JICA Country Analysis Paper for Ghana

Japan International Cooperation Agency
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JICA Country Analysis Paper (JCAP) is a paper in which countries are analyzed by JICA, as a development cooperation agency, from the viewpoint of development and is to be utilized in considering and providing effective cooperation to ODA recipient countries. JCAP provides information from the viewpoint of development for the government of Japan in formulating aid policies such as "country development cooperation policy". It is also noted that actual cooperation and projects to be implemented shall be considered and determined in accordance with policies of the government of Japan, and budget of each fiscal year, etc.

Summary

1. Ghana's strategic position

Ghana occupies a strategic and respected position in West Africa as one of the region's most stable and democratic states. Since the return to constitutional rule in 1992, the country has maintained a consistent record of peaceful elections and transfers of power, distinguishing itself as a model of democratic governance in a region where several states continue to face political instability, coups, and violent extremism.

Ghana also plays an important diplomatic role within ECOWAS. Even after the recent withdrawal of several Sahelian countries from the bloc, Ghana has actively worked to preserve regional cohesion and has frequently served as a mediator in political crises. Its balanced foreign policy and reputation as an honest broker enable it to contribute constructively to conflict prevention, security cooperation, and regional dialogue.

Economically, Ghana is one of the largest and most diversified economies in West Africa, serving as a key commercial hub with strong connectivity, human resources, and institutional capacity relative to its neighbors. For Japan, Ghana — an English-speaking country with a stable security environment — serves as a key entry point for Japanese companies seeking to expand their business operations into West Africa.

2. Economic and Social Situation

In late 2022, Ghana underwent one of its worst economic crises in a generation, driven by soaring inflation, a collapsing currency, unsustainable debt, and loss of access to international capital markets. These conditions culminated in Ghana's effective sovereign default in December 2022.

In response, Ghana launched an aggressive, multi-year stabilization program, focusing on restoring debt sustainability, tightening fiscal discipline, stabilizing prices, and rebuilding investor confidence. By late 2025, Ghana's economy had moved from crisis management following the 2022 effective default toward macroeconomic stabilization and early recovery, although structural vulnerabilities remained significant. These structural vulnerabilities include, for example, the country's high dependence on export of primary commodities such as crude oil and gold, which makes the economy and public finances highly sensitive to international commodity price fluctuations. A long-term resilience will require deeper structural reforms, especially in terms of diversification, strengthening domestic revenue, and job creation.

According to the UN, Ghana's population is expected to reach 35.1 million in 2025 (UN Population), 60% of whom are accounted to be in the working age group (aged 15 to 64). The GSS estimates the youth unemployment rate (15–24) to be 32% in 2025. It is also said that 60% of graduates have difficulty securing employment. Youth unemployment is one of the most persistent labor-market challenges in Ghana. The UN estimates that 58% of Ghana's population will be urban by 2024. Ghana faces several structural challenges such as increasing informal settlements, rising housing costs, congested roads, weak public transport coverage, strain on water sanitation and waste management.

Although Ghana remains one of West Africa's most politically stable democracies, it is facing increasing security pressures stemming from Sahelian jihadist spillover, internal violent conflict (chieftaincy and land dispute), organized crime, and rising violent incidents. Regional dynamics also heighten vulnerability.

3. Overview of Development Plans and Development Cooperation

The current national framework, the Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework (MTNDPF) 2026–2029, highlights on "Resetting Ghana: Creating Jobs, Ensuring Accountability, and Promoting Shared Prosperity." The MTNDPF (2026-2029) has five key dimensions: 1)

Economic Development, 2) Social Development, 3) Environment, Infrastructure & Spatial Planning, 4) Governance & Institutional Development, and 5) International Relations & Cooperation.

4. Future JICA's Cooperation Policy

Japan and JICA have long regarded Ghana as an important partner, and JICA has accumulated substantial cooperation assets that can be leveraged for scalable impact and regional spillover. These include flagship cooperation in the field of health (e.g., the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research and maternal and child health record book), agriculture (e.g., CARD and market-oriented approaches), industrial productivity (Kaizen), infrastructure (e.g., Tema Motorway Interchange Project), and human resource development, comprising education (e.g., improving mathematics education through School Management Committees) and public sector capacity development (e.g., strengthening the Civil Service Training Centre), supported by partnerships with universities, private sector actors, and civil society. Ghana's relative stability and its role as a West African hub further enable piloting and dissemination of models through third-country training and regional knowledge sharing.

Given these circumstances, JICA's future cooperation should continue to promote sustainable economic growth, placing a stronger emphasis on human security, resilience, and institutional effectiveness. This includes: (i) building resilient economic foundations by improving connectivity in the sub-region and urban management; (ii) strengthening industrial and agricultural competitiveness under AfCFTA; (iii) improving resilience and stability of society (enhancing health security/universal health coverage (UHC), building strong community foundations, and strengthening governance); and (iv) developing human resources to promote self-reliant growth by addressing skills gaps and enhancing planning and implementation capacity. To maximize results, JICA would combine modalities flexibly and deepen co-creation with the government, the private sector, academia, and development partners, leveraging Ghana's hub function to expand its impact across West Africa.

Strategy and Direction of JICA's Future Operation

Basic Policy: Building Resilient Social and Economic Systems toward Sustainable Economic Growth	
Priority Area	Development Issue
1.Building Resilient Economic Foundations to Support Sustainable Growth	1-1 Improving Connectivity in the Sub-Region
	1-2 Improving Urban Management
2.Strengthening Industrial and Agricultural Competitiveness	2-1 Promoting Industrialization and Business Development under the AfCFTA
	2-2 Enhancing Agricultural Value Chain
3.Improving Resilience and Stability of Society	3-1 Achieving UHC and Enhancing Health Security
	3-2 Building Strong Community Foundations
	3-3 Strengthening Governance
4.Developing Human Resources to Promote Self-reliant Growth	4-1. Developing Human Resources to Promote Self-reliant Growth

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	English	日本語
ABE Initiative	African Business Education Initiative for Youth	アフリカの若者のための産業人材育成イニシアティブ
ACCP	Africa Clean Cities Platform	アフリカのきれいな街プラットフォーム
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area	アフリカ大陸自由貿易圏
AIDA	Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa	アフリカの産業開発加速化
AU	African Union	アフリカ連合
BIAT	Boosting Intra African Trade	アフリカ域内貿易の促進
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme	包括的アフリカ農業開発計画
CARD	Coalition for African Rice Development	アフリカ稲作振興連合
CHPS	Community-based Health Planning and Services	地域保健計画・サービス
CLFZ	Child Labor Free Zone	児童労働フリーゾーン
COMPASS	Community Participation for Sustainable School	コミュニティ参加型持続可能な学校
DSA	Debt Sustainability Analysis	債務持続可能性分析
DX	Digital Transformation	デジタル・トランスフォーメーション
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	西アフリカ諸国経済共同体
EMBRACE	Ensure Mothers and Babies Regular Access to Care	母子の継続的ケアへのアクセス確保
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	国際連合食糧農業機関
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	国内総生産
GALOP	Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project	学習成果向上・説明責任強化プロジェクト
GHS	Ghana Health Service	ガーナ保健サービス
GRA	Ghana Revenue Authority	ガーナ歳入庁
GRIP	Ghana Rice Production Improvement Project	ガーナ稲作生産改善プロジェクト
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service	ガーナ統計局
HSMTDP	Health Sector Medium Term Development Plan	保健セクター中期開発計画
IABA	Integrated Area-Based Approach	統合的地域アプローチ

ILO	International Labor Organization	国際労働機関
IMF	International Monetary Fund	国際通貨基金
JETRO	Japan External Trade Organization	日本貿易振興機構
JGA	JICA Global Agenda	JICA グローバル・アジェンダ（課題別事業戦略）
JOCVs	JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers	JICA 海外協力隊
KCCP	Knowledge Co-Creation Program	知識共創プログラム
LCA	Life-course Approach	ライフ・コースアプローチ
MCHRB	Maternal and Child Health Record Book	母子手帳
MNCH	Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health	母子保健（母体・新生児・小児の健康）
MOH	Ministry of Health	保健省
MRH	Ministry of Roads and Highways	道路・高速道路省
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases	非感染性疾患
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions	国別決定貢献
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission	国家開発計画委員会
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations	非政府組織
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme	国民健康保険制度
NINJA	Next Innovation with Japan	JICAの開発途上国におけるビジネス・イノベーション創出に向けた起業家支援活動
NMIMR	Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research	野口記念医学研究所
NTE	Non-traditional Export	非伝統的輸出
OECD/SWAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development / Sahel and West Africa Club	経済協力開発機構／サヘル・西アフリカ・クラブ
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association	保護者と教師の会「PTA（ピー・ティー・エー）」
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals	持続可能な開発目標
SHEP	Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion	小規模農家向け市場志向型農業振興
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa	サブサハラ・アフリカ
SSA Big 4	Sub-Saharan Africa Big Four (Top 4 economies/startup hubs in SSA: Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Egypt)	サブサハラ・アフリカ地域の主要経済国・スタートアップ拠点：ナイジェリア、南アフリカ、ケニア、エジプト

TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on African Development	アフリカ開発会議
UHC	Universal Health Coverage	ユニバーサル・ヘルス・カバレッジ
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs	国連経済社会局
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	国際連合開発計画
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	国際連合教育科学文化機関
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	国際連合児童基金
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization	国際連合工業開発機関
WHO	World Health Organization	世界保健機関

List of authors

In Charge of	Department/Division		Name
Supervision	Africa Division 2, Africa Department	Director	ASANO Seizaburo
	Cameroon Office	Chief Representative（Served as Director of the Africa Division　2 until December 2025）	OKUMOTO Masakatsu
	Ghana Office	Chief Representative	SUZUKI Momoko
Chapter 1 Chapter 2	Ghana Office	Chief Representative	SUZUKI Momoko
		Senior Representative	ODA Ryotaro
	Africa Division 2, Africa Department	Senior Assistant Director	KURISU Masanori
		Associate Expert	MISEKI Risa
		Intern	NAKAMURA Miku
	Ghana Office	Chief Representative	SUZUKI Momoko
		Senior Representative	ODA Ryotaro
		Representative	AIZU Naho
			MORISHITA Keisuke
			NAGAO Mako
			SATO Miku
		Project Formulation Advisor	MATSUO Hidenori
			NAGAI Tomokazu
		Principle Program Specialist	Joshua B. Mabe
		Senior Program Specialist	Prosper N. Tang
			Sylvester Bayowo Bagulo
		Program Specialist	Nana Adwoa Asiam
			Stephen Gerrar
			Prince Bio
			Woedem Gomez
Chapter 3	Africa Division 2, Africa Department	Deputy Assistant Director	MAEDA Yu
		Associate Expert	MISEKI Risa
Planning	Cameroon Office	Chief Representative (former Director of Africa Division 2 until December 2025))	OKUMOTO Masakatsu
	Ghana Office	Chief Representative	SUZUKI Momoko
Writing Support	Planning and TICAD Process	Senior Assistant Director	SARASHINA Ryo

	Division, Africa Department		
	Africa Division 2, Africa Department	Senior Deputy Director	ABE Go
		Senior Assistant Director	KURISU Masanori
		Assistant Deputy Director	MAEDA Yu
		Associate Expert	MISEKI Risa
		Intern	NAKAMURA Miku

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Chapter 1 Ghana’s Development Policies and Plans

1.1 Ghana’s Development Policies and Plans

- Ghana’s national development policy is guided by a constitutionally mandated planning system under the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). The system operates through long-term, medium-term, and district-level planning instruments which are all aligned with the 1992 Constitution (Article 36) and Acts 479/480.

1.1.1 Long-Term National Development Plan (2018–2057)

- Long-Term National Development Plan (2018-2057) represents Ghana’s first comprehensive long-term development strategy. It was launched in 2017 to commemorate 60 years of independence and to chart a vision for the next four decades. With the vision of “A free, just, prosperous, and self-reliant nation which secures the welfare and happiness of its citizens, while playing a leading role in international affairs,” the plan aims to achieve a transformative change over 40 years. This long-term developmental agenda has been structured to be implemented with 10 different 4-year medium-term development plans within that the 40-year horizon.
- This transformation seeks to structurally, predictably, and measurably improve the living standards of Ghanaians across economic, social, environmental, and institutional dimensions. The plan is built upon the following five overarching goals: 1. Build an industrialized, inclusive, and resilient economy, 2. Create an equitable, healthy, and prosperous society, 3. Develop well-planned and safe communities while protecting the natural environment, 4. Establish effective, efficient, and dynamic institutions for national development, 5. Strengthen Ghana’s role in international affairs.

1.1.2 Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework (2026–2029)

- In January 2026, the NDPC presented the Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework (2026–2029) to the Ministry of Finance. The current framework operates under the theme “Resetting Ghana’s Agenda: Creating Jobs, Ensuring Accountability and Promoting Shared Prosperity.” It is structured around five key dimensions: economic development; social development; infrastructure, environment and spatial development; governance and institutional development; and international relations. Each dimension identifies priority issues, broad objectives, and strategies aligned with Ghana’s international commitments
- The plan aligns with major flagship initiatives such as the 24-Hour Economy initiative, the Accelerated Export Development Programme, the Agriculture for Transformation Agenda, and Feed Ghana in areas of economic development. Social development initiatives include universal access interventions, early childhood development programmes, and the Mahama Care Trust Fund, which targets non-communicable diseases not fully covered under the National Health Insurance Scheme. On infrastructure, key initiatives include environment, and spatial development, the Big Push infrastructure programme, particularly in road development, and the Clean Up Ghana Initiative.
- The addition of a policy chapter on international and diplomatic relations further signals Ghana’s intention to play a more proactive role in regional stability and development, consistent with its position as a key democratic anchor in West Africa and as host of the AfCFTA Secretariat.

1.1.3 Other Related Government Initiatives

- 24-Hour Economy and Accelerated Export Development Programme (24H+): A multi-sector economic transformation programme, introduced by President John Dramani Mahama on 2 July 2025. It aims to transform Ghana's economy, moving it from an import-dependent, low-value, daytime economy to a globally competitive, production-led economy operating around the clock. The initiative aims to create 1.7 million quality jobs within four years, with support from both government financing and private sector investment totalling nearly US$2 billion committed. The programme is implemented through eight coordinated programmes spanning agriculture, industry, logistics, finance, digital services, human capital, and governance. The 24-Hour Economy Authority has been proposed to regulate and promote its implementation.

- Feed Ghana Programme: Launched on April 12–13, 2025, this agricultural transformation programme aims to achieve food sovereignty, reduce imports, boost production, modernize farming, create jobs, and supply raw materials for a robust agri-industrial economy. It sits under the broader Agriculture for Economic Transformation Agenda (AETA).
- The Big Push Infrastructure Programme: Ghana's US$10 billion, multi-year national infrastructure transformation agenda, also launched in 2025. The programme aims to modernize transport, energy, water, and digital systems; complete abandoned projects; stimulate economic growth and exports; and create massive jobs across all 16 regions.
- Ghana Medical Trust Fund (Mahama Care): Ghana's national medical trust fund designed to protect citizens from catastrophic health costs by funding chronic disease treatment, expanding specialist care, and strengthening the health system through sustainable financing and public-private collaboration.

1.2 Key Development Issues in Ghana

1.2.1 Macro-Economic Situation

- Although Ghana has recently shown signs of recovery from its effective sovereign default in December 2022, fundamental macroeconomic vulnerabilities persist. These challenges are structural, recurring, and interconnected. These structural vulnerabilities include, for example, the country's high dependence on export of primary commodities to limited countries, which leaves the economy susceptible to global price fluctuations.
- The IMF's Fifth Review (December 3, 2025) under Ghana's 39-month Extended Credit Facility (ECF) concluded that macroeconomic stabilization was gaining momentum and that Ghana's performance under the programme had been broadly satisfactory. All quantitative performance criteria and indicative targets were met, and the review unlocked a US$385 million disbursement, bringing total support to about US$2.8 billion.
- According to the IMF, economic growth exceeded expectations through September 2025, driven by robust performance in the services and agriculture sectors, while the cedi appreciated and international reserves surpassed programme targets. Robust gold and cocoa exports strengthened the external sector, contributing to an improved current account position.
- A major milestone highlighted by the IMF is that inflation has returned to the Bank of Ghana's target range of 6–10 percent, marking the first period of single-digit inflation since 2021. With inflation subsiding, the Bank of Ghana has begun a cautious monetary-easing cycle and implemented a new structured foreign exchange framework to smooth market volatility.
- The IMF also reports significant progress on debt restructuring. Ghana has:
    - Signed bilateral debt relief agreements with many members of the Official Creditor Committee,
    - Finalized several agreements in principle with external commercial creditors, and
    - Continued engagements with remaining creditors under terms consistent with programme parameters.
- On the fiscal front, Ghana is on track in 2025 to achieve a primary surplus of 1.5% of GDP,

supported by corrective actions and adherence to the new Fiscal Responsibility Framework. The country has also significantly reduced its fiscal deficit, contributing to the overall improvement in fiscal balances. The IMF emphasizes strong programme ownership and improved investor confidence but stresses that continued implementation of structural reforms — including energy-sector restructuring, strengthened governance, and enhanced public-financial-management systems — is essential to fully restore debt sustainability and safeguard the recovery.

1.2.2 Trade Structure and External Sector

- Ghana’s export structure remains highly concentrated, with over 80% of export earnings derived from gold, petroleum, and cocoa beans and products. As a result, the country is significantly exposed to fluctuations in international commodity prices.
- In 2025, Ghana’s grain self-sufficiency rate stood at approximately 66%, with particularly high dependence on imports of rice and wheat. Due to unfavourable geographical and climatic conditions, wheat production is virtually non-existent, making the country fully reliant on imports. Rice self-sufficiency is estimated at only around 47%, leaving more than half of domestic demand to be met through imports—highlighting persistent vulnerabilities in food security (USDA FAS, 2025).
- Ghana’s main export destinations include Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, India, South Africa, and China, while China and India also feature prominently as key import sources. Imports from Japan (approximately 2.1%) mainly consist of automobiles, rubber products, and machinery.
- Intra-African trade accounts for around 10% of Ghana’s total trade, a relatively small share compared to other regions. Going forward, the ECOWAS framework and potential monetary integration are expected to contribute to expanding regional trade.

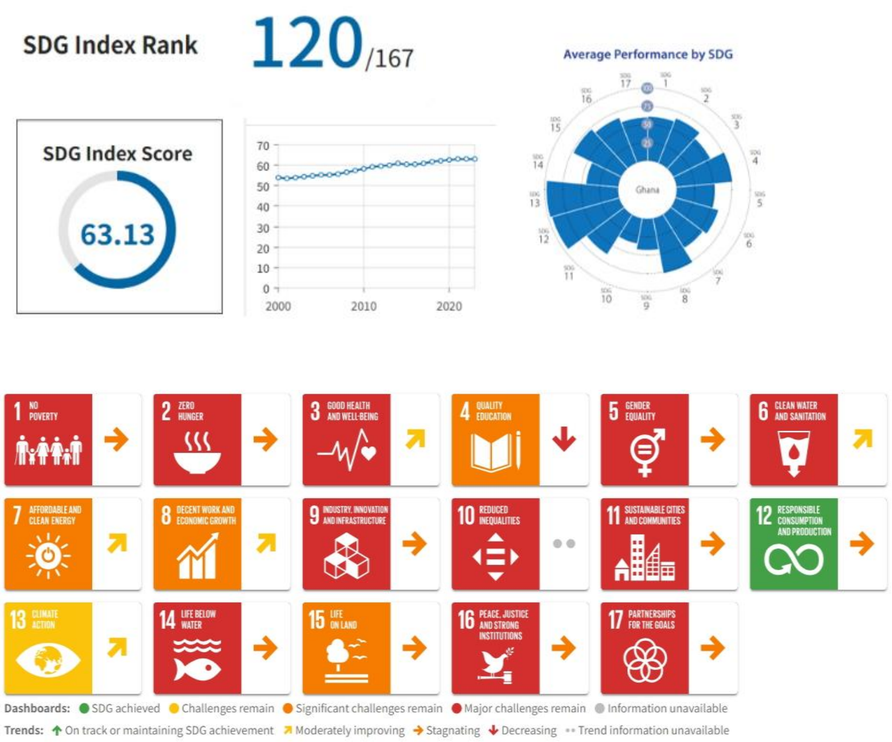
1.2.3 Achievements of SDGs

- Ghana was ranked 120th out of 167 countries, scoring 63.13 points in 2025. Ghana has made moderate but uneven progress toward the SDGs. The country demonstrates notable achievements in education gender parity, social protection expansion, energy access and macroeconomic stabilization. However, persistent challenges remain in poverty, regional inequalities, health system gaps, sanitation deficits, climate vulnerability, underemployment of youth, and a lack of institutional trust. Ghana’s 2025 Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the SDGs report highlights the following.
- Poverty and Inequalities (SDG 1, 10): While social protection expansion is improving, multidimensional poverty remains high at 41.3% (2023) and stagnant. Monetary poverty is projected to rise to 31.5% in 2025, indicating vulnerability to economic shocks. Deep regional inequalities, especially between northern and southern Ghana, continue to hinder inclusive development.
- Health and Sanitation (SDG 3): Maternal mortality in Ghana remains more than four times above the SDGs target at 109 per 100,000 live births (2023) with stark regional disparities. Only 24.3% of the population has access to basic sanitation. Open defecation remains high at 24.6% posing serious public health risks.
- Decent work (SDG 8): 80% of the employed population are engaged in informal activities. Youth aged 15 to 24 and 15 to 35 have been disproportionately left behind in the labor market, consistently recording the highest unemployment rates. This challenge is particularly acute among young women, who experience higher levels of joblessness compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, a significant portion of youth — 19.7% of those aged 15 to 24 — are not engaged in education, employment, or training (NEET), highlighting a critical gap in

youth inclusion and empowerment.

- Climate Action (SDG 13): GHG emissions are rising and renewable energy accounts for 31.6% of installed electricity capacity—including hydropower—the share of non-hydro renewable energy remains below 1%, leaving the power mix highly exposed to rainfall variability and thus limiting climate resilience. (APRA 2025)..
- According to the VNR, the government prioritizes specific goals, including decent work (SDG 8.5), basic education (SDG 4.1), sanitation (SDG 6.2), and energy efficiency (SDG 7.3) and effective institutions (SDG 16.6). To achieve these targets, the government is implementing an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to mobilize public and private resources and ensure alignment with SDG investments. It seeks to further strengthen strategic partnerships with youth, the private sector, academia, and development partners, promoting co-creation and joint investment through collaborative platforms (Ghana VNR, 2025).

Figure 1 SDG Index Rank



(Source: Sustainable Development Report 2025 (Sachs et al. 2025))

1.2.4 Resilient Economic Foundation

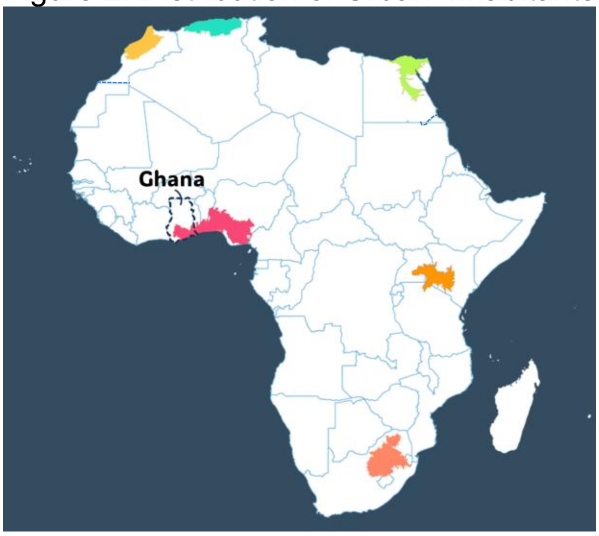
(1) Connectivity in the Sub-Region

- The coastal area along the Gulf of Guinea is Africa's largest population cluster with 93 million people and has strong potential as the continent's biggest market. Although this population agglomeration is envisioned as an engine of economic growth in the region, it is not realizing its full potential. Persistent overreliance on road transport, chronic delays in port clearance procedures, and weak domestic and cross-border connectivity have collectively diminished the region's effective market size and constrained the productivity of coastal–inland economic linkages.
- In Ghana, domestic freight transport depends overwhelmingly on road networks — approximately 95 percent of all cargo movements — yet much of the trunk road system remains single carriageway, with deteriorating pavements. The government's assessments

recorded that only 47% of pavements were in “good” condition, 32% in “fair,” and 21% in “poor” condition, which is far below the target of 60% in “good” condition by 2027 (MRH, 2023). This degradation undermines transport speed, increases vehicle damage, and raises logistics costs, thereby eroding systemwide productivity. Moreover, the Eastern Corridor — a critical shortcut linking ports, inland production zones, and the Sahel — has experienced repeated interruptions due to incomplete sections, construction suspensions, and payment delays. As long as these major corridors remain underdeveloped, inland regions will be unable to benefit from improved agricultural freshness and yield, the timely procurement of industrial inputs, or the economies of scale generated at coastal gateways.

- Portside constraints further exacerbate these structural bottlenecks. The average release time for import cargo at Tema Port stands at 10 days and 21 hours (GRA, 2022). Delays stemming from inspection procedures, permits, and gaps in pre-arrival information contribute to this protracted clearance cycle. Although government reforms, including the rollout of the Integrated Customs Management System (ICUMS), paperless port processes, and an upgraded port single window, have made progress, persistent issues such as manual intervention, fragmented interagency coordination, and operational inconsistencies continue to hinder efficiency. Without decisive resolutions to these challenges, import and export costs will remain elevated, preventing coastal economic gains from extending into the hinterland.
- The AfCFTA is driving the continent’s transition toward a unified single market. However, to fully leverage AfCFTA’s scale benefits, regional corridors must be strengthened through simultaneous improvements in both physical (“hard”) infrastructure such as roads, border posts, and logistics facilities, and trade facilitation (“soft”) measures, including simplified border procedures, interoperable digital systems, and harmonized customs regimes.

Figure 2: Distribution of Urban Inhabitants (More than 10 million) in Africa



(Source: OECD/SWAC, 2018)

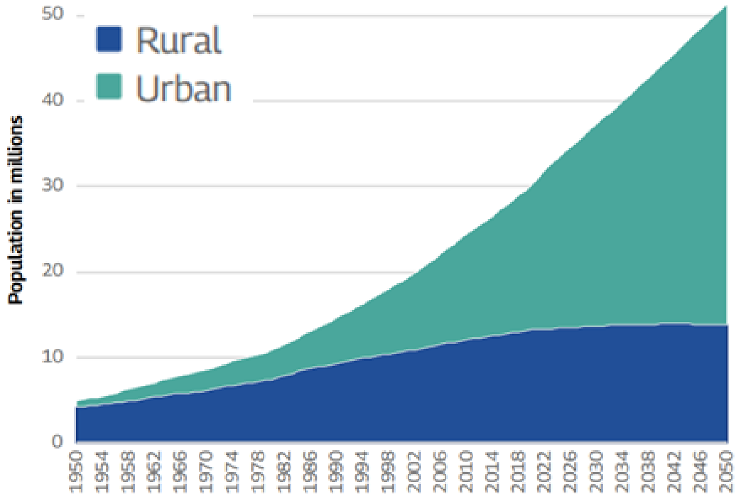
Disclaimer: Country borders or names do not necessarily reflect official endorsement or acceptance by JICA. This map is only for illustrative purposes and does not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of JICA, concerning the legal status of any country or territory or concerning the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

(2) Urban Management

- Ghana is experiencing rapid urban population growth, with an average annual growth rate of 4.6%, resulting 56.7% of citizens living in urban areas (GSS, 2021). While this population concentration has supported economic growth, infrastructure investment has fallen far short of keeping pace with demographic expansion. The annual infrastructure requirements are estimated to be US$37.2 billion, which is nearly 40 times the government's capital expenditure in 2021 (World Bank, 2025). This significant investment gap affects a wide range of foundational urban systems, thereby threatening the long-term sustainability of urban areas.

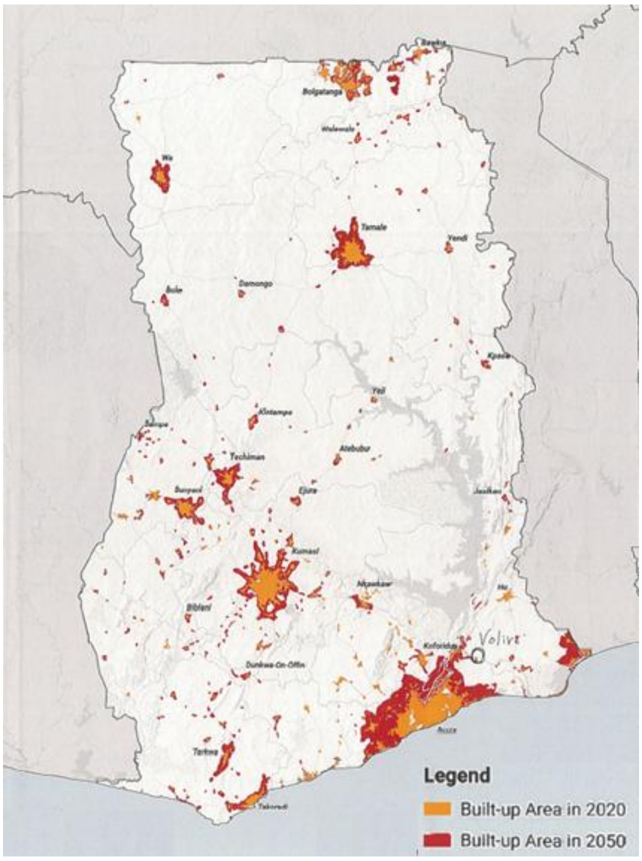
- Deficiencies in transport infrastructure are particularly severe. In urban areas, traffic congestion, logistics delays, and rising mobility costs have become chronic. In Accra and Kumasi, physical urban expansion has outpaced population growth, resulting in increasingly low-density development patterns, while weak transport networks have exacerbated persistent congestion. Furthermore, delays and cost overruns amounting to roughly GHS 7.03 billion have been recorded in road development projects, highlighting inefficiencies in policy implementation and project management (NDPC, 2024).
- The power sector faces structural challenges. Aging and overloaded transmission and distribution lines have led to substantial power losses of 32% driven by a combination of overloaded equipment, deteriorated distribution infrastructure, illegal connections, and unpaid bills (ECG, 2024). These conditions have increased the risk of outages, heightened uncertainty for businesses, and constrained growth in urban economies.
- Environmental pressures further compound these challenges. The capacity for waste management has not kept pace with rising waste generation, heightening flood risks and worsening public health outcomes. It is estimated that the volume of waste generated in Accra has tripled over the past two decades, while the segregation and recovery of organic and recyclable materials, which account for roughly 60% of total waste, remain inadequate (JICA, 2025). The Kpone landfill, which was designed to handle 700 tons of waste per day, is receiving over 750 tons per day and is approaching its operational limit. Strengthening source separation, composting, and biogas production will be essential to reduce dependence on landfills and mitigate future environmental burdens.
- Climate change is further intensifying these urban challenges. Ghana's coastal areas, which account for a substantial proportion of national economic activity, are highly vulnerable to rising sea levels, erosion, and storm surges. Approximately 80% of the country's 550km coastline is affected by erosion, with an average shoreline retreat of 2m per year and reaching up to 17m in certain locations (UNESCO, 2024). These developments pose serious threats to the lives and livelihoods of coastal residents.
- These challenges are not merely a shortage of infrastructure, but also a broader deficit in the institutional, financial, technical, human, and collaborative capacities needed to plan, operate, and maintain urban systems effectively. In order to maximize the impact of limited resources amid rising urban demand and fiscal constraints, Ghana must strengthen its long-term, integrated urban planning; enhance the maintenance and asset management capacity of its urban infrastructure; and incorporate disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation into its urban policy frameworks.

Figure 3: Population in Urban and Rural Area in Ghana



(Source : UN DESA, 2018)

Figure 4: Urbanisation Transition in Ghana



(Source: GSS, 2021)

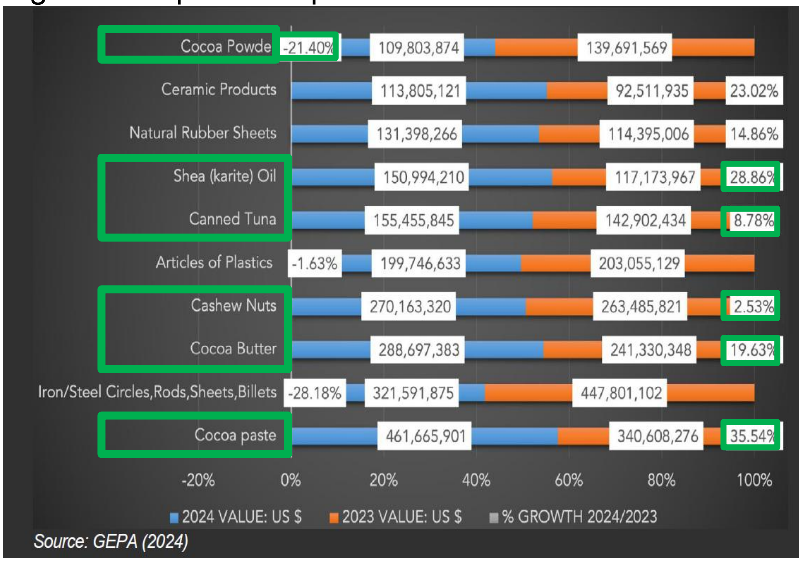
1.2.5 Industrial and Agricultural Competitiveness

(1) Private Sector Development

- Ghana retains a strong economic standing and political stability within West Africa, though improving public sector efficiency remains important for creating a more supportive business environment. The Business Ready Index 2024 highlights Ghana’s solid performance in labor-related indicators, utility services, and business insolvency frameworks. At the same time, notable challenges persist in business entry, market competition, and dispute resolution, which emphasises the need for continued regulatory and institutional reforms.

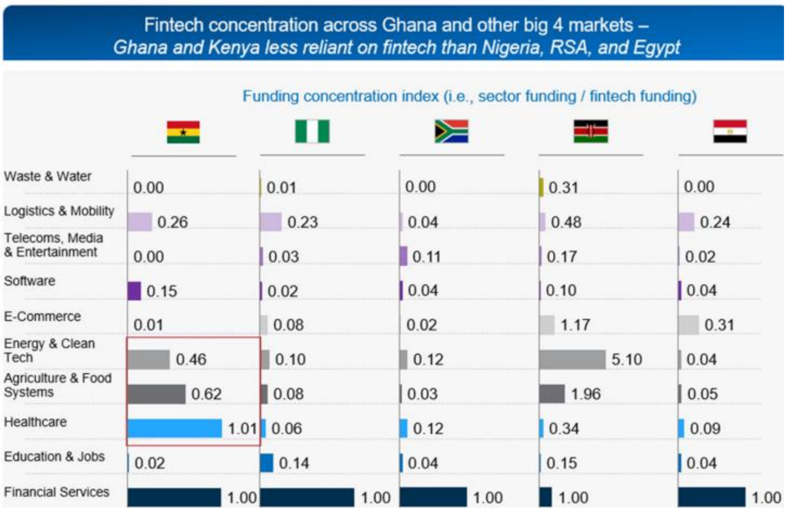
- Ghana's trade structure remains heavily dependent on natural resources and raw material exports. Nevertheless, non-traditional exports, mainly agro-processed products, grew by 134% between 2020 and 2024, with 45% destined for regional markets in 2024. Building on this positive momentum, Ghana is increasingly well-positioned to expand value-added production and strengthen its long-term export competitiveness.
- The implementation of the AfCFTA presents a major opportunity for Ghana to expand its regional trade. However, there are still several obstacles to overcome. Limited market access, high certification costs, and complex administrative procedures continue to impede the ability of the private sector to benefit fully from the AfCFTA framework. To address these challenges, Ghana has established a National Coordination Office in early stages to lead domestic AfCFTA implementation and is actively strengthening institutional systems and operational processes to support an effective rollout and enhance national readiness.
- Ghana's startup ecosystem ranks fifth in Sub-Saharan Africa, behind the region's "Big Four" such as Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa and Egypt, reflecting a landscape of growing yet still emerging innovation. Fintech represents a comparatively smaller share of the ecosystem, accounting for 30% of startups and 28% of total funding. In contrast, agriculture (19% of startups, 18% of funding) and healthcare (13%, 29%) attract relatively higher levels of investment, underscoring both sector-specific opportunities and the structural constraints that continue to shape diversification within the market.
- Ghana's private sector development policy has remained largely consistent. The National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework (NMTDPF 2022–2025) prioritizes international trade and investment, strengthening the supply of quality raw materials, advancing industrial skills development, improving the business enabling environment, formalizing the informal sector, and supporting growth in tourism and the creative industry.
- Under the new administration, the policy focus has increasingly shifted toward agri-business. A flagship initiative, the 24-Hour Economy, seeks to enhance productivity and optimize the use of resources for export orientation and job creation. In line with this strategic direction, the former Ministry of Trade and Industry has been restructured as the Ministry of Trade, Agribusiness and Industry (MoTAI). The updated strategic priorities of MoTAI focus on promoting value-addition in priority sectors, accelerating the diversification of non-traditional exports, and advancing regulatory reforms to strengthen the overall business enabling environment.

Figure 5: Top10 NTE products in 2024



(Source: GEPA 2024)

Figure 6: Fintech Concentration across Ghana and other big 4 markets

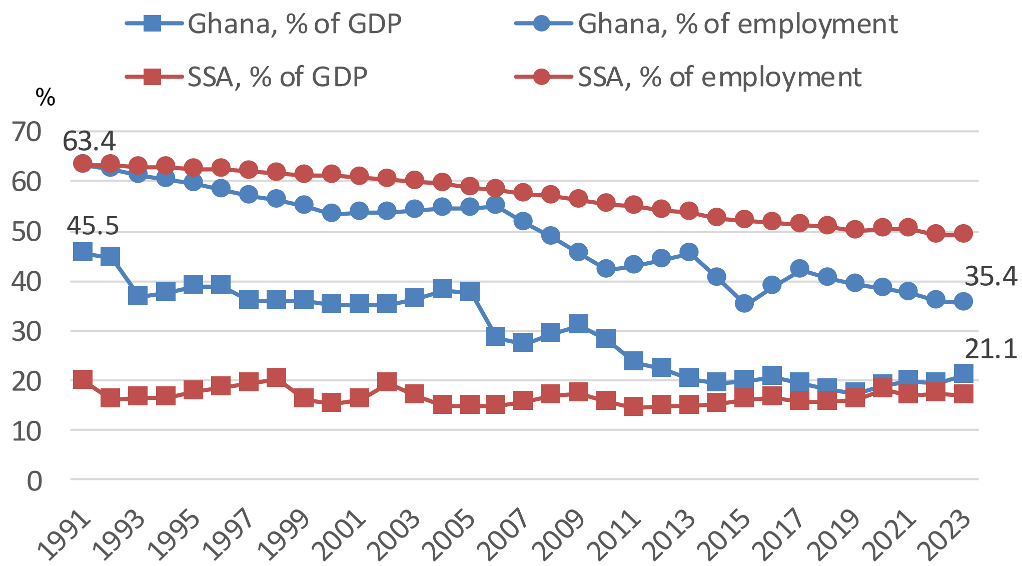


(Source: JICA 2025)

(2) Agriculture Development

- (Agriculture in Ghana’s economy) Ghana's agricultural sector is a fundamental component of its economy, playing a critical role in ensuring national food security, generating employment, and providing raw materials for industries. In 2023, the sector contributed to 21.1% of the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (World Bank, 2025). Despite experiencing a rapid urbanization, with an increase of 38.6% in urban population, compared to 6.4% in rural areas between 2013 and 2023, agriculture remains an important employer, engaging 35.4% of the labor force, compared to 17.7% in industry and 46.9% in services in 2023 (World Bank, 2025). In 2023, Ghana exported US$2.84 billion worth of agricultural products, of which 10.4% was towards ECOWAS member countries, while in the same year, the country imported US$2.21 billion worth of agricultural products, 16.5% of which came from ECOWAS member countries (ITC, 2025). However, this structure indicates a continued dependence on primary agriculture and exposure to external shocks in food supply, as well as limited competitiveness relative to the expanding services sector.

Figure 7: Share of agriculture in GDP and employment in Ghana and Sub-Saharan Africa

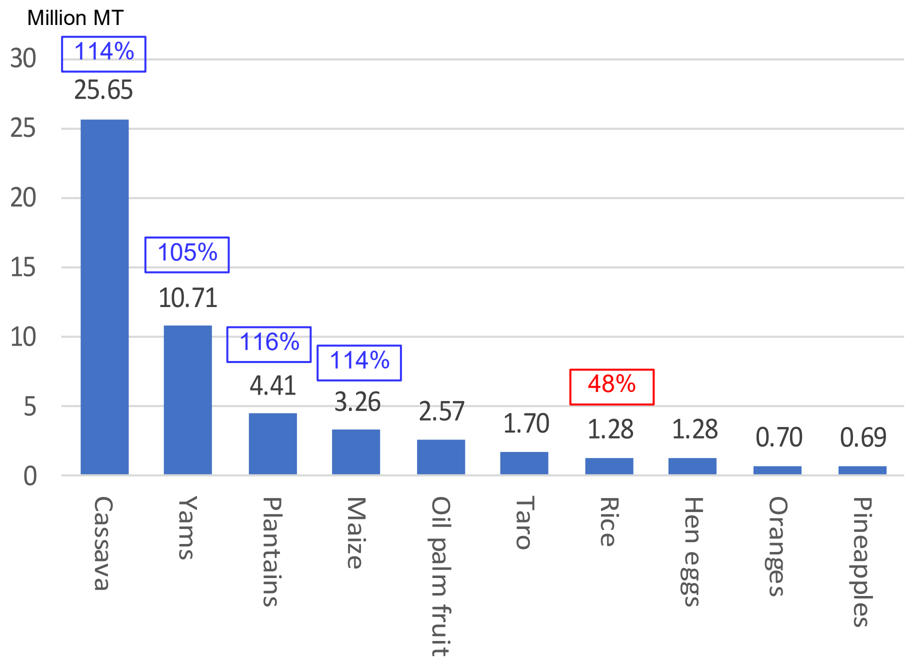


SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa

(Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, Retrieved May 2025)

- (Major crops) major products include cassava, yam, plantain, maize, oil palm, taro, rice, cocoa, citrus, and pineapples, in descending order in terms of quantity produced in 2022 (FAO, 2025b). Of these crops, rice is the only staple crop for which the country is far from self-sufficient, producing only 47.5% of the required quantity in 2022 (MoFA, 2023). In 2022, it was estimated that Ghanaians consumed 1.4 million metric ton of rice (43.5 kg per person), compared to 0.6 million metric ton in 2008 (22.6 kg per person) (MoFA, 2023). In 2023, the country spent US$286 million importing rice (ITC, 2025). The country's most important export crop is cocoa, accounting for 10% of the agricultural sector's GDP. In 2023, Ghana exported US$1,898 million worth of cocoa (ITC, 2025). However, production of the crop has been in a sharp decline since 2021. This is attributed to a myriad of factors including climate change, aging trees, diseases, and loss of farms due to illegal small-scale mining activities (Galamsey).

Figure 8: Ghana's top 10 most produced crops and self-sufficiency ratio of staple crops (2022)



(Source: Production: FAOSTAT, Retrieved May 2025; Self-sufficiency ratio: MoFA, PFJ2.0.)

- (Agroecology and farm economy) Ghana can be divided into six agro-ecological zones, in which the mean annual rainfall varies between 600 mm and 1,500 mm. In the north, there is only one long rainy season from May to October. The major cash crops there are cotton and tobacco, while the main food crops are sorghum, maize, millet, cowpeas, groundnuts, yam and rice. In the south, there are two relatively short rainy seasons, one from March to July and another from September to October. The major cash crops there are cocoa, oil palm, coffee and rubber, while the main food crops are maize, plantain, cocoyam, cassava and rice (FAO, 2001; FAO, 2005; MoFA, 2022). Agriculture in Ghana is predominantly rain-fed: Out of 1.9 million hectares of potentially irrigable land, only 1.6% is equipped for irrigation (FAO, 2025a). The majority (56.7%) of farmers in Ghana are smallholders with less than 2 acres (0.81 hectares) of land. Compared to other sectors, the poverty ratio in the agricultural sector is high, with 42.7% of households found below the poverty line in 2016/17 (GSS, 2018). Some parts of the country are still experiencing a high prevalence of malnutrition among children and adults. Compared to the middle and southern regions, the northern regions have a higher proportion of farming households in the population (between 64.6% and 77.5% depending on the region), as well as a higher proportion of food-insecure households (between 23% and 49% depending on the region) (GSS et al., 2022).

- (Major challenges) The Ghanaian agricultural sector is facing various challenges across its value chain. At the farm level, productivity is generally low, due to the high cost of essential inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, labor and mechanized equipment; limited knowledge of farming techniques among farmers; and inconsistent rainfall patterns and prolonged dry spells caused by the climate change. The quality of produce is negatively affected by limited infrastructure and inadequate handling techniques during the harvesting, storage, processing, transportation, and distribution stages. The low income generated from agricultural activities, coupled with the physically demanding nature of the work, makes the sector less appealing to young people. Despite women's significant contributions across various stages of the agricultural value chain, they experience considerable disparities in access to crucial resources such as land, financial capital, and technology.

1.2.6 Resilience and Stability of Society

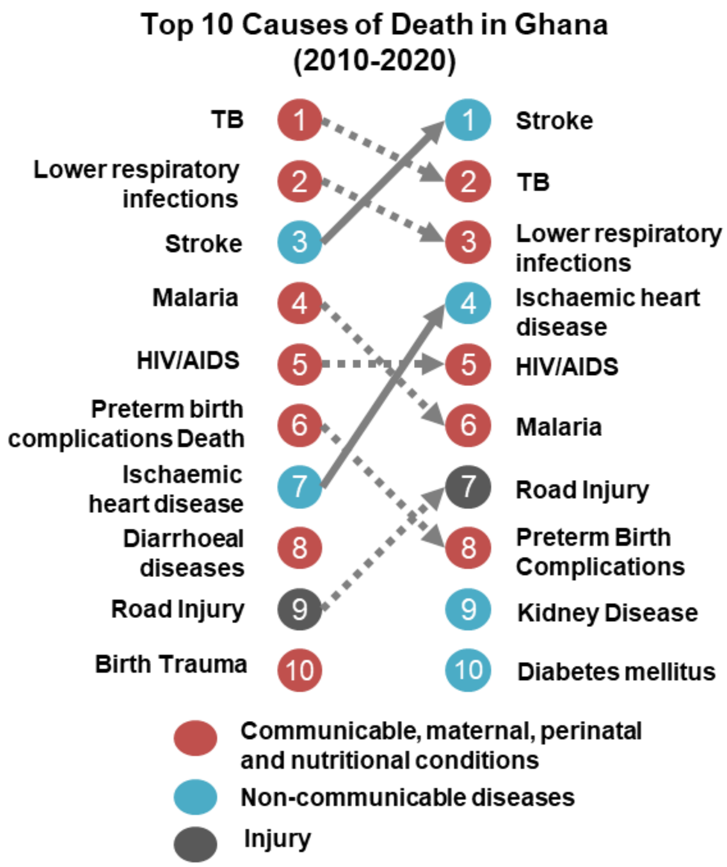
(1) Health

- Health is a central pillar of Ghana’s Country Development Cooperation Policy (2019). It is anchored in the Accra Initiative on African Health Sovereignty, which focuses on self-reliance in health financing and vaccine production capacity. Recent reforms extend this trajectory by addressing persistent gaps in financial risk protection and fiscal sustainability, for example through the NHIS funding reforms, including the 2025 budget decision to uncap NHIS allocations. Other reforms are the agenda 111 hospital programme to improve infrastructure and referral readiness, and the Ghana Medical Trust Fund to cover high-cost NCD conditions. In parallel, the ongoing development of a quality-focused Free Primary Health Care policy aims to strengthen the front line as the entry point to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) (UNICEF, 2025).
- Ghana’s UHC Service Coverage index has improved from 24 in 2000 to 48 in 2023, but it remains in the mid-range. While this signals gains in essential service coverage, it also highlights gaps in resilience and institutional capacity as well as effective coverage and quality (World Bank & WHO, 2023). This underscores the continued need to strengthen the health system to ensure resilience and to achieve the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Two key enablers of Ghana’s health system have been geographic and financial accessibility. The Community-based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) strategy has significantly improved service delivery at the community level, with 79.7% functionality coverage (MOH, 2021). Nevertheless, only 42% of the population can access healthcare within 30 minutes on foot, and 62.5% within 60 minutes (GDHS, 2022), which indicates that there are still persistent geographic barriers. Financial accessibility has improved through NHIS (National Health Insurance Scheme), which had an active membership of 54.5% in 2022 (MOH, 2023). In the same year, Ghana’s health expenditure reached 3.7% of GDP, above the SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa) average of 2.93%, but still below the target of 15% set by the Abuja Declaration (World Bank, 2022). Out-of-pocket (OOP) expenditure remains high at 25.03% of current health spending though still below the SSA average of 32.04% (World Bank, 2022). Commodity security is another critical challenge facing the country, with reports indicating stockouts of up to 80% for essential medicines and health commodities.
- Maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH) outcomes are critical indicators of national development with Ghana witnessing improvement in recent years. The maternal mortality ratio has declined from 253 to 234 per 100,000 live births (2020–2023), while neonatal mortality has dropped from 29 to 17 per 1,000 live births (2014–2022). The under-five

mortality rate now stands at 37 per 1,000 live births, which is well below the sub-Saharan Africa average of 68. Despite these gains, Ghana's progress toward the health-related SDGs has slowed, with poor quality of care being identified as a key barrier. Despite over a decade of foundational support in expanding access to MNCH services, persistent gaps in the quality of care remain a major barrier to further progress.

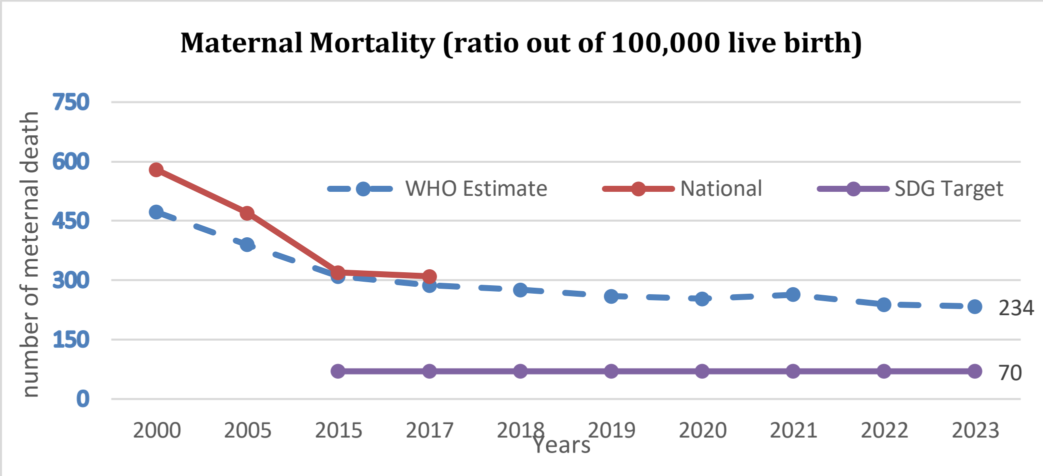
- Nutrition outcomes have similarly improved, albeit with challenges. According to the GDHS (2022), there has been a reduction in stunting (17%), underweight (12%), wasting (6%), and overweight (2%) among children under five between 2014 and 2022. However, malnutrition remains a significant public health challenge. Anaemia affects 41% of women aged 15–49, and obesity among men aged 20–49 stands at 21%, indicating emerging nutritional imbalances.
- NCDs (Non-Communicable Diseases) now account for 43% of all-cause mortality in Ghana (WHO, 2022), highlighting a growing double burden of disease. The consolidated system at PHC level for NCD prevention, early detection, and long-term management remains limited, requiring expanded capacity building and integrated Life Course Approaches. Ghana's health system has demonstrated resilience in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other recent outbreaks including monkeypox (4 recorded deaths), Marburg virus disease (2 recorded deaths), and Lassa fever (WHO, 2022). However, the country faces increasing health risks due to climate-induced changes with threats to food security, an increase in zoonotic, water- and vector-borne diseases, and respiratory conditions (World Bank, 2022). This indicates a need to enhance One Health approaches to tackling current and emerging disease outbreaks.

Figure 9: Top 10 Causes of Death in Ghana (2010-2020)



(Source: WHO Cause-specific mortality, 2000–2021)

Figure 10: Maternal Mortality in Ghana

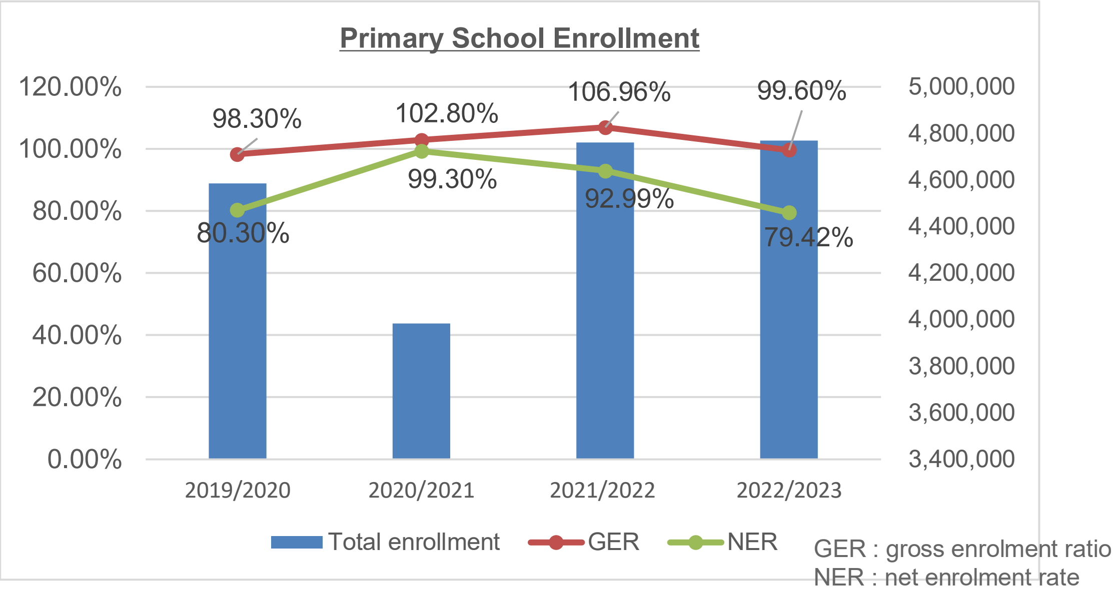


(Source: 1. WHO Maternal mortality ratio (modelled estimate, per 100,000 live births) - Ghana (last access: May 23, 2025, 2. Ghana Maternal Health Survey, 2017)

(2) Education

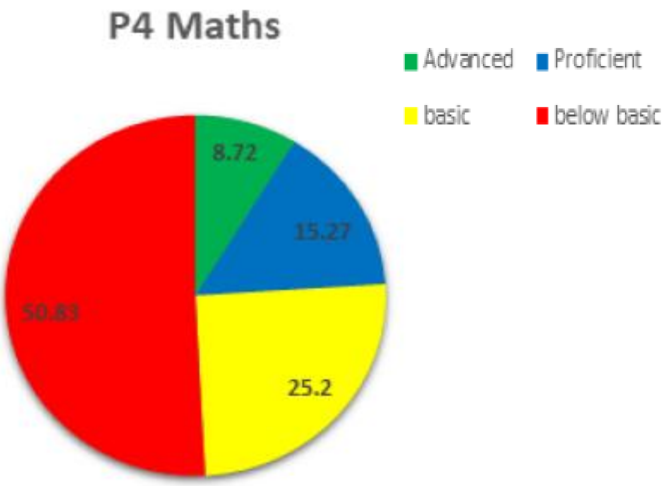
- Since the 2000s, JICA has consistently supported improvements to educational access in Ghana through a combination of Grant Aid and Technical Cooperation aimed at primary education infrastructure and environment. These interventions, in line with the efforts of other development partners, have resulted in a significant expansion of educational opportunities. As of 2023, the primary school enrolment rate had reached approximately 80%, substantially exceeding the sub-Saharan African average of roughly 50% (ESA, 2023; UNESCO, 2024).
- Despite these remarkable gains in access, the quality of education remains a critical concern. According to the 2022 Primary 4 National Standardized Test (NST) report, approximately 50% of pupils failed to meet basic proficiency thresholds in both literacy and numeracy. Although the preliminary 2024 NST results indicate a slight improvement over the 2022 outcomes, reaching 54% proficiency, they continue to point to a “learning crisis” that poses risks to the nation’s human capital development. The root causes are multifaceted and structural. In addition to inadequate fiscal investment (14.5% of the national budget, which falls below the international benchmark of 20%), the sector faces systemic weaknesses in local-level management, inefficient resource allocation, limited leadership capacity among school heads, and a shortage of professional teacher competencies.
- Under the Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2018–2030), the Government of Ghana identifies human resource development as a pillar of national growth, with "Improving Education Management" as a core objective. A key strategy is to empower community-level governance structures, specifically School Management Committees (SMCs), to enhance accountability and learning outcomes. The donor landscape is active, with the World Bank, UNICEF, the EU, and FCDO (UK) implementing initiatives focused on quality improvement, regional equity, and early childhood education. The Ministry of Education (MoE) facilitates donor coordination and policy alignment through the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG).

Figure 11: Primary school Enrolment rate



(Source: WDI 2025)

Figure 12: Result of National standardized Test



(Source: NaCCA 2025)

(3) Child Labor and Protection

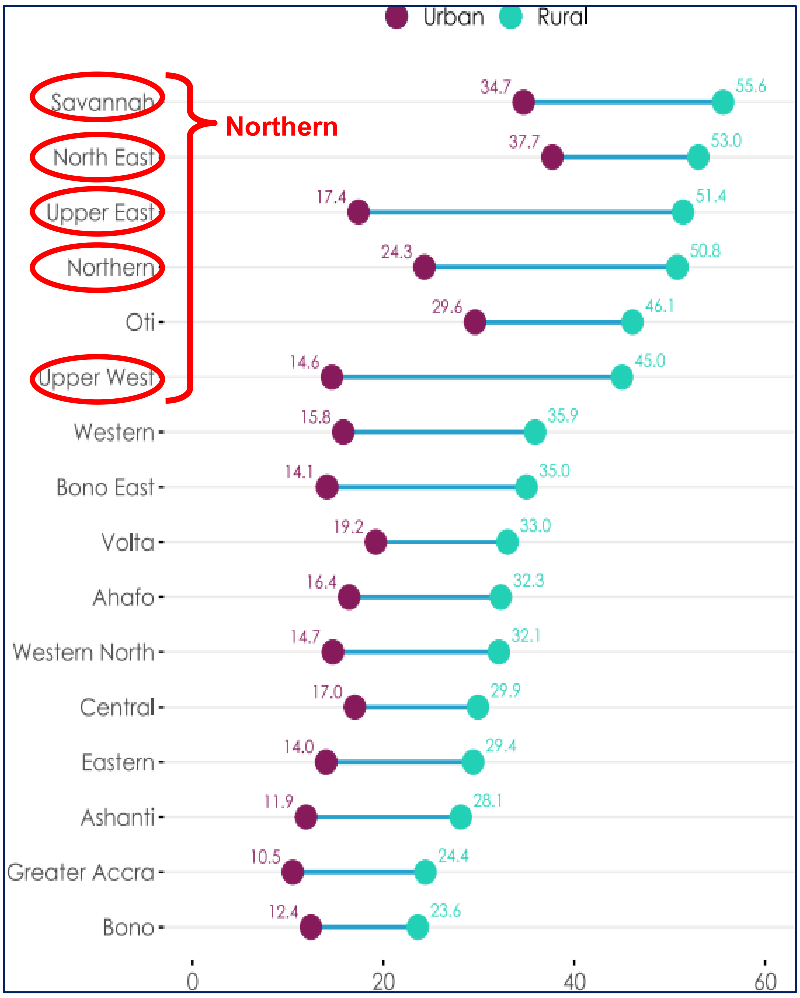
- Ghana stands as the world's second-largest producer of cocoa beans, a cornerstone of the global chocolate industry upon which Japan heavily relies, importing approximately 70-80% of its supply from Ghana. However, underlying this critical economic interdependence lies the serious and persistent challenge of child labor. As defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO), child labor encompasses work performed by children under the minimum legal age or hazardous work undertaken by individuals under 18 that endangers their health, safety, or moral development.
- According to the Ghana Accelerated Action Plan Against Child Labour (National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour), 2023–2027, an estimated 230,000 children aged 5–14 years—representing 3.2% of all children in this age group—are engaged in economic activities. The incidence of child labour is significantly higher in rural areas (5.7%) than in urban areas (1.0%). Nearly 80% of these children are involved in agriculture-related activities, with the highest concentration in the Savannah Region (89.8%) and the lowest in Greater Accra (26.2%). Children in Ghana work across various sectors, including fishing, cocoa production, mining, and other emerging industries. Specifically, U.S. Department of Labor data indicates that 79.2% of working children are engaged in agriculture, often handling sharp tools and chemicals in cocoa farming or working in gold mining. Furthermore, internal migration sees girls from northern regions working as porters (kayayei) in cities under harsh conditions and low wages.
- To address these systemic challenges, the Ghanaian government implemented the National Plan of Action (NPA) Phase II (2017–2021), which focused on improved coordination and community-level interventions in hazardous sectors. A landmark achievement during this period was the 2020 publication of guidelines for Child Labor Free Zones (CLFZs), developed through strategic collaboration with the ILO and Japanese partners such as ACE (Action against Child Exploitation) and Deloitte Tohmatsu Consulting. Building on this foundation, the Ghana Accelerated Action Plan Against Child Labor (2023–2027) now seeks to strengthen governance and evidence-based monitoring through the Ghana Child Labor Monitoring System (GCLMS).
- JICA has contributed to these efforts by supporting the establishment of the CLFZ framework

and fostering institutional capacity. Moving forward, by aligning with SDG 8.7 and international conventions, the focus remains on scaling these targeted, sustainable, and inclusive interventions. By expanding monitoring systems and strengthening both policy and community-level enforcement, these initiatives aim to accelerate the elimination of child labor and ensure the protection of children's rights nationwide.

(4) Development of Northern Ghana and Stability

- Northern Ghana faces issues relating to chieftaincy, land, and ethnicity, as well as high levels of poverty (50.4% compared to a national average of 23.4%), and youth unemployment. The significant disparity in poverty rates between urban and rural areas within the region also shows marginalization and economic vulnerability in Northern Ghana.
- Households headed by those working in the agriculture sector (34.3%) are poorer than those in industry (8.9%) and service (6.2%) sectors. This gap underscores structural dependence on low-productivity agriculture and reflects limited diversification of livelihoods across the northern regions.
- Between 2021 and 2023, over 60% of communal violence cases occurred in Northern Ghana. There is a high risk of violent extremism spillover from the Sahel, and youth radicalization is occurring amid high unemployment. The police-citizen ratio (1:559) and trust (41%) are low — security infrastructure remains weak.

Figure 13: Multidimensional Poverty by Region and Type of Locality (%)

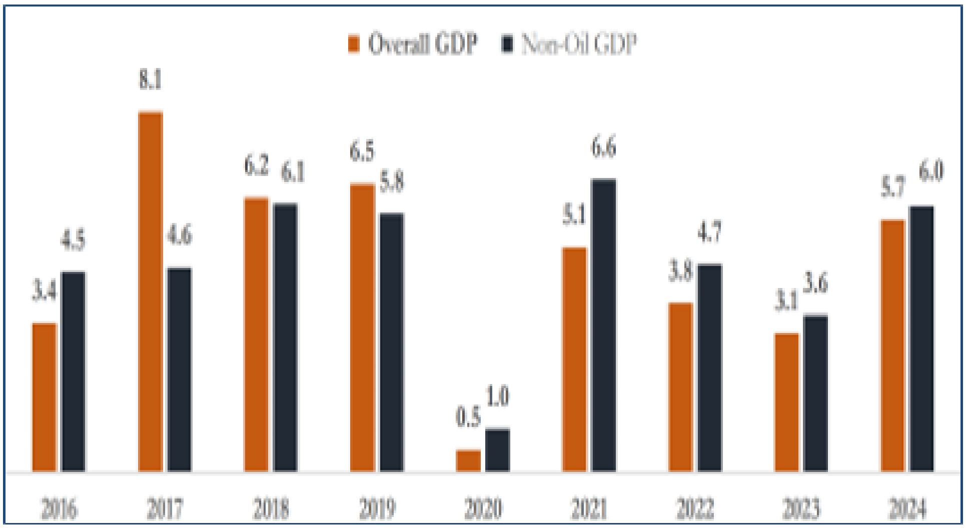


(Source: Multidimensional Poverty Report (Ghana Statistical Service, June 2024))

(5) Governance and Public Financial Management

- Ghana, with an estimated population of 33.5 million as of 2025 (World Bank, 2024), continues to exhibit a youthful demography. Individuals aged 15 to 34 account for over 35% of the population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2023). This age structure presents both an economic opportunity and a challenge for job creation, public service delivery, and governance. In the years preceding 2020, Ghana's economy was one of the top performers in Africa. Between 2014 and 2019, the country achieved an average real GDP growth rate of 4.9%, peaking at 8.1% in 2017 as shown in Figure 15 (MoF, 2025). Inflation remained relatively moderate during this period, averaging around 10% from 2014 to 2021 (Bank of Ghana, 2023). This growth was largely driven by robust performance in the extractives, alongside strong global demand for gold and cocoa, Ghana's principal exports.

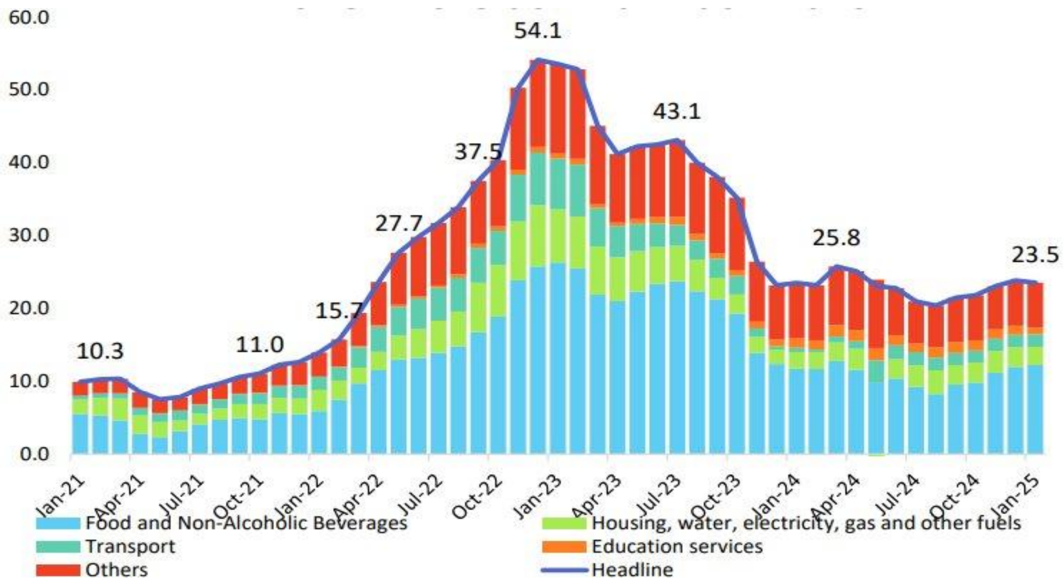
Figure 14: Ghana's real GDP Growth Rate (2016 – 2024)



(Source: MoF,2025)

- However, the dual shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine significantly altered Ghana's macroeconomic trajectory. These external shocks disrupted global and domestic supply chains, eroded tax revenues, and triggered a surge in public spending, especially on health and social interventions. As shown in Figure 15 below, inflation surged to a 21-year peak of 54.1% in December 2022 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2025), compared to the regional average of 9.9% in Sub-Saharan Africa (IMF, Regional Economic Outlook, April 2023) and outpaced those of regional peers, such as Nigeria (21.5%) and Côte d'Ivoire (5.2%). Real GDP growth slowed to 3.8% in 2022 from 5.1% in 2021, signalling a broad-based economic slowdown.

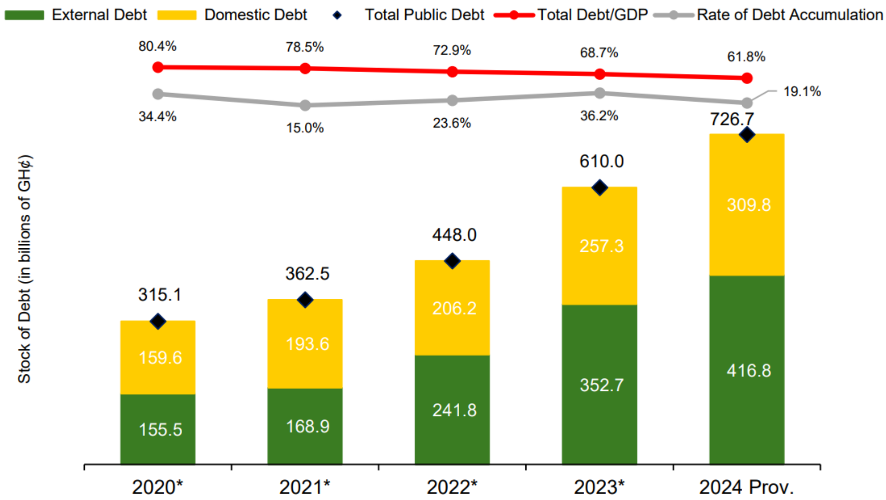
Figure 15: Ghana's Year-on-Year Inflation (2021- 2025)



(Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2025)

- The fiscal impact has been particularly severe. Figure 16 below shows that Ghana's public debt-to-GDP ratio surged to 80.4% at the end of 2020 (Ministry of Finance, Ghana, 2025). This level significantly exceeds the regional average for Sub-Saharan Africa, which stood at 57.2% in 2023 (IMF, April 2024). In contrast, Nigeria's debt-to-GDP ratio was about 41%, while Côte d'Ivoire's was around 56%, underscoring Ghana's relatively higher fiscal vulnerability.

Figure 16: Ghana's Public Debt-to-GDP Ratio (2020-2024)

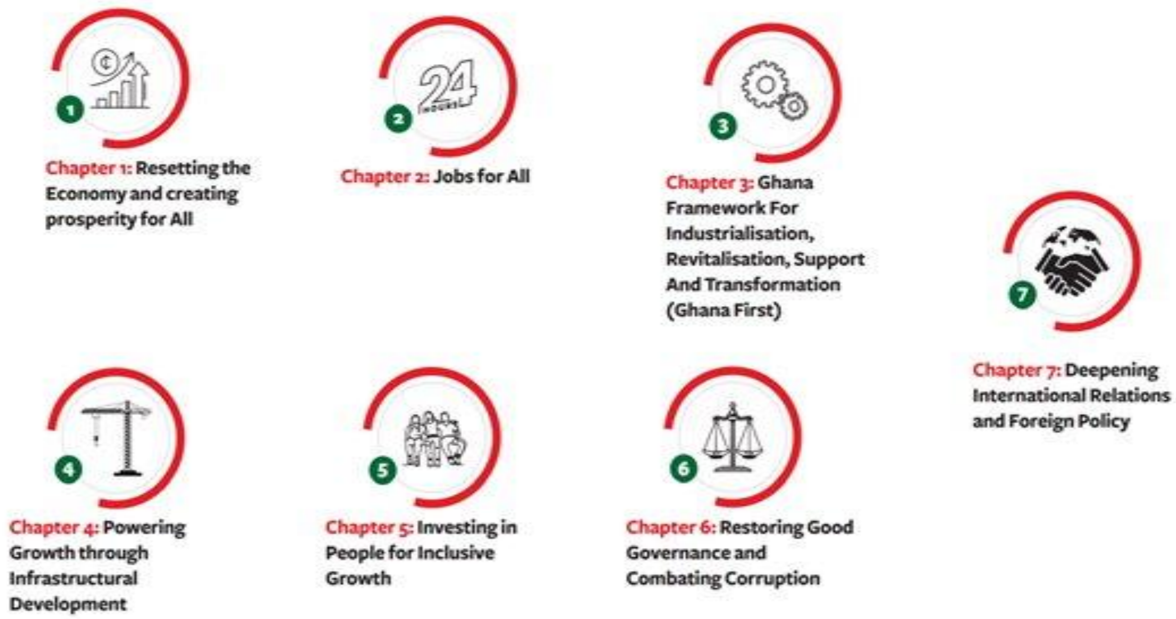


(Source: MoF, Ghana, 2025)

- Despite these challenges, recent macroeconomic indicators suggest signs of stabilization reflecting the impact of tighter monetary policy and currency stabilization. Under the ongoing Extended Credit Facility (ECF) program with the International Monetary Fund, the Government's prudent economic management, anchored on fiscal-consolidation measures, debt-restructuring efforts, and currency-stabilization mechanisms under its Reset Agenda *(Figure 17, Ghana's Reset Agenda, 2025)*, is helping to rebuild investor confidence and support a return to sustained economic growth.

- As of January 2026, Ghana's inflation rate had fallen sharply to 3.8%, down from 5.4% in December 2025 — marking the 13th consecutive monthly decline and the lowest level recorded since the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was rebased in 2021. Ghana's public debt-to-GDP ratio has also improved significantly, reaching 45.3% in January 2026. This represents substantial progress from the 61.8% recorded in December 2024 and a strong turnaround from the peak of over 80% during the 2020 debt crisis. While these gains are remarkable, sustained commitment to reforms will be essential to securing long-term economic stability and growth.

Figure 17: Summary of Ghana's Reset Agenda



(Source: MoF, 2025)

- Ghana's medium-term outlook remains vulnerable to external shocks and fiscal slippages. Deepening structural reforms in revenue mobilization, public financial management, and investment in human capital will therefore be critical to restoring macroeconomic resilience and achieving inclusive growth.
- Ghana's public service plays a pivotal role in its national development, policy implementation, and the delivery of essential services. The effectiveness of the civil service is therefore central to achieving these goals. Around 8.2% of the labor force is employed in the public sector, which is comparable to Kenya (7.9%) and Nigeria (6.5%) (GSS, Labor Force Report, 2023). However, productivity remains low relative to spending. In 2022, wage expenditure accounted for 47% of domestic revenue, which is well above the ECOWAS benchmark of 35% (World Bank Public Expenditure Review, 2023). Only 38% of citizens are satisfied with basic services, compared to 62% in Côte d'Ivoire and 45% in Senegal (Afro barometer, 2022). Despite various reforms having been attempted over the past decades, challenges around productivity, accountability, and institutional capacity persist.
- Following its victory in the 2024 general elections, the newly elected NDC (National Democratic Congress) government is delivering on its development strategy, which is anchored in its manifesto titled "Change to Reset Ghana". This strategy is designed to stabilize the economy, rebuild institutional credibility, and foster inclusive growth. Key fiscal

reforms include establishing a Fiscal Responsibility Council to provide independent oversight of budget credibility, expenditure control, and public debt sustainability. In line with global best practices and regional benchmarks, the government proposes a legislative debt ceiling of 60–70% of GDP in an attempt to reverse the current trajectory, which peaked at 80.4% of GDP in 2022 (Ministry of Finance, 2025), far above the Sub-Saharan Africa average of 57.2% (IMF, April 2024).

- On the institutional front, the reform strategy emphasizes public sector modernization, anchored on developing civil service capacity and implementing performance-based management systems across the public service. These reforms aim to tackle low productivity and enhance accountability across ministries, departments, and agencies. Furthermore, training programs are being designed in collaboration with institutions such as the Civil Service Training Centre and development to close skill gaps, strengthen administrative capacity, and improve service delivery.

1.2.7 Summary of the Analysis from the Perspective of Human Security

- Regional Disparities:

  The Savannah Region exhibits significant socioeconomic disparities, with 49.5% of its population classified as multidimensionally poor — approximately twice the national average of 24.8% (GSS, 2023). This persistent inequality underscores the structural development challenges in northern Ghana.
- Geographical Vulnerability:

  Northern Ghana, particularly the Savannah Region, shares a border with Burkina Faso, rendering it highly vulnerable to the spillover effects of violent extremism in the Sahel region. This geographic exposure poses a critical security risk for border communities.
- Security Incidents:

  Since 2022, there has been a notable increase in armed attacks and smuggling-related incidents along the northern frontier. Concurrently, the influx of refugees from Burkina Faso has placed additional pressure on already limited social services and local governance systems.
- Social Vulnerability:

  The northern regions remain economically marginalized, characterized by inadequate access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. These structural deficits exacerbate social grievances, which extremist groups often exploit for recruitment and radicalization purposes. A study on regional disparities in infrastructure in Ghana compared 12 districts, including three regions in the north and three in the south, and found that the Gini coefficient for infrastructure in the northern regions was 0.22, compared to 0.12 in the southern regions (Abdallah, 2018). Furthermore, significant disparities in both access to and quality of education persist between the north and the south. According to the MICS survey (2017/2018), literacy rates at the lower primary level reach 25% in Greater Accra (south), while in the north they remain as low as 1%. At the junior high school level, the respective literacy rates are 79% and 39%. Youth unemployment is another critical challenge in Ghana, particularly pronounced in the northern regions. The report *"Vulnerability Assessment on the Threats of Violent Extremism and Radicalization in Northern Regions of Ghana"* (2023) indicates that the unemployment rate among youth aged 15–24 is 39% in the Upper East, 38.2% in the Savannah, and 34.7% in the Northeast. These figures are higher than the national average of 32% for the same age group (GSS, 2025), underscoring the stark socio-economic disparities between the northern and southern regions. Moreover, child labor is also a critical concern from a human security perspective. As part of social vulnerability, it represents a form of generational vulnerability that disproportionately affects children and exposes them to long-term risks. Further details are provided in Section 1.2.4(3).

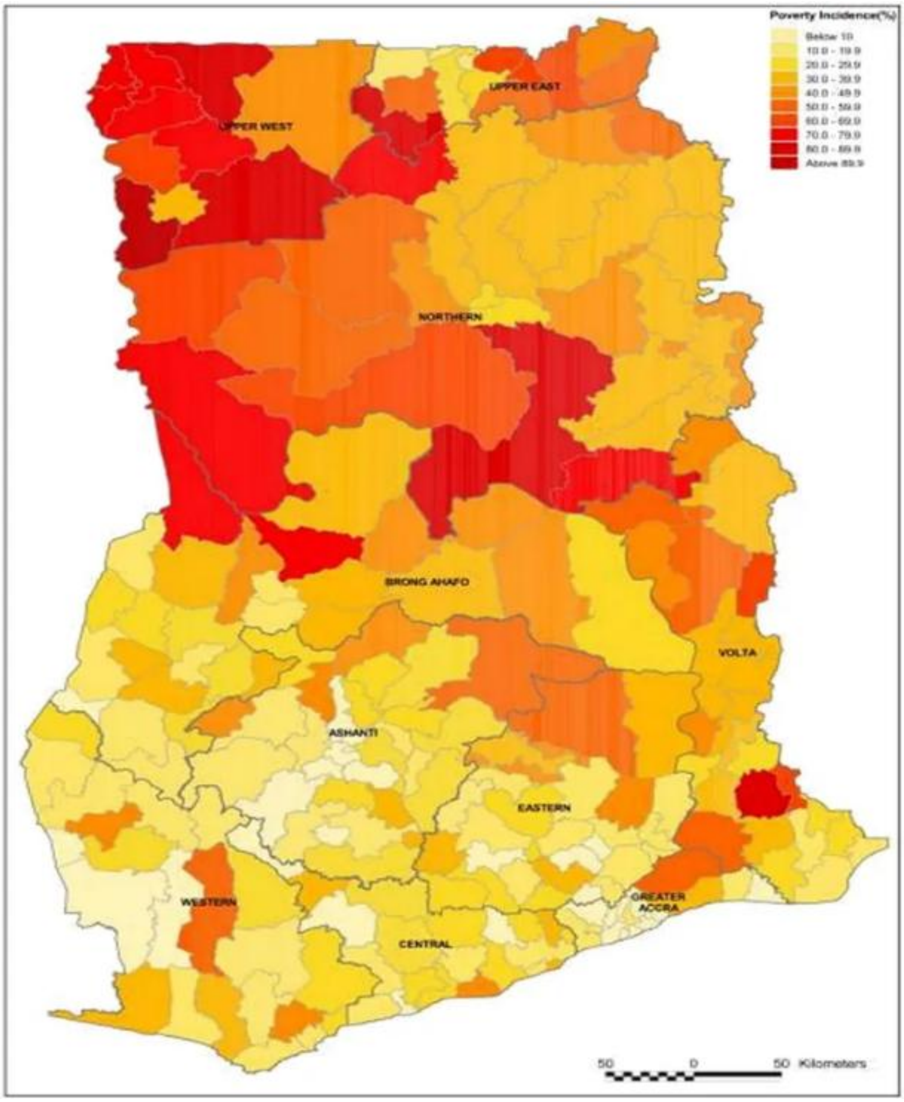
- Climate Change Impacts:

  The Savannah Region faces acute climate-related challenges, including rising temperatures, recurrent droughts, and heat-related mortality. Irregular rainfall patterns have led to a decline in agricultural productivity, with maize yields projected to fall by approximately 7% by 2050. In northern Ghana, delayed and reduced rainfall is expected to result in complete crop failure roughly every five years. Similarly, livestock production is at risk, which compounds food insecurity (UNDP, 2021).

- National Response:

  The Government of Ghana has adopted a “Preventing Violent Extremism” strategy aimed at strengthening community policing and expanding youth employment programs. Efforts to modernize border security and enhance inter-agency information sharing are underway.

Figure 18: Poverty rate June 2024



(Source: Ghana Statistical Service 2024)

Chapter 2 Major Development Challenges that JICA Should Address

2.1 Significance of Cooperation with Ghana

- Ghana plays a pivotal role in promoting peace and stability in West Africa, maintaining democratic governance and a commitment to dialogue even as instability persists in parts of the Sahel, thereby contributing to regional stability and advancing integration efforts within ECOWAS. As the host of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat, Ghana serves as a continental hub for economic integration and a gateway to the approximately 450-million-strong West African market, positioning the country as a practical testbed for the implementation of AfCFTA and broader regional integration initiatives. In the wake of COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, and the ongoing debt crisis, strengthening resilient economic and social foundations against external shocks remains a paramount national priority. In this context, the revision of the JCAP is intended to clarify JICA's cooperation priorities in advance of the next update of the Country Development Cooperation Policy and the introduction of new policy directions, and JICA is encouraged to further support Ghana's efforts to reinforce regional stability and deepen economic integration.
- Strategic Utilization of Assets Built Through Long-standing Cooperation

  This includes initiatives in the health sector such as the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, third-country training programs (including those for COVID-19 response), grant aid, and technical cooperation; the Civil Service Training Centre (CSTC), which serves as a core institution for civil service training not only in Ghana but across the West African region; and the acceptance of 61 participants under the ABE Initiative (cumulative total from FY2014 to FY2024) and 5,506 participants under short-term Trainee (cumulative total until FY2024).
- Over the years, various projects have been implemented as sectoral models within the framework of international cooperation with Ghana. For example, the strong relationship with the Government of Ghana built through long-term collaboration and the country's stable security environment make it easier to implement pilot projects and foster co-creation. Notably, JGA flagship projects have been piloted in Ghana ahead of other countries. These include infrastructure projects such as Tema Intersection and the rehabilitation of National Trunk Road 8, agriculture projects such as CARD and SHEP, health projects such as the Maternal and Child Health Record Book, industry projects such as KAIZEN, and human resource development projects such as Basic Education and JDS.
- Platforms for Co-creation with Diverse Stakeholders and Expansion of Impact

  JICA has sought to expand its impact through co-creation with a variety of stakeholders. This includes partnerships with universities such as the University of Tokyo, Keio University, Ehime University, and Mie University; producing over 100 alumni through programs like JDS; supporting startups through ABE Initiative and NINJA; and implementing the JICA Chair in collaboration with the University of Ghana and returned scholars.

  In terms of collaboration with Japanese companies, JICA has supported overseas business development through JICA Biz and has promoted initiatives such as the Africa Clean Cities Platform (ACCP), with member cities including Accra and Tema, aiming to share knowledge and mobilize resources across African countries and cities.
- Promoting Regional Integration through AfCFTA

  In 2022, JICA signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the AfCFTA Secretariat to collaborate in four areas:

  1. Trade facilitation and corridor development
  2. Industrialization and regional value chain development
  3. Knowledge sharing from ASEAN/Japan
  4. Capacity building and advocacy.

  Through cooperation with Ghana, JICA aims to extend development impact across the region by spearheading third-country training and regional initiatives, while also strengthening its collaboration with diverse international organizations and academic institutions.

2.2 Policy for reviewing the direction of cooperation

- In order for Ghana to achieve sustainable economic growth, it is essential to establish a resilient social and economic system that can withstand rapid environmental changes and external shocks, and the need for such a system has become increasingly evident. From this perspective, the Basic Policy (overall goal) should be defined as "Building Resilient Social and Economic Systems toward Sustainable Economic Growth."
- As for the priority areas (intermediate goals), it is desirable to maintain the four existing areas; however, since they currently appear as a mere list of sectors, they should be reorganized into four strategic fields:
  (1) Building Resilient Economic Foundations to Support Sustainable Growth
  (2) Strengthening Industrial and Agricultural Competitiveness
  (3) Improving Resilience and Stability of Society
  (4) Developing Human Resources to Promote Self-reliant Growth
- This would create a more strategic structure. Specifically, in order to promote the establishment of a resilient society and economy, priority areas (1) and (3) will be designated. Meanwhile, industrial and agricultural development - which is a key policy area of the new administration and serves as a driving force for economic growth and job creation - will be designated as priority area (2). This will be positioned as a central issue, with a strong emphasis on strengthening competitiveness. The fourth priority area, which also functions as a cross-cutting issue, is proposed as (4).
- In the health sector, rather than establishing it as an independent priority area, it is preferable to position it as one of the key contributors to improving social resilience, placed under the corresponding priority area.
- Regarding the education sector, it was previously positioned under the priority area of human resource development. However, as future efforts will focus on improving community-based school management, it should be repositioned alongside child labour countermeasures and community policing as a means of building strong community foundations, which play a critical role in enhancing social resilience in Ghana. Accordingly, it will be included under this development issue.
- Based on the above, it is desirable to revise the current three-tier structure as follows:

Table: Three-tier Structure (the Current and Revised Versions)
[Current]

Basic Policy: Promotion of Sustainable and Stable Economic Growth	
Priority Area	Development Issue
1.Infrastructure Development	1-1 Economic Infrastructure Development
2.Strengthening of Industrial Infrastructure including Agriculture	2-1 Enhancement of Agricultural Productivity and Profitability
	2-2 Industrial Development focusing on Local Manufacturing and Processing Industries

3.Health	3-1 Universal Health Coverage
4.Human Resource Development	4-1. Quality Education
	4-2. Strengthening Public Service Management

[Revised]

Basic Policy: Building Resilient Social and Economic Systems toward Sustainable Economic Growth	
Priority Area	Development Issue
1.Building Resilient Economic Foundations to Support Sustainable Growth	1-1 Improving Connectivity in the Sub-Region
	1-2 Improving Urban Management
2.Strengthening Industrial and Agricultural Competitiveness	2-1 Promoting Industrialization and Business Development under the AfCFTA
	2-2 Enhancing Agricultural Value Chain
3.Improving Resilience and Stability of Society	3-1 Achieving UHC and Enhancing Health Security
	3-2 Building Strong Community Foundations
	3-3 Strengthening Governance
4.Developing Human Resources to Promote Self-reliant Growth	4-1. Developing Human Resources to Promote Self-reliant Growth

2.3 Strategy and Direction of JICA's Future Cooperation

2.3.1 Improving Connectivity in Sub-Region

- JICA will adopt an integrated approach combining infrastructure development to support the free movement of people and goods, and border management assistance to facilitate trade. This strategy is characterized by a comprehensive blend of capacity development and policy support ("Soft"), together with infrastructure and equipment enhancement ("Hard"). The overarching objective is to support Ghana in consolidating its position as a regional trade hub in West Africa and becoming a key driver of economic growth of the sub-region.
- Under the first approach - Infrastructure Development, JICA will aim to improve essential facilities critical for enhanced connectivity in line with the "West Africa Growth Ring" initiative. This includes strengthening the operational and maintenance capacities needed to sustain and improve the quality of services associated with these facilities. These efforts are in accordance with JICA Global Agenda 1: Urban and Regional Development, 2: Transportation, and 3: Energy and Mining.
- The second approach - Border Management, JICA will focus primarily on customs operations, with the dual goals of reducing non-tariff barriers and ensuring effective enforcement against illicit activities. To further facilitate trade with neighbouring countries, JICA will continue to advance ongoing programs such as the WCO/JICA Master Trainer Programme (MTP), and initiatives to enhance land border management and build the capacity of customs officials. These efforts aim to reinforce the skills of customs officers while supporting the functioning of customs facilities, aligning with JICA Global Agenda 13: Public Finance and Financial System.

2.3.2 Improving Urban Management

- JICA will continue to support the development of strategically important urban infrastructure to meet the rapidly rising demand. At the same time, JICA will enhance the capacity for operating and maintaining infrastructure to ensure the efficient use of limited resources. Priority areas include mitigating traffic congestion, addressing an unstable electricity supply, improving waste management efficiency, and reducing disaster risk, with the aim of creating robust urban areas.
- Additionally, JICA will reinforce the capacity of the government to bridge the gap between urban planning and its execution on the ground. This includes strengthening the use of urban data, promoting evidence-based planning and improving land-use management to prevent emerging urban challenges and support the creation of overall urban resilience.
- Through these combined efforts, JICA will aim to support the development of sustainable, resilient, and inclusive cities, ensuring that urban growth does not lead to disorder, environmental degradation, or disparities in services, but instead creates a foundation for stable and equitable development.
- To achieve this, it is essential to apply appropriate measures to the multifaceted factors that constitute urban challenges. Accordingly, the initiative will be implemented through the integrated and strategic utilization of JICA Global Agendas—specifically Agenda 1: Urban and Regional Development, 2: Transportation, 3: Energy and Mining, 16: Climate Change, 18: Environmental Management, and 20: Disaster Risk Reduction through Pre-disaster Investment and Build Back Better—ensuring that these thematic strategies are leveraged in a coherent and mutually reinforcing manner.

2.3.3 Promoting Industrialization and Business Development under the AfCFTA (African Continental Free Trade Area)

- To enhance value addition within Ghana's manufacturing and industrial value chains, as well as to expand non-traditional exports to AfCFTA markets, JICA is supporting the development of prioritized sector-based value-chains. In line with the Government of Ghana's strong initiatives, the agro-processing sector has been selected due to its growth potential in African markets, and the solid industrial base already present in the country.

- As part of this cooperation, key value chains will be identified for strategic development. Pilot activities will focus on improving production to add more value through Kaizen and innovation, strengthening national branding, and fostering market linkages. In parallel, multiple institutions in Ghana involved in export-related functions will improve their services to the private sector, including AfCFTA sensitization and efforts to simplify and standardize application procedures. Insights gained through these activities will inform policy and strategy recommendations for the Government of Ghana and other AfCFTA member states.
- In line with the NINJA cluster of the Private Sector Development Global Agenda, JICA will strengthen the network and coordination in the ecosystem among startups, supporting organizations, hubs, academia and ecosystem associations, as well as the government.
- To advance the dissemination of Kaizen, the Ghana Enterprise Agency (GEA) will continue to lead efforts to drive nationwide adoption and establish a sustainable-fee-based service model. JICA encourages and supports these initiatives led by the GEA, as well as collaboration among business associations, development partners and financial institutions.
- In order to strengthen the capacity of human resources in the field of business law, such as competition law and intellectual property law, in cooperation with the AfCFTA, training courses for judicial personnel in Ghana and other AfCFTA member states will be conducted in cooperation with the AfCFTA.
- Furthermore, to enhance the enabling environment for industrialization and cross-border business under the AfCFTA, JICA will undertake a regional initiative to strengthen cybersecurity capacity across African countries. Specifically, JICA will conduct research into cybersecurity maturity in the AfCFTA region and organize capacity-building workshops for government agencies and relevant regional organizations. These efforts aim to improve digital resilience, ensure secure cross-border transactions, and promote trust in the digital trade systems that underpin regional value-chain development.
- These efforts are in line with JICA Global Agenda 4: Private Sector Development.

2.3.4 Enhancing Agricultural Value Chain

- Ghana must continue addressing the wide-ranging challenges across its agricultural value chain in order to meet the food demands of its rapidly growing urban population, while also improving food security, nutrition, and the livelihoods of rural communities. This would be particularly important for crops that the country currently imports, as it would save foreign currencies. Therefore, over the next five years, JICA's cooperation in the agricultural sector will focus on enhancing the agricultural value chain, with the aim of (1) improvement in productivity; (2) improvement in quality; and (3) stabilization of supply, at each stage of the targeted value chains.
- Through this approach, JICA will contribute to strengthening the industrial and agricultural competitiveness of Ghana. This aligns with the new government's policy of promoting agribusiness and making the agricultural sector the source of inputs for the industry sector. JICA's ongoing projects have been focusing on disseminating technical packages and market-oriented approaches to develop the rice and horticulture sectors in collaboration with counterpart organizations.
- Regarding this plan, JICA will discuss with other development partner organizations and private sector actors the possibility of further dissemination of these packages and approaches through their projects and businesses. In addition, JICA aims at accelerating its support for reinforcing the key input sub-sectors of the agricultural value chain, namely seed

and machinery. Equipment will be provided to increase the production of quality rice seeds, while capacity development will be conducted on mechanization from policy to operation-on-the-ground levels, along with promotion of private sector engagement.

- JICA will collaborate with various stakeholders working to improve the livelihoods of cocoa farmers, including the Ghanaian government, development partners, NGOs, the private sector, academia, and farmers.
- JICA will follow up on the recently conducted pilot activities on nutrition improvement, applying a multisectoral and nutrient-focused approach to improving food access. This will be achieved by making the most of related training opportunities, such as the Knowledge Co-Creation Programme and Agri-Net, and by seeking close collaboration with stakeholders in the health sector.
- These initiatives are aligned to JICA Global Agenda 5: Agricultural and Rural Development.

2.3.5 Achieving UHC and Enhancing Health Security

- Through TICAD 8, the Government of Japan confirmed the importance of intensifying efforts and facilitating support to achieve UHC and health security in Africa. To complement this effort, JICA Global Agenda (6. Health), which was updated in 2025, aims to achieve more resilient, equitable, and sustainable UHC as a new objective, strengthening prevention, preparedness, and response to public health crises, and enhancing health systems in each country. The JICA Global Agenda (7, Nutrition) also promotes achieving optimal nutrition and well-being throughout the life-course of all people by taking a multi-sectoral approach to interventions.
- In pursuit of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Ghana by 2030, JICA will support the enhancement of the Quality of Care, including maternal and child health as well as school health, through the utilization of Japanese technical expertise. Since the last JCAP in 2019, JICA has continued its efforts to improve access to healthcare. JICA will continue to support improvements in access to quality health services at the various levels of care, and will further enhance access to quality MCH services and strengthen the referral system.
- Ghana highlights the critical need to build a resilient health system. With the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research serving as a central platform, JICA will work to strengthen health crisis management capacities across the sub-region. JICA will also strengthen NMIMRs research and laboratory testing capacity through technical cooperation projects such as the SATREPS project for schistosomiasis.
- Japan will also explore avenues for cooperation aimed at the prevention and early diagnosis of Non-Communicable Diseases, as their prevalence has become more pronounced due to shifts in disease patterns in Ghana. By deploying a PHC advisor, JICA will support the rollout of the Network of Practice (NoP) and help the MOH to expand access to quality community services through the CHPS strategy with a focus on the Life Course Approach (LCA), especially in regions with weak community health systems. In furtherance to this, the deployment of telemedicine will be an integral part of optimizing service delivery at the sub-district level, targeting CHPS zones and health centers, through the NoP.
- The deployment of JOCVs will strengthen JICA's cooperation, create synergy and deepen the impact of interventions. Since 2023, JGA has designated "Maternal and Child Health Partners" to refer to all JOCVs engaged in MCH activities. By utilizing this framework, JGA aims to promote information sharing between personnel and specialists, facilitating a win-win relationship that enables mutual activities and collaboration.
- In line with TICAD 9, JICA will continue to pursue opportunities to collaborate with other stakeholders, including private entities, academia, and CSOs to create a synergetic effect. Furthermore, as envisioned by the cluster strategy, JICA will place an even greater emphasis

on mainstreaming gender and persons with disabilities, disaster risk reduction and climate change in its project formulation while seeking opportunities to further leverage digital technologies where relevant.

2.3.6 Building Strong Community Foundations

Education

- To establish a sustainable model for improving learning outcomes in Ghana, JICA's future interventions will focus strategically on two primary pillars: strengthening and scaling up school management nationwide through School Management Committees (SMCs), and pursuing strategic synergies with major donor-led initiatives.
- At the heart of this strategy lies the implementation of the COMPASS Project Phase 2. In addition to math remedial activities within SMC frameworks, this phase incorporates the teacher's guidebooks developed and validated by a JICA expert in mathematics education and the STEM Centre into the national pedagogical framework. By leveraging these existing assets, the project aims to accelerate the improvement of foundational learning.
- The ultimate trajectory of this intervention is to transition localized, project-level successes into a nationwide scale-up by embedding the COMPASS model into the Sector Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP). This will ensure that the proven correlation between enhanced school management and educational quality is sustained through the government's own budgetary allocations and administrative structures.
  Furthermore, by aligning this approach with existing foundational learning programs such as GALOP (Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project), JICA aims to provide the essential management infrastructure required to catalyse the nationwide improvement in foundational numeracy.
- This initiative is aligned to JICA Global Agenda 8: Education.

Child labor

- Through the current project, which runs until 2027, JICA will support the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR), specifically the Child Labor Unit, to enhance its organizational capacity and coordination role. This includes promoting the effective implementation of the Ghana Child Labor Accelerated Action Plan (2023–2027) to ensure that national policies are translated into impactful actions at the local level.
- JICA will also consider supporting the institutionalization and expansion of Child Labor Free Zones (CLFZs), which are grounded in active community participation, strengthened Community Child Protection Committee activities, and shared responsibility among households, traditional leaders, and local institutions. Through these efforts, JICA aims to help establish a sustainable community structure in which child protection functions on a daily basis.
- To maximize the effectiveness of child labor interventions, JICA will actively strengthen collaboration with the private sector companies, international organizations, NGOs, and civil society organizations. Within the CLFZ framework, JICA will promote the development of coordination mechanisms and clear role-sharing to advance a more holistic approach that mobilizes a broader range of social and economic resources.
- This initiative is aligned to JICA Global Agenda 12: Governance.

Community Policing

- Community policing will be strengthened as a strategic, trust-based approach to public security and safety while enhancing community resilience for sustainable growth. This will be achieved through continuous capacity building for the police and community stakeholders, establishing structured platforms for police–community engagement, and integrating community policing into local governance and development systems. Where possible, support sub-regional cooperation and knowledge-sharing platforms on community policing to promote learning, coordination, and collective action for security and public safety.

- This initiative is aligned to JICA Global Agenda 11: Peacebuilding.

2.3.7 Improving Governance

Strengthening National Fiscal and Financial Stability

- Support the Ministry of Finance, in enhancing national fiscal management and financial stability in line with the country's strategic objective of achieving macroeconomic stability. Potential areas of engagement may include capacity development in debt management, fiscal discipline, and budgetary control systems to promote transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in public financial management.
- This initiative is aligned to JICA Global Agenda 13: Public Finance and Financial Systems.

Strengthening the Capacity of the Civil Service

- In line with the strategic direction of fostering an efficient and professional civil service, support will be provided to the Civil Service Training Centre (CSTC) to establish it as a Centre of Excellence for public service capacity development, with a focus on Kaizen for improved service delivery. Strengthen partnerships to expand training and institutionalize Kaizen practices of the public sector across the sub-region. In addition, JICA Ghana will continue to support high-level human resource development for government officials through the JDS Master's and Doctoral programs in key development fields.
- This initiative is aligned to JICA Global Agenda 12: Governance.

2.3.8 Developing Human Resources to Promote Self-reliant Growth

- In collaboration with Japanese universities, private-sector and development partners, Japan will support human resource development to foster autonomy, discipline, teamwork, and practical problem-solving.
- In line with this approach, JICA promotes the development of skilled and globally minded human resources through initiatives such as the Africa Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE Initiative), training programs, and JICA Volunteer Programs (Basic Education, Technical Education, Sports, etc.), while also advancing the cross-sectoral expansion of Kaizen to improve productivity, work ethics, and organizational management across priority sectors.
- This initiative is aligned to JICA Global Agenda 4: Private Sector Development, 8: Education and 12: Governance.

Chapter 3. Matters to Consider during implementation of project

3.1. Contribution to Wider Areas

3.1.1 Regional Expansion and Strengthening of Regional Hub Functions

- The Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) serves as a core hub for the control of infectious diseases in West Africa. Since its establishment in 1979, JICA has continuously provided technical cooperation and grant aid. In recent years, beyond strengthening research and diagnostic capacity for infectious diseases, NMIMR has generated spillover effects across the region through training programs for 11 West African countries and third-country training. This model can be expanded beyond the health sector to other areas, thereby reinforcing regional hub functions.

3.1.2 Maximizing Collective Impact through Partnerships and Resource Mobilization

- A wide range of Japanese stakeholders, including companies, universities, local government, and NGOs, are showing strong interest and engagement in Ghana. Leveraging the diverse expertise and resources of these stakeholders in a more strategic and coordinated manner will be essential for maximizing development impact. Moving beyond isolated cases of collaboration requires a shift toward a more systematic, co-creative approach. By functioning as a hub that brings these stakeholders together around a shared vision, JICA can optimize the use of resources, enhance sustainability, and generate greater collective impact.

3.1.3. Promoting Digital Transformation (DX)

- Ghana's Digital Economy Policy and Strategy and the forthcoming National AI Strategy position digital transformation and emerging technologies as core enablers of inclusive growth, public-sector efficiency, and regional integration. JICA's cooperation will take into consideration of aligning with these national frameworks, particularly with regard to strengthening Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), digital government, and the responsible use of AI.
- A specialized advisor for "Strengthening Health Systems through Digital Technology" is currently in place. The Government of Ghana, through its E-Health Strategy, regards telemedicine as a key approach to addressing major health concerns and strengthening health systems. By improving the implementation and management capacity of teleconsultation services under the Ghana Health Service (GHS), access to quality healthcare services is being enhanced.
- Furthermore, in line with national development plans, efforts are underway to increase the added value of both existing and new projects by incorporating DX components as cross-cutting elements. In addition, considerations are being made to utilize space technologies and remote sensing to enhance the effectiveness of Ghana's efforts to address development challenges.

3.2 Sustainability Considerations

3.2.1 Gender and Diversity Perspective

- According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index (2025), Ghana ranks 88th out of 148 countries in the overall index, reflecting slow progress toward gender parity. The country performs relatively well in the Economic Participation and Opportunity sub-index, ranking 22nd, due to gradual improvements in women's labor force participation and access to economic opportunities. However, the score for Political Empowerment remains particularly low, with Ghana positioned at 119th, indicating persistent underrepresentation of women in national leadership and decision-making structures.
- According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Ghana records a Gender

Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.51, reflecting moderate gender-based disparities in reproductive health, empowerment, and labor-market participation. In addition, the World Bank's assessment of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) governance evaluates countries on (1) the adequacy of legal and policy frameworks and (2) the comprehensiveness of implementation mechanisms, using a scale where 100 represents the best performance. For Ghana, both the legal/policy framework score (1) and the implementation mechanism score (2) fall within the 0–75 range. This indicates that the country's foundational legal and policy environment, as well as its implementation system, are both insufficiently developed. Consequently, there are significant gaps in the effective prevention and response to SGBV. Therefore, Ghana falls into the category where both the basic legal and policy framework and the comprehensive implementation mechanisms remain insufficient, presenting persistent challenges.

- As outlined above, although women in Ghana have made progress in participating in economic activities to a certain extent, social challenges remain. These include limited participation in political and administrative decision-making, and weaknesses in legal and implementation frameworks for preventing and responding to SGBV. To address these challenges, it is important to analyze gender-related issues across all sectors, schemes, and projects and to advance gender mainstreaming initiatives within each project. In addition, JICA will work to increase the proportion of gender-responsive projects and expand women's participation in training and human resource development.

3.2.2 Disability Perspective

- According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, Ghana's total population is 30,832,019. Persons aged five years and above with disabilities represent 8% of the total population, with 6.7% among males and 8.8% among females. Although the census provides prevalence rates using the Washington Group functional domains (seeing, hearing, walking, remembering/concentrating, self-care, and communication), it does not provide national-level counts for each category. Therefore, while functional difficulties are captured, detailed numbers per impairment type remain unavailable. Globally, the World Health Organization estimates that 16% of the world's population lives with a disability, and 80% of whom reside in low- and middle-income countries. Compared with these global averages, the proportion of persons identified as having disabilities in Ghana appears lower, suggesting that a significant number of individuals with disabilities may remain uncounted or under-reported in national statistics.
- Ghana ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2012, committing the country to its implementation. In addition, Ghana enacted the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) to enshrine disability rights in domestic law, and further disability-related legislation and policies support inclusion efforts. A national disability strategy and related planning frameworks have also been developed. Despite these frameworks, major implementation gaps persist due to resource constraints, fiscal limitations, and insufficient awareness and understanding among stakeholders, resulting in laws and policies not being fully or effectively applied. Consequently, persons with disabilities continue to be excluded from education, employment, and broader social participation, which places them among the most marginalized in society. National data indicate that 8% of the population aged 5+ lives with disabilities, yet disparities remain across sectors such as schooling and workforce participation.
- In light of these conditions, all development cooperation should promote disability mainstreaming where relevant, ensuring that persons with disabilities participate as beneficiaries and implementers across all interventions. Priority actions include strengthening the collection and use of disability-disaggregated data, improving physical and information

accessibility, and promoting meaningful engagement and constructive dialogue with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations throughout project design and implementation.

3.2.3. Climate change Perspective

- In line with the Paris Agreement, Ghana submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC in 2015 and subsequently updated it in 2021. In its updated NDC, Ghana commits to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by a total of 64 $MtCO_2e$ by 2030, comprising 24.6 $MtCO_2e$ in unconditional reductions and an additional 39.4 $MtCO_2e$ conditional on international and private-sector support. The mitigation measures cover multiple sectors, including energy, forestry, agriculture, transport, and waste, with specific emphasis on transitioning away from high-emission technologies, such as heavy-fuel power generation, through fuel switching to natural gas, renewable energy expansion, and measures to reduce deforestation and degradation.
- According to the Government of Ghana's official energy-transition strategies, Ghana's long-term decarbonization pathway is defined in its formal transition frameworks. The 2022 National Energy Transition Framework sets a target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070, while the 2023 Energy Transition and Investment Plan, launched during the UN General Assembly, brings this target forward to 2060. In the area of climate adaptation, Ghana's NDC emphasizes enhancing national resilience, particularly through strengthening infrastructure against climate risks. Priority adaptation measures include early warning systems, disaster-risk management, water-resource management, food and landscape restoration, and building climate-resilient communities. These measures are reflected in the 13 adaptation measures identified in the updated NDC.
- JICA will identify climate resilience as a key development challenge, considering and implementing cooperation that contributes to strengthening adaptation measures to climate change.

3.2.4. Biodiversity Perspective

- Ghana is a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and has formulated its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). While the government is working to expand protected areas and promote forest restoration in line with international frameworks, integrating nature-based solutions into agriculture and urban planning remains an urgent challenge (Africa Natural Capital Accounting Policy Forum, 2023).
- Implications for Future Cooperation: When formulating new project plans, it will be important to assess the potential impacts on forests and biodiversity and to consider conducting relevant environmental and ecological studies.

End of the paper

Appendix: List of References

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