations Human Development Index. About 60% of the workforce work in the agriculture sector. Ghana's main exports are gold, cocoa and timber.

With an average economic growth rate of 5% in the past year, Ghana ranks as one of the best performing countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is also determined to hold on to the current rate of economic growth and to achieve middle-income status in 2015. The Netherlands is one of Ghana's main export countries, particularly for cocoa. Conversely, Ghana is the Netherlands' fourth main export destination in sub-Saharan Africa, especially for foodstuffs, livestock and manufactured goods. The Ghana Netherlands Chamber of Commerce and Culture (GHANECC) was established in 2003 to facilitate and support business cooperation between Ghana and the Netherlands and to foster cultural understanding between the two countries.

The Netherlands supports economic development in Ghana through private sector instruments such as the Infrastructure Development Facility (ORIO), the Private Sector Investment Programme (PSI), the Management Cooperation Programme (PUM), NL Agency's Matchmaking Facility and the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI).

For up-to-date information on economic and trade relations, go to the NL Agency website <http://www.agentschapnl.nl/en>.

## Culture

The Netherlands and Ghana have maintained uninterrupted diplomatic relations since 1701. Celebrations were held in 2001 and 2002 to mark this achievement. The strong historical and cultural ties between Ghana and the Netherlands mainly focus on the Dutch cultural heritage in Ghana. In partnership with a range of other parties, the Netherlands has restored a fort and several houses of Dutch origin, notably in the village of Elmina. Activities in Ghana are funded from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cultural programme.

## Development cooperation

Ghana has been a partner country since 1998. As announced in the letter of 18 March 2011 to the House of Representatives presenting the spearheads of development cooperation policy, Ghana will remain on the list of countries with which the Netherlands maintains a bilateral development cooperation relationship. Ghana falls in the profile 3 category of countries. These

are countries with healthy economic growth where activities focus on the main four spearheads of Dutch policy. However, over the next few years, the development budget for Category 3 countries will be reduced in the expectation that they will be increasingly capable of shaping their own development without bilateral assistance.

This year, the Netherlands is spending €45 million in ODA in Ghana, €10 million of which is for general budget support. But the volume of aid is actually much greater if ORET spending is included in the calculation. (ORET, the Development and Environment Related Export Transactions programme, is the forerunner of the Infrastructure Development Facility (ORIO).) In recent years, Ghana has been the principal beneficiary of the worldwide ORET programme.

In the current bilateral development programme (2008-2011), the Netherlands is active in the following areas: general budget support, health care, education and school meals, the environment, water and sanitation, gender and good governance.

General budget support to Ghana will end in 2011. In recent years, Ghana has made major strides in reducing extreme poverty. Extreme poverty has been halved, making Ghana the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to achieve Millennium Development Goal 1. By contributing €19.5 million, the Netherlands is the biggest donor in the healthcare sector. It also contributes approximately €10 million a year to the Ghana School Feeding Programme. This programme, for which the Ghanaian government pays the lion's share, provides schoolchildren with one hot meal a day.

Over the next few years (2012-2015) the Netherlands will focus on water, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and food security. The themes of gender, good governance and the environment will be fully integrated into the activities.

Dutch civil society is actively involved in promoting Ghana's development. Within its cofinancing framework, the Dutch government funds 11 alliances of Dutch NGOs active in Ghana led by organisations such as Cordaid, ICCO, IUCN, Oxfam Novib and Both ENDS. Another 225 civil society organisations are working in Ghana. Amsterdam, Almere, Gouda and Alkemade are twinned with counterparts in Ghana. Many Ghanaian diaspora organisations are also active among the Ghanaian community in the Netherlands.

## Treaties

For up-to-date information on bilateral treaties please see the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Treaty Database](#) .