

**Distr.  
RESTRICTED**

**E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/2003/WP.4  
5 May 2003**

**ENGLISH ONLY**

**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Sub-Commission on Promotion  
and Protection of Human Rights  
Working Group on Minorities  
Ninth session  
12-16 May 2003**

**MINORITIES IN GHANA**

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\* The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Working Group or the United Nations .

GE.03-14145

## INTRODUCTION

Ghana is bounded on the West by Cote D'Ivoire, on the North by Burkina Faso, on the East by Togo and on the South by the Atlantic Ocean. It changed its colonial name, The Gold Coast, to Ghana on the attainment of independence in 1957.

## ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF GHANA

Ghana's population, which is currently estimated at about 19 million, is a vast mosaic of big and small ethnic groups. The major ones are the Akan, Mole Dagbani, Ewe, Ga-Dangme, Guan, and Gurme.<sup>1</sup>

According to the 2000 census data, the prominent group is the Akan, 8, 562, 748 (49.1%), followed by the Mole Dagbani, 2, 883, 931 (16.5%), the Ewe, 2, 212, 113 (12.7%), and the Ga-Dangme, 1, 387, 217 (8.0%), the Guan 758, 779 (4.4%), the Gurma, 678, 681 (3.9%), the Grusi 490, 379 (2.8%), Mande-Busanga, 193, 443 (1.1%), and others, 269,302 (1.5%).<sup>2</sup> The current population of 18, 912, 079, is an increase of 53.8% over the 1984 population of 12, 269, 081.<sup>3</sup>

In the 2000 Census data,<sup>4</sup> the largest ethnic group, the Akan, consists of the following:

		%
Akan	-	49.1
Agona	-	1.4
Ahafo	-	1.1
Ahanta	-	1.5
Akwapim	-	2.9
Akwamu	-	0.6
Akyem	-	3.4
Aowim	-	0.6
Asante	-	14.8
Asen (Assin)	-	0.8
Boron (Brong) including Banda	-	-4.6
Chokosi	-	0.4
Denkyira	-	0.5

Evalue	-	0.1
Fanti	-	9.9
Kwahu	-	1.9
Nzema	-	1.2
Sefwi	-	1.2
Wassa	-	1.4

Akan, not specified - 0.8

The Akans are found largely in Ashanti, Western, Central, Brong Ahafo, Greater Accra, and Eastern.

The Ga-Dangme is a small ethnic group in the south-eastern parts of Ghana, also consists of:

Dangme	-	4.3
Ga	-	3.4

Ga-Dangme, not specified - 0.3

The Ewes also constitute (12.7%) of the population.

Guan (4.4) consist of

Akpafu, Lolobi, Likpe	-	0.4
Avatime, Nyingbo, Tafi	-	0.2
Awutu, Efutu, Senya	-	0.6
Cherepong, Larteh, Anum	-	0.9
Gonja	-	1.2
Nkonya	-	0.1
Yefi, Nchumuru, Krachi	-	0.6
Guan, not specified	-	0.2

Furthermore, the Gurma (3.9) is made up of Bimoba 0.6, Kokomba (2.7), Kyamba (Tchamba), Baasari 0.3, Pilapila 0.0, salfalba (sabulaba) 0.0, Gurma, not specified 0.2, found largely in Northern and Volta regions.

The second largest ethnic the Mole-Dagbon (16.5) largely in the Northern consists of

Builsa (Kagyaga or Kanja)	-	0.7
Dagarte (Dagaba)	-	3.7
Dagomba	-	4.3
Kusasi	-	2.2
Mamprusi	-	1.1
Namnam (Nabdom)	-	2.4
Nankansi and Gurense	-	0.5
Walba (Wala)	-	1.0
Nanumba	-	0.5
Mole – Dagbon, Not specified	-	0.1

The Grusi who constitute (2.8) also consists of small groups such as

Kasena (Paga)	-	0.7
Mo	-	0.3
Sisala	-	0.9
Vagala	-	0.2
Other Grusi	-	0.2
Grusi, not specified	-	0.4

The Grusi are largely found in the Upper West.

The Mande-Busanga the smallest ethnic grouping, interestingly are found largely in the Ashanti Region.

They consist of:

Busanga	-	0.8
Wangara (Bambara, Mandigo)	-	0.3
Mande-Busanga, Not specified	-	0.1
And all other tribes	-	(1.5)

**Table One**  
**MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS IN GHANA**

	<b>AKAN</b>	<b>%AGE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>WESTERN</b>	<b>CENTRAL</b>	<b>GREATER ACCRA</b>	<b>VOLTA</b>	<b>EASTERN</b>
Akan	49.1	8562748	1388738	1208608	1065509	129384	1031498	
Ga-Adangbe	8	1387217	62743	33815	794881	30446	374271	
Ewe	12.7	2212113	104997	70211	481583	1045715	315555	
Guan	4.4	758779	25868	89737	77459	140799	143415	
Gurma	3.9	678681	11778	5615	21000	98489	12543	
Mole-Dagbon	16.5	2883931	135332	24326	136848	20664	61611	
Grusi	2.8	490379	23814	14277	54345	10149	20712	
Mande-Busanga	1.1	193443	14033	5754	20450	2667	5999	
Other Tribe	1.5	269302	6734	22241	27916	47429	15115	
	<b>ASHANTI</b>	<b>BRONG</b>	<b>NORTHERN</b>	<b>UPPER EAST</b>	<b>UPPER WEST</b>			
Akan	2458088	1069744	174469	19186	17524			
Ga	43226	33213	8859	2823	2940			
Ewe	99658	57723	33288	2094	1287			
Guan	53878	66010	150605	6219	4789			
Gurma	47947	74133	379173	26830	1173			
Mole	282420	263163	909510	634646	415411			
Grusi	74568	70906	48539	72270	100797			
Mande	56460	25452	8467	52788	1373			
	38617	45268	27790	34681	3511			

Source: Ghana Statistical Services, 2002

A critical review of the table shows that, among the Akan, the Asante, (14.8%) and Fante, (9.9%), stand out in size, in the case of other groups, no clear numerically dominant groupings emerge at the national level. It is worthy of note that, the national picture changes depending on the base region of the ethnic groups. For instance, the Sissala make up 86.9% of the Grusi in Upper West, while the Kasena constitute 77.1% of the

Grusi and the Busanga (94.6%) of the Mande-Busanga in Upper East. Similarly, the Kokomba in Volta (91.2%), Northern (80.6%) and Brong Ahafo (70.2%) clearly stand out among the Gurme. Furthermore, the census data shows that while Greater Accra (mainly Accra, Tema and Ashiaman), Ashanti (mainly Kumasi and Obuasi) and Western (Bibiani, Tarkwa, Prestea) have tended to be net receivers of migrants, Central, Volta, Upper East and Upper West are areas of net out-migration.<sup>6</sup>

It is significant to note that, the classification of ethnic groups in Ghana, as used for the Census, is that officially provided by the Bureau of Ghana Languages and which has been in use since the 1960 Census. The classifications as presented above are only generic descriptions to cover a broader spectrum of ethnic grouping. It is also based on self-identification<sup>7</sup>.

In Ghana, there is a rough coincidence of ethnicity and administrative regions, with each region also serving as home to a sizable number of “strangers” and others who might not have migrated from their “home” regions. The Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Central regions are generally peopled by Akans and the Mole-Dagbani and Gurma are in the Northern, Upper West, and Upper East regions, while the Volta region is home to mainly the Ewe.<sup>8</sup>

As regards religious affiliation, a critical observation of the 2000 Census reveals that, Christianity, Islam, and Traditional religion stand out. Nationally, Christianity is dominant, with over two-thirds (68.8%) of the population claiming affiliation with the Christian faith, followed by Islam, with 15.9% and Traditional Religion, with 8.5% adherents. A significant proportion on (6.1%) report affiliation with no religion.<sup>9</sup>

Significantly, the proportion of females professing the Christian faith (70.5%) is larger than for males (67.1%), indeed, both numbers and proportions for all the Christian denominations are larger for females than for males. On the other hand the proportions and numbers of males profession Islam or no religion are larger than those of females. Furthermore, the regional distribution shows that Islam is the dominant religion (56.1%) in the Northern Region. where over a third (34.0%) of adherents of Islam are recorded in the region. Traditional religion also dominates in Upper East (46.4%), where 26.6% of adherents are recorded (22.2% of adherents of tradition religion are also in Volta).<sup>10</sup>

A review of the ethnic map in Ghana shows that despite the country’s rich ethnic diversity, easy geographical and social mobility have scattered people from the various ethnic groups throughout the country without destroying or weakening their ethnic bonds. Moreover, the ethnic map of Ghana is almost coterminous with its religious map. Christians who constitute about 68.8% of the population are found largely in the southern sections while the Muslims who constitute 15.9% live mainly in the Northern section and Animists are evenly distributed among the various ethnic groups throughout the country. The spatial distribution of the two major foreign religions, Islam and Christianity, almost coincides with the division of the country into the Northern half that is poor and disadvantaged, and the southern half which is wealthy and more developed.

It is instructive to note that, the release of the final report of the 2002 Population and Housing Census was met with a storm of protest from an important section of Ghanaian society: Muslims and adherents of traditional African religion.<sup>11</sup> Their spokespersons vehemently challenged the accuracy of the census figures. They contended that the Statistical Services Authority had substantially undercounted the population of Ghana and that the total figure should stand at about 21.4million instead of the official figure of 18.8million. They threatened the Ghana Statistical Service with a lawsuit if it failed to heed the ultimatum to withdraw the "bogus" census report.<sup>12</sup> The spokespersons for the Muslim community (notably the Coalition of Muslim organizations in Ghana) took umbrage at the distribution of religion in the census report describing as unacceptable the report that the percentage of Muslim in the Ghanaian population was 15.6%, African traditional religion was 8.5% ,and Christians was 68.8%.<sup>13</sup> However, the arguments presented by the Muslim leaders were not particularly cogent. Some of the sources from where the Muslims critics of the report obtained the information on which their huge contentions were based are highly questionable. For example they cited American Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A) data reproduced in the 1995 Universal Almanac, which puts the population of Muslims in Ghana at 30%, Christians at 24% and traditional religion at 38%. But they failed to provide an outline or notations on the methodology used by the C.I.A to compile its data. Moreover the figure of 45% as a percentage of the population of Muslims in Ghana cited approving, as a basis for challenging the official 2002 census data was highly problematic. This figure is based on information provided by Muslim authorities to the National Commission on Culture and not from the Ghana Statistical Service in 1999.<sup>14</sup>

## **THE POLITICS OF ECONOMIC REFORMS IN GHANA**

In Ghana, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) led by Rawlings embarked on an economic recovery program along World Bank, IMF lines in 1993. The focus of this program, at least initially, was on economic stabilization, rationalization, and the rehabilitation of infrastructure. However, with the strong emphasis on economic principles and goals (such as quick return on investment and comparative advantage), initial SAP investment went into the rehabilitation of Ghana's export sector and the supporting infrastructure base of roads, railways, and harbors. Thus the cocoa, timber and mineral producing areas/regions of Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, and western regions, the port cities of Tema and Takoradi, Accra (the national capital and home of most of the country's manufacturing establishments), and Kumasi (the Ashanti capital) have been showered with attention in structural adjustment program (SAP) reconstruction exercise. By contrast, the historically disadvantaged and extant economically depressed areas; especially the Northern regions (Northern, Upper West, and Upper East regions) appear to have suffered benign neglect during most of the period.<sup>15</sup>

SAP induced austerities affected all segment of the Ghanaian population and socio-economic groups, but partial evidence suggests that the urban low-wage earners and the unemployed, as well as the poor in the historically disadvantaged and the extant economically depressed areas/regions, were among the most negatively affected groups.

The urban working class suffered job losses under the labor retrenchment exercise in which at least 36000 persons were laid off from the lower ranks of the Ghana Education and Civil Service between 1987 and 1990. In addition, their real income stagnated as government imposed restraints on wages and allowed the cost of living to skyrocket through massive currency devaluations price control, and the withdrawal of subsidies on health, education, and portable water. Some analysts suggested that they could see a link between the outbreak of the guinea worm epidemic in Northern Ghana in the mid-1980s and the introduction of “user fees” on portable water under SAP within the same period. Other studies documented a drop-off in hospital attendance and enrolment in primary and middle schools in some of Ghana’s historically disadvantaged (Northern) and economically depressed (Central and Volta) regions.<sup>16</sup>

As in many other African countries, Ghana’s SAP proved widespread negative public reactions. While ethno-regional reactions to SAP were muted and largely indirect, class reactions were sharp and direct. The strongest opposition came from working-class element and labor unions—notably, the industrial and commercial Workers’ union (ICWU), students, and radical intellectuals. Workers and their unions protested wage restraints, removal of subsidies, adoption of cost recovery measures, the threatened cancellation of leave allowances, and labor retrenchment. Student agitations arose over services, while the radical intellectuals charged that the PNDC had betrayed its anti-imperialist and populist ideology by consorting with World Bank/IMF neo-orthodoxy.<sup>17</sup> The adjusting regime in Ghana appeared to recognize the uneven impact of the programs across social and ethno-regional groups and attempted to compensate losers directly and indirectly. The most direct attempt came under the Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment (PAMSCAD). Under the program an amount of 84 million dollars was earmarked for spending on community-initiated projects in health, education, housing, and sanitation; and impoverished farmers in the Northern and Upper regions and those who lost their jobs in the labor retrenchment exercise were targeted for assistance. Additionally, the infrastructure rehabilitation activities undertaken by the Public Investment Program (PIP) from 1986 to 1988 had been designed to give special attention to job creation. Furthermore, the extension of the national electricity grid through Brong-Ahafo to the Northern regions of Ghana, as well as the general spillover from SAP such as improvements in roads, railways, telecommunications, and supplies, could be regarded as indirect compensations to SAP losers.<sup>18</sup> However it is important to note that these limited governmental concessions to social class and ethno-regional anti-SAP pressures constituted a deviation from SAP.<sup>19</sup>

About twenty years into SAP poverty is still pervasive in Ghana. The country has experienced growing and deepening poverty—evidence of intensification of vulnerability and exclusion among some groups in some areas, especially in the north of the country. Moreover population growth during the last decade far outstripped the rate of decrease in poverty levels.<sup>20</sup>

## **GEOGRAPHICAL DIMENSION OF POVERTY IN GHANA**

Geographically, the picture of poverty in Ghana is even more gloomy: Five out of ten regions in Ghana had more than 40% of their population living in poverty in 1999<sup>21</sup>. The worst affected were three Northern savannah regions. Nine out of ten people in Upper East are poor, eight out of ten in Upper West and seven out of ten in the Northern Region were considered poor in 1999.<sup>22</sup> Upper East (88 percent), Upper West (84 percent), and the Northern Region (69 percent) were considered poor.<sup>23</sup> In contrast, statistics available also indicate that the Greater Accra Region has the lowest incidence of poverty of 5% with the people earning 30% a day. Ashanti Region has a poverty level of 27.7% while Eastern Region has 44%. Central, Western and Brong Ahafo Regions have poverty levels of 48%, 27.3% and 35.8% respectively.<sup>24</sup>

Besides its geographical pattern, it is important to relate poverty and trends in poverty to the economic activities. Paradoxically, food crop farmers in the country have the highest incidence of poverty; constituting 59 percent of the poor in Ghana.<sup>25</sup> This has been due to several factors including access to markets, the high cost of inputs and low development of economic infrastructure.

On the other hand, export farmers and wage employees in private employment enjoyed the greatest gains in their standard of living.<sup>26</sup> It is important to note that the indicators of poverty (both monetary and non-monetary) remind us of the persistent inequality in Ghanaian society.

## **THE POLITICS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN GHANA**

It is also instructive to note that, since the early 1990s the Ghanaian economy has been characterized by high rates of inflation, high interest rates, continual depreciation of the cedi, dwindling foreign reserves, excessive public debt overhang and stagnant economic growth.<sup>27</sup>

It is against this background that the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government on taking over the reins of government on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2001, opted for the HIPC initiative. Recently, the World Bank has endorsed the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP). This document in principle forms the basis of development cooperation between Ghana and the development partners, and defines the accepted priorities within this cooperation. The GPRSP document is unique in that it seeks to ensure that all stakeholders participate in the drafting of the strategies for poverty reduction. Towards this end, the NPP government has been engaging in series of meeting with Ghanaians both at home and abroad, to collate views in order to chart a new development vision for the country, with poverty reduction high on the agenda. As part of efforts by the government to broaden and deepen consultation with Ghanaians of all walks of life who have a stake in the development and progress, meetings were held throughout the ten regions of Ghana, bringing together political parties (in the opposition), traditional rulers, trade unions, religious bodies, students, the private sector and the media among others. Similarly, the

government has also held consensus-building meetings with Ghanaians resident in Berlin, London, Washington to elicit their views.<sup>28</sup>

The GPRSP document was preceded by two other national development strategies: Ghana Vision 2020: The First Step (1996-2000), a development strategy to lead the country into middle income status, drawn up by the previous National Democratic Congress (NDC) government, and the interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: 2000-2002 (I-PRSP), produced by the NPP government soon after coming to power, setting out short term measures to reduce poverty.<sup>29</sup>

The implementation of these two strategies, however, met considerable challenges due in part to weak national ownership, unrealistic implementation strategies and inadequate financing. For instance, over the first five years of vision 2020 economic growth did not reach five percent.

The main goal of the GPRS is to ensure “sustainable, equitable growth, accelerated poverty reduction and the protection of the vulnerable and excluded within a decentralized democratic government”<sup>30</sup>.

First, the objectives of the strategy among others include increasing production and promoting sustainable livelihoods, providing direct support for human development,. Second, the provision of basic services, Thirdly, the provision special programs in support of the vulnerable and excluded in society.

The three strategic objectives of the GPRS are aimed at directly improving the well being of the poor. Second, the programs for realizing each of these objectives have direct effect on the poor.

For instance, under the theme “*Special Programs for the Vulnerable and the Excluded*” pro-poor programs include the following:

- Integrating street children into mainstream of society
- Reintegrating Trokosi victims into mainstream of society
- Ensuring that all regions have adequately equipped, rapid response unit for disaster management
- Ensuring social justice, equity and respect for human rights with special reference to the protection of the rights of women and children
- Preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Improving the quality of life of the physically handicapped.<sup>31</sup>

Again, under the theme “*Direct Support for Human Development and the provision of Basic Services*” the pro-poor policies include:

- Ensuring equity in gross primary school enrollment across regions and gender
- Ensuring equity in share of school infrastructure across regions

- Reduction in infant and maternal mortality rates with greater emphasis on those in the least deprived regions
- Percentage of recurrent expenditure on health in the three Northern Regions and Central region to be increased by 7 percentage points to 40% of total expenditure by 2004.
- Increase in the ratio of population per doctor in Northern regions.<sup>32</sup>

Finally, under the theme “*Increased Production and Gainful Employment*” the following pro-poor programs have been identified:

- Proportion of farmers with access to dug-out water facilities in Northern Ghana is expected to increase by 15% by 2004
- Proportion of farmers with access to feeder roads is to increase to 40% by 2004
- Total area of land under irrigation is expected to increase by three-fold by 2004.<sup>33</sup>

It is obvious from these programs that the GPRS in the spirit of its goal is intended to bridge both the location and gender disparity in access to basic services, provision of infrastructure for sustainable livelihood and provision of a safety net for the poor and destitute in society.

To ensure maximum effect and without spreading resources thinly, the programs in the five thematic areas of the GPRS were prioritized. The priority programs were to ensure that the problem of poverty is confronted in a holistic and equitable manner.

Indeed, page one of the volume two of GPRS specifically states, “*Implementation of the medium term priority programs and projects will reflect the geographic location priorities identified in the policy framework*”. The medium term priority programs include the following:

- Modernized agriculture based on rural development
- Promoting the development of agro-processing
- Increase environmental protection through re-afforestation
- Rehabilitating to major highways including Accra-Yamoransa, Accra-Kumasi, Accra-Aflao.
- Rehabilitate or construct one good road linking rural with urban units in all regions
- Re-gravelling and upgrading feeder roads
- Improve overall energy supply to boost industrial production and targeted supply to the poor
- Reducing and restructuring the domestic debt
- Developing the national ID system
- Providing one model Senior Secondary School (SSS) in every district
- Expand pre-school access to all basic schools
- Increase girls’ enrolment
- Providing model health center in every district of the country.

- Phasing out cash and carry system
- Increase access to drinking water in rural areas
- Promote women's access to credit
- Increase resources for the protection of the rights of women
- Improve the quality of life of the physically handicapped
- Equip and train the Police
- Strengthen the campaign against corruption
- Strengthen the capacity of the Attorney General's office
- Strengthen the capacity of the District Assemblies
- Increase awareness and provide support for people living with HIV/AIDS.<sup>34</sup>

The medium term priority programs focus on improving agricultural methods in the rural areas by providing them with tractors and other mechanized machinery, (Ghana Population is predominantly rural-rural) Increasingly, the level of afforestation to stem the tide of the Sahelian droughts and to ensure that our river beds are protected from drying out, that children in poor communities have access to SSS that those in the urban centers attend; people in the rural communities have access to health facilities comparable to those in urban centers; people have access to good drinking water in rural areas, and increase support for people languishing as a result of the AIDS pandemic . It is in this regard, that the government set up the Ghana AIDS Commission.

For instance, 26.5% of the total expenditure for the medium term priority programs is earmarked for social programs such as education, health care, good drinking water and sanitation; 22% is earmarked for road infrastructure of upgrading major highways, trunk roads and feeder roads; 18.7% is earmarked for energy generation to boost industrial production to increase employment and also increase targeted access to the poor; 4.58% earmarked for increased awareness and provide support for people living with HIV/AIDS and about 4 percent for promoting farm modernization and re-afforestation of degraded forests, abandoned mining areas and major river banks<sup>35</sup>

From the above discussions, it is apparent that the goal of the GPRSP is to achieve equitable economic growth and accelerated poverty reduction. The strategy also focuses on laying a solid foundation for reducing regional disparities in poverty and enhancing access to social services. In addressing the disparity in regional poverty levels, the paper also seeks to reduce poverty in Northern Region from 69% in 2000 to 60% in 2002, 88% in Upper East in 2000 to 75% in 2004. Government also intends to reduce poverty in Upper West region from 84% in 2000 to 70% in 2004. Government intends to reduce poverty from 39% in 2000 to 32% in 2004, reduce extreme poverty from 27% to 21%.<sup>36</sup>

On August 29, 2002, the Minister for Finance Yaw Osafo-Mafo announced that an amount of 117 billion cedis is to be distributed among the district assemblies. Accra, Kumasi, and Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan areas got 3.5, 2.5 and 2.0 billion cedis respectively, while Tema, New Juaben (Koforidua), Tamale and Cape Coast Municipalities had 1.5 billion cedis each. Each of the one hundred and ten district assemblies was also to get an amount of one billion cedis.<sup>37</sup>

Under the scheme, each Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executive is to submit a prioritized list of proposed projects of the first tranche of 50% of approved allocation. The minister said the balance of 50% would be released upon satisfactory progress on the implementation of first tranche of projects.

“Projects eligible for funding are infrastructure for basic education, health facilities, community water and sanitation.”<sup>38</sup>

According to the minister of finance “Metropolitan, Municipal and DCE’s are to submit identified projects through their respective Regional Ministers. The regional ministers are also to liaise with the minister for Local Government and Rural Development.

However, the modality for the disbursement of the HIPC funds as announced by the Minister of finance did not go down well with sections of the Ghanaian population. For instance, the Center for Policy Analysis (CEPA) has criticised the modality for distributing the HIPC funds equally among district assemblies because poverty levels differ from region to region, and district to district. CEPA explained that areas where poverty is more endemic should have received more funds than areas where poverty is not so widespread.<sup>39</sup> The Northern Ghana Network for Development, an umbrella association of civil society organizations working in the Northern regions, have also expressed reservation at the mode of distribution of the HIPC funds.<sup>40</sup> But it is also true that there are pockets of poverty in the other regions as well as high population density.

## **CURRENT FRAMEWORK AND PRACTICES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The 1992 Constitution provides for a multi-party liberal political order under-pinned by the separation of executive, legislature and judicial powers. The constitution contains notable proclamations and extensive enforceable provisions on good governance and participation. It also contains certain innovations such as to explicit recognition of “Economic Rights”, “Educational Rights”, Cultural Rights and Practices”, “Women’s Right”, Children’s Right”, “Rights of the Disabled” and the “Rights of the Sick”, alongside the traditional constitutional concern with civil, political and private property rights.<sup>41</sup>

## **CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR DECENTRALIZATION IN GHANA**

All the post-colonial regimes have grappled with the issue of local government and decentralization. In 1987, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) launched its proposal for local government reform, a process that culminated in 1988, in the District Assemblies (Das) Law (PNDC Law 207). The District Assembly (DA) structure, functions and visions were incorporated in the 1992 Republican Constitution.<sup>42</sup>

As far as political representation is concerned, progress has been made in recent years to empower poor people through such measures as the implementation of decentralization policies to promote popular participation at grassroots level in political, development and, decision-making.

To meet these challenges, the Ghana constitution of 1992 prescribed, “*a system of local government and administration which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralized*”<sup>43</sup>.

The main features of the system of decentralization are the following:

- Law passed by Parliament that will ensure that all functions, powers responsibilities and resources are at all times transferred from the Central Government to local government units in a coordinated manner;
- Parliament shall by law provide for taking such measures as are necessary to enhance the capacity of local government authorities to plan, initiate, coordinate, manage and execute policies in respect of all matters affecting the people within their area, with a view to ultimately achieving localization of those activities;
- There shall be established for each local government unit a sound financial base with adequate and reliable source of revenue.
- As far as practicable, persons in the service of local government shall be subject to the effective control of local authorities.
- To achieve accountability at the local government level, people in the respective areas should be afforded the opportunity to participate in their government.<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, in achieving an *effective and accountable local government administration*, the constitution clearly identifies the following areas for necessary action.

- The development and availability of capacity at the local government level.
- The availability of resources, including a sound financial base, to the local administrations to undertake the necessary economic development initiatives.
- The necessity to place the destiny of persons living in the local authorities in their own hands, and thereby place accountability for the development of those areas squarely at their door steps.
- The urgent need for central government authorities to divest themselves of absolute control over “all functions, powers, responsibilities and resources” that appropriately belong to the local authorities.<sup>45</sup> These provisions in the constitution recognized that the interest of the local people would best be served by themselves, given the resources.

A particular advantage of the system of local government is that the process of elections by which Assembly Members are chosen is at the same time a process of the delineation of problems and interests, and a contribution to the process of general political organization in the community. In theory the strength of the DAs lies in the fact that, the majority of the membership is elected by the local communities, which they serve, and their membership can be terminated only by that electorate. Thus, the assemblies derive their legitimacy from the communities. In addition, to the extent that it is only the electorate that can recall a member with whom they are displeased, the assembly is

protected from the center. All these are expected to combine to create for the assemblies a local political milieu that does not directly depend on central government.<sup>46</sup>

However, the translation of this apparatus into autonomy of local decision-making, accountability, and popular local politics is constrained in a number of other regards by the design and actual operation of the assemblies.

First, the power of the members elected by the community is counterbalanced by the sizable proportion – 30% appointed by the President, whose consent alone they can be removed. Their primary allegiance is to the central government. Underpinning this bias is the power of the centrally appointed District Chief Executive (DCE) and the relationship of the DA to the next structure of sub-national government, the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC). An un-elected body, the RCC is composed of the Regional Minister, the Presiding member and the DCE of each district assembly in the region, the regional head of the ministries in the regions and two chiefs appointed by the regional house of chiefs. One of the RCC's roles is to monitor, coordinate and evaluate the performance of DAs in the region.

Furthermore, the prohibition of party politics at the district level has provoked considerable debate since the restoration of multi-party political activity. With the current partnership in national politics, the NPP government has proposed to introduce party politics at the district level by 2004.

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

A notable change that has occurred since the coming into force of the 1992 Constitution has been the expansion and liberalization of the right to free expression. This right had been effectively stifled during the PNDC years. The present liberalization of the scope of free expression has been buttressed by the repeal of many of the restrictive laws that run counter to the letter and spirit of the constitution. A classic example is the repeal of the Criminal Libel Law. The mass media landscape provides one of the most eloquent testimonies to the gains in free expression since 1992. Chapter 12 of the Constitution spells out the freedom, independence and responsibility of the mass media.<sup>47</sup> Freed by the Constitution from the requirement for licenses, there has been a proliferation of privately owned newspapers since 1992 along side to state-owned ones. The resurgence of privately owned newspapers has been accompanied by the opening up of the electronic media to private ownership, though the latter requires licenses to operate. Recently, the Ga-Dangme council launched a newspaper, titled, "Manye Aba" to serve as the authoritative mouthpiece of the council.<sup>48</sup>

The new freedom has encouraged people to express themselves in local languages. New FM radio stations ran various programmes in local languages and during phone-in programmes people call to express themselves freely in their local languages. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) has GBC- Ga language programmes on "Obonu-FM" station. Nevertheless "Obonu-FM" has been a source of controversy since it started transmission in August 2001. It is alleged that certain elements use the station to "arouse

Ga-Dangbe passion”<sup>49</sup> To a large extent the relatively deregulated environment engendered by the 1992 constitution is enabling the media to run various programmes in the local languages, thus making it possible for people including minority groups to contribute to lively, often keen and at times frank discussion of controversial national issues.

Freedom of expression and political participation are tightly intertwined. The 1992 Constitution contains extensive provisions on the citizens right to political participation in variety of ways apart from the periodic elections of the President, Members of Parliament and of the District Assemblies (DAs.).The right to form, join and advance the objectives of political parties is provided for, with a prohibition of parties based on religious and ethnic sectarianism. The internal organization of parties are to conform to democratic principles.<sup>50</sup> However, the elaborate membership, geographical spread and financing requirements, which must be met before the National Electoral Commission (NEC) registers a party, have been criticized for being too restrictive.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

These issues of the quality, security and dignity to work, have long been a subject of international conventions and declarations and national laws. The convention of the International Labor Organization (ILO), for example, lay down international standards on such subjects as the rights of workers to organize, to bargain collectively and to work in a secure, health and protected environment; and prohibit the use of forced labor and child labor. Ghana is signatory to all the core conventions on International labor standards.<sup>51</sup> The 1992 Constitution of Ghana, for its part, upholds the “right to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions”, with “the assurance of rest and leisure”. (Article 24(1).<sup>52</sup> Article 36 of the Constitution enjoins to state to take necessary action to ensure that the national economy is managed in such a manner as to, among other things, provide adequate means of livelihood and sustainable employment to the needy.<sup>53</sup>

The 1992 constitution also has provisions that further enhance workers’ rights. The constitution affirms the right of workers to join local, national and even international labor unions of their own choice. They have the right to assemble, to march, and to undertake activities in protest against or in support of public policies.<sup>54</sup> The significance of employment for the reduction of poverty and vulnerability, and the enhancement of the dignity of the individual are further underscored in Ghana Vision 2020 and the (GPRSP).

In practice, however, the past two decades have witnessed growing unemployment, the persistence, and in some cases, the deepening of poverty, and a general decline in the quality of employment and labor groups. For instance, In Ghana, the incidence of child labor is high; particularly in the Northern regions where 20% of boys and 16% of girls in the age range of 7-14 are economically active reflect the high incidence of property in this part of the country.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the absence of any discriminatory laws and continued affirmation by successive governments of a commitment to the equality of men and women, the level and nature of women's political participation sharply highlights the extent of gender inequality in Ghana. A cursory observation of the political scene shows that women are largely absent from the highest level of the state and the power structures of society. For instance, at the end of the recent local government elections total of 341 women were elected to membership of district assemblies across the country.<sup>56</sup> On the surface, the yield appears meagre. Considering there were a total of 13,590 candidates who contested the elections, the 965 female contenders represented a mere 7.1 percent, and the 341 candidates who eventually won seats make up only 7.4 percent of the 4,582 newly elected members of the country's district and metropolitan assemblies.<sup>57</sup> There is a slight chance that these figures may improve after elections in the outstanding six districts in the Northern Region have been held (once the state of emergency imposed in the Dagbon area has been lifted). Still, analysts and gender advocates point out that the new landscape is a vast improvement over the outcomes of the two previous district assembly elections.

In terms of regional distribution, Ashanti Region fielded the most women candidates (214) and, correspondingly, ended up with the largest number of elected assemblywomen (69). Eastern Region produced 58 elected assemblywomen, Volta Region 48, Central Region 39, Brong Ahafo Region 37, Western Region 29, and 26 for Greater Accra Region. In the Upper West Region, almost half of the women who contested (16 out of 35) got elected. The Upper East Region, where (like the Upper West) women are especially disadvantaged socially and economically, registered an equally impressive success rate, with 15 out of the 42 women candidates being elected. In the Northern Region, however, only four out of the 47 female candidates who ran were Ghanaian women contest in national or local elections: socialized "division of labor" between the sexes, culturally-rooted inhibitions, the burden of household responsibilities, lack of education and awareness of rights, lack of funds, lack of support and encouragement from significant others, and the unflattering perception of politics as a "rough and dirty game."<sup>58</sup>

From the above discussions, it is clear that, the status of women regarding educational attainments, participations rates, occupational structure, private and public laws, technological advancement, and above-all socio-cultural attitudes are all weighed against women. Women are clearly under-represented in Senior Public and Private positions in the District and National Legislature, the Judiciary etc, yet they constitute the majority of the population. In the 1996 elections, there were more women registered in at least 5 of the regions in Ghana. In all about 49% of those registered were females, this was not reflected in their political representation in Parliament.

While the strategy being adopted by government, non-governmental organizations and other advocacy groups is gender sensitive, there is an urgent need for a new policy in which special preferences to facilitate access to education employment, political participation are major component in order to redress the historical and cultural imbalances to push the whole society forward.

## **RULE OF LAW**

The law of Ghana affirms the equality of all before the law. The system of justice, both criminal and civil, is founded on well-defined laws and rules of procedure. At present, the public perception is that the rule of law is seriously flawed and prone to arbitrary behavior on the part of state and its institutions. The popular experience and image of the police service is that of an unaccountable institution whose personnel are corrupt and act with impunity. This perception has affected public trust and confidence in a key state institution.

In addition, the judicial process is also perceived as being largely inaccessible and expensive, frustratingly slow and possibly corrupt, favoring the rich and powerful. Whatever the veracity of these perceptions, the present situation is that the poor and illiterate have been particularly disadvantaged within this system.<sup>59</sup> The Parliamentary Select Committee on the Judiciary in collaboration with the Ghana's Center for Democratic Development (CDD-GH) is conducting Public Hearing in all the regions on alleged corruption in the judiciary.<sup>60</sup>

## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

Among the factors of inequality of opportunities in Ghana the following are particularly noteworthy: geography: (north-South and urban-rural), gender, disability and class. Inequality of opportunities was one of the motivating grievances of Ghana's anti-colonial movement and successive Ghanaian governments and key policy documents, such as the 1992 Constitution, have declared their commitment to equal opportunities for all Ghanaians. Inequality of opportunities is the result of the combined effect of objective factors like – differential resource endowment, history and public policy, as well as subjective factors such as attitudes and prejudices.<sup>61</sup> The data on health, education employment and poverty offer clear evidence of these dimensions of inequality.

Successive governments have put forward various plans and policies to level the field of opportunities. To illustrate, the 1961 Education Act which provided for free-compulsory primary education, and the investment that went with it, was an important step in reducing the gap between the social classes, the north and the south of the country and town and country, in terms of access to education and the opportunities which education opens up<sup>62</sup>. The 1992 constitution also provides for Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (fCUBE)<sup>63</sup>, a policy position repeated in the Ghana-vision 2020 and the GPRS. Nevertheless, the cost-sharing measures introduced under the 1987 Education Reform appears to have undermined the quest for an improvement in human development conditions in some of the more seriously deprived areas. This is particularly so in the Northern savannah, where the rise in the share of costs borne by households has seriously eroded the capacity of subsistence croppers and pastoralists to access quality education for their children, even where schools are available.<sup>64</sup>

## **ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS OF GOVERNMENT**

The 1992 Constitution attaches great importance to accountability, transparency and openness of government. Accordingly, there are several constitutional clauses that affirm and provide for freedom, justice, probity and accountability. The primary constitutional instrument for ensuring accountable government is, the right of the citizenry to elect the government. In addition, there are constitutional yardsticks for judging institutions and office holder as well as mechanisms – notably the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), which is expected safeguard human and political rights. CHRAJ is empowered by the 1992 constitution to receive complaints from the public and private individuals over alleged infringements of civil/human rights by public officials.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, the powers vested in the CHRAJ have considerably widened and deepened the scope for citizens to ensure probity and accountability from public officers.

## **THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM OF GHANA**

Under the 1992 Constitution, the Political Parties law (PNDC Law 281), 1992, the Representation of the People Law (PNDC Law 284), 1992 and the Representation of the People (Parliamentary Constituencies) Instrument (LI 1538), 1992, Ghana's electoral system has the following basic features:

- i. Universal adult suffrage for citizens who are 18 years and above (it used to be 21 years up to the advent of the Second Republic, 1969 – 1972);
- ii. Secret ballot;
- iii. Official registration of voters;
- iv. Non-compulsory registration or voting;
- v. Registration of political parties;
- vi. Presidential and parliamentary and local government elections on the basis of first-the-post;
- vii. Presidential election where the winner requires more than 50% of the valid votes cast;
- viii. A run-off presidential election within 21 days in case no winner emerges on the first ballot. In such an event, the run-off between the two candidates who obtained the highest votes. The one who get the higher votes becomes the president;
- ix. No minimum voter turn-out is required for presidential, parliamentary and other elections;
- x. Political parties are debarred from sponsoring candidates for elections to local government bodies. This is to ensure consensus building at the local level to promote development.
- xi. The establishment of a permanent electoral commission, which has statutory responsibility for setting election date. The fixing of an election date is, however, done within the framework of specific provisions. For the 1996 presidential and parliamentary elections, 7 December 1996 was chosen in fulfillment of two constitutional provisions relating to the election of a Member of Parliament (MP) and the president respectively. The requirement in the case of the MP is that

- election of MPs shall be held within 30 days before the expiration of the period of the current parliament, which in this case was 6 January. The provision relating to the presidential elections stipulates that where a president is in office, the election should not be earlier than a month before his term of office expires;
- xii. The president serves for two terms of four years (altogether 8 years) and is not eligible for re-election thereafter;
  - xiii. Presidential and parliamentary elections are held every four years (Ghana, 1992a; 1992b; 1992c; 1992d); and
  - xiv. 200 constituencies for purposes of election to the legislature, unlike in 1969 and 1979 elections under which 140 constituencies were competed for by candidates. The demarcation of the 200 constituencies was done by the Electoral Commission (EC) in 1992, using the population and land mass of each of the 10 regions and 110 districts as the basis<sup>66</sup>

These features, it must be noted, are meant to facilitate the expression of the will of the people of Ghana through periodic and genuine elections, conducted on the basis of equal suffrage and secret ballot. However, some critics, view the simple majority system of voting as a contributory factor for the under representation of women in Public Life. In recent times there have been calls for the modification of the electoral rules to facilitate women participation in the public sector.

## **MAJOR PROBLEMS IN CHANGES IN DEMOGRAPHIC BALANCE IN GHANA**

The issue of changes in the demographic balance between groups in Ghana is a major problem. A classic example is the Afram Plains district in the Eastern region. Traditionally, the land belongs to the Kwahus but it is also an important migrant destination for the people from the Volta, Brong Ahafo, Northern and Upper Regions. The district is a major breadbasket of the country, consequently, most of the people are engaged in farming.<sup>67</sup> However, the settler farmers who appear to be in the majority, dominate both the farming and fishing industry in the area. The change of demographic balance in favor of the settlers has resulted in frequent clashes between the settler farmers and their hosts, the Kwahus over settler rights versus landlords claim.

Also, the Krobo settler farmers in the Eastern region have over the years become powerful economically. In certain areas they dominate both demographically and economically Example is the Fanteakwa district, where there is large presence of Krobo settler population who have acquired large acres of land for farming. This has resulted in clashes between the settler farmers who dominate particular sectors of the local economy and their host, the Akyem over the right to use land.

The situation in the Eastern region is not different from what pertains in the other parts of the country. In the Western region, tensions have persisted between the Ashanti settler farmers and their hosts over settler rights versus landlord claims.

In the case of Bawku, the two ethnic groups, the Kusasi and the Mamprusi have feuded continuously over land rights and chieftaincy. The Mamprusi appears to dominate in political, social and economic terms. For example for well over two years the Bawku district assemble, largely dominated by the Kusasi failed to endorse the President's nominee for the position of District Chief Executive and the presiding elder both of whom were Mamprusis. The conflict has often been exploited by politicians. For instance, conflict broke out between the two ethnic groups in the Bawku Central constituency soon after the 2000 elections.<sup>68</sup>

Recently, on October 26, 2002, violent conflict erupted between the Newuris and Konkomba resident at Kutase Zongo in the Nkwanta district of the Volta region. Five people lost their lives and more than hundred Nawuris, majority of whom are women and children were displaced.<sup>69</sup> The immediate cause of the conflict was an argument over a hoe<sup>70</sup> but the remote cause is settler rights and landlord claims.

Also, in the Greater Accra region, Ghana's capital city has increasingly become cosmopolitan. In recent times the Greater Accra region has witnessed violent clashes between sections of the Ga sub-nationalists cum traditional religionists and vigilantes on the one hand, and some of the capital city's Christian groups particularly, the Charismatic churches over the observance of ban on "drumming" and "noise-making" a month-long (May 8 to June 8) imposed by the Ga traditional council as a prelude to the celebration of the Ga festival "Hommowo" in Accra. The Ga-Dangme Council has expressed concern about the manner their identity is increasingly being submerged, and the fact that their customs and culture has been disregarded or treated with contempt by "strangers". However the cultural expression of the Ga's could only be superficial, the underlying problem is their resentment to the economic and social domination by "foreigners". Since the 1960s, the government has taken over most of their lands for development purposes without adequate compensation. In addition to that the Ga's have lost most of their lands to "foreigners".

The changes in demographic balance between groups, especially, the settlement of majority in minority and vice-versa has led to tensions between groups over settler rights, versus landlord claims. These tensions often manifest itself in communal violence and warfare, land, religious, ethnic and chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. Some of the tensions are deeply rooted in history and tradition and attempts by successive governments to resolve them have proved futile.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

As a multiethnic/multicultural and multireligious country, the management of ethnic, regional and other conflicts as well as nation building has been very high on the agenda of postcolonial governments in Ghana. The birth of the fourth Republic has led to a relatively liberalized political and human rights atmosphere in Ghana. Consequently, the period since 1993 has witnessed significant positive developments in the area of good governance.

The main elements of these developments are that, the 1992 constitution contains notable proclamations and extensive enforceable provisions on good governance and participation, including periodic election of the President, Members of Parliament and of the District Assemblies, the expansion and liberalization of the right to free expression, the proliferation of mass media organizations, growing awareness about gender inequality, high profile focus on probity and accountability of public officers and the vesting of extensive powers in the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice(CHRAJ),the National Media Commission(NMC),and the strengthening of rule of law.

The constitution also contains innovations such as the explicit recognition of “*Economic Rights*”, “*Educational Rights*”, “*Cultural Rights and practices*”, “*Women’s Rights*”, “*Children’s Rights*”, “*Rights of the Disabled*” and the “*Rights of the Sick*” alongside the traditional constitutional concern with civil, political and private property rights.

Additionally, the Directive principle of State Policy contained in the 1992 constitution enjoins the state to achieve “reasonable regional and gender balance in recruitment and appointment to public office.”

However there are still important problem areas and contested issues. There is at least superficial evidence of a surge in ethno-regional and other social tensions in the new political era. Also, the competing political groups have found themselves unable to resist playing the “sectarian card”, and voting patterns, have followed at least mildly ethno-regional lines since 1992. Nevertheless, politicians have been sensitive to the ethno-regional issues and tried to balance the representation of the various societal groups in their cabinets and other key political and administrative positions. However, a more equitable distribution of nominal power and symbolic goods may help attenuate feeling of exclusion on the part of the other socio-cultural and political groupings and render fissiparous tendencies manageable.

Ghana, like the other African countries, continues to face the crucial challenge of how to combine sound and sustainable economic development with democratic governance and thereby build a solid basis for nation building. For, instance, Article 36, of the 1992 constitution enjoins the state to take the necessary action to ensure that the national economy is managed in such a manner as to, among other things, provide adequate means of livelihood and sustainable employment to the needy. The significance of employment for the reduction of poverty and vulnerability, and the enhancement of the dignity of the individual is further underscored in Ghana’s vision 2020 and the GPRS. Furthermore, the 1992 constitution enjoins the state to improve on the conditions of life in the rural areas and redress any imbalances in the development between rural and urban areas.

To realize this constitutional requirement, it is imperative that the state combines political liberalization with economic development. To maintain the impetus in poverty reduction that has been achieved over recent years it is essential that growth be accelerated, sustained and broad- based. It is evident that, poverty reduction in Ghana during recent years was due mainly to a strong economic growth. Without accelerated growth there

is little that can be done to reduce poverty. For example, if we consider the number of years it would take to reduce the poverty head count ratio in Ghana to 10 percent (at which point it could be assumed that group-and region-specific interventions, as opposed to overall growth, would be needed to reduce poverty further), if per capital income grow at 3 percent per annum, it would take Ghana 12 years to achieve the target. But if growth were to slow to just 1 percent per annum, it would take over 34 years for poverty to fall to 10 percent. Acceleration to 5 percent would mean that the target could be achieved in 7 years. The implication is that for real poverty reduction to take place, Ghana's GDP needs to grow by more than 7 percent.

The recent deceleration in economic growth, attributable in part to a lack of fiscal and monetary discipline, therefore, is a cause for some concern. Maintaining economic stability must clearly be of the highest priority if Ghana is to continue its efforts to reduce poverty. This is because macroeconomic instability is not only inimical to rapid growth, but it also harms the poor directly. The government must also strive to create an enabling atmosphere for private sector participation in the economy.

Furthermore, the 1992 constitution provides for freedom of Religion and Association. However, a cursory observation of the Ghanaian society shows that, there is symbolic representation of the three major religious groups. For instance at the national level, it is a common practice to commence official/state functions first, with prayers from the Christian faith, followed by the Islamic and traditional faith respectively. By contrast, the sub-national level, important meetings and programs of public institutions, often start with prayer offered by the Christian faith. Thus, the sub-national structures appear to privilege the Christian faith over the others. The impression usually created is that the Christians who constitute about one-third of the population are in the majority and that Ghana is a Christian state. In short, state institutions at the sub-national level are not sensitive to religious equity. To achieve religious equity, as enshrined in the 1992 constitution, it is important that, state/public institutions both at the national and sub-national level should accord equal opportunity to all the religious groups to practice the faith they profess. Thus, the concept of 'secular state' in Ghana must be pursued to its logical conclusion. The state and its agencies including publicly funded ones should be disengaged from religion so that the smaller religious groups will not feel marginalized.

Furthermore, the opportunity offered by the proposals for affirmative action to increase the participation of women in public life must be seized for a national debate and policy review on the important matter of gender inequality as well the marginalisation of the disabled.

As Ghana pursues nation building, it is imperative that we focus on building and strengthening institutions that will give voice to the voiceless in society. Therefore, the resource needs of some independent institutions like the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the National Electoral Commission, the Police Service, the Judiciary and the National Media Commission, must be addressed, since the past few years has shown the immense scope of their constitutional responsibility.

In Ghana, there are about ninety-two ethnic groups, some of which are very small; consequently, electoral boundaries cannot be drawn to conform to the various ethnic groupings. It is imperative that, in certain cases, special provision should be made for the minority groups to facilitate access to education, employment, political participation in order to address the historical and cultural imbalances to push the whole society forward. The government must also review the electoral laws to facilitate the participation of minority groups in governance.

Furthermore, there is the need to ensure an effective and accountable local government system in Ghana. An effective local government is the one, which has the ability, and the capacity to deliver locally desired services and operates internally and is able to manage local social conflict.

The main indices of an effective and accountable local government include

- Adequacy of local authority to initiate and implement policies and programs that is devolution of authority;
- Adequacy of human and fiscal resources to sustain such policies and programs that is deconcentration of resources;
- Existence of a broad-based, informed and attentive local public life, that is, the development of local political process that will promote accountability, responsiveness and representation. Authority is needed to permit, legitimize and structure action; resources are needed to sustain the action and reward participants; and a broadly based political process is needed to steer the decisions and actions.

The government should as a matter of urgency speed up the payment of compensation to minority groups and communities whose lands were taken by the state for development Purpose.

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