

Empowering Citizens Through Informed Communication

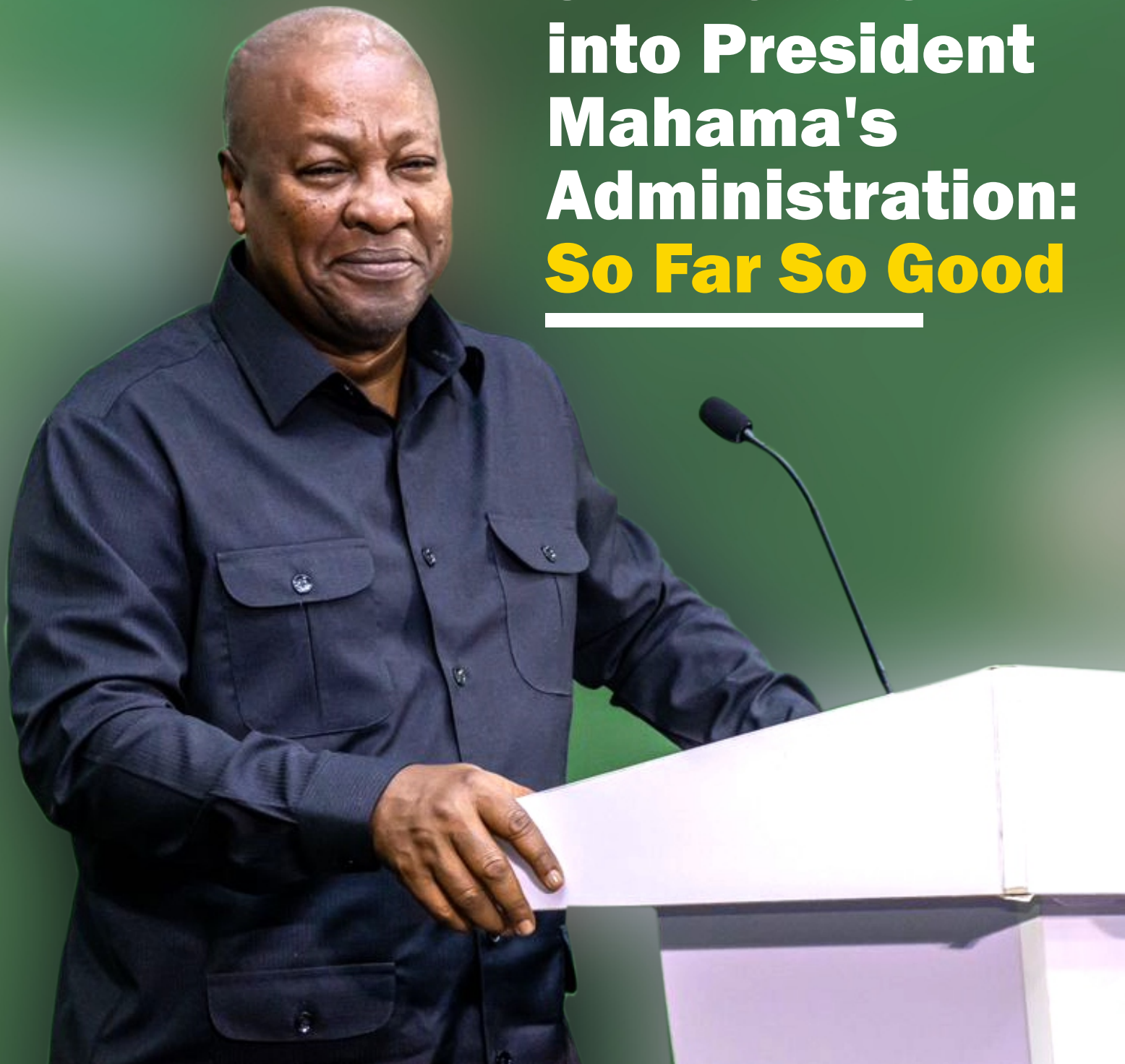


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Six Months into President Mahama's Administration: So Far So Good



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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.

Six Months into President Mahama's Administration: So Far So Good

By: Bala Ali



PRESIDENT John Dramani Mahama took over the administration of the country on 7th January 2025 with high expectations from the citizens. Despite their high expectations, the citizens also appreciated the challenges that confronted the new government. Economic indicators did not look good as the cedi remained weak in the wake of high inflation and high cost of petroleum products, which indirectly affected the living conditions of Ghanaians.

To give Ghanaians hope, the first budget of the government cancelled a number of taxes, including the ten per cent winnings on online betting tax, the Emissions Levy and the Electronic Transactions Levy (E Levy). This move provided the citizens with financial relief, particularly with the E Levy, which many viewed as a nuisance tax.

The first six months of President Mahama's

administration has been marked by prudent management of the economy. Inflation has significantly dropped from its December 2024 rate of 23.8% to 18.4% in May 2025 – the lowest inflation the country has recorded since February 2022 (FocusEconomics, 2025). The cedi has also appreciated against the US dollar and other major trading currencies. It was trading between GHS16.00 and GHS16.50 to the USD but currently hovers around GHS10.50.

This gain has reduced the cost of doing business, resulting in marginal price reductions on certain goods and services. This in turn means improved living conditions of the citizens as the cost of living automatically goes down. The cedi's appreciation has also lowered Ghana's external debt, thereby making it possible for the government to make some savings for infrastructural projects.

Notably, the administration has introduced life-transforming social intervention policies, including the "No Academic Fee" policy for first-year students in public universities, making tertiary education more accessible to the poor. This policy caters for the admission fees of all first-year students who enroll in the country's public universities. As a result of this scheme, thousands of poor Ghanaian students who hitherto could not raise admission fees are now in school.

The introduction of the Ghana Medical Trust Fund policy, otherwise known as the "MahamaCares," is another mark of this government's performance in the first six months. This health policy which was launched on April 29 2025, seeks to provide financial assistance to patients suffering from chronic diseases that are currently not covered by the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). This implies that the poor just as the rich, can now get medical care for chronic illness whose

cost of treatment is very expensive. It is indeed good news to state that under this policy, the poor will be able to get treatment for acute kidney diseases and other related illnesses.

The President's bold decision to introduce code of conduct for his appointees, particularly members of the executive arm of government also shows a mark of good governance. Democracy without accountability and transparency cannot be said to be the government of the people. Thankfully, the code of conduct seeks to promote these key tenets of democracy and integrity among government appointees.

Considering the place of the above examined phenomena in the progress of the citizens, it will not be out of place to opine that the current Mahama-led administration has by far done well in the first six months.



MahamaCares: Gateway to Quality Medical Care for All

By: Bala Ali



GHANA'S health care system was originally founded on the basis of free health care model. This model became unsustainable which resulted in the introduction of token user fees in 1972. With time, a full-fledged user fee was introduced by a legislation in 1985. This brought about a health policy termed the “cash and carry system,” which made it compulsory for patients to pay the full cost of their treatment before they were attended to.

The introduction of the cash and carry system, however, made medical care inaccessible to the poor. To address this problem, the erstwhile government of President John Agyekum Kufour introduced the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) in August 2003. With this scheme, the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) was established by an Act of Parliament to ensure equal accessibility to basic health care for all Ghanaians regardless of their financial status.

The NHIS is equally not without limitations. For instance, it doesn't cover certain illnesses like acute kidney and cardiovascular diseases. This again made quality medical care inaccessible to the poor despite its numerous contributions to the health needs of many Ghanaians. To fill this gap, the President John Dramani Mahama led-administration has introduced the Ghana Medical Trust (MahamaCares) Fund policy.

Set up to provide financial assistance to patients of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), the MahamaCares programme will make it possible for the poor to also access quality medical care just as their wealthy counterparts. Provision of medication and care for this category of patients under the Fund marks great improvement in the country's medical services delivery. Quality medical care will no longer be a privilege for the few rich but a social right to be enjoyed by all, regardless of their financial stand. With the MahamaCares,

programme, poor patients suffering from cardiovascular and acute kidney diseases will no longer be left to their fate; they will be supported with medication and care.

The policy is indeed designed to promote inclusiveness in the country's medical care delivery system. To ensure quality medical care for all, the MahamaCares programme is designed to also promote research, education on the Non-Communicable Diseases, sponsor the training of more health specialists, acquire more hospital equipment and expand hospital infrastructure. This will make quality medical care accessible to all citizens regardless of their locations as the policy also seeks to expand and equip more health facilities with specialists and equipment.

The socio-economic health of the country largely depends on the output of the citizens. So does the progress of the citizens depends on the country's level of development. To ensure the progress of the country for the collective good of all, the health of the citizens must be protected to enable them give off their best to the nation. This makes the Mahamacares health policy very imperative. Therefore, the appeal for donation to support the scheme must be embraced by all.



President Mahama Tours the Regions

By: Abigail Amankwaa Amoako Boateng



President Mahama in a handshake with one of the one of the Parties big wigs during the tour

AFTER a convincing victory over his main opponent, Dr. Mahamadu Bawumia in the 2024 general elections, President John Dramani Mahama has been touring the country to express his gratitude to the electorates for the trust reposed to him. The tour has given him the opportunity to interact with various people from different socio-economic, and religious backgrounds spread across the country. It has also given him firsthand information of the needs of the people of Ghana and how to provide these needs in the frame of his national resetting agenda. This shows the commitment of the President to improve the well-being of Ghanaians. This tour has gained currency as it has become the talk of the town by citizens and political experts.

The Process of Reaffirming Bonds

The President's tour to the regions is his response to reaching out to people at the

grassroots level. In Kumasi and other parts like the Volta region, the President has been interacting with opinion leaders and ordinary residents to hear what affects them and to state his vision for Ghana.

President Mahama has always emphasized the importance of inclusivity, economic growth, and sustainable development in every region of Ghana. He asserts that the nation's challenges such as unemployment, infrastructure gaps, and inadequate healthcare can only be addressed through collective efforts and creative solutions.

Messages to the People

President Mahama's approach during his tour involves paying additional attention to the needs of each region. He pointed out in the Northern region that, boosting irrigation would lead to better farming and tackle issues with

food insecurity. In the Western region, the President explained why the region's natural wealth should be shared fairly to help all communities.

In the Ashanti region, the President engaged with traders and artisans, promising to revive local industries and create opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises. His ability to tailor his message to the unique needs of each region has resonated deeply with the people, many of whom felt that their voices have often been overlooked in national discourse.

A Vision for the Future

As well as solving current problems, Mahama's tours have also helped him articulate his plans for Ghana's future. The President has repeatedly talked about the value of focusing on education, healthcare, and infrastructure, saying they support the development and equal treatment of all in our society.

Mahama wants governance to be more transparent and has promised to tackle corruption, making sure public funds support everyone in the country. The President has always insisted on helping young people, vowing to offer them job openings and chances for growth.

A Leader Who is Close to the People

The President's success during the tour mainly results from his sincere bond with the people. His humility and approachability have made him popular among many people.

It demonstrates how close he is to the people of Ghana and how well he understands their daily

problems. It also shows that he believes leadership means not only making choices but also being open to changing what you know, whenever necessary.

A call to join in and get involved

The continuation of Mahama's tour has motivated many Ghanaians with new hope. His message of unity, progress, and shared responsibility has struck a chord with people from all walks of life, reminding them of the power of collective action.

At the same time, the tour urges everyone to keep working toward a better Ghana, since there is much left to do. It is hard for people, whether leaders or others, to join forces and work for the same objective despite their differences.

Conclusion

President Mahama's tour is meant not only for political gains but also to bring people together, help everyone reflect, and spark fresh hope. Through meeting with people and helping to sort out their issues, he has demonstrated the qualities of a good leader.

While the tour continues, it strongly reminds us that a country's power comes from its people. If government should listen to the people's opinions, addresses their problems, and works with them, it can develop an inclusive and sustainable future.

According to Mahama, the well-being of Ghana depends on all of us. We should join forces to create a country we can all be proud of.

The Military Take Overs in West Africa. is it a Blot on the Democratic Governance in the Sub Region?

By: Abigail Amankwaa Amoako Boateng



IN the West African Sub-region which has earned recognition for advancing democracy, an issue is on the rise. Military takeovers that haven't been seen for many years are now re-emerging. In Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Niger, the steps of armed forces storming government positions are a clear sign that democracy is under threat. While these military takeovers are rather unfortunate, it reminds everyone on the continent and around the world who stands for democracy that such incidents can happen again.

Civilian governments are being replaced by military rule.

Lately, the West African Sub-region has experienced several military takeovers that have taken away the successes of having democratic governments. On August 18th, 2020, a coup in Mali forced President Ibrahim

Boubacar Keita to leave office because of alleged cases of corruption and insecurity. Similarly, Guinea's military toppled the government, less than a year after his re-election, and removed President Condé after he continued in office despite major controversy. In January 2022, power in Burkina Faso was taken by the military after they said the civilian government was not tackling the growing threat from jihadists. In July 2023, the military removed President Mohamed Bazoum, causing political problems in the country.

These coups, often justified by the military as necessary interventions to restore order and address governance failures, have instead left a trail of instability, economic hardship, and eroded public trust in democratic institutions.

Although the main point advocated for coups

was to improve order and security, most often resulted in more disorder, challenges in the economy, and less trust in democratic governance among the population.

Causes of the Crisis

The resurgence of military rule in West Africa is not an isolated phenomenon but a symptom of deeper systemic issues. Decades of poor governance, rampant corruption, and economic inequality have left many citizens disillusioned with their leaders. In some cases, the military has capitalized on this discontent, presenting itself as a savior capable of delivering stability and accountability.

The recent increase in military rule in West Africa shows that there are bigger problems affecting the region. Government flaws, a lot of corruption, and unequal distribution of wealth have made many citizens doubt their leaders. In these circumstances, the military intervenes as the answer to the country's difficulties and promises stability.

In reality, the subject is much more complicated than what is commonly known. There are many nations, especially those with frequent coups that are also facing big security challenges like Jihadist uprisings, clashes between various communities, and criminal organizations. Many civilian governments have a hard time handling these threats because they are usually not well equipped. Because many West African states already depend heavily on their military, this institution has now taken action to make its presence stronger, usually with the help of irritated citizens.

The reversal of democracy

The decline in democratic governance in West Africa has greatly influenced the return to military rule. Whenever a coup occurs, the rule of law is harmed, institutions become less stable, and it provides a model for future people to try the same thing. Efforts by the African Union and ECOWAS to slap sanctions usually ends in futility.

Besides, the way the international community acts varies from one incident to another. Even though several Western countries have put a

stop to assistance and imposed sanctions, others do not for fear of losing their involvement in a vital and strategically rich part of the world. Despite the challenges these coups pose to democratic governance, coup leaders continue to gain strength and invariably reduced people's trust in democracy.

The people affected by war

Aside from the changes in power, military takeovers have brought serious trouble to the lives of the ordinary people. Many times, after coups, there are restrictions on who can disagree with the new leaders, who can say what in the media, and the rights protected by the constitution are taken away. Sanctions on the leaders typically increase the hardships faced by the most vulnerable members of the community.

A decline in security has also become a major issue in lots of these nations. Although military regimes pledged to fix the country's problems, they have been unable to handle the situations that led to their rule. Both Mali and Burkina Faso face more jihadist attacks now that coups have taken place, and this has forced thousands to move and made the existing humanitarian crisis worse.

Ways to Move Forward

The return of military rule in West Africa shows the need for new attention and action in the area at large. To fix the underlying issues, we should use various methods, not only by stating our disapproval of coups but also putting sanctions in place to guard against future occurrences.

Again, more funding should be directed toward supporting strong democratic systems and proper governance. Among the goals is backing honest and open elections, promoting open governance, and giving groups in civil society strength.

In addition, the rest of the world should support democratic rule in the region using clear and steady principles that those in charge, both military and civilian, must be responsible for everything they do and that the long-term prosperity of the nation is more valuable than any momentary gain.

Finally, the roots of the crisis will never be solved unless security issues are addressed together. These steps include equipping local governments with what they need, encouraging regional collaboration among countries, and tackling the main reasons behind warfare, such as poverty, disparity, and a lack of representation.

Conclusion

The rise of military governments in West Africa proves that, the military's role is to offer security and order, historical experience has proven that its actions usually cause more problems and

suffering.

It may be difficult to start, but this process is necessary. If West African nations and the international community handle the main problems and uphold their democratic principles, they can prevent the region from being remembered by marching boots and raise the people's opinions instead. Still, despite its faults, democracy offers the best chance for understanding and success. There is no time to waste.

Ghana Labour Laws on Compulsory Retirement at 60: A Call for Review

By: Joyce Adwoa Animia Ocran



In Ghana, the mandatory retirement age of 60 has been a long-standing policy under the Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651).

While this law was designed to create opportunities for younger professionals to be employed and ensure a steady transition in the workforce, its rigid application has raised concerns about fairness, productivity, and economic sustainability. Many argue that the policy fails to consider individual capabilities, evolving life expectancies, and the valuable experience older employees bring to the workplace.

Under Section 24 of the Labour Act, workers in Ghana are required to retire at age 60, except for those in academic and judicial roles, who may work until 65 or 70. This blanket rule applies across both public and private sectors,

leaving little room for flexibility.

While the policy aims to promote youth employment, it often forces out skilled professionals at their peak, creating a gap in institutional knowledge and expertise.

One major issue is the assumption that productivity declines at 60. In reality, many Ghanaians remain physically and mentally active well beyond this age.

For instance, a 62-year-old senior lecturer at the University of Ghana may still be contributing significantly to research and mentorship, yet the law requires them to step down. Similarly, experienced nurses and engineers are compelled to retire just as their expertise becomes most valuable.

Another concern is financial strain, with rising life expectancy now at about 64 years many retirees face difficulties sustaining themselves on pensions, which are often inadequate.

The National Pensions Regulatory Authority (NPRA) reports that only a fraction of retirees receive monthly pensions sufficient to cover basic needs, pushing some into informal menial jobs.

Internationally, countries like the UK and Australia have moved towards flexible retirement ages, allowing workers to continue based on health and performance. Even within Africa, nations like Nigeria and South Africa permit extensions in certain sectors.

Ghana's rigid stance contrasts with these progressive models, potentially hindering workforce optimization.

Experts suggest that Ghana's retirement laws should be revised to allow for extensions where necessary. Performance-based assessments, rather than age, could determine retirement eligibility.

For example, a 60-year-old bank manager with a strong track record could be retained for an additional five years, ensuring continuity and mentorship for younger staff.

Additionally, sectors facing skill shortages such as healthcare and education could benefit from retaining experienced professionals.

The Ghana Medical Association has previously advocated for extending the retirement age for doctors, citing the country's doctor-to-patient ratio, which remains below WHO recommendations.



While the compulsory retirement age was established with good intentions, its one-size-fits-all approach no longer aligns with modern workforce dynamics. A review that considers health, performance, and economic realities would better serve Ghana's development goals.

By adopting a more flexible system, the country can retain vital expertise, improve pension sustainability, and create a more inclusive labour market.

The conversation has started, but policymakers must act to ensure Ghana's labour laws reflect the needs of its people both young and old.

ISD, playing the lead role in Government Communication

By: Joyce Adwoa Animia Ocran

IN an era where information flow influences public perception and policy direction, good government communication is critical.

In Ghana, the Information Services Department (ISD) stands out as the primary agency responsible for disseminating official government information, with the objective of ensuring transparency, and fostering citizen engagement.

Established in 1945, the ISD has evolved from a colonial-era propaganda tool to a modern communication hub, playing a pivotal role in national development.

The ISD operates under the Presidency with a clear mandate: to inform, educate, and engage the public on government policies, programs, and activities. Unlike the private media, which may prioritize commercial interests, the ISD focuses on government communication by providing accurate, timely, and unbiased information. Its work spans traditional and digital media, community outreach, and public education campaigns.

The ISD leads nationwide campaigns on critical issues such as health, sanitation, and civic education. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ISD worked with the Ghana Health Service to disseminate information on safety protocols, vaccination, and government interventions on the pandemic.

Through radio jingles, town hall meetings, van outreach programmes and social media, the Department ensured even rural communities received vital updates.

The ISD organizes press briefings for government officials, ensuring journalists have direct access to policymakers.

During the introduction of the E-levy policy on



1st May 2022, the ISD facilitated media engagements and carried out extensive public education where officials explained its purpose and addressed public concerns. This helped mitigate misinformation and allowed for structured public discourse.

Recognizing the fact that not all Ghanaians have access to digital media, the ISD deploys Public Address Vans to remote areas to facilitate the public education programme.

Similarly In 2023, during the voter registration exercise, these vans traveled across regions, educating citizens on registration requirements and deadlines. Such efforts bridged the information gap between urban and rural populations.

Another key programme of the Department in facilitating government communication is the production of documentaries. When the government completed the Pokuase Interchange, the ISD highlighted its benefits through video reports, helping citizens understand the project's impact on traffic and

economic activity.

Despite its crucial role, the ISD faces hurdles that affect its efficiency, key among these constraints is inadequate budgetary allocation and delay in the release of funds which most times delay public education campaigns or restrict the use of modern communication tools.

With the increase in the number of independent news outlets, some citizens perceive the ISD as a government propaganda mouthpiece rather than an impartial information agency.

While urban areas benefit from digital outreach, some rural zones still rely on outdated communication methods.

To maintain relevance, the ISD must adapt to changing media landscapes. Expanding its digital presence, investing in multimedia

content, and collaboration with local influencers could enhance engagement. Additionally, promoting accountability in its operations would strengthen public trust.

The ISD remains the backbone of government communication in Ghana, ensuring citizens are informed, educated and engaged on national policies and programmes.

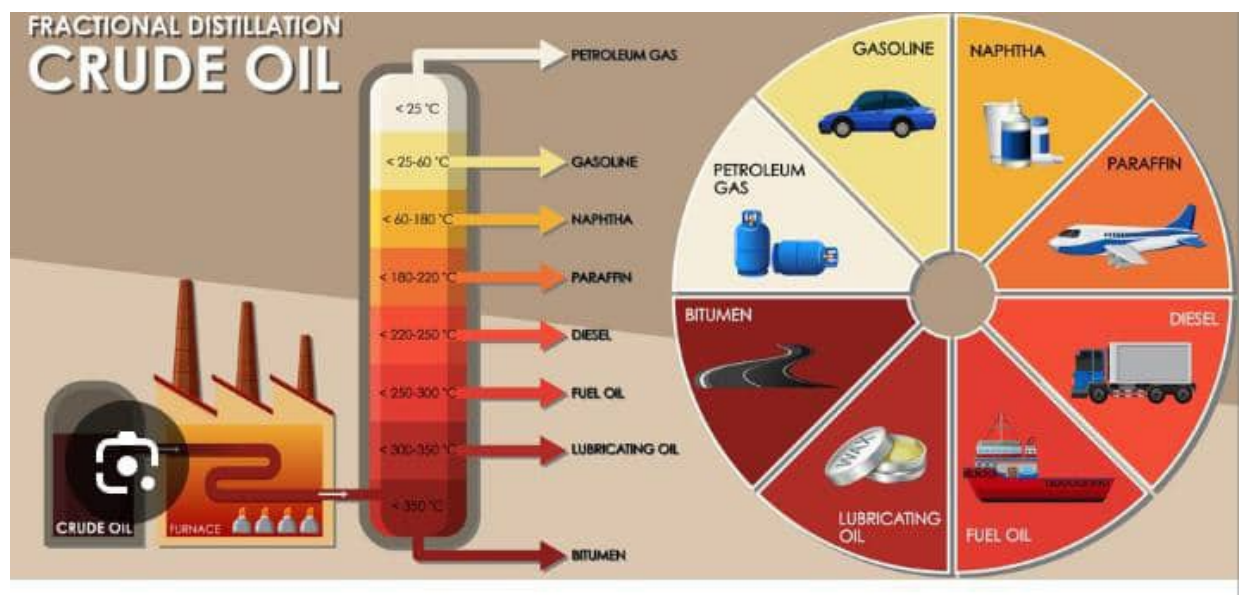
While challenges exist, its role in national development cannot be overstated. By embracing innovation and reinforcing its credibility, the ISD can continue to lead effectively in an increasingly digital and dynamic information age.

As Ghana progresses, the ISD's ability to evolve will determine how well the government connects with its people making its mission not just important, but indispensable.



Can the reduction in the prices of petroleum products affect the pockets of the ordinary Ghanaian?

By: Edem Agblevor



THE path to an economic recovery is determined by the cost of global petroleum products and other external factors, which can either increase or decrease. Sharp increases in the price of petroleum products impose a tax on both individual and businesses. When it comes to payment of products at fuel stations and utility bills, homes endure a great deal of stress.

The high cost of these products often lead to an increase in input costs for businesses and industries, which always result in higher retail pricing on customers. Equally, as the price of petroleum products declines, businesses and consumers gain from cheaper prices, which encourages economic growth.

Some of these petroleum products are fuel oil, gasoline, kerosene, liquified natural gas and petroleum gas, butane and diesel fuel.

According to an article in <https://examplesweb.net/products-made-from-petroleum>, market demand for petroleum products remains high due to their essential roles. Gasoline, for instance, powers vehicles, while jet fuel supports air travel.

It states, in 2025, global gasoline consumption reached approximately 1.2 billion metric tons. Additionally, plastics derived from petroleum find uses in packaging and consumer goods. With the growth of urbanization and industrial activities, you can expect continual demand for these products.

Now making smarter financial decisions and preparing for the impact of price fluctuations can be facilitated by having a thorough understanding of the complex relationship between petroleum products and the economy.

Oil is the main component used in petroleum

products, any major fluctuations in oil prices translate directly to changes in fuel costs for vehicles. This implies that higher oil prices mean higher costs to fill up a car's fuel tank.

Many homes and businesses use oil or natural gas for heating and for electricity generation. Price increase on these commodities are often passed on to consumers in the form of higher utility bills.

Companies that produce and transport goods rely heavily on oil and gas. When their costs rise due to higher fuel prices, they frequently increase the prices, they charge consumers for those goods and services which puts a lot of pressure on the economy.

Higher oil prices will definitely imply that consumers and businesses have to spend more on energy and transportation, leaving less money available for other goods and services. This can slow down economic growth.

Now in as much as high prices in petroleum products affect the economy and creates high cost of living environment for the ordinary Ghanaian, when these prices reduce it has the tendency also to pave way for a smooth and less strain in the pockets of the populace.

The reduction in petroleum products causes a reduction in transport and fuel costs in the economy. Consumers will benefit from the lower prices of transport and fuel. This will also effectively increase their income and enable them to spend more on other goods'

The ordinary Ghanaian always desires the cost of petroleum products to reduce to enable him to be able to live within his income.

When this happens the very first thing the populace is happy about is the reduction in transportation fare because the prices of fuel become very affordable.

So feeling the reduction of prices on petroleum

products in the pocket of the ordinary Ghanaian, some consumers in an interviews on the street of Ablekuma, said the reduction has a slight positive impact on their pocket.

This according to them is because even when petroleum products are reduced, prices of goods and services still remain the same because the retail businesses still sell at the price they bought the goods which they term as old stock as at the time the petroleum products where on the rise.

When it comes to the reduction in transport fares, most drivers refuse to reduce the fares with the excuse of very bad roads which can be understood possibly because their cars(trotro)always break down, getting spare parts equally still expensive as well as mechanics charging high fees.

During the first quarter of this year cost of petroleum products have reduced which obviously needs to automatically affect pockets positively but it's not been actually the case because prices of goods and services are still on the high side. People still need more money to be able to make ends meet.

In my opinion, if the concerns of these people are anything to go by, then one will still be spending more instead of less when the prices on these petroleum products reduce. This implies that as to whether the reduction in cost of these product affects the pockets of the ordinary Ghanaian varies from person to person.

The government needs to ensure that the right policies are put in place to ensure that the main purpose of the reduction in the price cost of these petroleum products which is to lessen the burden on the ordinary Ghanaian is achieved. If this is not done petroleum prices will reduce but people will continue to struggle financially.

The Inclusion of Private SHS in the Free SHS Policy: A Promising Prospect for the educational Sector

By: Grace Acheampong



THE Free Senior High School (SHS) policy was introduced in the Ghanaian educational system in 2017 by the government to ensure that every Ghanaian child placed in a public Senior High School receives free education. This policy covers all fees, including boarding, textbooks, meals, and other charges, aiming to alleviate financial burdens on families and increase access to secondary education.

Though the initiative and policy has expanded access to secondary education, a few more qualified students could not be enrolled because of inadequate infrastructure and this has also compelled the authorities to run a shift system. To cater for this challenge, the new Government, maintaining the policy has

decided to bring on board private Second Cycle Educational Institutions which are duly qualified to partner the public sector institutions. It is hoped the inclusion of and participation of the private institutions will further expand access and ultimately cancel the Shift System.

The Free SHS policy was established to address longstanding educational challenges in Ghana, primarily related to access and affordability. Integrating private SHS into the Free SHS policy presents multiple advantages. It would broaden the educational landscape, allowing more students to benefit from government resources, including subsidies for materials, meals, and transportation.

This could lead to a more even distribution of

students across schools, thus alleviating overcrowding in public schools and enhancing competition among all SHS institutions and encourage private schools to maintain high standards, knowing they must meet certain government criteria to qualify for inclusion.

The inclusion could stimulate innovation in teaching methodologies and curricula, as these schools often adopt different approaches to education. This infusion of diverse educational practices could enrich the overall experience for students and teachers alike, fostering a more dynamic learning environment conducive to development and growth.

While the prospect of integrating private SHS into the Free SHS policy is promising, several challenges must be addressed. Concerns over funding allocations, quality assurance, and regulatory frameworks are paramount. Policymakers need to ensure that the inclusion doesn't drain resources from public schools, which still serve the majority of students. Establishing clear guidelines for the quality of education and facility standards will be crucial into maintaining the integrity of the program. Transparent selection criteria for schools, and proper monitoring mechanisms will be essential to ensure that the integration of private institutions into the Free SHS system is effective and equitable.

Additionally, it will be important to maintain

rigorous standards for educational quality, ensuring that accepting government funding does not compromise the conditions that make private schools attractive to families.

In order to resolve any issues and create a clear `i m p l e m e n t a t i o n f r a m e w o r k`, stakeholders—including parents, student, and educators—must have a productive conversation as the policy change is being discussed. The success of the policy can be tested through pilot initiatives, which the government can then progressively expand based on input and results.

The inclusion of private SHS in the Free SHS policy presents a compelling opportunity for the educational system in Ghana. By creating a more inclusive environment that fosters collaboration between public and private schools, the government can enhance access to quality education for all students, ultimately contributing to the nation's long-term development. The future holds promise, and with careful planning and execution, this initiative could be a game-changer in Ghana's educational narrative. The inclusion is expected to start in September 2026 and more than 100 private secondary institutions have been shortlisted to participate in the programme.

Appreciation of the Ghanaian Cedi: A Critical Factor to the Country's Economic Growth

By: Grace Acheampong



A country's economic future is greatly influenced by the value of its currency. In the case of Ghana, the appreciation of the Ghanaian cedi in recent times has emerged as a significant factor that can propel the nation towards sustainable economic growth and stability. Understanding the dynamics of currency appreciation and its effects on the various economic sectors is vital for stakeholders, policymakers, and citizens alike.

The appreciation of a country's currency means its value increases relative to other foreign currencies. For the Ghanaian cedi (GHS), this could translate to needing fewer cedis to buy

the US dollar, the Euro, or the Pound. The Cedi appreciation leads to improved investor confidence, higher foreign reserves, favorable trade balances, and solid fiscal discipline.

The Ghanaian cedi has experienced fluctuations in value over the years, often influenced by factors such as inflation rates, interest rates, and other economic fundamentals. When the cedi appreciates against major currencies, it indicates that the purchasing power of Ghanaians is rising. This increase in the purchasing power enables consumers to buy more goods and services, which stimulates domestic demand. A stronger

cedi can also lower the cost of imports, reducing the overall price level for imported goods and services. This dynamic can lead to decreased inflationary pressure, benefiting consumers across the board.

International investors frequently favor stable currencies; an appreciated cedi may draw in foreign investment. The strengthening of the cedi indicates optimism about the Ghanaian economy. A stable currency makes it more appealing to foreign direct investment (FDI) and creates an atmosphere that is favorable for companies to establish operations in the nation. Increased investment can result in the construction of infrastructure, the transfer of technology, and the creation of jobs—all of which support economic expansion. Enhanced Purchasing Power: Consumers benefit directly as their Cedi's go further. This can drive demand and support the local economy.

On the other hand, the cedi appreciation is not an absolute victory, either. It needs to be handled cautiously to prevent any negative effects. Ghana's economy is mostly dependent on exports, sectors like, oil, gold, cocoa and agriculture. A rising cedi might affect these important industries by making Ghanaian exports comparatively more expensive and may lower demand for export.

Faster translation of foreign currency inflows may result in lower Cedis for remittance-receiving families.

To maintain a favorable balance, the government and Bank of Ghana need to implement sound macroeconomic policies. These could include managing inflation rates, ensuring stable fiscal policies, and promoting trade partnerships that can cushion the economy against adverse effects of currency fluctuations. Furthermore, initiatives aimed at diversifying the economy can help reduce dependency on a limited range of exports, making the country less vulnerable to the effects of currency appreciation.

The appreciation of the Ghanaian cedi stands out as a critical factor influencing the country's overall economic growth. While it presents numerous advantages, such as increased purchasing power and foreign investment attraction, it also necessitates careful management to avoid harming the export sector. By fostering a balanced economic environment through prudent policies, Ghana can harness the benefits of a strong cedi while ensuring sustainable growth for its economy. Stakeholders must remain vigilant to navigate the complexities of currency valuation, contributing to a robust and resilient Ghanaian economy.



Land and Food Security: How Ghana's Land Tenure System Shapes Agriculture Production.

By: Irene Wirekoaa Osei



GHANA'S agricultural landscape is marked by promise and complexity. The country's fertile soils, diverse climate, and hardworking farming communities suggest a future where food security and economic growth go hand in hand. Yet, beneath this promise lies a challenge that shapes every harvest: anchored on the land tenure system.

The Roots of Land Tenure

Land in Ghana is generally governed by a dual system. Customary land, which is managed by traditional authorities such as chiefs and family heads, makes up about 80% of the country's landmass. The remaining portion falls under state control or private ownership through formal legal arrangements. This blend of customary and statutory systems creates a

patchwork of rules and expectations, where tradition and law sometimes work in harmony, but often find themselves at odds.

Customary land tenure is deeply embedded in Ghanaian society. For generations, land has been allocated by chiefs or family elders, often without formal titles or documentation. These arrangements, while culturally resonant, leave many farmers exposed to the risk of eviction or disputes. The absence of clear, enforceable rights discourages long-term investment in the land, as farmers worry that improvements could be lost if ownership changes hands.

The Impact on Agriculture

The effects of insecure tenure ripple through Ghana's agricultural sector. Crop yields for



staples such as maize, rice, and cassava lag behind their potential, despite favorable growing conditions. Smallholder farmers, who produce most of the country's food, often lack the means or knowledge to navigate the complexities of land acquisition and registration.

Women face even greater hurdles. In many regions, customary practices restrict their ability to own or inherit land. This gender gap limits the productivity of a workforce where women play a vital role, both in the fields and in managing household food supplies.

Reform and Resistance

Recognizing the challenges, Ghana has undertaken efforts to reform its land tenure system. The Land Act of 2020 stands out as a comprehensive attempt to bridge the gap between customary and statutory governance in land administration. The law aims to streamline administration, improve record-keeping, and strengthen the rights of tenants and leaseholders. It also promotes digitization of land records to curb fraud and reduce bureaucratic hurdles.

However, progress has been gradual. Limited funding, resistance from traditional authorities, and low public awareness have slowed implementation. Chiefs and family heads, who

see themselves as custodians of communal assets, sometimes view reforms as threats to their authority. While some have embraced land registration as a way to attract investment and minimize conflict, others remain wary of changes that could alter long-standing power dynamics.

Disputes and Their Consequences

Land disputes are a persistent feature of Ghana's rural landscape. Competing claims of land ownership from families, investors, and government authorities often escalate into lengthy legal battles or, in some cases, violent confrontations. The lack of an efficient dispute resolution mechanism means that many farmers spend more time defending their land than cultivating it.

Community-based mediation, supported by local leaders and legal aid organizations, has emerged as a promising alternative. These systems offer quicker, more accessible resolutions and help reduce tensions that can undermine agricultural productivity. Expanding such approaches could allow more farmers to focus on growing food rather than fighting for their right to do so.

The Investor's Dilemma

Large-scale agricultural investment is seen as a pathway to modernization and job creation. Yet, investors face their own set of challenges when acquiring land. Overlapping claims and the need to negotiate with multiple stakeholders can delay projects and deter potential partners. Some companies have opted for lease agreements with customary landowners, but these arrangements require mutual trust and clear terms to avoid future disputes.

Tenure Security and Food Security

Secure land tenure is more than a legal issue; it is a cornerstone of food security. Farmers with documented rights are more likely to adopt improved techniques, access credit, and invest in sustainable practices. In the northern regions of Ghana, where climate change and population growth are increasing pressure on land, secure tenure can help prevent the expansion of farmland into fragile ecosystems.

Clear land rights also open doors for farmers to participate in outgrower schemes, supplying produce to larger agribusinesses under contract. These arrangements provide stable markets and better incomes, creating a virtuous cycle of investment and productivity.

Government Initiatives and Their Limits

The Planting for Food and Jobs agricultural program, by the previous government launched in 2017, offers subsidized inputs and extension services to boost productivity. Yet, without addressing land tenure challenges, the program's impact remains constrained. Farmers who are unsure of their rights may hesitate to invest in improved seeds and fertilizers, knowing that their access to land could be revoked at any time.

Charting a Path Forward

A lasting solution requires collaboration among

traditional leaders, government agencies, civil society, and the private sector. Simplifying land registration, strengthening dispute resolution, and educating farmers about their rights are essential steps. Pilot projects exploring innovative solutions, such as blockchain-based land records or community land trusts, could provide models for broader reform.

Ghana has the natural resources and human talent to transform its agricultural sector. Sustainable food production depends on a tenure system that offers clarity, security, and fairness to all. By addressing these challenges, Ghana can empower its farmers both smallholders and commercial operators to feed the nation and fuel its economic future. The journey toward greater food security begins with the overhaul of the land system and the rights of those who cultivate it.



National Apprenticeship Programme: A Lifeline for Ghana's Unemployed Youth

By: Irene Wirekoaa Osei



ACROSS the nation, the search for employment is a daily struggle for thousands of young people. Many complete their education only to find themselves without a clear path to employment. The frustration is palpable, especially among those who have invested years in school, only to discover that their qualifications do not match the needs of the job market.

In response to this challenge, the government has introduced the National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP), an initiative designed to give young Ghanaians practical skills and a new hope for their future.

The Programme is the product of collaboration between the Ministry of Youth Development and Empowerment and the National Youth Authority. Its mission is straightforward: training young people in trades that are in demand and equipping them with the hands-on experience required to succeed in today's job environment.

In its first phase, NAP aims to train more than 10,000 youth, with plans to reach over 100,000 in the following year. This effort is backed by a substantial government funding of GH¢300 million allocation in the 2025 budget, ensuring that the programme is not just a short-term fix but a sustained effort to change the employment landscape.

A core issue behind youth unemployment in Ghana is the mismatch between education and the realities of the labor market. Schools often focus on theory, leaving graduates with little exposure to the practical skills employers require. Many young people, even after years of study, find themselves ill-prepared for the world of work.

The National Apprenticeship Programme presumably tackles this problem head-on by emphasizing a training model that is 70% practical and 30% theoretical. Apprentices spend the majority of their time learning on the

job, guided by experienced professionals in fields such as carpentry, tailoring, auto mechanics, and hairdressing.

This approach is designed to ensure that graduates are job-ready from day one. By focusing on trades that are in demand, the programme gives participants a direct route to employment or the skills needed to start their own businesses.

Upon completion, apprentices receive nationally recognized certification, making it easier for them to find work or launch their own ventures. The programme goes a step further by providing tools and startup capital, helping new graduates overcome some of the most common barriers to self-employment.

NAP is built on the principle of inclusivity. It is open to all Ghanaians between the ages of 15 to 40, regardless of their educational background. There are no minimum academic requirements, making the programme accessible to school dropouts, secondary and tertiary graduates, and those already working in the informal sector. Special attention is given to women and persons with disabilities, with dedicated quotas to ensure that these groups are well represented. Training is available in both short- and long-term formats, ranging from two to eighteen months, depending on the trade and the participant's previous experience.

To make the programme accessible to everyone, registration can be completed online or in person at local government offices. This ensures that young people from all parts of the country, including rural and underserved communities, have the opportunity to participate. The programme is available in all 261 districts, bringing opportunities closer to those who need them most.

Support for apprentices does not end with training. NAP provides monthly stipends to help trainees cover their living expenses while they learn, easing the financial pressure that often comes with pursuing further education. After graduation, participants receive startup capital and equipment, giving them the resources they

need to start their own businesses or enter the workforce with confidence.

The programme is designed to be sustainable and is integrated with other national development strategies. Partnerships with private companies, civil society organizations, and local authorities create a support network for young entrepreneurs and job seekers. This collaborative approach also helps to formalize Ghana's traditional apprenticeship system, which has long played a role in training the country's workforce but has often lacked structure and recognition.

The training model used by NAP draws on successful examples from other countries, where apprenticeships have helped reduce youth unemployment by bridging the gap between education and employment.

In Ghana, the programme is tailored to local needs, with training delivered in languages and formats that are accessible to participants. The involvement of national training authorities helps ensure that the quality of instruction meets both local and international standards.

For many young Ghanaians, the National Apprenticeship Programme represents more than just a training opportunity. It is a chance to gain independence, build confidence, and contribute to their communities development.

The challenge of youth unemployment in Ghana is complex and will not be solved overnight. However, the National Apprenticeship Programme offers a new direction; one that values practical skills, opens doors to self-employment, and provides sustained support for young people. By investing in the potential of its youth, Ghana is laying the groundwork for a stronger, more resilient economy.

The true impact of the programme will be measured in the lives it changes and the communities it strengthens. As the programme grows, its success will be seen not just in statistics, but in the stories of young Ghanaians who find their footing and build their dreams.

Resetting Ghana onto the Path of Economic Growth and Prosperity: The Key Indicators

By: Judith Twumwaa



Introduction

Ghana's economic growth and prosperity have faced challenges in recent years, necessitating a strategic reset to achieve sustainable development.

This article explores key indicators that can guide Ghana towards economic growth and prosperity, highlighting areas for policy intervention, investment, and sustainable development.

Rebounding Growth: GDP Performance and Outlook

One of the clearest signs of economic revival is

the country's recent Gross Domestic Product (GDP) performance. In the first quarter of 2025, Ghana's economy recorded a robust 5.3% year-over-year growth, exceeding the 4.9% recorded in the same period of 2024 and surpassing earlier full-year growth projections of 4.5% to 4.8% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2025).

This promising performance suggests that Ghana may outperform even the most optimistic forecasts. What is noteworthy is that this growth comes at a time when the government is exercising fiscal restraint, a sign that economic expansion is not being driven solely by public spending, but also by structural

strength and increased private sector activity.

Macroeconomic Stability: A Balanced Approach
Economic growth is only as sustainable as the macroeconomic environment that supports it. Ghana's recent recovery has been underpinned by a firm commitment to stability through disciplined fiscal policy and tight monetary controls.

The first quarter of 2025 exemplifies this balance. Even with limited government spending, the economy expanded, and inflationary pressures have continued to decline. Producer price inflation, for instance, stood at 10.2% in May 2025, an encouraging sign of controlled cost increases across industries.

Taming Inflation: A Prerequisite for Prosperity

Inflation control remains a cornerstone of Ghana's economic strategy. Projections indicate that inflation will decline from around 23.5% at the beginning of 2025 to 11.1% by the

end of the year. This sharp fall is largely due to effective monetary tightening policies from the Bank of Ghana and improved fiscal management.

A drop in inflation enhances consumer purchasing power, stabilizes markets, and strengthens investor confidence. This trajectory bodes well for households, businesses, and the overall economic climate.

Fiscal Discipline and Debt Sustainability

Ghana's economic reset also hinges on improved fiscal health. The fiscal deficit is projected to reduce to 4.2% of GDP in 2025, down from an estimated 4.9% in 2024. This improvement reflects the government's concerted efforts to enhance domestic revenue collection, streamline public spending, and implement much-needed tax reforms.

On the debt front, Ghana completed domestic debt restructuring in 2023 and continues to negotiate external debt under an IMF-supported program. These steps are important



in restoring fiscal credibility and ensuring long-term debt sustainability.

Structural Transformation and Diversification

Economic growth must be inclusive and broad-based. Ghana's structural transformation agenda focuses on building a diversified and competitive economy. Major infrastructure investments, support for Agro-industrialization, and skill development initiatives are helping shift the economic focus from raw material exports to value-added production.

The Ghana Economic Transformation Project (GETP) exemplifies this effort, fostering innovation, expanding private sector growth, and encouraging investment in non-resource sectors such as manufacturing and services.

Digital Transformation and Innovation

Ghana's digital ecosystem is rapidly evolving, supported by stronger internet infrastructure, national cybersecurity policies, and a renewed push for digital literacy. These efforts are transforming how Ghanaians interact with government services, education, and commerce.

This digital shift not only creates jobs but also enhances transparency and efficiency in both the public and private sectors, laying the groundwork for a modern and resilient economy.

Trade, Investment, and Global Integration

International trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) remain vital engines of growth. A new trade agreement with China, allowing Ghanaian exports to enter Chinese markets duty-free, is expected to significantly boost export revenues, especially in agriculture, mining, and oil.

China remains Ghana's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade surpassing US\$11 billion in 2024. Ghana is also working to position itself as a regional trade hub under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), creating new opportunities for cross-border business and regional value chains.

Social Inclusion and Good Governance: Building the Foundation

Sustainable prosperity cannot be achieved without inclusive development and sound governance. The government's 2025 Budget Statement, themed "Resetting The Economy For The Ghana We Want," places strong emphasis on transparency, accountability, and institutional reform.

Anti-corruption initiatives, property rights enforcement, and efforts to improve public sector efficiency are crucial steps toward fostering a more trustworthy investment climate.

Tackling Poverty and Unemployment

Economic and Social programs such as Planting for Food and Jobs and various SME support schemes are helping reduce poverty and create employment.

However, youth unemployment and regional disparities persist. Targeted programs to empower young people and invest in underserved regions will be essential to creating a more equitable economy.

Conclusion

As Ghana moves forward, continuous tracking of key indicators, GDP growth, inflation, debt levels, investment flows, and social outcomes will be essential in ensuring that progress is not only sustained but shared across all segments of society.

Reviewing the 1992 Constitution After 32 Years: The Prospects and Challenges in Consolidating Ghana's Democracy

By: Judith Twumwaa

Introduction

Ghana's 1992 Constitution, which established the Fourth Republic, has guided the nation for over 32 years. This era has seen significant democratic progress, including peaceful transfers of power and a stable multiparty system, setting Ghana apart in a region often marked by political instability. However, as the country matures, a critical assessment of this foundational legal framework reveals both its strengths and areas needing urgent reform to further consolidate its democracy.

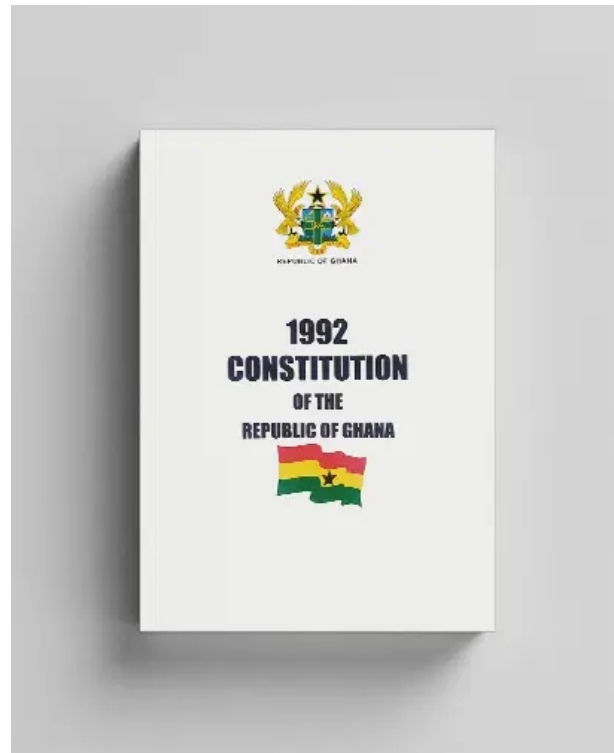
The 1992 Constitution was born out of a desire to transition from a history of military coups and political turmoil to a stable democratic system. It enshrines fundamental human rights, establishes a separation of powers among the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary, and provides a framework for multiparty politics. Over the years, it has facilitated several peaceful electoral transitions, an impressive feat by African standards. Yet, the evolution of Ghanaian society and contemporary realities together with 32 years of the 1992 Constitution practice demand a re-evaluation of certain provisions and practices.

Challenges

Despite its successes, the 1992 Constitution faces challenges and shortcomings that have become central to the reform discourse.

Institutional Vulnerabilities and Corruption

Ghana's democratic institutions encounter challenges, particularly concerning an independent judiciary often hampered by resource constraints, corruption allegations, and political interference. This undermines public trust in the Judiciary and the Judiciary's ability to uphold constitutional principles. Other



state institutions are sometimes seen as serving narrow elite interests rather than the broader public good.

Gaps in Rights Protection

While the Constitution outlines strong human rights provisions, critics argue it lacks explicit guarantees for economic, social, and cultural rights. The absence of these rights can hinder inclusive development and exacerbate inequalities. Advocacy groups have highlighted the need for amendments to address these gaps and ensure comprehensive human well-being.

Stalled Reform Processes

Ghana previously has initiated constitutional reviews, notably by the Constitutional Review

Commission (CRC) between 2010 and 2011, which proposed 478 recommendations. However, many of these suggestions have stalled due to political disagreements and a lack of sustained political will, perpetuating existing inequalities and undermining public confidence in the democratic process.

Prospects for Comprehensive Reform

Despite these challenges, discussions around reviewing the 1992 Constitution present opportunities for deepening Ghana's democracy. A well-executed reform process can address historical weaknesses and ensure the Constitution remains relevant.

Enhancing Separation of Powers and Accountability

One key area for reform is rebalancing power among the three branches of government. Amendments could reduce the executive's excessive power, empowering the legislature and judiciary to act as stronger checks on government authority. This rebalancing would enhance accountability and governance efficiency.

Promoting Decentralization and Local Governance

Strengthening decentralization by transferring more power and resources to local authorities would enable local governments to better meet community needs and foster citizen participation in decision-making. This approach could bridge the gap between central policies and local realities.

Broadening Rights and Inclusivity

Incorporating explicit economic, social, and cultural rights into the Constitution would represent a significant step toward equity. By guaranteeing access to essential services, Ghana could further reduce vulnerabilities and discrimination, aligning the Constitution with global human rights standards.

Improving Public Trust and Participation

A transparent constitutional review process involving broad public consultation can enhance the legitimacy of reforms. Ensuring diverse stakeholder voices are considered will help build public trust and encourage an active citizenry.

Prospects for the Future: Consolidating Ghana's Democracy

The review of Ghana's 1992 Constitution is not just an academic exercise but a critical moment for reinforcing the nation's democratic foundations. Success hinges on sustained political will, meaningful public participation, and commitment to implementing substantive reforms.

Ghana's commitment to constitutionalism, exemplified by adherence to term limits, showcases its democratic resilience, especially in a region where such norms are often challenged. However, true consolidation of democracy requires moving beyond procedural norms to achieve substantive governance, where accountability and citizen rights are fully realized.

Continued advocacy by civil society organizations (CSOs) for transparency and accountability is crucial. Strengthening civic education will empower citizens to engage actively in constitutional reforms, ensuring the process reflects national aspirations.

Conclusion

The review of the 1992 Constitution reveals a mixed legacy of achievements and challenges. While Ghana has made noteworthy progress in its democratic journey, issues such as corruption, electoral integrity, and youth engagement require urgent attention. By addressing these challenges and seizing growth opportunities, Ghana can reinforce its democratic foundations and inspire positive change in the region. The journey is ongoing, and the collective commitment of all Ghanaians will be vital to the success of this endeavor.

Inter-Ethnic Conflicts in Our Communities: A Bane to Development and Progress

By: Margaret Adjeley Sowah



Introduction

Inter-ethnic conflicts have become a pervasive issue in many societies, undermining development and progress. These conflicts arise from a multitude of factors, including historical grievances, competition for resources, and cultural misunderstandings. The consequences can be devastating, stunting economic growth, disrupting social cohesion, and leading to widespread violence.

Many inter-ethnic conflicts are rooted in historical injustices and/or power imbalances. In many cases, colonial legacies established broad-classed ethnic identities that instilled marked feelings of resentment and animosity. For example, in many African nations, colonial governments created arbitrary borders that

combined different ethnic identities with disparate histories many of which have caused conflicts in post-colonial states.

Inter-ethnic conflicts also have the potential to worsen through the political exploitation of ethnic identities. Leaders in many conflict areas exploit ethnic identities to garner support, creating polarization which can lead to violence. Such political exploitation over time does not only extend existing tensions but can also create an atmosphere that renders conciliation difficult.

The Impact of Inter-Ethnic Conflicts on Development

Inter-ethnic conflicts can severely disrupt economic activities. Violence can lead to the

destruction of property, loss of livelihoods, and displacement of people. When people are displaced and instances of destruction are widespread, both investment and economic activity are curtailed. For instance, the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia did not only result in loss of life but also devastated their economies, hindering development for decades.

Furthermore, conflicts erode social cohesion and trust among community members. When people are divided along ethnic lines, cooperation becomes challenging, and community projects aimed at improving livelihoods or infrastructure often fail. This destruction can lead to a vicious cycle of mistrust and conflict, making reconciliation difficult.

Inter-ethnic conflict can also cause humanitarian crises including mass displacement or refugee migration. Individuals affected by violence, often face shortages of food, clean water, and healthcare, exacerbating poverty and suffering. For instance, the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar, where we witnessed mass displacement from Myanmar and a humanitarian crisis that has led to global outcries over the impact of the conflict.

Strategies for Promoting Peace and Development

Promoting engagement between ethnic groups is important for building trust and understanding. Forums, cultural events, and educational events can help break down stereotypes and promote mutual respect. Engaging youth in these initiatives can particularly be effective, as they are often the future leaders and influencers within their communities.

Moreover, ensuring that all ethnic groups have a voice in governance can help mitigate grievances. This includes representation in decision-making processes and equitable distribution of resources. Policies that promote inclusivity can reduce feelings of marginalization and resentment, fostering a sense of belonging among all community members.

The establishment of mechanisms for conflict resolution is critical. This could involve dragging in mediators from the community, who can be trusted by all sides. Having local leaders trained in conflict resolution skills can empower communities to resolve conflicts before things escalate to violence.

Encouraging economic collaboration among different ethnic groups can also promote peace. Joint economic projects, like cooperatives that involve members of different ethnicities can help create interdependency and reduce competition. By working together towards common goals, communities can build stronger relationships and enhance their overall development.

Conclusion

Inter-ethnic conflicts pose a barrier to development and progress in many communities. Understanding the root causes of these conflicts and their impacts on development is crucial for developing effective strategies to promote peace and cooperation. By fostering dialogue, ensuring inclusive governance, establishing conflict resolution mechanisms, and encouraging economic collaboration, communities can work towards a more harmonious and prosperous future. Ultimately, avoiding inter-ethnic conflicts is not just a moral imperative but a vital component of sustainable development.

The Onset of the Rains: How Prepared Are We for Our Sanitation Challenges?

By: Margaret Adjeley Sowah



WHEN the first droplets of rain begin to fall, the air is filled with a refreshing scent that signals the arrival of the rainy season. For many, it is a time of joy and rejuvenation, filled water tanks, cooled air, and the promise of a fertile landscape. But alongside these blessings, another reality surfaces: overflowing drains, clogged gutters, waterborne diseases, and the recurring sanitation crisis that we conveniently forget during the dry months. While rain is essential for agricultural growth and replenishing water sources, it can also worsen existing sanitation issues, particularly in urban areas.

One of the most immediate impacts of heavy rainfall is flooding. Overflowing sewage

systems and blocked drains can pollute drinking water sources. In many places, this does not only poses health risks but also creates difficulties in everyday life, leading to further complications in sanitation. Flooding can wash away solid waste, potentially carrying harmful substances into water bodies, further polluting and posing health threats. The most affected are typically those areas with limited sanitation facilities, as rainwater can carry pathogens directly into homes and settlements. With stagnant water serving as a breeding ground for mosquitoes, the incidence of malaria and dengue fever increases. Waterborne diseases like cholera and typhoid fever can spread rapidly in unsanitary conditions. Communities that lack proper sanitation

infrastructure face the highest risks, often resulting in outbreaks that strain local health systems. The World Health Organization emphasizes that clean water and sanitation are vital for health. During the rainy season, the surge in disease transmission highlights the urgent need for effective sanitation measures.

Upgrading drainage systems, expanding waste management services, and creating public awareness campaigns are essential steps towards addressing the sanitation challenges. However, the pace of these improvements often lags behind the increasing severity of weather patterns. In some regions, innovative solutions are being adopted, such as permeable pavements that allow rainwater to seep into the ground and reduce flooding. Green infrastructure, like rain gardens and bioswales, can also help manage stormwater effectively.

Community involvement plays a vital role in sanitation preparedness. Community groups can mobilize residents to participate in clean-up exercises, educate them about hygiene practices, and encourage the reporting of sanitation issues. Empowering communities to take ownership of their surroundings can significantly mitigate the effects of the rainy season. Sanitation and hygiene drives can raise awareness about the need for sanitation measures, which are especially essential during rainy days. Community efforts can also help distribute necessary materials, such as water purification tablets and hygiene kits.

Governments must prioritize sanitation in their disaster preparedness plans. This includes establishing quick response teams for emergencies, investing in sustainable waste management technologies, and collaborating with NGOs to deliver essential services. Effective communication strategies can also keep communities informed about potential risks and safety measures.

Technology is increasingly being used to help solve sanitation problems. Smart sensors can monitor water quality and drainage systems, providing real-time data that helps authorities respond swiftly to potential issues. Mobile apps can facilitate the reporting of sanitation problems, empowering citizens to take action and alert local governments.

As we welcome the rains, it is imperative to recognize that our sanitation challenges require immediate attention. Comprehensive planning, community involvement, and government action are crucial in ensuring that we are not only prepared but resilient in the face of these challenges.

While rains can bring life and development, they also bring precarious sanitation challenges that must be addressed beforehand. If united, governments, individuals, and communities can establish a healthier environment that thrives even in the wettest months. Let us not wait until the initial floodwaters rise; instead, let us act now to safeguard our health and well-being.

120 days of President Mahama's administration: So far so very good.

By: Kuagbenu Matthias Yao



PRESIDENT John Dramani Mahama's first 120 days in office were characterized by a series of decisive decisions and policy interventions that set a new tone in governance in Ghana. He did not waste time in nominating and getting a complete cabinet confirmed within a fortnight, which showed that he was serious about having a leaner but more efficient government. The reduction in the number of ministers and presidential staffers was symbolic and showed a broader commitment to austerity and responsible leadership. In his first year in office, President Mahama introduced a tight Code of Conduct for public officers, including a ban on government appointees taking over state assets, this move by the president, is viewed by most analysts as a naked response to public pressure over corruption and ethics scandals within the government.

Economically, the government did not hesitate to scrap unpopular taxes such as the Electronic Transaction Levy (E-levy) and the 10% betting tax. These provided relief to individuals and businesses immediately, signaling the government's pro-people economic management style. Understanding that what was needed was an integrated economic plan, President Mahama convened a National Economic Dialogue, which gathered the stakeholders and experts to evolve a long-term recovery plan that addresses Ghana's short-term fiscal challenges and builds the pillars for durable growth.

The introduction of social intervention programs and sustainable economic growth have also been at the forefront of the administration's early agenda. The launch of

the "Tree for Life" reforestation program and the "Blue Water" project to save water supplies highlighted a new drive towards conservation. In education, the introduction of the "No Fee Stress" scheme for first year tertiary students in public universities to take the cost burden off parents, and the introduction of free sanitary pads for female pupils at the primary and secondary levels are already on the ground. There was also a National Education Dialogue to reshape policy direction and improve the quality and accessibility of education across the country.

President Mahama's anti-corruption stance has also moved from rhetoric to action by his government. An international company is auditing financial commitments made on the stalled National Cathedral project, investigations into the African Games expenditure and the recruitment into security services are ongoing. The government has even reopened those unresolved violent crimes and murders, such as the killing of investigative journalist Ahmed Suale, election-related violence deaths, and other politically sensitive homicide cases showing hunger for justice and accountability.

At the local government level, President Mahama has directed Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) to put

integrity, sanitation, and people-centered development first. All government appointees have been directed to make public declarations of their assets. The district sanitation league table will also be rolled out to promote healthy competitive sanitation at the district level. The government is also bringing forward a significant policy shift with the proposal to introduce the election of MMDCEs from 2026, as a move towards enhancing democratic accountability at the local level.

Public and expert assessment of government performance has overall been positive, with impartial polls placing government achievement of the 120-day social contract at between 54% and 76%. Most analysts have commended the speedy fulfillment of promises, though some have also shown that there is still more work to be done.

In short, President Mahama's first 120 days have been characterized by boldness, transparency, and belief in collective advancement. All is not yet ideal, but the early dividends suggest a government determined to deliver on its mandate and redirect Ghana's destiny towards unity and prosperity. The coming months will tell whether the momentum will be sustained, but for now the judgment is unequivocal: so far, so very good.



The significance of ORAL on President Mahama's fight against corruption

By: Kuagbenu Matthias Yao



OPERATION Recover All Loot (ORAL) is the signature of President John Dramani Mahama's second-term corruption crusade in Ghana. Labeled as one of the main pillars of his anti-corruption campaign, ORAL aimed to deal with the perennial challenges of stolen national assets and money that have thwarted Ghana's development and undermined government confidence among the people over the decades. The project was widely highlighted in Mahama's 120-day social contract as a message that he aimed at making corruption a costly and unwanted activity for government officials.

ORAL is worth its value in terms of

comprehensive mandate and leadership at the level of chief executives. The project is guided by a five-member committee with various specialities such as legal, auditing, law enforcement, and investigative journalism backgrounds. This multi-party committee has the mandate to screen suspected corruption cases, particularly from previous governments, and prioritized recovering embezzled public funds and assets. The committee's role is not just to investigate; it gathers evidence, offers protection for whistleblowers, and ensures serious allegations are passed on to the Attorney General for prosecution.

The urgency to fulfill ORAL's objective is also underscored by startling disclosures in recent

reports such as the Auditor-General's 2023 audit, which reported financial irregularities in public institutions amounting to billions of cedis. Several of these irregularities have been discovered as recoverable, and this puts the scope of work and what can be accomplished with a viable asset recovery program into perspective. The ORAL committee's initial scan of thirty-six headline-grabbing cases alone uncovered over \$20 billion of recoverable assets, including undervalued sales of state land and funds lost to controversial projects and procurement improprieties.



President Mahama's ORAL plan goes further than asset recovery itself. He has pledged to bring tough accountability, including prosecuting the wrongdoers and introducing a ban on the purchase of state assets by politically exposed individuals and government appointees. These reforms intend to close loopholes that have previously aided corruption and provide confidence to Ghanaians that no one is beyond the law. Mahama has continually reaffirmed that Ghana will no longer be a haven for corruption and that his administration is committed to reaffirming integrity in public administration.

Despite its high goals, ORAL has not been free from controversy. Opposition parties have raised concerns over the legality of establishing the committee and whether it will be politically charged or otherwise. Others say that the initiative could be a duplication of function by already established anti-corruption agencies or utilized as a political tool for revenge. But its defenders respond that ORAL rests on constitutional principles of accountability and good government, and that its focus on

evidence-based inquiry and collaboration with tried institutions is essential to genuine progress.

The broader significance of ORAL is for Ghana's economic and social development. By recovering stolen resources, the program is intended to contribute to available resources for priority sectors such as education, health, and infrastructure. This fiscal dimension is significant in a context where government funds are lumped together and where corruption bites most emphatically at the grassroots level.

Lastly, ORAL is a test and challenge for President Mahama's administration. It shall succeed depending on transparent implementation, adherence to the rule of law, and political will to see prosecutions and recoveries through. Successful, ORAL can establish a new gold standard for anti-corruption in Ghana and be emulated as a model by other countries with comparable issues. If it does not succeed, it will be added to the long queue of broken promises in the fight against corruption. The coming months will determine if ORAL is able to accomplish its high mission and actually transform Ghana's war on corruption.

Unveiling Ghana's Unifying Spirit through our culture and traditions

By: Priscilla Osei-wusu Nimako



IN Ghana's lively democracy, political talk often takes center stage. You hear strong arguments, see excited gatherings, and sometimes even sharp disagreements. Ghana, like many democratic nations, experiences political division among its citizens, particularly in the run-up to elections. However, under all of this political fervor is a strong and enduring sense of unity.

Ghanaians share an identity that goes beyond party lines and different ideas. This strong connection isn't just an idea; you can see it in everyday life, it's especially clear in community events like festivals, funerals, and in the common spirit of being welcoming and sharing cultural values. These traditions act like strong

glue, making political differences disappear and reminding Ghanaians of their shared past and future.

Ghana's many festivals are prime examples of this unity; these celebrations go beyond cultural performances, as shown by the lively gathering of chiefs at the Hogbetsotso Za of the Anlo Ewes, the distinctive yam-eating events at the Homowo Festival of the Ga people, and the grand Adaye Kese of the Ashantis. No matter the political affiliation, these gatherings are important community events that bring together families, groups, and entire towns. During these times, people set aside concerns about party loyalty and focus instead on their shared heritage, honoring their ancestors and showing

gratitude to one another.

The celebration of the Homowo Festival, which commemorates the people of Ga ancestry over starvation, comes to mind. Political opinions are less significant than the community's common identity as the people of Ga unite to celebrate cheerful parades and sprinkle kpekple, a traditional dish. Similarly, the people of Ashanti great display of culture and reverence for the Asantehene (Ashanti King) during the Akwasidae Festival foster re-union a sense of pride and unity that transcends political differences.

These festivals are times for reunion when stories of strength, migration, and success are told again. This helps develop a common narrative that unites the people. The festivals play a traditional role, where traditional leaders, who are often seen as neutral guardians of culture, play a key role in bringing people together and making peace; they remind everyone of the important values that guide their society. The shared eating, drumming, dancing, and storytelling create an atmosphere where differences are put aside for a moment, and the feeling of being 'Ghanaian' takes over.

Another event that brings people together is the Ghanaian way of observing funerals. Far from being only sad events, funerals in Ghana are big social gatherings that show the close connections of family and community support. When someone dies, it's not just a family's loss but the whole community's shared sadness. People travel long distances, often from different areas and with different political affiliations, to show their respect, offer comfort, and help the grieving family. The huge number of people who attend, the community cooking, the sharing of things, and the shared mourning rituals all show a deep sense of care and connection that overrides any political association.

Fulfilling social obligations, honoring the deceased, and strengthening links among the community are the key objectives. Many times,

throughout the nation, this silent but powerful act of solidarity demonstrates that, despite political differences, Ghanaians are one people bound together by the same ideals of compassion, reverence for elders, and community service.

Beyond these big life events, several other things quietly but increasingly make national unity stronger. The common Ghanaian spirit of being welcoming, as *akwaba*, in the Akan language, is given to everyone, no matter their background or political views. A stranger is often welcomed, offered food and drink, and talked to in a friendly way; this natural warmth and openness create a feeling of shared humanity that often smooths out the rough edges of political competition.

Additionally, other important reminiscences of our unifying factors as Ghanaians lie in our national symbols, such as the national flag, the celebration of national events, sporting activities, among others, regardless of our political or ethnic differences and divisions.

Religion, too, often acts as a unifying force. Though Ghana has many different religions, with a large number being either Christians or Muslims, people from these different faiths generally get along well. Religious leaders often preach messages of peace, understanding, and unity, encouraging their followers to live together happily, no matter their political choices. Common spiritual values, like kindness, fairness, and community responsibility, are often across the different faiths and help bridge any divide.

While Ghana's political scene remains active, and often characterized by different political activities, reflecting the different political ideologies, the country's basic unity stays strong, anchored on our common unifying factors and experience through our culture, values, religion, traditions and social events. These factors consistently strengthen the fabric of our national identity and a sense of pride in our common heritage as Ghanaians.

Ghana's Rail Revival: Paving the Way for Progress Beyond Roads

By: Priscilla Osei-wusu Nimako

Ghana has grown used to the constant hum of trot-tros, the never-ending crawl of traffic on major routes, and the constant dust created by vehicles. Road transportation has been the unchallenged monarch of mobility in the West African nation, Ghana, for decades, allowing people and goods to be transported from busy urban areas to isolated agricultural heartlands.

However, this comes at a high cost: persistent traffic jams, high number of frequently fatal accidents, increasing fuel consumption, and serious environmental pollution.

Reviving the railway transportation system, which has been a long-neglected alternative that is resurfacing as a ray of hope as Ghana struggles with the demands of sustainable development and economic diversification.

Ghana's railway system, which formerly served as the backbone of colonial transportation system by linking cocoa plantations and mineral-rich areas to port cities, is now mostly in poor condition and a holdover from a bygone period. Large tracts of rails are overgrown, stations are run-down, and rolling stock is rusting as a result of decades of underinvestment, bad maintenance, and a lack of strategic vision.

What remains is a skeletal system, far from meeting the demands of a rapidly growing economy and population. However, the potential for a modern, efficient railway system to transform Ghana's transportation landscape is immense, offering a viable, indeed crucial, alternative to the overburdened road network.

First and foremost, when it comes to transporting large quantities of commodities across extended distances, rail transit is simply more economical. If petroleum, manganese, bauxite, and cocoa goods were transported by



rail instead of hundreds of vehicles from inland production locations to the ports of Takoradi or Tema, just think of the efficiency improvements. This would not only reduce the cost of doing business for industries but also alleviate the wear and tear on roads, extending their lifespan and reducing maintenance expenditure.

Additionally, by making it easier to transport agricultural products to markets and drawing in new investment to previously unreachable places, a strong railway network might unleash the economic potential of neglected areas.

In addition to bulk goods, passenger rail provides an intercity travel option that is safer, more comfortable, and frequently quicker. There is an urgent need for safer alternatives, as seen by Ghana's horrifying traffic accident statistics. Example: In the first half of 2025, Ghana experienced a significant increase in road accidents, with 7,289 crashes resulting in 1,504 deaths and 8,364 injuries according to the National Road Safety Authority. This represents a 21.6% increase in fatalities compared to the same period in 2024. Trains have a much-reduced chance of accidents than the hectic nature of road travel because of their dedicated tracks and controlled settings.

In addition, a reliable passenger rail service could reduce the stress and unpredictability associated with long-distance bus journeys,

fostering greater domestic tourism and improving the quality of life for commuters.

Rail makes an equally compelling case from an environmental standpoint. In comparison to road vehicles, trains are substantially more fuel-efficient per tonne-kilometer or passenger-kilometer, particularly when they are propelled by electricity or more efficient diesel engines.

As part of Ghana's commitments to combat climate change, an important portion of passenger and freight traffic would be transferred from roadways to rail, which would reduce greenhouse gas releases. This would lead to a cleaner air in cities and a more sustainable transportation footprint overall.

The social dividends of a railway renaissance are also noteworthy. Large-scale railway projects are labor-intensive, creating thousands of direct and indirect jobs in construction, engineering, maintenance, and operations.

The creation of jobs can give Ghana's growing youth population much-needed possibilities. Better connection can also promote stronger national cohesion by making it simpler for people to travel across different locations and exchange ideas and cultures.

However, the path to a revitalized railway system is not without its hurdles. The primary challenge lies in securing the substantial financial investment required for infrastructure development, rolling stock acquisition, and human capital development.

International loans, strategic investments from multilateral institutions, and public-private partnerships will all be essential. Both political will and long-term planning are essential; railway projects need time and persistent dedication throughout political cycles.

Technical expertise, both in railway engineering and operational management, needs to be cultivated locally, possibly through partnerships with experienced international railway

companies. Issues such as land acquisition and the potential for corruption must also be addressed transparently and effectively to ensure projects are delivered on time and within budget.

Ghana can draw lessons from other African nations that have embarked on ambitious railway modernization programs. Ethiopia's Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway, a standard-gauge electric railway, has significantly boosted trade and connectivity. Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) has changed the flow of people and goods between Mombasa and Nairobi in a similar way. Despite their inherent difficulties, these projects show how smart railway investment may have a revolutionary effect. Despite being narrow-gauge, Ghana's ancient railway lines offer a base network that can be improved and extended rather than beginning from scratch.

The way forward demands a comprehensive national railway development plan, integrated with broader economic and spatial planning. This plan should prioritize key economic corridors, such as the Western Railway Line connecting mineral-rich areas to Takoradi Port, and the Eastern Railway Line linking Accra to Kumasi, a major commercial hub. Investment in modern signaling systems, durable tracks, and efficient rolling stock is paramount. Also, regulatory frameworks must be strengthened to ensure safety, efficiency, and fair competition.

Ghana is in an essential moment. Its road-centric transportation system's shortcomings are becoming more and more apparent, impeding economic development, risking safety, and rising environmental issues. A really sustainable and prosperous future requires a deliberate, ongoing investment in modernizing the railway system. Ghana can create a more robust, effective, and environmentally friendly transportation system by energizing its iron spine, opening the door to a new era of growth and connectivity. The time for a railway revival in Ghana has come.

Ghana's Anti-Corruption Next Steps Post AU Review

By: Richard Aniagyei



AUABC

African Union Advisory
Board Against Corruption

THE African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption's (AUABC) State Party Review Mission to Ghana (June 1-6, 2025) has ended, but its impact on the country's governance landscape continues to unfold. Rather than marking a conclusion, the mission serves as a starting point for reflection on Ghana's multi-layered anti-corruption strategy and planning the next phase of the continental peer review.

Ghana's foundation, built on its early ratification of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC), underwent thorough examination. The AUABC delegation met with top officials, including the Office of the President, the Ministry of Justice, and the Attorney-General's Office, as well as specialized bodies such as the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). The Ghana Audit Service presented its financial oversight work, while Parliamentary Committees demonstrated their monitoring role. The review confirmed that the national architecture, designed for governance, is "rooted in ethics, justice, and the unwavering resolve to combat corruption," while identifying

areas that require strengthening.

The mission focused on sectors where corruption is perceived to be strong. Detailed discussions occurred with the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) and the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), which outlined efforts against complex financial crimes. The Public Procurement Authority (PPA) underwent examination of its mission to clean up government contracts, while the Registrar-General's Department and Judicial Service discussed reducing bureaucratic corruption and improving judicial integrity. These sector-specific meetings provided the AUABC with concrete data on progress and ongoing challenges, translating anti-corruption efforts into measurable impacts on economic efficiency and public service delivery.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) like the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) and Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) played an important role in the review. Their ground-level perspectives – monitoring services, mobilizing communities, educating citizens, and reporting corruption – provided vital reality checks against policy statements. Their participation

embodied the principle that the fight "is not the task of a few, but the solemn duty of us all." Their testimonies offered valuable insights into how corruption affects society, as well as the effectiveness of local reporting systems for corruption-related issues (like hotlines or offices) at the local level.

The mission concluded with the High-Level National Anti-Corruption Conference on June 6th, themed "Revitalizing the Anti-Corruption Architecture in Africa: Ghana's Accountability Journey." This dynamic meeting brought together AU officials, national leaders, sectoral regulators, frontline agencies, CSOs, Development Partners, and citizens. The conference, built consensus, distilled the review's preliminary insights, and shaped actionable recommendations while serving as a platform for peer learning.

For Ghana, the immediate task is translating the mission's observations into concrete action.

This involves implementing the AUABC's forthcoming strategic recommendations, strengthening coordination among diverse actors from the OSP and CHRAJ to EOCO and grassroots CSOs, providing adequate resources for anti-corruption agencies, improving accessible reporting channels with strong whistle-blower protection, and deepening collaboration with development partners.

The State Party Review was an important diagnostic and springboard. Ghana's national framework provides structure, sectoral reforms target vulnerabilities, and local vigilance supplies essential pressure and feedback. The effectiveness of this three-tiered approach will determine whether Ghana capitalizes on this opportunity to revitalize its anti-corruption architecture. The continent witnessed Ghana's commitment in June; the world now watches for resolve demonstrated in the months ahead.

Can Ghana Fix Its Anti-Corruption Gaps? AUABC Report Will Tell

By: Richard Aniagyei



THE African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC) has completed its assessment of Ghana's anti-corruption framework and returned home, leaving the government to prepare its response to what promises to be a detailed evaluation of the country's efforts to combat graft. The AUABC, established by the African Union to monitor how member states implement the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC), conducts these periodic reviews to ensure countries are living up to their continental commitments and to provide technical guidance where gaps exist.

The review forms part of the AUABC's mandate to monitor how member states implement the AUCPCC, a treaty Ghana has championed since its adoption. The board's role extends beyond mere oversight, serving as both

watchdog and advisor by examining existing anti-corruption institutions, assessing their effectiveness, and recommending improvements that align with continental best practices.

During the mission, government entities across the spectrum engaged extensively with the review team. The Office of the President outlined strategic direction while the Office of the Special Prosecutor presented its prosecutorial mandate and ongoing cases. The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice elaborated on its administrative justice role, particularly asset declaration processes for public officials. The Economic and Organised Crime Office showcased financial crime investigations and asset recovery efforts, while institutions like the Public Procurement Authority, Financial

Intelligence Centre, Ghana Audit Service, and Registrar-General's Department presented their respective frameworks. Parliamentary oversight committees contributed by explaining their scrutiny functions, particularly the Public Accounts Committee's role in following up on audit findings.

The government now faces the demanding task of transforming recommendations that emerge from the AUABC report into concrete policy changes and operational improvements. This requires establishing clear coordination mechanisms, with the Office of the President, Ministry of Justice, and Attorney-General's Office providing unified leadership to prevent fragmentation that often weakens anti-corruption efforts. Each participating agency will need to translate the board's expected recommendations into specific adjustments within their respective mandates.

Ghana's anti-corruption landscape reveals several persistent challenges that the AUABC review likely examined closely. Despite the Public Procurement Authority's regulatory framework established under the Public Procurement Act 2003 (Act 663), reports of bribe demands in contract processes continue to surface, suggesting implementation gaps. The Economic and Organised Crime Office faces ongoing challenges in asset recovery rates, with tracking assets proving difficult due to low public awareness of the asset recovery regime.

The Judicial Service continues to grapple with delays in corruption cases that affect justice delivery. While Ghana has had the Whistleblower Act since 2006, Parliament passed the Whistleblower (Amendment) Bill in

2023 to address weaknesses in the original legislation, yet implementation gaps remain. When the Ghana Audit Service identifies irregularities in public spending, follow-up mechanisms often prove inadequate, as evidenced by the recent identification of GH¢150.4 million in unearned salaries from 53,311 separated staff over the 2023-2024 period and GH¢15.8 billion in financial irregularities in the energy sector alone in 2024.

The momentum generated by Ghana's hosting of the Anti-Corruption Conference in June now requires strategic direction. The government must sequence its response to the AUABC report by identifying priority recommendations for immediate implementation while aligning them with existing frameworks such as the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan.

Development partners, including the World Bank and GIZ, have expressed willingness to support Ghana's efforts, but this assistance must align with government-defined needs emerging from the review.

The timeline remains fixed, with the next AUCPCC review scheduled within five years. The government's implementation efforts will ultimately be judged by tangible results that citizens can observe: specific corruption prosecutions that proceed through the courts to conclusion, measurable reductions in bureaucratic corruption at key government interfaces, and improved performance in international corruption perception indices. The AUABC review represents both an opportunity and a test for Ghana's commitment to the anti-corruption agenda it has long advocated at the continental level.

The Cedis Appreciation Against the US Dollar: the Economic Prospects and Challenges.

By: Sarah Safo Boamah

IN a stunning turnaround that has captured the attention of economists and investors alike, the Ghanaian Cedi (GHS) has become the world's best-performing currency in 2025. Appreciating by over 40% against the US dollar since January, the Cedi now trades around GHS 10–11 per dollar a remarkable improvement for a currency that has long struggled with volatility and depreciation. According to Bloomberg and local economic analysts, the Cedi is one of the best performing currency so far in 2025.

But while this development brings welcome relief to many, it also reshuffles the economic deck, creating clear winners and losers across the Ghanaian economy.

Several key factors have contributed to the Cedi's sharp appreciation.

A major force behind the trend is a surge in commodity earnings. Ghana's gold exports have benefited from a global price increase of nearly 60% since 2024. According to Bank of Ghana, Cocoa revenues also rose from \$1.7 billion in first quarter of 2024 to \$1.84 billion in first quarter of 2025, the same period this year, adding much-needed foreign exchange to the economy.

The Bank of Ghana has also maintained a tight monetary policy, keeping its benchmark interest rate at 28%. This, combined with fiscal discipline under an IMF-supported program, has helped stabilize inflation and attract investor confidence.

Additionally, the Bank of Ghana has actively intervened in the foreign exchange market through auctions and regulatory reforms, helping rebuild reserves, which now stand at around \$11.5 billion—up from \$6.4 billion a year



ago.

The most immediate beneficiary of the stronger Cedi is the government itself.

A stronger currency lowers the cost of servicing Ghana's dollar-denominated debt. According to government data, nearly GHS 150 billion in external debt obligations have already been settled this year, offering welcome fiscal relief.

Importers are also reaping the rewards. A stronger Cedi reduces the cost of bringing in fuel, medicine, raw materials, and electronics. This effect is already visible in consumer prices: inflation dropped to 18.4% in May 2025, its lowest level since early 2022.

Businesses that rely heavily on imports such as manufacturing, construction, and retail are seeing improved profit margins. The tourism, travel and tour sector operators stand to benefit as well, with more stable pricing attracting both domestic and international travelers.

Not everyone is smiling though. While the Cedi's rise is largely seen as positive, several groups are feeling the pinch.

Top among them are families that rely on remittances from abroad. As the Cedi strengthens, each dollar sent home buys fewer local goods and services. As per Bank of Ghana data, remittance inflows have declined by nearly 50%. This means reduced real income for these households, which depend on diaspora transfers for basic living expenses.

Exporters outside the gold and cocoa sectors are also facing headwinds. A stronger currency makes Ghanaian goods more expensive on the global market, potentially eroding competitiveness for textiles, fruits, crafts, and other non-traditional exports. The Ghana Export Promotion Authority have warned of declining export volumes and narrower profit margin.

Another overlooked group is businesses and individuals holding dollar-denominated loans. As the Cedi gains value, repaying these loans in local currency terms becomes more expensive—especially for those whose revenues are entirely in Cedis.

Currency traders who most often speculate on the continued depreciation of the Cedi have also been hit hard. With the Cedi now surging, many speculative positions have unraveled,

leading to steep losses.

Can the Cedi appreciation be sustained? This is a question that remains open.

Analysts caution that the currency's strength is tied closely to favorable external conditions particularly high gold prices and stable global markets. Any significant shift, such as a stronger US dollar or a drop in commodity prices, could challenge the Cedi's position.

Dr Priscilla Adjei, a financial economist at the University of Ghana expressed that Stability is not the same as Strength and that Ghana's micro-economic recovery is still fragile. She went on to say that the Cedi's appreciation is a good sign, but it needs to be backed by productivity growth and export diversification.

Nonetheless, for now, the Cedi's rally has given Ghana a rare moment of monetary stability in a region often defined by currency volatility. The key challenge for policymakers will be to convert this momentum into long-term structural gains through export diversification, industrial growth, and continued fiscal reforms. As Ghana enjoys this rare currency tailwind, the hope is that the winners will far outnumber the losers, and that the broader economy will be lifted along with the Cedi.



The Rising Cost of Data Prices and the Future of Ghana's Digital Economy

By: Sarah Safo Boamah

IN an increasingly interconnected world, access to affordable and reliable data is not a luxury, but a necessity. For Ghana, a country striving to lead Africa's digital transformation, the cost of data has become a pivotal issue. While Ghana is often lauded for having some of the lowest data costs in Africa, this narrative does not always align with the lived experiences of many Ghanaians. Real beneath official statistics lies a digital divide shaped by economic constraints, regulatory imbalances, and structural market challenges. As the country pursues its vision of a thriving digital economy, the rising cost of data threatens to undermine progress unless comprehensive reforms are enacted.

On paper, Ghana's data costs are relatively low approximately \$0.40 per gigabyte, according to international benchmarks. However, this figure is misleading. Domestic reports suggest that Ghanaians pay closer to \$0.96 per gigabyte, with monthly data spending ranging from GHS 50 to GHS 400 for many users. This discrepancy arises from fluctuating exchange rates, high inflation, and the inclusion of various taxes and fees. A combination of VAT, the GETFund levy, the National Health Insurance Levy (NHIL), and local authority fees can add over 22% to the cost of telecom services.

The depreciation of the Ghanaian currency, the cedi against major foreign currencies has also significantly increased the operational costs of telecom companies. These companies must import network equipment, pay for software licenses, and fund operations in foreign currency, all while generating revenue in a volatile local currency. The end result is a data market where consumers pay more for less, and providers face mounting pressure to maintain profitability.

Looking at Market Structure and Its

REVIEWED INTERNET DATA VALUE / PRICES			
	CURRENT PRICE GH¢ 350	BEFORE (GB) 92 GB	NOW (GB) GH¢ 399 FOR 214 GB
	GH¢ 400	90 GB	250 GB
	GH¢ 400	195 GB	236 GB

Consequences, another major factor contributing to high data prices is the lack of robust market competition. MTN Ghana, designated as a Significant Market Power (SMP), controls a dominant share of the market. While this status is meant to limit anti-competitive behavior, it paradoxically prevents MTN from undercutting prices to attract more users. At the same time, smaller providers like Telecel and AirtelTigo lack the infrastructure and resources to compete meaningfully. Consumers are thus left with few choices and little bargaining power.

The limitations of market structure are compounded by infrastructural deficiencies, especially in rural areas. The cost of building and maintaining network infrastructure is high, and many regions remain unserved. This creates a stark urban-rural divide, where residents of Accra and Kumasi enjoy relatively fast and reliable data, while those in northern and coastal rural areas face poor connectivity and prohibitively high costs.

The consequences of rising data prices extend far beyond the consumer market—they affect national development, education, healthcare, and economic inclusion. About 30% of Ghanaians remain offline, many of them in rural areas. High data costs limit access to online education platforms, telemedicine services, agricultural advisory systems, and mobile money—tools that are essential for inclusive development.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which make up the backbone of Ghana's economy, are particularly vulnerable. Entrepreneurs depend on affordable data for digital marketing, financial services, logistics, and customer engagement. When connectivity becomes too costly, innovation slows and productivity declines. Some businesses have even started adopting alternative solutions such as satellite internet through services like Starlink, but such options remain financially inaccessible for the average Ghanaian.

Furthermore, global research suggests a 10% increase in mobile broadband penetration can boost GDP per capita by up to 2.8% in developing countries. In this context, Ghana's ambition to become a regional tech hub will be difficult to realize if large segments of its population remain digitally excluded due to high costs.

Recognizing the urgency of the issue, the Government of Ghana convened an Inter-Agency Data Pricing Committee in February 2025. This 23-member group, comprising representatives from the Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation, the National Communications Authority (NCA), and the major telecom operators, was tasked with producing a roadmap for data affordability.

The committee's report acknowledged that while headline data prices have declined, real-world affordability remains a concern. These recommendations from the committee included reducing telecom-specific taxes from 22% to around 15%, enforcing infrastructure investment obligations, and introducing solar-powered base stations to lower energy costs. The government should also encourage local data hosting to reduce international bandwidth fees.

Telecom companies have responded by pledging \$150 million in infrastructure investment and committing to increase data volumes in standard bundles by 10–15% beginning July 2025. Meanwhile, the NCA plans to enforce quality-of-service benchmarks and billing transparency measures to improve consumer trust.

The road ahead towards a Sustainable Digital Economy, for Ghana to fulfill its digital promise, several strategic pillars must align. First and foremost is affordability. Data prices must be reduced to below 2% of average monthly incomes to meet UN affordability targets.

Second is competition. The telecom market must be opened to new entrants and support provided to existing but under-resourced providers. Third is infrastructure. Investments in rural broadband, off-grid power sources, and local data centers are vital. Finally, content and services must be locally relevant, available in Ghanaian languages, and designed to address real-world needs in health, education, agriculture, and commerce.

The government's Digital Economy Policy Framework (2024) offers a solid foundation, with its focus on digital skills, universal access, and innovation. However, policies must now move from ambition to execution. The success of these reforms will determine whether Ghana's digital economy becomes a powerful engine for inclusive growth or a missed opportunity marked by digital inequality.

The cost of data in Ghana is not merely a consumer pricing issue, it is a systemic economic concern with far-reaching implications. While progress has been made through policy discussions and private sector commitments, more work remains. Without significant reductions in data costs and improvements in access, Ghana risks entrenching a two-speed digital economy: one where urban elites thrive, and rural communities fall further behind. A coordinated effort from government, industry, and civil society is needed to ensure that data becomes a public good accessible to all. Only then can Ghana truly realize its vision of a modern, inclusive, and globally competitive digital economy.



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Our Vision

A smart modern ISD and the preferred choice for trusted and credible source of government information.

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ISD exists to promote public participation and engagement through awareness creation of government policies, programs and activities for national development.