

Empowering Citizens Through Informed Communication



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A portrait of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a red jacket with a textured collar and a gold necklace. She is standing in front of a Ghanaian flag, which is partially visible on the right side of the image. The background is a light-colored, possibly stone or concrete wall.

**Ghana's First Female
Vice President: A
New Era for Women's
Empowerment**

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National Anthem

God bless our homeland Ghana,
And make our nation great and strong,
Bold to defend for ever,
The cause of Freedom and of Right.
Fill our hearts with true humility
Make us cherish fearless honesty,
And help us to resist oppressor's rule
With all our will and might for evermore.

Hail to thy name, O Ghana,
To thee we make our solemn vow:
Steadfast to build together
A nation strong in Unity;
With our gifts of mind and strength of arm,
Whether night or day, in mist or storm,
In every need what'er the call may be,
To serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore.

Raise high the flag of Ghana
And one with Africa advance;
Black star of hope and honour,
To all who thirst for liberty;
Where the banner of Ghana freely flies,
May the way of freedom truly lie
Arise, arise, O sons of Ghanaland,
And under God march on for evermore.

National Pledge

I promise on my honour to be faithful and
loyal to Ghana my Motherland.
I pledge myself to the service of Ghana,
with all my strength and with all my heart.
I promise to hold in high esteem our
heritage, won for us through the blood and
toil of our fathers; and I pledge myself in all
things to uphold and defend the good name
of Ghana.
So help me God.

Ghana's First Female Vice President: A New Era for Women's Empowerment

By: Patience Anaadem



GHANA'S political landscape historically has been male-dominated since independence in 1957. Although women have played vital roles in governance, their representation at the highest levels of leadership in the country remains minimal. The presidency has always been occupied by men, despite increasing efforts to promote gender inclusive in our body politics.

The Swearing-in of Professor Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang as Ghana's first female Vice President marks a significant change in Ghana's politics. This moment is not just about breaking a long-standing barrier, it is a transformative shift that redefines possibilities for women in leadership and signals a new era for gender equality in governance.

Women in Ghanaian Politics: A Long Struggle

For decades, women in Ghana have faced numerous challenges in their quest for political leadership. Long-standing cultural inhibitions,

societal barriers, and limited access to financial and institutional support have discouraged many women from actively participating in politics.

Although various policies aimed at promoting gender inclusiveness have made progress, the highest offices in the land remained out of reach until now. Currently, women make up only 14.5 percent of Ghana's Parliament, a figure that falls short of the 30 percent benchmark set by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) for gender balance. In comparison, Rwanda leads the Sub-Saharan region with 61 percent female representation in Parliament, demonstrating the potential for progress.

The Swearing-in of Professor Opoku-Agyemang is attestation to the resilience of women who have long fought for equal representation. It sends a powerful message that leadership is not determined by gender but by competence, vision, and dedication to national development.

Who is Professor Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang?

Born in Cape Coast, she pursued her education at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), where she later became the first female Vice-Chancellor, a ground-breaking feat in Ghanaian academia. As Minister of Education, she spearheaded reforms aimed at improving access to quality education, particularly for marginalized groups

Throughout her career, she has championed gender equality, women's rights, and inclusive policies that uplift communities. Her rise to the second-highest office in the country is not only a recognition of her expertise and leadership but also a reflection of Ghana's growing commitment to inclusive governance.

Impact Beyond Symbolism

The impact of her appointment extends beyond symbolism. It represents a concrete shift in societal perceptions of women in leadership. Her presence in the highest office offers young girls and aspiring female leaders a role model who proves that no position is beyond their reach.

It challenges the deeply ingrained notion that leadership is a male domain and provides a blueprint for future generations to follow. With her influence, there is an opportunity for policies and reforms that prioritize women's interests, ensuring that governance is more inclusive.

Her leadership could lead to an increase in women's participation in decision-making positions, creating a governance structure that reflects the diversity of the population. Moreover, her presence at the helm of political affairs strengthens the fight for gender equality in workplaces and education, ensuring that opportunities are open to all, regardless of gender.

Economic and Social Implications

Beyond politics, her appointment has the potential to enhance economic empowerment for women. With her influence, more initiatives can be developed to support women

entrepreneurs, professionals, and small business owners, enabling financial independence and fostering economic growth. Additionally, her leadership could drive stronger legal measures against gender-based violence and discrimination, ensuring that women are protected and have access to justice. This moment is about more than just representation; it is about creating an environment where women's voices are not just heard but also acted upon in policy decisions that shape the country's future.

Public and Global Reactions

Across Ghana, reactions to her appointment have been overwhelmingly positive. Many gender advocates and political analysts have hailed this as a victory for women's rights and an essential step toward greater gender parity in governance.

A Ghanaian gender advocate, Akosua Boakye, remarked that her appointment as the Vice President signifies Ghana's progress in gender representation and gives young women a reason to believe that they, too, can rise to the highest levels of leadership.

Her appointment resonates beyond Ghana's borders as well. In a region where female political representation remains low, averaging 24 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa, this achievement positions Ghana as a leader in advancing gender equality in governance. Internationally, it contributes to the growing global discourse on women's empowerment and signals to other nations that the inclusion of women in the highest offices of power is not just possible but necessary for equitable governance.

The Road Ahead: Challenges and Opportunities

Despite the historic nature of this moment, challenges remain. Women in politics continue to face gender biases, cultural stereotypes, and financial constraints that make it difficult to enter and thrive in political spaces. Structural barriers within political parties often discourage female candidates, and societal prejudices still cast doubt on women's ability to lead.

If this appointment is to be more than just a symbolic victory, there must be deliberate efforts to create opportunities for more women in governance. Strengthening mentorship programs for young women in politics, increasing financial and institutional support for female candidates, and implementing gender-sensitive policies within political parties are essential steps toward ensuring that this milestone is not an isolated achievement but part of a larger movement toward inclusivity.

Combating societal prejudices that discourage women from seeking leadership roles is also necessary if true equality is to be realized.
A Call for Lasting Change

As Ghana embarks on this new chapter, there is an urgent need for stakeholders including political leaders, civil society groups, and citizens to harness this momentum to address deeper structural inequalities. The challenge now lies in translating this historic appointment into tangible and lasting change.

This means reforming electoral processes to be more inclusive, investing in women's education and entrepreneurship, and creating platforms that amplify the voices of marginalized groups. The success of this moment will not be measured solely by the title that Professor Opoku-Agyemang holds but by the structural changes that follow to ensure that more women rise to leadership positions across all sectors.



Improving Maternal Health: Is Government's Free Primary Healthcare the Answer?

By: Patience Anaadem



MATERNAL health is a fundamental pillar of a nation's progress. When mothers receive quality healthcare, they are more likely to experience safe pregnancies and give birth to healthy children while safeguarding their own lives. This inherently contributes to the overall stability and progress of society. However, in Ghana, despite notable improvements in the healthcare sector such as the introduction of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and the Free Maternal Healthcare Policy (FMHCP) which exempts pregnant women from paying NHIS premiums or renewals, accessibility to maternal health services remains a challenge, particularly among women in rural and low-income communities who struggle to access quality healthcare.

According to the Ghana Health Service (2022),

the country's maternal mortality ratio stands at 308 deaths per 100,000 live births, a figure far higher than the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of fewer than 70 per 100,000 by 2030. Many of these deaths result from preventable complications such as postpartum hemorrhage, preeclampsia, infections, and obstructed labor. These conditions, if detected early, could often be managed effectively. However, financial constraints and limited access to skilled healthcare professionals prevent many expectant mothers from seeking the medical attention they need.

The cost of antenatal visits, laboratory tests, medications, and transportation to health facilities present a major burden on many women, particularly those in rural areas, despite government interventions. Additionally, healthcare resources in Ghana are unevenly

distributed. Urban centers tend to have better-equipped facilities and more skilled professionals, while rural communities suffer from shortages of essential healthcare services. This disparity forces many women to rely on traditional birth attendants or deliver at home without the assistance of trained professionals, increasing the likelihood of complications and fatalities.

The Free Primary Healthcare Policy and Its Role in Maternal Health

The Free Primary Healthcare Plan, which is set to become the largest social intervention in the health sector, has the potential to revolutionize the country's healthcare system. The Government has pledged to implement this initiative, ensuring that all Ghanaians, regardless of political affiliation, religion, or tribe, access quality healthcare without financial constraints. The policy is designed to provide preventive, promotional, and curative healthcare services at no cost to the beneficiary.

The plan will be implemented across various healthcare facilities, including district hospitals, polyclinics, health centers, and Community Health Planning Services (CHPS) compounds. This wide accessibility will make it easier for expectant mothers, particularly those in rural areas, to receive the care they need without traveling long distances to access essential healthcare services. Unlike the current healthcare system, the Free Primary Healthcare policy will not require an NHIS card, ensuring that healthcare services are available to everyone, regardless of their insurance status.

Beyond eliminating financial barriers, the initiative also aims to reduce the burden on higher-level healthcare facilities, which are often overcrowded and overburdened. By improving primary healthcare services, the policy will help to address Ghana's longstanding "No Bed Syndrome," ensuring that more people receive timely medical attention without unnecessary delays.

Challenges

While the Free Primary Healthcare Policy presents a promising solution, it is not without challenges. One major concern is funding.

Providing free healthcare to all citizens will require sustained financial resources, and there are questions about whether Ghana's economy can support such a large-scale program on a sustainable basis.

Another challenge is the shortage of healthcare professionals. Ghana already faces a brain drain, with many medical workers seeking better opportunities abroad. If the demand for healthcare services increases due to the free policy, the country may struggle with staffing shortages, leading to longer wait times and reduced quality of care.

Infrastructure is also a concern. Many rural health centers lack adequate medical equipment and facilities. Without significant investment in expanding and improving infrastructure, the policy may not deliver its full benefits to marginalized communities.

A New Era for Maternal Healthcare in Ghana

Despite these challenges, the Free Primary Healthcare Policy represents a significant step towards improving maternal health in Ghana. If executed effectively, it will not only improve access to maternal healthcare but also enhance the overall quality of healthcare services in the country. Expectant mothers will no longer have to choose between financial constraints and seeking medical care. Skilled birth attendants will become more accessible, reducing the number of home births and improving the safety of deliveries.

Furthermore, by promoting preventive healthcare, the policy will contribute to early disease detection, reducing the prevalence of complications that lead to maternal mortality. Ghana has the opportunity to set a precedent for healthcare accessibility in Africa. The time for action is now. By prioritizing maternal health through Free Primary Healthcare, the country can create a future where no woman dies from preventable pregnancy-related complications. The well-being of mothers is not just a health issue, it is a national priority that requires immediate and sustained attention.

The success of this initiative will not only save lives but also strengthen families, communities, and the nation as a whole.

The Role of Solar Energy to Ghana's Electricity Challenge.

By: Abigail Amankwaa Amoako Boateng



FOR some time now, Ghana's energy sector has been facing challenges that threaten its potential for growth and development. Despite being endowed with significant natural resources, the country struggles with power shortages and inconsistent supply. With a rapidly growing population and an expanding economy, the demand for reliable electricity has reached critical levels. To address this challenge, the solar energy emerges as a vital solution, offering the promise of a sustainable and resilient energy future for Ghana.

The Electricity Crisis: An Overview

Over the past decade, Ghana has faced recurring power blackouts that locals dub "dumsor" which means "on and off." The blackouts produce widespread disruption in life activities along with negative effects on commercial activities that also discourage

foreign investment. Ghana relies on hydroelectric power and thermal generation as its electricity sources primarily, using natural gas and oil as fuel. The power supply in Ghana suffers from instability because of irregular water supply combined with outdated infrastructure and irregular fuel availability.

Ghana Energy Commission reports that the nation needs 3,000 megawatts of electricity (MW) to manage the demand requirements. The actual generating capacity falls below the expected capacity which results in economic consequences. The power supply instability causes industries to suffer production interruptions just as healthcare institutions also fail to operate essential medical services and citizens also face interruptions in their electricity service.

Solar Energy: A Bright Alternative

The equatorial climate position of Ghana enables the country to receive uninterrupted sunlight throughout every month. The high levels of sunlight throughout the year make solar energy a desirable energy supply source for Ghana. Ghana meets international standards for solar power generation due to its 5.5 kWh/m² daily solar irradiation ranking which positions it as an exceptional solar energy location worldwide.

The supply of the electricity for Ghana can substantially increase through multiple solar energy implementations such as:

The decentralization of power generation through solar energy enables communities to produce electricity directly in their vicinity thus enabling them to meet their domestic power needs. The use of solar power in off-grid communities provides major advantages because they lack access to the national grid.

The National Grid connects to Solar farms which extends power supply options for Ghana by stabilizing the existing electrical system. Off-grid solutions powered by solar technology enable the distribution of solar home systems and mini-grids to provide electricity for homes and healthcare facilities and educational institutions in areas without connecting to the power grid.

Government Initiatives and Policy Framework

The Renewable Energy Act of 2011 established a framework for promoting renewable energy, specifically highlighting solar power. This act encourages private companies to get involved and provides guidelines for developing solar energy projects.

Significant government initiatives include:

The modern era has seen government officials initiate active public-private partnership with the private funding groups for constructing sizable solar power installations. Solar power projects reached major milestones through the Northern Region solar plant installation and the establishment of a 100 MW solar facility in the

Central Region which has collectively boost the national power network.

The government established both tax benefits along with custom duty exemptions for solar materials to stimulate the adoption of solar technology.

Community Impact and Economic Benefits

Rural solar projects have changed community members' circumstances by establishing power systems that bring electricity to homes and power commercial ventures and refrigerators. People in rural areas gain access to steady power supply that allows small businesses to flourish alongside educational development programs which help students study through nighttime hours.

The solar industry expansion generates employment opportunities which exist across production facilities and service establishments as well as site installation and equipment maintenance operations. Educational training programs and professional vocational courses prepare current and potential staff members for solar sector employment.

Solar energy maintains sustainability through its clean renewable source which helps eliminate dependence on fossil fuels and minimizes emission of greenhouse gases. Solar power investment provides Ghana an opportunity to achieve its climate objectives and drive sustainable development progress.

Challenges to Overcome

To achieve the maximum benefits of solar energy, the following solutions are worth considering;

Many homes and businesses find it hard to afford solar technology because of the high initial costs. To encourage more people to use solar power, we need financial support and incentive programs to help reduce these costs.

Ghana requires energy storage solutions and infrastructure upgrades to reach the maximum benefits from solar energy use. The nation requires this essential investment to succeed in



integrating solar-powered intermittent electricity with its power distribution system. Solar energy projects require lasting support from the government through a stable regulatory framework to achieve long-term success. The investments depend on policies which favor investors and this supports necessary financing attraction.

A Vision for the Future

The solar energy sector presents hope to Ghana during its struggle to solve its power supply problem. Sustainable energy development becomes possible through collaborations between governmental programs and private investments along with community participation.

Solar power provides Ghana with a dual benefit

of resolving its power crisis while supporting economic growth and job creation and bettering citizen quality of life. The Energy sector of Ghana benefits right now from direct sunlight while collective national efforts will lead to sustainable future growth.

Solar energy remains crucial in solving Ghana's electricity problems and it delivers a revolutionary solution to the country's power crisis. Through its adoption of renewable energy, the country takes its place as a sustainable energy leader on the African continent with an example to guide future adoption. Ghana should waste no time in harnessing solar energy since it represents the critical opportunity to establish a promising future.

Free Senior High School Programme: The Need For Strategic Plans To Improve The Programme

By: Abigail Amankwaa Amoako Boateng



THE Free Senior High School (FSHS) programme, launched in 2017, was a landmark initiative aimed at making secondary education accessible to all Ghanaians, regardless of their socio-economic background. While the programme has significantly increased enrollment rates, challenges remain that threaten its sustainability and effectiveness. To ensure that the FSHS programme achieves its intended goals, there is the need for strategic plans to improve it.

The Impact of the Free Senior High School Programme

Since its establishment, the FSHS programme has reshaped the educational environment throughout Ghana. The policy has caused a substantial increase in enrollment numbers at senior high schools where millions of students now benefit from it. Through this initiative,

schools have become more accessible to students while also relieving their families from education-related expenses so more individuals can pursue their academic dreams.

The fast growth of this programme has created several problems that require immediate solutions. Several barriers obstruct the delivery of quality education in Ghana. These include substandard facilities combined with teaching workforce deficits, limited educational resources and ineffective teaching standards.

The positive impacts and challenges of Free Senior High School.

Positive impact

Increased Enrollment, The FSHS program has led to a significant rise in the number of students attending senior high school, increasing access to education.

Reduced Financial Burden, Families no longer have to pay tuition fees, which eases the financial strain on parents and encourages more students to pursue secondary education

Improved Social Mobility, by providing free education, the program helps students from low-income backgrounds improve their prospects and contribute to social mobility.

Challenges

Infrastructure Strain, many schools face overcrowding and inadequate facilities, as they struggle to accommodate the increased number of students.

Resource Shortages, there are insufficient learning materials, such as textbooks and teaching aids, which affects the quality of education.

Quality of Education, the rapid increase in enrollment can lead to larger class sizes, making it difficult for teachers to provide individual attention and maintain educational standards.

Strategic Plans for Improvement

The government should take active measures by creating new classrooms and restoring old ones and establishing contemporary laboratories libraries and dormitories. Public-private partnerships should also be considered by the government to serve as a supplementary mechanism to raise funds for infrastructural development.

Student success depends fundamentally on teaching and learning materials since all students need this resources to achieve academic results. Educational institutions need sufficient funding allocation from the government to obtain the materials necessary for teaching and learning. Traditional teaching resources become more effective by merging e-learning technologies with digital educational materials which are valuable for distant learning students.

Quality assurance systems which are strong represent essential elements to sustain high-quality educational standards through every

aspect of curriculum delivery. Periodic evaluations along with assessments performed by the Ghana Education Service (GES) would enable checking program performance and detecting areas needing improvement. Productive planning requires teacher contributions in addition to student and parent involvement since this creates the best framework for programs that meet all requirements.

Engaging communities in providing educational resources also creates an environment where students receive support from their community members. The educational environment must team up with regional organizations and community leaders and parental groups to develop initiatives which will drive academic success alongside student comfort. The FSHS program includes multiple services such as mentorship support and tutoring sessions after school hours along with parent engagement programs.

Conclusion

The Free Senior High School programming marks a significant transformative moment for Ghanaian education because it provides educational access to many students. The complete success of this initiative requires establishment of strategic plans that will enhance its functionality. The FSHS program will expand educational access effectively while delivering better student learning when Ghana resolves its deficiencies in infrastructure and educational personnel, learning materials and educational standards.

The future development of Ghana's youth relies directly on effective improvement strategies for the FSHS program. Through united governmental and educational institution and community collaboration and stakeholder participation, Ghana will develop an empowering educational system which drives national development. Ghana can build a robust education system that empowers its young people and drives national development. The time to invest in the future of Ghana's education is now, and the benefits will resonate for generations to come.

Turning Waste into Wealth: The Power of Recycling in Ghana

By: Joyce Adwoa Animia Ocran



ON any given day, the streets of Accra, Kumasi, or Takoradi tell a worrying tale of heaps of plastic waste clogging drains, rubbish piling up in communities, and landfills overflowing with refuse. Ghana, like many developing nations, struggles with waste management, leading to severe environmental, health, and economic consequences.

Despite efforts by governments and various organizations, to deal with the challenge/situation, improper waste disposal remains a daunting challenge. However, one proven solution to this menace is recycling, a method that does not only reduces waste but also creates jobs, economic opportunities and conserves resources. The question remains: how can Ghana fully harness the potential of recycling to combat its waste crisis?

Ghana generates an estimated 1.7 million

tonnes of plastic waste annually, yet only about 5% of this is properly recycled. The rest ends up in drains, streets, or the ocean, contributing to environmental pollution. Poor waste disposal practices have resulted in frequent flooding, disease outbreaks, and contamination of water bodies.

Over the years, both governmental and non-governmental organizations have attempted to address the situation through sanitation laws, cleanup exercises, and waste collection services. However, these efforts have been met with several challenges, including poor enforcement of laws, inadequate waste infrastructure, and lack of public awareness.

Recycling is the process of converting waste materials into reusable products. This method significantly reduces the volume of waste that

ends up in landfills, helps conserve natural resources, and provides economic opportunities.

Beyond keeping communities clean, recycling protects the environment, creates jobs, and promotes a circular economy where materials are continuously reused instead of being discarded. In a country where unemployment remains a pressing issue, recycling could serve as a major employment avenue for waste collectors, manufacturers, and entrepreneurs.

Some efforts have already been made in Ghana to encourage recycling. Companies such as Zoomlion Ghana Limited have introduced plastic recycling plants to process waste into reusable products.

Initiatives by companies such as Nelplast Ghana use plastic waste to produce building materials such as pavement blocks, while startups like Replast Ghana and the Ghana Recycling Initiative by Private Enterprises (GRIPLE) focus on converting waste into valuable resources. Some local artisans have even turned discarded materials into innovative products like bags, furniture, and artwork.

Despite these promising efforts, several challenges hinder the widespread adoption of waste recycling in Ghana. There is limited infrastructure, with only a few recycling plants and inadequate waste collection systems. Public participation remains low, as many citizens do not segregate their waste or actively take part in recycling programs. Financial constraints also pose a significant challenge, with many recycling startups struggling to secure funding and government support.

To make recycling a mainstream solution to

waste management, Ghana must take deliberate action. The government should enforce strict waste segregation policies and provide incentives for businesses investing in recycling while imposing penalties on industries that fail to manage their waste responsibly.

Public-private partnerships should be encouraged to expand recycling infrastructure and fund awareness campaigns that educate citizens on the importance of waste separation. Schools, churches, and community groups should play a role in sensitizing the public, while recycling bins should be placed at public spaces to encourage participation in clean up exercises and indiscriminate dumping of waste.

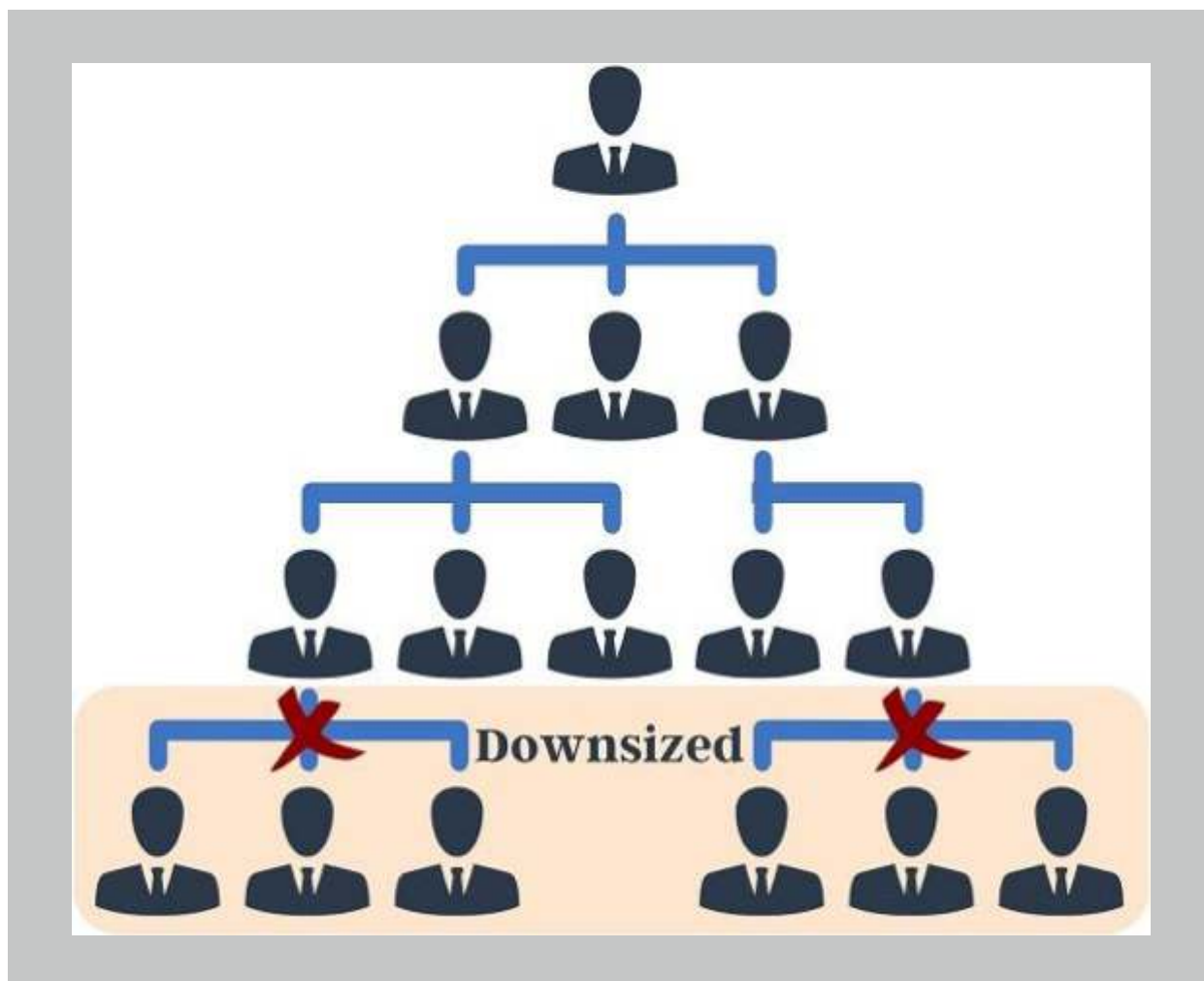
Innovative solutions must also be explored. Young entrepreneurs should be encouraged to venture into recycling businesses, with access to funding and technical support to turn waste into valuable products. Waste should no longer be seen as a nuisance but rather as an untapped resource that holds great economic potential.

Tackling Ghana's waste menace requires a collective effort from the government, the business community, and citizens. Recycling is not just an environmental obligation; it is a pathway to a cleaner, healthier, and more prosperous nation. Every Ghanaian has a role to play in sorting waste, supporting local recyclers, educating others, and demanding better waste management policies.

The time to act is now. Ghana must turn its waste challenges into an opportunity by embracing recycling as a sustainable solution.

Reduction in the Size of Government Ministries: A Cost-Saving Measure on Government Expenditure

By: Joyce Adwoa Animia Ocran



Ghana's governance structure has long been a subject of public debate, particularly regarding the size of ministries because of its impact on the public purse. In the previous administration, there were over thirty ministries, a number that many Ghanaians criticized as excessive. Despite public concerns, the government at the time defended the large number of ministries, arguing that it was necessary to achieve its developmental objectives.

However, following the general elections on December 7 2024, a new leader was inaugurated on January 7th, 2025, with a strong

commitment to reducing the number of ministries as part of broader cost-saving measures. The government has already scrapped seven ministries as part of this effort. Many Ghanaians have long called for a leaner government to cut down unnecessary spending, as large government often lead to inefficiencies and delays in service delivery. A large number of government structures placed an immense financial burden on the state, reducing resources available for critical sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education. The country also faces economic challenges, including high debt levels and fiscal

deficits, making it imperative to adopt strategies that improve fiscal discipline.

Reducing the number of ministries will also promote better coordination and effectiveness in governance. When ministries have overlapping functions, resources are wasted through duplication of roles, and decision-making becomes cumbersome. Streamlining ministries will eliminate such redundancies and allow for a more focused approach to national development. Moreover, adopting international best practices demonstrates that having fewer ministries does not necessarily compromise service delivery. Countries like Rwanda and Tanzania have successfully optimized their government structures, leading to improved governance and efficiency.

One other advantage of reducing the number of ministries is the reduction in government expenditure. Each ministry comes with ministers, deputy ministers, directors, and administrative staff, all of whom draw salaries and allowances. By cutting down on the number of ministries, the government can significantly lower its wage bill, freeing up resources for productive investments. Additionally, ministries require office space, vehicles, and utilities, all of which contribute to government expenditure. A reduction in ministries means fewer government buildings, reduced utility bills, and lower travel expenses. Ministries often allocate significant budgets to foreign trips, procurement of official vehicles, and unnecessary administrative costs. Streamlining the government structure will help curb such wasteful expenditures.

Merging ministries that have similar functions can also lead to cost efficiencies. A streamlined government also allows for faster decision-making and policy implementation. When too many ministries exist, bureaucratic processes tend to slow down decision-making. By having fewer ministries, governance can be more responsive to emerging challenges, improving the overall effectiveness of government operations.

While reducing ministries may lead to

downsizing, the government can ensure that affected employees are reassigned to other relevant sectors to prevent job losses. This will involve skill assessment and retraining programs to integrate staff into various departments where their expertise is needed. Ministries were established by law, meaning the legal frameworks must be reviewed and amended to facilitate mergers and dissolutions. A comprehensive policy direction should be developed to provide a clear roadmap for restructuring the government's operations.

Some political actors may oppose the reduction due to vested interests, as the existence of multiple ministries provides more opportunities for political appointments. Proper stakeholder engagement, including consultations with political leaders, civil society, and the public, will be essential to gaining support for the initiative. There may be fears that reducing ministries will negatively impact service delivery. However, with proper restructuring and digital transformation, service delivery can be maintained and even improved. Investing in technology and modern management systems can enhance efficiency without requiring an extensive bureaucratic structure.

While merging ministries may require some initial investment in restructuring, the long-term savings will outweigh the costs. The government must plan for potential expenses such as severance packages, office reallocation, and administrative reorganization. However, these costs should be viewed as a necessary investment toward long-term fiscal sustainability. Some employees may face uncertainties regarding their roles in the new government structure. Implementing career transition programs, offering alternative employment opportunities, and ensuring fair severance packages will help address workforce concerns.

Reducing the size of government ministries is a necessary step toward ensuring fiscal responsibility, efficiency, and improved governance.

Life-Transforming Takeaways of the 2025 National Budget

By: Bala Ali, ISD



THE Government's 2025 National Budget and Economic Policy was highly anticipated. So, it was no wonder its presentation sparked intense debate among stakeholders as social commentators, politicians, economists and other experts shared their thoughts on it.

The Minority in Parliament, for instance, has criticized the budget, claiming it has failed to make provisions for job creation. They have labeled the economic policy a consumption budget, arguing that it has allocated huge sums of money to the presidency to consume despite the government's claim that it has formed a lean cabinet to control public expenditure.

The Majority on the other hand, believe the budget is prepared to reset the economy and chart the path for sustainable economic growth. They have argued that the budget has adopted workable measures to contain the depreciation of the cedi and control inflation through the implementation of the 2024-hour economy.

Members of Civil Society Organisations and the public in general have also commended the government for abolishing certain taxes that made life unbearable for the citizens. These taxes include 10% withholding tax on winnings from lottery, otherwise known as the "Betting Tax," Electronic Transfer Levy (EL Levy) of 1%, Emission Levy on industries and vehicles, VAT on motor vehicle insurance policy and the 1.5%

withholding tax on winning of unprocessed gold by small-scale miners.

Regardless of these varied opinions, the budget has introduced a number of life-transforming takeaways that deserve mention. This article therefore seeks to highlight the socio-economic impact of the takeaways in the budget on the citizens, especially, the marginalized.

In the first place, the Finance Minister got it right to observe that, “The removal of these taxes will ease the burden on households and improve their disposable incomes. In addition, it will support business growth and improve tax compliance.”

The government's No-Academic-Fee policy for all first-year students in public tertiary institutions under the 'No-Fees-Stress' initiative is very transformative. Many Ghanaians live from hand to mouth. Such citizens are usually unable to raise funds for projects like payment of tertiary admission fees which is usually paid in full. The introduction of this policy will therefore make tertiary education accessible to thousands of Ghanaian children who would have ended their education at the Senior High School (SHS) level.

The government has also shown commitment to empowering the weak and promoting social inclusion. This is evidenced in the uncapping of the GETFund to allow for full free tertiary education for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs). This will go a long way to empower the PWDs because as people who are physically disadvantaged, their intellectual development

is critical to their welfare and progress. (Page 59 of the budget reads, H.E President John Mahama has resolved the funding challenge by uncapping the GETFund. This makes available dedicated funds for the full financing of free secondary education and free tertiary education for Persons with Disability (PWDs).

The allocation of funds to provide free sanitary pads for basic and secondary school children appears like what the bible calls little foxes but it will play a huge role in the development of these children. While some of these girls, who could not afford the pads, skipped school during their menstrual periods, others resorted to using substitutes that could be harmful to their health. So, this initiative will go a long way to impact positively on the academic performance of these girls.

The uncapping of the National Health Insurance Levy (NHIL) will make it possible for enough revenue to be raised to pay service providers. This will make health care more affordable and accessible, particularly to the poor, who patronize the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) most. So, its improvement is an enhancement of quality medical care for these marginalized citizens who, just like the few wealthy, also contribute hugely to the development of the nation.

Though It could be true that the 2025 National Budget and Economic Policy of the current government may have fallen short in some areas as pointed out by the Minority in Parliament, the fact remains that it has made provision for some life-transforming takeaways.

Electoral Verdict of 2024: Ghanaians Must Have a Message for President Mahama

By: Bala Ali, ISD



THE 2024 general elections ended with His Excellency John Dramani Mahama cruising to victory with over 56 per cent of valid votes cast as declared by the Electoral Commission. This is the first time a party's flag bearer has won the presidential elections with almost Two million votes difference.

A critical look at the issues that cropped up prior to the elections is a clear indication that Ghanaians are by this electoral decision, communicating a certain message to the President.

Aside from the economic down turn that hit the nation and caused the citizens with untold hardships, Ghanaians had a lot of grievances against the erstwhile Akufo-Addo-led government.

Topical among these grievances is the failure of the immediate past government to deal with the menace of illegal mining that plagued the country. This menace did not only destroy the country's water bodies and forest reserves, but it also posed a health risk as medical doctors attribute the rise in kidney diseases to it. The alleged involvement of government appointees and other top political class in this illegal activity compounded the resentment of the citizens against the past administration.

The electoral verdict of the 2024 general elections could therefore be seen as a clear message to President Mahama to deal with these issues with good will and high sense of patriotism. The citizens would want to see the president tackle the galamsey menace without fear or favour. Their votes for Mr Mahama and the NDC parliamentary candidates is therefore an appeal to the current government to protect their forest reserves and water bodies against pollution or destruction. This novel electoral decision is also a call on the President to prioritise the health of the citizens over the parochial economic interest of the few who made excessive gains through illegal mining at the expense of the citizens' wellbeing.

Mr Mahama's massive electoral victory in the 2024 general elections could also be taken as a message to him to frown on corruption among his appointees. A picture was painted of former President Akufo-Addo as a leader who condoned the alleged corrupt deeds of his appointees. This perception transformed into a public opinion as his political opponents named him "A clearing Agent." Since there is direct correlation between an ailing economy with public sector corruption, the voters opted to vote for a new government to deal with this malfeasance to heal the economy.

The citizens could not also stand the phenomenon of government appointees becoming rich overnight. The rate at which some government appointees became rich upon getting the opportunity to serve the nation at that level, made the citizens to believe that they would have milked the country to economic recession. To salvage the economy from which the livelihoods of all depends, they massively voted for President Mahama and his NDC. So, Ghanaians are by this electoral verdict, requesting President Mahama to discourage avaricious acquisition of wealth by his appointees.

The government policy to absorb admission fees of first year Tertiary students. A timely intervention to increase enrolment.

By: Edem Agblevor



EDUCATION can be formal, informal or non-formal which are all very important to any person no matter the circumstance they find themselves either rich or poor. Due to this, no matter the situation, everyone has to go through at least one of these form of education.

According to Emily Summers (Dec,15,2019), Formal education is a structured and systematic form of learning. This is the education of a certain standard delivered to students by trained teachers and administered by institutions such as schools, colleges and universities.

In the past, education was limited to the wealthy

class to keep the lower classes uneducated. After all, it was easier to rule when the majority of the masses were illiterate. Same (2019) Today, this is no longer the case because presently basic education has become a right to every child in most part of the world regardless of the financial status of the parents or guardian.

When the basic school education is completed there is the need to take up higher education. This level becomes very difficult for most people mainly due to financial constraint because the higher the level one decides to go in formal education, the more expensive it becomes.

Informal education according to same (2019) lacks the structure and standards of formal education. Learning happens outside the classroom, whether in educational locations like museums and libraries or in non-educational locations like at home or in non-educational organizations. Unlike formal education settings, informal education is completely optional.

According to Teacher Educator, (Oct 5,2024), Non-formal education refers to any organized educational activity that takes place outside the formal education system. This type of education can occur in a variety of settings, such as community centers, workplaces, and online platforms. Non-formal education often focuses on practical skills and experiential learning, rather than academic knowledge.

For a country like Ghana to ensure that more students get access to tertiary level of education without being burden with how expensive it is, there is the need for the government to come up with a policy and strategy to make this dream a reality for them.

The government of Ghana's policy to absorb the admission fees of first year Tertiary students one would say is a very laudable and timely intervention that will definitely increase enrollment.

This is because, it will encourage and give more students the strong urge to pursue higher educational level since the stress and burden of paying admission fees especially the very first year will be taken care of by the government. It is without doubt that getting into school the very first year can be very expensive.

This intervention, while increasing enrollment,

will boost the country's productivity because after school the students will get employ into more suitable, higher-paying jobs, there will be more educated populace which would help young people find their path.

Also this will guarantee that every student in the country will get some level of education and secured life, as education is one of the key to a secured life.

When admission fees of first year students are absorbed, students will not be worried about money and will focus on their studies. The tendency for students to apply for loans and other financial aids to support their stay in school cannot be underrated.

According to writers of University of the People, (Nov 27,2024), When people are more educated, they can solve problems better. This means that society can progress at a faster rate.

People with education can better understand the history of their society and its current economic conditions. As such, they may be more inclined to participate in all aspects of national life and improve their country.

Also, when more people have access to a college education, the number of employable people for high-skilled jobs increases. This means that more people will join the workforce, which could help lessen the wealth gap between the upper, middle, and lower classes.

I strongly believe Ghana can build a strong tertiary educational system by increasing enrollment and achieve these results when we at least build a firm stand in absorbing first year admission fees.

Cocoa Farming vs. Galamsey: The Push Factors Compelling Cocoa Farmers

By: Grace Acheampong



FOR many years, the cocoa industry has played a vital role in Ghana's economy, supporting thousands of farmers and substantially contributing to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the Ghana Commercial Bank "COCOA SECTOR ANALYSIS 2023" report, Ghana emerged as the second-largest global exporter of Cocoa Beans, with total exports amounting to \$2.3 billion in 2022 and Cocoa Beans ranked as the third most exported product from Ghana during the same year. However, in recent times, the cocoa sector is now seriously threatened by the menace of illicit mining, popularly known as galamsey.

The economic scale of preference between the cocoa sector and galamsey (illegal small-scale mining) in Ghana is driven by several factors which often compel cocoa farmers to abandon their farms for galamsey.

Illegal mining activities often yield higher profits in a shorter period compared to cocoa farming, which requires significant investment in time and resources before seeing any returns. For example, a cocoa farmer in Ghana may have to wait several years before their cocoa trees start producing beans, whereas a galamsey miner can extract gold from the ground within weeks or even days.

Many cocoa farmers in Ghana struggle to make a decent living due to low cocoa prices, high production costs, insufficient government assistance and lack of access to credit and technical assistance. As a result, some farmers see galamsey as a more lucrative alternative to cocoa farming, despite its illegal and destructive nature.

Farmers may be pushed toward Galamsey by

the influence of intermediaries and outside parties in the cocoa supply chain. By paying poor rates for their beans, middlemen frequently take advantage of cocoa farmers, making it difficult for them to break even. Galamsey miners, on the other hand, can sell their gold straight to consumers or dealers, eliminating the need for middlemen and increasing their earnings.

The impact of climate change on cocoa production, such as unpredictable weather patterns, pest infestations, and disease outbreaks, can also drive farmers towards galamsey. Climate variability and extreme weather events can significantly reduce cocoa yields and quality, leading farmers to seek alternative income sources that are less susceptible to environmental risks.

Many young people are leaving rural areas to seek better opportunities in urban centers, leading to a decline in agricultural labor and intergenerational knowledge transfer. As a result, some farmers may turn to galamsey as a way to support their families and maintain their livelihoods in the face of mounting economic pressures.

Cocoa farming is often seen as a labor-intensive and low-paying job with limited opportunities leading some farmers to seek more lucrative and prestigious alternatives. The allure of wealth and social status associated with illegal mining activities can be a powerful incentive for farmers to abandon cocoa farming in favor of galamsey.

The push factors compelling cocoa farmers to switch to galamsey are multifaceted and complex, driven by economic, social, environmental, and political factors. While galamsey may offer short-term benefits in terms of financial gain and social status, the long-term consequences for farmers, communities, and the environment are dire. It is crucial for governments, civil society organizations, and international stakeholders to work together to address the root causes of galamsey and promote sustainable cocoa farming practices that benefit both farmers and the state. Only through collective action and collaboration can we ensure a brighter future for cocoa sector and safeguard the livelihoods of those who depend on it for their daily bread.

Revival of Defunct Factories: A Catalyst for Industrialization and the 24-Hour Economy in Ghana

By: Irene Wirekoaa Osei



GHANA'S industrialization policy, which at one time held the promise of economic salvation, has experienced decades of major crises. Most factories that operated robustly in the post-independence period are defunct today with empty buildings, leaving thousands without jobs. Their reactivation, however, is coming out strongly as a master plan to revamp industrialization, stimulate local purchasing power, and provide employment opportunities. This project is also in accordance with government's proposed 24-hour economic policy, which seeks to maximize productivity and economic output by ensuring round-the-clock operations in key sectors. Together, the revival of defunct factories and the 24-hour economy project have the potential to transform Ghana's economic landscape that would result into sustainable development and reduced dependence on imports.

The Decline of Ghana's Industrial Sector

Ghana during the 1960s and 1970s had thriving factories that produced goods such as textiles, ceramics, beverages, and machinery. Those

factories not only provided employment but also earned the country a significant amount of money in terms of GDP. However, due to a combination of factors ranging from bad management, underinvestment, to competition from cheap imports, most of those factories collapsed. The decline in the manufacturing sector has had far-reaching implications, from high unemployment rates, reliance on imported goods, to a static manufacturing base.

Ghana currently imports a high proportion of its consumer products, from textiles to processed food, despite having the potential to produce the majority of these products domestically. Such importation drains foreign exchange reserves and stifles the growth of domestic industries. Reviving collapsed factories presents an opportunity to reverse this trend, create jobs, and boost local consumption.

The Case for Reviving Defunct Factories

The revival of abandoned factories is not merely restoring old buildings and equipment; it is about stimulating Ghana's industrial



potential. Reviving these factories can help the government spur economic activity, eliminate unemployment, and foster self-reliance. For example, the revival of the Komenda Sugar Factory in the Central Region can help curtail Ghana's dependence on sugar imports and produce thousands of direct and indirect employment opportunities in the sugarcane value chain. In the same vein, the resumption of the Bolgatanga Meat Factory would spur the livestock sector in the Upper East Region and offer a ready market for farmers.

The benefits of reviving idle factories extend beyond job creation. Through local manufacturing, Ghana will be able to reduce its trade deficit, conserve foreign exchange, and stimulate supporting industries. An example is that a revived textile factory will generate jobs not just in the factory but also provide a boost for cotton farmers, producers of the dyes used, and traders. This multiplier effect can bring a revolutionary boost to the economy.

Challenges and Solutions

While the revival of defunct factories holds immense promise, several challenges must be addressed. One major obstacle is the lack of capital to rehabilitate old factories and purchase modern equipment. To overcome this, the government can partner with private investors, development banks, and international organizations to secure funding. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) could play a crucial role in attracting investment and ensuring the sustainability of these projects.

Another challenge is the need for skilled labor. The majority of the labor force who have once worked in these factories have retired or moved to other sectors. The government can address

this challenge by establishing training programs to equip the workers with the ability to work on new equipment and manage industrial processes. Collaboration with technical universities and schools of vocational training can bridge the skills gap.

The success of this initiative depends on reliable infrastructure, particularly electricity. Frequent power outages have long been a challenge to Ghana's industrial sector. To support round-the-clock operations, the government must invest in renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, and improve the efficiency of the national grid.

A Path to Sustainable Development

The revival of defunct factories, combined with government's 24-hour economy initiative, has the potential to transform Ghana's industrial sector and drive sustainable development. By producing goods locally, Ghana can reduce its reliance on imports, create jobs, and stimulate economic growth. The 24-hour economy policy initiative will further enhance productivity, ensuring that Ghana's industries operate at full capacity and compete effectively in the global market.

Moreover, this approach aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). By revitalizing its industrial sector, Ghana can achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth, lifting millions out of poverty and improving living standards.

Conclusion

The revival of defunct factories represents a bold and innovative approach to industrialization in Ghana. These initiatives have the potential to boost local consumption, create jobs, and reduce the country's reliance on imports. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities, Ghana can unlock its industrial potential and pave the way for a brighter economic future. As government moves forward with its 24-hour economy policy, the revival of defunct factories must remain a central pillar of this strategy, ensuring that Ghana's industrial sector becomes a driving force for sustainable development.

Establishing Women's Development Bank: A Game-Changer for Ghanaian Women Economic Empowerment

By: Irene Wirekoaa Osei



IN Ghana, women largely form the backbone of the informal economy and generate most of the household incomes, but long standing systemic barriers have affected their economic fortunes over the years. Limited access to credit, exorbitant interest rates, and strict loan terms have made it impossible for many women entrepreneurs to grow their businesses. In an effort to address these issues, the government has allocated GH¢51.3 million as seed money in the 2025 budget to set up a Women's Development Bank (WDB). This initiative aims to create a women-owned, special-purpose bank providing low-interest loans to women to expand or set up their business. The ultimate goal is to empower millions of Ghanaian women and move them out of poverty.

The Need for a Women-Centred Financial Institution

Ghanaian women, especially rural women, are greatly restricted from accessing financial services due to cultural and legal restrictions based on land and property ownership. These often prevent them from providing the collateral required by traditional banks to access loans while high interest rates and rigid repayment terms further deter women in the informal economy. This makes many of them resort to informal lenders with exorbitant rates that trap them in debt traps.

This restricted access to credit stifles entrepreneurship and hinders the growth of

women-owned businesses, which are crucial to the economy of Ghana since women constitute about 44% of the labor force and are largely concentrated in micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), but without adequate finance, these businesses remain small and unsustainable, hence perpetuating poverty and inequality. In order to overcome these challenges, the establishment of the Women's Development Bank (WDB) would address the unique needs of women through providing them with low-interest loans, convenient repayment terms, and non-financial support services.

Government's Commitment: GH¢51.3 million Seed Funding

The government's allocation of GH¢51.3 million in the 2025 budget as seed fund for the establishment of the WDB underscores its commitment to women's economic empowerment. This funding will be used to establish the bank's infrastructure, develop financial products, and launch initial operations. The allocation reflects a recognition of the critical role women play in Ghana's economy and the need to provide them with the tools to succeed.

The seed funding will also enable the WDB to leverage additional resources from development partners, private sector investors,

and international organizations. By combining government support with external funding, the bank can ensure its sustainability and expand its reach to women in even the most remote areas.

How the Women's Development Bank Will Operate

The Women's Development Bank will be a specialized financial institution designed to serve women exclusively. It will be run by women, ensuring that its policies and services are informed by a deep understanding of the challenges women face. The bank will offer a range of financial products, including:

Low-Interest Loans: The WDB will provide affordable credit to women-owned and women-led businesses, with interest rates significantly lower than those offered by traditional banks. This will make it easier for women to access the capital they need to start or expand their businesses.

Flexible Repayment Terms: Recognizing the irregular income streams of many women entrepreneurs, the bank will offer flexible repayment schedules tailored to the cash flow of their businesses. This will reduce the risk of default and ensure that women can repay their loans without undue stress.



Savings and Insurance Products: In addition to loans, the WDB will offer savings accounts and insurance products designed to help women build financial resilience and protect their businesses from unforeseen shocks.

Non-Financial Support Services: The bank will provide training in financial literacy, business management, and vocational skills to help women maximize the impact of their loans. These services will be delivered through workshops, mentorship programs, and digital platforms.

To ensure accessibility, the WDB will establish branches and mobile banking units in rural and underserved areas. It will also leverage technology, such as mobile money platforms, to reach women who may not have access to traditional banking services.

The Potential Impact of the Women's Development Bank

The establishment of the Women's Development Bank has the potential to transform the lives of millions of Ghanaian women. By providing affordable credit and tailored financial services, the bank will enable women to start and grow businesses, increase their incomes, and create jobs for others in their communities. This, in turn, will contribute to poverty reduction and economic development at the national level.

Beyond economic empowerment, the WDB will also promote gender equality by challenging traditional norms that limit women's roles in society. As women gain financial independence, they will have greater decision-making power within their households and communities. This shift will lead to improved outcomes in areas such as education, healthcare, and nutrition, benefiting entire families.

Challenges and the Path Forward

While the Women's Development Bank holds immense promise, its success will depend on addressing several challenges. One key concern is ensuring sustainable funding beyond the initial GH¢51.3 million allocation. The bank will require regular support to maintain its operations and expand its reach.

The government, international donors, and private sector partners will need to collaborate to provide the necessary resources.

Another challenge is overcoming cultural barriers. In some communities, deeply entrenched gender norms may discourage women from accessing financial services or starting businesses. The WDB will need to engage in extensive outreach and education efforts to address these cultural barriers, build trust and encourage participation.

To ensure long-term success, the WDB must also prioritize transparency, accountability, and best practices. By adopting these measures in financial management and maintaining a client-centered approach, the bank can build a reputation as a reliable and effective institution.

A Model for the Continent

The establishment of the Women's Development Bank in Ghana could serve as a model for other African countries grappling with similar challenges. By demonstrating the transformative power of women-centred financial institutions, Ghana can inspire regional efforts to promote gender equality and economic empowerment.

Conclusion

The Women's Development Bank is a bold step towards poverty reduction and eliminating gender inequality in Ghana. With the government's announcement of GH¢51.3 million in the 2025 budget as seed capital, the WDB will be a reality, bringing affordable credit, flexible financial instruments, and tailored support within the reach of women. By releasing the economic potential of millions of Ghanaian women, the WDB will not only transform individual lives but also the overall development of Ghana. As these women increase their businesses, increase their incomes, and take greater control of their lives, the beneficial effects will be felt across families, communities, and the country as a whole. The WDB is more than just a bank - it is a catalyst, a beacon of hope, and proof of the dividends on investment in women. If well supported and with dedication, the Women's Development Bank can be a pillar of Ghana's journey to inclusive and sustainable development.

Ghana's 2025 Presidential Inauguration: How World Leaders Graced the Occasion

By: Judith Twumwaa



GHANA'S 2025 presidential inauguration was a proud moment for the nation, drawing attention from around the world. Held in Accra, the event celebrated the peaceful transfer of power from one government to another and demonstrated Ghana's strong democratic values.

The inauguration itself combined tradition and modernity. The outgoing president formally handed over power to the newly elected leader, symbolizing a smooth transition of governance. The new president took the oath of office, promising to serve the nation and uphold its constitution. Cultural performances, featuring music, dance, and a display of traditional attire, added a lively touch to the ceremony, celebrating Ghana's rich heritage.

The presence of world leaders at the inauguration sent a clear message about the importance of democracy and peaceful transitions of power. In a world often plagued by political instability, Ghana's successful inauguration stood as an example of how

nations can uphold democratic values and ensure stability.

The ceremony welcomed numerous world leaders, diplomats, and representatives from global organizations. Leaders from neighbouring West African countries were also present, showing their support for Ghana's democratic process and reinforcing the importance of regional unity.

Significant numbers of the dignitaries were African leaders, emphasizing regional solidarity and mutual support within the continent. Leaders such as President Bola Ahmed Tinubu of Nigeria, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and President Julius Maada Bio of Sierra Leone were among the notable dignitaries present.

They were joined by President Félix Tshisekedi of the Democratic Republic of Congo, President Bassirou Diomaye Faye of Senegal, President Adama Barrow of The Gambia, and President Joseph Boakai of Liberia.

Other West and Central African leaders present were President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé of Togo, President Patrice Talon of Benin, President Ibrahim Traoré of Burkina Faso, President Mahamat Idriss Déby of Chad, President Mamady Doumbouya of Guinea, and President Umaro Sissoco Embaló of Guinea-Bissau.

Additional dignitaries were President Brice Oligui Nguema of Gabon, President Duma Boko of Botswana, President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah of Namibia, Vice President Philip Isidor Mpango of Tanzania, Vice President Jessica Rose Epel Alupo of Uganda, and Vice President Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue of Equatorial Guinea. Their attendance highlighted the unity and collaborative spirit prevalent among both West and East African nations.

In addition to current heads of state, the inauguration welcomed former presidents and vice presidents, such as Goodluck Jonathan and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria. Their presence underscored the depth of diplomatic relationships and the comprehensive nature of the delegations sent to Ghana. Regional blocs like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) further emphasized the collective commitment to economic integration and political stability within the region.

Beyond Africa, the inauguration attracted high-level delegations from global powers. Lord Collins of Highbury, the UK Minister for Africa, led the British delegation. Madam Shalanda D. Young, Director of the United States Office of Management and Budget, led the U.S.

delegation. Mr. Bernard Quintin, Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs, and Foreign Trade, represented the European Union. Their presence showcased Ghana's growing influence globally and its ability to build strong partnerships with nations worldwide.

Key international organizations were also represented. Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Amina J. Mohammed and Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland were among the dignitaries, highlighting the integral roles that Ghana and Africa play within these global institutions. Their attendance underscored collaborative efforts toward achieving sustainable development goals and enhancing international cooperation.

For many visiting leaders, the event was also an opportunity to engage in discussions with Ghana's new administration. Meetings on the sidelines focused on areas such as trade, security, and development, strengthening existing partnerships and exploring new ways to collaborate. These interactions reinforced Ghana's role as a key player in addressing global challenges.

Ghana's 2025 presidential inauguration was not just a national event but a global gathering that showcased the country's democratic achievements. The attendance of world leaders reflected Ghana's position as a beacon of democracy in Africa and its ability to bring people together in the spirit of togetherness to foster progress. As the new administration begins its work, the support and goodwill expressed by international leaders will contribute to Ghana's continued growth and

The Second Coming of John Dramani Mahama: Expectations

By: Judith Twumwaa

THE re-election of President John Dramani Mahama into office in the recent 2024 elections is a moment that has resulted in a blend of excitement, hope, and skepticism across Ghana. Having served as President from 2012 to 2017, he left behind a legacy of both significant achievements and challenges. As he has taken on leadership again, many Ghanaians are eager to see how he will push the country forward.

President Mahama, then Vice President, initially took office in 2012 following the passing of President John Atta Mills. He later won the election that same year but lost in 2016 to Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo.

His first term from 2012 – 2016 was marked by the construction of numerous infrastructure projects, including roads, hospitals, and schools. His government also took on the energy crisis head-on, making efforts to reduce the power challenges the nation was going through.

Now, his return was largely driven by growing public discontent with the immediate past government, concerns over rising national debt, and frustrations over economic hardship. With a campaign built on experience, stability, and renewed commitment, he is promising to convince Ghanaians that he can do better.



HIS EXCELLENCY
JOHN DRAMANI MAHAMA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

At the heart of expectations for President Mahama's second term is the economy. Ghana has been facing financial turbulence, with high inflation and unemployment weighing heavily on citizens. Many hope that the President will implement effective policies to stabilize the economy, strengthen the currency, and create more job opportunities.

In his new tenure, Ghanaians want to see a shift toward industrialization, which would reduce

reliance on external loans and promote local businesses to drive sustainable growth.

Infrastructure remains another major talking point. President Mahama was praised for his infrastructure projects during his first term, but this time, Ghanaians want more than just roads and physical structures. There is an expectation for well-planned, sustainable projects that will improve the quality of life.

From better healthcare facilities to more affordable housing and improved energy supply, the onus lies on him to deliver real, lasting change in these areas. With urbanization accelerating, citizens are also looking forward to better city planning and modernized public services.

Beyond development, one of the biggest concerns for many Ghanaians is governance and corruption. Strengthening anti-corruption institutions, ensuring transparency in government dealings, and enforcing financial discipline will be crucial. Ghanaians are not just looking for promises, they want to see real action against corruption and mismanagement.

Education and healthcare are also critical areas of concern. With the Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy now firmly in place, President Mahama is expected to refine and improve the system to ensure it remains accessible and of high quality. There is also a growing demand for better technical and vocational education to help tackle youth unemployment. On the

healthcare front, improving the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and ensuring that quality medical care is available to all citizens will be key areas where Mahama's leadership will be tested.

Another major expectation in President Mahama's second term will be his ability to unite the nation and maintain political stability. Ghana's democracy has thrived on peaceful transitions, and many expect the President to uphold this tradition by adopting a governance style that bridges political divides. Citizens want to see a leader who promotes inclusivity, respects media freedom, and strengthens the country's democratic institutions.

In the light of these high expectations from Ghanaians, President Mahama's second term would undoubtedly not be an easy one. He would have to navigate through strong political opposition, overcome economic limitations, and reaffirm the trust and hope of Ghanaians.

The re-election of President John Dramani Mahama presents both an opportunity and a challenge. His leadership will not only be measured by his vision but also by his ability to turn words into action. While some see this as his chance for redemption, others remain cautious, waiting to see whether he will bring the transformation he promised. In the end, his legacy will be defined by the choices he makes and the impact they have on the lives of Ghanaians.

The Inauguration of the President and His Vice: Deepening Ghana's Democratic Credentials

By: Margaret Adjeley Sowah



ON January 7, 2025, Ghana once again marked another milestone in its democratic journey, with the inauguration of John Dramani Mahama as President and Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang as the first female Vice President in Ghana's political history. In addition to being power transfer from one government to another, this event also reaffirmed Ghana's democratic values and governance. The inauguration, as mandated in the Constitution, signifies the start of a new administration and further solidifies the country's reputation as one of Africa's most stable democracies.

Ghana, since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1992, has had nine successful elections, in 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008,

2012, 2016, 2020, and 2024. The successful conduct of these successive elections has positioned Ghana as a beacon of hope for democracy, good governance, peace and stability in Africa.

The inauguration ceremony was held at the black star square. It was graced by dignitaries of heads of state from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Botswana, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Senegal, and Uganda among others.

The orderly transfer of power is crucial to the stability and legitimacy of any democracy. It is a moment that reinforces public confidence in democratic institutions and processes. As the new president and vice president took their oaths of office, they subscribed to the

responsibility of upholding the rule of law, protecting human rights, and fostering national unity.

They pledged to uphold the nation's interests with integrity, transparency, and accountability. This pledge struck a chord with the thousands of Ghanaians who gathered to witness the historic event.

President Mahama noted the significance of the day, drawing parallels to his previous inauguration in 2013, highlighting the tradition of peaceful transitions in Ghana.

In his address, he stated that his administration will reset Ghana and transform its economy and governance structures, focusing on four critical areas to aid the reset agenda.

These areas include economic restoration and macroeconomic stability, improvement in the business and investment environment to make Ghana attractive for investors, governance and constitutional reforms, accountability, and the fight against corruption.

He acknowledged the dire circumstances the country finds itself in and vowed to take decisive actions in his term as president.

Speaking on the current global landscape, he disclosed that in 2023, the G7's shared total of world GDP was 30% but is predicted to drop to 27% by 2029 in 2023, while the BRIC's percentage of world GDP was 37.3%.



The swearing in of Professor Naana Jane Opoku Agyeman as Vice President is particularly remarkable, representing the government's commitment to enacting policies that empower women and ensuring that the door of opportunity is opened wide for the youth and women to excel regardless of their background.

The inauguration of the president and vice president on January 7 was more than a ceremonial event; it was a reaffirmation of Ghana's democratic values and a commitment to continuous improvement in our governance system. As the nation moves forward, the emphasis on unity, accountability, and inclusive governance will be essential for deepening its democratic credentials and ensuring a prosperous future for all Ghanaians.

Agricultural Policies in Ghana: Transformations and Impact

By: Margaret Adjeley Sowah

SUCCESSIVE governments in Ghana have instituted various reforms over the past three decades to improve the agricultural sector. The beginning of the Fourth Republic in the early 1990s saw considerable changes to agricultural policies aimed at achieving economic growth and job opportunities. Prior to the Fourth Republic, Ghana's agricultural policies were influenced by colonial and early post-independence eras. Early policies focused on commodities trade, such as cocoa, with state control predominant under import substitution and mechanized state farms.

Since 1992, Ghana's agricultural sector has undergone several strategic policy shifts to boost productivity through enhanced research, market reforms, and infrastructure development. These policy evolutions reflect a transition from isolated approaches to a more integrated framework that encompasses research support, market liberalization, financial incentives, and climate adaptation measures. The restructuring aimed to leverage the private sector's potential, modernize production methods, and transform agriculture into a robust engine for job creation and sustainable growth.

Key Agricultural Policies

Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy Initially implemented in 2002 and revised in 2007, the Food and Agricultural Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) emerged as the flagship policy for Ghana's agricultural sector. This policy aimed to enhance the agricultural productivity in the sector, ensuring food security, and promoting sustainable practices. It focused on developing value chains, improving market access, and supporting rural development through public-private partnerships. Capacity building for farmers and stakeholders was also a key focus, ensuring they were equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement best practices in



agriculture, as highlighted by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in 2007.

National Agricultural Policy (NAP)

The National Agricultural Policy (NAP) was introduced alongside FASDEP with the goal of building capacity, modernizing research infrastructure, and improving extension services to resolve long-term issues. According to the Agricultural Policy Research Institute in 2015, NAP focused on enhancing linkages for smallholder farmers to larger markets while proposing environmentally friendly farming practices to counteract pollution and market failures. It also aimed to improve the adaptability of the agricultural sector to climate shocks.

Block Farms Program and Mechanization

The Block Farms Program was introduced in 2010 to consolidate individual small farmers into larger, more efficient blocks. The program aimed to improve agricultural productivity by facilitating access to essential inputs, mechanizing production methods, and providing training in modern planting technologies. By creating economies of scale, the program was designed to enhance yields and improve overall efficiency. However, challenges remained in ensuring that all farmers had equitable access to resources, which was crucial for the program's long-term



success.

The Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (GASIP)

Launched in 2015, GASIP aims to enhance agricultural productivity and promote value addition. By attracting investments and supporting smallholder farmers, this program has contributed to job creation, particularly among rural youth. The International Fund for Agricultural Development noted in 2018 that the initiative focuses on improving access to resources, training, and technology, thereby empowering farmers to increase their output.

Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ)

Another flagship program designed to boost agricultural output and rural employment is the Planting for Food and Jobs initiative. Launched in 2017, PFJ has been hailed as a transformative program for Ghana's agricultural sector. It aims to boost food security, create employment, and alleviate poverty. The Ghana Statistical Service reported in 2020 that PFJ has substantially increased the number of active farmers and enhanced agricultural production by providing farmers with subsidized seeds and fertilizers, along with improved agricultural practices. As of 2023, recent data indicates that over 1.5 million farmers have benefited from the program, leading to a reported increase in food self-sufficiency from 40% to approximately 55%.
Impact on Employment

The policies implemented during the Fourth Republic have had a measurable impact on employment in the agricultural sector. The PFJ initiative, for example, has reportedly created thousands of jobs across the country. By enhancing food production and promoting value chains, more individuals are employed in farming, processing, and distribution.

Moreover, the focus on mechanization and modernization has opened up new avenues for employment. As farmers adopt new technologies, there is a growing demand for skilled labour in areas like equipment maintenance, agronomy, and logistics. This shift not only creates direct jobs but also stimulates the local economy through increased demand for goods and services.

Challenges

Despite notable achievements, Ghana's agricultural sector is still facing challenges. Inadequate resources severely limit productivity and growth, as farmers often lack access to essential inputs like quality seeds, fertilizers, and modern equipment, hindering their ability to increase yields. Additionally, altered weather patterns, droughts, and floods adversely affect both crop yields and livestock production. The land tenure system is complicated and insecure, leading to disputes and limited access for women, which further challenges agricultural productivity. This dual system of statutory and customary laws creates confusion over ownership and discourages investment in long-term improvements.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the challenges, the Agricultural policies in Ghana during the Fourth Republic have made substantial progress in promoting job creation and enhancing productivity. Initiatives like GASIP, PFJ, and others reflect the government's commitment to transforming the agricultural landscape. However, current challenges such as lack of resources, climate change effects, and a complicated land tenure system still exist, limiting the sector's potential. To ensure a sustainable future, it is crucial to invest in infrastructure, support smallholder farmers, and reform land policies to improve food security and rural livelihoods.

Strengthening Ghana's Road Infrastructure Through Contract Reform

By: Kuagbenu Matthias Yao



THE road infrastructure/sector in Ghana plays a key role in the country's economic development, connecting communities, supporting trade, and enabling access to essential services. However, the road network faces numerous challenges, such as poor maintenance, delays in project completion, and substandard construction. At the heart of these issues lies the road contract awarding system, which has been criticized for inefficiencies, lack of transparency, and allegations of corruption. Reforming this system is essential for sustainable development and rebuilding public trust.

The current road contract awarding system faces several problems. One major issue is the lack of openness in how contracts are awarded. Many contracts are given without open competitive bidding, leading to suspicions of favoritism and unfair practices. Corruption is another concern, with reports of bribery and kickbacks undermining the integrity of the

process. These problems, combined with delays and inefficiencies, often result in cost overruns and abandoned projects. Local contractors also face challenges, as they often lack the technical and financial resources to compete effectively. Weak monitoring and enforcement further worsen the situation, allowing some contractors to deliver poor-quality work. These issues have eroded public confidence in the system and hindered efforts to improve Ghana's road infrastructure. Addressing these challenges require meaningful reforms.

To improve on the system, transparency and accountability must be prioritized. Contracts should be awarded through open and competitive bidding, with tender documents and evaluation criteria made available to the public. An independent oversight body could help ensure compliance with procurement laws. Strengthening the legal framework, including the Public Procurement Act, is also

necessary to close loopholes and impose stricter penalties for violations.

Technology can play a role in making the process more efficient and transparent. E-procurement systems can simplify bidding, reduce human interference, and promote fairness. Blockchain technology could also be used to create a secure and unchangeable record of contract awards, ensuring accountability throughout the process. Supporting local contractors is another important step. Providing training, access to financing, and mentorship programs can help them compete more effectively, while maintaining quality standards.

Better monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are needed to ensure high-quality construction. Regular independent audits can assess contractor performance and the efficiency of the procurement process. Clear performance indicators should be established, with consequences for contractors who fail to meet them. Combating corruption is equally important. A dedicated anti-corruption task force could investigate and prosecute corruption in the contract awarding process, while protecting whistleblowers who report wrongdoing.

Timely payments of funds and clear contract terms can help prevent delays in project completion. The government should ensure contractors are paid promptly for completed work, and standardized contracts can reduce

misunderstandings. Engaging stakeholders, including civil society, the media, and the public, is also important for promoting transparency. Feedback mechanisms can allow stakeholders to report issues and suggest improvements.

Learning from international best practices can also benefit Ghana. Countries with effective road contract awarding systems can provide valuable insights. Partnerships with organizations like the World Bank and Transparency International can offer technical support and expertise. Sustainability should also be a focus, with environmental and social impact assessments conducted before projects begin. Contracts should include provisions for the long-term maintenance of road infrastructure.

Reforming Ghana's road contract awarding system is a challenging but achievable goal. It requires political will, collaboration among stakeholders, and a commitment to transparency and accountability. Addressing inefficiencies and corruption can pave the way for a better road network that supports economic growth and improves the lives of citizens.

The benefits of these reforms go beyond infrastructure. They can restore public trust in government institutions, attract foreign investment, and create opportunities for local businesses. A reformed road contract awarding system can help Ghana build a stronger foundation for the future.

Brief profile of CEOs of the state agencies

By: Priscilla Osei-wusu Nimako

1. Madam Justina Nelson is currently serving as the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Minerals Income and Investment Fund (MIIF). She is a seasoned banking professional with over 20 years of experience. She was appointed to this position by President John Dramani Mahama, early January 2025.

Before her appointment, she worked as a Group Head at Zenith Bank (Ghana) Limited, overseeing the Energy and Commercial Banking sectors. Her extensive experience in the banking sector, combined with her strong academic background, makes her well-suited to lead the MIIF.

She holds several academic degrees, which includes a Master of Laws in Corporate and Commercial Law, a Master of Business Administration in Marketing, a Bachelor of Laws, and a Bachelor of Arts in Management and Psychology

2. Dr. Kwaku Asiedu-Nketiah is the Deputy CEO Mineral Income Investment Fund. He was appointed on 15th January 2025 by President John Dramani Mahama and he is a renowned financial consultant with a strong background in corporate governance and financial management. His extensive experience spans across continents, with notable positions in esteemed organizations in Canada, the United States, and Ghana. He Holds a DPhil in Management Science from the Central University of Technology, Master of Science in Finance and Management from Heriot-Watt University, Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting and Management from Mount Royal University and a Member of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Production Accountants.

He is a Managing Partner at AFRIMEX GOLD LIMITED, Chief Executive at JOY TRANSPORTERS COMPANY LIMITED, CEO/Founder at KAYAB Maritime Services



Company Limited, Negotiated a \$30 billion infrastructure development deal for the Republic of Cameroon, Spearheaded the founding of Wankang and Kadaceramics companies in Takoradi.

He won CEO of The Year at the Ghana Youth Leadership Award 2023 and Excellence in Quality Leadership Award in Paris, France, 2015

3. Sammy Gyamfi ESQ is a Ghanaian lawyer, politician, and communications expert who hails from Wamfie in the Bono Region. Gyamfi had his secondary education at St. James Seminary Senior High School and later attended the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology for his first degree. He is the current National Communications Officer for the National Democratic Congress (NDC)

and was re-elected to this position since 2018. He is known for his strong advocacy and communication skills, which have been instrumental in shaping the NDC's message and policies.

He has recently been appointed as the Acting Managing Director of the Precious Minerals Marketing Company (PMMC), where he will oversee the establishment of the Ghana Gold Board, a key initiative aimed at driving economic revitalization in Ghana's gold mining sector.

4. Godwin Edudzi Tamaklo ESQ is a Ghanaian lawyer and public servant who has made a name for himself in the country's political and legal scenes. Currently, he serves as the Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Petroleum Authority (NPA), a position he was appointed to by President John Dramani Mahama on January 17, 2025.

As a seasoned lawyer, Tamaklo has extensive experience in litigation and strategic advisory roles, having worked as a Partner at Ayine & Partners Law Firm. He has also demonstrated exceptional leadership skills, previously serving as the Director of Legal Affairs for the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

He holds an LLM in Natural Resources (Downstream Petroleum) from the University of Ghana and was called to the Ghana Bar in 2013.

5. Mr. Edward Bawa served as a Member of Parliament for the Bongo Constituency from 2017 to date and was a member of the Parliamentary Committees on Mines and Energy, as well as Communications. He played a crucial role in shaping energy legislation and policy in Ghana. With over 20 years experience in energy policy, management, and public service, Bawa has demonstrated his expertise in the energy sector. He is certified in petroleum revenue management, upstream agreements, and energy commercialization.

He is the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC), a

position he was appointed to by President John Dramani Mahama in January 2025

6. Professor Nana Ama Browne Klutse is a renowned Ghanaian climate scientist and an academic. She is currently the Head of the Department of Physics at the University of Ghana and serves as the Vice-Chair of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group. As a leading expert in climate science, Professor Klutse has made significant contributions to the issues of climate dynamics, particularly in West Africa. Her research focuses on climate modeling, assessing the impact of climate on society, including health, energy, and gender.

Professor Klutse has also held various roles, including Director of the Remote Sensing and Climate Centre, and senior research scientist at the Ghana Space Science and Technology Institute. She is a strong advocate for girls' education and encourages young women to pursue careers in science.

She has been appointed as the Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Ghana.

7. Victoria Emefa Hardcastle ESQ is a Ghanaian lawyer and legal practitioner. She has expertise in energy, corporate, and commercial law. She is a Senior Partner at LithurBrew & Company. She holds a BA in Law and Sociology from the University of Ghana, Legon. She earned an LLM in Banking and Finance from the London School of Economics and Political Science as a Chevening Scholar. She obtained her Business Law from the Ghana School of Law.

She is a member of the Ghana Bar Association, having been admitted in 1995. She has previous experience working with the Petroleum Commission of Ghana from 2011 to 2017. She participated in the International Lawyers for Africa program at the UK-based law firm Hogan Lovells. She also worked at the Swiss embassy as a deputy head, Economic Section, Economic Trade attaché. She received the F.K.A. Apaloo Prize for Company

Law. It is also noted that she was a director of the collapsed Royal Bank. She is the exclusive IR Global Advisor for Commercial Litigation in Ghana since 2023.

She has been appointed as the acting Chief Executive Officer of the Petroleum Commission

8. Mohammed Abdul-Salam was appointed as the Acting Director-General of the National Lottery Authority (NLA) in Ghana by the president. He holds an International Executive Master of Business Administration with a major in Strategy and Consultancy Management from the Paris Graduate School of Management. He also has a Postgraduate Diploma from the same institution and a Higher National Diploma in Accountancy from Tamale Polytechnic.

Preceding his NLA appointment, he served as a Senior Manager at the Northern Regional Office of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). He also has had previous roles within the NHIA in other regions of Ghana.

9. Wisdom Yayra Koku Deku is the Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Identification Authority (NIA). He is a seasoned System Analyst and Cybersecurity Consultant. He has a history of working with the NIA, having previously served there. He has also held the position of Deputy Director of IT and Elections for the National Democratic Congress (NDC). His areas of expertise being Information Technology (IT) Electoral data and Cybersecurity

His appointment is seen as significant in relation to the potential synchronization of the NIA and Electoral Commission (EC) databases. It is seen that he has a deep understanding of the NIA's operations. He has also been involved in leveraging data regarding electoral processes. He has previous experience working at the NIA under the Kuffour administration.

10. Afetsi Awoonor is a Ghanaian entrepreneur, writer, and petroleum trader who has made a name for himself in the energy sector. He is the son of renowned Ghanaian

poet and novelist, Professor Kofi Awoonor. He holds degrees in Marketing, Business Administration, and International Oil and Gas Leadership from institutions in Ghana, Switzerland, and France. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Business Administration from the Geneva Business School, Switzerland.

As a seasoned energy sector executive, Awoonor has nearly a decade of experience in the African oil and gas sector, with a focus on hydrocarbon trading operations across the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

He has worked with companies like DOC Africa and Convenio Energy, and previously served as Manager of Government Relations at the Bulk Oil Storage and Transportation Company Limited (BOST) from 2016 to 2017.

He has been appointed as the Managing Director of BOST, by president John Dramani Mahama.

11. Margaret Ansei, better known as Magoo, is a Ghanaian public servant who has established herself in administrative work and community development project. She has been appointed Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA), beginning January 27, 2025.

As the Acting CEO, Margaret Ansei is expected to drive the agency's mission of supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across Ghana. Her focus areas include strengthening capacity-building initiatives, championing innovative programs, and enhancing financial support for small businesses to stimulate economic growth and create employment opportunities.

Before her appointment, Margaret Ansei served as the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) for Suhum in the Eastern Region, where she gained valuable experience in local governance and community development.

12. Hannah Bissiw is a Ghanaian politician and veterinarian who has held various

prominent positions. She served as the Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture and Member of Parliament for Tano South in the Brong Ahafo Region. Currently, she is the National Women's Organizer of the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Born in Techimantia, Brong Ahafo Region, Hannah Bissiw attended Kumasi Girls' Senior High School and later earned a scholarship to study veterinary medicine in Cuba. She graduated as a Veterinary Doctor in 1999 and worked in veterinary hospitals before entering politics.

She has been quite vocal on various issues, including supporting farmers and advocating for women's rights. She has also been involved in several initiatives, such as the "School Farm Project". Recently, she was appointed as the Administrator of the Minerals Development Fund (MDF).

13. Randy Abbey is a Ghanaian media personality and sports administrator. Born Ransford Annetey Abbey on January 6, 1974, in Accra, Ghana. He has had a remarkable career spanning over two decades. As a media personality, Randy Abbey is best known for hosting the popular morning show "Good Morning Ghana" on Metro TV, a position he held for 17 years. He has also worked as the Managing Director of Metro TV and has been involved in various sports administration roles. In sports, Randy Abbey has been an Executive Council member of the Ghana Football Association and the president of the Kpando Hearts of Lions Football Club. He has also chaired the Referees Appointment Committee and the Black Meteors Management Committee.

Recently, Randy Abbey was appointed as the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) by President John Dramani Mahama.

14. Professor Ransford Edward Van Gyampo is a renowned Ghanaian academic, researcher, and administrator. He has made significant contributions in the fields of

governance, political science, and public policy. He is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Ghana. Prof. Gyampo has taught and researched for over two decades, focusing on governance, democratic development, electoral studies, and natural resource management. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Ghana and Tufts University in Boston, USA. Prof. Gyampo has held various leadership positions, including the Founding Director of the Centre for European Studies at the University of Ghana. He has also worked with the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) as a Senior Research Fellow and Coordinator of the Ghana Political Parties Programme.

Recently, Prof. Gyampo was appointed as the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Shippers Authority by President John Dramani Mahama.

15. Reindorf Twumasi Ankrah is the current CEO of the Ghana Integrated Aluminium Development Corporation (GIADEC). He was appointed as the Acting CEO by President John Mahama on February 24, 2025. He is a distinguished lawyer with extensive experience in multiple legal domains, including the extractive industry, real estate, and corporate law. He holds an LLM in Energy Law and an LLB from the University of Ghana.

16. Maame Efua Houadjeto the CEO of the Ghana Tourism Authority is a results-driven professional with a strong background in event production, project management, and tourism development. She has served in various roles related to tourism, events, and project management.

Her Skills and Expertise are Event Production, Project Management, Tourism Development, Marketing and Promotion as well as a Leadership and Management.

17. Abeiku Santana, also known as Mr. Tourism, is a renowned Ghanaian media personality and entrepreneur. Born Gilbert Abeiku Aggrey Santana on February 16, 1977, he has made a significant impact in Ghana's

tourism industry. As a media personality, Abeiku Santana has had an illustrious career spanning over two decades, with experience in radio and television broadcasting, events, public relations, and advertising. He's currently the host of the drive-time show on Okay FM and has also been involved in various TV programs, including UTV's "Atuu" program.

He is also a successful entrepreneur, serving as the CEO of Kaya Tours Ghana Limited, a Ghanaian travel company. His contributions to Ghana's tourism industry have earned him recognition, including the Special Recognition Award for Tourism Marketing and Promotion at the Exclusive Men of the Year Africa Awards (EMYAward).

Abeiku Santana has been appointed as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Tourism Authority, further solidifying his influence in Ghana's tourism sector.

18. James Gardiner is a talented and versatile Ghanaian actor who has starred in numerous Ghanaian and Nigerian films. He began his acting career in the mid-2000s and has gained recognition for his talent and charm. He is also a model, event MC, and presenter. He has participated in various advertising campaigns and has business ventures outside of entertainment.

Recently, he has been appointed as the Deputy Executive Secretary of the National Film Authority.

19. Kafui Danku-Pitcher is a Ghanaian actress and film producer. She has a significant presence in the Ghanaian film industry. She has also worked as an author and advocate. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Cape Coast. She is currently pursuing an Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) at the University of Ghana. She is known for her contributions to Ghanaian cinema. She is involved in philanthropic work, including advocating

against child marriage and supporting children's health. She also empowers start-up businesses through her Dream Achievers Project. She has received recognition from the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) for her work in advancing women's roles. She has also received awards like Tourism Personality of the year 2024, and Most Outstanding Women Entrepreneur's Rising.

She has worked with the UNHCR. She has attended many global summits and conferences.

She has been appointed the Executive Secretary of the National Film Authority.

20. Ing. Edward Ekow Obeng-Kenzo is the Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Volta River Authority (VRA). He is an accomplished Business Executive with extensive experience in the power sector, spanning over 24 years. Prior to his current position, he served as the Deputy Chief Executive (Engineering & Operations).

He has held various key positions within the VRA, including: Director, Thermal Generation SBU. Plant Manager, Tema Thermal Power Complex (TTPC). Operations Manager, TTPC. Project Manager, Tema Thermal 2 Power Project (49.5MW Siemens Emergency Power Plant). He holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration (MPA). He also holds a Bachelor of Science Degree (BSc Hons) in Mechanical Engineering from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). He is a member of the Ghana Institution of Engineering. He has a proven track record in providing strategic direction and leadership. He is focused on supporting cross-functional teams to achieve critical results.

He has been appointed as the Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Volta River Authority (VRA).

The 24-Hour Economic Policy: Can It Solve Youth Unemployment in Ghana?

By: Priscilla Osei-wusu Nimako

PRESIDENT John Mahama's promises to create a "24-hour economy" brings hope for change in Ghana's future. This plan would transform how the country works by keeping economic activities running all day and night, instead of the usual 8-hour workday that is practiced per the labour law.

In a 24-hour economy, businesses and services stay open around the clock, seven days a week. This approach aims to get the most out of what the country produces and how efficiently it works. It often involves using morning, afternoon, and night shifts, plus more workers, money, equipment, and resources. Countries use these methods to grow their economies.

Like many other countries, Ghana struggles with youth unemployment. This problem leads to wasted talent, poverty, and social unrest. The government has tried several programs to fix this issue.

The 24-Hour Economic program is one solution that could create more jobs by keeping businesses open longer. This approach could help Ghana deal with unemployment, make better use of resources, and improve infrastructure.

More jobs could be created as businesses work in shifts, especially in retail, services, transportation, and manufacturing. Public transit, security, and healthcare would need more workers, particularly for night shifts at police stations, hospitals, and other key services.

Ghana could also make better use of its resources and facilities that currently sit empty outside of regular business hours. Public spaces, factories, and offices could be used more fully.

The tourism industry would benefit greatly. Ghana has many historical sites, natural attractions, and cultural heritage that could



make it a top tourist spot in West Africa. By offering 24-hour services like restaurants, entertainment, and tourist activities, Ghana could attract more international visitors. Many travelers prefer to visit attractions during quiet hours or explore cities at night. Cities like Accra, Kumasi, and Cape Coast could offer night tours, longer museum hours, and nighttime events for tourists.

Public services would improve with the 24-hour economic policy. Hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies could provide care at all hours. Public transportation could run late into the night, helping locals, visitors, and workers get around. Currently, many Ghanaians have few options after 10 p.m. and must walk long distances or pay for expensive taxis. A 24-hour public transportation system would fill this gap.

Energy use could be more balanced throughout the day. Currently, Ghana has high energy demand during the day, especially in the afternoon and evening, which causes inefficiency and power outages. By encouraging companies to work at night when energy use is lower, power outages during peak hours might happen less often.

To make this plan work, Ghana needs coordinated action from the government, the private sector, and community groups as a whole.

Better infrastructure is essential: Ghana's electricity supply, telecommunications, and roads need major improvements to support 24-

hour business operations. Providing constant electricity, expanding urban transportation, and improving the road network are key priorities. Public transportation must be expanded and made safe and convenient at night, especially in major cities like Accra, Tema, Kumasi, and Takoradi. Night buses, more taxis, and ride-hailing services would help people move around after hours.

Security must be strengthened: People and businesses need to feel safe at night. Ghana should increase police presence in cities, invest in surveillance technology like CCTV, and improve street lighting in business districts. Community policing programs should be expanded, and rapid response units for emergencies could help address safety concerns.

Businesses need incentives to stay open 24/7: The government could offer tax breaks, subsidies, or lower utility bills to companies that commit to operating around the clock. Reducing licensing requirements and providing financial help to small businesses could encourage more participation. The private sector will drive much of this change, especially in manufacturing, logistics, retail, and hospitality. Public-private partnerships can help share the costs of improving security and infrastructure.

The 24-hour economy policy aims to address unemployment challenges in Ghana by creating jobs and stimulating economic growth by Job Creation, Increased Employment Opportunities: Operating around the clock can lead to a flow in employment opportunities, particularly for the youth. Sectors like healthcare, public safety, and administrative functions will require a larger workforce.

New Industries and Businesses: A 24-hour economy can attract new businesses and industries, creating fresh job opportunities in areas like logistics, transportation, and security.

Economic Growth, Increased Productivity: Extended operational hours can lead to heightened productivity, driving economic growth and sustainability.

Improved Service Delivery: Continuous operation of government agencies and businesses can ensure essential services are available without interruption, contributing to a seamless and efficient service delivery mechanism.

Targeted Initiatives, Incentives for Businesses: The policy includes incentives to stimulate productivity, such as time-of-use electricity tariffs and access to financing through institutions like the Ghana Enterprise Agency and Ghana EXIM Bank.

Support for Priority Sectors: The policy focuses on 12 priority sectors, including Agro-Processing, Manufacturing, and Healthcare, which can create jobs and drive economic growth.

Potential Challenges, Infrastructure and Logistics: Reliable power sources, secure transportation, and logistical complexities need to be addressed to support continuous operations.

Human Capital Strain: Managing a 24-hour workforce requires strategic planning, robust training programs, and measures to prevent burnout.

The 24-Hour Economic Policy is an ambitious programme. Its success depends on how well the government addresses the challenges ahead. While the idea of a thriving nighttime economy is appealing, we must be realistic about what it can achieve. Though not a perfect solution, a well-planned, well-funded, and inclusive 24-hour economy could help create a better future for Ghana's youth.

Captain Traoré at the 2025 Presidential Inauguration and Its Implications

By: Richard Aniagyei

WHEN Captain Ibrahim Traoré arrived at the inauguration ceremony of President John Dramani Mahama on 7th January, 2025, many people were surprised. As Burkina Faso's military leader who took power in a coup, his presence made some people wonder: Is Ghana trying to bring all the regional heads together, or is this a risky move that goes against Ghana's democratic values?

Traoré seized power in Burkina Faso in September 2022, overthrowing the temporary government led by Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba. At just 34, he became the world's youngest leader. He promised to bring security to a country struggling with terrorists' attacks. Some people in Burkina Faso welcomed him, because the previous government was not doing enough on the country's security problem. However regional blocs such as the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) did not only criticize the takeover, but also kicked Burkina Faso out of these organizations, and demanded a return to constitutional rule.

Ghana, unlike Burkina Faso, is known for her strong stands on constitutional rule. The recent presidential inauguration ceremony showed another peaceful power transfer, showing its stability and good leadership. Ghana often helps to resolve conflicts between countries and stands up for democratic principles.

So why did Ghana invite Captain Traoré? She might be trying to build a friendship with her neighbour, especially since both countries face similar security threats from terrorists in the Sahel Region?. By exchanging pleasantries with Traoré, Ghana might want to work together to fight terrorism?.

Or maybe Ghana is quietly accepting Traoré as a legitimate leader, despite the way he took power. This could mean a change in how



countries deal with leaders who take power through coups. While the AU and ECOWAS have strongly opposed coups, individual members such as Ghana might be using a more diplomatic approach in dealing with successful coup makers in the sub-region.

The world is watching this situation closely. For AU and ECOWAS, Ghana's move may undermine their stands to discourage military takeovers. But it could also open the door to new ways of dealing with coup leaders, especially when they have support from their citizens.

For Traoré, this invitation would go a long way to legitimate his government in the sub-region and internationally. The invitation would also open doors for more diplomatic relationships.

But there are challenges too. Traoré's leadership remains controversial. Critics say his government has not fixed Burkina Faso's basic problems - poverty, corruption, and tensions between ethnic groups. Human rights groups are also worried about abuses by security forces under his rule.

For Ghana, inviting Traoré could strengthen their relationship and help them work together on security, but it might damage Ghana's reputation as a champion of democracy. Some civil society organizations may accuse Ghana for supporting military rule, which could lower Ghana's stands on democracy in the region.

Political experts have different opinions. Some say Ghana's invitation is a practical move to keep the region stable, even if it means working with controversial leaders. Others warn that while this might help in the short term, it could hurt Ghana's democratic image in the long run.

This invitation shows the complicated nature of West African politics. As the region deals with security threats, economic and leadership problems, Ghana's decision shows how difficult it is to balance principles and practicality. Whether this will lead to better cooperation or create more division remains to be seen. What's clear is that in international relations, every action matters and has consequences.



West Africa at the Crossroad: Following Withdrawal of Some ECOWAS Members

By: Richard Aniagyei

The exist of the Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have set wave that will be felt across West Africa for years to come. Established in 1975, ECOWAS has been the framework through which 15 nations have worked toward shared economic growth, political stability, and regional security. Now, this framework faces one of its greatest test.

The exit creates immediate challenges for trade in the region. ECOWAS policies have made it easier for goods, services, and people to move across borders through initiatives like the Trade Liberalization Scheme and common external tariffs. For the three departing nations, all landlocked countries, regional trade routes are lifelines to ports and markets. Their withdrawal may lead to new trade barriers, higher costs for businesses and consumers, and reduced economic activity that will negatively affect them and their neighbors.

Beyond the issue of economic integration, regional security hangs in the balance. ECOWAS has stepped in during times of conflict in the sub-region, offering peacekeeping forces and diplomatic solutions. With Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger currently fighting insurgencies and dealing with political unrest, their departure makes it harder to coordinate regional responses to these threats. Without a unified front, the region may struggle to contain security challenges that cross borders.

The political dimension cannot be overlooked. Relations between these three nations and ECOWAS have soured following the military coups in each country. ECOWAS condemned these takeovers and imposed sanctions. By leaving, these nations are pushing back against what they consider as outside interference while trying to assert their independence. However, this move may leave them with less influence in regional affairs and other opportunities.



For ECOWAS itself, the withdrawal raises questions about its future. The bloc has been held up as an example of regional integration in Africa, and losing three members damages this reputation. Other member states might question their commitment to the organization, potentially leading to further disintegrating. ECOWAS leaders will need to rethink how they engage with member states to prevent additional departures.

Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger are taking a calculated risk. While breaking away gives them a sense of sovereignty in the short term, they face uncertain economic and security challenges ahead. These countries will need to find new ways to work with their neighbours and build partnerships that support their development without the ECOWAS framework.

As these changes happen, West Africa watches and waits. The withdrawal shows how complex regional cooperation can be, especially when political instability and changing allegiances come into play. How these nations fare outside of ECOWAS, and how the bloc adapts to their absence, will shape West African relations for a generation to come.

The Future of Sanitation in Local Governance: Expectations from the New Administration

By: Sarah Safo Boamah



IN the heart of Ghana, two neighboring communities tell very different stories about sanitation. In one community, children play freely without worrying about disease. Clean water flows through well-maintained pipes, and waste is managed properly. In the second community, just a few kilometers away, the picture changes completely. Open defecation happens often, waste blocks the drains, and the air smells bad from decay. People here often get sick with cholera and other illnesses related to poor sanitation. This difference shows how important good sanitation is in local governance and sets the stage for what we expect from the new administration.

Sanitation basically means keeping places clean through services like garbage collection and wastewater disposal. The World Health Organization defines it as "the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces." Poor sanitation causes many diseases worldwide, leading to health problems and economic costs.

Even after more than 65 years of independence, Ghana's sanitation coverage remains low. According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, about 17.7% of

households practice open defecation, with more people doing this in rural areas (31.3%) compared to urban areas (8.9%).

In 2014, after a cholera outbreak, the government declared the first Saturday of every month as National Sanitation Day to promote cleanliness across the country. However, more than ten years later, people have forgotten about this initiative, and sanitation issues have been relegated to the background.

Poor sanitation costs Ghana a lot of money. A 2012 report by the World Bank showed that inadequate sanitation costs Ghana about GHC420 million each year, which is 1.6% of the country's GDP. These costs come from health expenses, lost productivity, and damage to the environment.

To address these challenges, the government has worked with private waste service companies like Zoomlion Ghana Limited to manage waste collection and disposal. Also, grassroots movements such as the "Bus Stop Boys" have started, with people volunteering to clean the environment by clearing gutters and removing trash. While these efforts are good, they need proper equipment and support to

continue working well.

In a recent government reorganization, Hon. Ahmed Ibrahim, the newly appointed Minister for Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, has stressed better coordination among departments, with a new focus on sanitation and waste management. His vision includes making cities and towns cleaner and healthier, recognizing that sanitation is basic to sustainable development. He responded to concerns about merging the sanitation ministry with local government by saying that a strategic restructuring would ensure good coordination among departments. He stated that he will make sanitation and waste management a top priority for the ministry. He is committed to ensuring cleaner and healthier cities and towns across the country, describing sanitation as essential to sustainable development. "We must all work together to make sanitation and waste management a national priority. A healthy environment is necessary for achieving our development goals," he stated. He promised to watch the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) carefully, making sure they prioritize sanitation and waste management to keep cities clean.

As a key intervention measure, the new administration should work on improving infrastructure by investing in modern sanitation facilities and ensuring fair access across urban and rural areas. Public education campaigns are needed to teach citizens about the importance of proper sanitation practices. The government needs to enforce the sanitation by-laws through the Assemblies. Support community initiatives by providing resources and recognition to grassroots movements that help keep the environment clean is also important. Setting up systems to regularly



check how well sanitation programs are working and making data-based adjustments will help track progress.





Achieving better sanitation requires everyone to help. The Assemblies yearly league table contest on sanitation should also be revived.

Citizens must practice good hygiene, businesses should operate in environmentally friendly ways, and the Government must provide leadership and resources. By working together, Ghana can improve its sanitation situation, leading to healthier communities and a stronger economy.

The contrasting stories of the two communities show how important good sanitation is in local governance. With the new administration's commitment and a unified national effort, there is hope for a future where every Ghanaian community enjoys the benefits of proper sanitation. The journey toward this future begins with everyone's dedication to maintaining a clean environment. The change starts with you.



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