



Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII)
Local Chapter of Transparency International

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GII KICK STARTS A NEW ANTI-CORRUPTION PROJECT

Joyce Lena Danquah, SADISC Project Coordinator

The Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) together with the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) and SEND-Ghana have secured funding support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement a four-year project focused on civil society and government institution strengthening. The project is titled Strengthening Accountable Democratic Institutions and Systems through Citizen Engagement (SADISC). The project will span September 2014 to September 2018. This project has been designed to renew and build upon on-going efforts and also increase the capacities of anti-corruption CSOs to motivate citizens to apply pressure to policy makers and institutions through a number of targeted and focused actions with the aim to reduce corruption in Ghana. The three organizations have together formed a GII Consortium to implement this project of which the GII is the Lead Organization. All members of the GII Consortium are national NGOs committed to anti-corruption interventions aimed at strengthening good governance in Ghana.

The project forms part of a wider USAID project, Accountable Democratic Institutions and Systems Strengthening (ADISS) Project 2014. The major purpose of this grant programme is to strengthen Government of Ghana Institutions and Civil Society Organisations. The broad project activities are made up of four components. The GII Consortium will be implementing Components 2 and 3 of these four components of the overall USAID project which are:

- Component 1: Strengthening Systems of Public Accountability and Transparency;
- Component 2: Increased advocacy by civil society for legislative change related to accountability;
- Component 3: Increased documentation and exposure of corruption through civil society reporting mechanisms and
- Component 4: U.S. Government Coordination.

This USAID project aims at achieving increased government accountability to better informed citizens.

Under Component 2, the project seeks to:

- Improve organizational capacity among CSOs to perform long term, strategic law reform campaigns;
- Establish collaborative relationships between CSOs, accountability institutions and other stakeholders to fight corruption;

- Increase citizens engagement in law reform campaigns;
- Increase monitoring of PAC recommendations and ARICs' actions on them;
- Increase documentation and exposure of corruption through civil society reporting mechanisms.

Under Component 3, the project seeks to:

- Empower citizens and CSOs to report and document corruption and related cases through accessible and innovative ICT and social media platforms;
- Equip citizens with sufficient knowledge of the costs and impacts of corruption on their lives to engage in anti-corruption activism to advocate for change;
- Advocate anti-corruption agencies to take action on corruption-related referrals reported by citizens;
- Empower citizens to hold anti-corruption institutions accountable in the execution of their mandates.

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The Editorial Board of GII Alert encourages readers to write "Letters to the Editor" on matters they wish to comment on as well as short stories or expert pieces on corruption / good governance. The stories must, however, be relevant to the anti-corruption crusade. Articles should remain brief and straight to the point to increase their chances of being published. The Editor reserves the right to edit such articles to suit the editorial policy of the newsletter and the general mandate of the GII.

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Ghana Integrity Initiative(GII) is the local chapter of Transparency International (TI), the leading non-governmental organisation in the fight against corruption worldwide.

The SADISC project aims at achieving the following outcomes:

- Increased civil society engagement in effective direct lobbying and law reform advocacy
- Increased use of anti-corruption reporting mechanisms and institutions by citizens
- Increased Implementation of the Public Accounts Committee's Recommendations
- Increased investigations, sanctions and prosecutions of corruption cases
- A robust and effective legal framework preventing and sanctioning corruption
- Increased CSO documentation reporting and exposure of corruption in Ghana

It is envisaged that the above outcomes will result in:

- A robust and effective legal framework preventing and sanctioning corruption; and
- An increased CSO documentation, reporting and exposure of corruption in Ghana.

Since the finalization and signing of the main agreement and the sub-recipient agreements, to pave the way for the commencement of project implementation and accompanying expenditures, the Consortium has recruitment of a Project Coordinator, carried out national stakeholder consultations, held a National Inception Meeting and started reaching out to district-based citizens' groups in the 50 project districts in preparation of the project take-off.

In the first place, a Project Coordinator was recruited to support the Chief of Party, who is also the Executive Director of GII, in the coordination of the implementation of the project. Secondly, as the implementation of the project requires the support and collaboration of national level state accountability institutions and civil society organizations, the Consortium visited and held individual meetings with the heads and/or representatives of seven institutions, including the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the Judicial Service, the Audit Service and the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) and two Committees of Parliament - the Committee on Subsidiary Legislation and the Public Accounts Committee. Meetings were also held with

three CSOs, that is, the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) and Citi FM Radio Station. The meetings were held to introduce the project these potential partners and solicit their support for its successful implementation.

The meetings were followed by an inception meeting which brought together representatives of these institutions as well as the other potential partners that the GII Consortium could not meet due to their unavailability. The meeting discussed critical issues of relevant to the project, including its purpose and goal, management structure, project areas, key strategies and expected outcomes. The meeting also identified key legal gaps in the fight against corruption for advocacy

and secured stakeholders' commitments in joining hands to successfully implement the project. This has set in motion the process of building partnerships with both state accountability institutions as well as civil society organizations for continuous engagement on issues related to the fight against corruption.

The Consortium also started reaching out to district based citizens' groups in the 50 projects districts aimed at strengthening and aligning them to the SADISC project. These citizens' groups are the Social Auditing Clubs (SACs) of the GII, the Local Accountability Networks (LANets) of the GACC and the District Citizens Monitoring Committees (DCMCs) of SEND-Ghana. So far 21 citizens' groups have been engaged with over 200 participants reached.

AND PUTS IN PLACE STRUCTURES TO DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY FROM ACCOUNTABLE AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

For every accountability initiative to make the necessary impact at the targeted level it is crucial to have the structures and systems in place but, most importantly, also to ensure that it caters for the interest of the various stakeholders. It is in the light of this that GII, in the recent past, has facilitated the formation of Social Auditing Clubs in selected districts and empowers them to actively participate in the processes of governance by demanding transparency and accountability from office holders and service providers. So far, twenty-one (21) Social Auditing Clubs (SACs) have been formed in 21 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) across Ghana. The SACs, among others, continuously monitor and track ongoing projects and service provision in their localities and make recommendations to the local authorities and follow up to ensure that the issues identified are addressed. They also demand to be actively involved in local governance by calling for increased accountability and transparency in order to help reduce corruption, ensure good governance and subsequently to reduce poverty and improve service delivery in Ghana.

As part of the implementation of the new project dubbed "Strengthening Accountable Democratic Institutions and

Systems through Citizen Engagement (SADISC)", GII is using some of these existing structures where applicable and establishing new ones in project districts where GII does not have existing SACs to implement this new project that is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). So far, GII facilitated the establishment of three (4) new SACs and strengthened and aligned seven (7) existing SACs. In all, GII is expected to be operational in 17 out of the 50 districts that this new project cover with the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC - 16) and SEND Ghana (17) working in the other MMDAs. The districts covered by GII so far are Tain, Atebubu, Jaman North, Nkoranza North and Pru in the Brong Ahafo Region and Akatsi North and South, South Tongu, Central Tongu, South Dayi and Kpando in the Volta Region.

The SADISC project is an initiative of the GII Consortium, made of three organisations, Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) and SEND-Ghana with GII playing the lead role. The GII Consortium received funding from the USAID to implement the SADISC project which started in October 2014 and is expected to be implemented over a 4 year

period. SADISCs is purposed to renew and build upon efforts to increase the abilities of anti-corruption civil society organisations in order for them to motivate the citizenry to hold democratic accountable institutions and policy makers in executing their mandate.

The next project activities include the organization of Regional and District level stakeholder consultations across the ten regions of Ghana, the review, completion and adaptation of the IPaidABribe internet multi-platform

reporting mechanism by the GII, conduct of a baseline survey and the identification of 50 anti-corruption champions in the 50 project districts to lead the fight against corruption in these districts

It is envisaged that the SADISC project would contribute immensely to the renewal and up scaling of on-going efforts as well as increasing the capacities of anti-corruption state institutions and CSOs to motivate citizens to join the fight against corruption in Ghana.

BREAKING THE BARRIERS OF CORRUPTION AND SOCIAL INDISCIPLINE FROM OUR SOCIETY

Mary Awelana Addah, Acting Programmes Manager, GII

My eye caught spectacular scene on my way to Kumasi. It was right there by the roadside at Nsawam where there was a display of abundant turkey tail for sale. This is a scene I have continued to observe that baffles me. You may ask why does an ordinary Ghanaian trying to make a living have to baffle me. To the best of my understanding and from the few checks I made, there is a ban on the importation of turkey tail into the country, so the question I always wrestle with as I pass by is: how did the banned meat find its way into the Ghanaian market?

In the midst of widespread complaints about corruption in this country, that scene at Nsawam speaks volumes of why we are clearly failing in our efforts at fighting corruption. For whatever reason the authorities had for banning turkey tail, it is obvious that somehow, some people had defied the law by getting it into the country and having it displayed while those who know the illegality of selling it just turn a blind eye to it or even condone the act by buying it.

In our quest to break the chains of corruption from our society, it is essential that we begin to put in place the systems and structures that make corruption unattractive to the ordinary man on the street but equally also very expensive for the public office holder and the private business person alike. Recently, Transparency International (TI) carried out a study on the “main barriers to fighting corruption in the private sector” in order to understand why we continue to hear stories of bribery and corruption involving businesses. Three thousand respondents were surveyed and the following are some examples of the several options provided:

- ‘businesses do not take the issue seriously enough’
- ‘unethical behaviour is widespread amongst public officials’
- ‘corruption and bribery related crimes are not prosecuted’
- ‘corruption is widely accepted as a fact of life’
- ‘none of these’

Out of the options specified, the first four were all recognized relatively evenly across the total sample as being the main barrier to stopping corruption, with just 3 per cent answering 'none of these'. Clearly, all these agents and issues have a role to play – both in perpetuating corrupt practices and in doing too little to prevent and fight corruption. Additionally, other barriers that come to mind in the fight against corruption include, lack of a strong civil society voice, the lack of partnership between CSOs and other key agencies of state particularly the media not only to help propagate and sustain the discourse around corruption, but also expose all acts of corruption in our society

But corruption is also driven by an attitude in many of us. While we all appear to condemn corruption in public, we are at the same time blinded by a glorification of material wealth which prevents us from making a distinction of how that in itself is a catalyst for corruption.

Some of the following issues came up when the question was raised at a recent interaction during the STAR-Ghana end of project convention at a session on corruption I facilitated about why people continue to engage in corrupt behavior and disregard laws. Chief among the reasons were the lack of sanctions, weak monitoring mechanisms and a general obsession with materialism and compulsive tendency to take the shortcut to affluence which is never questioned. The 'brazen display of wealth by public officials' who are usually unable to explain the source, points to how bad corruption has reached in our society. Many of these officials lived on modest income before being elected or appointed into political offices.

Lack of ethical standards in the agencies of government, businesses and other sectors usually account for some of this blatant disregard of the rules governing our society. Many officeholders do not have a clear conception of the ethical demands of their position, and little attention, if any, is being given to this ideal. They often steal and rob to accumulate wealth. Ethics is action, the way we

practice our values, and a guidance system used in making decisions. And the issue of ethics in public sector (and in private life) encompasses a broad range, including a stress on obedience to authority, on the necessity of logic in moral reasoning, and on the necessity of putting moral judgment into practice.

Another critical challenge to the fight against the corruption canker and the disregard of the law is poor reward systems of people in the public sector. The reward system is next to nonexistent as workers are not paid living wages. The retirement and social security benefits are too low to see retired public workers through their unproductive years. Consequently, many of them are not happy, honest, law-abiding and productive, as they “cut corners” to make ends meet. Vilification of the upright or who speak out against corruption and/or blow the whistle on corrupt officials is another major challenge in the fight against corruption. In most of such cases, the upright who try to speak up against corruption are usually vilified and made the 'scape goats' rather than being recognized and rewarded for their nationalistic acts.

Looking into the future, I am quick to say that unless and until political leadership, public officers, the private sector and all citizens start to exhibit commitment to the struggle against corruption both by refusing to be corrupt or corrupted while demanding accountability from office holders, Ghana would not be winning its fight against corruption. Admittedly, Ghana has many laws already that are intended to fight corruption as well as the recently adopted the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) that serves as a guide for the next 10 years in the fight against corruption. However, what is lacking or not appropriately expressed is the will to implement and enforce the laws and implement the NACAP and other action plans that seek to promote transparency and accountability.

We all have a role to play if we are to win the war against corruption and facilitate the developmental agenda of our dear nation. Remember, to resist, refuse and report every corrupt act. Remember to use all platforms available, including the media (both traditional and interactive social media) to facilitate the process of fighting corruption and eliminating social indiscipline from our society. This is a war we collectively have to fight to make Ghana a better place for all to live.

GII HAS FOUND A NEW PARTNER IN THE OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE FOR WEST AFRICA (OSIWA)

1. Establishment of Eight New Local Accountability Structures in Northern Ghana

Social auditing is crucial to the effectiveness of any credible institution. It provides citizens the opportunity to participate in local affairs as well as demand accountability and good governance. All Ghanaian are charged by the Constitution to participate fully in all forms of government. This has been the pillar on which GII established the Social Auditing Club (SAC) concept which empowers citizens to participate in various governance issues at the local level. As part of its pilot phase, GII established 13 SACs in municipalities across the country. 12 of the SACs were based in the southern part of the country while only one club was established in the northern region of the country in the Savelugu District. Over the years the SACs concept has proved to be invaluable to increasing citizens' participation in local governance. Furthermore, the SACs concept has also yielded many tangible results for local development in the areas where the clubs have been established.



A section of Participants during the formation of SAC in the Jirapa District in the Upper West region

In a bid to replicate this success story across the country, GII sought support from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), to expand SACs to the three northern regions of the country. As a result, GII, with support from OSIWA, facilitated the formation of eight new SACs in the 3 northern regions of the country. The new SACs were established between the 1st and 14th of February in the Jirapa District, Wa Municipality, Sisala East District, Kasena Nankana East District, Builsa South District, Bawku West District, Gonja Central District and Kpandai District.

The establishment of the SACs in the eight districts followed a workshop each organised by GII in collaboration with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE). The workshop highlighted the negative impacts of corruption and the key challenges hindering the fight against corruption, as well as the techniques of social auditing. The workshop, which was facilitated by the GII Programme Manager, Mrs. Mary Addah and the former NCCE Programme Director, Mr. Samuel Akuamoah (now one of the Deputy Commissioners), took participants through the principles of social auditing and the role of social auditing in eliminating corruption and promoting development at the local level. The interactive workshops culminated in the formation of SACs in the respective districts.



A section of Participants during the formation of SAC in the Builsa South District in the Upper East Region

One outcome from the formation of the local accountability structures was the support and acceptance by the local authorities in all the districts of the need for the citizens' voices to be heard but also the need for citizens to demand accountability at all levels since the end results are beneficial to all.

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2. Holding of Mobile ALACs in three Districts

Transparency International's Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) were established in 2009 with the aim to provide free and confidential legal advice to victims and witnesses of corruption. Since then, Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) has been offering the services of ALAC in Ghana since 2009 and has recorded incredible successes in providing legal advice and facilitating redress for victims and witnesses of corruption cutting across several sectors and working in partnership with the various state accountability institutions. In 2014, GII received support from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) to sensitize the general public on key national anti-corruption legislations and policies as well as encourage corruption reporting as a major yardstick in the fight against corruption.

As part of the OSIWA project, GII embarked on sensitization workshops in three districts across the country. The workshops, dubbed "Mobile ALACs" were implemented in the Nkoranza North District of the Brong Ahafo Region, the South Dayi District in the Volta Region and the New Juaben Municipal Assembly of the Eastern Region. The workshops which were aimed to move the ALAC, centred in the GII office in Accra, closer to all citizens, also served as a platform to sensitize the general public on corruption issues as well as the value of the NACAP, Whistle-Blower Act and other key anti-corruption legislations and institutions in the fight against corruption. In implementing this action, GII partnered with the NCCE and CHRAJ, national level stakeholders with a physical presence in the selected districts to ensure sustainability of the action and also facilitate the process of citizens having direct access to the reporting and compliant mechanisms available at the local level. Participants were drawn from all sections of the society including women's groups, trader's groups/Associations, persons with disabilities, traditional authorities and officials from Metropolitans, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), among others. The sensitization programs also strongly focused on the involvement of the media, through selected media (radio) stations in the 3 districts where the program was implemented. As part of the program, radio stations including Jerryson FM in Nkoranza, Look FM in Kpeve (South Dayi District) and Poly FM in Koforidua played host to the GII team who used their platforms to reach a wider audience



GII staff at Jerryson fm in Nkoranza South

through sensitization programs and call-in discussions held on the radio platforms.

"Mobile ALAC", which simply refers to the transfer of the ALAC (Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre) also, formed part of the programmes implemented in the 3 districts. The ALAC office which is based in the GII office in Accra moved around the 3 regions and set up a desk at the district capitals to receive complaints from individuals who had experienced or witnessed corruption as a first step to facilitating redress. The sensitization workshops and the Mobile ALACs, which sought to discuss and educate citizens on anti-corruption legislations and encourage the reporting of corruption, were well received and recorded high participation rates in the districts where they were implemented. The reporting of corruption, however, remains a huge challenge with just a few individuals taking advantage of the mobile ALAC desks set up at the districts to report corruption. In all, GII received only 3 corruption complaints as part the workshops and the ALAC Coordinator is following up on these complaints to ensure the victims receive redress.

Throughout the implementation of the Mobile ALAC programme, the various media partners in all the districts visited lauded the initiative by GII and its key partner OSIWA for implementing such programs and committed to dedicating their platforms to discussing issues around corruption and encouraging citizens to report corruption through the ALAC and other key state anti-corruption institutions.

THE PARTY OR THE STATE?

Linus Atarah, Project Coordinator, Open Governance Project (OG-P)

It is 12.00 o'clock mid-day earlier this year in January in Nsawam, a small town of about 30 kilometres from the capital city, Accra, where I had accompanied a friend to his relative's funeral. The small group of sympathisers are gathered and waiting in the town's most popular restaurant for the burial of the young man who was ran over by two vehicles.

All of a sudden, three black four-wheel drive vehicles with tinted glasses appear in

the distance preceded by a police dispatch driver with siren in full blast. All other motorists are signalled to stop by the roadside and give way to the convoy and, of course, pedestrians are left wondering by the roadside about what is going on.

The convoy screeches to a stop at the popular restaurant where we are gathered waiting to accompany our compatriot on his last journey to the cemetery. A very large man in regal dress – a traditional cover cloth and hugely broad sandals emerges from the back of one of the

vehicles and the rest – over a dozen of them start pouring out of the other two vehicles. Before long I learn that the large man in the regal dress is a Party bigwig coming to have his lunch. So are all the other members of the entourage, all senior operatives of the Party.

As we move to the funeral grounds we are hit with a different reality. The deceased young man, who has left behind a small baby and a young wife has difficulties getting to his final resting

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place. He is to be buried in a communal reusable coffin which by now looked so worn out that the sympathisers, upon seeing it, all simultaneously gasped for air. You could hear murmurs all around. His landlord and also his employer finds the situation so eye-popping that he immediately offers to pay for a new coffin on the spot.

All this while, my mind is still working back to the party bosses who by now are still feasting at the restaurant. Why did those passing the information around choose to highlight on their party credentials and not the business they do? And as party bosses, are they also entitled to travel in a motorcade with a state-employed dispatch rider as consort just to go and have lunch? No doubt, the Party's National Chairman still holds on to his public officer position, a contravention of the Constitution.

In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Cassius, the leader of the conspiracy to assassinate Caesar to prevent him becoming a king thereby making Rome a monarchy, wins over Brutus, a close friend of Caesar's:

Men at some time are masters of their fates: The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

To a very large extent Cassius was right but he could have made some qualifications. People's situations are also determined by the socio-political environment which designs rules of the game that we are forced to participate in.

Political parties, by the nature of their business, need lots of money for all kinds of things. They have to keep offices in every corner of the country in order to be nearer to their potential supporters and voters. They need money to pay party activists, money to pay electricity bills, money to fund-raise for more money, money to pay rent, money to... and the list goes almost interminably.

Where does all this money come from? The simple reason is, we do not know. All we know is that political parties exist and it is they who provide the pool of leadership that eventually become minister and presidents of the country. We also know that political parties are funded from membership dues but that would hardly be

enough to make up for the needs of the parties.

So clearly, how political parties fund their activities is of crucial importance to all citizens in a democracy – in all democracies for obvious reasons. It is obvious because in a democracy people need to know that the combination of politics, power and money, is a deadly potent force that can fell democracy like a rhino.

Listen to what even the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, had to say about unrestricted influence by big business: “It is the next big scandal waiting to happen ... an issue that exposes the far-too-cosy relationship between politics, government, business and money ... secret corporate lobbying, like the expenses scandal, goes to the heart of why people are so fed up with politics.”

That is why we need to know the source of funding for Ghana's political parties. In all multi-party democracies, there are laws governing how political parties are funded, in Ghana, too. It is for a very simple reason. So that we know whether political party big spenders are the ones who are likely to win huge procurement contracts. We witness the publicity showered on procurements in the newspapers, but what we do not know is who have won the contracts. At that point, everything suddenly goes dim. Unfortunately, the political parties ignore what the Political Parties Act, 2000 (Act 574), which is the law governing the operation of political parties, say about sources of funding.

Section 21 (1) of the Act states that, “A political party shall, within six months from 31st December of each year, (i) file the state of its accounts; (ii) the sources of its funds (iii) membership dues paid (iv) contributions or donations in cash or kind (v) the properties of the party and time of acquisition with the (Electoral) Commission. The law also demands that a political party must declare its assets upon registering and, if a party has taken part in a general or bye-election must “submit to the Commission a detailed statement in such form as the Commission may direct of all expenditure incurred for that election”. Even this has watered down the requirement in the Constitution for political parties themselves to publish their Audited Financial Statements.

There is, therefore, a clear interest in maintaining transparency in how political

parties operate in the country, especially in respect of their finance. But Ghanaians still know very little indeed, of where political parties get funded and that should be a central concern to all citizens and especially the various anti-corruption groups. The question that warrants an answer is: To what extent are political parties fanning the flames of corruption in this country?

But apart for explicitly forbidding non-citizens from contributing to a political party, not even accepting a loan from a non-citizen, the law does not place any limitations on the amount of money individual donors or businesses are allowed to contribute to political parties. This is a worrying situation because it leaves the field wide open for big money to hold sway and influence policy-making with complete disregard for people like this young man that we went to bury in Nsawam.

It has become fairly standard practice in the news media to qualify the name Alfred Agbesi Woyome with “the big financier of the NDC” and no one finds anything wrong with that. In fact, it actually is considered a badge of honour. Well, the state is groaning under huge losses from the sorry tale of “Judgement Debts”.

A sound political funding system would be based on membership fees. Each party should be allowed to charge the same fixed annual fee from its membership and the membership should be updated annually. No other sources of income would be permitted. Instead, each political party would receive matching funding from the state as a multiple of its membership receipts. This arrangement would drive out the dirty money out of politics and also would force political parties to reconnect with the people and raise their membership.

Some people would definitely scoff at the idea of the state providing even partial funding for political parties, but the fact is, democracy is an expensive business. It is definitely better to provide public money to support political parties so we can assert our right to demand accountability from them than allow the state to be fully captured by a few big party spenders. The consequences are too grim for the rest of us.

CORRUPTION RISKS ASSESSMENT OF REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION

Michael Henchard Okai, National Coordinator – Climate Change Finance Integrity Project

Ghana Integrity Initiative has engaged a consultant to carry out a corruption risk assessment To help the consultant in his assignment, GII held a ..on the.. of April

Tackling climate change and fighting corruption go hand-in-hand. Together, they are major challenges that weaken advancement towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Corruption destroys public trust, undermines human rights and the rule of law, worsens conflicts and increases gender inequality. Adverse effects of climate change, such as breakdown of water and agricultural systems, malnutrition, water shortages, and more frequent extreme natural disasters, present major obstacles to sustained human development. Successful climate adaptation coupled with stringent mitigation hold the key to human development for the 21st century and beyond. These are not without challenges, which can be compounded by corruption when it weakens institutional checks and balances on power and results in non-transparent decision-making processes.

Although the actual extent of forest loss in Ghana is disputed, it is generally acknowledged that the country has one of the highest rates of deforestation in Africa. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 21.7% of land in Ghana (equivalent to 4,940,000 hectares) is covered by forest (FAO, 2010). Of this, 8% (395,000 hectares) is classified as highly bio-diverse and carbon dense primary forest and 260,000 hectares are plantations (FAO, 2010). Deforestation has been identified as a critical environmental issue and Ghana has lost more than 33.7% of its forests, equivalent to 2,500,000 hectares, since the early 1990s (FAO, 2010). Between 2005 and 2010, the rate of deforestation was estimated at 2.19% per annum; the sixth

highest deforestation rate globally for that period (FAO, 2010). The high rate of forest loss in Ghana is partly caused by weak forest governance. Most of the principles of good forest governance, which includes recognising local community rights over trees and creating incentives for sustainable forest management, have historically been ignored by state forest



managers. Forest crime thrives well on weak forest governance and poor law enforcement. Both factors also contribute to undermine transparency, probity and institutional accountability.¹

It is widely acknowledged that corruption and poor governance are important factors that contribute both to deforestation and to marginalization of forest communities. These challenges must be tackled if REDD+ is to be successful. At the same time, it is well established that the process of implementing REDD+ will impact the political economy of the forestry sector. REDD+ initiatives at the national and project level are vulnerable to various forms of fraud, embezzlement, conflict of interests, and human rights abuses. Nonetheless, there is an emerging view that, while not without risks, the entry of REDD+ and related activities in developing countries present a powerful

opportunity to improve forest governance practices, and this includes opportunities towards systematically addressing corruption in the sector.

The concept of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) provides financial incentives to developing countries to protect, better manage, and wisely use their forest resources, contributing to global efforts to address climate change. REDD+ strategies go beyond deforestation and forest degradation to include the role of conservation, sustainable forest management, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in reducing emissions. There is a growing concern and international debate on political barriers to the successful implementation of REDD+ schemes. It is well established that the process of implementing REDD+ will impact the political economy of the forestry sector. REDD+ initiatives at the national and

project level are vulnerable to various forms of fraud, embezzlement, conflict of interests, and human rights abuses. REDD+

It is foreseen that REDD+ will likely face corruption-related roadblocks and challenges given its fundamental ties with existing forestry practices and institutions. There is no doubt that the integrity of REDD+, as a national forest management strategy, will depend on a country's ability to identify and systematically address gaps and institutional weaknesses that breed corruption within and outside the forestry sector. Serious discussions have begun to identify and provide analysis towards understanding how corruption can affect and arise from REDD+.

In the Readiness Phase, national frameworks for REDD+ could inherit the corrupt systems already found in the

¹ Source: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations) 2010 Forest Resources Assessment. Rome: FAO

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sector, or worse, “legalize” such systems. During this phase, “high level actors, such as political elites, institutions, powerful national and international timber companies, industrial scale agribusiness, multinational corporations and project developers may seek to influence the design of national REDD + frameworks, legislation and regulations in order to maximize their chances of capturing REDD + revenues.

In the *Implementation Phase*, existing petty and/or grand corruption in contexts where REDD + is implemented could work against the conservation and developmental goals of REDD + schemes. Moreover, financial resources associated with REDD + could create additional incentives and opportunities for corrupt activities. Such an environment could perversely attract public officials to extract rents from REDD + resource flows.

A Corruption Risk Assessment is an analytic tool which seeks to identify weaknesses within a system which may present opportunities for corruption to occur. It differs from many other corruption assessment tools in that it focuses on the potential for - rather than the perception, existence or extent of - corruption. At its core, a risk assessment tends to involve some degree of evaluation of the likelihood of corruption occurring and/or the impact it would have should it occur. The purpose of a corruption risk assessment is usually to supplement evidence of actual or perceived corruption in a given context in order to inform anti-corruption strategies and policies or for advocacy purposes. It can also serve as a baseline for anti-corruption work to track changes in risks over time. Corruption risk assessment can be applied at all levels from government institutions, to donor support programmes, down to sectoral programmes, as well as in individual organisations or units. It is often undertaken as part of a larger corruption assessment exercise. As a general rule most corruption risk assessments take an institutional approach, that is, they aim to identify weaknesses in (the enforcement of) rules and regulations in the institution, sector and/or process under analysis. Beyond this, however, the conceptualization of risk varies from tool to tool, for example:

1. Corruption risk is equated with the set of institutional vulnerabilities within a system or process which might favour or facilitate corrupt practices;
2. Measures of institutional vulnerability are combined with data on perceptions and/or experience of corruption as a proxy for corruption risk;
3. Risk is expressed as a factor of the likelihood of corruption multiplied by the impact of corruption;
4. Objective risks (weak institutions and regulations) are differentiated from subjective risks (tolerance to corruption, personal motivation, weighing up of costs/benefits, past experiences);
5. Corruption risk is understood as a factor of the level of transparency and level of fairness in a process; and

6. Corruption risk is understood as the difference between actual and ideal systems.

Thus, the sophistication of risk assessments ranges from identification of corruption (or integrity) and/or institutional weaknesses/gaps as an indicator of risk of further corruption, to an analysis of the impact and estimation of the likelihood of corrupt practices. Moving from the identification of risks to 'actionable' information, further stages in the assessment may include prioritization of risks, identification of tools to address the identified risks, and guidance on the development of anti-corruption strategies (although strictly speaking the latter stages are beyond the scope of a 'core' risk assessment). One of the key benefits of corruption risk assessment is that it can complement evidence of corrupt practices to give a better understanding of the corruption situation in a given context. Moreover, corruption risk assessments can serve to visualise the relationships between different risks and actors and identify specific areas where limited resources can be most effectively channeled.

Unfortunately, guidance on how to assess the specific level of risk is often weak or nonexistent. There is often an implicit assumption that low capacity and weak institutions/ regulations are more likely to foster corruption, but the level of risk that these weaknesses yield is not always explicitly assessed. In many cases what is termed a risk assessment is in fact an attempt at detecting the incidence and extent of corruption. The focus is on the extent to which identified corrupt practices might affect performance (risk of negative impact of corruption) rather than the existence of conditions which may facilitate corrupt practices.

The link between corruption and REDD+ raises some difficult challenges for development policy and practice. There are advances in responding to corruption, including forest-related corruption, in many developing countries that plan to implement REDD+. Responding to the governance challenges posed by REDD+ requires building on existing efforts and continuing with ongoing reforms of laws and legal institutions. Yet, there are awkward questions, requiring more analysis and discussion, about how corruption relating to REDD+ will be detected, avoided and responded to. Part of the problem is that corruption may exist in remote locations, and victims may not articulate issues as 'corruption'. Though transparency is important, it is well established that simply increasing information flows is a vague route to addressing corruption. The key is how information is made available, how people are able to comprehend and use this information and, critically, what accountability is in place. In most REDD+ implementing countries citizens do not have a legal right to information, so responding to corruption will require that fundamental political, environmental and economic rights are justiciable, including for the most vulnerable.

The 16th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty was held from March 23–27, 2015 at the World Bank Headquarters in Washington D.C. Over 1200 participants attended from 123 countries. The participants included leaders and professionals from across governments, civil society, academia, the private sector and development partners who came together to interact and discuss innovative approaches to improving land governance.

Under the theme 'Linking land tenure to land use', the workshop discussed land governance issues in more than 100 sessions, and roundtables. A day-long Innovations Fair on March 26 enabled participants to assess progress on issues like spatial data acquisition, mobile technology and other applications that help improve service delivery, transparency and analytical capacity.

The Keynote Speaker of the Opening Session of the 2015 Land, Women and Corruption Conference was James Robinson, a Harvard professor and author of 'Why Nations Fail.' The following is a summary of his presentation. Economic policies don't just have economic consequences, they influence politics as well. Nowhere is this clearer than in policies with respect to land. The definition and regulation of property rights to land is at the heart of state formation and politics all over the world. In his presentation, he discussed the inter-connections between land and power and how it may affect the impact of countries' land policy choices and programs supported by development partners including the World Bank. He illustrated, using historical and contemporary examples from Latin America and Africa, how much of the inequality, poverty and misery of the contemporary world has been exacerbated by thinking of land policies through a narrow technocratic or economic lens. Finally, he laid out what would be required to formulate and implement land policies in ways that avoid such a narrow and myopic vision.

Another key feature of the conference was the presence of a team from Transparency International (TI) which made a presentation on the linkages between women, land and corruption. The team was led by one of the Board Members of (TI), Elizabeth Ulgar, also the Executive Director of TI Columbia. Transparency International's paper titled 'Examining

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL AT THE WORLD BANK LAND AND POVERTY CONFERENCE 2015

Mary Awelana Addah, Acting Programmes Manager - Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII)



linkages between Women, Land Governance and Corruption' was presented by Mary-Jane Ncube, the Executive Director of TI-Zimbabwe. Below are some key highlights from the presentation:

- Women in Africa suffer from corruption that exists in land administration and governance in specific gendered ways as a consequence of pre-existing gender inequalities that limit women's ownership, use, access and control of land.
- In rural land 70 – 80 % of women in Africa depend on the land, making up 5% of agricultural landholders in North Africa and 15% in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- In urban land it is estimated that women in the developing world own only between 1% and 2% of titled land, whether commercial or residential.
- Transparency International holds the belief that corruption worsens the disempowerment of women because it deepens poverty by driving skewed growth patterns that in turn increase inequalities between men and women.
- More so when legal systems, customary practices and policy frameworks seem to conspire to deepen the feminization of poverty for women dependent on rural or urban land for survival and security.
- Gendered corruption occurs because of gaps between law and practice in land governance in the public and private sectors.
- Gendered corruption often takes advantage of weak accountability and transparency in land governance.

Conflicts between women's rights contained in customary law and traditions and statutory law are often manipulated by corrupt administrators and traditional leaders to suit their own ends in either urban or rural land use, access and ownership.

Going forward, the Transparency International report made the following

recommendations to help reduce gendered issues in access to and control of land, thereby removing all barriers.

- Social inclusion and equality in implementation of economic blueprints should be gender sensitive by providing a level playing field to minority groups, youth, women and people with disabilities to participate in economic development programs, especially at the level of small holder farming.
- Access to Capital: Women need to be given less financially complex means of accessing capital through micro-credit schemes targeting specifically women
- Revoke offending Laws: revoke all laws and customs presenting impediments that can be manipulated to prevent women's access to land, especially for commercial use and economic empowerment. This suggests that chiefs, family and other land administrators may not use customary law in order to deny women decision making opportunities over land use;
- Ensure women's access to justice, by adopting measures to overcome obstacles like corruption, including the costs of criminal investigations, police investigations and trials.

Ensure women's and girl's access to education and basic health care delivery. Government measures must be strengthened to ensure that girls' have access to free education, including in rural areas, and that they remain in school.

SOUTH DAYI DISTRICT – A REFLECTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Seyram Awushie Agbemenya, Senior Program and Research Officer



A section of the posters of developmental projects in the South Dayi District Assembly

“Let us give praise where praise is due”-

This is a common adage which requires no further explanations in our local context. However, it is increasingly becoming very difficult to do in Ghana, particularly in the public sector since many fall short of the standards expected of them. Many Ghanaians have come to a point where they believe that there is no institution or leader (politician) due their praise. This is because of the widespread reports of corruption, misappropriation, and mismanagement in public institutions in recent years.

But can we blame Ghanaians for not giving praise where praise is due? That is a question we need to begin to critically answer. Ghanaians have felt the strong punch of bad leadership and high levels of corruption in almost every sector in the country, so much so that we have come to believe that nothing is being done right in the country and we cannot have institutions led by leaders of integrity. This position, held by many Ghanaians has also been heightened by the current economic hardships that face Ghanaians, from “Dumsor” to wit, the current electricity supply challenges, to high levels of unemployment, low standards of services provided and the remnants of corruption that can be seen all around us. In the midst of all the gloom, there are still good leaders and institutions operating on good governance principles, and I think it is about time we as Ghanaians highlight the few persons who have exhibited and continue to excel in the midst of destitution to serve as an

example for others to emulate. With this in mind, I set out to find out if we still have leaders and institutions of integrity and good governance in our country.

Recently on an official visit to the Volta region, I visited one of the districts, South Dayi, where GII is setting up structures to promote citizens participation in the governance process. As we drove through the main entrance of the Assembly, I was pleasantly surprised to see the walls littered with different pictures of the various development projects currently ongoing or completed. This was an exception to the norm particularly with our experience going round the country. Entering the premises of the District Assembly Offices, the first thing that catches one's eye, is not just copies of the mission and guiding principles of the South Dayi District Assembly, but also pictures with full details of all developmental projects being carried out in the district. These pictures include the source of funding for projects as well as the start dates and envisaged end dates of each project. This immediately gives any one visiting the Assembly a sense of an institution operating transparently and being accountable to the people. Wow, I said to myself, at least hope is not completely lost if we have systems like these operating effectively.

Intrigued and to further understand and verify if this was not just a charade, I followed up to learn more about the leadership and operations of the South Dayi District Assembly. I quickly discovered from discussions with the District Chief Executive (DCE), Mr. Kafui Semenu Bekui and the District Coordinating Director that the South Dayi District Assembly management adequately understood their role as service providers in the community and have put in measures to ensure that they execute their mandate effectively. This

understanding of their role informed good governance practices instituted in the District Assembly, under the leadership of the DCE. From the good stories I heard from the administrators of the district, I could not help but be impressed with the way things were done. However, in order not to be perceived biased, and to also gather other voices on the good practices from the Assembly, I spoke with other stakeholders and also citizens who all had glowing tribute paid to the administrators for the good work done and the manifestations of which were clearly visible for all to see.

Consequently, the assembly was adjudged the number 1 District Assembly in the Volta Region as part of the District League Table Programme. The District League Table, an initiative of UNICEF and CDD, is a simple ranking tool used to measure the level of development in all the districts of the country. The tool ranks districts based on their delivery across six key sectors (health, governance, education, security, water and sanitation).

The South Dayi District Assembly is proof that any institution that imbibes the simple governance principles of transparency and accountability can derive great results for its constituents. The achievement of the South Dayi District and the commitment of the leadership to ensuring good governance indicate that all hope must not be lost and there is still an opportunity for our country to rise out of our current predicament. Evidence alludes to the fact that, when institutions and leaders commit to upholding the key principles of good governance and anti-corruption in their operations, as well as emulate the examples of good leadership and governance in institutions across the country, Ghana will make great strides in achieving good governance.



Members of the GII Team with the DCE and the South Dayi NCCE Director

HOW ARE ARICS DOING?

By Linus Atarah, Project Coordinator,
Open Governance Project (OG-P)

The first time I heard of the acronym, ARICs was also the last time. It means Audit Report Implementation Committees, created with strong legal backing to ensure that actions recommended in the Auditor-General's (AG) Reports on the Public Accounts of Ghana are carried out in the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). I got to know this at a book launch ceremony by Ghana Integrity Initiative late last year at Sunlodge Hotel. But after that day I haven't heard anything more about ARICs.

At the book launch, Mr. Kan Dapaah, a former Member of Parliament and chief author of the research now published as a book, said he was commissioned by GII to research into, among other things, whether recommendations in the AG's annual reports are implemented. The report of the research has subsequently been published in a book, appropriately titled, *"Show Me the Money"*.

This is what Kan Dapaah said about the ARICs: "... it was apparent from the interviews conducted that the MDAs generally did not attach particular importance to the role of the ARICs between 2009 and 2011".

This is a very revealing statement which says a lot about how this country is ran. We are supposed to be governed by laws to provide maximum peace and liberty for everyone. But it seems the people responsible to make the laws work do not miss an opportunity to use their position to nullify those same laws if there are chances the laws might one day turn around to persecute them.

So here we are, in a country where laws are not enforced and yet there is wailing and hand-wringing all around the neighbourhoods about corruption. Why complain about corruption when laws are not enforced for deterrence? Sometimes it makes you wonder whether the painful and tedious process that goes into passing legislation is worth the sweat.

Parliament passes legislation which it then pushes down or up to the executive branch, which includes the various ministries and the civil service bureaucracy, to implement.

The Auditor General's report provides independent assurance to the public that the government has spent taxpayers' money appropriately and for the purposes for which the money was allocated by parliament.

Indeed, auditing public accounts by the Audit Service is a very important exercise in accountability and very central in making sure that misappropriations, misuse and stealing of public resources is detected and reported. That is precisely why the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana demands that reports of the Auditor General are submitted to Parliament, which is the supreme accountability institution, and not to the President.

But somehow some laws are created to self-destruct. The ARICs are the institutional mechanisms legally mandated to ensure that any recommendations following from the AG reports are acted on. And that often means making it possible to reclaim the missing billions of cedis routinely reported in the AG's annual reports.

For instance, "financial irregularities", as the AG calls them, uncovered by the AG report of 2009 – another way of saying loss to the state – totalled GHC 267,403,411.00 from just five ministries covered in the survey. The ministries were, Finance and Economic Planning, Education, Health, Youth and Sports and Attorney General and Ministry of Justice.

All of these monies have to be recovered, otherwise, what is the point in conducting audits? That is why the ARICs are created and legally mandated with the primary function to ensure that recommendations in all audit reports, including, but not limited to the Auditor-General's Report are implemented.

But, here comes the hitch! Indeed, ARICs were set up in a couple of ministries but in the majority of cases they were politely ignored or simply allowed to remain still-born. "Most of the ministries confirmed that they have had no functioning ARICs since the passage of the Audit Service Act". In fact, at the time of the research, even the Attorney-General and Ministry of Justice had failed to set up an ARIC to implement decisions taken by

Parliament on the Audit reports.

But why? Part of the answer lies in how these ARICs have been constituted.

"It has been observed that the composition of the ARICs is such that key officials of the institutions are the same people whom against adverse findings would have been made. To expect such officers to implement the findings against themselves is not quite realistic", says the report in its conclusions.

The other causal factor follows a familiar pattern of government reluctance to fund public institutions. So, in spite of the acknowledgement of the importance of ARICs in designing strategies to implement the Auditor-General's recommendations, the ARICs have not been given any budgetary provision, and yet they are supposed to make field trips to follow up on the implementation of audit recommendations. Starved of funds, ARICs cannot even convene meetings. No wonder they have been mostly dysfunctional. This raises doubts as to their effectiveness and whether any of the Auditor General's recommendations have been acted upon.

The research made this observation: "Although a key objective of this project (the research) was to ascertain the extent to which audit report findings and recommendations have been implemented, this could not be verified beyond verbal assurances from key officials that actions have been taken". Now, let us look at how the ARICs were constituted. In the case of an institution, such as the Atomic Energy, for instance, the governing board or council becomes the ARIC. But in the case of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) a ministerial committee is set up to serve as ARIC. And for the District Assemblies, a special committee of the Assembly is set up to function as an ARIC. Is it not because these bodies have failed to exercise effective oversight that the law requires the establishment of the ARICs? How then can the same responsibility be thrown back to them?

One might say, fair enough, to the way the ARICs are constituted. After all, special ministerial committees taking up the function of ARICs is packed with enough punch and that is nothing to be sneezed at, except for one major flaw which has been pointed out in the research report.

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HOW ARE ARICs DOING?

“Members of the ARICs as provided in the Act are very senior officers of the institution with very heavy load schedules. In practice, it is very difficult for such officers to afford the time commitment that they need for the committee”, says the report.

A further look into the composition of the ARICs reveals another thing sorely missing. It makes you ask yourself, where are the phantom CSOs who are always there to be consulted, according to claims by government. None of them has a seat in the ARICs. Don't decisions on how to claim back stolen state resources concern ordinary people? Where is their representative in the ARICs?

So can one also make a reasonable claim that the ARICs largely failed because participation in the decision-making process is not broad enough? Surely, the government has inadvertently realised just that and has pledged to correct the imbalance in the composition of the ARICs. A proclamation in the government's National Action Plan for the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Initiative indicates that it would review the composition of the ARICs to include civil society representatives and independent professionals.

Well, you cannot fatten a pig already on the way to market, but it is probably not too late to add a little more inclusiveness into the membership of the ARICs. And

that presumably says something about lessons having been learnt? But a further step should be taken to increase participation in governance in general. Civil society and stakeholder representation is also required in the advisory boards of sector ministries which provide capacity-building to the ministers and their advisors on how to run these public institutions.

When this is done, then we would reach a milestone in opening up government to serve the interest of the people. It means making ordinary people to also dip their fingers into the molten iron in a common search for solutions against corruption, for instance. And if that fails, then perhaps, we can appeal to the Heavens.

INTEGRITY SPOTLIGHT

“I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions.”

LILLIAN HELLMAN DRAMATIST AND SCREENWRITER JUNE 20, 1905 - JUNE 29, 1984



MONEY QUOTES

“If you want to know what God thinks of money, just look at the people he gave it to.”

DOROTHY PARKER - WRITER AND POET (AUG. 22, 1893 - JUNE 07, 1967)

CORRUPTION QUOTES

“But when you have bad governance, of course, these resources are destroyed: The forests are deforested, there is illegal logging, there is soil erosion. I got pulled deeper and deeper and saw how these issues become linked to governance, to corruption, to dictatorship.”

WANGARI MAATHAI - ENVIRONMENTAL & POLITICAL ACTIVIST (1940-2011)



FIGHTING CORRUPTION BY STEALTH

Mary Awelana Addah, Acting Programmes Manager - GII

“Madam, it's been a long time, I am so happy to see you”, said Akparibo, as he gives a broad pleasant smile while approaching the GII Programmes Team who had just arrived at his shop in Zebila in the Upper East Region. Akparibo proudly announces, “I am happy to report that the road project we followed up on has finally been completed and the CHPS compound is also now functional”.

There are many stories around the country of poor service delivery, especially in the water sector, road and building contracts abandoned mid-stream with the contractors disappearing without trace never to return, while the communities are left entirely in the dark after the initial euphoria of sod-cutting ceremonies over new projects. In some of these cases, the contractors have abandoned the projects after they have been paid mobilization funds or advances for the projects.

GII, in its bid to promote transparency and accountability and participation of citizens, devised an innovative approach to help curb this waste of public resources. The approach is simple. The beneficiary communities ought to be given a greater say in development projects implemented in their communities. They have to determine their priorities and focus on the monitoring of whatever projects have been designed in their name to ensure that any shoddy work is reported for remedial action.

This approach was tried in three selected districts including Bawku West District under the 'Results Call Initiative' project funded by STAR Ghana to test how things are going to play out in a short period of time. GII visited the communities and consulted with them, but also with all the key stakeholders which led to the formation of community leadership groups responsible for drawing up community action plans which provided a guideline on how to monitor community projects.

We did not have to wait too long. When we visited this community for the first time in 2011, the atmosphere depicted a community in dire need but had somehow become apathetic due to the numerous failed efforts in the past to get their due of the national cake. After a short time, most of the prioritized issues including the road project had started; women and men were gainfully employed in the construction site whilst others were providing other services to the contractors including the provision of chippings collected by the women in the village.

But our visit this time, many years later, the situation was entirely different. “I will be very happy if you could visit the community to see for yourself how things have changed”, said

Akparibo. And true enough there were changes. Apart from success with the CHPS compound and the road project that Akparibo announced earlier, the community has also requested for a general purpose dam to provide water for the livestock as well as human needs. The contract for the dam, we learnt, had already been awarded to a contractor and work on it was about to begin, all in a short period of time because a now reinvigorated community leadership was active in making follow up visits to project sites, demanding to know who the contractor was and pressing for work to begin before the rains set in.

What GII realized very early on was the need for active consultations and engagement with the key stakeholders in the districts, including Assembly officials and Assembly members as well as community members. GII also worked effectively with the other state organisations to ensure that the project monitoring was effective. Training on Monitoring and Evaluation was conducted for the team after community members selected them to ensure that there was continuous engagement and that follow up action was consistent.

The approach has been applied in many GII projects and is currently being used in our Social Auditing Clubs (SACS) in several communities across the country and the method is catching up rather quickly with equally impressive results. For instance, in several district including the Akatsi South, the SAC's monitoring activities have led to an improvement in the provision of basic social services to the communities. A case in point is a contractor who was stopped from executing a shoddy project and his payment withheld until it was rectified.

The story behind the successes of this project and many more that are not mentioned here was the high involvement and support of stakeholders, particularly the chiefs and officials of the various District Assemblies. This support contributed to the easy buy-in and high participation as well as the tangible changes evident in the various communities where the project was implemented.

As CSOs, we must rethink our engagement processes by assigning specific roles to key stakeholders, particularly the local authorities in order to be able to sustain efforts after projects have ended. In sustaining efforts, how do we plan and incorporate follow up actions to document some of the very useful lessons that are have been learnt after project closure? This is a question for all to ponder. This gives me hope, that indeed, citizens can make a difference and bring about change in the critical areas that affect them and I believe this is same for the fight against corruption.



CHINA TRACKS 'CORRUPT' FUGITIVES TO BRITAIN

China's feared anti-corruption unit identifies three fugitives it has tracked to the UK in a "wanted list" containing the names of 100 global targets



LIU XIANGJIAN, QIU BO HAI and CHEN YIJUAN

Beijing is tracking at least three Chinese fugitives, including one public security official, who it believes have gone into hiding in the UK as part of Xi Jinping's high-profile war against corruption.

President Xi, now widely described as China's most powerful leader in decades, has warned that corruption could lead to the Communist Party's collapse.

He has promised to obliterate thieving "tigers" and "flies", referring to high-level and minor offenders, in China and to pursue fugitive criminals across the globe as part of a recently [launched campaign code-named "Operation Sky Net"](#).

The operation is a continuation of a previous initiative dubbed "Operation Fox Hunt" which saw Communist Party agents hound overseas targets. That one-year campaign saw 680 fugitives returned to China from 69 countries, according to state media reports.

Fresh details of China's international manhunt emerged this week as the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, Beijing's feared anti-corruption agency, released a wanted list containing the names of 100 Chinese citizens who had fled the country.

The list's publication was designed "to show our determination to pursue corrupt people who have run away to foreign countries," Fu Kui, a senior anti-corruption official, told state television.

"Wherever you go, we will arrest you and bring you back," he added.

The majority of the 100 fugitives – of whom 77 are men – are thought to have taken up residence in North America, according to the list. Forty are believed to be hiding in the United States while 26 had gone to Canada.

Three are thought to be in Britain: Liu Xiangjian, a senior immigration official accused of selling passports to human traffickers; Chen Yijuan, a mobile phone company employee accused of money laundering; and Qiu Bohai, a former factory owner who accused of stealing his workers' wages.

"Via Interpol and other channels, China has requested that law enforcement organs in related countries strengthen their cooperation and help bring these suspects back to face justice," the anti-corruption agency said in a statement.

Mr Liu, a former public security official in Hunan province, fled to Britain in October 2004 after being questioned over involvement in an illegal passport racket, [according to state media](#).

Six years before fleeing, Mr Liu, now 60, sent his son and wife to England, where the former was studying at secondary school, reports at the time claimed.

Chen Yijuan, the second named fugitive, is also from Hunan where she worked for China Mobile, a state-owned

telecommunications giant.

The 44-year-old fled her native country in April 2013 and her name was [placed on Interpol's "Red Notice" wanted list](#) in December that year.

Qiu Bohai, the third fugitive, ran a factory in Shandong province and was subsequently accused of embezzling workers' salaries. The 67-year-old is wanted for "corruption" and is believed to have flown from Beijing to the UK in early 2012.

A spokesperson for the British embassy in Beijing said: "The UK examines all extradition requests from China on a case by case basis.

"The UK does not have an extradition treaty with China, but works with relevant authorities to ensure that fugitives from justice are brought to account. Cases are considered on an individual basis by the British courts who observe the European Convention of Human Rights when making decisions."

Since Xi Jinping came to power in late 2012, China has placed increasing pressure on foreign governments to help it snare fugitives who have eloped with billions of dollars of public money.

Britain, Australia and the United States have all been handed "priority lists" of allegedly crooked officials who China wants repatriated, according to [reports in the Chinese and Australian media](#).

A list given to France contains the names of around 10 fugitives with ties to that country.

More than 150 "economic fugitives" are now living in the United States, [Chinese officials said last year](#).

President Xi's war on corruption has proved popular with many ordinary Chinese who are tired of exploitative officials and employers.

Enemies of Qiu Bohai, the former factory manager who Beijing has tracked to Britain, took to the internet on Thursday to celebrate his naming and shaming.

"He was a son of a b----," wrote one. "Now Qiu Bohai has no place to fly, even if he has wings."

By Tom Phillips, Beijing