

# John Agyekum KUFUOR

Former President of Ghana

(2001-2009)



**Date & Place of Birth:** 8 December 1938, Kumasi (Ghana)

**Education** : Mr. Kufuor was called to the Bar at Lincoln Inn, London (1959-1961) and obtained an Honours Degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from Exeter College, University of Oxford (1961-1964).

**John Kufuor served two terms as president of the Republic of Ghana from 2001-2008.**

During his presidency, he served as chairperson of the African Union (2007–08) during which he supervised the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Kenya, among others.

He was also chairman of the Economic Community of West African States for two terms (2003–05) and saw to the successful negotiations that brought peace and major post-war reconstruction to Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Liberia.

Earlier in his career, he was twice elected Member of Parliament (1969-1972 and 1979-1981). He served as a deputy minister of foreign affairs, representing Ghana's delegation to the United Nations (UN); secretary for local government; and chief legal officer and city manager of Kumasi, the second largest city in Ghana.

As President, Ghana witnessed the fastest growth in its history attaining a Middle-Income status by 2006 much earlier than the projected year of 2015 envisaged under the UN Millennium Development Goals and GDP reaching a record 8.4% between 2007 and 2008 even in teeth of the international financial and economic crisis.

He introduced the health insurance scheme with free maternal care for pregnant women under which about 56% of the population was registered and instituted the Free School Feeding programme to provide one nutritious locally produced meal a day for school children in kindergarten (age four) to Junior High School (age 14).

Under Kufuor, the Agricultural Extension Services was reactivated and special attention paid to educating cocoa farmers on best practices. As a result between 2002 and 2005, cocoa production in Ghana, the world's second largest producer, doubled from 350,000 tons a year to 734,000 tons a year, an all-time record in more than a century of cocoa farming in the country.

Using similar measures, production of food crops such as maize, cassava, yams and plantains increased tremendously just as livestock and fish.

The latest Global Hunger Index (GHI) which measures children's undernourishment, underweight and mortality in developing countries showed that Ghana had one of the greatest percentage reductions since 1990.

In retirement, President Kufuor has set up the John A Kufuor Foundation on Leadership, Governance and Development.

In 2011 he was named joint winner of the World Food Prize for Food and Agriculture with former Brazilian President Lula da Silva.

He is currently a Global Ambassador against Hunger for the UN World Food Programme; chairman of the UN Interpeace Program; Chairman of the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership; Global Envoy for the Neglected Tropical Diseases Alliance; Lead Advocate for the Partnership for Child Development.

Other positions President Kufuor holds include: President of the Italian development organization, Alliance for Africa; member of Club de Madrid; Director of Brenthurst Foundation of South Africa; director of the Leon Sullivan Foundation and Director of the Netherlands Development Corporation.

Kufuor was one of 10 distinguished global leaders tasked to work on the reform of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

He has served as leader of the Commonwealth Observer Mission on Elections to Malawi and leader of the African Union Mission to observe elections in Sudan and Nigeria; leader of the International Republican Institute's pre-election monitoring team of the Nigerian elections; He led the Jimmy Carter Foundation Observer Mission to the first round of the Cote d'Ivoire elections.

Kufuor also became the inaugural lecturer in 2010 at The Legatum Centre for Development and Entrepreneurship at the MIT, Boston, and also inaugurated the lecture series, Global Health Ground Rounds at the Cornell Medical School in New York.

Kufuor has received numerous awards including; the Chatham House prize for good leadership by Queen Elizabeth II of Britain, Germany's highest national award the Bundesverskreuz by former President Horst Kohler; Liberia's highest award of the Grand Cordon in the Most Venerable Order of the Knighthood of the Pioneers for helping to return peace to that country.

He has received several doctoral honours degrees from universities in Britain, Nigeria, Ghana, South Korea.