EMERGING MARKETS ADVISORY

GHANA 2026

MACROECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Cementing Stability, Delivering Growth

February 2026

2026 So Far: A World in Motion

The first month of 2026 has confirmed what many suspected: this will be a year of consequential change. On the global stage, the Trump administration's aggressive tariff regime has reshaped international trade, with average US tariff rates reaching levels not seen since the 1940s. Gold also surged past $5,000 per ounce, as investors sought shelter from geopolitical uncertainty and questions about monetary credibility. Meanwhile, at Davos, a record gathering of over 60 heads of state convened under the theme "A Spirit of Dialogue," though the conversations were dominated by trade fragmentation, the Greenland dispute, and tentative moves toward peace talks between Ukraine and Russia.

Ghana has not been immune to the turbulence. January brought intense public debate on the Ghana Gold Board's operations, as the institution assumed full responsibility for artisanal gold trading from the Bank of Ghana and signed a landmark refining agreement with Gold Coast Refinery. Transport woes have also dominated headlines, with bus shortages and fare disputes leading to multiple calls for comprehensive sector reform. Fuel prices offered some relief, though, as the cedi's strength brought pump prices down.

All of this confirms what the year's opening weeks have made clear: 2026 promises to be eventful. This outlook, updated through January 2026, situates Ghana's prospects within this rapidly shifting global and domestic landscape.

Introduction

Ghana entered 2026 riding a wave of hard-won macroeconomic stability. For the first time in recent memory, Ghanaians have cause for cautious optimism: the cedi posted its first annual gain against the dollar since 1994, inflation plunged from 23.8% to 5.4% over the course of 2025, and fuel prices declined meaningfully. Beyond the headline numbers, tangible improvements in living standards are emerging. The Ghana Statistical Service reports that over 950,000 people exited multidimensional poverty between Q3 2024 and Q3 2025, a welcome reversal from the crisis years, when the World Bank documented hundreds of thousands of people being pushed into poverty.

The turnaround reflects the cumulative impact of fiscal consolidation under the IMF Extended Credit Facility, a commodity windfall, and a new administration commanding a substantial parliamentary majority, which provided political stability and reset public expectations.

Yet 2026 is the year when good vibes alone will not be enough to sustain the momentum. The IMF programme concludes mid-year, removing the external anchor that has disciplined fiscal policy. The structural rigidities that have long plagued Ghana's budget, such as an outsized wage bill, inefficient goods and services expenditure, and revenue leakages, remain unresolved. And the commodity tailwinds that buoyed 2025 cannot be taken for granted. **Our baseline GDP growth projection of 4.8%** assumes continued fiscal prudence, moderate policy execution, and stable global conditions. Under an optimistic scenario with strong delivery of flagship programmes, growth could reach 6.0%. But if old patterns reassert themselves, policy drift, expenditure blowouts, and external shocks could cause growth to slip to 4.1%.

The fundamental question for 2026 is whether Ghana can maintain fiscal discipline without the IMF looking over its shoulder. Historical precedent is not encouraging: the country has a well-documented pattern of post-programme fiscal slippage. But the current administration has an opportunity to break that cycle. With nearly three years before the next election, there is political space for difficult reforms. The question is whether that space will be used.

Key Forecasts at a Glance

GDP Growth: 4.8% (baseline) | Inflation: 6.9% annual average | Policy Rate: 14.0% by H2 2026 |

Cedi: GHS 12.0/USD by year-end | Primary Balance: -1.4% of GDP (cash basis)

1. GDP Growth Forecast

The 2025 Foundation: Good Vibes, Real Gains

The transformation in Ghana's economic fortunes through 2025 was remarkable. After years of crisis, a 54% inflation peak in December 2022, a collapsing currency, and a debt default that shut the country out of international capital markets, 2025 delivered genuine relief. The macro numbers were good, but even beyond that, people actually felt better off.

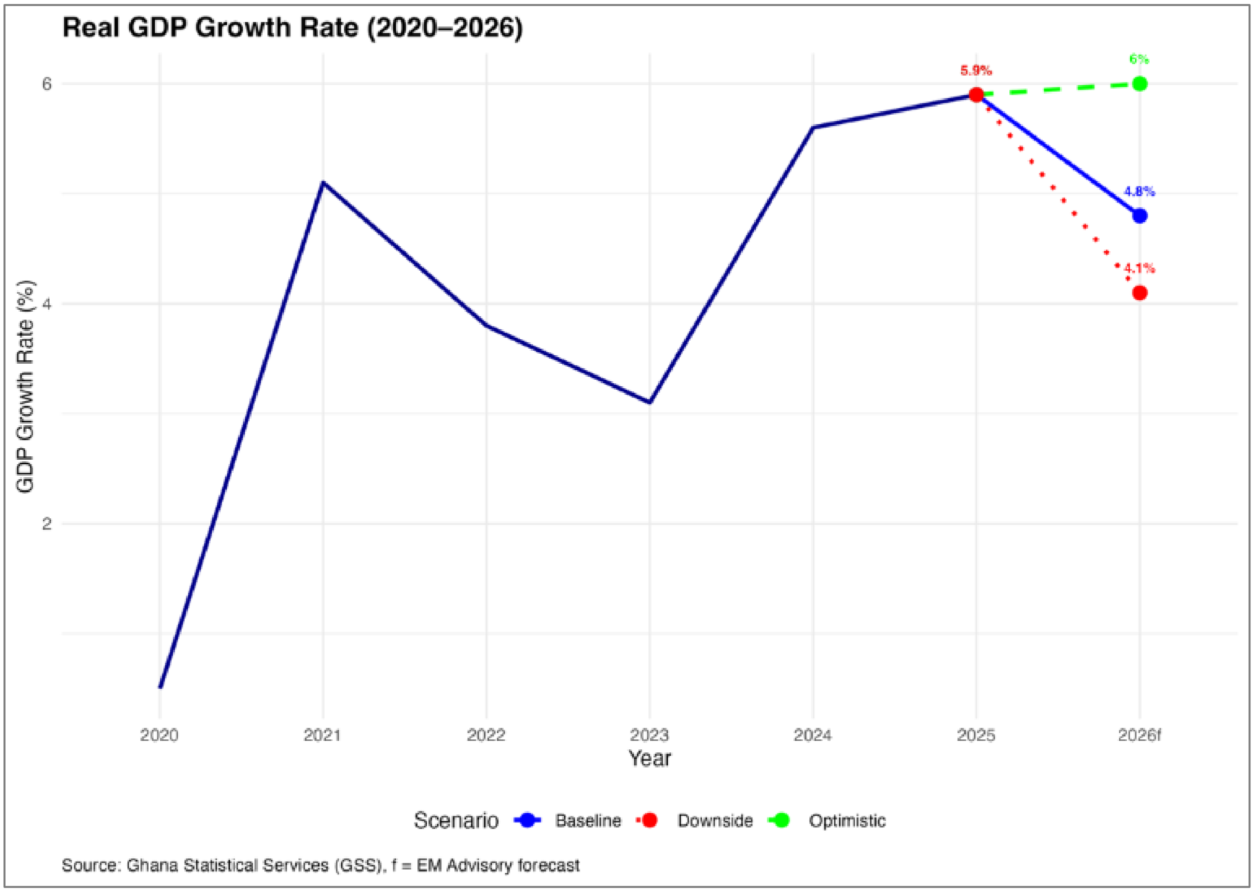
The evidence extends beyond sentiment. The Ghana Statistical Service's Multidimensional Poverty Index shows the national poverty headcount falling from 24.9% in late 2024 to 21.9% by Q3 2025, a decline from 8.2 million to just over 7 million people classified as multidimensionally poor. While regional disparities remain stark (poverty incidence exceeds 50% in the North East and Savannah regions), the overall trajectory has reversed.

What drove this improvement? The honest answer is that Ghana benefited substantially from external factors largely beyond its control. Gold prices surged to historic highs, with international benchmarks rising by more than 50% through 2025. Gold now represents approximately 62% of Ghana's total export earnings. The Ghana Gold Board reported small-scale gold exports alone reaching an estimated $8 billion in the first eight months of 2025, surpassing the entire 2024 total. Cocoa prices also strengthened. These commodity tailwinds, combined with disciplined adherence to IMF programme targets, stabilised the cedi and enabled the central bank to rebuild foreign exchange reserves.

Our 2026 Projections

The Government of Ghana projects GDP growth of approximately 4.9% for 2026. Our assessment is broadly aligned but slightly more conservative, reflecting uncertainty about the execution of policy and the sustainability of commodity price rises.

Downside (4.1%)	Baseline (4.8%)	Optimistic (6.0%)
Policy implementation delays; public service delivery failures; external shocks (commodity price collapse, regional instability)	Continued fiscal discipline; moderate policy execution; stable commodity prices; no major external shocks	Strong Big Push execution; 24-hour economy gains traction; structural reforms advance; commodity prices remain elevated



Baseline Scenario (4.8% growth)

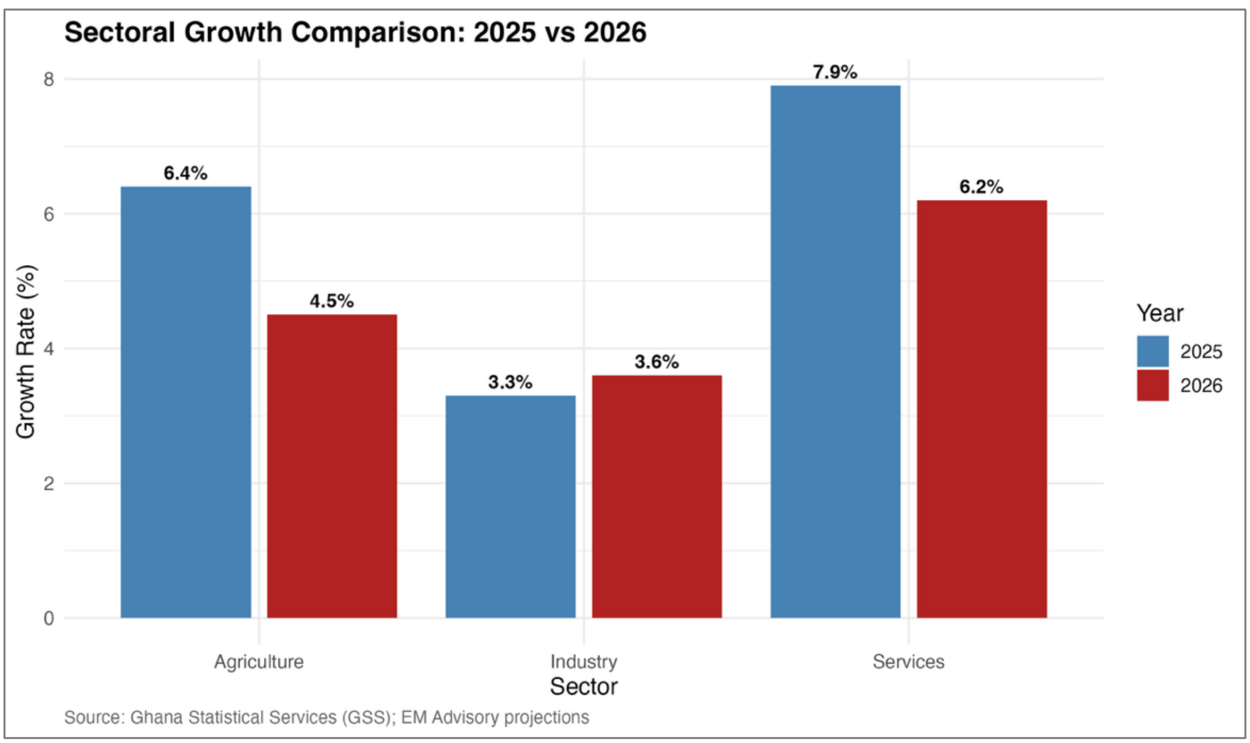
Our baseline assumes the government maintains the fiscal consolidation trajectory established under the IMF programme, executes flagship initiatives (Big Push, 24-hour economy) at a moderate pace, and faces no major external shocks. Under this scenario, services remain the primary growth driver at 6.2%, supported by continued expansion in financial services, telecommunications, and trade. Agriculture is projected to grow at 4.5%, benefiting from improved input availability and favourable weather. Manufacturing growth of 5.0% reflects gradual industrial recovery, though the sector remains constrained by high financing costs and unreliable power supply.

The oil and gas sector presents a significant drag, with a projected contraction of 15.6% for the year. This reflects the natural decline of mature fields and limited new production coming online. However, non-oil GDP growth of 5.0% demonstrates the underlying strength of the productive economy.

Sectoral Growth Projections

Period	Overall GDP	Agriculture	Industry	Mining & Quarrying	Oil & Gas	Manufacturing	Services	Non-Oil GDP
2026 Q1	5.0%	4.5%	3.8%	2.1%	-21.4%	5.0%	6.2%	4.9%
2026 Q2	4.8%	4.7%	4.3%	2.6%	-14.7%	5.6%	6.2%	4.8%
2026 Q3	4.9%	4.1%	4.7%	1.2%	-12.8%	4.8%	6.2%	4.9%
2026 Q4	4.7%	4.8%	1.5%	-7.3%	-13.4%	4.7%	6.2%	5.2%
Annual Average	**4.8%**	**4.5%**	**3.6%**	**-0.3%**	**-15.6%**	**5.0%**	**6.2%**	**5.0%**

Source: EM Advisory Staff Calculations



Optimistic Scenario (6.0% growth)

The upside scenario requires the government to deliver on its ambitious policy agenda. The 24-hour economy programme, if implemented effectively, could unlock significant productivity gains in manufacturing and services. The Big Push Infrastructure Programme, with its GHS 30 billion allocation for roads, bridges, ports, and logistics corridors, has the potential to crowd in private investment and reduce transaction costs across the economy. If commodity prices remain elevated and structural reforms advance, particularly in the energy sector and public financial management, Ghana could achieve growth rates not seen since the oil production boom of the early 2010s.

Downside Scenario (4.1% growth)

The downside scenario captures the risk of policy drift and external shocks. Ghana has a documented pattern of fiscal expansion following IMF programme exits. If wage bill commitments exceed projections, if goods and services spending rebounds sharply from suppressed 2025 levels, or if the government yields to political pressure for expanded social spending ahead of the 2028 elections, the deficit could widen significantly. External risks include a sharp correction in gold prices, regional instability spilling over from the Sahel, or a global economic slowdown that depresses demand for Ghanaian exports.

> **Critical Point**
>
> Ghana has demonstrated it can grow even through crisis. The country eked out 0.5% growth during COVID-19 while peers contracted. But with population growth averaging 2%, merely positive growth is insufficient. The country needs sustained 6%+ growth to make meaningful progress on employment and human development.

2. Inflation Trajectory and Monetary Policy

The 2025 Disinflation Achievement

Ghana's inflation performance in 2025 ranks among the most impressive disinflation episodes in recent emerging market history. Headline inflation fell from 23.8% in December 2024 to 5.4% in December 2025, an 18.4 percentage-point decline over 12 consecutive months of easing. This was the lowest December inflation reading since 1970 and comfortably below the Bank of Ghana's 8% target (with its 6-10% tolerance band).

The drivers of this disinflation were mutually reinforcing. Currency appreciation (the cedi strengthened by approximately 30% against the dollar over 2025) reduced import price pressures. Tight monetary policy, with the policy rate held at 27% for most of the year before easing, anchored inflation expectations. Improved food supply conditions, partly reflecting better agricultural performance and reduced input costs, brought food inflation down from 27.8% to 4.9% over the year. Food accounts for about 43% of the CPI basket, so this decline provided substantial relief to household budgets.

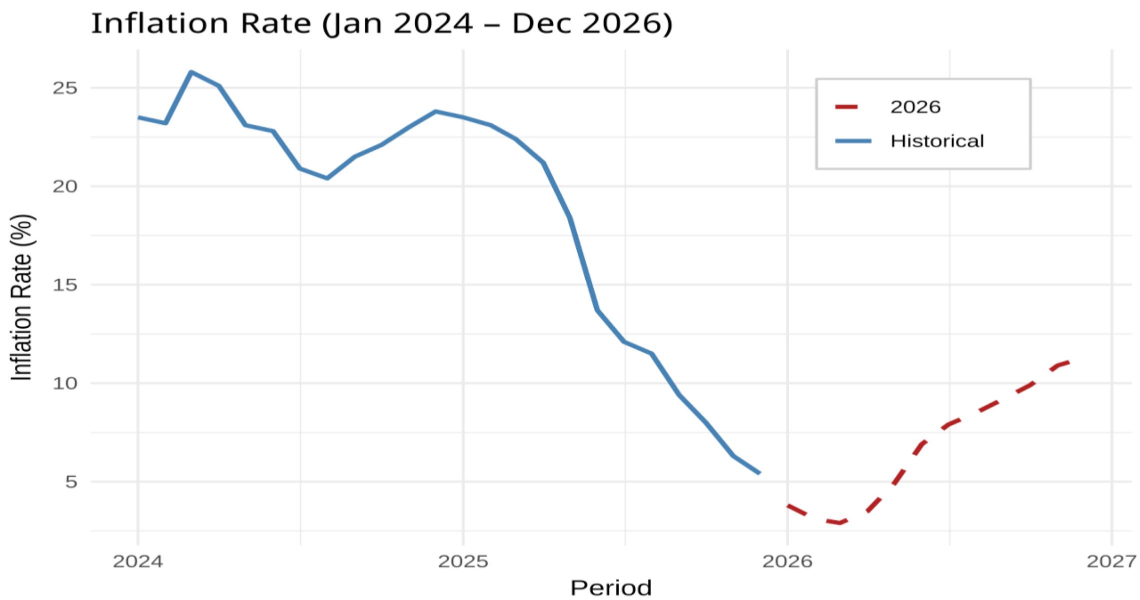
2026 Inflation Outlook

Our estimate for 2026 places inflation in the lower band of 8% ± 2%. Under the most likely scenario, we project an average annual inflation of 6.9% for 2026. This reflects several factors: base effects as the sharp 2025 declines roll off, a more expansionary fiscal stance (the 2026 budget projects higher capital spending), and our expectation that the cedi will resume a mild depreciatory path as the Bank of Ghana prioritises external competitiveness.

Month	All Products	Food	Non-Food
January	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%
February	3.1%	3.5%	3.1%
March	2.9%	4.5%	2.4%
April	3.5%	5.9%	2.3%
May	4.9%	7.5%	3.3%
June	6.9%	10.1%	5%
July	7.9%	11.1%	5.7%
August	8.5%	12.1%	5.8%
September	9.2%	13.3%	5.9%
October	9.9%	14.2%	6.4%
November	10.9%	15.7%	7.1%
December	11.3%	16.2%	7.3%
Annual Average	**6.9%**	**9.8%**	**4.8%**

Source: EM Advisory Staff Calculations

Our month-by-month projections show inflation remaining subdued in Q1 (averaging 3.3%) before trending upward through the year, reaching 11.3% by December. Food inflation is expected to rebound more sharply, rising from under 5% in early 2026 to over 16% by year-end, driven by seasonal patterns, potential weather disruptions, and the expiry of some temporary price support measures. Non-food inflation remains more contained, ending the year at 7.3%.



Source: Ghana Statistical Services (GSS); EM Advisory projections

Monetary Policy Path

The Bank of Ghana began its easing cycle in late 2025, cutting the policy rate from 27% to 18% as inflation converged to target. As it stands, the Bank of Ghana (BoG) reduced its policy rate from 18% to 15.5% following its first Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting of 2026. We expect this easing to continue in 2026, with the policy rate reaching 14% by mid-year. Governor Dr Johnson Asiama has signalled his ambition to bring lending rates down to approximately 10% over his tenure, though achieving this will require sustained inflation control and continued fiscal discipline.

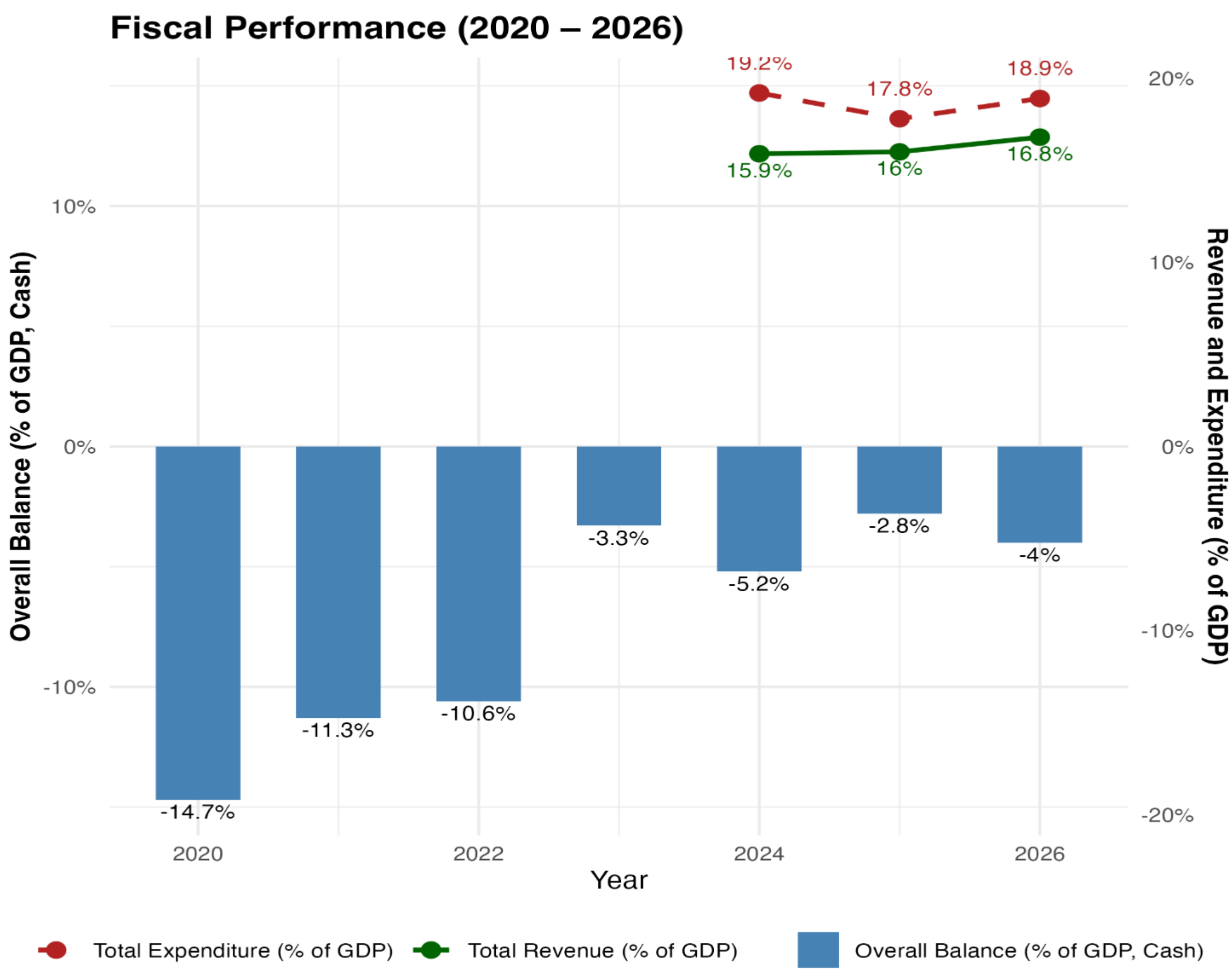
The transmission of policy rate cuts to lending rates remains imperfect. Ghanaian banks maintain wide spreads, reflecting credit risk, operational costs, and structural inefficiencies in the financial system. Even with a 14% policy rate, prime lending rates are likely to remain in the 20-25% range, constraining credit-financed private investment. Reforms to improve the credit information ecosystem, strengthen collateral frameworks, and deepen capital markets could accelerate transmission over the medium term.

Policy Implication

Policies to further drive down major contributors to inflation, particularly food prices, fuel, and utilities, would be welcome additions. The government should prioritise supply-side interventions in agriculture, storage infrastructure, and transportation logistics rather than relying solely on monetary policy.

3. Fiscal Analysis

The fiscal story of 2025 was one of discipline rewarded. After years of deficits that spiralled out of control, culminating in a debt crisis that forced the country into default, Ghana demonstrated that it could hold the line when external pressure demanded it. Revenue collection improved meaningfully, rising 21.5% year-on-year, though it fell 5.5% short of target due to softer oil company tax receipts and weaker import duty receipts. More importantly, the government resisted the temptation to spend windfalls, keeping the overall deficit within IMF programme parameters.



Source: Ministry of Finance

The 2026 budget signals that the consolidation effort will not be abandoned. Expenditure is projected at 18.9% of GDP, representing a continued commitment to spending restraint even as the IMF programme winds down. Revenue is targeted at 16.8% of GDP, reflecting both improved tax administration and base-broadening efforts. The government is projecting a primary surplus of 1.5% of GDP on a commitment basis. However, on a cash basis (which accounts for timing differences in payments), this translates to a deficit of 0.4%.

The overall fiscal deficit is targeted at 2.2% of GDP on commitment terms and 4.0% on a cash basis, both figures well below the long-term average of 5.3% that characterised the 2010-2025 period.

The removal of the COVID-19 health levy, which contributed 1.7% of total revenue and grants in the first three quarters of 2025; the adjustments in the computation of VAT, which reduces the effective VAT rate from 21.9% to 20.0%; and the upward revision in the registration threshold from GHS 200,000 to GHS 750,000, exempting more small businesses from the tax net, bring significant relief for businesses and the taxpaying public and are expected to inspire voluntary compliance. But unless it is accompanied by a massive compliance drive to reduce the existing VAT gap of some 60%, the resulting revenue loss from the VAT cut would further reduce the fiscal space and the ability of the government to fund its infrastructure projects and support much-needed social services. These tax reforms are politically popular measures, but they will make achieving the revenue targets harder.

On the spending side, pressures are building. Public sector workers have been promised a 9% increase in base pay, adding significantly to a wage bill that already consumes an outsized share of revenues. The Big Push Infrastructure Programme has been allocated GHS 30 billion for roads, bridges, ports, and logistics corridors, a necessary investment but one that requires careful execution to avoid the cost overruns and abandoned projects that have plagued past capital budgets. The combination of constrained revenue growth and expanding expenditure commitments means the deficit will likely widen from 2025 levels, even if it remains contained by historical standards.

Fiscal Sensitivity Analysis

Scenario-Based Fiscal Triggers in 2026

The 2026 budget's expenditure framework is characterised by extreme structural rigidity. Compensation of employees (GH¢90.8bn), interest payments (GH¢57.7bn), and statutory transfers (GH¢63.6bn) together account for 70% of total expenditure, leaving only 30% available for discretionary adjustments throughout the year. This means any fiscal slippage must be absorbed by an already-compressed envelope of goods and services and capital expenditure, with predictable consequences for service delivery and growth.

Our sensitivity analysis identifies several trigger points that warrant close monitoring. If the compensation bill exceeds 38% of revenue (versus 33.9% budgeted), expect deficit slippage of approximately 0.7 percentage points of GDP by the end of the year. Moreover, we identified that each 5% tax revenue shortfall is associated with a deficit deterioration of approximately 0.7 percentage points. Interest payments already absorb 21.5% of revenue; a 10% increase from adverse rollover conditions would add a further 0.4 percentage points to the deficit. These are not extreme assumptions in any scenario; rather, they reflect plausible downside outcomes with limited fiscal buffers amid the formal end of the Government's IMF-supported ECF programme.

Under a moderate stress scenario combining a 5% wage bill overrun with 10% tax underperformance, the cash deficit widens from 4.0% to circa 5.7% of GDP, breaching the 5% target under the Fiscal Responsibility Act (Act 982), which could require emergency adjustment measures. Altogether, the budget can accommodate modest shocks in isolation but has limited capacity to absorb combined pressures. The margin for error is thin, suggesting that execution discipline will determine whether the recent gains from consolidation hold or slip.

The Post-IMF Test

Ghana's Extended Credit Facility concludes in mid-2026. This is both a milestone and a risk. The programme provided an external anchor that disciplined fiscal policy through performance-based disbursements. Subsequent tranches could only be secured by strictly adhering to fiscal targets, creating powerful incentives to stay on track even when domestic political pressures pushed in the opposite direction.

Historical experience, both in Ghana and across emerging markets, suggests that the existence of such external rules and limits tends to produce better fiscal outcomes than purely domestic commitment devices. The cedi's stability and the cooling of inflation in 2025 owed much to market confidence that Ghana would maintain discipline under IMF oversight. The open question is whether that discipline can be sustained once the programme ends.

The Credibility Test

Without discounting the remarkable fiscal consolidation achieved in 2025, it is easier to be fiscally prudent under the combined pressure of an IMF programme and steady commodity revenue.

Beyond stability, growth and development are expected. With several major projects lined up for 2026, the year will serve as a genuine fiscal credibility test for the new administration. Can Ghana stay the course without the Fund watching?

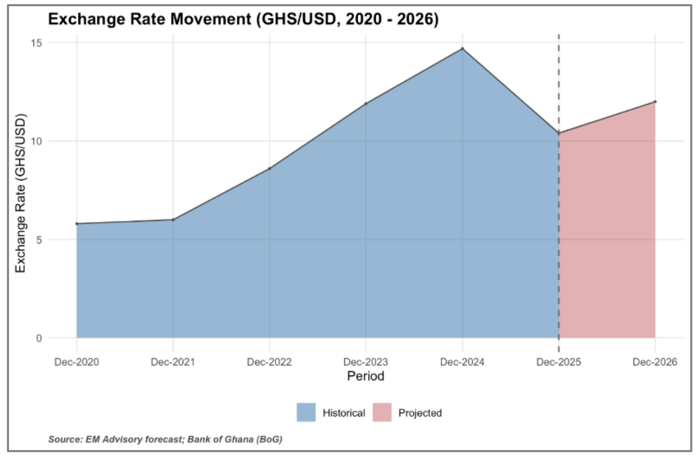
4. External Sector: Cedi and Reserves

The 2025 Cedi Rally

The cedi's performance in 2025 was historic. For the first time since at least 1994, the currency posted an annual gain against the dollar, appreciating by approximately 30% over the year. This was driven by elevated gold prices, strong cocoa export earnings, and a marked build-up in international reserves that enabled the Bank of Ghana to inject roughly $10 billion into the FX market between January and November.

Gold exports reached $8.3 billion in the first half of 2025 alone, nearly double the same period in 2024 and the highest half-year total since at least 2016. In a remarkable milestone, gold exports exceeded total imports for the first time in a decade. Because the Ghana Gold Board is mandated to surrender its foreign exchange earnings to the Bank of Ghana, these inflows went directly to strengthening reserves rather than leaking into parallel markets.

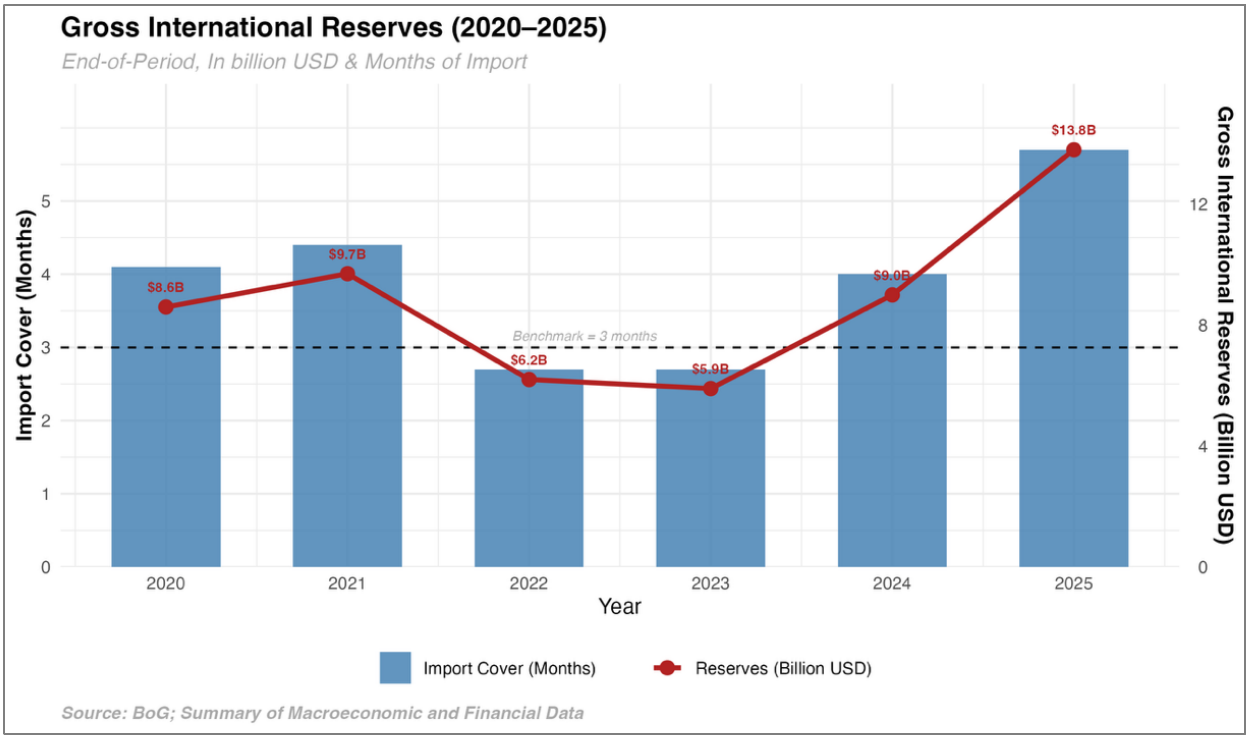
2026 Exchange Rate Outlook



We expect the cedi to revert to a mild depreciatory path in 2026. While gold prices should remain elevated, the Bank of Ghana is likely to allow the currency to resume its traditional gradual weakening trend to preserve Ghana's external competitiveness. An overly strong cedi risks undermining non-traditional exports and import-competing industries at a time when the government is promoting industrialisation and economic diversification.

Our year-end projection is GHS 12.0 to the dollar, representing modest depreciation from current levels. This assumes no major external shocks and continued, if not reduced, FX market intervention by the central bank.

Reserves Adequacy



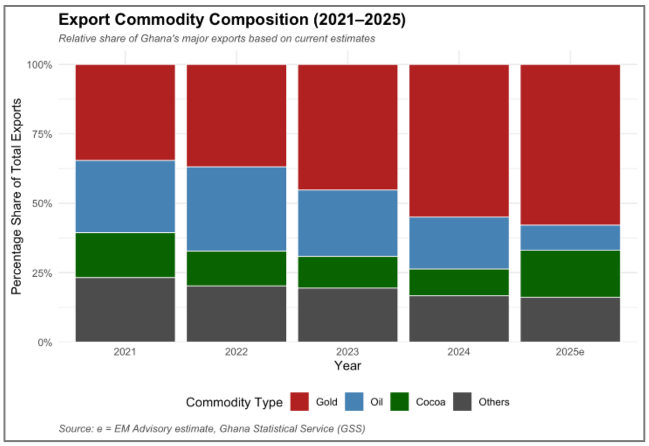
The Bank of Ghana's Domestic Gold Purchase Programme led to an improvement in gold reserves, with holdings reaching 37.1 tonnes of gold (valued at $3.43 billion) as of November 2025. An aggressive rebalancing strategy by the Bank, however, resulted in end-of-year holdings of 18.6 tonnes (valued at $2.68 billion), representing a 49.9% decrease from the previous month. This represents a step toward ensuring an optimum bundle of reserve holdings against transitory movements in gold prices and should serve as a strong signal against heavy reliance on gold export earnings.

Total gross international reserves increased to $13.8 billion (equivalent to 5.7 months of import cover) from $9.0 billion (4 months of import cover) the previous year, with reserve money growing by 12.5%. The resulting buffer helped to stabilise the currency and gave the Bank of Ghana enough room to ease monetary conditions with a 250-basis-point reduction in the policy rate to 15.5% as inflation pressures moderated.

That said, reserve accumulation through the GoldBod framework resulted in a $214 million trading loss. This loss has largely been attributed to the purchase of gold at near-retail prices while booking FX inflows at lower interbank rates. Despite the broad benefits realised from the framework, such as lower import valuation, exchange rate stability, and improved reserve liquidity, it is important to mitigate these losses to maximise the framework's gains.

Beyond these institutional enhancements, the fundamental resilience of the reserve buffer remains challenged by the structural concentration of Ghana's exports. Ghana still exports predominantly raw commodities, leaving the economy vulnerable to swings in international prices. The central bank is reportedly developing a hedging strategy, but more needs to be done. Establishing a modern gold refinery and implementing traceability mechanisms across the supply chain would help capture more value domestically and reduce exposure to price volatility

Commodity Price Sensitivity



Ghana's reliance on commodity exports, predominantly cocoa, oil, and gold, exposes the country to significant external risk. Gold now represents approximately 62% of total export earnings. The last time gold prices peaked in 2011, they subsequently fell by nearly half over the next four years. With gold now trading above $4,000 per ounce, history could repeat itself if global interest rates remain elevated or geopolitical tensions ease. Recent developments have seen gold prices surge above $5,000 per ounce, far exceeding earlier forecasts. This development should be viewed as an opportunity to reduce overreliance on a single export commodity and accelerate economic diversification, rather than as an incentive to concentrate solely on gold.

External Risk Monitor

Key external indicators to watch: Global gold price trajectory; Cocoa production and prices (particularly given West African supply concerns); Oil production from mature Jubilee and TEN fields; Federal Reserve interest rate path (affecting dollar strength and commodity prices); Regional stability in the Sahel, affecting trade routes and security expenditure.

5. Red Flags and Risk Monitor

While the outlook for 2026 is cautiously optimistic, several risks warrant close monitoring throughout the year. We identify five primary red flags that could derail the baseline scenario:

1. Post-IMF Fiscal Slippage

The single most significant risk to Ghana's 2026 outlook is a return to fiscal indiscipline following the IMF programme exit. Ghana has a documented pattern of expenditure expansion in post-programme periods. The political calendar adds pressure: while the 2028 elections are still distant, governing parties typically begin positioning early, and the temptation to expand social spending will grow.

What to watch: Fiscal data from MoF; wage bill execution vs. budget; supplementary budget requests; domestic arrears accumulation; Treasury bill yields as a market signal of fiscal stress.

2. Policy Execution Failure

The government's ambitious flagship programmes (Big Push, 24-hour economy, agricultural interventions) require competent implementation to deliver growth dividends. Ghana's track record on policy execution is mixed. The previous administration launched numerous initiatives that struggled with coordination, funding, and follow-through. If the current government cannot demonstrate visible progress on its priorities, the optimistic growth scenario becomes unattainable.

What to watch: Capital budget execution rates; physical progress on infrastructure projects; private sector uptake of 24-hour economy incentives; agricultural input distribution ahead of planting season.

3. Commodity Price Reversal

The 2025 turnaround was substantially commodity driven. Gold prices rose by over 50%; cocoa prices strengthened. If these trends reverse sharply, Ghana's external accounts, fiscal revenues, and currency stability all come under pressure simultaneously. The country has limited hedging in place and no sovereign wealth fund to buffer commodity volatility.

There is, however, an encouraging development on this front. In January 2026, the Ghana Gold Board signed a landmark agreement with Gold Coast Refinery to refine one metric tonne (1,000 kilogrammes) of gold locally every week, beginning in February 2026. This represents a decisive shift from Ghana's long-standing practice of exporting nearly all its gold in raw form. Under the deal, Gold Coast Refinery, supported by South Africa's Rand Refinery (Africa's only LBMA-accredited facility), will process gold doré into refined bullion with a minimum purity of 99.5% before export. Ghana also secures a 15% free carried interest in the refinery.

If executed well, this value-addition strategy addresses a core vulnerability. Refined gold commands better prices and more stable margins than raw doré, reducing Ghana's exposure to the undervaluation and price volatility that has long plagued its commodity exports. The millions of dollars currently paid as refining charges to facilities in Dubai, Switzerland, India, and Hong Kong would instead circulate within the domestic economy. The goal is to scale up progressively toward complete local refining of all gold exports. This is precisely the kind of structural shift that can insulate Ghana from the boom-bust commodity cycles that have repeatedly derailed its development.

What to watch: International gold price (currently near $5,000/oz); cocoa futures; OPEC+ decisions affecting oil prices; BoG reserve accumulation pace; Gold Coast Refinery throughput and scale-up progress.

4. Regional Security Spillovers

The Sahel region remains deeply unstable. Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali have all experienced coups in recent years, and jihadist violence is spreading toward coastal West Africa. While Ghana is far from at risk of a coup, it may face rising security expenditures to reinforce its northern borders, expenditures that its fragile budget may struggle to accommodate. Trade disruption through traditional overland routes is also possible.

What to watch: Security incidents in northern Ghana; military/security budget allocations; cross-border trade volumes; refugee flows from neighbouring countries.

5. Structural Service Delivery Failures and PPP Readiness

2026 has already begun with familiar challenges: concerns about galamsey (illegal mining) and its environmental destruction, water shortages affecting major urban areas, and a transportation crisis that has exposed profound infrastructure deficits. These structural issues affect the daily lives of ordinary Ghanaians and, if left unaddressed, erode public confidence in the government's ability to deliver meaningful change.

This is also the period when the government needs to upgrade its project appraisal capabilities significantly. Given the tight fiscal constraints, only the most viable and highest-impact projects should proceed. The temptation to approve projects based on political considerations rather than rigorous cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis must be resisted.

The fiscal straitjacket means that public-private partnerships will need to carry a larger share of the infrastructure delivery burden. Ghana has a mixed history with PPP structuring, with past projects suffering from poor risk allocation, inadequate due diligence, and contracts that failed to deliver value for money. Now is the time to get this right. The PPP Act provides the legal framework; what is needed is proper implementation. The Ministry of Finance's PPP unit must be empowered to conduct rigorous appraisals and ensure only the best-structured projects proceed.

On average, Ghana has processed only a handful of PPPs per year. 2026 should be the year when the foundation is laid to break that trend. The private sector needs to step up with well-packaged projects that meet Ghana's infrastructure needs. Government, through the Finance Ministry, must cut bureaucracy and create fast-track approval processes for deals that deliver genuine value for money and advance the broader development agenda—speed matters, but not at the expense of quality.

What to watch: Water supply reliability in Accra; electricity load-shedding incidence; fuel availability; public transport service quality; galamsey enforcement actions; PPP pipeline development; project appraisal quality from MoF.

The Fundamental Question

Ghana enters 2026 at an inflexion point. The stabilisation achieved in 2025 was real but remains fragile. The year ahead will reveal whether the country has genuinely turned a corner on economic management or whether 2025 was merely a respite in a longer cycle of boom and bust. The government has the opportunity, and the political capital, to cement a new trajectory. The question is whether that opportunity will be seized.

6. Opportunities and Upside Catalysts

While risks warrant attention, 2026 also presents significant opportunities for Ghana to accelerate its development trajectory. We identify several potential upside catalysts:

Tourism and the Creative Arts

Ghana possesses a rich cultural heritage that remains significantly under-monetised. The turnaround in its economic story provides the best platform in years to reposition the country on the world stage. The "Year of Return" campaign demonstrated the diaspora's appetite for reconnection; that momentum should be built upon with improved air connectivity, hotel capacity, and destination marketing.

The growth multiplier from investing in tourism and the creative arts should not be underestimated. These sectors create jobs across skill levels, from hospitality and transport to content creation and event management. Critically, they generate employment quickly. A young Ghanaian can start earning from creative work or tourism services far faster than from manufacturing or agriculture. In an economy where youth unemployment exceeds 13%, this matters.

The sector also generates foreign exchange without commodity price exposure, diversifying Ghana's external earnings away from gold, cocoa, and oil. With the right policy support, visa facilitation, creative industry incentives, heritage site development, and international marketing, tourism and the arts could become meaningful contributors to both GDP and employment.

Manufacturing and Technology

Both sectors are positioned for expansion. Manufacturing benefits from the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), headquartered in Accra, which provides preferential access to continental markets. The technology sector continues to attract venture capital investment, with Ghanaian startups securing funding rounds that signal international investor confidence. If infrastructure constraints (particularly power reliability and internet connectivity) can be addressed, both sectors could accelerate significantly.

Agricultural Modernisation

Ghana remains a net food importer despite abundant arable land and favourable growing conditions. Policy interventions that improve input availability, storage infrastructure, and market access could simultaneously reduce food inflation, improve rural livelihoods, and strengthen the current account. The government's agricultural interventions under the Feed Ghana initiative warrant close observation for execution effectiveness.

Private Sector Participation

The government's embrace of private sector participation in infrastructure, through PPPs, privatisation, and innovative financing structures, could crowd in investment that the fiscally constrained public sector cannot mobilise alone. If properly structured with appropriate risk allocation and transparent procurement, these arrangements can accelerate infrastructure delivery while preserving the fiscal space.

Conclusion: A Year to Prove It

The year 2025 marked a turning point for Ghana, and 2026 begs the question: where do we go from here?

The country enters a medium-term recovery phase in which the stabilising factors of 2025 cannot be guaranteed. The IMF programme will soon come to an end. Commodity prices may normalise. The government's own policy choices, on fiscal discipline, on structural reform, and on service delivery, become the primary determinants of outcomes.

Ghana is a country that promises much. The first African nation to achieve independence, it has suffered the paradox of enormous potential repeatedly undermined by boom-and-bust economic management. The current moment offers a chance to break that pattern. With a substantial parliamentary majority, a relatively stable macroeconomic foundation, and nearly three years before the next electoral cycle, the government has political space to pursue difficult but necessary reforms.

Those reforms are well understood: rationalising the public sector wage bill; improving civil service productivity; broadening the tax base while reducing compliance costs; strengthening budget execution; investing in infrastructure that actually gets completed; and delivering reliable public services in water, electricity, transport, and sanitation. None of this is glamorous. All of it is essential.

Altogether, there is much to play for in 2026. The government can cement its status as a competent steward of the economy by using the year to deepen structural reforms and deliver visible improvements in citizens' daily lives. Those things that matter: better transport, reliable water, stable electricity, available food at reasonable prices, and jobs for the young, are achievable with disciplined execution.

We see 2026 as the year Ghanaians get a genuine sense of how capable this administration is. The rest of Africa is on an upward growth trajectory; Ghana cannot afford to fall behind. The government has inherited both a stabilised economy and the expectations that stability has created. Meeting those expectations requires moving from stabilisation to transformation.

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