



The

Gateway

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Ghana Turns 56

Story: Joseph Quaye Amoo

Arms wide open. Beaches sprawling. Smiles beaming. A nation growing.

Fifty six years ago, a country in the West of Africa was born. A fine intellectual and a freedom fighter will be named the African of the Century after five decades. He was at the frontiers of a fight for independence – a fight that had a vision of a united Africa. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah left his name in the sands of time and up until today, he remains famous and Africa’s history has been enriched by his efforts, intellect and vision.

Each year, Ghana celebrates her independence day at the Independence Square in Accra with a parade.



A year before his overthrow as president of the Republic of Ghana, he made yet another profound address to the National Assembly at the time:

“Countrymen, the task ahead is a great indeed, and heavy is the responsibility; and yet it is a noble and glorious challenge – a challenge which calls for the courage to dream, the courage to believe, the courage to dare, the courage to do, the courage to envision, the courage to fight, the courage to work, the courage to achieve – to achieve the highest excellencies and the fullest greatness of man. Dare we ask for more in life?”

This inspiration he provided spurred many Ghanaians, Africans and black people on as they defied the myths and broke the stereotypes to become globally respected citizens.

Fifty six years down the line on the 6th of March, the president, John Dramani Mahama honoured the heroics of Nkrumah in his independence address:

“Today, we celebrate the vision, perseverance, and legacy of a generation of heroic Ghanaians. Today we honour the leadership of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. A leadership that was both committed and compassionate, one that extended beyond words and into action. And even today, significant parts of the national infrastructure we still enjoy are as a result of the vision of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.”





The independence day celebration was adorned by men and women in military uniforms, children from first and second cycle schools, ministers, members of parliament, citizens and of course the first citizen of the land – the president.

The air force displayed in the air; the navy on the sea right behind the independence arch and the security services march passed in front of the president.

Since 1992, Ghana has remained peaceful. Smooth transitions have been possible. The greatest asset remains the unfailing peace that the country enjoys.



Kumasi Veterinary Outreach



What would veterinary volunteers be doing in an orphanage?

One cannot imagine veterinary volunteers working in a children's home but that is possible at the Kumasi Children's Home. The orphanage offers care, support and affection to children who have been abandoned and brought to the home and those whose mothers cannot afford to take care of them.

The Home receives donations from kind-hearted individuals

and celebrities as well as groups and organization like Projects Abroad. In order to supplement the nutrition of the children, the Home rears different farm and domestic animals to provide protein sources for the proper growth and development of the children.

Our veterinary volunteers with our staff outreach to the orphanage to give care and treatment to the turkeys, goats, sheep as well as "Let Them Say" – the dog of the Home. Each domestic animal received

injections to cure diseases and to keep the animals healthy for human consumption.



Koforidua Update

Koforidua hosted twelve volunteers in March. All the volunteers have remained dedicated to their respective projects – care, teaching and medicals.

On the sixth of March, all volunteers together with the Staff at Koforidua went to witness Ghana's Independence celebrations in the Eastern Region. The event took place at

the Jackson Park. Our volunteers were happy to be a part of the celebrations. The staff took the volunteers out to a pool site on Independence Day to cool off and have fun.





Projects Abroad has rolled out several building projects in the Hills. Aside building, volunteers have assisted in care and teaching placements in the Hills.

The long awaited library was commissioned by our Country

Director Emmanuel Abaaja at Akokoia - Projects Abroad village. It was funded by a volunteer and built by a volunteers. The library serves as the depository of all donated books from volunteers.

There were drumming and dancing lessons and competitions amongst the volunteers. They exhibited their skills to the local tunes – difficult for many yet it was fun-filled.

Caught on Camera! All five Regional Coordinators treated themselves to a game of table tennis at the Accra Office when they met for their occasional coordinators meeting.



From far left –
Fynn (Accra)
Grant (Cape Coast)
From far right –
Prince (The Hills)
Gabby (Kumasi)
Kwasi (Koforidua)

Accra Human Rights

Our Human Rights Office travels to Dodowa, a semi-urban town in the Greater Accra Region to spread the human rights message.

Our volunteers visited a vocational training school and made presentations on domestic violence. They raised awareness on the Ghana Domestic Violence Act and the institution responsible for the overseeing the implementation of the Act – the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVSU) of the Ghana Police Service.

They partnered with a local assembly man Honorable Daniel N. Odotor to educate the students on their human rights and how they can protect themselves from sexual, economic and physical abuses in



Accra Donation



Projects Abroad Ghana donates a set of computer to *The Ghanaian Times* – a national newspaper – to support their work since volunteers are placed at the newspaper. The equipment was officially accepted on behalf of the Deputy Editor Jim Macauley (standing behind the receiver of the equipment). From right to left: Emmanuel Abaaja – Country Director, Fynn Kusi Adjei – Accra Coordinator, Lisa Neumann – journalism volunteer
The rest are members of staff of *The Ghanaian Times* newspaper.

Cape Coast Fundraising



Two of Projects Abroad ex-volunteers Mellijn van Zanen and Lisette Hummelink have started raising funds for children at the Children's Home of Hope in Asebu, Cape Coast through a [Facebook page](#). They have planned to come to Ghana in June this year to deliver materials and donate money.

Mellijn and Lisette plan to donate money for vaccinations, building of a toilet for the orphanage and other materials like clothes, shoes, toys and more.

Remember to support them to assist the children in the orphanage.



➤ Market Weighton High School graduate Vicky May gathers experience in midwifery while volunteering in Ghana

Twenty-year-old Vicky May, from North Yorkshire, travelled to Ghana to volunteer at the Projects Abroad medical and midwifery placement in the country's capital city, Accra.

During her three month stay, she worked at the Police Hospital, in the labour and paediatrics ward. "The medical staff was always happy to show me around and give me tips and I felt that there was a high standard of care at the hospital," says Vicky.

Before Vicky arrived in Ghana, she had always had plans of travelling and making valuable

use of her time to get experience in medicine and midwifery before she begins

medical training at university.

Vicky's work was not limited to the hospital ward but also in underprivileged communities around Accra. She joined other medical volunteers on various outreach projects in the slum communities where they treated wounds and other skin infections of the local children. "I am convinced that Projects Abroad makes a difference in the lives of these children by sending volunteers over to treat them and I feel satisfied with the little yet meaningful contribution that I have made."

More rewarding for Vicky, was the role she played at the labour ward.

"I supported the women to give birth. When the babies were born, I bathed, weighed, measured and dressed them. Then I would wrap them up and I happened to be the person to present the babies to their mothers for the first time. That was my favourite job!"

Vicky had never been away from home and she insists that the experience has made her more confident and that she has developed a sense of independence, "Although I admit, I did experience a culture shock during my first few days!" But after a short time, what she came to admire about Ghana was the fact that one can walk alone and still feel safe on the streets.

For Vicky, the unique opportunity she has had with Projects Abroad stands her in good stead for her future career: "The things I have seen in the Police Hospital are very difficult to see in the UK. Nobody can take away from me the things I've seen. I came nearest to what I want to do in my future career."

Projects Abroad hopes great stories like these inspire others to help Projects Abroad continue to make a difference, and by doing so, learn something themselves along the way.



University of Stavanger Graduate

Helle Surnevik gathers invaluable experience while spending 4 months volunteering in Ghana.

22-year-old Helle Surnevik from Stavanger in South-Western Norway travelled to Ghana to spend 4 months volunteering with Projects Abroad first at the Care Project in Kumasi, and then at the Building Project in the Akuapim Hills in Eastern Ghana.

Helle recently graduated from the University of Stavanger where she studied economics and administration. Prior to her coming to Ghana to volunteer, she had always planned to volunteer abroad to experience something new and to see a different culture.

She worked briefly with an engineering and services group called Bilfinger to save up some money to travel to Ghana to volunteer at the Kumasi Children's Home for the first 2 months of her stay and then to assist in the building project in the Akuapim Hills in the Eastern Region of Ghana for the remainder of her 4 month volunteering experience.

Some of Helle's daily tasks at the Kumasi Children's Home included helping the children in the orphanage to prepare for school.

Weekend Trips?



Your weekends can never be boring in Ghana as you have unlimited access to interesting tourism destinations within the country. Visit Tafi Atome Monkey Sanctuary in the Volta Region to play with those friendly mona monkeys who's curiosity is endless. It's a three hour's drive from Ghana's capital Accra.

“We [the volunteers] feed and dress them. Then after they are back from school, we play with them for about an hour every day,” she said.

She wishes that Projects Abroad volunteers could do more to make a big difference in the lives of the children in the orphanage. She cited the limited time each volunteer has in order to make some significant difference: “We had very little time to monitor the children grow and develop so it was difficult to say if we were making much difference. But if you are here for long, you can monitor the difference. However, it was good that we were there nonetheless.”

Helle believes that her experience in Ghana will be very useful for her future. “I have learnt to adapt and live in a different country and to be independent and that will definitely help me everywhere I go,” she said.

Helle has had several memorable experiences in Ghana while volunteering with Projects Abroad. “I miss the kids at the orphanage, the other volunteers, traveling on the weekends and my host family. I’ve not had a bad day!”

Ghana is a country noted for its warm hospitality and Helle experienced nothing less than that: “The people are friendly.

It is so easy to go round the country. You feel free and safe moving around.”

Helle had this simple message for future volunteers: “Come here and don’t be afraid of the new culture. Embrace it and you will like it.”

Projects Abroad hopes great stories like these inspire others to help Projects Abroad continue to make a difference, and by doing so, learn something themselves along the way.

Ghanaian food of the month



Most foods in Ghana are heavy and spicy. Rice is one of the staple foods you can find here. It is cooked in different ways.

Jollof rice is rice cooked together with stew. After you finish preparing your tomato stew, you pour the uncooked rice into the stew and add some water and stir appropriately whilst it is cooking. This gives the rice a red colour with an awesome taste and aroma.



Projects Abroad





Azonto lessons in Kumasi

Azonto is a contemporary Ghanaian dance and a music genre which has travelled to several parts of the world. The famous Azonto dance craze is believed to have originated from Ghana's capital, Accra. The dance moves mimic with the hands everyday activities such as washing, brushing shoes, dressing up, flushing toilets as well as driving cars. The dance is intended to have a comical effect. Generally, it reflects the creativity and sense of humour of the Ghanaian people.

Our office in Kumasi organized Azonto dance lessons for volunteers in Kumasi to bring them up to the beats of Azonto music. Next time you visit Ghana, make sure you take some Azonto moves with you. Azontonize yourselves with these [Youtube videos](#)

Social Media

Our social media platforms remains a powerful tool that connects volunteers, friends and family of Projects Abroad though status updates, tweets, pictures, blogs and videos. Our Facebook groups were as active as always in providing information on volunteer experiences and that informs the expectations of volunteers who are coming to Ghana and prospective volunteers as well. Our different Facebook groups – [The Hills](#), [Koforidua](#), [Accra](#), [Cape Coast](#), [Kumasi](#) and the [Projects Abroad Human Rights Office](#) were active throughout the month of March.



An opportunity to relive

For many of our volunteers, our social media platforms provide the opportunity to continuously relive the valuable moments they once had in Ghana and it becomes their space for expressing the heartwarming satisfaction they gained from volunteering to affect the lives of people in need.

Visit us:



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Learn!

Explore!

Projects  Abroad