



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

National Youth Service Country Profile

Profile verified by:

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INTRODUCTION:

The Ghana National Service Scheme is a public organization currently under the Ministry of Education of Ghana. The Ghana National Service Scheme (NSS) operates under the Ghana National Service Scheme Act of 1980, Act 426, which replaced NRCD 208 of 1973. Under the new Act, National Service Personnel (NSP) are required to render a mandatory service for a period of two years including a minimum period of six months military training. However, in 1995, the two year duration was changed to one-year for all able-bodied Ghanaians who are eighteen (18) years and above.

VISION STATEMENT:

Leader in Youth Service

MISSION STATEMENT:

Mobilize and Deploy Ghanaian citizens of 18 years and above for National Development

SLOGAN:

“Service to the Nation”

CORE OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage the spirit of national service among ALL segments of Ghanaian society in the effort of nation -building through active participation.
2. Undertake projects designed to combat hunger, illiteracy, disease and unemployment in Ghana.
3. Help provide essential services and amenities, particularly in towns and villages of the rural areas of Ghana.
4. Develop skilled manpower through practical training.



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5. Promote national unity and strengthen the bonds of common citizenship among Ghanaians.

NATIONAL SERVICE DEPLOYMENT:

The Scheme's deployment is contingent on provisions of section (3) of Act 426, which directs the Scheme to deploy personnel to undertake National Service duties in:

[a] Agriculture

[b] Health

[c] Education

[d] Local Government

[e] Rural Development, including surveying, physical planning, civil engineering and rural industries.

[f] Youth Programmes

ADMINISTRATION:

The Administrative structure of the Ghana National Service Scheme comprises the Board at the apex, the Executive Director and two Deputy Executive Directors, one in charge of Finance and Administration and the other in charge of Operations (Programmes and Projects). Operating under the Deputy Executive Directors are Heads of various Departments. Each Region has a Regional Director who supervises the work of the various District Directors.

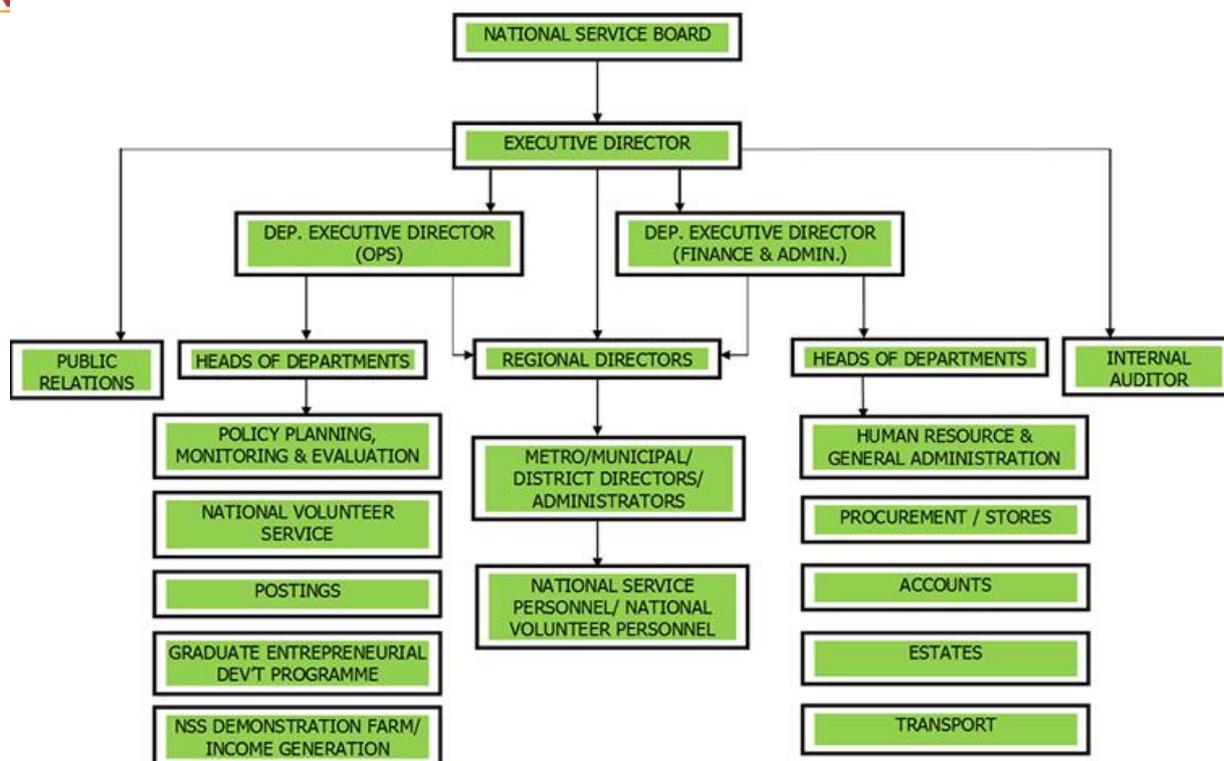
The Executive Director has direct and oversight responsibility over all postings of both mandatory and voluntary service personnel. The Internal Auditor and Head of Public Relations report directly to the Executive Director.

The Deputy in charge of Finance and administration has oversight responsibility for a number of departments, namely Human Resource and General Administration, Estate, Procurement, Accounts and Transport, Information Technology as well as Regional Directors.

The Deputy for Operations oversees Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Projects, Research and Development, Voluntary Service and the Graduate Entrepreneur Development Programme.



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The Scheme also has a number of Units that report to the Heads of Department, ten Regional Directors and 170 District Directors. The Scheme has a total Staff strength of Three Hundred and Fifty Eight (358).

DURATION OF SERVICE AND COVERAGE:

The duration of the National Service is one year. Service usually starts in September and ends in August the following year.

The National Service program is for Ghanaian tertiary graduates who have completed tertiary education and have pursued approved courses from an institution accredited by the National Accreditation Board of Ghana.

The National Service Secretariat also requires that personnel who have done a one-year non graduate service are required to undertake a one-year post tertiary service.

Ghanaians leaving abroad are also required to serve after they have completed their education in the country they are migrants.

WHAT WE DO/ PROGRAMMES:

The Ghana National Service Scheme currently deploys between 40,000 and 50,000 mandatory National Service Personnel and 20,000 volunteers annually. The deployment strategy is influenced by the government's socio-economic development agenda for the country. With the available skill mix, National Service Personnel are deployed to a variety of occupational fields. Priority areas of deployment include the following:



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- **EDUCATION**

The Ghana Education Service is the major beneficiary of the services of the service personnel since the education sector always has a deficit and needs more teachers in the classrooms especially in the rural areas. An average of 60% of personnel, are deployed to the sector annually. National Service Personnel are deployed at all levels of education (Basic, Secondary and Tertiary) to teach relevant subjects where there are shortfalls.

- **HEALTH SECTOR**

All over the world, the cost of health care is usually quite high and this adversely affects the health condition of ordinary people especially the poor and the excluded. Health is paramount for poor people and in most cases their immediate environment is a threat to them. Improving environmental conditions including water and sanitation as well as waste management services is basic to the creation of sustainable livelihoods and the elimination of poverty.

With this recognition, the Scheme intervenes by posting National Service Personnel to deprived communities to assist in the provision of potable water and appropriate sanitation facilities. They assisted in collecting vital health data for building health statistics for the Ministry of Health. At the same time they assisted in public environmental health education, child immunization and HIV/AIDs awareness campaigns.

- **GOVERNANCE AND DECENTRALISATION**

The Scheme has become the source of leverage to most public service institutions including the District Assemblies, by using National Service Personnel to meet their social service obligations. Following the Civil Service Reforms in the country in the 1990s which sought to reduce the size of the Civil Service; most Public Sector organizations became contracted and experienced manpower shortfalls. The Ghana National Service Scheme, being the biggest concentration of educated youth in the country, provides the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies with critical manpower to support the implementation of their programmes. The Scheme has played a crucial role in the country's decentralization process, by deploying qualified personnel with the requisite skills, in the area of planning, accounting, civil engineering etc to support the social and infrastructural service delivery of the District Assemblies.

- **SUPPORT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

In support of the government's private sector growth policy, the Scheme deploys between 5% and 10% of total National Service Personnel posting to private enterprises.



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- **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

The Scheme has in recent years directed its operations to support deprived communities in critical areas of need, focusing on programmes that support sustainable livelihoods. It is on the premise that hunger and malnutrition remain the most serious and intractable threats to most rural and sub-urban communities in the country. This situation renders most people vulnerable to poverty and they suffer a lack of access to or loss of control over resources including land, skills, knowledge, capital and social connection.

As an intervention, the Scheme established the Community Improvement Unit to use National Service Personnel to improve the lives of rural communities. The creation of this Unit is a strategic approach to Community Action using teams or gangs to enter into a “Change Agent” relationship directly with rural, deprived and vulnerable communities.

The Unit has Health, Agriculture and Small Scale industry sub-sectors where personnel offer their services and also develop their skills. In the Health sub-sector there are the Primary Health Care and Water and sanitation Units, where personnel are deployed into communities to work in clinics and health education programmes. The community service personnel design various programmes and projects with the communities’ involvement to be executed in needy areas. The Community service personnel also assist communities in the construction of school blocks to retain children in schools, construct Ventilated Improved Pit Latrines for communities to improve environmental sanitation. Income generating skills such as carpentry, masonry, manufacture of camp beds and sports equipments and beekeeping techniques have been imparted to male adults in deprived communities while their female counterparts received training in dress and soap making, as well as food processing through the Skills Training and Employment Placement Programme.

The National Service Scheme has been at the forefront of National Volunteering through the National Volunteer Service. The concept of volunteerism is not new in Ghana. Ghanaians since the colonial period have offered free and selfless services to the nation including the struggle for independence. In addition, many Ghanaians in different ways have served the country at the expense of other lucrative options.

The National Volunteer Service is a collaborative work between the Ghana National Service Scheme and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Ghana. The National Volunteer Service was officially launched in October 2003 with the posting of 53 volunteers as teacher to Secondary Schools (now known as Senior High Schools) in the Upper East Region of Ghana. This followed an 18-month planning and preparation process for both NSS and the Voluntary Services Overseas Ghana (VSOG) during which the organizations clarified the nature of their partnership, their respective roles and the design of the program. Additionally, procedures were developed for recruitment, selection, orientation, training and support of the volunteers.



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The NVS aimed to reduce teacher shortage in the most rural and deprived schools in Ghana, while at the same time offering volunteers a personally challenging experience that would heighten their capacity for lifelong active citizenship. The Government of Ghana (GoG) was quick to support the program following its early success in the 2003/4 pilot. In its second year the NVS scaled up to work in seven (7) regions and in 2005/6 it placed volunteers in all 10 regions bringing a 100% increase in numbers, with a 300% increase the following year. The NVS is wholly owned and implemented by the Government of Ghana through the NSS with technical and some financial support from VSO Ghana.

Since 2004 the government of Ghana has funded the allowances of all volunteers – representing a significant financial commitment.

There is almost unanimous praise for the NVS. The sheer scale and reach of the NVS means that its impact is guaranteed. Since 2003 the NVS has helped improve the lives of disadvantaged Ghanaians with tremendous zeal and enthusiasm. The NVS is a clear manifestation of Ghana's commitment to enforcing the Millennium Development Goals, specifically MDG 2-the provision of universal primary education and MDG 3-the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.

GENDER & HIV DESK

Introduction:

The Ghana National Service Scheme (NSS) has a permanent staff strength of 341 nationwide. In addition, the Scheme is currently responsible for 53,420 National Service Personnel (NSP) and 10,000 National Volunteer Personnel (NVP) deployed to various public and private organizations across Ghana's ten regions.

The age and gender profile of the Scheme's workforce as well as the wide geographical reach of its operations is *raison d'être* for the Scheme to establish and sustain an HIV&AIDS Awareness Programme.

- Majority of the Scheme's personnel, aged between 21-30, and fall within the national HIV&AIDS-prone age group of 19-29 (NSS HIV&AIDS Survey 2009).
- The large numbers and national distribution of NSS workforce as part of the productive labour force of Ghana thus, obligates NSS to enforce HIV&AIDS awareness and education for NSS operatives, at workplaces and communities

Gender and HIV&AIDS Strategy and Initiatives:

Through the Gender and HIV&AIDS Desk, the Scheme has developed a strategy outlining initiatives that are being rolled out across GNSS' staff, personnel, partners and user agencies.



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Initiatives as a Scheme:

- Mainstreaming of HIV&AIDS and gender issues in the Scheme's overall programme planning, implementation and monitoring.
- Provision of scientific and socio-economic information on HIV&AIDS during campus orientation and in-service induction sessions, as well as on the Scheme's official website.
- Facilitation of inter-sectoral collaboration on HIV&AIDS programmes
- Assurance of confidentiality of health records and 'Employee Wellness Service'

Initiatives for Staff, NSP and NVP:

- Continuous Drive to become Voluntary Non-Monetary Blood Donors (VNMBD)
- Provision of HIV&AIDS, moral, ethical, and sex education and awareness programmes

Initiatives for Partners and User Agencies:

- Provision of equal opportunities for personal and professional development to all NSP and NVP regardless of gender
- Assurance of confidentiality of health records and 'Employee Wellness Service'

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY PROGRAMME

The National Volunteer Service operates under the Ghana National Service Scheme and is mandated to recruit, train and deploy post-national service personnel as teachers to rural and deprived basic schools in Ghana. It provides a platform for Ghanaian citizens, out of their own free will, to share their skills, talents and energies to help solve identified needs of rural and deprived communities in Ghana.

It is restricted to teaching in rural and deprived basic schools.

Ghana National Service Scheme official webpage <http://www.nssghana.org/>