



Ghana



The Republic of Ghana is located in western Africa. The country's name means "Warrior King" in the Soninke language, which is spoken by an estimated two million people spread across many West African countries. Ghana covers an area that is slightly larger than the state of Oregon with a population seven times larger. The Akan is the biggest ethnic group in the country, representing almost half of all Ghanaians.



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Tribal Kings were traditional outfits at a festival in Ghana.

The capital city of Ghana is Accra. It is located in the south, which is the most populated part of the country. While English is the official language, more than 250 languages are spoken in Ghana!

The area that is now Ghana was ruled by various ethnic and cultural groups since well

before the time of Christ. In the 15th century, the country established direct trade with many European countries, thanks to its coastline. Its primary export was gold. Sadly, at this time, Ghana also became a major port involved in the trade of human slaves as well. In the late 19th century, Great Britain took control of some parts of the country and established the British Gold Coast. Finally in 1960, Ghana achieved independence and declared itself a republic.

Most people who live in Ghana are Christian (over 75%); only about 10% of all Christians are Catholic. Although education is free and compulsory in Ghana, many children, especially in the north where subsistence farming is a way of life, do not attend school. There, the literacy rate is a mere 37.2%. Girls are more likely to be kept at home than boys.

While most people in Ghana (about 78%) have access to indoor running water, only about 14% of all Ghanaians have access to indoor bathrooms. Once again, people in the south and more urban areas fare better than those living in the rural north where the lack of clean water and sanitary facilities contributes to upwards of 70% of all diseases.

MCA in Ghana

Cultural beliefs vary across the regions of the country as well. In the northern areas of Ghana, many traditional ideas are still practiced, some of which have very negative affects on citizens, especially the children.

In the Diocese of Yendi, in northern Ghana, missionaries are working to educate people about the acceptance of children born with disabilities. Under traditional customary beliefs in some communities, any behavior or appearance considered to be abnormal can be linked in the minds of the people to the spirit world. Children exhibiting any “differences” may be accused of witchcraft. Sadly, these children are often rejected by their own families as they are seen as a bad omen for the community. The Church and the Ghanaian government are working hard to change these beliefs but as Bishop Vincent Boi-Nai of Yendi said, “Old habits die hard.”

The Nazareth Home for God’s Children in Yendi is a safe place where children of all



ages and abilities are loved and cared for unconditionally. Sister Stan Therese Mumuni runs the home. Almost 100 children are given safety, nutritious

food, healthcare, education, and most importantly, the knowledge that God loves them.

Sister Stan makes sure that the children receive the education that suits their abilities. Her dream is that, one day, the children will return to their communities to show how the love and support of the Church has empowered them to develop and reach their

personal goals with the gifts God gave them.



One of the children at the home is Sarah. She is a happy twelve-year-old with a bright future ahead of her. She likes to play with her friends, and enjoys math,

science, English, and religion at school. She is in the top of her class! She has come a long way in the seven years that she has lived at Nazareth Home.

When Sarah was four, she was wrongly accused of being involved in violence against people in her village. Because Sarah had a speech impediment—she was unable to speak well or clearly—she did not speak up and defend herself. Some in her community took this as proof that she was a “spirit child” in accordance with the local customs. Because Sarah would not—or could not—speak up for herself, she was thrown out of her village.

Thankfully, Sister Stan became aware of the danger that four-year-old Sarah was in and fought to save her, giving her a new chance at life. Sarah said of Sister Stan, “I like her because she saved my life.”

At last report, members of the Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) worldwide sent \$8,000 to help the children of Yendi Diocese. MCA members across Ghana sacrificed \$27,946 to the General Solidarity Fund so that more children can come to know how much God loves them.