

WHV – Community Outreach on Intangible Cultural Heritage and Biodiversity associated with the Asante Traditional Buildings

Asante Traditional Buildings, Ghana

PROJECT DATES

Cultural property inscribed on the World Heritage List (1980) 01 August - 20 September 2024

THE SITE - Near Kumasi, a group of traditional buildings are the last remaining testimony of the great Asante civilization, which reached its peak in the 18th century. Arranged around courtyards, the buildings are constructed of timber, bamboo and mud plaster and originally had thatched roofs. The unique decorative bas-reliefs that adorn the walls are bold and depict a wide variety of motifs. Common forms include spiral and arabesque details with representations of animals, birds and plants, linked to traditional “Adinkra” symbols. As with other traditional art forms of the Asante, these designs are not merely ornamental, they also have symbolic meanings, associated with the ideas and beliefs of the Asante people, and have been handed down from generation to generation. The buildings, their rich colour, and the skill and diversity of their decorations are the last surviving examples of a significant traditional style of architecture that epitomized the influential, powerful and wealthy Asante Kingdom of the late 18th to late 19th centuries. Asante Traditional Buildings reflect and reinforce a complex and intricate technical, religious and spiritual heritage.

OBJECTIVES - The project aims at sensitising and transmitting to the young generation the traditional and indigenous knowledge systems that support the preservation of the intangible heritage and biodiversity of the Asante Traditional Buildings, also contributing to the development of cultural tourism in the region.

ACTIVITIES - Volunteers will hold round table discussions on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and biodiversity, accompanied by public video streams to raise awareness among the local community, and will receive training to become knowledge bearers of indigenous cultural practices at the site and agents of advocacy for heritage protection and preservation.

PARTNERS - Ghana Education Service, Local assemblies and traditional councils.

Ghana Museums and Monuments Board

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