

Burmese market stall with lady selling vegetables

GOOGLE TRADER

MATCHES BUYERS AND SELLERS IN GHANA.

By Google

Project URL: google.com.gh/local/trader

Organisation URL: google.com

Organisation Twitter: [@google](https://twitter.com/google)

- Economic Empowerment
- Internet
- Mobile
- Social Software

Perhaps you want to rent some office space in the capital, buy a new house in a high-end suburb, find a job as a computer programmer or just sell some avocados from your plot as a subsistence farmer. Google Trader is a low-cost, online platform created in Ghana for people to contact one another to buy and sell. Thousands of items are listed for sale. One of the main aims was to help young unemployed people start their own small-scale businesses.

Google Trader makes a particular difference for poor, rural Ghanaians. Using a text-based system it matches buyers and sellers of agricultural produce and commodities. Farmers get access to a wider market, buyers to a more diverse set of suppliers. Farmers post an SMS message saying what they have to sell, which is made available to potential buyers in a 30km radius for seven days. In its first five weeks the service got more than one million queries.

Google Trader has not been without its problems, attracting its fair share of fraudsters, including one car dealer posing as a man of the cloth. However, the service's rapid uptake suggests it has met a real need, connecting a wider set of buyers and sellers in localities using little more than a simple website and SMS.

Image 'Myanmar / Burma Market' courtesy of Eustaquio Santimano

Last updated: 09th of May, 2014