



Rural Infrastructure

Planning for the future in Ghana's rural communities

2,000 Impacted Communities in Ghana.

9 Partner Organisations.

9 EWB volunteers working in the field or with government partners.

Engineers Without Borders has been working with local partners to improve their data and infrastructure planning capabilities, better meeting the water, road, education and healthcare needs of rural communities in Ghana.

A Lack of Public Services

For the people who live in the rural village of Saboba, Ghana, reaching the nearest health clinic is a long and arduous 50 kilometer journey. Here, when a child gets sick they have minimal access to medicines, advice, or emergency care.

Saboba's story is not uncommon. All across rural Ghana people have limited access to public services. There are not enough wells and hand pumps for clean water, only a few reliable roads to transport food, and minimal schools to secure a strong future. For the people in these vibrant communities, the lack of infrastructure severely inhibits their potential.

The implementation of public services in Ghana is often driven by bureaucratic processes and

inaccurate or absent data. Government decision-makers generally have a fragmented understanding of what rural communities need. Infrastructure planning has not been based on evidence, but on areas of high interest. This has resulted in poor prioritization of infrastructure projects throughout rural Ghana. Here, vulnerable communities like Saboba are often left behind.

Improving Infrastructure in Ghana

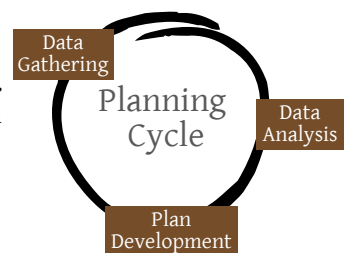
Engineers Without Borders is focused on addressing the root causes of widespread infrastructure failure. Our volunteers are testing new approaches to evidence-based planning, and scaling up ideas that create positive impact.

Planning based on evidence

EWB volunteers are working with district staff in Ghana to implement infrastructure planning cycles based on everyday realities in rural communities like Saboba. We are working in conjunction with local partners to create surveys, analyze trends, and aggregate existing data to get a better picture of where infrastructure is needed most.

In doing so, we are improving the data analysis and critical thinking skills of district employees. Because of this, rural districts can now prioritize clean water, education, transportation, and healthcare work based on tangible data.

All across rural Ghana people have limited access to public services.





EWB volunteer Nick Jimenez facilitates a workshop in Saboba District, Ghana
Photo: Nick Jimenez

Habib, a Regional Planner in Northern Ghana noted that “EWB has improved our capabilities as planners, versus just giving us money for more failed infrastructure. For the first time we created a clearly drawn up strategy for our region. This is not the status quo in Ghana.”

We are having a clear impact in communities across Northern Ghana. EWB supported the rural Saboba district in performing a district-wide survey to collect water data. Based on our work, a large development partner was able to build 30 wells in areas of high-need. Our approach led to a critical investment in Saboba’s future, and positively impacting the lives of many people.

Fostering district accountability and leadership
Our work has indicated that elected officials must be held accountable for planning decisions. With this we know that rural communities can play an important role. We are testing new approaches to involve communities in planning decisions. Bulletin boards, gazettes, posters, and public hearings, are increasing public participation in infrastructure decision-making.

We are also creating a culture of high performance amongst district leaders. A collective focus on creating transparent processes is key, as it generates mutual learning and better quality infrastructure choices. To achieve this, we have developed a mentorship program matching eight experienced planners like Habib, with district level staff. This has significantly expanded the quality of planning capability at the district level.

The Way Forward

EWB’s vision for infrastructure in Ghana is one where even the most remote communities can lead healthy, safe, and prosperous lives. Our work is helping to move this forward. We have built up the planning and analysis capabilities of staff, and have seen access to key public services increase for communities like Saboba. Here, EWB has already begun building opportunities for Ghanaians.

Over the next 5 years our work is poised to have a widespread impact in Ghana. EWB is aiming to scale up our innovative approaches to infrastructure challenges in Ghana, with a focus on evidence-based planning. Specifically, we aspire to institutionalize infrastructure planning cycles at the district, regional and national levels so universally beneficial decisions are taken. To ensure we have an enduring impact, EWB will continue building the capacity of district staff to better harness their skills as managers and field experts. In the coming years we will work to improve the lives of rural Ghanaians, on a widespread scale.

EWB’s ambitions are high for Ghana’s governance and rural infrastructure sector. With proven impact, EWB is working to leverage our innovative capacity to drastically improve healthcare, education, and clean water access for hundreds of communities across rural Ghana.



engineers without borders
ingénieurs sans frontières
Canada

366 Adelaide Street West, Suite 601, Toronto, Ontario M5V 1R9
TELEPHONE 1.416.481.3696 FAX 1.416.352.5360 E-MAIL info@ewb.ca
Charitable Registration Number: 89980-1815-RR0001

www.ewb.ca/ghana