

# Ghana launches \$500m rural roads programme to boost agricultural markets and create jobs

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**Ghana is set to deliver one of its largest rural infrastructure programmes in recent years following the approval of a \$500 million initiative aimed at improving market access, strengthening agricultural value chains and creating thousands of jobs across the country.**

The Ghana Market Access and Connectivity Project (GMACP) will focus on upgrading and maintaining more than 1,000 kilometres of rural roads over the next five years, helping connect agricultural production areas with urban markets while supporting long-term economic development in rural communities.

The programme will be implemented by Ghana's Ministry of Roads and Highways and targets some of the country's most important agricultural regions, including Upper West, Northern, Savannah, Oti, Volta, Eastern, Ashanti, Bono and Western regions.

## Connecting farmers to markets

Poor road infrastructure has long been recognised as a major obstacle to rural development in Ghana.

In many agricultural communities, inadequate transport links increase travel times, raise logistics costs and contribute to significant post-harvest losses as farmers struggle to move produce efficiently to market.

The new programme aims to address these challenges by improving year-round access between farming communities and commercial centres, enabling producers to access larger markets and participate more effectively in higher-value agricultural supply chains.

The upgraded road network will support key crops including maize, rice, yam and cassava, all of which play an important role in national food security and rural livelihoods.

By improving connectivity, the project is expected to reduce transport costs, improve supply chain reliability and strengthen the competitiveness of agricultural producers.

## Major employment opportunity

Alongside infrastructure improvements, the programme is expected to deliver a significant employment boost.

Approximately 25,000 short-term jobs are anticipated through construction activities and ongoing road maintenance works, providing an immediate economic stimulus for local communities.

Overall, the initiative is expected to directly benefit more than 550,000 people, including around 350,000 farmers, 250,000 women and 310,000 young people.

For project professionals, the programme highlights the increasingly important role infrastructure investment plays in supporting wider economic and social development objectives, particularly in emerging economies where transport connectivity remains a key enabler of growth.

## Focus on long-term asset management

A notable feature of the programme is its emphasis on sustainability and long-term asset performance.

Rather than focusing solely on road construction, the project includes measures to strengthen maintenance practices and improve the long-term management of transport infrastructure.

This includes operationalising Ghana's Road Maintenance Trust Fund and introducing performance-based maintenance contracts designed to ensure road quality is maintained after project completion.

Performance-based contracting has become increasingly common across infrastructure programmes globally, aligning contractor incentives with long-term asset performance rather than simply construction delivery.

For project owners and delivery organisations, the approach can help reduce lifecycle costs while improving infrastructure reliability and service outcomes.

## Building climate resilience

Climate resilience has also been integrated into the programme's design.

Road and drainage infrastructure will be constructed to withstand increasing climate-related risks, helping protect investments against extreme weather events and reducing future maintenance requirements.

This reflects a broader trend across major infrastructure projects, where resilience and adaptability are

becoming core project objectives rather than secondary considerations.

## More than a transport project

While road improvements form the foundation of the initiative, the programme's wider ambition is to stimulate economic growth across rural Ghana.

Improved connectivity is expected to unlock new opportunities for businesses operating across agricultural value chains, support local employment and contribute to food security by reducing inefficiencies in the movement of goods.

For project leaders, the Ghana Market Access and Connectivity Project demonstrates how infrastructure programmes are increasingly being designed to deliver multiple outcomes simultaneously, combining transport improvements, economic development, job creation, climate resilience and institutional strengthening within a single integrated delivery framework.

As governments continue looking for ways to maximise the impact of infrastructure investment, programmes such as GMACP provide a clear example of how project delivery can be aligned with broader national development goals while creating tangible benefits for communities and local economies.