



# Integrated Country Strategy

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**GHANA**

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

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## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

The United States and Ghana continue to have excellent relations based on shared commitments to democracy, religious freedom, free market economics, and a willingness to collaborate on a range of regional and global issues. Entering the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ghana's economy and political institutions are showing signs of strain. The country's economic recovery has been slow due to weak revenue mobilization elevating the fiscal deficit and debt burden. In 2020 the country experienced a contentious electoral cycle that saw legal challenges, some violence at the polls, and a resultant split parliament, the first of its kind in modern Ghanaian history. Despite these developments, Ghana remains a key partner that is focused on regional security threats and has redoubled its efforts to keep the country prosperous and secure.

Our four mission goals, outlined below, advance American interests while reflecting Ghana's stability and our productive partnership. These goals support the Ghanaian government's vision of eliminating dependency on foreign assistance, including through increasing domestic resource mobilization, trade, and economic growth. In addition, our public diplomacy efforts strengthen the people-to-people relations that assist in achieving our strategic objectives and promote greater public awareness on how U.S. partnership and development programs in Ghana directly benefit Ghanaians.

These goals are closely aligned with the National Security Strategy, Department of State-U.S. Agency for International Development Joint Strategic Plan FY 2022-2026 (hereinafter "Joint Strategic Plan"), the Department of State Africa Bureau's Joint Regional Strategy, USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy, and Washington's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and anti-corruption guidance.

- **Spur Environmentally Sustainable Long-Term Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment**
- **Promote Opportunity and Development by Investing Inclusively in People**
- **Bolster Peace and Security**

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- **Improve Accountable Governance and Strengthen Democratic Institutions**

The management platform for Mission Accra has the potential to serve a leading role in advancing sustainable best practices, while promoting U.S. green technology and business. Management seeks to partner with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) on multiple greening initiatives; given the scale of the Mission housing pool at over 170 properties and growing, Mission Ghana presents an opportunity to be the toehold for U.S. sustainable energy entrepreneurship in a growing West African marketplace, while making the U.S. Mission facilities a showplace for greening initiatives. Overall Mission growth, and continued pressure by multiple agencies to develop Accra as a regional hub, has placed pressure on the Embassy ICASS platform to grow accordingly. Since 2011, Mission growth as measured by Basic Package subscriptions has grown by over 54 percent. Management will expand Facilities and Housing services, in particular to meet the growing customer workload. Ghana was one of the fastest growing economies in the world prior to the pandemic. Despite the better-than-anticipated 2020 growth, the pandemic reversed past positive gains made in terms of growth, fiscal consolidation, and debt reduction. Inflation reached a five year high at 12.6% in December 2021 and unemployment or underemployment, particularly among youth, remains an issue for an economy heavily reliant on commodity exports (cocoa, gold, and oil) and the services sector.

Home to the African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat, Ghana has an opportunity to serve as a trade and technology hub, attract increased investment into its growing private sector; expand trade exports beyond the basic commodities; and develop its weak manufacturing sector. We seek to promote a stronger business and trade environment, including for agricultural products, working in tandem with the private sector to spur broad-based, inclusive growth. Agricultural engagement will continue to focus on improving food security through climate smart practices, among others. We support Ghana's digitalization efforts to address debt and fiscal challenges and improve service delivery. Ghana is seeking to manage its domestic oil and gas resources more effectively, and make electricity more affordable and accessible, while consolidating its energy sector debt and expanding its use

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of renewable energy (solar, wind, nuclear) in support of its climate change goals. As a result, there remains a great need to **spur environmentally sustainable, long-term economic growth, trade and investment** to support pandemic recovery and ensure Ghana becomes a thriving middle-income nation that is able to provide for the welfare of its citizens and is no longer dependent upon outside assistance.

Ghana has made significant but uneven progress in improving its citizens' health and education over the past decade. U.S. government assistance will continue to help improve the health and literacy of Ghanaians by **promoting opportunity and development by investing inclusively in people** and encouraging Ghana to pursue its stated goal of self-reliance and independence from foreign aid. We will advance this goal by expanding access to quality health services; supporting COVID response, reducing the impact and spread of malaria, HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases; and increasing the use of preventative measures delivered through high quality and equitably distributed community-based health care. This includes family planning; maternal and child health care; water, sanitation, and hygiene; and improved nutritional practices.

Our health and education programs and donor partnerships will address policy reform leading to increased capacity building and strengthened health systems and good governance mechanisms at decentralized levels. Where appropriate, we will seek to incorporate innovative technologies into our diplomatic and development programs to ensure assistance reaches its intended beneficiaries.

It is in the United States' interest to continue to develop Ghana's military and civilian security services' capabilities, as well as to strengthen Ghana's peacekeeping and rule of law institutions. Ghana not only maintains peace and stability within its borders, but also advances peace in the region's maritime domain, on the continent, and beyond. Our security assistance programs seek to address Ghana's internal and regional security challenges, training needs, and equipment shortages, while supporting the nation's efforts to maintain professional and apolitical security services. U.S. assistance that is focused on capacity-building and self-sufficiency is crucial to **bolster peace and security** in Ghana. Our initiatives

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also provide the Ghanaian criminal justice system with the tools needed to achieve and sustain local capacity to maintain the rule of law, secure the country's borders, and hold individuals accountable for crimes that affect U.S. and Ghanaian interests.

Despite Ghana's status as a relative model of democratic governance on the continent, governance systems at both the national and local level are weak, subject to corruption, and often insufficiently accountable to citizens. That is why we must continue to work alongside our Ghanaian partners to **improve accountable governance and strengthen democratic institutions** in the country. U.S. Government assistance should focus on encouraging fair and inclusive political processes and public financial management; promoting a more transparent judicial and legal process; supporting human rights and human rights defenders; and mitigate conflict in northern Ghana. As perceptions, reports, and allegations of corruption increase, we will amplify our public and private messages on this topic. Through these efforts, we aim to encourage the Ghanaian government to improve accountable governance, rule of law, and representative, sustainable development.

## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

### **Mission Goal 1:** Spur Environmentally Sustainable Long-Term Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Accelerate Broad-based, Inclusive Economic Growth, to include improved Food Security and Agriculture Value Chain (CDCS DO1)
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Improve the Business Environment to Model Transparency, Accountable Governance, and Rule of Law
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Strengthen Government and International Partners' Capacity to Prevent, Detect, and Prepare for Climate, Environmental, and Health Security Threats

### **Mission Goal 2:** Promote Opportunity and Development by Investing Inclusively in People

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Accelerate Sustainable Development in Northern Ghana (CDCS DO3)
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Strengthen Collaborations that Supports the Global Health Security Agenda (NAMRU-3)

### **Mission Goal 3:** Bolster Peace and Security

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Enable Citizens to Reinforce Peaceful Communities (CDCS IR 3.4)
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Increase Capability and Professionalism of Security Forces, Law Enforcement, Defense Establishments, and Institutions of Justice

**Mission Goal 4:** Improve Accountable Governance and Strengthen Democratic Institutions

- **Mission Objective 4.1:** Improve Accountability and the Quality of Services Delivered by the Ghanaian Government, including in Basic Education (CDCS DO2)
- **Mission Objective 4.2:** Promote and Protect Human Rights for Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups
- **Mission Objective 4.3:** Foster a Free, Safe, Professional, Responsible, and Relevant Media that Supports Democratic Principles

**Management Objective 1:** Use the Mission Operational Platform to Advance U.S. Strategic Goals

**Management Objective 2:** Adapt Information Technologies to Reflect/Support the Changed Work Environment Resulting from the Pandemic



### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

#### **Mission Goal 1 | Spur Environmentally Sustainable Long-Term Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment**

**Description |** Mission Goal 1 seeks to improve Ghana’s economic growth, trade, and investment in a sustainable way for the mutual benefit of the United States and Ghana. This goal aligns with the interim 2021 National Security Strategy (NSS) strategic goals of expanding economic prosperity and opportunity grounded in equitable and inclusive growth, as well as investments to encourage innovation, strengthening national competitiveness, producing good-paying jobs, rebuilding American supply chains for critical goods, and expanding opportunities for all Americans. Mission Goal 1 advances Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) Strategic Objectives 2.1 and 2.3 which focus on promoting American prosperity, U.S. job creation, and U.S. economic security, and Joint Regional Strategy (JRS) goal 2 on increasing mutually beneficial economic growth, trade, and investment. Mission Goal 1 also intends to advance the interests of the Ghanaian people and their government to fulfill a vision of shared prosperity and security. It is a component of the USAID/Ghana Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), most directly aligned with Development Objective (DO) 1, “Broad-based economic growth accelerated and sustained.”

#### **Objective 1.1 | Accelerate and sustain broad-based economic growth (USAID/Ghana CDCS DO 1)**

- **Justification |** Although Ghana experienced strong macroeconomic performance from 2000 to 2019 with an average GDP growth rate of 6.65 percent, it was largely driven by unprocessed commodity exports, especially oil, gold, and cocoa. The COVID-19 pandemic depressed Ghana’s GDP growth rate to 0.4 percent in 2020, and government spending designed to combat its economic effects raised the country’s debt-to-GDP ratio to 83.5 percent by the close of 2021. Most Ghanaians work in the informal sector, and Ghana’s tax base accounts for only 12 percent of GDP compared to a sub-Saharan African average of 17 percent. The private sector investment needed to

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diversify exports, expand the economy, and create jobs is constrained by low access to technology, inefficient port and logistics procedures, and lack of market- or sector-specific information for investors to fully participate in the economy. High levels of corruption and contract steering, and instances of a disregard for contract sanctity further erode the business enabling environment. There are opportunities to diversify Ghana's economy and export base by improving agricultural productivity, expanding access to affordable and clean energy, catalyzing private investment, and accelerating trade, and stimulating investment in non-traditional sectors (those sectors outside of gold, petroleum, and cocoa). Fostering regional integration in the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) zone and taking advantage of a strong U.S. business presence in Ghana will allow Ghana to attract additional investment, expand exports and put innovative technologies to use. A young and vibrant population that is poised to take advantage of digital technologies will provide opportunities for Ghana to upgrade its digital infrastructure, create jobs in information technologies and other entrepreneurial enterprises, and attract international firms to serve as anchors for Ghana's nascent ICT sector.

- **Linkages** | This objective aligns with the economic focus of JSP Goal 2, JRS Goal 2, the interim NSS, and USAID/Ghana CDCS DO 1. The objective also operationalizes a number of U.S. Presidential Initiatives, including Feed the Future (FtF), Power Africa, Prosper Africa, Digital Africa, the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa, and the G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. It also supports trade under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and development efforts under the Build Back Better World initiative. In addition, this objective supports the Government of Ghana's (GoG) priorities as established in the Ghana COVID-19 Alleviation and Revitalization of Enterprises Support (CARES) plan, Shared Growth and Development Agenda, Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy, Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program, and the Medium-Term Agricultural Sector Investment Plan.

- **Risks** | Risks associated with not achieving this mission objective include Ghana's debt-to-GDP levels continuing to increase, which crowds out national investment that could be put to productive use in favor of debt repayments and increases the cost of borrowing in the private sector. A resurgent COVID-19 pandemic would also depress business activity and disrupt supply chains, raising the costs of doing business, decreasing firm profitability, and increasing unemployment. The Mission will mitigate the debt risk by focusing its economic growth programming on the private sector to increase tax revenue and by encouraging the GoG to undertake data-driven policy reforms that will emphasize efficiency. The United States is helping Ghana acquire COVID-19 vaccines and preventative materials to ward against the virus while offering technical assistance to help strengthen supply chains and encourage domestic production of key goods.

**Objective 1.2** | Improve the Business Environment to Model Transparency, Accountable Governance, and Rule of Law

- **Justification** | Ghana increased government spending to address the economic fallout of the pandemic, putting upward pressure on its fiscal deficit and debt to GDP ratio, with political dynamics challenging efforts toward renewed fiscal consolidation and increased revenue mobilization. At the same time, uneven application of regulatory, tax, and business rules continue to undermine private sector growth and development while raising questions about rule of law and accountability. A sub-optimal business enabling environment, weak business competitiveness, a tight credit market, and an unskilled workforce further constrain growth. Women and youth, among other underserved populations, may find the environment too challenging to pursue viable entrepreneurial ventures or access financing given high borrowing costs and crowding out by government borrowing. Efforts to address corruption, improve the business environment, and strengthen Ghana's fiscal management will boost trade and investment opportunities for both U.S. and Ghanaian businesses, help Ghana attract more foreign direct investment, and improve revenue mobilization. These efforts will

better position Ghana to take advantage of AfCFTA as broader efforts to increase its awareness among U.S. investors and across the continent support the trade area's success. Mission Accra's interagency will mobilize foreign assistance funds to strengthen institutions, improve service delivery, and build civil service skills sets. It will also leverage exchange and outreach programs with direct advocacy to partner with the Government of Ghana to strengthen the business environment and its economic outlook.

- **Linkages** | This objective directly aligns with the Joint Regional Strategy (JRS) goal 2 to increase mutually beneficial economic growth, trade, and investment and goal 4 to strengthen the capacity of Sub-Saharan countries to absorb shocks, adapt to social, economic, and environmental changes, particularly as Ghana's economy recovers from pandemic shocks and seeks to build back better. It also operationalizes key Presidential and department initiatives on corruption, transparency (B3W, ERGI), and economic resilience (Prosper Africa, Feed the Future) to support a more inclusive and stable global economy.
- **Risks** | Without improvements in the business environment, the Ghanaian private sector and U.S. businesses, along with the country's economic growth, will continue to be stifled, and its vulnerable fiscal position will deter foreign direct investment. Without improvements in the business environment, unemployment and poverty will continue to compromise Ghana's economic growth. Post will mitigate these risks by strengthening systems and institutions, and mobilizing U.S. government institutions and initiatives, such as Prosper Africa, the Development Finance Corporation (DFC), Export-Import Bank (EXIM), and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), to support private sector investment.

**Objective 1.3 | Strengthen Government and International Partners' Capacity to Prevent, Detect, and Prepare for Climate and Environmental Security Threats**

- **Justification |** Post seeks to leverage Ghana's position as a regional leader in addressing climate change challenges and supporting regional efforts post COP-26 to meet Nationally Determined Contribution thresholds, prevent fisheries collapse, and reduce the impacts of illegal mining. Enhanced cooperation with the Government of Ghana and international partners will result in increased protection of local biodiversity, reduced pollution, improved sustainable management, and serve as a model for the region. To achieve these goals, post seeks to increase political will, identify and mobilize resources, and strengthen local and regional operational capacity to combat environmental crimes (including illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, wildlife trafficking, and illegal mining). Mission Ghana will continue to work with local and international partners to deter wildlife trafficking, which contributes to increased risks of zoonotic disease emergence and spread and transnational organized crime. Mission Ghana will advocate for better air quality and improve local capacity for air quality management, a fundamental determinant of local and regional public health outcomes. Improved health outcomes will reduce strain on the health care system and stabilize income flows to Ghanaians, who miss less work due to illness. Mission Ghana will continue to promote the use of a one health approach when working with local and international partners to deter wildlife trafficking, which contributes to increased risks of zoonotic disease emergency and spread and transnational organized crime.
- **Linkages |** This objective aligns with key U.S. and GoG policies to identify, address, mitigate, and prevent the effects of global climate change, approved under the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, to which both the United States and Ghana are party. This objective supports existing and enhanced GoG policies under the Ministry of Environment Science Technology and Innovation, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Finance to address climate-related environmental and economic challenges. Concrete steps will also entail a robust regulatory environment capable of

enforcing its authority and financial and political support to effectively implement the Paris Agreement and Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). This goal aligns with the President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience and the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate.

- **Risks** | To mitigate the risks associated with climate change, overfishing, and illegal mining, Mission Ghana will embrace a shared commitment to promote the conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial, aquatic, and marine ecosystems with like-minded partners and actors, as well as non-traditional biodiversity stakeholders including local communities. Corruption, a lack of robust enforcement of established policies, waning political will, mismatched priorities among government ministries, and a lack of financing options all present risks to addressing these issues. Without USG engagement, Ghana is at risk of facing increased effects of droughts, climate refugees, decreased food security, increased instability and civil unrest, catastrophic damage to coastal areas, a collapse of Ghana's offshore fisheries, polluted waterways, loss of biodiversity, loss of government revenue, and increased mortality rates.

## **Mission Goal 2 | Promote Opportunity and Development by Investing Inclusively in People**

**Description** | Focus investments in disadvantaged and underserved communities, especially northern Ghana to encourage private sector investment; improve equitable delivery of quality social services by government; and empower citizens, particularly women and youth, to advocate for the well-being of their families, security of their communities and accelerate development.

The Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) is a group of more than 70 countries, international organizations and non-government organizations, and private sector companies that have come together to achieve the vision of a world safe and secure from global health threats posed by infectious diseases. The GHSA aims to strengthen countries' capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to emerging public health threats in a manner that aligns with

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International Health Regulations (IHR) requirements. The GHSA leverages and complements the strengths and resources of multisectoral and multilateral partners to address priorities and gaps in efforts to build and improve country capacity and leadership in the prevention and early detection of, and effective response to, infectious disease threats. Ghana officially committed to the GHSA in 2015 and began to strengthen essential areas such as disease surveillance.

**Objective 2.1 | Accelerate Sustainable Development in Northern Ghana**

- **Justification |** Despite Ghana's steady economic growth and social improvements, significant historical inequalities persist between the north and south of the country. In addition, the northern regions of Ghana (Northern, Upper East, Upper West, North East and Savannah) suffer from erratic rainfall, poor soil quality, the highest poverty rates, and inadequate vital infrastructure such as roads, electricity, potable water, and access to education and health. The north, largely savannah, almost Sahelian, experiences severe climate and environmental shocks, including perennial long spells of droughts and floods, leading to a vicious cycle of food insecurity and attendant malnutrition, stunting, wasting, higher child mortality rates, and poor educational learning outcomes. The north is also plagued by recurring ethnic-chieftaincy and resource-induced violent conflicts, and youth migration. The unique development challenges faced by northern Ghanaians, including inequalities in access to quality basic service delivery, and rising security concerns, require a purposeful and strategic focus to address.

Northerners represent 16 percent of the country's total population spread out over 43% of Ghana's landmass. The combined underemployment and unemployment in the Northern, Upper West, and Upper East regions are 24.7, 29.6, and 55.4 percent respectively, in comparison with a national average of 15.6 percent. Across the north, women represent a significant percentage of smallholder farmers: 64 percent in Northern Ghana; 59.4 percent in Upper West; and 44.1 percent in Upper East. While both male and female smallholder farmers are caught in a cycle of poverty, women suffer from a more profound lack of inputs, access to credit, and land rights. Nearly 68 percent of Ghanaians living in the Northern region live on less than \$1.25 per day.

Recent surveys show that health outcomes in Ghana's northern regions continue to lag compared with the national averages. For example, 33 percent of children in the Northern region are stunted compared to a national average of 19 percent. Skilled birth delivery in Ghana's Northern Region is at 59 percent as compared to the national average of 80 percent. Family planning use in the former Northern region is also low, with 17 percent of women (age 15-49) using a modern method of family planning as compared to 25 percent nationwide. Access to basic sanitation is 8 percent in the Upper West Region, 12 percent in the Northern Region, and 15 percent in the Upper West Region, as compared to the national average of 21 percent. Regarding gender-based violence, early marriage affects 28 percent of girls (age 20-24) in the Northern region and 22 percent in Upper West and Upper East regions, compared to 19 percent nationally.

Similar disparities exist in the education sector, where averaging across the three regions in northern Ghana for the 2016 National Education Assessment (NEA), only 18.4 percent of students achieved proficiency in Primary 4 English. The percentage of women and girls who have never been to school is highest in Northern (59 percent), followed by Upper West (53 percent), and Upper East (45 percent), compared with only 14 percent of women and girls in Greater Accra. Furthermore, only 4 percent or less of girls in the Northern, Upper East, and Upper West Regions Accra have completed secondary education or higher compared to 20 percent of women and girls in Greater Accra. Per the most recent 2017 Ghana Statistical Service report on poverty, approximately 58 percent of Ghanaians living in the north have access to electricity; however, most cannot afford to use it. As Ghana's relative stability provides an example for other West African countries to emulate. Conversely, forced transitions in government and violent extremism in no less than five West African countries could spread to Ghana.

- **Linkages** | This proposed Objective 2.1 is informed by and directly responds to the priorities outlined in State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Africa by encouraging partnerships with countries that are responsive to their citizens, pursuing effective governance, promoting fair trading practices, establishing good business climates, and a



desire to move beyond assistance to a relationship that promotes prosperity for all. In the post-COVID-19 era, this also embodies the essence of the USG's Build Back Better World agenda and commitment that includes a focus on climate, health and health security, digital technology, and gender equity and equality.

**Redefining our Relationship with Partner Governments:** We will coordinate with many different stakeholders to spur progress in northern Ghana. This includes facilitating relationships between the GOG, civil society organizations (CSO), and key private sector actors, as well as catalyzing a true partnership between the citizens of northern Ghana and those elected to represent them. We continue to maintain a focus on gender equity and equality.

**Financing Self-Reliance:** While northern Ghana is largely agrarian, viable opportunities exist to catalyze broad-based economic growth and combat widespread poverty. This includes documenting and highlighting the gaps in needed domestic investments in the north.

**Private Sector Engagement:** To encourage private sector investment in northern Ghana, we will continue to focus on innovation in water, sanitation, health care delivery, energy services, low-cost private schools, and agriculture.

The sub-objective also aligns with the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The USG's focus on northern Ghana aligns with the Government of Ghana's (GoG) efforts to close the regional development gap that includes establishing the Northern Development Authority in 2017 to implement a framework to accelerate development in the northern regions. The GOG's flagship programs such as "Planting for Food and Jobs" and "One Village, One Dam" also aim to address the regions' development challenges. These efforts will require sustained, strategic investments to bolster the region's poor development outcomes brought about by a historical lack of investment and geographic and climatic realities. The GOG's plan to build a multi-purpose hydro dam in the region will also boost agriculture, and livelihoods, and reduce migration, and poverty. It will open the area for private sector investment to catalyze transformative

development. Furthermore, the achievement of Ghana's aspirational vision of "Ghana beyond aid" cannot be achieved if the northern regions remain underdeveloped, marginalized, and vulnerable. By investing in Ghana's people and government systems, particularly in Northern Ghana, we ensure the U.S. has a stable, economic trade partner, co-laborer in the fight against emerging health threats, and political ally on the African continent, thereby bolstering U.S. national security.

- **Risks |** The COVID-19 pandemic, other epidemics, economic shocks, or other disasters such as floods or droughts overwhelm government systems, resulting in undelivered basic services including school closures. People returning from cities to small communities may increase pressure on already fragile resources, triggering disputes/conflicts. Lack of inclusive governance and heavy-handed security service component with lack of justice may spark violent extremist activities. Continuous unemployment/underemployment of youth may escalate youth vigilantism. The absence of concerted efforts by governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector, in partnership with citizens, may erode any gains already made.

**Objective 2.2 |** Strengthen Collaborations that Support the Global Health Security Agenda

- **Justification |** The 2015 Ebola epidemic in West Africa highlighted gaps in bio surveillance and outbreak response capabilities in countries such as Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Cote d'Ivoire. Subsequently, the 2019 global COVID-19 pandemic further demonstrated the detrimental impact of infectious diseases on public health (at the population and individual levels) in addition to non-health related ramifications resulting from poor global health security policies. To address these deficiencies, the U.S. Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Agency of International Development (USAID), and the Department of Defense clinical researchers collaborated via interagency global public health teams to make significant strides in infectious diseases surveillance and global health security capacity in Ghana. Disease screening capability, data capturing/management, and contact tracing effort did not advance significantly, and these gaps were exposed during the early onset of the COVID-19

pandemic in Ghana. Notable deficiencies included: delayed outbreak response coordination, poor synchronization across the governmental public health entities, inconsistent data capturing, infrequent testing rates, inconsistent supply chains and delays in infection prevention training, and lack of adequate resources for field epidemiology teams and frontline health workers. Investment in the GoG's public health infrastructure in conjunction with the Global Health Security Agenda will equip the GoG with accurate and broad diagnostic support to allow for reliable, efficient clinical infectious disease identification, outbreak detection, pandemic (emergency) response, field epidemiology and firmly establish the ability to respond to emerging or re-emerging threats. Anticipating there will be a persistent increased presence of U.S. government personnel, DoD service members, and private American citizens in Ghana, improving the global health security landscape of Ghana benefits USG interests by ensuring appropriate countermeasures and mitigation strategies to inform USG personnel deployed and stationed overseas.

- **Linkages** | This proposed Objective 2.2 is informed by and directly responds to the priorities outlined in: the Joint Regional Strategies (JRS) Global Health policy; the 2017 National Security Strategy – *Combat Biothreats and Pandemics*; Joint External Evaluations (JEE) for Improved Health Security, and the U.S. CDC's Global Health Security Agenda 2020 Annual Report. Through this proposed objective, the USG interagency partners will collectively work toward common targets and objectives in alignment with global health security.
- **Risks** | Infectious diseases do not differentiate based on ethnic background, religious affiliation, or political partisanship; nor do they respect international borders. Inability to support and execute these sub-objectives of the Mission ICS will negatively impact both USG and GoG operations, as well as the productivity of Ghanaian citizenry. Reduced work forces due to departures or illness, limited operational postures, and inability to engage our host nation partners directly reduce our ability to fully support our host nation partner and will hinder diplomatic relations in Ghana. In the event of a new emerging pandemic or infectious disease threat, detrimental health impacts will be

experienced with a significant ripple effect into socio-economic, educational, financial, and developmental sectors as well. Learning from the experiences of the global COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that GHSA targets are met allows the USG to accomplish its mission confidently and competently in Ghana while keeping USG assets informed of infectious disease threats and ensure protective measures are in place while Mission personnel are deployed or stationed in Ghana.

### **Mission Goal 3 | Bolster Peace and Security**

**Description |** Mission Goal 3 aims to counter threats to peace and security, both within Ghana and throughout the region by supporting the Government of Ghana's efforts to mitigate conflict and combat extremism, transnational criminal organizations, and cybercrime while improving public security and the rule of law.

#### **Objective 3.1 | Enable Citizens to Reinforce Peaceful Communities (CDCS IR 3.4)**

- **Justification |** As witnessed in the Sahel region, violent extremist organizations (VEOs), transnational criminal organizations, and other malign actors take advantage of weak security forces and cleavages between local authorities and communities to foster violence and transnational crime. In Ghana, such cleavages exist that could be entry points for VEOs, especially in the northern regions of the country. When compared to the southern regions, GOG presence in the northern regions is remarkably weaker, with certain communities entirely reliant on services provided by non-state actors and religious organizations. Underserved communities are often in the border and rural areas where discussions with security authorities highlight that cooperation and coordination between local authorities and communities are ad hoc and unstructured. Zongo communities throughout Ghana's urban settings are also historically underserved.

In northern communities, Ghana experiences intermittent violent clashes between nomadic herdsman and pastoralist farmers and also sporadic intercommunal violence

over chieftaincy and land tenure issues. Ghana's long-standing chieftaincy conflicts continue to fuel a cycle of violence and internal conflicts between communities. These internal conflicts erode and weaken community cohesion, prevent development, and weaken community resilience. These vulnerabilities, if left unchecked, leave communities susceptible to VEO influence, as the latter could exploit these governance challenges to build a rift between communities and the government. Ghana needs to develop a common understanding between local communities and authorities on the vulnerabilities the communities face and how they could work together to respond to them.

Factors contributing to the erosion of social cohesion in Ghana play out in the atmosphere of partisan polarization that tends to split along ethnic, religious, and geographic lines. In addition to political polarization, there are distinct intergenerational tensions, as youth often feel excluded from decision-making processes, particularly the political process. Given recent survey findings that those who feel their community is more cohesive are less likely to support violent extremism, we will promote programming to build trust and social cohesion across these social, political, and religious cleavages.

- **Linkages** | The proposed Objective 3.1 is informed by and directly responds to the priorities outlined in the 2021 NSC Interim National Security Strategic Guidance; the State-USAID Joint Strategic Goal Framework; USAID's Policy for CVE through Development Assistance, the Global Fragility Act (GFA), the new 2020 U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, and USAID/Ghana's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).
- **Risks** | A deterioration of social cohesion threatens Ghana's democracy, economy, and stability. Ongoing ethnic, chieftaincy and land disputes are internal destabilizing factors. Increasing tensions between farmers and herders, and the marginalization of women, children, and minorities such as Fulani/Fulbe herders seeking grazing pastures for their cattle could catalyze violent extremism, both internally and from external

actors. The Mission is working with local leaders, media, and security forces to help Ghana build resiliency to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE).

**Objective 3.2 | Increase Capability and Professionalism of Security Forces, Law Enforcement, Defense Establishments, and Institutions of Justice.**

- **Justification |** It is in the United States' interest to continue to develop Ghana's military and civilian security service capabilities as well as to strengthen the professionalism of Ghana's institutions responsible for maintaining peace and upholding the rule of law. This support bolsters Ghanaian security agencies' capacity to respond to threats from terrorist groups, cybercriminals, and transnational criminal organizations present in the region. Ghana's enhanced ability to bolster public security contributes to economic and political stability in a key regional U.S. partner. Ghana's relatively small military forces are apolitical and contribute to the country's internal stability and democratic credentials.

Ghana not only maintains peace and stability within its borders, but also advances peace on the continent and beyond. Ghana consistently ranks in the top ten global contributors to UN peacekeeping operations (PKO). Its peacekeeping forces are well respected worldwide. Strengthening Ghana's ability to rapidly self-deploy and sustain capabilities that help stabilize countries across the continent—and worldwide—is a primary objective of our security assistance activities.

As piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has increased, maritime domain awareness and security are a top security concern, particularly given the need to safeguard Ghana's offshore oil resources—along with its shipping and fisheries resources. USG assistance supports Ghana to become a regional leader in maritime security.

USG security assistance programs also seek to address Ghana's internal and regional security challenges, training needs, and equipment shortages, while supporting the nation's efforts to maintain professional and apolitical security services. Programs seek to enhance Ghana's ability to prevent and respond to destabilizing influences, such as

terrorism and violent extremist organizations (VEOs), which may exploit cultural and ethnic ties and attempt to weaken government controls to obtain a foothold in Ghanaian society. Established criminal smuggling routes render Ghana's ports vulnerable to illicit international organized criminals and susceptible to other illicit activities. This fuels a culture of corruption from which terrorists and VEOs benefit. USG security assistance both mitigates Ghana's security challenges and safeguards the United States from potential attacks against its citizens and interests both at home and abroad. The USG is strengthening its programs to reduce corruption in civilian security services by enhancing Ghana's internal investigation and prosecution capability.

Corruption remains a serious issue in Ghana. Ghana has failed to make progress in the fight against corruption as seen by stagnant scores on the Corruption Perception Index over the last three years. The GoG has taken some steps to combat corruption, including establishing an Office of the Special Prosecutor, but has not yet fully resourced or supported anti-corruption initiatives to the degree the rhetoric implies.

- **Linkages** | Mission Goal 3 advances the aims of Pillar I of the National Security Strategy; Goal 1 of the JSP; Goal 1 of the JRS; and the President's "Memorandum on Establishing the Fight Against Corruption as a Core United States National Security Interest."
- **Risks** | Without capable defense and security institutions, Ghana is vulnerable to transnational organized crime, violent extremism, and terrorism. Ghana's tradition of peaceful, free, and fair democratic elections and continued economic growth cannot be sustained without neutral and competent security agencies and a fair, efficient, and effective criminal justice system. Public trust in these systems is key to stability, and negative interactions with security forces are a driving force to violent extremism. The United Nations Development Program reports that 71% of extremists pointed to a negative interaction with security services, directly, or involving family or friends, as the reason for their joining extremist organizations. Mission Accra continues to support the professionalism of Ghana's civilian security and military forces through training, knowledge sharing, and capacity building to help ensure Ghana remains an exporter of peace in the region – without exporting all the peace.

## **Mission Goal 4 | Improve Accountable Governance and Strengthen Democratic Institutions**

**Description |** Mission Goal 4 advances the dignity of individuals, empowers women and youth, and protects the human rights of everyone in Ghana. A strong human rights and democratic environment will reinforce the societal fundamentals that will permit Ghana to serve as a beacon of security and trade and continue to align Ghana with U.S. foreign policy priorities. By seeking to combat corruption in Ghana and promote government transparency and accountability, mission Goal 4 ensures American companies can compete fairly in a transparent business environment through the creation of a free, fair, and reciprocal economic relationship. It can also improve trust between Ghanaians and their elected leaders, with government funds spent properly, reinforcing democratic resiliency.

**Objective 4.1 |** Improve Accountability and the Quality of Services Delivered by the Ghanaian Government.

- **Justification |** Ghana continues to experience a steady decrease in public trust in government leaders and institutions. Although the government has many of the legal tools in place to combat corruption, it appears to lack the political will to enforce these laws and impose consequences on offenders. In 2019, only 35 percent of Afrobarometer survey respondents noted that they believe the country is going in the right direction and 53 percent of respondents noted their belief that corruption increased in the last year. Based on international indicators, Ghana ranks 73 out of 180 countries on Transparency International's 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index, scoring 43 out of 100, a number that remains below the global average and that has not meaningfully improved since 2016.
- **Linkages |** USG assistance is geared toward addressing corruption in Ghana by supporting civil society organizations to advocate for anti-corruption efforts, and by strengthening government transparency and accountability. To address these issues, the U.S. Embassy is focused on addressing corruption through prevention, awareness,

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and, eventually, meaningful prosecutions. Objective 4.1 is informed by and directly responds to the priorities outlined in the 2021 NSC Interim National Security Strategic Guidance; the State-USAID Joint Strategic Goal Framework; the 2020 U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, and USAID/Ghana's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

- **Risks |** Risks associated with not achieving this mission objective include further reduced public trust in government institutions due to the persistence of corruption at all levels of government leading to increased difficulty in engaging credibly with the Ghanaian government. Higher levels of corruption could lead to underdevelopment and an erosion of economic gains. This could eventually lead to dissatisfaction among the population and destabilization of democracy/violent extremism taking hold in Ghana. Likewise, failure to improve the performance of the government could lead to weakening democratic institutions and an increase in the policy space between Ghana and the United States.

**Objective 4.2 | Promote and Protect Human Rights for Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups.**

- **Justification |** Ghana is a vibrant democracy with active political parties; active civil society organizations, including the media; a history of peaceful political transitions; and freedom of speech and association. However, the human rights community here has historically been underfunded and deprioritized when compared to other, more acute, problems in the region. The result is a human rights / civil society community with only a few truly capable partners that multiple diplomatic missions return to repeatedly. A lack of resources has created a zero-sum mentality in many smaller human rights organizations located in Ghana, which are reluctant to pool resources and cooperate. To improve the human rights situation in Ghana, the USG needs capable partners.
- **Linkages |** The United States is well placed to use its strong relationship with Ghana, our shared goals and values, and the demonstrated desire of the government and people of Ghana for meaningful change to promote core human rights. Except for a few significant outliers like LGBTQI+ rights, Ghanaians generally reflect U.S. views on

human rights. Objective 4.2 is informed by and directly responds to the priorities outlined in the 2021 NSC Interim National Security Strategic Guidance; the State-USAID Joint Strategic Goal Framework; the 2020 U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, and USAID/Ghana's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

- **Risks** | Failure to improve the capacity of existing partners and expand the pool of capable partners threatens to undermine Ghana's existing human rights atmosphere. A significantly degraded human rights ecosystem will undermine the legitimacy and practice of Ghana's democracy, as well as deter business investment.

**Objective 4.3** | Foster a Free, Safe, Professional, Responsible, and Relevant Media that Supports Democratic Principles.

- **Justification** | Ghana's media is recognized as fully free, one of the few nations on the continent to earn that distinction. However, there are some points of concern. A lack of transparency regarding ownership casts doubts on the impartiality of some news reporting. There is no meaningful investigative journalistic community in Ghana, which limits the types of news stories, as well as limits the number of "watchdogs" that can monitor and report in a factual manner about human rights abuses and corruption.
- **Linkages** | USG social media platforms have the largest followership of any diplomatic mission in the country and ensure USG messaging is well positioned to tell the success stories of U.S. investments and development partnership programs and how they directly benefit citizens. Objective 4.3 is informed by and directly responds to the priorities outlined in the 2021 NSC Interim National Security Strategic Guidance; the State-USAID Joint Strategic Goal Framework; the 2020 U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, and USAID/Ghana's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).
- **Risks** | The operation of a free media is a cornerstone of our shared democratic principles. Significant backsliding on media freedom could threaten the USG's ability to operate in an open and transparent manner and sow doubt about USG

intentions in Ghana. It can also enable corruption to proliferate with no accountability, undermining the investment climate.

## 4. Management Objectives

**Management Objective 1 |** Appropriate and Efficient Management of Infrastructure to Provide the Operational Platform Needed to Support Mission Strategic Goals.

- **Justification |** As Embassy Accra becomes an increasingly desirable regional base for USG offices, the Management platform must keep pace, ensure adequate office, communications, and residential support enable the Mission's various offices and agencies to accomplish the goals and objectives articulated in this ICS.
- **Linkages |** Providing the platform to support Mission operations as articulated in the ICS responds to the State-USAID Joint Strategic Goal Framework, the Global Fragility Act, the Joint Strategic Plan, and the Interim 2021 National Security Strategy.
- **Risks |** A lack of adequate Mission administrative infrastructure would undermine progress on all ICS goals and objectives. Inability to anticipate and provide office facilities in response to growing strategic efforts would hamper new initiatives, and force customer agencies to seek out less-efficient, itinerant solutions.

**Management Objective 2 |** Adapt Information Technologies to reflect/support the changed work environment post-COVID pandemic.

- **Justification |** The response to the global pandemic has triggered health and safety precautions in the workplace, many of which are likely to persist past the pandemic period. Concurrently, the response has brought to light new productivity tools and work techniques which can be applied to better accomplish strategic goals and objectives in the long-term.
- **Linkages |** Providing the platform to support Mission operations as articulated in the ICS links to all strategic planning, from this ICS to the State-USAID Joint Strategic Goal Framework, the Global Fragility Act and onward.

- **Risks** | Failure to provide modernized productivity tools and adapt new work pattern techniques will inhibit productivity across all Mission agencies and offices.

**Management Objective 3** | Use the Mission operational platform as a medium to advance U.S. strategic climate and commercial goals in Ghana.

- **Justification** | Mission Ghana's operational platform includes a large Chancery compound and over 170 residences. These properties represent potential sites for promoting U.S. renewable energy entrepreneurship, as both an initial market and as a showcase of their products. Installing photovoltaic generation sources would also improve Mission operations and eliminate a major waste, fraud, and abuse vulnerability by phasing out fuel purchases for vehicles and diesel generators.
- **Linkages** | Supports ICS Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3
- **Risks** | Continued risk of fuel theft; missed opportunity to directly showcase U.S. energy innovation and products.