



Ghana Integrity Initiative
(Local Chapter of Transparency International)

GII Alert

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GII moves into Climate change with REDD+ IN

As a tropical country Ghana has been fortunate enough to have been richly endowed with natural forests, but over several decades the original forest area has been rapidly dwindling due largely to improper use of forest resources such as illegal chain saw milling.

According to the Executive Director of Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Vitus Azeem, illegal chainsaw milling across the country accounts for over 84 per cent of Ghana's lumber supply annually with an estimated volume of 497,000 cubic metres and a market value of over \$200 million.

Speaking at the launch of GII's new project, REDD+ IN, late August, Azeem pointed out that total forest cover, which stood at 8.2 million hectares at the turn of the 20th century, has decreased to 1.6 million hectares. The current rate of deforestation in the country, he noted, is estimated to be about 65,000 hectares per annum of which one of the major causes is illegal chainsaw milling.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Governance and Finance Integrity for Africa, is an EU-financed project and was proposed under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is a mechanism which is aimed at providing incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, as well as the conservation of forest carbon stocks,

sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

It is observed that the chainsaw activities significantly contribute to deforestation in the country which if not tackled with the seriousness that it deserves could spell doom for the country.

Transparency International, the global anti-corruption group received funding for the three-year project to be implemented by seven of its national chapters in Africa – including Cameroon, Ghana, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Others African countries to benefit from the project will be the Congo Basin, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

REDD+ governance and finance integrity in Africa project has an overall objective to improve anti-corruption policy and practice in REDD+ finance and governance in Ghana.

Specifically the project seeks to among others:

- ≈ strengthen citizens' engagement to increase the demand for transparency, accountability in REDD+ governance and finance policy development and monitoring;

- ≈ empower potential victims and witnesses of corruption and fraud in REDD+ actions (including land acquisitions) to pursue their corruption-related complaints;

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Key note speakers:(from left to right) Mr. Kwame Agyei of the Forestry Commission, Christopher Ackon, a representative of European Union (EU) delegation in Ghana, Moses Kwame Gyasi, the board chair of GII, Dr. Rebecca Asare of Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC) /Forest Trends and Mr. Vitus Azeem, Executive Director of GII.

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Editorial Team

Prof. Audrey Gadzekpo
Vitus A. Azeem
Mary A. Addah
Augusta Sena Gabianu
Likem H. Senaya

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.

Our Contact

Ghana Integrity Initiative
Tel: 233 0302
760884/782364/5,
House No. 21 Abelenkpe
Road, Abelenkpe.
Fax: 233 0302 782365
E-mail: tighana@4u.com.gh
ghanaintegrity@yahoo.com
P. M. B. CT 317,
Cantonments, Accra, Ghana.
Website: www.tighana.org
Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) is the local chapter of Transparency International (TI), the leading non-governmental organisation in the fight against corruption worldwide.

Editorial

The case of CHRAJ indicates a monitoring failure in state institutions

A presidential commission is at the moment investigating events which led to the unexpected poor performance of the national football team, the Black Stars, in this year's world cup tournament in Brazil. When the commission was constituted ordinary people may have thought that its terms of reference would be confined strictly to the technical aspects of football management and how to improve on this in the future.

And while we are still waiting for what more dirt would be thrown up by the commission's investigations, yet another bombshell has exploded in, of all places, the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). It was revealed by the *Daily Graphic of Tuesday September 16*, that the state has spent a whopping \$203, 500 on temporarily accommodating the Commissioner, Lauretta Lamptey within the last 37 months while her official residence is being renovated. But it is not yet over. The Commissioner has moved into a hotel whose daily charge is reported to be \$456.25 to be paid in cedis, amounting to a total of GHC1, 460 per night at current exchange rate. Meanwhile her official residence is being renovated at her request, for a total cost of GHC182, 000. The renovation has been going on for three years according to the *Daily Graphic* and its completion is not yet in sight.

The painful irony is that CHRAJ is a state institution that is unable to run its programmes due to lack of funds and therefore largely funded by external aid donors. The Danish development co-operation assistance agency, DANIDA is this year supporting CHRAJ with GHC 7.5 million to top up the state budget allocation of a paltry GHC 1.5 million. It just doesn't add up. A state institution relying on foreign largess to run its operations for lack of money and yet spending that amount of money to accommodate its boss, not to talk of her other official entitlements? Admittedly, however, amounts to dabbling in populism because it is her legal entitlement based on her Condition of Service and the appointment agreement signed between her and the government. Instead, the focus of attention should, therefore, be turned to questions the structures which enabled such wanton misuse of state resources.

Since the Commissioner's official residence was not ready it was the state's responsibility to accommodate her. A few questions immediately come to mind:

- ? Who determined that the house required renovation?
- ? Who selected the contractor to carry out the renovation?
- ? Did the selection process go through the laid down procurement law and its Regulations? Who is supervising the renovation?
- ? Why has it taken so long for it to be completed in order to avoid spending so much money on temporary accommodation?
- ? Was there a higher state agency which approved the request for renovation and the attendant costs?

A lot more questions can be asked.

When Ms Lamptey's accommodation at the exclusive AU Village kept ratcheting up costs just because of delay in completing her official accommodation, did any higher state agency intervene to stem the tide of rising expenses for the state? The

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strengthen national, regional and global anti-corruption policies and practices of Lead to REDD+ Safeguards respected in practice and information available in national systems.

Ghana is at the final phase of REDD+ readiness and will begin pilot implementation next year, said Kwame Agyei, of the Forestry Commission, and therefore welcomed GII's project as an independent monitor of its activities. He agreed that stakeholder consultations is pivotal in the REDD+ process and explained that regular consultations has been the hallmark of Ghana's REDD+ process leading to readiness.

According to Dr. Rebecca Ashley Asare of the Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC), the biggest donor commitment for Ghana was the World Bank with \$33.9 million but the biggest donor disbursement of funds, she said, came from the Japanese government that has redeemed its commitment of \$7.8 million in full. According to her the forestry commission is the institution that has received the biggest funding among the institutions that have received funding for the project.

However, concerns were also raised over the future prospects of the potential benefits from the implementation of REDD+ given the widespread corruption in the country. Kwame Gyasi, Chairman of the Board of GII, was worried that Ghana has not made any meaningful strides in bringing an end to illegal chainsaw operations because of the corruption

and poor governance issues in the country. And systems in place to check and correct wrongdoings lead to an increase in deforestation.

"If REDD+ works it will help us all but if it is infiltrated by corruption then its benefits will not be realised. Hence it is our duty to prevent corruption in REDD+", he said



Devastation by illegal chainsaw operators

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Editorial

Commissioner has now moved into a hotel which again is expensive by any standard. Who approved that arrangement? Is there anyone monitoring how long it would take for her to stay in that hotel at state expense?

According to the former Commissioner of CHRAJ, Emile Short who previously occupied the house which is now being renovated, he left the house in a "habitable condition" even though he admitted that "one or two repairs would have been needed here and there". Yet an approval was given to proceed with the renovation. Did anyone inspect the house to find its condition and whether it needed that much expenditure to make it habitable? Who gave the approval?

All of these are not marginal questions – because they raise concerns about the use of public resources and also bring into sharp focus, the rationale behind the policy of housing top government officials at the expense of the state.

Government is obliged to provide housing for all state ministers and their deputies while Members of Parliament are provided with housing loans of GHC50, 000.00. What happens to the loans of MPs who are also ministers and

deputy ministers? Is it proper for them to accept the state house when they have already taken the housing loan? How long can a public official stay in hotel at state expense awaiting the official accommodation? In addition to housing expenses, the state also has to, in one way or the other, bear the costs of transport of government officials through the provision of vehicles and fuel. Some officials are even allocated two or three cars with more than adequate fuel to run them.

All of this constitutes a large drain on state resources. But the emerging case in CHRAJ clearly shows that the system of mandatory provision of housing for officials is open to abuse. It has created a situation where state officials would hold tooth and nail to their entitlements irrespective of, and blind to the drain on the public purse. Clearly, this policy needs a revision and should not be cast in stone.

The CHRAJ case also raises the issue of the structure of independent state institutions and the accountability in their operations. The independent state institutions such as CHRAJ were crafted with the good intentions of abiding by democratic principles, to ward off unnecessary government interference and provide with them with credibility and impartiality.

Where from this thing called corruption?

Linus Atarah, Project Coordinator, Open Governance Project, GII

In Sembene Ousman's *Le Mandat* (in English, *the Money Order*), Ibrahima Dieng, receives a money order from a relative in France.

To cash it he needs to provide documents to show he is the rightful owner. His tax papers showing he has been dutifully fulfilling his tax obligation are not enough; neither are his voter's card. Instead, he is to provide an identity document which bears his photograph. He has no idea where to procure a photograph, being a rural dweller and coming straight from the countryside.

After a while, he manages to find a place, but he still has to provide his date of birth about which he has no clue. Without a date of birth, he will not have an identity paper and so will not be able to cash his money. He goes back to the village to find out from neighbours when he was born. The

money order is valid for just two weeks and will be returned if not cashed within that period.

Back in the village word has already gone round that Ibrahima Dieng has just hit a fortune, even though the expected amount is not yet known. Local shopkeepers are flooding his house volunteering to sell him rice on credit while he is still overwhelmed with the daunting bureaucratic task of procuring an identity paper. After enormous bureaucratic hurdles he manages to cash the money, but just.

Sembene Ousman's novel was about the immediate post-independent Africa, where colonialists had bequeathed to the people a bureaucratic architecture about which they knew little and yet a monstrosity which, as it turns out, will have an enduring impact on their lives.

That was quite over fifty years ago. Now let me take you through live at the Driver and Vehicle Licence Authority (DVLA), in Accra, the sole body which issues driving permits.

Make no mistake, the fairly large crowd seated at your right hand side and jostling for the next to be served are not people waiting for the arrival of food relief from a charity; they are first-timers trying to procure a driver's licence. They will have to visit rooms in numerical order, Room 13, Room 14 ... and, by the time they get through to Room 15 to perform the crucial bureaucratic rite, the day is over and they have to come and continue the next day. In all, it takes up to three months of continuous visits to secure one's driver's licence, that is, if one is persevering and does not outsource the task to a "facilitator".

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Editorial

The CHRAJ in particular, of all the state institutions, is a constitutionally mandated institution established to fight against the very corruption and mismanagement which bedevils most aspects of governance in this country. To put in another way, CHRAJ is supposed to be the last court of appeal in terms of public sanctity and if it turns out that some individuals in such an institution are not beyond reproach then that would irreparably dent the credibility of the institution. It is, therefore, crucial that robust accountability mechanisms are put in place in order to stave off further damages to its credibility and losses of state resources.

However, the way CHRAJ and similar institutions are structured appears to have sacrificed the issue of accountability in their internal governance. Usually public institutions have an overall governing board which supervises the management and would pull the brakes if management is veering off the demarcation line. The board

is the highest decision-making body which regulates, among other things, the budgetary expenditure of these organizations. But in some of these independent state institutions there are no external governing boards. Some of these institutions are operating without external governing boards where the buck stops. And it is precisely such a pitfall which CHRAJ has tripped over. Its governing board is made up of just three of its own commissioners working within it.

The emerging case in CHRAJ – we do not yet know its scope and magnitude – indicates a monitoring failure which may appear to engulf other state independent institutions. To forestall such an eventuality in the near future, the ongoing constitutional review process should include putting in place strong and enforceable accountability mechanism for independent state institutions. Admittedly, a constitutional provision which spells out a clear and robust monitoring system for the state institutions may not provide iron-clad guarantee to everything, but it provides a guiding principle on how these institutions should function and inspire confidence in the population.

Where from this thing called corruption?

And if you happen to lose your hard-fought document by some misfortune, here is what you go through to be issued with a new one. First, you report to the Police for a police extract to confirm that you have actually lost your driver's licence. At the DVLA, you queue up to see the Regional Manager for him to scribble an authorisation for you to proceed upstairs and pay a search fee. After paying, you queue back to the Regional Manager once again for him to scribble an authorisation that the search can now proceed. In other words, you have to queue three times to see the same person and that might take several hours. By the way, the search is about retrieving your profile from the database.

After the search, yet another round of queuing back to the Regional Manager to allow you go to another room, perhaps Room 16, this time, and pay the cost of a new driver's licence. But do not jump into your car just yet. You will be given a set of forms to fill, among them, the requirement to undertake eye tests. An eye test! Of course, what do you expect?

At that stage you might want to argue that actually, your eyesight was examined just six months ago when you were issued with your first licence. Futile argument. You have to understand that the Ghanaian bureaucracy is well past middle age and so has a failing memory, in spite of the modern database system that has been set up to assist in juggling its brains. It still cannot keep track of the fact that you only had an eye test just six months ago and that your sight is just as it was the first time you came in there.

So another eye test please! After another round of frivolous eye tests which establishes nothing new about your sight, you are probably just about

to breathe a sigh of relief, thinking you are through and that you probably would not be visiting this place in a while. But the working day has just ended and no worker is prepared to handle cases any longer so you have to come back the next day! With great deal of consternation, you are sauntering home wondering how long the queue would be the next day.

The DVLA was the subject of a recent documentary by journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas with the strange title of *Soul Seekers*. The premier screening was a big fiesta with special invitations to anybody who was somebody in the political and business establishment. He tried to establish that the deadly motor accidents on the roads stem from an institution which is innately corrupt and, therefore, issues driver's licences to unqualified people based on their ability to pay.

The documentary indeed contained gory pictures of accidents which can easily whip up emotions. It also showed how easy it was for one to procure a driving permit without even having to set foot at the DVLA premises. Nevertheless, all of that was based on circumstantial evidence. Aremeyaw Anas did not produce a single evidence linking a driver involved in an accident with a dubiously acquired licence. It was simply assumed that all those cars in the accidents were driven by people who obtained licences from DVLA through corruption.

Is there corruption at DVLA? What might explain it?

Many licence applicants are not only people who have nothing else to do but spend days queuing around the bureaucratic maze to obtain their licences. It also includes people who have full time jobs and, therefore, find it impossible to sit around all day in long and winding queues. They have to find a way round the problem.

Fortunately, the vicinity of the DVLA is teaming with all kinds of people who are milling around apparently with nothing special to do. They are insiders and know the right people to contact for a fast-tracked licence. But above all, they are the ones with all the time and the patience to tour round the bureaucratic labyrinth. They make a living from charging a little extra fee for renting out their time and “tipping” the DVLA officials who by now are their allies, or business partners, depending on which way you prefer to call them.

The DVLA by now may have become notorious for corruption either prior to, or after Aremeyaw Anas's documentary. But the search for its cause can be located in the sprawling bureaucratic juggernaut that has been created, weighed down by myriads of frivolous requirements like gold trinkets around the decorated arm of a royal leader, and people must spend several valuable man-hours to satisfy before being issued with a driver's licence.

In the days of *Le Mandat*, a rural dweller like Ibrahim did not understand that he was expected to offer a little “service fee”. That was the unspoken language and with that he need not have gone through the difficulties he did. The post-colonial ruling class inherited structures and quickly realised that they could turn them into oilfields by either maintaining them or adding more layers of bureaucracy.

So the perceived corruption at the DVLA has to be viewed from this light: a system which is being maintained by a block of entrenched interests which have little motivation to reform because of the benefits they feed on. Until political leaders muster sufficient courage to carry out deep administrative reforms, bureaucratic institutions will continue to be a lucrative source of corruption and white-collar crime while we continue to stare down our navels.

Trading our Nation for Gold – The Story of our Troubled Environment

Seyram Awushie Agbemenya

Growing up around the mining community of Akwatia, I had the privilege to witness many small-scale mining operations in the 1980's and early 1990's, but what I witnessed in the Upper Denkyira District during my recent visit left me in a state of shock and dismay. This was no Galamsey! It was not the Galamsey I knew and grew up around, where the miners simply dug shallow trenches and sieved through muddy water with locally fabricated wire sieves. This was a different type of mining operation I had never witnessed in Akwatia.

What was going on in Upper Denkyira was large scale mining on large expanses of land and using heavy and sophisticated machinery to extract the minerals. Another significant feature I saw in the Upper Denkyira District was a large presence of Asians, most probably Chinese, who seemed to be the bosses in charge of the Galamsey sites. Further investigations revealed that Chinese miners are often backed by a cartel of influential Ghanaian business men and mining concession holders, partnering with the Chinese who support their mining operations through the provision of heavily mechanised mining equipments.

Ghana ranks among the top 10 gold producers in the world, second only to South Africa on the African

continent. Being one of the mineral rich counties in Africa, Ghana's mineral rich areas have been dogged by reports of illegal mining and associated environmental degradation. This reality has become



Chinese Galamsey Operator Poses for Our Cameras

widely known by many Ghanaians, perhaps through the popular documentary, "Fool's Gold" by Ghana's renowned investigative journalist, Anas Aremyaw Anas which exposed the illegal dealings behind small scale mining in Ghana. This documentary and several other media reports reveal countless evidence of the illegality and impacts of small scale mining operations in Ghana. However glaring the evidence, perhaps what is most baffling amidst the reports of Illegal activities is the lack of impetus on the part of the Ghanaian government and relevant public institutions to institute effective measures to deal with this large scale menace which has become an increasing danger to not just precious lives but a threat to the entire economy of Ghana.

"Galamsey", a term used to refer to small-scale mining, an activity which has been present in Ghana for decades, is a practice in which unskilled miners use manual and mostly non-mechanised techniques in the extraction of minerals through surface mining. However, in recent times, a new trend has emerged in the small-scale mining industry, raising various question of the legality and impact of such mining operations. A visit to the Upper Denkyira District revealed just how large scale these mining activities have become.

For the temporal gain of a few millions of dollars, several acres of lands are destroyed, perhaps in the most degradable nature.

Aside being overwhelmed by the grand scale of Galamsey operations in the Upper Denkyira District, I was quickly taken aback by the immediate visible impacts of

the mining activities. The sheer scale of deforestation and land degradation unleashed on the Rain forests of the Upper Denkyira District was disheartening. The Offin River was not exempt from the impact of the treacherous mining activities as it has been left highly polluted, causing the river to appear very muddy and brown in colour. Perhaps the site that will send chills down the spine of any ecologist is the huge muddy dams that have

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replaced centuries old trees in the middle of the Rain Forest. The thought of graders mowing down 'pristine' forest should be sickening to every well meaning Ghanaian. These sums up the value we, as Ghanaians place on our natural resources, for the temporal gain of a few millions of dollars, several acres of lands are destroyed, perhaps in the most degradable nature.

Apart from its direct impact on vegetation and the removal of the nutrient rich top soils to pave way for the sinking of mine pits, the use of strong chemicals in mining activities also pollutes water bodies and renders the soil unproductive and infertile in the long term. Land degraded with such harsh chemical

is known to take hundreds of years to replenish if they will ever have any

possibility of supporting life. The inability of these lands to support plants is already evident in an area of Dunkwa-on-Offin, where a local group driving the forestation and

rehabilitation of mined lands, have recorded the death of all oil palm seedling planted on reclaimed Galamsey mined lands. It is evident that Galamsey activities cause more harm than good in the long run. The short term hundreds of dollars gained through Galamsey is shortly lived and replaced by a more permanent and costly impact to the environment and the economy.

After witnessing the devastating impact of modern day Galamsey in the Upper Denkyira District, only one thought run through my mind, "how can our leaders sit back and watch us run our precious county into eternal debt?" As a State Party to the Rio Conventions, Ghana is expected to protect its environment in honour of its obligations under

The short term hundreds of dollars gained through Galamsey is shortly lived and replaced by a more permanent and costly impact to the environment and the economy.

United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), United Nations Convention to Combat

Densification (UNCCD) And United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Like all other natural resource rich developing country Parties of the Rio

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Galamsey equipment and operators at work

Ghana Integrity Initiative takes a strategic leap into the future

It is crunch time for the non-governmental movement world-wide. Donor funds are drying up largely due to the storm of a global financial crisis which has forced governments to redefine development assistance priorities. For non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the South, most of who have been entirely depending on donor-funded projects, it is an existential threat with dire consequences for vulnerable communities in their countries who have benefited significantly from NGO activities.

Southern NGOs – and almost certainly some of their counterparts in the North – in the prevailing conditions have

been forced to think outside the box. They either have to figure out how to wean themselves of donor-dependency or find some other alternative sources of funds to patch up the large hole left by flight of donor funds.

This forms the backdrop of GII's strategic planning meeting which was organized late July. What better place than to retreat into the Forest Hotel of Dodowa where the cool atmosphere provided by the protective foot of the Akuapim mountains allowed cool-headed and dispassionate reflections!



(Front row from left to right): Mrs Linda Ofori Kwafu, Executive Secretary, Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition, Mr Kwame Gyasi, GII Board Chair, Mr Vitus Adaboo Azeem, GII Executive Director and Nana Hagan, Resource Mobilisation Officer, Ghana Center for Democratic Development.

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Trading our Nation for Gold –

Conventions, Ghana enjoys many financial incentives which are aimed at improving environmental conservation efforts, especially though the conservation of 'pristine' forests and ecosystem for global benefits. This means the onus lies on the likes of Ghana, to conserve and protect their natural ecosystems for global benefits, as a means to slow or even reverse predicted adverse impacts of climate change which could most probably wipe out the earth if it is not addressed. This is why the many first world and often natural resource poor countries pledge and donate millions of dollars in environmental funds to developing countries like Ghana every year. In support of the global agenda of addressing global climate change, Ghana receives millions of dollars annually in climate funds. In 2012 alone, Ghana received a total of UD\$105,604,332 in REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) related funds aimed at financing environmental conservation programmes.

These activities are not necessarily hidden from the view of the public, this is why it puzzles me that the government of Ghana has not initiated any concrete policies to curb this menace...

Galamsey is perhaps the greatest singular threat to our environment, society, natural resources, human resource, education, culture and economy today. The impact of a single Galamsey operation is immediately clear once you enter any community with Galamsey activity. These activities are not necessarily hidden from the view of the public, this is why it puzzles me that the government of Ghana has not initiated any concrete policies to curb this menace, in spite of the glaring impact of Galamsey and the

innumerable resource available to Ghanaian authorities to fight deforestation and land degradation activities. It is very surprising, to say the least, that Galamsey, which are known to have

a huge knock on our economy and environmental resource continue to occur in the full glare of the authorities with little attention being paid. This is an unfortunate and avoidable situation and in my view, our government has failed not just us citizens, but our voiceless environment.

The healthcare we deserve – more important than ever!

As the rain pours down on the roof of a church in Kadjebi, a group of people huddle in a circle discussing their health. They are talking about the National Health Insurance Scheme, protective equipment, access to drugs and the attitudes of healthcare workers. What is particularly interesting about this conversation is that the mood is generally positive – compared to 12 months ago, healthcare workers are treating patients quickly and with respect, health insurance cards are arriving within a reasonable time, without mistakes on them. There is a definite feeling of progress and accomplishment in the room.

The state of our healthcare systems, our health, and how we can protect ourselves and our families is a hot topic in Ghana at the moment. With the Ebola Virus causing devastation among our regional neighbours and a Cholera outbreak posing a very real and present danger at home, it is no wonder we are concerned about the state of our healthcare system and whether it is capable of doing its job.

In this context, an informed and active citizenry who are monitoring the ability of responsible officials and service providers to deliver the healthcare and protection needed in their communities is more important than ever. This is why, in August this year, the GII Programmes Team carried out validation and monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) training workshops in 6 regions around the country as part of a STAR-Ghana and UNDP funded project 'Increasing Participation, Accountability, Responsiveness and Transparency (PART): focus on the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and other MDG-related interventions in the health sector in Ghana'. The aim of the Validation and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) training workshops was to confirm the data collected during Community Score Card research (CSC) programmes in 2013 and to see whether things have changed as a result of the original intervention.

When the project first started, GII provided community members with an opportunity to identify issues around the

NHIS and its implementation and score the quality of health services in their communities. They were then given a platform to raise these concerns with health workers, District Health Directorates, Assembly Members and NHIS representatives. In turn, health service providers were given the opportunity to explain any misconceptions held by community members about health services and the NHIS, as well as their rights and responsibilities as patients.

And after one year, the follow-up process of evaluation and monitoring through training workshops has indicated that there has been enormous community benefits.



Community members and health workers discussing improvements in healthcare in Kadjebi

A total of 12 districts and 24 communities in the Upper East, Brong Ahafo, Volta, Eastern, Central and Western Regions were engaged by GII and its local partners for both the CSC process and follow-up validation workshops. The validation workshops provided GII with important insight into the effectiveness of our work and we were delighted to hear inspiring success stories from each and every district that was involved in the project.

The experiences of community members and health service providers alike showed that the CSC programmes contributed significantly towards improving health services in the various communities. District NHIS officials reported dramatic improvements in the relationship between the NHIS and its clients in the communities. Likewise, community members reported that their relationships with health workers were civil and friendly and they felt they were receiving care from people who were doing their best. The NHIS officials were engaging more with local people through targeted sensitization and outreach programmes, in order to ensure patients know and understand their responsibilities and entitlements.

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A Social Auditing Club Sends Shivers Through The Spine Of The Savelugu Water Supply System Management

Since 2004, GII has received funding from MISEREOR; the German Catholic Bishops Development Agency to support its project entitled “Further Support for GII’s Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Programmes in Ghana”.

As part of the initiatives to achieve the purpose for the funding GII has since 2010 facilitated the establishment of thirteen (13) Social Auditing Clubs (SACs) in 13 Districts to monitor projects and service delivery in the various communities as a way of ensuring that beneficiaries of GII’s public education workshops utilized the knowledge and skills they acquired from the training. The formation of these clubs is part of efforts to ensure grassroots participation in decision-making, monitoring of awards of contracts and project implementation and service delivery, leading to the efficient use of public resources and accountability in local governance. The clubs are made up of volunteers who audit community based projects, monitor and report shoddy work to the local authorities for remedial action as well as reporting acts of corruption to the appropriate authorities.

The saying “when dry bones are mentioned the old woman becomes uneasy” is exactly how the Savelugu Water Supply System management felt when the Savelugu Social Auditing Club (SAC) wrote to the institution for a visit. The question is why should this be? Does this mean the Savelugu Water Supply System management had something to hide? Or perhaps the name SAC which includes the word “auditing” is a bit misleading. Good conscience and practices, they say, makes one fearless. Their fears,

however, was laid to rest when the Savelugu SAC informed them that their purpose was to bring to their notice the challenges facing the town concerning the water supply extension and fees fixing and to engage them in finding a lasting solution to the problem. This knowledge also allowed them to engage the SAC with more freedom and openness which led to a fruitful collaboration ending, to a large extent, a cordial discussion of the issues concerning water supply and fee fixing in the Savelugu township.



An uncompleted building that has been re-awarded to pressure from SAC in Atebubu

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The healthcare we deserve – more important than ever!

Although community members and health officials agreed that there had been significant changes as a result of the CSC process implemented by GII, they recognised that more needed to be done to improve healthcare delivery in their respective districts and communities.

To ensure the sustainability of the progress that has already been made, the validation programmes culminated in a capacity-building workshop which engaged the community members and local opinion leaders on the need for enhancing citizen participation, as well as the community’s role in monitoring and evaluation to ensure good service delivery in their communities. The platform was also used to build participants’ capacity to engage with responsible officials to effect necessary changes in service

delivery, as well as the development of work plans to guide local monitoring activities.

As we watch the challenges being faced by the people, health workers and governments in Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Nigeria as they struggle to cope with the Ebola outbreak, it is clear that a strong healthcare system that citizens can trust is vital to minimising the damage of public health crises.

It is now more important than ever that each and every Ghanaian is able to demand an effective health system that delivers the healthcare they deserve. GII’s STAR-Ghana and UNDP jointly funded health monitoring project has assisted 24 communities in engaging in an informed and cooperative dialogue with healthcare providers and local administrators to work towards better healthcare. The successes of this project demonstrate the crucial need for interventions like this.

GII takes REDD+ governance and corruption risks to the door-steps of forest fringe communities

by Michael Okai, Project Coordinator,

REDD+ is a global mechanism for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. The framework involves a three-phase process for a REDD+ mechanism for developing countries: firstly development of national strategies or action plans and capacity building; secondly implementation of national strategies or action plans that could involve REDD+ pilot projects; and thirdly mobilization of funds from developed countries, with financing mechanisms yet to be decided upon (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).

The primary goal of REDD+ is a reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, consistent with the goal of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

(UNFCCC) to achieve “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.” The GHG reduction targets for countries to act on were set by the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. REDD+ is expected to bring much more than emissions reductions; a properly designed mechanism is expected to contribute to multiple benefits. Depending on the location and type of REDD+ activity, these benefits potentially include poverty alleviation, indigenous rights, improved community livelihoods, technology transfer, sustainable use of forest resources and biodiversity conservation. Responsibility for climate change should involve all and at all levels: governments, business enterprises, civil society organizations including anti-corruption movements, communities and individuals. Several tools, including regulations, taxes and subsidies, can be applied by

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Multi-stakeholder platform workshop participants in Asankrangwa

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GII takes REDD+ governance and corruption risks to the door-steps of forest fringe communities

governments to motivate all actors to alter their behaviour in ways that can reduce GHG emissions and promote climate change mitigation. However, these tools can meet apathy, passive resistance or even active opposition. Effective communication on all aspects of climate change policy is, therefore, essential to gain public support and thus reduce GHG emissions.

Traditionally, the forestry sector has faced many corruption challenges and REDD+ is equally vulnerable to corruption risks at various levels. Corruption can lead to a decline in REDD+ effectiveness (e.g. continued or increased deforestation and forest degradation), efficiency (by creating distortions in markets) and equity (by unfairly

denying certain communities benefits from REDD+ payments), overall failing to deliver REDD+ development outcomes and leading to decreased confidence by local actors and international investors thereby making the REDD+ mechanism unsustainable. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) under the 2010 Cancun Agreements requires countries undertaking REDD+ activities to develop both transparent forest governance systems as well as systems for providing information on how this governance safeguard and the others are promoted, addressed and respected. Significantly, the overwhelming majority of REDD+ countries are signatories or have ratified the 'United Nations Convention Against Corruption which sets out a number of corruption preventive measures and under which they have a number of obligations.



Sensitization in Ahomaho community



“Mammon is the largest slave-holder in the world.” - Frederick Saunders (1807-1902)- American Publisher

CORRUPTION ISSUES IN AFRICA AND AROUND THE GLOBE



HONDURAS

Honduras arrests ex-social security chief in \$200 million graft bust

A former government official linked to one of the biggest corruption scandals in Honduras in decades was arrested on Tuesday after months on the run, the country's security minister said.

Mario Zelaya, head of the Honduran Institute of Social Security (IHSS) from 2010 until January 2014, is accused of fraud, bribery, abuse of public funds and money laundering.

Zelaya left the IHSS, which covers 1.6 million Hondurans, in precarious financial shape after allegedly overpaying companies, some formed by his former IHSS subordinates, about \$200 million (£124.3 million), according to the National Anti-Corruption Board.

Authorities stressed that several lines of investigation remain open and the scale of the corruption and graft scandal, already considered among the biggest in recent memory, has still not been fully determined.

"We're proving that impunity is a thing of the past, and that impunity won't prevail, justice will," said Security Minister Arturo Corrales after announcing the capture of Zelaya, whose arrest on corruption charges was ordered soon after he left the Social Security agency in February.

Prosecutors discovered more than \$7 million worth of assets including mansions, apartments, land and vehicles under Zelaya's control.

Zelaya was captured in the southern state of El Paraiso, which borders Nicaragua. Honduran President Juan Hernandez, who was elected last year, has been praised by foreign governments for going after rampant corruption in Honduras

The Central American country, the main driver behind the recent U.S. border child immigration crisis, is one of the poorest in the Americas and violence fuelled by drug gangs has saddled it with the world's highest murder rate.

Source: Reuters

LESSONS FOR GHANA

It is rare in Ghana to arrest a (former) politician for corruption. As long as the Inspector General of Police and the Attorney General are appointed by the President, even if it is on the advice or approval/endorsement of Parliament or Council of State, it is most unlikely. Even when the former President or Minister belongs to the Opposition Party, it will still not happen because as somebody always says, "Politicians are the same!", and, of course, the fear of retaliation. They even grant Presidential pardon before leaving office.

Integrity Spotlight



"Integrity is the first step to true greatness. - Men love to praise, but are slow to practice it..." Charles Simmons. (1798-1856), American Clergy

Ex-Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell, Wife Guilty of Corruption

A Richmond jury today convicted former Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell on 11 of 14 corruption counts. His co-defendant wife Maureen McDonnell was found guilty on nine corruption counts and obstruction of justice.

The charges stemmed from granting favors to a wealthy Virginia businessman in exchange for more than \$177,000 worth of lavish gifts, vacations, and loans. The pair was acquitted of bank fraud charges.

Reporters in the courtroom described the McDonnell family as sobbing and hysterical as the guilty charges were read. This was the third day of deliberations for the jury after a five-week trial.

Leaving court today, McDonnell told reporters, "All I can say is my trust remains in the Lord." McDonnell's defense attorney Henry "Hank" Asbill told the swarm of reporters they would appeal the verdict.

This was a stunning fall from grace for the man who was on the short list to be a possible running mate for GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney in 2012.



Guilty: Former Virginia Governor and Wife

Over the five-week trial jurors heard about the eye-popping gifts Richmond businessman Star Scientific CEO Jonnie Williams gave the McDonnells, including a \$20,000 New York City shopping spree for the then-first lady which included stops at tony stores Louis Vuitton, Oscar de la Renta, and Bergdorf Goodman. Williams spent thousands on vacations for the McDonnells, including a resort on Cape Cod and letting them stay at his lake house vacation home where he made sure his Ferrari was there so the McDonnells could drive it around town. Jurors saw several photos of the then-governor, who usually was driven around by his security detail, driving the luxury car.

THOUGHTS OF GOLD

"In this world, it is not what we take up, but what we give up that makes us rich".

BEECHER, Henry Ward (1813-1887)
American Clergy

Williams also bought McDonnell a Rolex watch with the words "71st Governor of Virginia" engraved on the back. McDonnell testified his wife gave him the \$6,000 timepiece as a Christmas gift and he did not know it was paid for by Williams. Williams paid for gifts for family members including \$15,000 for the catering for one daughter's wedding and a \$10,000 wedding gift for another. He took McDonnell on expensive golf outings and bought a set of golf clubs for his son. Jurors heard about the \$120,000 in loans Williams gave the McDonnells.

Much of the testimony that came from the defense side focused on the alleged breakdown in the McDonnells' marriage, stressing the two could not have conspired in the quid pro quo scheme because they were barely speaking. The defense also said Maureen McDonnell had a "crush" on

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INDONESIA

Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Jero Wacik submitted his resignation on Friday, September 5, a presidential spokesman said, two days after anti-corruption officials named him a suspect in the latest graft case to embarrass the president's fractured Democratic Party.



GRAFT SUSPECT. Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Jero Wacik (C) mobbed by journalists after being questioned by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in Jakarta.

Presidential spokesman Julian Aldrin Pasha said President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono had yet to respond to the resignation letter submitted by Jero, who did not attend the cabinet session on Friday.

But Coordinating Minister for the Economy Chairul Tanjung said the president will likely appoint an interim officer to take over Jero's duties, which will only last until the new government is inaugurated on October 20.

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Williams. Jurors heard intimate details of their marriage problems, including Maureen McDonnell's habit of yelling at staff, with some testifying they believed she had mental problems. A private letter McDonnell wrote to his wife was read in court. The letter, which went unanswered by Maureen McDonnell, said "I am lonely sometimes."

McDonnell was already the first governor in Virginia history to be charged with a crime and now is the first ever to be convicted of one.

Sentencing is set for January 6 at 10 a.m. The couple faces mandatory minimum prison sentences, but the maximum sentence for each corruption charge is 20 years. During the next phase of sentencing, family members and friends will likely contact the judge, traditionally by mail, to plead for leniency for the former first couple of Virginia.

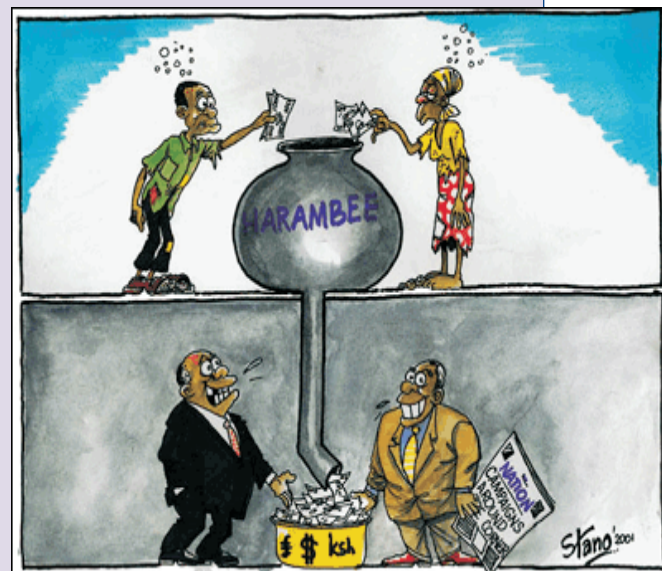
The current governor of Virginia, Terry McAuliffe, released a statement on the historic verdict: "I am deeply saddened by the events of the trial that ended in today's verdict, and the impact it has had on our Commonwealth's reputation for honesty and clean government.

"Dorothy and I will continue to pray for the McDonnell family and for everyone who was affected by this trial," McAuliffe wrote.

Source: ABC News

LESSONS FOR CORRUPTION

Corruption is not the prerogative of Ghanaian politicians and their wives. The difference is that when it happens in some countries, they are arrested and prosecuted. It will take long but it will happen right here in Ghana.



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Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) officials announced on Wednesday, September 3, that they had named Jero a suspect based on evidence showing the minister was involved in extortion activities that generated about IDR9.9 billion (\$840,000) in illicit funds.

Jero, according to the KPK, had ordered people in the ministry to raise funds for him, such as by carrying out fictitious meetings or soliciting kickbacks from procurement activities and consulting services.

The case involving Jero stems from the August 2013 arrest of Rudi Rubiandini, the chief of upstream oil and gas regulator SKKMigas, for taking bribes. Rudi, who was recommended by Jero for his position, was jailed in April for 7 years.

The investigation into Rudi led to the arrest of the energy ministry's secretary general, Waryono Karno, who is then believed to have misused funds on orders from Jero.

Other possible suspects

Political analyst Ari Dwipayana told Tempo.co that Jero – a high-ranking Democratic Party official – was not KPK's main target. He said the anti-graft body employed the "pyramid strategy", which involved arresting sidekicks prior to approaching the main actors.

Indonesia's Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center (PPATK) said on Thursday that it had found suspicious transactions worth "billions of rupiah" in Jero's bank accounts. PPATK deputy chairman Agus Santoso said they sent the financial records to KPK, as it could reveal other parties that might have been involved with Jero in the extortion scheme, the Jakarta Post reported.

The naming of Jero as a suspect – the timing of which caught the ruling party by surprise according to sources – is the latest corruption scandal to rock Yudhoyono's administration.

Jero is the third minister from the current cabinet and the latest high-profile member of the ruling Democratic Party to be named a suspect by KPK, which has a 100% conviction rate in Jakarta.

Former Sports Minister Andi Mallarangeng, also from the Democratic Party, was jailed for 4 years in July over a \$40-million corruption case.

In May, Religious Affairs Minister Suryadharma Ali quit after being accused of misusing funds that were supposed to help Muslims go on pilgrimage to Mecca.

Source: Agence France-Presse/Rappler.com

LESSONS FOR GHANA

Can't the Ghanaian politicians learn from Indonesian politicians? Moving failed politicians or those alleged to have engaged in corruption to the Flagstaff House is no punishment. It is even a promotion as you move closer to the seat of power and have the benefit of seeing the President and the Vice President every day. That is, if they are in town! You may even be in a better position to impersonate and engage in influence peddling.

You can stop
CORRUPTION