Volunteer Placement Profile
Conservation Research and Advocacy

Agona District Assembly
Swedru, Ghana
Job Description

One of the Agona District Assembly departments is in agriculture activities and waste management.

The Agona district is basically a farming community which provides the country with a good source of food like plantain, cassava and other essential foods; however, they have little knowledge about conservation awareness and the importance of such issues in preserving the country's resources. The assembly staff are working hard to correct this situation but they need volunteers to assist them in this huge endeavour.

As a conservation awareness volunteer you may be asked to assist the assembly staff: in obtaining information on wildlife and their habitats, recommending changes in hunting and trapping seasons, helping to resolve conflicts between hunters and land management experts, implementing control measures such as the trapping and relocating of animals and investigating suspected unlawful pollution of waterways.

A volunteer may also be asked to assist in the patrolling of areas in order to prevent the illegal killing of game, as well as deal with educational projects for the people in various communities to raise their awareness about environmental and conservation issues.

Conservation awareness volunteers do not need any specialized academic training at this placement. They should have a keen interest in the environment and the protection of its resources, as well as good communication skills in order to project a positive image to the people in Ghana about conservation issues. As a conservation awareness volunteer you need the ability to work effectively as a team member, as well as in unsupervised conditions. Volunteers would also be expected to be able to conduct training sessions and workshops.

Volunteer Tasks Required

Community Awareness

As a conservation awareness volunteer you would be expected to plan and
co-ordinate community awareness workshops in co-operation with partner organisations, relevant government agencies and also local authorities.

**Collaboration With Organizations**

As a conservation awareness volunteer you would be expected to collaborate with other organizations on awareness outreach projects and incorporate cross-cutting issues into the agendas of community committees established near key habitats.

**Time Sheet Reports**

As a conservation awareness volunteer you would be expected to complete a weekly time sheet report and submit it to the conservation area project manager at the end of each week.

**Conservation Lectures**

Conservation awareness volunteers may be asked to go to the local schools and/or local community groups to conduct conservation awareness lectures informing the people of Ghana about global warming and climate change; why it is so important to constantly strive to improve conditions affecting our environment.
Organization Details

The Agona West Municipality is in the eastern portion of the Central Region. It has a total land area of 540-sq. km. The municipality is divided into eleven zones. The Municipality forms part of twenty (20) metropolitan municipalities and districts in the Central Region. The Administrative Capital is Agona Swedru. The municipality shares boundaries with Agona East District to the North, to the south with Gomoa East District, to the West with Asikuma-Odeben-Brakwa District and to the East with Awutu Senya District.

The Agona District Assembly is responsible to the district in terms of education, health, agriculture, waste management, health and hygienic education, vector control, rodent control, routine house to house inspections and school education. The Agona Assembly is comprised of a group of men from the communities who report, (at the end of each month), to the chief executive the daily activities that have taken place in each department and if any new development has occurred that requires action.

The Agona District Assembly has a membership of 72 persons. This includes the District Chief Executive and two members of parliament for Agona East and West respectively.

The Assembly is the highest political and administrative authority in the district and its meetings are steered by a presiding member who is the local equivalent of the Speaker of the House. One person represents each electoral area of the district in the Assembly. Additionally, the government of the day also appoints 1/3 of the total number of elected representatives to bring expertise and socio-cultural balance into the House.

When the Organization was Founded

Agona District Assembly was founded by the Government of Ghana in 1970 to help the district achieve development through the outlined projects of the Assembly and it has served the people of Agona through the development and building of schools, water sanitation projects, agriculture, food and school health education projects.

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How the Organization is Funded

The District Assembly gets its fund from the District Assembly Common Fund which is distributed by the government through members of parliament that represent each district. Funds for their daily activities are obtained through the M.P Common Fund.
Placement Location Information

Agona District Assembly is located about a 15 minute walk from the main part of town in Swedru. The site of the assembly is often referred to as an estate because of its quiet environment and the fact that its two buildings are bungalows. There are fifteen offices in the buildings and these interior offices are painted a blue colour. There is a bungalow for the office staff and other employees who work on the big farm which grows plantation and other vegetables in it.

There is a visitors car parking lot for costumers who have appointments with members of the assembly or have come seeking information. Each department has its own parking section for its staff and the chief executive has been provided with a garage.

All assembly bungalow exteriors are painted brown in colour and the grounds around the bungalows have green grass growing. Mango trees have been planted to provide shade, as well as contribute to an attractive atmosphere within the compound.

City Description

Swedru is a small attractive town situated 20 km away from the coastline of Ghana. It is the capital of the Agona District with a population of approximately 60,000 people. While strolling down the winding pathways of Swedru, you will be mesmerized by the beauty of this city. The palm trees, lush vegetation and elaborate markets entice many visitors to stay more than just one night.

Swedru is a unique town having both the components of a rural and urban community. Visitors to Swedru, frequently comment on the various traditional activities that occur throughout the town. For example, it is quite common to see people wearing traditional attire, playing traditional games or using bicycles as the major form of transportation.

Since Swedru is the district capital of Agona, there are many facilities throughout the city that generally are only found within the big cities of Ghana. For example, there are at least six hotels, five internet cafe's, restaurants that serve a wide-range of
Ghanaian and western dishes and a fairly big hospital. It is considered a major commercial centre for the district and is well known for its cocoa growing plantations.

**Points of Interest**

Swedru lies about 20 km north of Winneba which is the historical seat of the Afutu people of Ghana. Winneba has a long history with the Europeans who have left their mark on the city. The historic Deer Hunter Festival (Aboakyere Festival) is held in Winneba every year in May.

The region can be broadly divided into two: the coast, which consists of undulating plains with isolated hills and occasional cliffs characterised by sandy beaches and marshland in certain areas. There is also the hinterland, where the land rises between 250 and 300 metres above sea level. The region lies within the dry equatorial zone and moist semi-equatorial zone. Annual rainfall ranges from 1,000 mm along the coast to about 2000 mm in the interior.

Along the coast can be found the coastal savannah with grassland and a few trees while semi-deciduous forest predominates the inland areas. Much of the original dense forest vegetation has been cleared for the cultivation of cocoa and palm oil.

**Weather in the Area**

The dry season in Ghana is from September through to March and temperatures generally range from 30-45 degrees Celsius. The rainy season occurs in April until August and is a bit cooler at temperatures of 20-35 degrees Celsius. As the name of the season suggests, rainfall increases dramatically throughout these months. It is generally not constant rain, but when it does rain, it usually pours. The wettest months are May-June and September-October while the drier periods occur in December-February and a brief period in August.

**Transportation From BaseCamp**

Volunteers will travel from the BaseCamp Center (Pink Hostel) by taxi or tro tro (public transportation) to the Kaneshie Lorry Station in Accra. From there volunteers will take a mini bus to the city of Swedru, usually taking around an hour and a half,
depending on traffic. Once there a BaseCamp Regional Coordinator will be there to meet you and take you to your homestay which is about a 45min drive.
Accommodation and Meals

All of our volunteers begin their stay in Ghana at our BaseCamp Center in Accra. Given that this placement is less than a 1 hour and 15 minute commute from BaseCamp, volunteers working here will have the option of living with us at BaseCamp or living with a host family.

The following information outlines a brief description of life at BaseCamp and also what someone can expect living with a host family in Ghana. Once you have completed our application, you can let our staff know if you would prefer to live with a host family. Otherwise, your application will default to having you live with us at BaseCamp.

If you have any questions about the difference between life at BaseCamp or life with a host family in Ghana you can always give us a call or send us an email. Our contact details are listed in the footer of every page of the site.
The BaseCamp Center in Accra is a hostel situated in the residential neighbourhood of Asylum Down. This is a relaxing and peaceful area, away from the continuous activity and hubbub of the tourist district, but central enough that we are within walking distance of many attractions in Accra including the National Museum, Kwame Nkrumah Circle and Adabraka Market.

The centre itself is a three-story building with several dormitory rooms. There are also several quiet areas where volunteers can study and relax including a covered area outside. There is an internet cafe, allowing volunteers to stay in touch with friends and family abroad. In addition to this, free WIFI can be accessed throughout the building.
All volunteers spend their orientation in this centre when they first arrive in Ghana. The workshops and language training take place in this building as well although each day we incorporate outings to learn about the area and how to get around independently.
Living with a host family in Ghana is a fantastic way to gain a deep understanding of and appreciation for the people and customs of the country. Each home-stay will provide a bed and three meals per day for our volunteers. The majority of host families offer private rooms with only one or two volunteers living with the family.

Living with a host family can greatly enhance your performance at your placement. For one, it will have a huge influence on the speed with which you gain familiarity with the local language. This, along with your deeper understanding of cultural practices and beliefs that you are likely to gain in this environment, can go a long way to improving or strengthening your relationships with your team mates at work. Furthermore, a significant percentage of our host families are closely affiliated with the organizations with which our volunteers work. As such, even the evening meal or hanging out around the house can become valuable time during which volunteers can share their ideas and continue their support of their host organization.

All of this being said, living with a host family is not for everyone. It is very important for volunteers to honor the house rules in their host family and to be punctual. Also,
depending on how remote your placement location, host families can be very rustic. Our staff in country can give you a better idea of what exactly you can expect from a host family in any particular community. However, in general, if these things sound like they might pose a challenge for you, we strongly suggest that you look at a placement within commuting distance from BaseCamp Ghana.
How the Program Works

Our program structure and costing is completely flexible which lets our volunteers ensure that they only pay for exactly the degree of support that they want.

Option 1 - Free Services

Some volunteers prefer to coordinate their own accommodation, meals and other support while overseas.

Anyone is welcome to use our volunteer placement search tool to help in finding a placement that is well suited to their interests. Once someone finds a placement that they wish to work with, they are welcome to make all the rest of their arrangements on their own.

As well, our team of staff overseas are often able to offer a few helpful pointers for volunteers 'doing it on their own'. Just send us an email with your questions and we will put you in touch with our team abroad. We only ask that you keep your requests fairly general, as this type of advice is exactly how our team earn their living. :)

Option 2 - Placement Support - 250 USD

Other volunteers would like assistance in selecting and confirming their placement, but they plan to manage their own accommodation and other expenses on their own.

These volunteers have the option of choosing to only have our assistance with selecting and confirming their placement. This option also includes ongoing placement support while abroad, so a volunteer would be able to ask our team for help if things at their placement were not working out.

In providing Placement Support, our team works with each volunteer through email, telephone and either Skype or Google Hangouts, to ensure that each volunteer has a clear understanding of their placement options. Our in-country staff will put together a custom list of placement options for each volunteer that they believe are the most appropriate matches with the volunteer's background, skills and interests.
Then each volunteer can work with our team both in Canada and abroad to go through each of the options and narrow-down their selection.

Option 3 - Full Program Support

For most volunteers who are volunteering for less than a year, they are looking for an option that includes their accommodation, meals, airport reception, country and program orientation and placement support. This is what our Program Fees are designed for.

We are proud of how over the years we have ensured that our program fees are amongst the most reasonable of any program in the world while we continue to provide exceptional volunteer support both at home and abroad.

Our Program Fees and listings of what these do and do not include are listed below:
# Program Fees Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Fee</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Week</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Weeks</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Weeks</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Weeks</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Weeks</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Weeks</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Weeks</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Weeks</td>
<td>1,190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Weeks  | 120  |

All program fees are listed in US Dollars.
Inclusions & Exclusions

What is Included

- Pre-Departure support
- Placement consultation
- Airport reception & transfer
- 2 Day orientation
- Accommodation (BaseCamp or host family)
- Breakfast and dinner
- Emergency & placement support

What is Not Included

Before Departure

- International flight
- Travel medical insurance
- Visa costs where required
- Work permits where required

While Overseas

- Daily transportation to and from placement
- Transport to airport on departure
- Placement fees if required
Program Dates

Our regularly scheduled program start dates are the first Friday of each month, every month of the year. We strongly recommend beginning your program on one of these dates as this will allow you to go through our orientation alongside other international volunteers.

If you would prefer, our application will also allow you to select a custom start date for your program. Keep in mind that there is an additional fee for a custom start date which ranges from 50 to 75 USD.

| Jul 05, 2019 | Aug 02, 2019 | Sep 06, 2019 |
| Oct 04, 2019 | Nov 01, 2019 | Dec 06, 2019 |
| Jan 03, 2020 | Feb 07, 2020 | Mar 06, 2020 |
| Apr 03, 2020 | May 01, 2020 | Jun 05, 2020 |
| Jul 03, 2020 | Aug 07, 2020 | Sep 04, 2020 |
| Oct 02, 2020 | Nov 06, 2020 | Dec 04, 2020 |
| Jan 01, 2021 | Feb 05, 2021 | Mar 05, 2021 |
| Apr 02, 2021 | May 07, 2021 | Jun 04, 2021 |

PLEASE NOTE:

These dates are the day that volunteers should plan to arrive on the ground in country. We can accommodate arrivals in-country at any time day or night on these dates.