

ADISS FOTPRINTS

ACCOUNTABLE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING



Ambassador Robert Jackson duly launching the report dubbed "Corruption is Eating Us Up: A call to Action". With him are (L-R) Mr. George Osei-Bimpeh (Country Director of SEND-GHANA, Mr. Joe Winful, former Managing Partner at KPMG and Chairperson of FAT-Africa), Mrs. Linda Ofori-Kwafo (Executive Director – GII) as well as Commissioner Joe Whittal of CHRAJ.

REPORTING CORRUPTION VIA WHATSAPP

Strengthening the role of citizens in the fight against corruption has become essential in championing anti-corruption. Gone are the days when one has to hassle to report corruption experience. Although there are a number of platforms that can be used to encourage citizens to report corruption, there are still people who are timid about reporting.



It is therefore necessary to adapt a reporting channel that is convenient and easily accessible. In response to this, the GII Consortium has created a WHATSAPP platform for reporting to the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC). This means citizens can now report acts of corruption to ALAC via WhatsApp. The addition of WhatsApp gives witnesses and victims of corruption the opportunity to add pictures and videos as evidence when reporting.

The WhatsApp line, 0577-665-295, has been

publicized on the website and Facebook pages of member organisations (the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition, Ghana Integrity Initiative, and Send-Ghana). ALAC could also be reached via phone toll free (Vodafone -0800 100 25; Airtel/Tigo -0800 100 250) email (alac@tighana.org) and physical visit to the premises of the Ghana Integrity Initiative in Accra or SEND Ghana's offices in Tamale and Wa.









EDITORIAL

It has been three years already since the inception of the "Accountable Democratic Institutions and Systems Strengthening" (ADISS) project. The project is being implemented by Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) and SEND-GHANA in 50 districts across all ten regions of Ghana. So far, most of the activities scheduled under the project have been implemented.

ADISS, which is in line with the USAID Forward strategy, seeks to contribute to building the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) to understand and effectively engage with parliament for reform and enactment of anti- corruption legislation and instruments. It also seeks to strengthen CSOs and citizens to engage government institutions to implement the audit recommendation against them as a means of strengthening their financial management system and recover state money.

Finally, the project seeks to increase corruption reporting, investigations, sanctions and prosecution of corrupt officials.

Through the use of the participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches, citizens are being empowered with the skills and knowledge to articulate their views on corruption-related issues, specifically providing feedback on the impact of corruption on their lives, which has led to the election of Anti-Corruption Champions in the 50 districts where the project is being implemented. The approach has led to the reorientation and alignment of existing citizens groups working with the participating members of the GII Consortium and CSOs for a well- coordinated advocacy to reduce corruption incidence in Ghana.



Cross section of participants at the ADISS Launch



Cross section of participants at the Validation of ADISS Baseline Report

The ADISS project is also collaborating with national level CSOs who are already working in this area, including Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), Legal Resource Centre, IMANI Center for Policy Education, Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), etc. to build synergies and enhance capacities to engage with the identified accountability institutions. The project is also working with grassroots CSO partners of the members of the Consortium and identifying other CSOs at the district level for collaboration.

The ADISS project, through its implementation strategies, has yielded several results including the Vice President of Ghana, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia's, surprise working visit to the Passport Office to assess the process of acquiring a passport as well as ascertain the challenges applicants face. He subsequently pledged government's commitment to abolish the manual passport processing system for an electronic system. He also disclosed government's initial directive to the office of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration and Passports Office to decentralize the passport processing system. Dr. Bawumia further pledged government's commitment to increase security at the Passport Office to check the illegal activities of 'goro' boys (middlemen) by ensuring that public officials who work at the Passport Office wear a name tag.



EDITORIAL CONTINUED



Mrs. Linda Ofori-Kwafo, ADISS Chief of Party, making a presentation at the ADISS Report launch



GII Consortium with officials of the Customs Division of GRA

His reaction came after a research report entitled: "Corruption is Eating Us Up: A Call to Action" was launched by the GII consortium mentioned the Passport Office as one of the institutions where citizens reported that they experienced bribery.

Perception of the level of corruption in some selected public institutions with the Ghana Police Service perceived as most corrupt institution (78% of citizens). The Police Service was followed closely by Political parties, Judiciary (47%), and DVLA (48%). On the issue of actual experience with bribery, the proportion of respondents who have had contact with these institutions reported that most bribes are paid at Customs division of GRA (76% of citizens who had contact), DVLA (74%), Passport Office (63%) and the Police Service (61%).

Also, as part of the implementation strategy of the project, consortium members paid a courtesy call on the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo. The president used the opportunity to re-iterate his commitment to the passing of the RTI Bill. He promised to ensure the bill is laid before parliament for consideration as well as ensure the speedy passage of the Code of Conduct for public officers and establishment of the office of the Special Prosecutor.

Additional result chalked by the project is the establishment of the "I PAID A BRIBE" online reporting platform. It is a platform designed to allow every person who experiences corruption in their daily lives to share. So far, 317 people have been able to share their corruption experience on the platform.

Quantitative summary of the number of reports is provided on the platform. The platform also gives a summary of the reports submitted.

The GII consortium working with EOCO and investigative journalists has been able to retrieve GHC225, 460 part payment from a lawyer for stranded farmers in Takorase Congo in the Eastern region who had appealed to the ALAC Office to help them retrieve the money.

The GII Consortium met with the Director of the Customs Division of GRA and other senior officials to strategize on how to collaborate and carry out some activities under ADISS. As part of the collaboration, anti-corruption for a will be organized for all 17 supply chain stakeholders at the harbor. The collaboration will also advocate for the introduction of an electronic system and one pay point for all stakeholders.

The consortium members will mount a bill board at DVLA that will outline the authorized processes people must follow in their quest to acquire or renew a driving license. Consortium members are advocating for an increased security presence at the DVLA offices to limit the work of 'goro' boys (middlemen).

Fighting Corruption through ICT



In recent years, many governments have resorted to use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in an effort to modernize governance. The e-governance system as it is being referred to, has become an effective tool used to increase efficiency and reduce corruption by promoting transparency.

Corruption continues to inflict hardship on many citizens in poor countries, including Ghana. The menace has become a national security threat and has eaten deep into the fabric of society, making it difficult for government to raise enough revenue to develop the country as a result of leakages from the public purse via various corrupt schemes.

Ghana attained lower middle income status in 2011 and can only make meaningful economic progress if corruption is dealt with. This is why the introduction of a platform - www.ipaidabribe.org.gh have been made available for all citizens to report corrupt experience they encounter with any institution.

The online reporting platform allows every person who comes across corruption in their daily lives to share their experience without fear of reprisal. The platform: www.ipaidabribe.org.gh is aimed at making reporting quicker and easier on internet accessible devices.

Citizens can log onto the website to report bribes that were taken from them, bribes that they resisted paying and to commend an honest public official or office.

In a few simple steps, you can report on the nature, number, type, location, frequency and value of actual corrupt acts on this website.

Steps to follow:

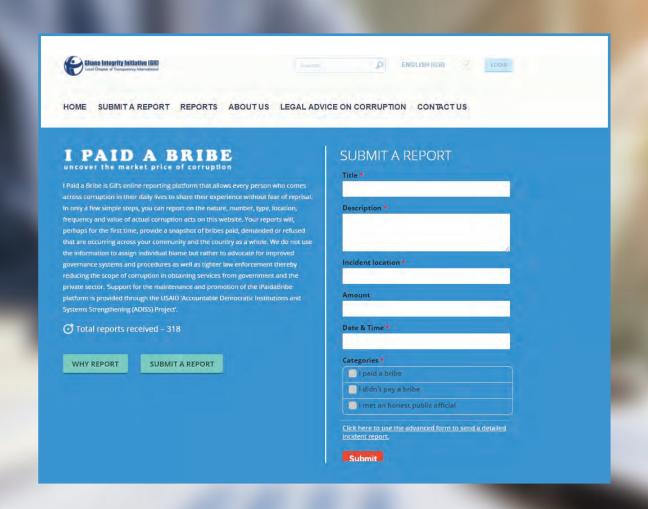
1. Log on to the website: www.ipaidabribe.org.gh

- 2.A quick reporting template is provided for on the right side on the homepage.
- 3. Click on "Submit a Report" to fill a more detailed template in order to send GII a complaint.
- 4. One can add a video, photo or a news link as part of evidence to support the report.
- 5. It is optional for one to provide his/her phone number and e-mail address (this can be provided if the complainant wants the Consortium to get more details on the case).

Visitors could read more on a particular report by clicking on the "more information" link below each report.

The reports will perhaps for the first time, provide a snapshot of bribes paid, demanded or refused that is occurring across your community and the country as a whole. We do not use the information to assign individual blame but rather to advocate for improved governance systems and procedures as well as tighter law enforcement thereby reducing the scope of corruption in obtaining services from government and the private sector.

The new website which is one year and one month old as at 29 May, 2017 has: - 317 reports; - 5,897 visitors; - 5,367 unique visitors and 10,441 page viewers. With the aim of uncovering the market price of corruption the platform has recorded GH 78,821.00 = USD\$ 18,416.22 as the cost of bribery to citizens. As the numbers increase, the website will become a powerful evidence to engage cited institutions to plug the hole that allow corruption to thrive on their corridors.



"It is a man's own dishonesty, his crimes, his wickedness, and barefaced assurance, that takes away from him soundness of mind; these are the furies, these the flames and firebrands, of the wicked."



Legislative/Policy Updates



GOVERNMENT RESPONDS TO ADISS REPORT BY STRENGTHENING CORRUPTION-PRONE STATE INSTITUTIONS

The release of the ADISS corruption report, "Corruption is Eating Us Up: A Call to Action" has caused government to make rapid commitments to reforms in some of the state institutions cited in the report.

Following the report, government has made numerous pledges to amend the lapses that exist in key state institutions such as the Passport Office. Among the moves are abolishing the manual passport processing system for an electronic system, government's directive to decentralize the passport processing system, increasing security at the Passport Office to check illegal activities and ensuring that public officials who work at the Passport Office wear a name tag for identification.

"Corruption has eaten into the very fabric of our society so bad that we think of somebody as being smart anytime we hear that he has stolen a huge amount of money."

Wonder Madilo-Convenor (Coalition Against Corruption-Ghana)



"O that estates, degrees, and offices were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour were purchased by the merit of the wearer."

Shakespeare



Knowledge, Perceptions and Experiences of Corruption among Citizens

Civil society organisations in Ghana have played significant role in the design, preparation and implementation of anti-corruption initiatives that aim to complement the efforts of the state. The GII Consortium through its ADISS project has considered several forms of implementation strategy to support the fight against corruption. This includes the launch of a report by the GII Consortium dubbed: "Corruption is Eating Us Up: A Call to Action".

Over the years, research on corruption had mostly focused on citizens' perceptions rather than actual experiences on corruption. The ADISS report captured the knowledge, perceptions and actual experiences of corruption across the ten regions of Ghana to ascertain people's knowledge on the forms of corruption, particularly their understanding of the various manifestations of corruption, citizens' perception on the level of corruption in key institutions in their districts as well as their actual experience of corruption.

The top three institutions perceived by citizens as extremely corrupt are the Ghana Police Service (78%), political parties (55%) and the Judiciary (47%).

In an analysis of the percentage of citizens who paid bribes in the course of dealing with some selected institutions revealed the Customs division of GRA (76%), the DVLA (74%), Passport Office (63%) and the Ghana Police Service (61%) as the top institution where citizens experience bribery.

Now, juxtaposing response on citizens' perception and actual experiences, the ADISS report has been able to provide information on the actual situation. Although there is high perception that the Ghana Police Service, Political parties and the Judiciary are the most corrupt institutions, citizens actual experiences with the most common form of corruption (bribery) shows that Customs Division of the GRA, DVLA and the Passport Office are the most corrupt public institutions.



"I am alarmed that even the religious groups are mentioned as corrupt. This is serious and needs urgent attention from all stakeholders especially the church which is the cradle of integrity"

- Emmanuel Ghartey (Nkoranza North Local Council of Churches).

GALLERY



ADISS National Stakeholders Inception Meeting

A cross section of participants at the ADISS National Stakeholders Inception Meeting

Validation of ADISS Baseline Report

Mr. Vitus Azeem, former Executive Director of GII making a delivery at the Validation of ADISS Baseline Report



GII Consortium meets Registrar General's Department

Joyce Danquah (Coordinator on the ADISS Project) making the introductory remarks during the consortium engagement with management of the Registrar General's Department

Cross section of staff of Registrar General's Department that were engaged by the GII Consortium members



GALLERY Cont'd

Meeting between GPHA and GII Consortium Team

Mr. Jacob Adorkor (Director of Ports, Tema) and Mrs. Beauty Emefa Narteh (Executive Secretary of GACC)



Dialogue on Attorney-General's (AG's) Report and Public Account Committee of Parliament Recommendations



Dialogue on the Implementation of the PAC and AG Recommendations with the Management of Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA)



Anti-corruption Champion Taking the Management of the District through the AG's Report Concerning the Nkoranza North District Assembly

Launch and Policy Dialogue on Citizens Knowledge, Perception and Experiences (KPE) Report



Group photograph of the participants at the launch of the KPE Report for Asante Akim Central Municipality – Konongo.



A cross-section of participants at the STMA launch

Success Stories

Ghana has in recent times suffered power challenges and this has been compounded with the increasing demand for power increasing by 12-13% per annum. In an effort to make electricity accessible to those in the rural areas the rural electrification began with the aim of extending electricity power lines to connect about 59,000 new customers in 530 communities in 26 districts in Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) operational areas to make electricity accessible to every part of the country.

As part of an activity under a USAID funded Project titled "Accountable Democratic Institutions & Systems Strengthening" (ADISS) a sensitization was held on 'Socio-cultural practices that inhibit the fight against corruption'. Vote selling was highlighted and it proved beneficial as the people of Abulu community in the Kasena Nankana West district, Upper East region had decided to sell their votes to whoever could provide them with power. The reason being that the some labourers hired by contractor charged to provide power for the community were extorting money from residents by asking them to buy the wires which will join the homes to the power grid at 600GHS. This was a Government of Ghana awarded

contracted and so such fees were illegal.

The consortium charged the anti-corruption champion to follow up on the elections and also get the authorities to resolve the issue. The anti-corruption champion for the district, Akobulgo Zotipelba, after the elections reported that he was in the community during the campaign period as well as the Election Day. People he had personal interactions with told him, they voted based on their preferred candidate and not to the highest bidder. The community sensitization helped enlighten them.

They saw the electrification as their right to social service. Information and emerging issues related to the sensitisation in the community were shared with the District Assembly. Upon receiving the information, the District Chief Executive (DCE) immediately went to the community and held a discussion with the contractor. He cautioned the contractor to ensure no citizen was made to pay the GHC600 being demanded because it is their right to have electricity. Currently most houses in the community are connected to the grid and have access to electricity.

"This sensitization is very timely.
We feel deserted by governmen
and we were willing to
sell our vote
to any Politician.
I promise to vote based on
policies and not
how much any politician gives me.
I will encourage all the
members to do same"



(Source: field work, 2016)

ALAC Helps Farmers to Claim Compensation—

About 1,220 aggrieved farmers from Takorase – Congo, a farming community in the Eastern Region of Ghana have been able to claim compensation due them after a protracted tussle between them and a legal practitioner who represented them in court in a case between them and the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC).

The farmers' settlement was made possible when they visited the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC), a unit under the Accountable Democratic Institutions and Systems Strengthening (ADISS) project being implemented by the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) Consortium comprising, GII, Ghana Anti - Corruption Coalition(GACC) and SEND-Ghana.

What necessitated the farmers' claim was that in 2012, Ghana received a loan facility of twelve million, five hundred US dollars (US\$12.5m) from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) on behalf of the Ghana Oil Palm Development Corporation (GOPDC), a subsidiary of the SIAT Group of Companies, an agro-industrial company based in Belgium. The amount was to acquire the Government of Ghana interest in the over 21,500 hectares of land acquired in 1976 for oil palm plantation under section 10 of the Administration of Lands Act (Act 123) of 1962 in the Kwaebibirim District.

The acquisition process started in 2005 and by 2012, GOPDC Limited have fully occupied the land resulting in the loss of livelihood and homes of the said farmers.

Children of the farmers for instance, by 2014 had to drop out of school because their parents were not able to pay for their school fees. Madam Faustina Dwamena, 38 and mother of 8 children have had to withdraw all 8 children from school because she was unable to settle school fees.

In May 2014, the Ghana Oil Development Company Limited paid over GHC4.7m (about US\$1.2m) in pursuant to a judgement of the High Court for adequate compensation to the lawyer of the farmers to be shared among the farmers. Furthermore, in January 2016, the company paid an extra GHC582,664 for the destruction of their farms. However, in the process the lawyer disbursing the money to the farmers, kept GHC200,000.

The farmers contacted ALAC and through the ADISS Investigative Journalists, the lawyer who initially denied keeping part of the money admitted he inappropriately kept part of the money and made a refund to the farmers.

The Cheque Received from the Lawyer



Some of the affected farmers



(Photo Credit - Suleman Mohammed, Public Agenda)

Responses from some Beneficiaries



"The Company pulled down my house and so together with my wife and children, we had no place to lay our head. On receipt of the compensation money however, I have been able to secure a new accommodation and my children are also back in school.

Thank you ADISS and the investigators".

Dogah Samuel, Farmer, Takorase Congo.



66 "I have been able to pack my belongings and has relocated in the community". **99 Kweku Derrick, Farmer, Takorase Congo**



66 "I have been able to pack my belongings from the community and I have gone to rent an abode elsewhere.

This has been a big relief to me. Thank you ADISS and the Journalists as well. My family and I are most grateful".

Kweku Eric, Farmer, Takorase Congo



"The compensation money has enabled me pay my children's school fees and so they have returned to school. I am very grateful to GII and ALAC". "

Kwame Ofei, Farmer, Takorase Congo

Corrupt Hospital Officials Exposed, thanks to the Vigilance of Anti-Corruption Group

Health insurance in Ghana continues to attract more and more low to middle income earners as a means for improving health care utilization and protecting households against impoverishment from out-of-pocket expenditures.

However, the health financing mechanism which was introduced in 2003 as a way of pooling health risks, preventing health related impoverishment and counteracting the detrimental effects of user fees, now appear to inhibit heath care utilization, particularly for vulnerable citizens. Atebubu Government Hospital and some service providers allegedly charge laboratory fees, citing delay in reimbursement as reason.

As part of USAID funded Accountable Democratic Institutions and Systems Strengthening (ADISS) Project, citizen groups and anti-corruption champions were trained on how to carry out anti-corruption education, identify and report illegal practices through the writing of letters to their representatives in parliament for redress.

Seth Opoku Mensah is a teacher in one of the schools at Atebubu. He is a member of the anti-corruption Citizens Group that developed a strategy to identify and report any malfeasance in the district. "At the training we were told that we should educate people on corruption issues and report any corrupt practice we see," he said.

"Having been empowered with this knowledge, I decided to take action when I got information that Atebubu-Amantin Government Hospital was charging for laboratory services. I went there to verify and it was true," he said.

"The training I had and the information I got gave me the courage

Mr. Seth Opoku, 'Anti-Corruption Champion', making a contribution

to confront the hospital management and tell them that what they are doing is illegal because what they are charging at the laboratory is being covered by the National Health Insurance Scheme," he added.

The laboratory department of Atebubu-Amantin Government Hospital was charging unapproved fees ranging between GH 10 and GH 20 for laboratory test.

However he faced obstacles. "Some of the hospital senior staff and an opinion leader in the community threatened me." Yet Opoku did not yield to pressure and threats from the hospital staff.

Opoku's success was made even more profound when citizens in the community alongside members of Opoku's citizens' group took a collective decision to support him in the fight against corruption by writing a petition letter to their member of parliament. Other corrupt acts were also uncovered when the citizens group requested the traditional authorities to summon the hospital authorities. A petition was written and sent to the Regional Health Directorate and almost all the hospital authorities have been given letters of transfer to leave by 2nd May, 2017.

"As a result of our efforts, seven (7) management members of the hospital found culpable have been transferred whiles investigation still continues."

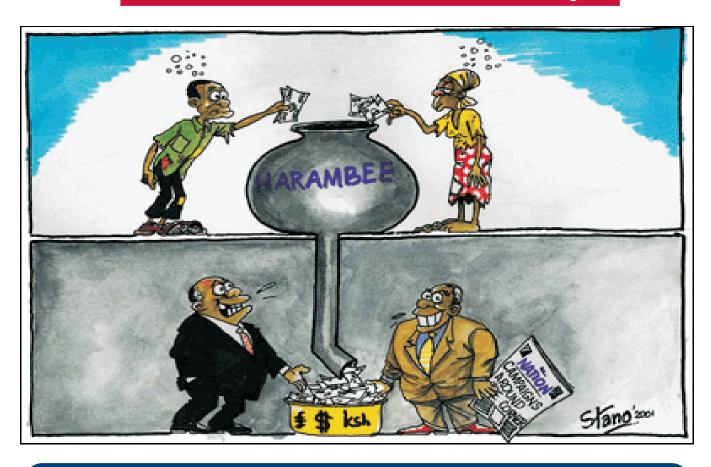
"I am now more convinced that our efforts at fighting corruption are yielding results. People should take active interest in what public office holders do at the work places so that together we can reduce if not eliminate corruption in our society."

Jacob Ahuno and Pascal Kudiabor

The training I had and the information I got gave me the courage to confront the hospital management and tell them that what they are doing is illegal because what they are charging at the laboratoy is being covered by the National Health Insurance Scheme.

Corrupt Hospital Officials Exposed, thanks to the Vigilance of Anti-Corruption Group

Cont'd From Pg. 13



"Having been empowered with this knowledge, I decided to take action when I got information that Atebubu-Amantin Government Hospital was charging for laboratory services. I went there to verify and it was true,"

"To be successful, the fight against corruption must be backed by **political will** and **genuine determination** - It involves all of us because we all benefit from a corruption-free society. **The majority are saying no to corruption** ..."

Mr. Joe Ghartey, Former Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Ghana. At the 5th Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity in Johannesburg, South Africa (2006).

No More Unretired Imprests

Every year, the Auditor-General audits and compiles a report on how local government and other state institutions expend public funds allocated to them.

This report cites irregularities found and makes recommendations to retrieve unapproved funds spent or to strengthen the financial management systems of institutions. However, most public institutions fail to implement audit recommendations, leading to loss of public funds and perpetually weak financial systems at these institutions.

The ADISS activity is looking to inter alia; get selected state institutions to implement audit recommendations against them. At the local government level, the GII Consortium together with citizen groups had a dialogue with District Assemblies on the status of implementation of the audit recommendations made against them.

At Mfantseman, in the Central Region of Ghana, it became clear from the Auditor General's Reports during the dialogue that the Mfantseman Municipal Assembly was consistently cited for "unretired imprests". Staff who received funds for programmes failed to account for the use of the funds. During deliberations it came to light that the Assembly could actually write to the banks of Staff to ask for the appropriate deductions from their salary when they withhold imprest. The Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) instructed the finance officer to adopt this measure against staff found to be withholding imprest henceforth.

"We are grateful to you for this dialogue. If nothing at all is gained from this dialogue, we can be sure of one; that from today the problem of unretired imprests would cease".

He said: "Once this [deduction from bank accounts] can be done, please remind me to address all staff on that. We need to save ourselves from this embarrassing situation. Any staff who fails to retire their imprest would have it deducted from their salaries. We can't allow this to continue" (Hon Kenneth Essuman, MCE- Mfantsiman Municipality)

The MCE was also full of praise for the GII Consortium and the citizen groups that engaged them in the dialogue.

He said: "We are grateful to you for this dialogue. If nothing at all is gained from this dialogue, we can be sure of one; that from today the problem of unretired imprests would cease".

The Citizen group (Local Accountability Network) at Mfantseman and the GII Consortium will be following up on the implementation of this directive as the citizen group engages the Assembly in subsequent years of the ADISS project.





"Corruption contributes to poverty and mortality:
Corruption strikes particularly hard at the
most vulnerable in our societies, exacerbating poverty
and ultimately taking lives. Corruption reduces access
to essential services and means of making a living".

Huguette Labelle, Former Chair, Transparency International

DISCLAIMER:

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government

FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) Consortium: GII, Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) & SEND-GHANA

GII

Private Mail Bag CT 317.
House No. 21 Abelenkpe Road,
Abelenkpe, Accra, Ghana.
Tel: +233 302 760884Fax: +233 302 782365
E-Mail: tighana@.org

Facebook: facebook.com/tighana.org
Twitter: www.twitter.com/GhanaIntegrity

GACC

Kotobabi Road, Pig-Farm Junction (Main Olusegun Obasanjo Way) P. O. Box GP 17921, Accra-Ghana Tel: +233 302230483 Fax: +233 302 230490 E-mail: info@gaccgh.org Website: www.gaccgh.org

Facebook: Ghana anti-Corruption Coalition

SEND - GHANA

A28 Regimanuel Estates, Nungua Barrier, Sakumono, Accra, Ghana.
Tel: +233 302 716860/716830
Website:www.sendwestafrica.org
E-mail:info@sendwestafrica.org
Facebook:sendghanaofficial
Twitter: @SEND GHANA





