



Ingraining Development for Empowerment and Advancement of Society

Post Office Box 600, Bolgatanga, Ghana

Adjacent Bolgatanga East District Assembly

Digital Address: UE-0414-5255

ideasghana2021@gmail.com / <https://ideasghana.org.gh/>

Let's Fundraise for Your Volunteer Placement

IDEAS Ghana has compiled the most reliable and fun strategies to fundraise for your volunteer placement in Ghana.

We've taken the hassle out of it so you can jump into the fun part, deciding which ideas work and testing them out.

Below you will find all sorts of ideas that will help you get to your volunteer placement fundraising goals quickly.



The district veterinarian with IDEAS Ghana local volunteer implementing a program for empowering elderly farmers for sustainable livelihoods.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 1

→ Raising funds via email, socials and over the phone!

Step 1:

Set your fundraising goal and make it visible to your supporters.

State your goal on your fundraising page if you use a site like GoFundMe.

e.g. US\$3000

Explain what it is for. Being transparent will help.

Break it down so your supporters can see it.

Placement fee \$1500 + airfare \$1500

Or, perhaps you are fundraising for your airfare or fees alone.

In this case, \$1500, or whatever your amount is.

Step 2:

Communicate, communicate, communicate.

Email + social media + calling/facetimeing

Divide your time between emailing, social media and phone calls.

EMAIL

In traditional fundraising in non-profits, email lists raise much more funds than social media, so try emailing and see how you go.

Email list

Spend about 30 minutes to an hour brainstorming and listing everyone you can think of. Write their social handles + email address.

Then go through all your social networks and list anyone you missed whose email you may be able to obtain. As you go through it, you will remember people close and distant to you—list them, too. Think about the people you work with and the people next door.

If your family or friends have access to a big email list, including their own friends or work colleagues, ask them to share your letter to their friends, too.

Sometimes people only check either their email or socials, but not both. Contacting them two ways helps to increase your chance of them reading your content.

Think about anyone who is actively involved in the community, who has volunteered or worked abroad, as they are often good advocates for you. Tap into their community.

What about family's business contacts. Can you ask them to send a message out over their email list?

Decide the best channels to reach them. Keep your notes clear and reach out to them systematically.

In this way, you can create an email list and socials handle list.

Tailor your messages

Write your email messages and your social media messages.

Rather than emailing/DMing everyone you know with the same message, write your message for each audience in note apps.

It can look like this:

Email - close friends

Email - acquaintances

Email - close family

Email - distant family

Write your email to your closest friends differently than you would a great aunt, for example.

Email - work buddies

Etc.

As a rule, emails can be about 100 words before people stop paying attention. So keep them short and make your fundraising link clear. [Click here to donate](#) is tried and tested to work.

TIMING

Try your first email and see how it goes. Don't just do it once. Sometimes people read something and forget to get back to it.

Try once every 4 weeks. If you already have fundraising success, let your supporters know how far you have gone to reach your goal, and this will persuade new folks to donate, too.

Hi! Thanks for reading. I have already reached \$1500 thanks to the generous support of dozens of donors this month, but I still need to raise \$1000 more. Will you be willing to help?

This is why...

REST OF YOUR MESSAGE.

Don't discount the over-the-phone nos, however, in an email message out—include them in emails out. The person who says no on the phone may wish they said yes, so reaching out via a message will give them another chance.

Remember, during your fundraising journey, collect all your supporters email contacts so you can share your journey with them. Add them to your email list. Supporters love to see progress and feel like they are part of your experience, too, so share some of your volunteering with them while you are in your placement. It will serve as a lifelong network for you as you grow in your education or career, whatever stage of your life you are at.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Use social media where your allies and supporters are.

Socials should be about 30 words or fewer.

You can write a lot of social content quickly and store it for later.

Do one post a week—not too much and not too little.

Always include a link to a GoFundMe page.

Tailor your social content to capture the audience that resonates with you most, while keeping in mind those who may donate and don't usually engage.

We will give you social media snippets you can copy/edit and paste.

PHONE CALLS

Think about what the people you know prefer. Many people about 50 years of age and older prefer a personal call, in general, and they may be your best supporters. Overcome the fear of the call and call everyone you think will donate and ask. Have your “why” ready (see below).

And have your fundraising page link handy to tell them or message them on the spot. Don't wait.

People who fundraise for a living will tell you all you have to do is ask. The worst that can happen is someone says no, so move on to the next person. You will be surprised at how good this makes you feel because when you get a yes, it is worth it.

If you can facetime with friends or family, try this, too. Seeing your excitement is infectious. They are most likely going to be very happy for you and proud of what you are doing, and everyone can spare \$10 or more. It all adds up.

GENEROUS

You may find that some people are extraordinarily generous, and you will not have necessarily expected this from them. Sometimes you cannot predict who will and will not be supportive or donate, so do not discount anyone and try everyone. You just might be surprised by who your biggest supporters are, and you might miss them if you don't reach out.

Start with why

Explain why you are doing this to your supporters via email and on the phone. Shorter versions of this will be good for socials. Everyone has different reasons. Here are a few examples.

I am going to volunteer in Ghana because we learned it is one of the safest nations in Africa in my college peace studies course and IDEAS Ghana actively works on peace-building programs where I can help run workshops and facilitate focus group discussions and support communities towards mutual understanding, while gaining credit for my studies.

I am going to volunteer in Ghana because someone gave me crafts from Ghana and I fell in love with the arts and crafts, which led me to IDEAS Ghana who work with arts and crafts communities and I can make a difference helping the businesses become sustainable, while learning arts and crafts in my free time.

I am going to volunteer in Ghana because my university already did research in Ghana and I felt inspired to go there. As an agriculture student undertaking my PhD studies, this placement lets me research towards my PhD while making a difference to agricultural communities in the Upper East Region.

I am going to volunteer in Ghana because I want to work in international development as I am planning on a career change. I want to try it out for myself and see if it is for me, before I apply for studies, while using all my work experience in learning disability support in schools to support teachers and parents identify students who may need extra class supports in schools outreach programs in Ghana.

Gratitude

Thank your donors with a personal message after they donate, whatever form it takes and whatever amount. Ask them for their home or postal address (see below) just in case you feel inspired in Ghana.

In Ghana, people actually send postcards all the time at the local post office in Bolga and it is cheap. So, if you are motivated, you could also write a heap of postcards on one of your days off and send them to donors, thanking them FROM GHANA and telling them about your volunteering experience. Imagine how awesome it would be to get a thank you on a postcard and a stamp from West Africa!



IDEAS Ghana staff, supporters and program participants after a workshop in Bolgatanga.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 2

➔ Fun fundraisers!

Try

We have listed a bunch of popular, traditional and modern fundraisers. Decide which ones inspire you most and work for your circumstances. Enlist your friends, family and work mates to help.

People love to be a part of something and not everyone can go abroad to volunteer, so by holding fundraisers you are giving people a chance to contribute to something and they get to feel a part of your journey, too. Often people are more than willing to support you; they just need the chance to do it.

Moreover, you are your best advocate. People love to support people who are positive and taking a leap to make a difference.

Below we give you letters and scripts to help you share the purpose and goal of volunteering, so you can explain it to your community and raise more funds for your placement.

Refine, Try Again

Once you have tried a few different fundraisers, refine what worked, discard any that didn't, and try again. Try combining different types of fundraisers, too. Don't give up. It is possible to raise your entire budget through fundraising.

SOME FUN FUNDRAISING IDEAS

Quiz days or nights: Organise a quiz night for family and friends where everyone pays a small donation to join. Make it fun. Tell them about your placement and goals. Maybe it can be a quiz with questions about Africa and related to the theme. During the night, kindly ask them if they would be willing to share your GoFundMe on their socials/their work newsletter/any other place...try doing double duty with every event, without going over the top. Keep it simple. The worst you get is a no. The best you get is a yes! You can't get to "yes" without trying, so don't give up.

Rotary or business: If you happen to have family or friends in business associations like Rotary International or a local chamber of commerce, ask if you can give a talk one night about your upcoming project specifically to fundraise—let them know this is your aim up front. If they say yes, you know they are willing to support your fundraising pitch, and that you can do "the big ask", and you are likely to raise funds there. We will send you a short PowerPoint presentation if you would like to use it.

They will want to hear from you during your placement, and this could turn out to be a positive long-term networking opportunity, too.

Exercise/dance fundraiser: If you are good at something like dance, gym, yoga, karate, boxing, etc, why not throw a challenge fundraiser? Say, "look like a pro in dance/karate/a heart pumping workout, boxing—in 2 hours or less, for a good cause". If you don't look like a pro after 2 hours, you can have fun trying! Participants donate a small fee to participate. Make it fun. You don't have to be an expert to teach it. They will love that they have learned the basics of a new physical exercise and that they are contributing to a changemaking experience for you and the communities you will serve.

Cupcake + cookie + donut + granola bar + brownie sales: It does not get much simpler than baking something your community likes and selling it where they are located. Do you have a special recipe? You can sell baked treats to your school, work, friends and even a street stall.

Get crafty: Can you make any cottage craft items like candles? One family started a candle stall and sold all their production every week at the local markets with hand-poured beeswax candles. What about jewellery? Soap? Scrunchies? Headbands? If you are fundraising in the lead up to Christmas, this is a solid strategy.

Recycled arts and crafts: Can you teach a recycled art or craft workshop to all your friend's children for a couple of hours for a small donation? Grab a bunch of recycled crafty materials from your local recycling depot or recycled crafts materials hub, or collect offcuts and materials from family and friends, and run a workshop one Saturday for children of family, friends and the neighbourhood. This is good practice for your placement, too. A \$10 donation is reasonable! The parents will LOVE you.

Get Arty: Like the above, are you good at art or design? Try making something to sell to family and friends, and online on places like Etsy. A weekend market stall won't set you back much and is a good place to communicate your purpose and raise funds. Often markets will reduce your fees if it is for a community cause. If your market rules allow it and you can combine it with a bake sale, why not?

Coffee or drinks: Coffee really sells. Can you run a coffee stall at an event, say Saturday soccer/football, where there usually is not one? Can you make speciality drinks like sweet chai tea for an event? Make enough to sell about 100 cups and your fundraising will increase fast.

Birthday: Is it your birthday around your trip? Before, during or just after? Ask your family and friends to donate to your fundraiser instead of a gift.

Social media challenge: Are you on TikTok or Insta? Ask your followers to donate to watch the challenge. Get friends to dunk you with water—water is a big theme in communities where you volunteer—explain why you are volunteering. What about a dance challenge? Any other challenges?

Flower stall: In some bigger cities like Sydney, London and NYC, you can pop into the central fruit market very early and buy unusual and/or unique native flowers wholesale for a fraction of the cost in a shop—\$10 for 10 instead of \$100 for 10. Create a few unique bunches and keep a few individual stems, pop over to your weekend market and sell bespoke flower arrangements and bunches. Alternatively, ask a local shop if you can sell in front of them, say a cafe, for the day.

Workshop/tutor: Do you have a unique skill you could turn into a tutoring program or workshop for a few hours or a day? Are you very good at essay writing? Very good at a particular language? Very good at a musical instrument? Very good at maths? A good plumber? A good car mechanic—almost everyone can do with an introduction to basic mechanics. A good singer? Why not offer to tutor/workshop/teach this one-on-one for a few lessons?

Auction: Can you run a silent auction somewhere?

Cleaning: We personally love cleaning. Can you offer your services to anyone who needs cleaning help? Elderly family and friends or neighbours? Time-poor families? \$50-100/half day is reasonable.

Car-washing: This is a tested favourite. Do you live in the kind of street where neighbours would happily make a donation for car washing? If so, try this one once.

Family garage sale: The more the merrier. Can you ask family, friends and colleagues to donate items to a garage sale while you also clean out your spaces and sell off some unwanted items? Do they have clothes they no longer want? Shoes? Albums? Books? Household items? Used clothing? Do you have any large pieces of furniture family wants to get rid of to sell online? What about baby items? Prams, baby carriers and the like sell almost instantly. Do you have family or friends who wish to offload theirs?

Council clean up: Keep your eye on council clean-ups where people discard perfectly good items on the side of the road like kids bikes, couches, bed bases, etc. Grab the things in good condition for your garage sale and sell them at a “impossible to say no to” price.

Walk to local businesses: Walk into all your local shops/stores and tell them your pitch/story in 1 minute or less. Ask if you can leave your project letter for the boss, and if they would consider donating, sponsoring, or letting you leave flyers on a noticeboard.

These could be your fundraisers or your endorsement letter. Always give thanks, even if you get a no.

As you do your fundraisers, don't forget to share them on social media.

A basic strategy would be this:

Maybe stream live, depending on the audience and location. Maybe even turn the fundraiser into a Tik-Tok challenge, besides being a fundraiser in and of itself.

Then, capture images and content during the fundraiser and post it soon after, like the day after and during the week, thanking your supporters and showing new viewers where they can donate.

Social proof is key to fundraising online, so the more people who support you, the more you are likely to raise.



IDEAS Ghana staff undertaking monitoring and evaluation in a community supported by our programs. You can join them in the field in your program.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 3

→ Online fundraising

There are some reliable and easy to use online platforms that will make it easy for you to fundraise.

GoFundMe is considered one of the best platforms. It is easy to use, easy to share, and easy for donors to donate, thus increasing your fundraising chances of success. We truly recommend this. Plus, you can scroll through and see how others are raising funds and the kind of language and strategy that works.

It gives transparency to your fundraising efforts by showing your breakdown of costs translated into your goals and mini goals, which helps you raise more funds. People love to support and donate to something when they know the funds are responsibly used and there is no better way to prove and show this than GoFundMe.

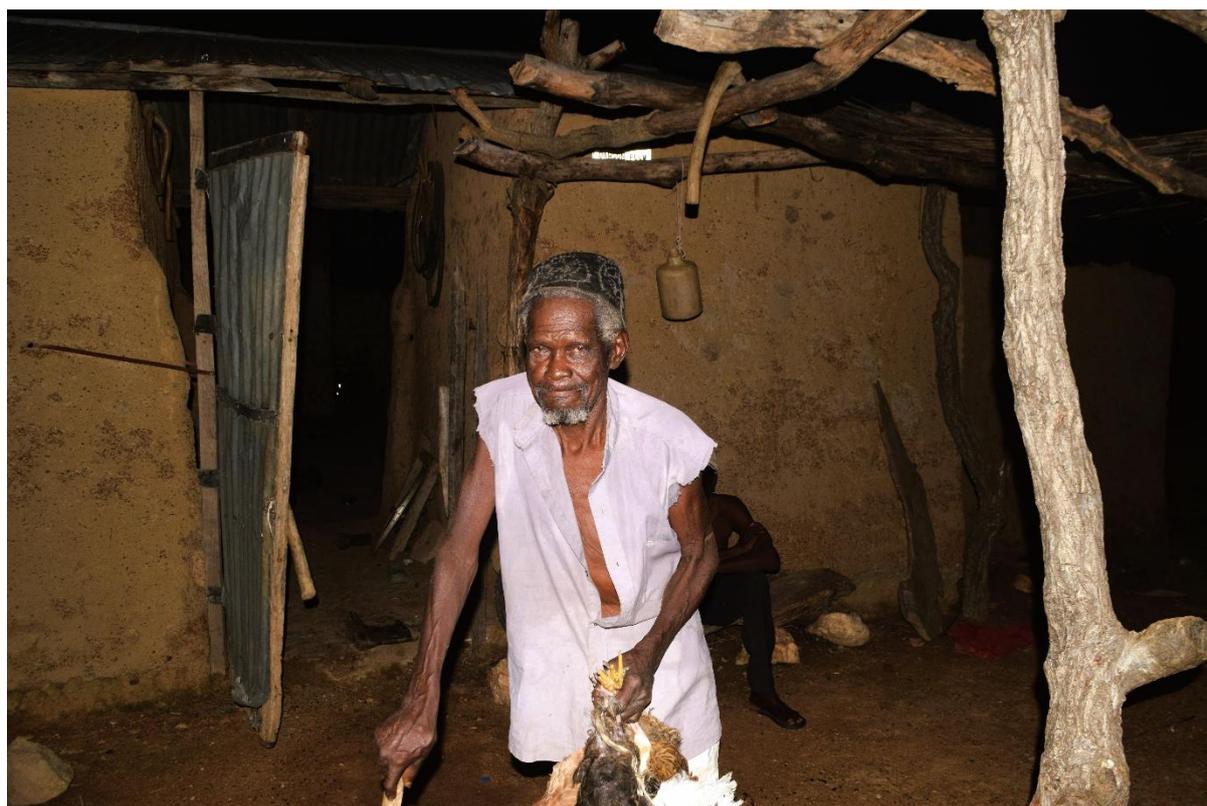
We encourage you to use this as your major online platform for fundraising.

You can change your GoFundMe goal if you happen to receive donations off the platform, to reflect how much you have raised offline. If you happen to receive a large donation like \$500, you can drop your GoFundMe goal by \$500 to reflect the new goal.

That transparency will also be valued by your community.

Our suggestion is to set your goals as the entire amount you need to help you volunteer hassle free and enjoy your time in Ghana without worrying about money. Break your campaign into mini-milestones and aim to meet the most important ones, like cost of ticket and program fees, and then aim to meet all of your goals by mixing and matching all the different strategies here.

There are many creative people around the world with incredible strategies for fundraising. Try “unique fundraising strategies” in searches to see what others are doing right now.



One of the elderly farmers who is a beneficiary of IDEAS Ghana’s Elderly Farmer Empowerment Program.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 4

→ SAVE

One of the best ways to ensure enough funds for volunteering is to not spend what you have; save as much as you can.

Some of the easiest ways to save is to give up a few things for the time being. It's easier than you think.

Try some of these:

- Cut eating out and home deliveries for the time being. You can save a lot cooking at home.
- Cut out takeaway coffee—you can save over \$1000 a year doing this. BYO from home.
- Limit credit cards—it saves in so many ways.
- Cut out some subscriptions for now, if you can ensure a refund or no yearly charges.
- Try no alcohol/no fancy cheese/no sushi weeks/months. You will be surprised how easy it is if you give it a go.
- Bring your own water and drinks rather than buying them.
- Cut out the ubers and the like and try public transport, walking or catching a ride with a friend.
- Cut out new clothes (have a seamstress make them here and support her business for a fraction of the cost at home).



One of the women beneficiaries in IDEAS Ghana's productive lands for female farmers program showing her abundant crops during the rainy season. Those are shea nut trees in the background. You can learn how to make shea butter in a local village, if you like.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 4

→ SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships

Many universities and colleges have scholarships or small grants for travel abroad volunteer programs and credit towards your studies. Ask around at university or search online for opportunities - the earlier the better.

Many volunteers to Ghana have been fortunate to receive scholarships in which they also receive course credit towards their studies through undertaking tailored programs designed between the host organisation and in consultation with their academic advisors back home. They can complete an entire unit of studies this way, or part of a unit. Just ask and we are happy to confer with them and work on this for you.

Try a search of volunteer abroad scholarships and apply often and early.

Here are some you may be able to apply to:

- **Gilman Scholarship:** For undergraduates with financial need (internships/study abroad).
- **Fulbright Program:** Can fund international internships/study for scholars (U.S. and reciprocal).
- **DAAD (Germany):** Generous scholarships, especially for Master's students, covering living costs.
- **Aga Khan Foundation:** Postgraduate scholarships for future leaders from selected countries.
- **Diverse International Women of Color (DIWC):** Scholarships for women of color studying abroad.
- **Rotary Peace Fellowships:** For Master's degree programs in peace/conflict resolution.
- **University-Specific/Nation-Specific:** Always check university aid and your home country's government (e.g., Ghana Scholarship Secretariat).



A woman beneficiary in IDEAS Ghana programs showing her abundant hibiscus flower production. You can buy freshly harvested hibiscus flowers like this for super refreshing, tangy tea everywhere in the local market for about 10% of the cost back home.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 5

→ PROJECT SPECIFIC CONTENT

Scripts for emails and social media

We have written letters and social media content you can adapt for your GoFundMe page or for emails out to family and friends and for social media. If you happen to present to a chamber of commerce or Rotary Club or the like, let us know and we will happily prepare a Powerpoint presentation to help support your talk.

Remember, in your email, make it personal.

You can use our script and edit it as you like.

EMAIL 1

Hi [NAME],

How are you? [ADD A PERSONAL NOTE HERE. What happened the last time you spoke/met? Recall and write this here.]

This is [YOUR NAME]. [ADD YOUR IMAGE HERE - it increases donations.]

I am writing to you because [INSERT YOUR "WHY"].

I am hoping you will support my volunteer placement by donating whatever you can here at my GoFundMe page which gives you much more information about my volunteering project in Ghana.

[INCLUDE LINK HERE.]

In short, I will spend [number of weeks] in Ghana working with a grassroots non-profit called IDEAS Ghana that you can read about on my GoFundMe page. My project involves [KEY PROJECT POINTS - YOU CAN USE YOUR VOLUNTEER PROJECT DOCUMENT FOR THIS]

I am so excited to be able to go and give my best to the communities and develop as a person, too. I will share my journey online so you can see progress and see how your funds are being used.

Thank you for any support you can give. Please tell your friends, family and colleagues about this, too. If you know anyone who is willing to give a shout-out in their newsletters or let me talk at a business dinner, please let me know this, too.

I appreciate any support you can give. Please let me know if you have any questions and I will be happy to answer.

Warm regards,

[YOUR NAME]

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is always evolving. We will email you the latest edits when we send your Volunteer Planning Toolkit.

AN IDEAS GHANA PROJECT LETTER

When we confirm your placement, we provide a project letter you can pass on to supporters such as businesses, the media, or anyone with a more professional approach so they can understand what your volunteer fees contribute to. IDEAS Ghana is a registered non-profit organisation in Ghana, for example, and there is a long and rigorous registration process for non-profits and rigorous reporting requirements annually. Knowing that IDEAS Ghana strictly adheres to all compliance requirements and has developed a 5-year strategic plan to 2030, will be useful for supporters.

This letter demonstrates how your volunteer placement fits into the organisation's program activities and how you personally will contribute to helping the organisation reach its mission and vision, including its 5-year plan, by coming to Ghana to volunteer your time and expertise.