



# Volunteer Programme

+233 245 055 816  
hello@awisifoundation.org  
www.awisifoundation.org

 Awisi's Foundation  @awisifoundation

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# ABOUT AWISI FOUNDATION

Awisi Foundation is a non-profit started by Rebecca Awisi Nomo in 2015 at the orphanage where she grew up, Nectar Home. Nectar Home is an orphanage whose aim is to provide an enabling environment for children orphaned through HIV/AIDS and other circumstances. After school she decided to also give back to the orphanage by supporting her family with their academics, physical and psychological well-being.

## MISSION

Awisi Foundation focuses on improving the quality of lives of less privileged children in society by supporting them to become productive and functional citizens. We aim at offering a helping hand in raising independent individuals by supporting them academically, psychologically and mentally..

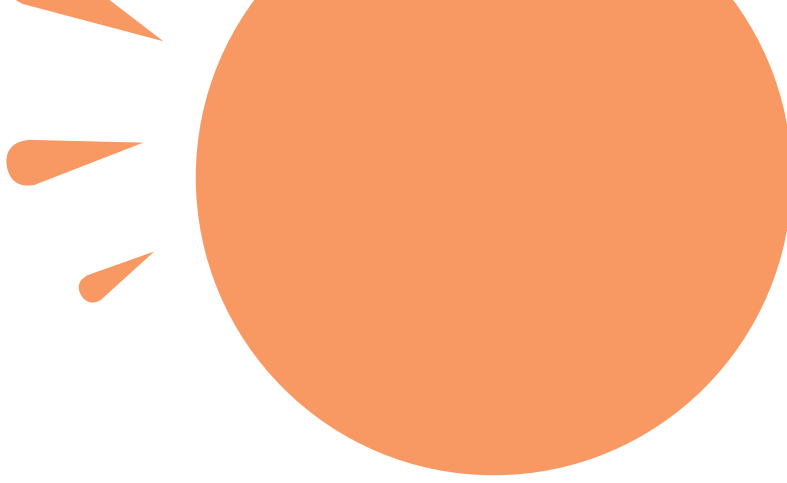


# SUPPORT

Awisi Foundation volunteers will receive the following support:

- Pre-Departure Volunteer Briefing Session
- Pre-Departure Culture Preparation Session
- Comprehensive Handbook
- In-country Orientation

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# PAYMENT AND FEES

As a not-for-profit organisation, our fees comparative to other volunteering programs are the most affordable offered in Ghana. 90% of the proceeds go to Nectar Home to cover costs and provide financial assistance to ensure the sustainability of the orphanage. Awisi Foundation retains 10% of the fees to pay for administrative expenses.

The fees for the programs are as follows but please keep in mind that Nectar Home is very flexible so if you wish to negotiate a different length of stay the fee will change accordingly. Also, if you enjoy your stay at the home and wish to extend it, that is also possible.

4 weeks = USD 2,000

6 weeks = USD 2,600

8 weeks = USD 3,600

A deposit of USD 500 is required to secure a spot in the volunteer program. The deposit will be deducted from the total volunteer fee.

## Program Fee Covers

- Airport Pick-up and Drop-off
- Accommodation in Accra (1 Night)
- Accommodation at Nectar Home
- All meals at Nectar Home
- Ghana Sim Card

## Program Fee Does Not Cover

- Airfare
- Visa
- Vaccinations
- Travel Insurance
- Local Transportation
- Any personal expenses incurred

# GHANA OVERVIEW

The Republic of Ghana comprises 24 million people and 239, 460 square kilometres. It is situated on the Atlantic coast of West Africa, bordering Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Togo. Inhabited since 4000 BCE, Ghana once comprised several tribes and empires including the 17th century Ashanti Kingdom. During its period of British colonialism, it was referred to as the "Gold Coast," and was a major port for slavery transportation. Ghana achieved independence and became a democracy in 1957.

Ghana's economy is experiencing considerable growth. Despite a population increase of more than 500,000 per year, the proportion of those living in poverty has declined sharply, with the percentage of those living on less than US\$1 per day declining from 45% in the 1990s to 35% in 2006. Education in Ghana has improved since independence, with most Ghanaians having relatively easy access to primary and secondary education. Real GDP has grown at an average annual rate of 6.0 per cent since 2000, which is expected to increase to 6.3 per cent in 2009, with its predominant exports being gold and cocoa.

Currently, tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors and is expected to grow at an average rate of 4.1 % per annum over the next two decades.

## MANYA KROBO

Nectar Home is situated in Odumase-Krobo which is a small town in the Lower Manya Krobo District, situated in the eastern region of Ghana. Manya Krobo has a population of 154,226, covering an area of 819 square kilometres. Farming is the major industry in the district, comprising 82.5% of the local economy. However poor soil quality and transport infrastructure has severely limited farming productivity. The prevalence of HIV in Manya Krobo is around 4.9%. This note is higher than elsewhere in the country due to the St Martin De Porres Hospital (where the medical placement is held) which is the premier HIV/AIDS treatment centre in West Africa.

## LANGUAGE

Whilst English is the official language, Ghana is made up of many diverse tribes, each with its own native tongue. Twi is a language from the Akan tribe and is widely spoken throughout Ghana.

The children and staff of Nectar home generally speak English, Twi and the local dialect of Krobo.



## MONEY MATTERS

The currency in Ghana is the New Ghana Cedi, which is then divided into 100 pesewas. We advise that you inform your bank of your travel arrangements to assist with monetary concerns such as cash withdrawals, international transactions and exchange rate fees.

Bank cards using Cirrus are not advised as ATMs that have are Cirrus compatible are rare. Visa is the most commonly used card in Ghana and can be used at most banks including Barclays. MasterCard facilities are a little harder to find but can be used at either the Bank of Ghana or a Stanbic ATM. There is both a Barclays and a Bank of Ghana in Somanya which is a fifteen minute tro-tro ride from Nectar Home. Be warned that the airport does not have any MasterCard or Cirrus facilities. However there is a Forex so you can change money at the airport.

## TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Volunteers are advised to bring their mobile phones to Nectar Home. Check with your service provider to ensure your phone is unlocked and can be used overseas. Once in Ghana, telephone SIM cards will be provided by Becky. Credit is dependent on the desired amount to be purchased.

The main telecommunications operators are MTN, AirtelTigo and Vodafone.

## CULTURAL NOTES

- Always use your right hand for eating, pointing, receiving a gift etc. It is offensive to direct someone with your left hand.
- Food proportions are usually very large. Whilst it is not considered rude to not finish your plate, it is courteous to advise the cook when you have reached your desired intake.
- If someone approaches your table while you are eating it is custom to say „you are welcome, inviting them to sit down with you.
- Foreigners can dress in “western” outfits in Ghana. However, the same is not necessarily acceptable of native Ghanaians. Out of respect for customs, it is advised that you keep skirts and shorts knee-length.

- Sharing or giving away left-over food is not uncommon or offensive.
- Passing down money in a "tro tro" (similar to a small community bus) is common practice, though most of the time you will not get your change back immediately. This may take place at the end of your journey.
- People will always ask how you are as a greeting. For a reply you should always impart a positive outlook and refrain from a negative.
- Ghana is a very religious country. Whilst you do not have to be Christian to participate in this program, we ask that you respect the Christian beliefs which are employed at the home.

## HEALTH

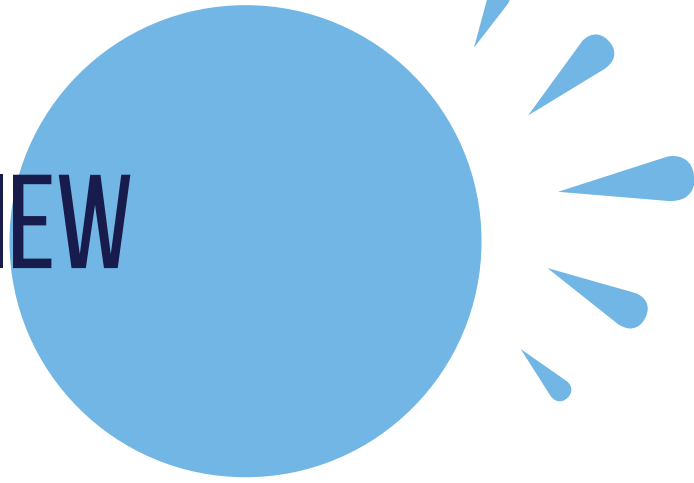
A significant health concern when travelling throughout Ghana is a lack of reliable and hygienic water. Precautions include: using bottled water, purchasing water sanitation tablets or boiling water prior to use. Use bottled water when brushing teeth and avoid swallowing water when showering.

The prevalence of HIV in Ghana differs according to sources; however it was estimated to be approximately 2.3% in 2005, with 320,000 Ghanaians infected. Manya Krobo district, in which Nectar Home is situated, has the highest prevalence of HIV in Ghana because of the presence of the St Martin de Porres Hospital.

HIV is not easily transferrable and as long as basic precautions are taken, does not pose a threat to travellers.



# PLACEMENT OVERVIEW



## DUTIES AT NECTAR HOME

1. Accompanying children to their various schools during the week.
2. Helping children with their homework in the evenings, especially reading.
3. Participating in fun activities with the children. This includes educational and leisure cartoons VCDs/DVDs. Other activities can include: soccer/ football, card making, making bracelets/necklaces, jump rope, spelling and reading games, hand games, card & board games, sewing, cooking, general building and construction projects throughout the home.
4. Engage in group mentoring sessions with the children.
5. Observing daily operations of the home and suggest means of improving its operation and functioning.
6. Keep the Volunteer Quarters tidy.
7. Helping out at the home. (Provided such activities are not to the detriment of one's health, well-being or self assurance relative to the customs of the home). Examples of activities include:
  - a. Assisting in the kitchen whilst learning how to prepare traditional Ghanaian food.
  - b. Sharing meals with the children.
  - c. Ensuring the children adhere to basic daily hygiene practices.
8. Offer any administrative assistance when necessary.
9. Occasionally attending meetings on behalf of the Home at the social welfare department at the local district assembly.

***Any other duties which may arise throughout the course of the program can be discussed further.***



## MEDICAL PLACEMENT

The medical placement will be based at Atua Government Hospital. The hospital provides what is arguably the best treatment, but other principal concerns of those admitted to the hospital include malaria, chest infection, (such as pneumonia and bronchitis) and hyper-tension and diabetes.

Volunteers undertaking the medical placement will have the opportunity to choose a particular area based upon their interest in which to observe, or rotate through a number of areas. These may include maternity, counselling, HIV/AIDS, lab-work, or the Out Patient Department (OPD). Those with less medical experience can also help out with administrative work, developing or helping to run health educational programs and more.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday (market days) are the busiest days. Volunteers normally work the morning shift (from 8am-2pm), as it is the busiest part of the day. As a result, volunteers can spend their mornings at the hospital and then return to Nectar Home in the afternoon to assist with the children after school.

## TEACHING PLACEMENT

The teaching program at Awisi Foundation offers volunteers the opportunity to influence not only the lives of the Nectar Home residents, but also those of the children in the local community.

The volunteer program has partnered with two local schools, Brains International School and Nuasu Presbyterian School, to allow volunteers to work within the school, by enriching the curriculum with their unique experiences and skills.

Volunteers are encouraged to consider creative ways of approaching the major disciplines of Mathematics and English, as well as any areas of interest in the arts/sciences/physical education before beginning the program. A background in education will be an added bonus, but is by no means necessary. The major prerequisites are an enthusiastic nature, a passion for the transfer of knowledge and bounds of energy. If comfortable, volunteers will be given classes to run alone.



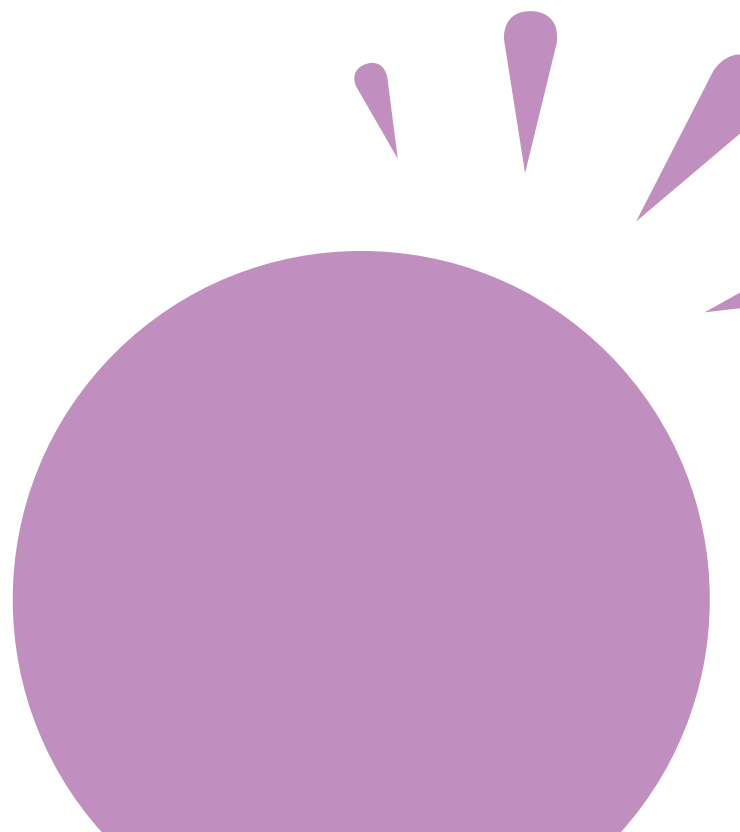
# ACCOMMODATION

**Housing:** Nectar Home has recently built volunteer accommodation. It is located on site and consists of a lounge area and 2 rooms. Each room has 3 single beds. It is advisable to bring a mosquito net.

**Meals:** Nectar Home will provide breakfast, lunch and dinner. Nectar Home's capacity is limited and access to certain foods is minimal. Dietary requirements (i.e. vegetarians) will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Main meals will usually consist of fried rice, red red, fried sweet potato, yam, stew, ground nut soup, chicken and often porridge and bread for breakfast.

**Laundry:** Laundry will need to be hand-washed in a bucket, so we advise bringing light, easy-to-dry clothing.

**Showering:** Nectar Home has an outdoor drop toilet and a showering block with hot water that is used by the children. The volunteer's room has been fitted with a western style toilet and shower.





# WHAT TO BRING

## **Documents:**

- passport, airline tickets,
- personal health insurance information (photocopies of each also advisable)

## **Personal items:**

- money belt or wallet
- cash, ATM debit/credit cards
- water bottle
- notebook or journal, pens
- camera
- towel and wash cloth

## **Toiletries:**

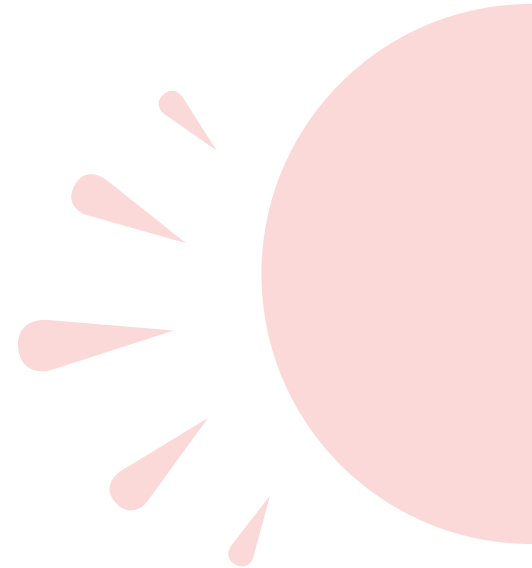
- toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo and soap
- prescriptions in original bottles (be sure to bring enough for the entire program)
- over-the-counter medications (headache, stomach, band-aids)

## **Clothing:**

- t-shirts/light long-sleeve tops
- shorts
- pants
- socks and underwear
- pyjamas
- long sleeve shirt, sweatshirt, or jacket
- thongs
- comfortable walking shoes
- one nice outfit to wear to formal occasions or church

## **Other items:**

- torch
- bathers
- sun protection: hat, sunglasses and at least 30+ sunscreen
- insect repellent (travel doctor recommends at least 30% DEET)
- hand sanitiser
- British power adapter
- gifts for children if you wish
- soap





# WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU LEAVE

## VISA

Most passport holders will need to get a visa to travel to Ghana. Whilst it is possible to obtain a 30-day tourist visa upon arrival in Ghana, it is recommended that volunteers do so prior to departure to prevent delays at immigration. It is recommended to apply for a visa at least 2 weeks prior to departure.

For references in Ghana you can list the following names:

1. Rebecca Dede Kofi-Nomo
2. Madam Fredrica Akuffo

Address:

Nectar Home, House No. K. 156/1 Nuaso New-Town, Krobo, Manya Krobo District, Republic of Ghana.

## VACCINATIONS

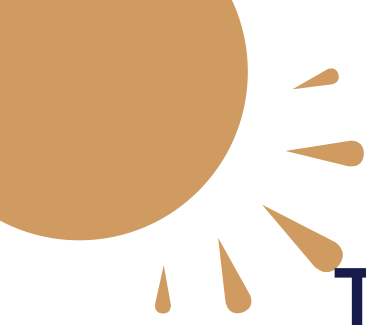
Several vaccines are recommended and are/or compulsory. Currently it is mandatory to carry a certificate that states you have had a yellow fever vaccine. Failure to carry this certificate will prohibit your entry into Ghana. Other vaccinations to consider include: Typhoid, Tuberculosis, Cholera, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Malaria treatment.

It is your responsibility to ensure you have checked your required vaccinations prior to departure.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance covers any events that may occur before or after travel. This may include medical expenses, baggage damage, loss or theft of possessions and so on. It is very important to purchase a reliable and reputable travel insurance policy if you are planning to travel overseas.

The cost of travel insurance varies depending on the destination, length of travel, age and the type of cover.

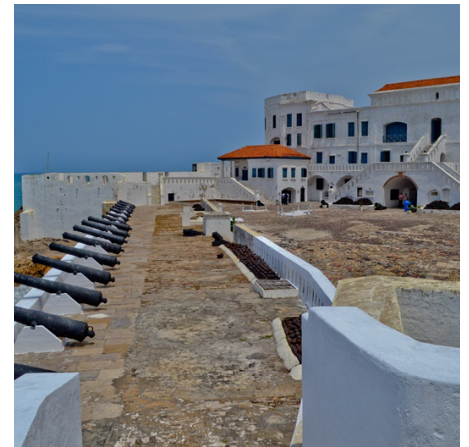


# TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Ghana provides an array of travel opportunities including 500 kilometres of coastline and neighbouring country destinations. Awisi Foundation may help arrange trips to the further destinations if requested.

The capital Accra has several sites, including the National Museum, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park, WEB Du Bois Memorial Centre for Pan African Culture, Independence Square and Osu (formerly Christiansborg) Castle, Labadi beach, Jamestown as well as the chaotic hustle and bustle of street markets, such as the Makola market.

West of Accra is several tourist attractions including Cape Coast, located near the Cape Coast castle, Kakum National Park, Elmina and Nzulezu. The Kakum National Park has an abundance of wildlife and a canopy walk consisting of ropes holding together 350m of narrow suspension bridges and 7 viewing platforms, 30 metres above the forest floor. St George's Castle, Elmina is the oldest European structure in Africa. Built in 1482 for the gold and slave trades is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and runs daily tours. Further west is the stilt town of Nzulezu, which is only accessible via dugout canoe.



Located to the east of Accra is Kumasi; (the capital of the Ashanti Kingdom), is the National Cultural Centre, Asantehene's Palace, Manhyia Palace Museum and Armed Forces museum. Nearby there is the Owabi wildlife sanctuary, Lake Bosumtwi Crater Lake and Boabeng-Fiema monkey sanctuary.

In northern Ghana, Mole National Park is one of the major tourist attractions, with approximately 90 species of mammals and over 300 species of birds. Here you can go on guided walking tours or visit the nearby Larabanga which has a mud-built mosque constructed in 1421.



# ADDITIONAL LEARNING

For further information on Ghana check the following resources:

## **Books**

- Lonely Planet West Africa
- Ghana – Culture Smart!: the essential guide to customs & culture – I. Utley
- Kofi Annan: A Man of Peace in a World of War – S. Meisler
- Ghana. Understanding the People and their Culture – J. Kuada & Y. Chachuh
- An Economic History of Ghana: Reflections on a Half-Century of Challenges & Progress – I. Agyeman-Duah, C. Kelly, W. Soyinka

## **Websites**

The Government of the Republic of Ghana: <<http://ghana.gov.gh/>>  
Lonely Planet: <<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/ghana>>  
The United Nations Mission in Ghana: <<http://www.un.int/ghana>>  
Ghana Tourism: <<http://touringghana.com>> Ghana Modern News: <<http://www.modernghana.com/ghanahome>>

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)



## **Why volunteer at Nectar Home?**

Awisi Foundation is run by Becky who also grew up at Nectar Home. It is non-profit meaning that all of your money goes directly to the orphanage. This makes it not only more affordable, but also more beneficial for Nectar Home as it covers their costs and assists them financially. As we are a small organisation you have complete flexibility in regards to the duration and location of your stay.

## **Can I volunteer as a group or with friends?**

There will be approximately 6 volunteers staying at Nectar Home at the same time however each application is considered on an individual basis.

## **Do I need specific skills or qualifications?**

No. The most important thing is that you have an open mind and a love of working with children. If you have specific qualifications that could be useful, for example being an art teacher, then please feel free to incorporate this into your activities.

## **Will I be working with other volunteers?**

You will be working with up to 6 other volunteers however you will all have your own schedule of daily activities.

## **Are flights and insurance included in the program costs?**

Flight and insurance are not included in the program, you will need to organise these yourself. Program cost includes accommodation, airport transfer to the orphanage and meals.

## **Will I need to be able to speak the local dialects?**

The official language of Ghana is English however the level of English may vary extensively. You will not need to be able to speak the local dialect however it may be useful to try and learn a few of the basic greetings.

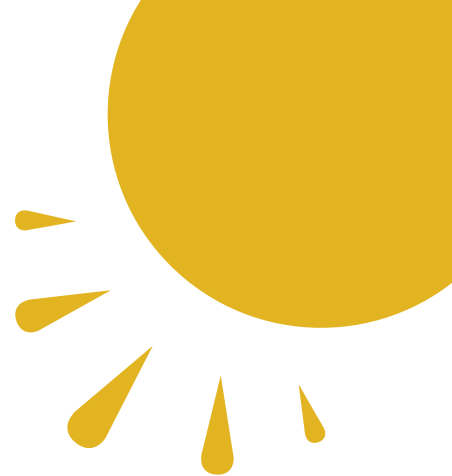
## **Will there be time for travel and sightseeing?**

During the week, you will most likely be occupied with your volunteer placement but over the weekends, there is definitely time for you to travel. You can organise time for travel and sightseeing during the weekends and at either end of your volunteer placement and Awisi Foundation will help with the arrangements.

## **Do I need a Visa?**

Visa requirements for Ghana are subject to change and it is your responsibility to organise your own passport and visa. Currently a tourist visa for most nationalities is required for travel in Ghana.

# USEFUL TWI WORDS



ENGLISH	TWI
Ask	Besa
Me	Mi, Maa
Go	Ko
Sit down	Tena-Si
Stop	Gyai
What is your name	Ye fro wo sen
My name is	Meh din day
Everybody	Obia
Water	Nsuo
Something	Biibe
How are you	Eti sen?
I'm fine	Eh yeh
And how are you	Na wo so eh?
Say	Ka
Sorry	Koo se
Tomorrow	O tsi na
I am hungry	E kom di me
Please	Meh paa cho
Thank You	Me daa si
Talk	Kasa
You	Wo
Come	Bra
Give it to me	Fa ma maie
Take it	Fa
Let's go	Yen ko
Eat	Didi
Food	Aduani
Somebody	Obi
How much is it?	Eye sen?
Today	Ene
Am going home	Me ko fie
Quickly	Ntem tem
Put it down	Fa to ho
Keep quiet	Ye din
Hurry up	Ka wo hm
Good morning	Maa chi
Good afternoon	Maa ha
Good evening	Maa jo
Foreigner	Obruoni
I'm going to	Meh ko
What is the fare?	Wo bya jay sen?
Again	Bion
Alright	Yoo
This is how much?	Wa ye sen?
I would like	Meh pay
Reduce it	Te so
little	Ka kra