

U4 Expert Answer



Overview of corruption and anti-corruption in Ghana

Query

Could you please provide an overview of corruption and anti-corruption in Ghana?

Purpose

Our agency is planning to increase its development cooperation and open an embassy in Ghana. The information will serve as input to preparation for this.

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Summary

Major governance indicators show that Ghana has achieved significant progress over the last few years in terms of government effectiveness, transparency of the regulatory framework and control of corruption. However, although it not perceived as extensive as in most other African countries, corruption remains a significant problem in the country. Petty corruption is persistent and there is evidence of forms of political corruption including looting of state assets. Sectors most affected by corruption include the police, political parties, and public financial management - in particular with regard to public procurement, tax and customs administration. With the recent discovery of offshore oil fields, the country's past record in managing its mineral wealth has raised concerns over its ability to manage oil

revenues in a transparent manner and avoid a "resource curse".

The government has a strong anti-corruption legal framework in place, but faces challenges of enforcement. A number of institutions were established in the 1990s to address corruption, such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, the Serious Fraud Office, and the Public Procurement Authority. The Serious Fraud Office has recently been replaced by the Economic and Organised Crime Office with additional powers to investigate and prosecute corruption cases. However, various reports underline the need to strengthen the independence and capacity of these various anti-corruption bodies.

Considered as one of the most vibrant emerging democracies in the region, civil society has the political space to develop, meet and campaign for anti-corruption issues freely and without major interference.

1 Overview of corruption in Ghana

Extent of corruption

Since the 2000 presidential elections which led to a peaceful transfer of power from Jerry Rawlings to John Kufuor, Ghana has enjoyed relative political stability in a region plagued by conflict and insecurity.

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Increasingly, the country is considered to have a relatively well-functioning democracy, and elections are generally perceived to be free and fair, as demonstrated by the December 2008 presidential elections which brought President John Atta Mills to power in a peaceful transition process. Corruption has been – and continues to be – on the political agenda for many years¹. John Kufuor had a “zero tolerance” policy on corruption and his successor, President John Atta Mills, pledged to root out corruption and improve governance as part of his electoral promises. The first months of his mandate have indeed focused on investigating corruption, increasing government transparency and improving living standards for the poor (Freedom House, 2010).

While it is still too early to assess the impact of these most recent anti-corruption initiatives, many sources claim that Ghana is doing better than many other African countries in this regard. Major governance indicators confirm that Ghana has achieved remarkable progress in terms of democratic governance in the last decade. **Transparency International's 2010 Corruption Perceptions Index** ranks Ghana in 7th place of the 47 African countries assessed (and 62nd of the 178 countries assessed), with a score of 4,1 on a 0 to 10 scale. According to the **2009 World Bank's worldwide governance indicators**, Ghana has also consistently improved its performance in terms of control of corruption over the past few years, scoring 59,5 % on a 0 to 100 scale in 2009 compared to 47,6 in 2004. The country has also achieved significant progress on all other dimensions of governance assessed, including in terms of voice and accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality and rule of law.

Reflecting these positive trends, Ghana remains one of the easiest places to do business in West Africa and has been ranked as one of the top 10 economies for doing business in Africa as a whole (World Bank/IFC, 2010). Only 9,8 % of the firms surveyed by the **2007 World Bank Enterprise Survey** identified corruption as a major constraint to doing business in the country, compared to an average of 36 % in other African countries (World Bank, 2007).

In spite of these noteworthy improvements, other reports and indicators suggest that corruption remains

widespread and systemic in the country. Corruption scandals involving high ranking officials regularly hit the headlines, such as Dr Richard Anane, former Road Transportation Minister, or the son of former President Kufuor (Freedom House, 2010). More recently, two ministers of state were forced to resign after a British construction firm, Mabey and Johnson, acknowledged in 2009 having paid a total of USD 761,725 in bribes to Ghanaian government officials during the 1980s and 1990s (Global integrity, 2009). While generally sharing the view that corruption in Ghana is not as widespread as in many other African countries, the **US Department of State's 2009 Investment Climate statement** also reports that American firms are often asked for “favours” from contacts in Ghana in return for facilitating business transactions (US Department of State, 2009). Similarly, Ghana performs relatively poorly in the **Index of Economic Freedom 2010** with a score of 39 % in terms of freedom from corruption (Heritage Foundation, 2010). Ghanaians themselves perceive corruption to be a stumbling block for the country, with more than 90 % of respondents of an urban household survey conducted in Southern Ghana in 2005 stating that corruption is prevalent and a serious problem in the country (Ghana Integrity Initiative, 2005).

Forms of Corruption

Petty and bureaucratic corruption

Although generally decreasing, TI's **Global Corruption Barometer 2010** confirms that Ghana continues to be affected by high levels of petty bribery, with 37 % of respondents (compared to 42 % in 2009) reporting that they have paid a bribe to obtain a service in the 12 months preceding the survey.

While Ghana has improved its regulatory framework in a number of areas - such as administrative procedures for starting a business, paying taxes and trading across borders - low salaries and inefficient government bureaucracy continue to provide both opportunities and incentives for corruption and rent-seeking behaviour (World Economic Forum, 2009). According to the **2007 World Bank Enterprise Survey**, close to 40 % of companies operating in Ghana expect to make informal payments to get things done, 23 % to get an operating licence and 18 % in meetings with tax officials.

Political corruption

Ghana is often referred to as one of the most vibrant emerging democracies in Africa. Elections are usually

considered to be free and fair, and Ghanaians can participate freely in the political process, including through the right to vote, compete for public office, and elect representatives (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2010). However, there have been allegations of fraud during the 2008 election campaign, including instances of violence and reported irregularities in the registration process with some political parties allegedly bussing potential voters from neighbouring countries and enticing minors to register (Ghana Integrity Initiative, 2008).

According to the **2010 Global Corruption Barometer**, political parties are perceived to be one of the most corrupt institutions in the country, scoring 4,1 on a 1 (not corrupt) to 5 (extremely corrupt) scale. The weaknesses of Ghanaian political parties are usually attributed to inadequate funding, weak internal structures, lack of transparency and low organisational capacity. As a result, political parties are often dominated by strong individual personalities, usually referred to as “founding fathers,” who tend to use the parties as their personal fiefdoms (Ghana Centre for Democratic Development, 2005).

In terms of political finance, the 2009 Global Integrity Report cites the lack of transparency of political funding as an issue of concern. Although a piece of legislation requires political parties to publish their financial reports, this information is not made available to the public in practice (Kokutse, F., 2010). While auditing requirements exist for political campaign expenditures, there is no effective election agency mandated to monitor the financing of political parties. This situation, combined with the absence of limits on donations, opens the way to potential abuse. For example, a citizen allegedly contributed/pledged one billion (old Ghana) cedis to the campaign of a presidential candidate during the primaries of the National Patriotic Party at a fundraising event (Global Integrity, 2009).

Patronage networks

According to the literature, Ghanaian political life is characterised by a deeply entrenched culture of patronage and clientelistic patterns of relations. Freedom House refers to the patronage networks that continue to underlie Ghanaian politics (Freedom House, 2010). A 2003 survey of Ghanaian MPs shows that MPs are involved in patron-client relationships to a significant degree to sustain their political power. The study further suggests that the prevalence of patronage

politics among MPs in Ghana has persisted and even increased through the country's democratisation process (Lindberg, S, 2003).

According to Lindberg, practices of patronage include favours such as attending to individuals' school fees, electricity and water bills, funeral and wedding expenses; distributing cutlasses and other tools for agriculture, finding someone a job or a place to stay, contracts, or other services; or even handing out 'chop-money' or small cash sums to constituents. It might also entail personal assistance in dealing with the authorities, whether police, courts, headmasters, local government officials or ministries.

Sectors most affected by corruption in Ghana

Natural resource management

Ghana has large reserves of minerals such as gold, timber, cocoa, diamond, bauxite and manganese which represent a major source of foreign exchange.

The recent discovery of **off-shore oil**² and its impending commercial production represent a tremendous windfall for Ghana that could boost the country's economy if challenges of transparency and accountability are effectively addressed. It is estimated that oil exploitation may result in a 30 % increase in government revenues. As Ghana officially began oil production on December 15th, many sources question the capacity of Ghanaian institutions to handle the sudden influx of cash in a transparent manner and Ghana's government faces growing pressure to ensure that oil will be effectively used and distributed (Smithin, P., 2010).

A key imperative in this regard is to promote oil revenue transparency and the government has taken several steps in this direction. Ghana has committed to full disclosure of oil revenues under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. A Freedom of Information Act is pending before parliament and according to the leadership of parliament, it is unlikely that it will be passed this year. Moreover, the recent

² An oilfield which is reported to contain up to 3 billion barrels (480×10⁶ m³) of light oil was discovered in 2007.

failure to pass a Petroleum Revenue Management Bill, which meets civil society's calls for transparency and safeguards against corruption, as well as a recent corruption probe into the sale of a Ghanaian oil block involving a Texas oil company and a local partner close to former President Kufuor, raises concerns over the management of oil revenues and Ghana's ability to avoid a "resource curse" (Wallis, W, et al, 2010).

The country's past record in managing its mineral wealth raises further questions in this regard. In particular, Ghana still faces major challenges of transparency in the **distribution of gold revenues** for the public good. These revenues account to date for 90% of mining sector revenue. (Revenue Watch Institute, 2007). According to a 2008 World Bank Report, Ghana has lacked the capacity to properly collect revenues and audit payments for gold mining companies during the past three years, as gold prices more than doubled. (Yeboa, S., 2010). In particular, Ghana has failed to closely monitor revenues and payments between government and multinational mining companies. At another level, commercial fraud in the form of scam gold deals is believed to be on the rise in Ghana, with numerous media accounts reporting on major gold fraud schemes (Global Integrity, 2009).

Illegal logging is also an issue of concern in the country and as much as 70 % of the country's timber harvest could be illegally exploited (Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen, 2008). Illegal activities can include a wide range of practices such as bribery to obtain forest access, extract timber without permission or from a protected area, exceed agreed harvesting limits, as well as fraudulent customs declarations and tax evasion.

Police forces

According to TI's 2010 Global Corruption Barometer, police is perceived by Ghanaian citizens as one of the most corrupt institutions, scoring 4,6 on a 1 to 5 scale, a view which is largely shared by the business executives interviewed within the framework of **TI's 2008 Bribe Payers Index**. According to the **Global Corruption Barometer 2009**, 63 % of households who had contact with the police reported to have paid a bribe. These findings are consistent with the 2008 Afro barometer findings which indicate that more than 50 % of respondents think that all or most police officials are involved in corruption (Afro barometer, 2008). In particular, police officers are known to demand bribes when dealing with court matters and vehicle

registrations. Traffic police also routinely extort bribes from commercial drivers, especially in urban areas.

At another level, law enforcement agencies are also poorly protected from political interference, and most promotions and appointments within the police are believed to be politically motivated rather than based on professional criteria, undermining the independence and legitimacy of the institution (Global Integrity, 2009). The police have established an internal unit - the Police Intelligence and Professional Standard Unit (PIPS) - which receives and investigates complaints of abuses. While considered more effective than previous accountability mechanisms, collusion between police and justices has resulted in adjournment of cases (Freedom House, 2010).

Public financial management

Ghana has made substantial efforts in recent years to improve fiscal transparency, including the introduction of more comprehensive public financial management legislation (the Financial Administration Act 2003); a strengthened system for controlling expenditure commitments and reporting of arrears; the creation of a centralized internal audit agency body in 2004; and improvements in the scope and quality of the annual budget statement, (IMF, 2004). These efforts are also reflected in the country's performance in terms of budget transparency, with Ghana scoring 54 (out of 100) in the 2010 Open Budget Index – the highest score of any other country surveyed in West Africa (International Budget Partnership, 2010).

In spite of progress made, problems in tax and customs administration deprive the government of much-needed revenues. Fiscal activities are hampered by low capacity among **tax collection** agencies, and remain vulnerable to corruption, abuse of office, misapplication of exemption laws and political interference. There have been complaints about corruption and extortion by tax officials and Transparency International's Global Corruption report 2009 reports on high ranking Internal Revenue Service officials covering up tax evasion, embezzling tax proceeds and conducting secret dealings (Transparency International, 2009). Reflecting these concerns, business executives interviewed within the framework of TI's 2008 Bribe Payer Index assigned tax authorities a 3,7 score on a 1 to 5 scale (Transparency International, 2008).

Similarly, there have been corruption concerns in the **customs administration**. Business executives

interviewed within the framework of the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2009-2010 complain about the burden of cumbersome custom procedures that create opportunities for requesting unofficial payments (World Economic Forum, 2010). Consistent with these perceptions, customs administration is seen as one of the most corrupt institutions in the country by the respondents of TI's 2008 Bribe Payer Index, scoring 4,1. According to Global Integrity, corruption remains widespread in the Customs, Excise and Preventive Services (CEPS, with CEPS officials in border areas routinely accepting bribes from good smugglers (Global Integrity, 2008). According to the World Bank 2007 Enterprise survey, close to 40 % of companies report that they expect to give gifts to obtain an import license. In response to these corruption concerns, the government set up a committee in 2007 to probe bribery allegations by members of the public, and review the agency's systems, procedures, rules and regulations. However, investigative journalist, Ana Aremeyaw Anas, recently released video footage of corruption, mainly bribery, tax evasion and stealing, at Ghana's main port, Tema Harbour (Insight Newspaper, 2011).

Public procurement account for between 50-80 % of the national budget and represent about 14 % of GDP (Transparency International, 2009). Although corruption has reportedly been significantly reduced following the introduction of a comprehensive **public procurement** framework, public contracting also remains highly vulnerable to corruption. The transparency of award procedures continues to be affected by challenges of implementation, capacity and resources. According to the **2007 World Bank Enterprise Survey**, more than 60 % of companies report being expected to give gifts in order to secure a government contract. The value of the gift made is estimated around 8 % of the contract. TI's Global Corruption Report 2009 reports on procurement-related cases of grand corruption, where contracts have been awarded to companies affiliated with the ruling parties.

2 Anti-corruption efforts in Ghana

Legal Framework

Ghana has a strong legal anti-corruption framework in place, but still faces implementation challenges in practice. This implementation gap is reflected by the country scoring very well in terms of the quality of its

anti-corruption law but very poorly in terms of law enforcement in Global Integrity 2009's scorecard.

The Ghanaian criminal code criminalises **active and passive bribery**, extortion, wilful exploitation of public office and the use of public office for private gain, irrespective of the nationality of the bribe payer/taker. Direct and indirect corruption is illegal, as well as attempting, preparing or conspiring to bribe and both agent and principal are liable. The **Anti-Money Laundering Act 2008** also criminalises money-laundering related offences.

Ghana has been praised by the World Bank for strengthening its public procurement system with the **Public Procurement Act 2003**, making it one of the most comprehensive in the developing world (World Bank, 2006). The law requires contract awarding to be tendered and conducted by tendering award committees. Suppliers and consultants attempting to exert undue influence on procurement processes are subject to sanctions, including debarment from government contracts for five years. However, according to Global Integrity, the legal framework prohibiting companies proven to have bribed in procurement process is not enforced in practice (Global Integrity, 2000).

The Public Office Holders Act requires some government officials to file **asset disclosures**, but there is no effective mechanism in place to monitor assets, incomes and lifestyles. The **lack of effective conflict of interest regulations** also opens the door to potential abuse of power and regulations governing gifts and hospitality are mere "guidelines" that lack adequate enforcement mechanisms. The **Whistleblowers Act 2006, (Act 720)** provides for the protection of witnesses and informants from prosecution and victimisation. It is rated as very weak on Global Integrity 2009 scorecard, due to a low level of enforcement in practice, but there haven't been any reviews of the implementation of the act to date. In addition, as a relatively recent piece of legislation, citizens appear to need to gain confidence in anti-corruption implementing agencies in order to overcome their fear of victimisation when reporting corrupt acts (Transparency International, 2009). The cabinet recently approved a **Right to Information Bill** to promote greater government transparency that has not yet been passed by parliament as of 4 February 2011.

As an EITI pilot country, Ghana committed as early as 2003 to full disclosure of oil, gas and mining revenues

under the **Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative** and achieved full compliant status in October 2010. Ghana has signed and ratified the **United Nations Convention against Corruption** and the **African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption**. Ghana entered and supported the **New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)** and was one of the first countries in the region to participate in the peer review mechanisms. In apparent recognition of its anti-corruption record, Ghana has been elected at the beginning of 2011 to serve on the African Union Advisory Board on fighting corruption.

Institutional framework

At the national level, anti-corruption policies have also focused on establishing an adequate institutional framework against corruption, through the establishment and strengthening of a number of anti-corruption bodies and committees such as the Commission on Human Right and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the Serious Fraud Office which recently became the Economic and Organized Crime Office, the now disbanded Office of Accountability, the Auditor General, etc.

The Commission on Human Right and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)

CHRAJ is charged with investigating alleged violations of human rights, including corruption of public officials, and taking action to remedy proven violations. The Commission has three mandates - relating to (i) human rights (i) the role of ombudsman, and (iii) anti-corruption - and its independence is guaranteed by the constitution. The CHRAJ cannot prosecute offenders and must refer investigations to the Attorney General for prosecution. In particular, CHRAJ has been investigating allegations made against the former President Kufuor for misuse of state resources for private gain. There are currently investigations examining corruption allegations against a number of former National Patriotic Party officials, including Kufuor's chief of staff, the health and information ministers, and the foreign minister. While many Ghanaians supported these initial investigations, there have been few real successes and prosecution leading to convictions. According to a 2005 report, civil society usually considers the CHRAJ to be strong on human right concerns and relatively weak on corruption, possibly due to due to the institution's lack of economic

independence from government (Doig, A., 2005). Lack of adequate resources resulting in low salaries, poor working conditions, and high rate of staff attrition are also often invoked for the relatively weak performance of the institution.

According to the US Department of State (2009), CHRAJ generally operates with no overt interference from the government but some critics questioned its ability to independently investigate high-level corruption. Critics often argue that investigations are mostly politically motivated. During the Kufuor administration for example, the National Democratic Congress accused the government of using anti-corruption investigations and prosecutions to intimidate and harass its members, while corruption scandals implicating the Kufuor administration officials generally led to resignations rather than prosecutions (Freedom House, 2010). In spite of these critiques, CHRAJ has acquired a reputation for investigative independence, especially compared to other anti-corruption bodies, investigating President Kufuor on conflict of interest charges in connection to the hotel acquired by his sons.

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO)

Until recently, the Serious Fraud Unit was the second main anti-corruption body in Ghana. It was established in 1993 as an independent government body in charge of monitoring, investigating and, on the authority of the Attorney general, prosecuting corruption resulting in "serious financial or economic loss to the state". The mandate of the SFO did not include investigations and prosecutions of offences relating to advance fraud schemes, drug trafficking, money laundering and organised crime. Like the CHRAJ, the SFO has been criticised for lacking independence and being subject to political pressure, as its director and much of its board are appointed by the executive (Freedom House, 2010).

The SFO has recently been replaced by the EOCO in an attempt to address some of these concerns. In August 2010, parliament passed the Organized Crime bill which seeks to establish a comprehensive legal framework to monitor, investigate and facilitate the prosecution of organised crime, including through the creation of the EOCO. Among other things, EOCO is also mandated to recover the proceeds of crime; monitor the activities connected with the offences to detect correlative crimes; take

reasonable measures necessary to prevent the commission of crimes specified and their correlative offences. There is no assessment available to date of its independence and efficiency.

The Auditor General

The Ghana Audit Service is established on a legal basis as the supreme audit institution and is responsible for reviewing public sector accounts. The independence of the auditor-general is guaranteed by the 1992 constitution. The activities of the institution are hampered by inadequate staffing and insufficient funding leading to delays in audits and a backlog covering more than two years. Reports are produced regularly and made public, but there are also delays and a backlog of audit reports. According to Global Integrity (2009), the government does not act on recommendations in a satisfactory manner, especially if it involves political figures and party supporters. Delays and backlogs also make it difficult to track past public officials who have been found to have engaged in fraud and embezzlement of public funds.

The Public Procurement Authority (PPA)

The PPA has been established in 2003 to ensure transparency in the awarding of government contracts. Similarly to the SFO, its board and executives are essentially appointed by the executive, which has been criticised by civil society as undermining its independence (Freedom House, 2010). Among other functions, the PPA provides information on regulations and relevant laws, and publishes tenders on its website. The PPA has established a committee to receive and investigate complaints from individuals and companies as well as set up tender committees and review boards within government ministries and agencies. The PPA also developed a procurement monitoring and evaluation tool, called the Public Procurement Model of Excellence (PPME), which is used by the PPA to collect data and to assess the level of compliance and performance of Ghana's procurement entities.

The PPA claims that corrupt practices have significantly reduced following the implementation of the Public Procurement Act 2003 because of its potential for punitive measures, a view which is shared by the OECD DAC Committee and the Auditor General reports (Business Anti-Corruption portal, 2010). However, a recent report by the World Bank suggests that only 37 % of government purchases were subjected to

competitive biddings and refers to widespread abuses in public contracting, especially at the local level (Freedom House, 2010).

The Judiciary

Ghanaian courts have acted with increased autonomy in the past two decades but corruption remains widespread, with 79 % of Ghanaians perceiving the judiciary as corrupt (Afro Barometer, 2008). Ghana Integrity Initiative's Judicial Watch Project report (2007) revealed that corruption was rife in the judiciary. According to Freedom House (2009), low salaries and scarce resources provide judges with incentives for corruption and rent-seeking behaviour. Although the level of judicial competence has improved in recent years, with the provision of regular legal education and training, courts are usually slow in delivering justice and face the challenge of enforcing decisions (Business Anti-Corruption portal, 2010).

According to the Bertelsmann Foundation, the judiciary is relatively independent and there is no apparent evidence of government interference in judicial procedures (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2010). However, the president is influential in the appointment of all superior court judges, including the chief justice. In addition, the fact that the attorney general is both the head of the prosecution services and legal advisor to the president raise questions about the independence of prosecutions and the government is often criticised by the opposition for exerting "selective justice" (Freedom House, 2010). The attorney general has power to launch or end a prosecution without explanation. High ranking officials and politicians continue to enjoy high-level protection from prosecution and the Ghanaian President is immune from prosecution (Global Integrity, 2009). A comprehensive code of conduct for judges has been developed in 2005 and complaints against judges and judicial staff can be submitted to the Judicial Service's Complaint Unit. However, Global Integrity (2009) assesses judicial accountability as very weak.

Other stakeholders

Media

Freedom of expression is constitutionally guaranteed and generally respected in Ghana, with numerous private radios and independent newspapers published in the capital city. According to the Bertelsmann Foundation (2010), there is no organised repression

against the media, although critical journalists have reportedly experienced forms of harassment targeting their economic well-being. The state-owned media, although less critical of government, has developed some degree of autonomy. Internet access is unrestricted and plays a growing role. Reporters without Borders have ranked Ghana first in its 2009 press freedom index on the African continent and 27th in the world.

Civil society

According to the Bertelsmann Foundation 2010, political and civil society organisations can develop, meet and campaign for their issues freely and without major political interference. Permits are not required for meetings or demonstrations. NGOs have played a major role in drafting important anti-corruption related pieces of legislation such as the Whistleblowers' Act. There are many opportunities for civil society to engage in anti-corruption initiatives. The **Ghana Integrity Initiative** functions as Transparency International's local chapter and has established an Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre that provides legal assistance for victims and witnesses of corruption. The **Ghana Centre for Democratic Development** works for promoting democracy, good governance and the development of a liberal political and economic environment in Ghana. The **Private Enterprise Foundation (PEF)** has been founded by four major business associations to promote the creation of an enabling business environment for the private sector. The PEF is a member of the **Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC)** which operates as a coalition of public, private and civil society organisations against corruption. Among other things, the local chapter of the **African Parliamentarian Network against Corruption** (which is headquartered in Ghana) is active in capacity building, information campaigns, and the promotion of anti-corruption legislation.

The international community

The international community is also playing an important role in supporting local anti-corruption efforts. Many interventions have focused on promoting civil society participation and strengthening citizens' demand for good governance.

For example, donors have supported anti-corruption coalition building such as the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition which is often referred to as a success in the literature. **DFID** also supports several anti-corruption

related programmes through its Governance and Transparency Fund, including promoting transparency in the forestry, water and education sectors, as well as in budget processes. **USAID** puts special emphasis on improving local governance, supporting activities aimed at increasing citizen participation – including women - in democratic processes and strengthening parliamentary and citizen oversight of the executive and local government respectively to ensure that national and local governments are responsive to the interests of their citizens especially in the health and education sectors.

Multilateral organisations are also active on governance and anti-corruption programmes. As part of its governance programme, the **United Nations Development Program (UNDP)** also aims at strengthening participation in decision-making and decentralized governance processes at all levels. In particular, a UNDP Civil Society Resource Centre has been established to further strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations to engage decision-makers on national development issues. UNDP also seek to improve access to justice and promote human rights especially for the poor and disadvantaged, through institutional capacity development and public education and engagement. The **European Union** also operates programs involving governance and justice, as do other international donors. The **World Bank** is also supporting interventions aimed at improving economic governance and stabilising Ghana's economy by restoring budgetary discipline and tackling long-standing public sector and energy issues. In particular, the Bank supports investments made in demand and supply-side approaches in order to improve natural resource management. The World Bank also supports oil management through its Oil and Gas Capacity Building Project.

According to the Bertelsmann Foundation (2010), the government of Ghana has proven to be a cooperative, constructive, reliable and dynamic partner in the international arena. Ghana has become a regional centre for international conferences, training and meetings. It has developed mostly positive relations with its neighbouring countries and has shown a persistent commitment to the objectives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

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