

# NewsLetter

JULY 2021



## HIGHLIGHTS

Supporting the national COVID-19 response is core to our development efforts.

UN provides independent monitoring support to Ghana's 2021 Population and Housing Census.

Youth Innovation for Sustainable Development Challenge gives a boost to

young people's businesses

UN supports the establishment of a Coordinated Mechanism on the Safety of Journalists.

## Supporting the national COVID-19 response: Core to UN's development efforts

Ghana received its second batch of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine from the COVAX facility on 7th May 2021. With this delivery of 350,000 doses, many Ghanaians who received their first dose were assured of their second jab. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) facilitated their safe transport from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Since the launch of the vaccination campaign in March this year, the UN in Ghana, led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF, have supported authorities to train health workers on vaccine

management, logistics, data management and operational plans, field support supervision, and communications and demand creation activities.

UNICEF conducted three surveys on knowledge, attitudes and practices around COVID-19 vaccination through telephone interviews and mobile interactive voice responses across different key groups. Per the survey, key concerns on vaccine hesitancy are around safety, efficacy and knowledge gaps on vaccination. The Children's Fund is contributing to address these challenges.

Ensuring the availability of medical supplies is critical to

the fight against the pandemic. Through the efforts of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), medical supplies from the West African Health Organisation (WAHO) have been delivered. Funded by the German Government (BMZ), the European Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and WAHO, these set of supplies, the second bulk supplies to ECOWAS member states, was procured by GIZ and UNDP. They form part of a \$50 million support facility to ECOWAS to enhance the regional fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. [\[Read more\]](#)



Meanwhile, results from a \$3.28 million World Bank funded joint project implemented by the UN in Ghana and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, demonstrate a progressive outlook with considerable positive impact of the COVID-19 response efforts.

The 9-month project, which ended in April 2021, aimed to support the Government of Ghana to close critical gaps in the COVID-19 response. The joint project focused on the healthcare system, enhancing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), conducting a food security assessment to enable

Government respond to the needs of food-insecure populations, and responding to issues of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and reaching the vulnerable with services even at the heat of the pandemic. Read the project [report](#) which sums up the impact of the project.



UNESCO and ECOWAS have supported the launch of a new musical campaign to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the sub-region. The joint initiative is spearheaded by the National Commission on Culture (NCC), the Musicians Union of Ghana (MUSIGA) and the Creative Arts Council, and aims at strengthening national capacities in re-

sponding to the pandemic.

The campaign consists of the release of a song, a music video, and video messages featuring selected musicians of MUSIGA including IOM Ambassador, Kofi Kinaata. The songs are in different Ghanaian languages with the message encouraging Ghanaians to continue adhering to COVID-19 protocol.

The video messages are produced by the Creative Arts Council and feature well-known Ghanaian personalities such as Stonebwoy, Kuami Eugene, Kidi, Daughters of Glorious Jesus and Doreen Avio. The short video messages have been aired on radio and television stations and shared online on social media. [Read more](#) and watch the music video [here](#).

## COVID-19 RESPONSE

Through the instrumentality of UNAIDS Ghana, three implementing partners have signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen community engagement in COVID-19 response. They are the Millennium Promise Alliance (MPA), the Network of People Living with HIV (NAP+1), and the Young Health Advocates Ghana (YHAG). The agreement is under the Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT) in Africa. It is part of a broader collaboration between UNAIDS and the Africa Centre for Disease Control of the African Union to support Ministries of Health of African countries in their fight against the pandemic.



## Empowering young Ghanaians to be innovative and to find their niche

On the economic front, the UNDP is strengthening partnership to support young entrepreneurs to be innovative, unleash their potentials and to find their niche.

Through its Youth Innovation for Sustainable Development (YISD) [Challenge](#), supported by the National Youth Authority (NYA), we focus on some beneficiaries.

[Felix Appiah Nyarko](#) has turned his innovative snail rearing ideas into a profitable and environmentally friendly business by migrating his snail rearing from recycled car tyres and locally-made-boxes into greenhouses built from nets, pipes and rubber as foundation. Today, Felix has built 16 greenhouses in Accra, thanks to a grant award he received from the YISD Challenge.

[Iddrisu Alhassan Kobga](#) has also transformed his innovative 200-capacity recycled fridge incubator into 3000 capacity, making it possible for him to serve over 100 clients, who incubate their eggs at a lower cost of Ghc1 per egg.

In addition, Alhassan trains farmers on how to cater for their guinea keets with organic feed and locally made vaccines. He also prepares and sells organic feed and builds incubators for farmers who want their own space, for a fee. In less than a year of his formalized

business, thanks to the YISD Challenge, he has built incubators for five clients, with his latest and biggest client in Accra.

[Prince and Sampare Owusu Banahene](#) are also scaling up their tiger nut drink and biscuit production business. They have been able to increase their production capacity of 100 bottles of tiger nut milk drinks per month to 8000 bottles, and tiger nut biscuit from 100 to 4000 packs. Their factory, built from locally fabricated technology, won them the YISD grant.

The improved production has also led to an expanded customer-base, with regular supplies to Tarkwa, Kumasi, Accra and Cape Coast.

[Enoch Keitu and Edmund Amu](#) are Certified Medical Herbalists. They have scaled up their Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) approved herbal medicine production facility - Kenoch HG Herbal.

With a standard production line, Kenoch HG Herbal has an increased production capacity from 25 bottles of herbal medicine per production batch to 2000 bottles. They also currently operate two clinics, employing 13 workers. The company's certified products include Kenoch Bakta Fight Mixture which is produced to strengthen the body immunity to help fight bacterial and fungal infections.



The Challenge, held under the Ghana Youth-Connekt platform, aimed to support young people in Ghana to develop and test innovative ideas towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Recipients of the award grant, 16 young Ghanaian innovators, also benefited from business development, incubation, coaching and mentorship [programme](#) which was offered in partnership with the Ashesi Design Lab.



## Grassroot stakeholders sensitized to improve access to Green Climate Fund

Human activities such as cutting down of forests, improper waste disposal, use of fertilizers, burning of coal and petroleum products and gas (fossil fuels), continue to have a brunt on the environment. These are leading to changes in average weather conditions such as temperature and rainfall, affecting natural resources and livelihoods.

Community engagement and sensitization is recognized as critical to the global response to climate change. In this regard, the National Designated Authority (NDA), which is the Economic Strategy and Research Division (ESRD) at the Ministry of Finance, in partnership with the UNDP, under the Green Climate Fund Readiness Support, is carrying out outreach at the sub-national level.

The exercise is to engage key stakeholders, sensitize and disseminate information on the [Green Climate Fund](#) (GCF) processes in selected local languages (Dagbani, Ewe, Ga and Twi) in pilot districts in Ashanti, Volta, Northern and Greater Accra regions of Ghana. The aim is to improve the understanding on the GCF's funding process to enhance stakeholder engagement and direct access to the fund, to accelerate climate actions in Ghana. [\[Read more\]](#)

Meanwhile, over 35,000 cocoa farmers (38% females) and about 2,750 extension trainers in the country have received training on sustainable natural resource and ecosystem management practices. This is to prepare the farmers to adopt climate resilient production practices to mitigate the adverse effects of



climate change, especially on cocoa production.

The joint intervention between the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and the UNDP is funded through the Mondelēz International Cocoa Life Programme.

The project interventions benefited about 271 communities in 12 Districts across Ghana and facilitated the [establishment](#) of two Community Resources Management Areas (CREMAs) in Asunafo North in the Ahafo Region and Wasswa East in the Western Region which are empowering over 60 communities to manage and take decisions on natural resource usage within their enclave. [\[Read more\]](#)

## UN supports adding value to groundnut and rice production in Ghana

Through the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP), UNDP has commissioned the first Women-led Groundnut Processing Factory at Ayorya in the Kintampo South District in the Bono East Region of Ghana. The factory, which will process groundnut into oil and paste, is an addition to previous [support](#) that ensured a more productive groundnut farming for women farmers.

The factory is a direct result of the strategic grant of US\$34,100 (GHS180,000) provided by UNDP/GEF-SGP to support and expand innovative women-led nature-based business enterprises

The women-led enterprises project is under a special initiative programme aimed at job creation for women, enhancing food security, promoting sustainable utilization of biodiversity products to meet international standards, and ensuring sustainable income flow to vulnerable women within the fragile ecosystems. Through the project, farmers are now engaged in climate smart organic agriculture by preparing and using compost instead of chemical fertilizers whilst growing high yielding short duration varieties to mitigate the effects of drought. [\[Read more\]](#).

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has also worked with UNOPS to procure \$2.6M worth of infrastructural and agricultural equipment to support its Rice Value Chain (RVC) Project. In December 2019, KOICA Ghana Country Office and UNOPS signed an agreement for the latter to implement targeted components of the project. These include design and construction management of agricultural infrastructure, supply of non-agricultural and agricultural equipment and training of operators. As a result of UNOP's support, construction of a rice milling facility has started in the Central region of Ghana. [\[cont. on pg. 9\]](#)



## Government of Ghana and Eswatini to join efforts to boost diasporas' contribution to local development

The IOM has facilitated a technical visit of a delegation from the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini (GoE) to Ghana, to exchange good practices on diaspora engagement and remittances with key repre-

sentatives from the Government of Ghana (GoG) and the private sector. Leveraging the diaspora's social, cultural, financial and human capital for national development is a common goal of both governments and will contribute to the attainment of internationally agreed develop-

ment goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the [Global Compact for Migration](#). Both Governments acknowledged the importance of harnessing the valuable potential of its diaspora for national development. [\[Read more\]](#)



## IOM helps build capacity of partners to provide reintegration assistance to returnees

The IOM has organized a workshop to build the capacity of government and non-government stakeholders on the reintegration of returnees in Ghana. The training was based on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Return and Reintegration. As part of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration, funded by the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, the training workshop has enabled participants to provide sustainable reintegration assistance. [\[Read more\]](#)

The IOM, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), has also trained 70 officers of the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) on migrants' mental health and psychosocial support. The officers have acquired new skills to support migrants, returnees and disaster victims, as well as pass on the newly obtained knowledge to their colleagues. [\[Read more\]](#)

# Agribusinesses may need more time and support to recover from COVID-19

...groundnut and rice production [cont.]

COVID-19 has affected almost all sectors of the economy and agribusinesses, which form an important part of the economy, have not been left out. New data on the impact of the pandemic on agribusinesses in Ghana suggest it may take a little more time and support for businesses to recover from the impact of the pandemic. The data reveal an estimated 16,000 agribusiness firms remain closed, with over 78,000 estimated staff laid-off and more than 267,000 workers having their wages reduced between May 2020 and January 2021.

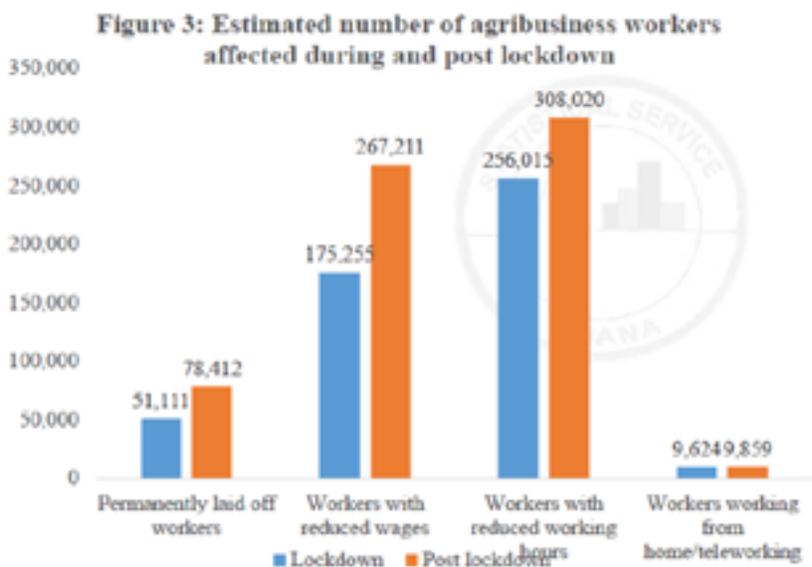
The survey results released by the [Ghana Statistical Service](#) (GSS), funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented

by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), collected data from about 8,000 agribusinesses across Ghana.

The findings revealed an increase in the estimated number of job losses for agribusiness workers, from 51,111 during the lockdown to 78,412 in the post-lockdown period. In the same vein, workers with reduced wages increased from 175,255 during the lockdown period to 267,211 within May 2020 and January 2021.

Results from the survey is aimed at guiding both businesses and policy makers in Ghana’s recovery process and helping build more resilient businesses. [\[Read more\]](#)

The RVC project is part of a wider programme being implemented by KOICA and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA). It aims at increasing rice productivity and value among farmers in the Central Region of Ghana. The construction works are to be implemented on two project sites: a seed processing and storage facility in the Gomoa East District and a rice milling facility in the Assin District. The project is expected to directly and indirectly benefit over 5,000 people, including farmers, and 30,000 people respectively.



- Overall, the estimated number of agribusiness workers that were laid off increased from 51,111 during the lockdown to 78,412 in the post-lockdown period.
- Workers with reduced wages increased from 175,255 during the lockdown to 267,211 in the post-lockdown period
- Relatively, few workers (9,859) in the agribusiness sector have been teleworking post-lockdown.

## UN responds to Government’s request for independent monitors for 2021 Population and Housing Census

Ghana’s 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC) started with counting on June 27. The deadline was extended to another week to July 18.

Through its Population Fund, the UNFPA, the UN in Ghana is providing independent monitoring of the census process to ensure the procedures meet international standards. According to the Country Representative of the UNFPA in Ghana, Mr. Niyi Ojuolape, about 40 population experts from the international community have been deployed “in response to the government’s request for the UN to implement the peer monitoring of the 2021 PHC”.

Population censuses have been conducted in Ghana at approximately ten-year intervals since 1891, the last being in 2010. Unlike previous years, this year’s is being conducted using a fully digital modality, the Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) method. This involves the use of tablets for data collection, thereby allowing for a more efficient data collection and analysis process.

The rationale for monitoring is predicated on the need to closely monitor and provide objective assessment and feedback on the impact of extensive use of new methodologies and technologies (innovations) on the quality of enumeration and share the ex-

periences and best practices with other countries through south-south cooperation.

In a related development, the UN has called for the need for inclusion of people outside the formal or traditional population such as migrants and refugees. IOM has further [engaged](#) key migration stakeholders to establish a Project Steering Committee to provide guidance and monitor the implementation of the IOM Development Fund project that will expand the knowledge on internal and international migration to and from Ghana and ensure migration is mainstreamed in the census process.



## 12-month project on RHE begins in Northern Ghana

A regional level advocacy meeting of key stakeholders in education has taken place to support the delivery of Reproductive Health Education (RHE) project phase II, funded by UNESCO, in the Northern region

The meeting, organised by Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC) in Tamale, was to outdoor the 12-month project on adolescent reproductive health and targeting teenage pregnancy, to regional stakeholders and to solicit their support for the implementation of the project.

The RHE project is being implemented in three districts in the North East and Northern regions in partnership with the Ghana Education Service and other stakeholders to adopt new strategies to reduce teenage pregnancy and encourage gender equalities in Northern Ghana as the number of children that had not reported to the classroom following the long closure of schools occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic last year is alarming.

## UN engages young people on HIV

In the lead-up to the June 2021 High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS-Ghana held a virtual youth consultation on HIV to prioritise the critical areas to be included in the Political Declaration on HIV. Participants called for the provision of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) to young people, as well as the need to increase education on Sexual and Reproductive Health Services and Rights (SRHSR) to prevent the spread of HIV.

The HLM was to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress on the commitments made in the 2016 Political Declaration towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030, and how the response, in its social, economic and political

dimensions, continues to contribute to progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global health goal.

## Girls design AI solutions during virtual hackathon

Microsoft and UNESCO have held a virtual AI-Hackathon to engage girls as Artificial Intelligence (AI) protagonists and to widen their understanding of what AI is and how to adapt to a constantly-changing AI landscape.

Themed 'AI for Earth', the two-day training focused on how AI can be used to better understand sustainability – particularly climate change and biodiversity loss. Five young girls from Ghana and an instructor from National Science Education Unit of the Ghana Education Service took part in the training which exposed them to AI prediction modelling and techniques, such as decision trees and random decision forests, data collection, data cleaning, image classification algorithms and statistical testing.

## Review of STI for SDGs Roadmap

A national Technical Task Team meeting has taken place to review the first draft of the Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development Goals Roadmap (STI for SDGs Roadmap) in Ghana. Members of the technical task, consisting of key stakeholders from relevant ministries, academia and research institutes expressed their views and contributed to the 1st draft of the roadmap focusing on prioritized SDGs (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 9), providing STI solutions in agriculture, health, education, sanitation, industry and innovation for Job creation.



## IOM and Ghana Immigration Service launch project to strengthen border security

The IOM and the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) have launched the project “Strengthening Border Security and Border Community Resilience in the Gulf of Guinea”. With funding from German Federal Foreign Office, the project aims to

contribute to the improvement of regional stability by strengthening border management capacities at select border posts in northern border regions of Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Togo. [\[Read more\]](#).



## Breaking the silence on sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment

No means no! These and other key messages on the prevention of sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment were drummed home to over 30 national and regional executives of the National Association of People Living with HIV (NAP+).

UNAIDS in partnership with UNFPA, held a three-day workshop where participants examined case studies and examples of sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment as well as key concepts and standards of conduct.

Facilitators throughout the workshop, extensively engaged participants on sexual and

gender-based violence and complaint mechanisms. They highlighted the devastating impact on the physical and mental health and productivity of survivors.

The workshop was opportune as increasingly, development partners are requiring country implementers to have sensitivity training and other capacity-building activities on the prevention of sexual misconduct as a prerequisite for funding.



## UN Days

Ghana has marked World Refugee Day with a public event and the launch of a community centre for urban refugees. The launch of the community center is in fulfillment of the UNHCR's policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas. The centre is named 'BLUE OASIS' connoting the warmth of the colour of blue and to empower refugees to remain zealous and resilient.

Situated in one of the busiest and vibrant areas in the City of Accra, Blue Oasis will offer refugees the space to socialize and learn basic trade skills. The Centre will also serve as a one stop shop for relevant information about refugees in the country. [\[Read more\]](#).

UNESCO led the UN in Ghana to commemorate this year's [World Press Freedom Day](#) with a flag-raising ceremony attended by key stakeholders.

The UN in Ghana called on the Government of Ghana to do everything in its power to support a free, diverse and independent media in the country.

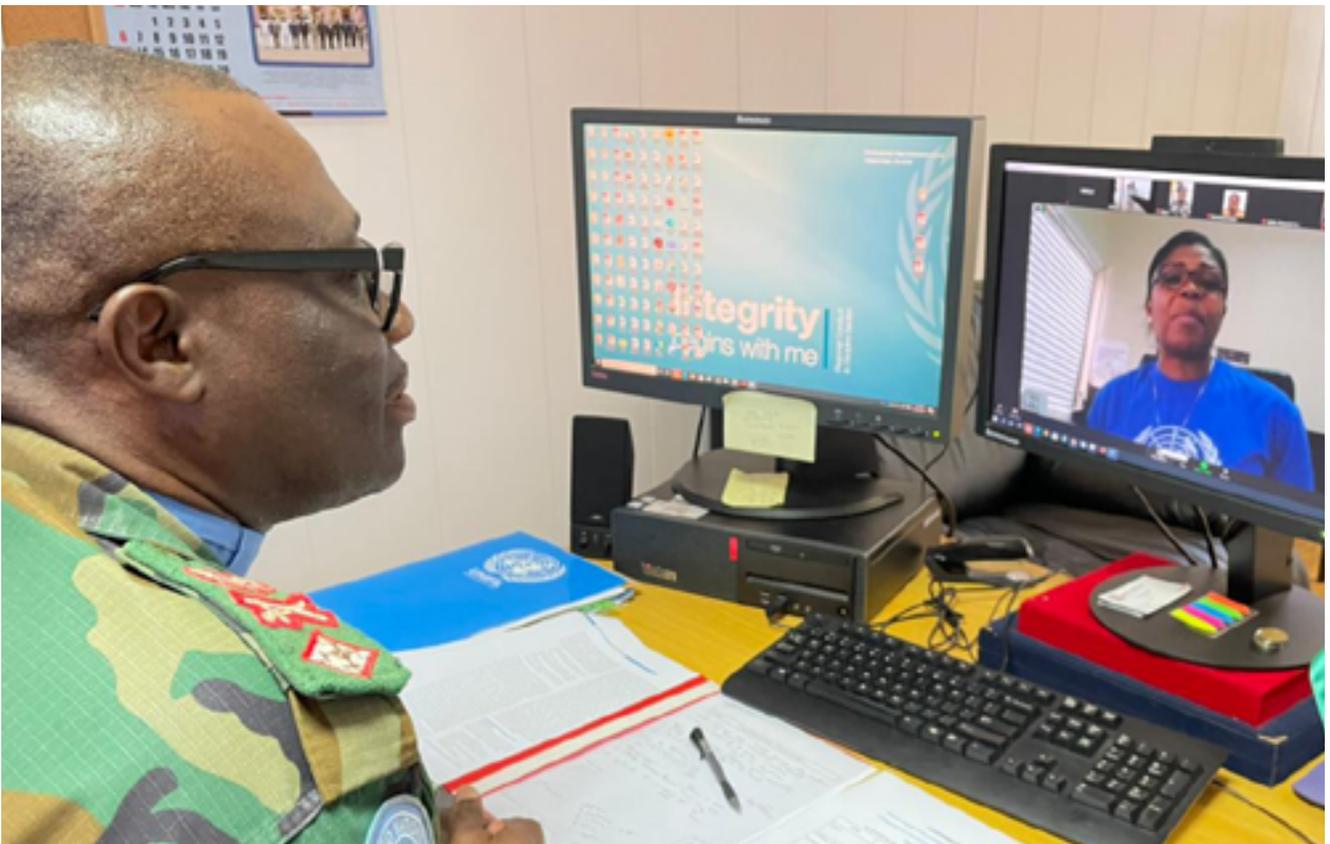
Ghana maintained its 30th position globally on the 2021 World Press Freedom Index, the lowest attained by the country. According to

Reporters without Borders, this was largely due to insecurity, and continuous threat on the lives of media practitioners in their line of duty.

The Chairman of the National Media Commission (NMC), Mr. Yaw Boadu Ayebofoh, announced the establishment of the Coordinated Mechanism on the Safety of Journalists, an office that would see to the safety of journalists in the country. The office is the official source for filing complaints of attacks on journalists, validating alleged attacks, following up on investigations & sanctions and reporting on safety of journalists. It is jointly established by the NMC, UNESCO and the Ministry of Information.

This year's International Day of UN Peacekeepers was observed virtually under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, the UN and the national security services – Ghana Armed Forces, Ghana Police Service, Ghana Prisons Service and Ghana Immigration Service – and in partnership with the [UNIFIL-PIO](#). Over 120 youth took part in this virtual event to interact with young Ghanaian Peacekeepers working with UNIFIL and to discuss the role of youth in maintaining peace and security. [\[Read more\]](#).





## Ussher Fort Slave Museum and Documentary Centre in Accra rehabilitated

With support from the Dutch Government, the Ussher Fort Museum has been rehabilitated to restore and preserve a part of history.

Ussher Fort has a rich history of having served as a trade post, slave dungeon, a police post and a prison. Most recently, it has been housing a museum of slavery that was temporarily closed in 2014.

This historical site has long needed repair.

In 2019, the Dutch government provided an amount of USD 33,593 through the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust (NFIT) for its rehabilitation and restoration. The project sought to enhance the experience of visitors to the museum, as well as strengthen the capacities of GMMB staff and selected community members from surrounding communities.

Two years later, on 8 June 2021, the project has been finalised.



## UN family joins Green Ghana initiative

The UN Country Team in Ghana joined the people of Ghana in a nationwide exercise to plant 1 million trees in the country and make Ghana green. Led by the UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Charles Abani, representatives of the various agencies and staff ensured they planted trees at various locations including office areas, homes and parks. Here are some photos.

