

EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

Report 9 / 2020 **COUNTRY EVALUATION BRIEF**

Ghana



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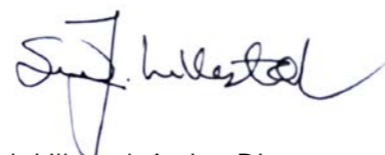
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ABBREVIATIONS

The purpose of this Country Evaluation Brief is to present relevant knowledge about donors' development efforts in Ghana. The brief systematises relevant findings from existing evaluations of development interventions in the country. The idea is to present the findings to the reader in a succinct and easily accessible format.

Readers who want to explore key issues in depth can access the underlying reports through the reference list. At our website, you can also find a set of short "Evaluation Portraits" summarising the key contents of those documents.

The Country Evaluation Brief was researched and produced by Particip GmbH.

Oslo, November 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Siv J. Lillestøl".

*Siv J. Lillestøl, Acting Director,
Evaluation Department*

Main Findings

The report draws on findings presented in 25 evaluations and reviews published since 2012 of major donor-funded programmes and projects in Ghana.

- Despite numerous initiatives by the Government and development partners, Ghana has not been able to significantly improve **DOMESTIC RESOURCE MOBILISATION**. It has also not developed a plan that can guide the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **BUDGET SUPPORT** created opportunities for the Government to strengthen the implementation of the national medium-term development framework. Budget support contributed to the expansion in discretionary expenditure. The policy dialogue and substantial technical support generated a wealth of knowledge and created opportunities to enhance policy formulation, intra-sector collaboration, and capacity development of key public entities.
- While the programme evaluations of development partners show satisfactory results on **RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS**, programmes have not performed well on sustainability. Mainly due to limited government capacity and budget constraints, donors had to support the establishment of alternative financing and institutional arrangements to ensure sustainability when planning to exit or reduce their engagement in areas where their development assistance has been significant, especially in the social sectors.
- While models such as the **MILLENNIUM VILLAGES PROJECT** recognise the need to address many inter-related development challenges, attempting to address all of them at once did not deliver significant results or synergistic effects.
- **GENDER** issues have been increasingly well integrated into the national policy framework, in part thanks to budget support. Gender impacts were assumed in programme implementation, but were often not measured against gender-disaggregated outcomes.
- The **OIL AND GAS SECTOR** has largely achieved the objectives of the legal, policy and administrative frameworks for the sector, and a functional and modern public sector institutional set-up has been put in place. However, the much more complex socio-political economic dynamics of on-shore and expanding sector activities have not been sufficiently addressed yet.
- External actors are limited in their ability to push for reforms that are at variance with the **INTERESTS OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL ELITES**.

Key Facts Ghana

Estimated population: 29,767,108

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

Population under the age of 15: 37.6%

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

Urban population: 56.1%

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

Urban population growth (annual %): 3.4%

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

Human Development Index (HDI): 142 (of 189)

(UNDP 2020; 2019 data)

Gender Inequality Index (GII): 133 (of 162)

(UNDP 2020; 2018 data)

Poverty headcount ratio at USD 1.90 a day (2011 PPP): 13.3%

(World Bank 2020; 2016 data)

Adult literacy rate: 79.0%

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

Life expectancy at birth (male/female): 63 (62/65)

(World Bank 2020; 2017 data)

Child mortality rate (under 5, per 1000 live births): 48

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

Net ODA received (% of GNI): 2.2%

(World Bank 2020; 2017 data)

Corruption Perception Index rank: 80 (of 180)

(Transparency International 2020; 2019 data)

Internally Displaced Persons (new displacements in 2018 due to conflict and violence): 61,000

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

Mean years of schooling: 7.2

(UNDP 2020; 2018 data)

Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, PPP (current international USD): 4,650

(World Bank 2020; 2018 data)

GNI growth (annual %): 7.3%

(World Bank 2020; 2017 data)

GNI per capita growth (annual %): 5.0%

(World Bank 2020; 2017 data)

GINI index: 43.5

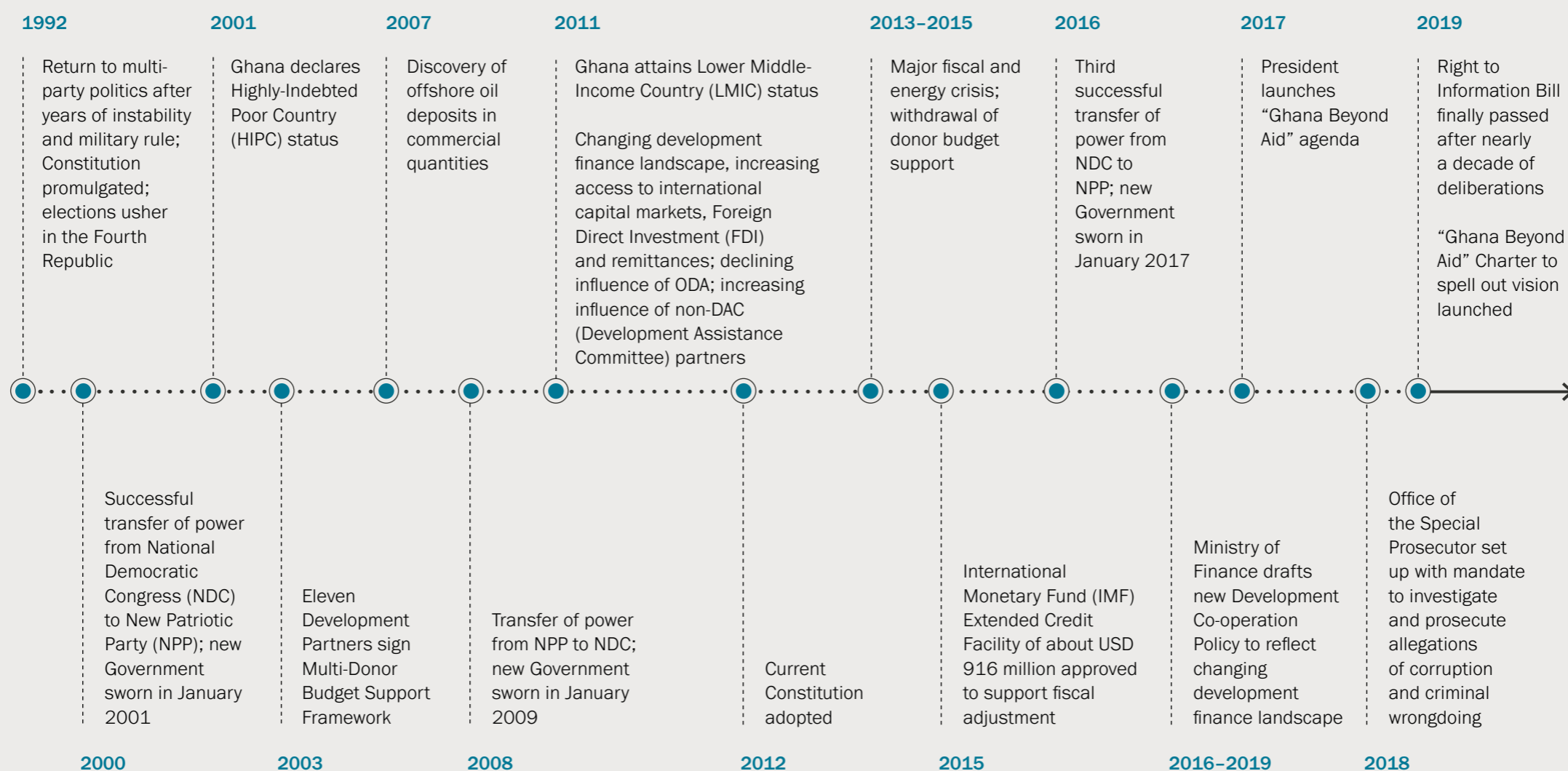
(World Bank 2020; 2016 data)



Ghana



Key Events



Introduction

Ghana is often seen as a model for political and economic reform in Africa. Aid to Ghana is in transition since the country achieved Lower Middle-Income Country (LMIC) status in 2011; however, it has seen increasing debt levels.



*Women doing working in the field. Ghana.
Photo: Curt Carnemark/World Bank/Flickr*

In 1957, Ghana was the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence and has seen a period of democracy and stability since 1992. The country is well endowed with natural resources and has roughly twice the per capita output of the poorest countries in West Africa. The economy is dependent on a number of key exports – principally, gold and cocoa, and now oil. The domestic economy was dominated by agriculture, which employs about 45 per cent of the work force, mainly smallholders. However, in the last decade there has been a burgeoning service sector. Ghana's economic prospects were given a further boost with the discovery, in 2007, of significant oil finds off the coast. The oil came on-stream in 2011.

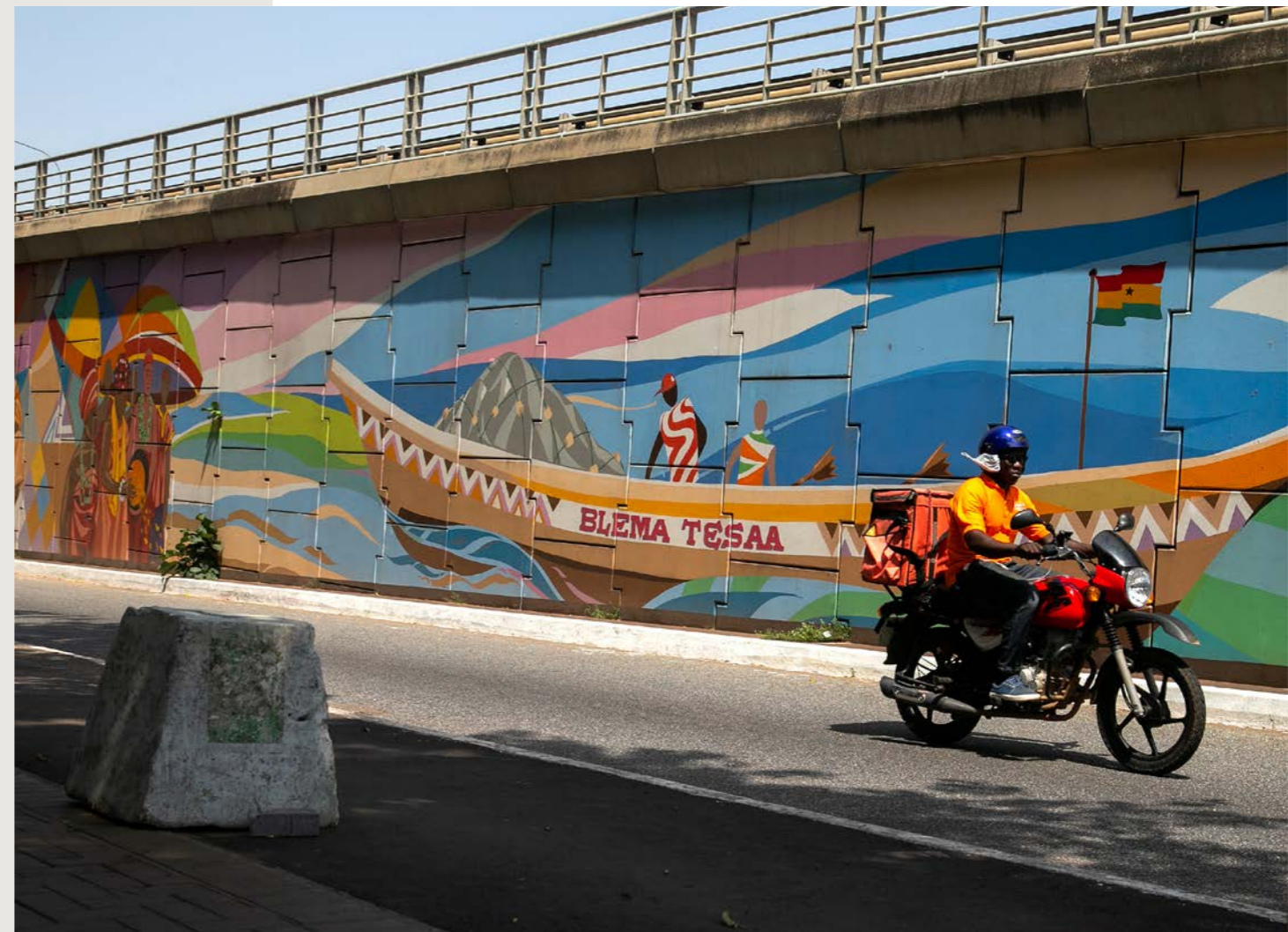
The Covid-19 global pandemic has given both a demand and supply side shock to Ghana's economy. The Government has implemented sweeping social distancing measures and travel restrictions, supported by aggressive contact tracing, enhanced testing capacity, and expansion of treatment and isolation centres (IMF 2020).



*An informal gold miner carries a shovel as he climbs out from inside a gold mining pit at the site of Nsuaem-Top, Ghana.
Photo: REUTERS/Zohra Bensemra/File Photo*

Country Context

Steady economic growth placed Ghana at the forefront of poverty reduction in Africa. However, growth has been accompanied by growing spatial disparities and income inequality. Corruption and political and ethnic patronage remain of concern.



A motorcyclist rides past a mural on the walls of Ako Adjei interchange in Accra, Ghana, October 2020. Giant murals by the creative Art Council of Ghana and the association of Visual Artists have been painted by over 30 painters on the walls of Ako Adjei, Tetteh Quarshie and Kanda interchanges in Accra. The works incorporate elements of traditional Ga Adangbe culture and portray the culture and traditions of the people of Ghana. Equally depicted are spiritual practices, reverence for the ocean and the universe, philosophical thoughts, cleansing rituals, symbols of communication, theatrical aesthetics and visual representations of mythical imaginations. Photo: Christian Thompson/EPA/NTB Scanpix

Ghana returned to constitutional rule and multi-party politics in 1992 after years of instability and military rule. There are two major political parties, so the political field is highly polarised and the stakes are high because of the “winner takes all electoral system. The four-year electoral cycle is effectively reduced by pre- and post-election concerns and is focused on short-term results rather than a long-term, strategic vision. Political stability is, however, seen as a major asset by all parties and citizens. There have been seven elections since 1992, with three successful transfers of power between the two main parties. The new inflow of oil wealth has raised the stakes and intensified the competition for political power. Civil society has played an increasingly active role in governance issues.

Ghana saw steady economic growth from 1993 that reached a peak of 11.3 per cent in 2011, but growth declined thereafter, reaching a low of 2.2 per cent by 2015, before recovering to 7 per cent in 2019. A systematic country diagnostic (World Bank 2018) summed up the growth phase as being in part due to higher prices for Ghana’s main commodity exports – notably gold and cocoa – and the start of commercial oil production in 2011, while the slowdown reflected a combination of declining commodity prices, energy rationing, and a major fiscal crisis in 2013.

Ghana achieved the first of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in reducing the national poverty rate by more than half between 1991 and 2012. However, the rate of poverty reduction has slowed since 2012, attributed partly to the slowdown in economic growth. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) Northern Ghana Human Development Report (2018) brings into sharp focus the reality of spatial inequality. Poverty has increasingly become concentrated in rural areas and in the northern part of the country. One out of three poor people lives in the northern rural areas, compared with only one out of five in 1991. Ghana has also lagged behind on key SDGs such as maternal and infant mortality and access to improved sanitation.

Following elections and change of government in January 2017, the new President, Nana Akufo-Addo, announced in his 2018 Independence Day speech his government’s desire to “prudently manage the country’s natural resources in a manner that will allow the country’s development agenda to be financed without recourse to external assistance” – an agenda he referred to as building “Ghana beyond Aid”. A Charter (2019) describes the vision as a national transformation agenda and a mindset and behaviour change among Ghanaians to work together towards a

Poverty has increasingly become concentrated in rural areas and in the northern part of the country.

prosperous country that is beyond needing aid, and that engages competitively with the rest of the world through trade and investment. The public budget is the main instrument to push forward the SDGs, and Public Financial Management (PFM) reform is intended to provide the necessary budget credibility and predictability to reach this goal. An IMF Extended Credit Facility of about USD 916 million to support fiscal adjustment was approved in April 2015 and ran to 2019.

Ghana's commitments under international agreements include: to realign all financial flows – public and private, domestic and international – with public goals and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda; to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15 per cent by 2030, under the Paris Climate Agreement (COP21); tax co-operation and exchange of information, under the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters; and work on illicit financial flows, under the Global Financial Report and National Risk Assessment on Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing. At regional level, Ghana has been co-operating with its neighbours to monitor progress on commitments.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government announced a major investment in healthcare infrastructure, including the construction of 88 district and six regional hospitals. It implemented social programmes for the poor and vulnerable during a partial lockdown of major urban areas. The Government committed about USD 210 million under its Coronavirus Alleviation Programme to, inter alia, the promotion of selected industries and the support of SMEs and employment. However, the pandemic is still expected to sharply reverse the previous growth trend. GDP growth in 2020 is projected to plummet from a target of 6.8 per cent to about 2.6 per cent, and to deteriorate further to 1.5 per cent if measures to halt the spread of the virus have to be prolonged (Ministry of Finance 2020). To help mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic, Ghana accessed a USD 1 billion interest-free loan from the IMF in April 2020. The disbursement is to help address the urgent fiscal and balance of payments needs, improve confidence, and catalyse support from donors (IMF 2020). The World Bank is supporting Ghana's emergency preparedness and response effort (Ministry of Finance 2020). The OECD-DAC has committed to protecting ODA budgets and to continuing to invest in health, social safety nets and humanitarian needs arising from the pandemic (OECD-DAC 2020).



Lawmakers meet during a session of Parliament in Accra, Ghana, June 2006. Photo: Jonathan Ernst/World Bank/Flickr

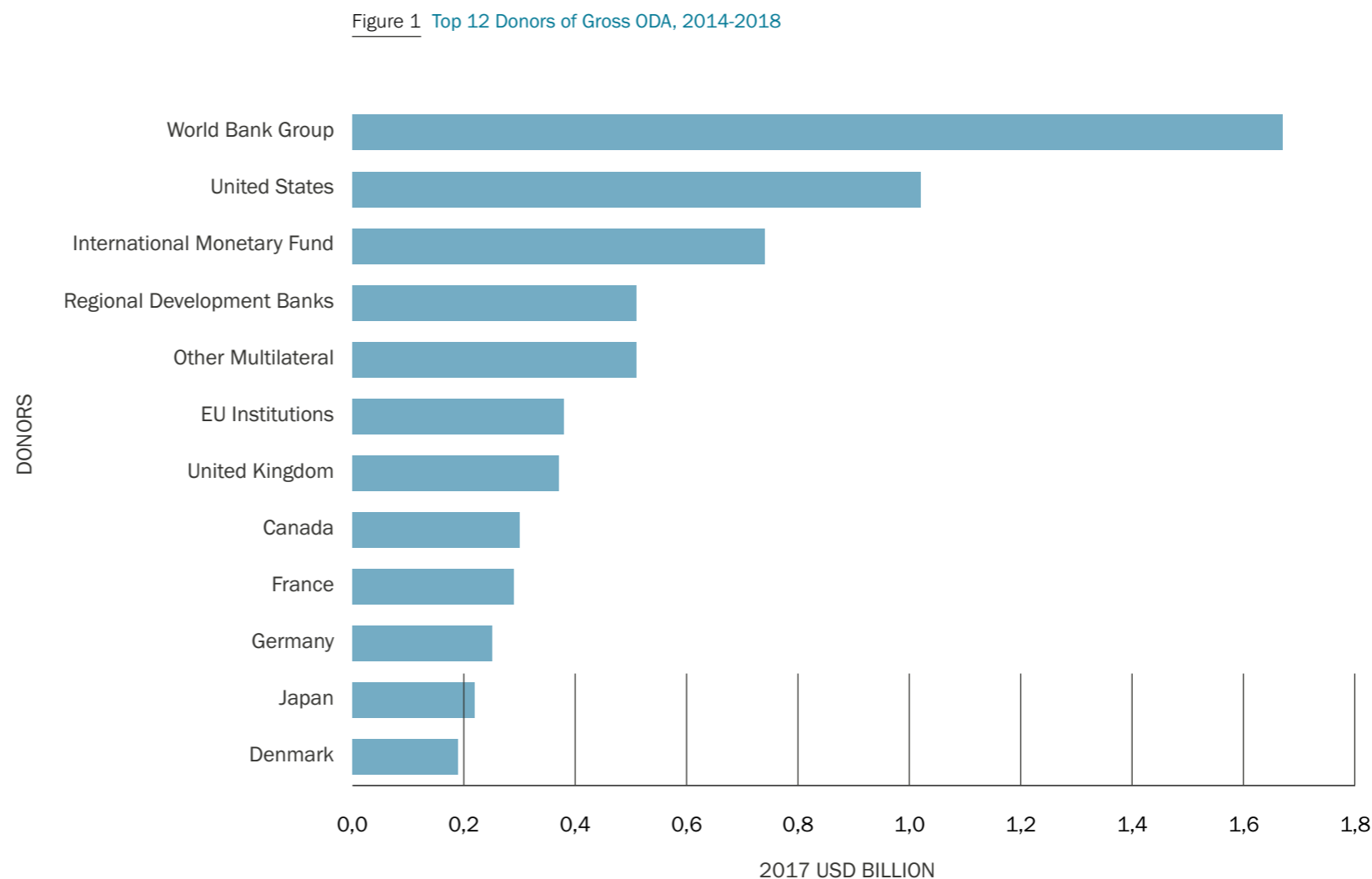
Donor Engagement

There has been a marked shift in the development finance architecture since Ghana attained Lower Middle-Income Country (LMIC) status. Official development assistance (ODA)¹ receipts have reduced significantly, and ODA has become only a small part of financial flows. Financing mechanisms have also changed towards more project aid, often in support of non-state actors.

¹ The CEB uses the term ODA in accordance with the official OECD-DAC definition: "ODA flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions are: i. Provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and ii. Concessional (i.e. grants and soft loans) and administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective" (OECD 2019).



From 2014 to 2018, the World Bank, IMF, African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United States (US) were the main providers of ODA to Ghana. Other partners with smaller ODA amounts include the European Union (EU), United Kingdom (UK), Canada, France and Germany (Figure 1). A Multi-Donor Budget Support (MDBS) framework was established in Ghana in 2003, including 11 Development Partners: AfDB, Canada, Denmark, EU, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland, UK, and the World Bank. Between 2005 and 2015, DPs provided over USD 3.4 billion in General Budget Support and USD 1 billion in Sector Budget Support. The MDBS partnership broke down in 2013-2014, after most DPs suspended budget support because of the deteriorating macroeconomic situation and concerns regarding PFM. Most suspended disbursements were released in 2015, but only a few DPs continued providing budget support to Ghana.



The category "Other Multilateral" includes the Global Fund, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) and, of lesser financial expression, the Climate Investment Funds (CIF), the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Source: OECD CRS Aid Activity database data 2020.

Since 2010, Ghana has experienced a rapidly-changing context for development finance. The Government has emphasised moving from partnerships based on aid to more trade and strategic economic co-operation. With the lapse of the MDGs on which the Aid Policy was anchored, and the adoption of the SDGs, the Addis Ababa Agenda for Action, the Africa Agenda 2063 and Ghana's long-term vision, the Ministry of Finance began a process in 2016 to revise the Aid Policy to reflect these key developments. However, after consultations with the partners, it was agreed that the Policy and 'Aid' were outdated, and that a new 'Development Co-operation Policy' be prepared that would reflect the changed architecture and the now-dominant non-DAC actors. The draft Policy (2019) has been discussed with partners.

The response of DPs to the changing context has been varied. Grants from the bilateral DPs have dwindled, instruments and modalities have changed, and some partners have exited ODA and moved to other types of partnerships (e.g. Danida). However, while aid to the budget – currently averaging about 3 per cent – has been on a declining trend, it continues to play a significant role in supporting the goods and services and capital expenditure budgets of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), averaging about 38

per cent. Thus, while the Government pays the salaries of public workers, MDAs continue to rely significantly on donors for operational resources. The Charter has set targets to steadily increase the Government's contribution to these budget expenditures.

Non-DAC sovereign countries – notably, China, India, Brazil and Turkey – have become important players, providing concessional and commercial loans to finance critical infrastructure. China is the largest and most influential actor among them. Exploration of these new partnerships has led to a reorientation of the country's trade and investment flows. Donors are working more with non-state actors – civil society organisations (CSOs)², private sector organisations, educational institutions, and think tanks (Figure 2).

A key focus of the Government's strategy is to attract private capital and investments to support the country's development, and the Public-Private Partnership Policy is being implemented. The development partners

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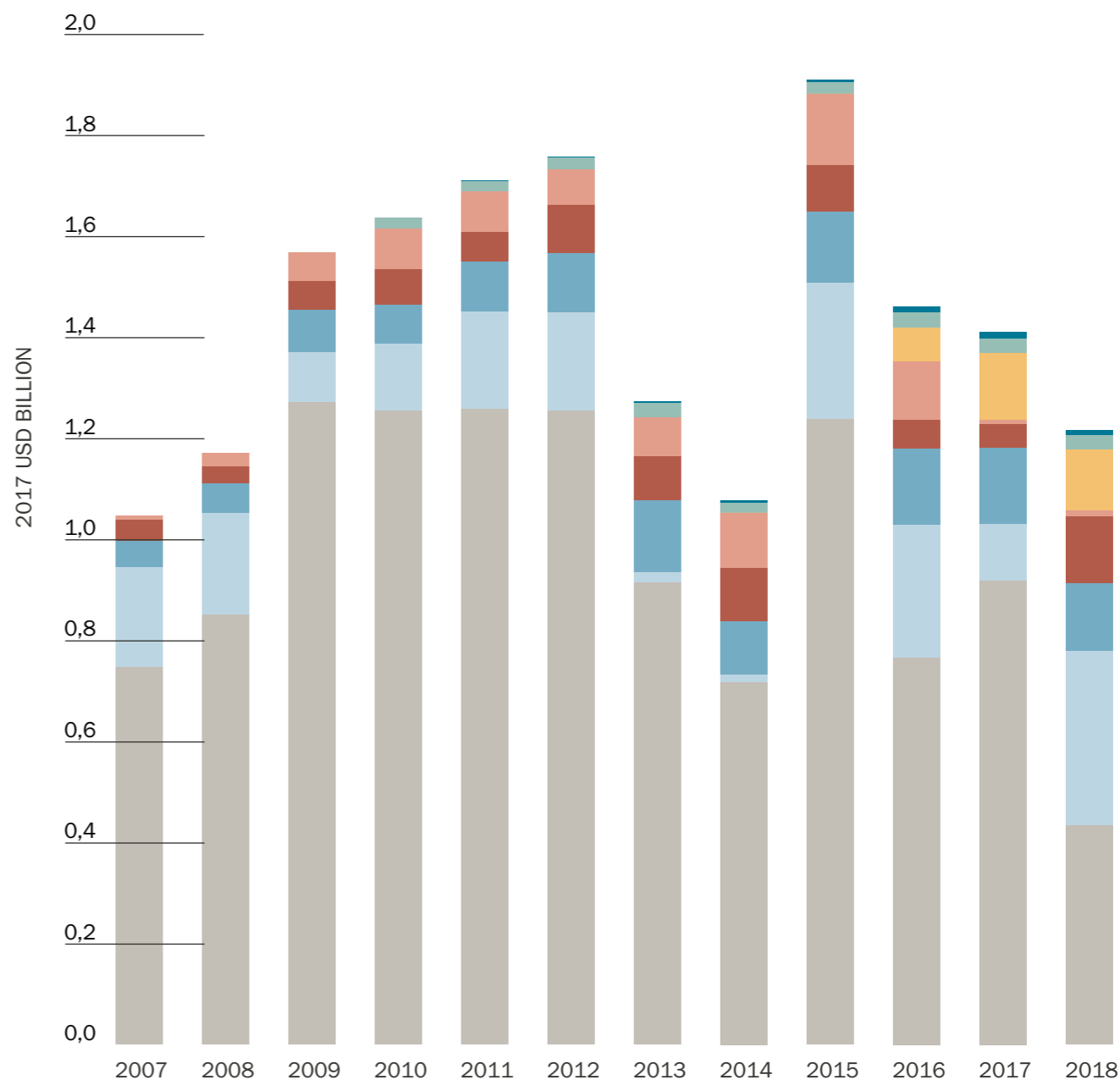
² The report uses the term civil society organisation (CSO) in line with the OECD DAC definition: "CSOs can be defined to include all non-market and non-state organisations outside of the family in which people organise themselves to pursue shared interests in the public domain" (OECD 2011). CSOs thus include non-governmental organisations and international non-governmental organisations.

are expected to leverage their resources to mobilise additional resources from the private sector and emerging donors, exploring options to attract private investment through existing and new instruments, such as co-financing arrangements and risk-mitigation instruments. FDI net inflow to Ghana has risen steadily in the last decade. Private remittances also constitute a significant percentage of foreign inflows (5.4 per cent of GDP in 2018), and the Government aims to leverage remittances to raise development financing. New additional financial resources are filling critical funding gaps, particularly in infrastructure (ACET 2017). However, the uncertainties arising from the Covid-19 pandemic are projected to lead to a slowdown in capital flows and investments to emerging markets (Ministry of Finance 2020).

- Public Sector ■ Not reported
- Civil Society Organisations ■ Multilateral Organisations
- Other ■ Private Sector Institutions
- Teaching institutions, research institutes or think-tanks
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

According to the OECD definition, the public sector comprises the general government sector plus all public corporations including the central bank.

Figure 2 Total ODA by Channel, 2007-2018



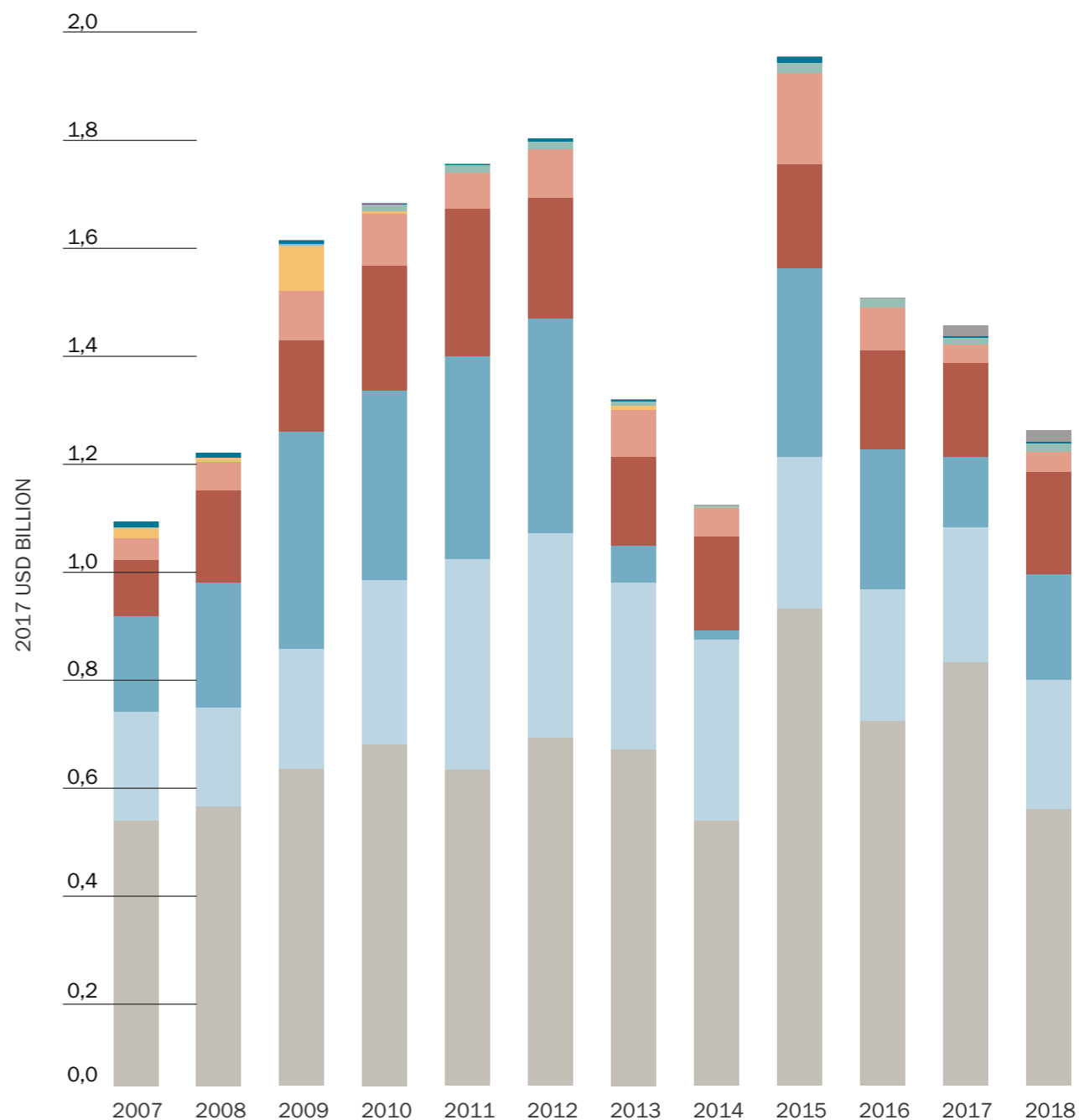
Source: OECD CRS Aid Activity database data 2020

As shown in Figure 3, with the decline in overall resources, there has been a reduction in ODA to social infrastructure and services, down to USD 500 million by 2018. ODA to economic infrastructure and services and to the production sectors was also about USD 500 million in 2018. However, the share of ODA allocation has remained stable since 2015 as donors responded to the Government’s emphasis. ODA to commodity aid and general programme assistance was minimal during the crisis period in 2013/14 and has fluctuated since 2015, averaging USD 200 million annually. ODA allocations to multi-sector/cross-cutting, humanitarian aid and administrative costs of donors were all minimal.

- Social Infrastructure & Services ■ Economic Infrastructure & Services
- Commodity Aid / General Programme Assistance
- Production Sectors ■ Multi-Sector / Cross-Cutting
- Action Relating to Debt ■ Unallocated / Unspecified
- Humanitarian Aid ■ Administrative Costs of Donors

“Social Infrastructure & Services” comprise i) Education, ii) Health, iii) Population Policies/Programmes & Reproductive Health, iv) Water Supply & Sanitation, v) Government and civil society. “Economic Infrastructure & Services” comprise i) Transport and storage, ii) Communications, iii) Energy, iv) Banking and financial services, v) Business and other services. “Commodity Aid / General Programme Assistance” comprise i) General Budget Support, ii) Development Food Assistance, iii) Other Commodity Assistance.

Figure 3 Total ODA by Sector, 2007-2018



Source: OECD CRS Aid Activity database data 2020

Evaluation Findings

In the last decade, donors have provided aid to support private sector development and trade, agriculture, energy, education, health, social protection, water and sanitation, environment and natural resource management, governance, and public finance management. Donors have had significant influence and impact in their support to Ghana's development objectives in a number of areas, particularly support to the social sectors, development planning, policy dialogue, civil society, and evidence for decision-making.



Budget Support

A joint donor evaluation of budget support (EU, World Bank Group 2017) finds that: budget support helped the Government to strengthen the implementation of the national development plan, improve the legal and policy framework, and accelerate the reform agenda. Budget support further helped to expand discretionary expenditure and strengthened the Government's ability to respond to external shocks and temporary falls in revenues, such as in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. As fiscal constraints increased, sector budget support contributed to compensate for dwindling resources of sector ministries and agencies. The report notes that the policy dialogue and substantial technical support helped to foster knowledge and strengthen policy formulation, intra-sector collaboration, and capacity of key public agencies. The MDBS framework played a key role in enhancing sector dialogue, consolidating the link between the Ministry of Finance and sector stakeholders, and strengthening the national aid architecture.

According to the evaluation, policy monitoring – which was an integral part of budget support dialogue – helped the Government and development partners to focus on spending priorities; and budget support consolidated the role of the National Development

Planning Commission, the body responsible for development planning policy and the monitoring and evaluation of development programmes. The report notes that, while some progress has been achieved in the legal devolution of functions to local government level, important aspects of the decentralisation policy, including fiscal decentralisation, still need to be implemented. And as civil society was involved in the policy dialogue and MDBS performance reviews, the capacity of CSOs was developed and their role enhanced in a wide range of areas. The report also states that gender issues were increasingly well integrated in the national policy framework (EU, World Bank Group 2017).

However, the evaluation mentions a number of factors that limited the benefits of budget support, including the deterioration in the macro-economy, the complex political economy of institutions, and the weakening of the partnership between the Government and development partners. It observes that the persistence of clientelist and political patronage systems continued to influence policy decisions and undermined the quality of policy implementation. In the absence of a capacity development plan, complementary support – such as institutional capacity building, technical assistance and analytical work – remained

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People dancing at the global launch of *Poverty in Rising Africa* in Accra, Ghana on October 2015.
Photo: Dominic Chavez/World Bank/Flickr

fragmented and donor-driven (EU, World Bank Group 2017). Denmark's evaluation of its overall partnership notes the importance of long-term partnerships and commitments, based on consistent high-level policy dialogue, supported by flexible technical assistance, to help generate trust and commitment for achieving results in partner institutions (Danida 2018a).

The budget support evaluation (EU, World Bank Group 2017) states that while Gender Desks were present in most ministries, they did not participate actively in the resource allocation process within their sector, and the gender-responsive budgeting initiative was not effectively sustained. In later years, the budget was constrained by the huge wage bill and high interest payments, reducing resources allocated to sector ministries and agencies, and making it increasingly difficult for them to adequately implement their strategies and plans. According to the evaluation, transparency and evidence-based decision-making remained weak. While there were attempts to make budget data more widely available, including through citizens' budgets, the fragmented budget structure and insufficient reporting made it difficult to conduct detailed sector assessments, limiting the Government's ability to allocate resources effectively and undermining budget credibility.

Overall, the evaluation notes that the focus of the MDBS, covering all the key sectors and priorities, was too broad to be truly strategic, and once the government-donor partnership and policy dialogue deteriorated, the essential benefits of budget support were lost (EU, World Bank Group 2017).

Transition

Development partners have aimed to increase understanding of the often complex processes when countries transition through different phases of development. Denmark's analysis of graduation³ in Ghana (Danida 2018b) observes that there has been a "herding" effect, as bilateral disbursements have decreased. The report notes that challenges with PFM have led to persistent deficits and the underfunding of the social sectors and agriculture. In addition, and despite significant initiatives by the Government and development partners, Ghana has not been able to significantly improve domestic resource mobilisation.

³ Ghana graduated to a lower middle-income country classification after a rebasing of its GDP in 2010. Ghana's LMIC status has limited its eligibility for concessional funds, it has met the operational income cut-off for eligibility for concessional IDA financing and after a transition process, Ghana will no longer be eligible for IDA funding.

It has also not developed a plan that can guide the implementation of the SDGs, and it is unclear whether it will be able to finance implementation.

According to the report, Ghana's experience shows the challenges countries face when they transition through different phases; that transition processes will be country-specific, and that the international community could play an important role in assisting in these processes. It notes that the transition process has demonstrated innovative approaches, synergies and working modalities at the crossroad between development and commercial/political co-operation. The report recommends clearer guidance for this, including balancing development priorities with commercial interests, and aligning diverging interests. It also notes the dilemma in selecting partnerships for the last phase of development co-operation, whether to continue supporting long-term partnerships (which may show little traction) or to engage in more prospective partnerships for the transition to future commercial co-operation (e.g. partnerships in the energy sector).

The report further recommends that, because of weak government capacity and serious budget constraints, donors need to support the establishment of alternative financing and institutional arrangements to ensure

sustainability when planning to exit or reduce their engagement in areas where their development assistance has been significant, especially in the social sectors. It also notes that sustainability aspects should be more critically addressed earlier in the phase-out process, including co-funding arrangements and exit strategies. The AfDB's evaluation (2017) shows that leveraging and co-financing have taken increasing strategic importance, with about one-third of projects approved across its evaluation period (2002-15) co-financed by other donors. UNDP's review of its Country Programme Document (UNDP 2017) recommends the inclusion of an exit strategy to test the Government's willingness to sustain and fund programme results that are considered particularly relevant for the country.

In the context of transitioning beyond aid, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) assessed the effectiveness and impact of Aid for Trade (Aft) in Ghana (ICTSD 2013). The evaluation finds that Aft programmes contributed to mainstreaming trade at various levels and helped tackle some of the constraints that hinder Ghanaian exports. However, they did not strengthen the absorptive capacity of the local institutions involved in the initiative, which limited the overall impact. The report

The transition process has demonstrated innovative approaches, synergies and working modalities at the crossroad between development and commercial/political co-operation.

notes that, despite the increase in trade, Ghana's exports were still highly concentrated and low in added value. It captured stakeholder perceptions that, overall, there was limited additionality in AfT, and that the increase in aid might have happened at the expense of aid to other sectors. Moreover, AfT, especially to infrastructure, became less predictable than aid to other sectors because of internal constraints such as cumbersome national systems and Government's inability to provide the requisite counterpart funding. The evaluation recommends a stronger government role in co-ordination of the AfT process to ensure greater synergy between the identification of trade development needs, mobilising resources, and monitoring and evaluation of the impact.

Energy

According to the World Bank Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) Performance and Learning Review (2016), the Bank supported actions aimed at increasing the availability of electricity and diversifying the energy mix. Its strategy originally focused on the reduction of power losses along the principal transmission interconnection with Nigeria, but it shifted this focus in 2014 – in response to government priorities – to diversification of energy sources and

development of cleaner domestic resources, especially off-shore natural gas. The AfDB evaluation (2017) notes that its power sector projects contributed to increased generation and transmission capacity, carbon emission savings, reduced transmission losses, and improved reliability of the transmission network.

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) Partnership for Growth evaluation (USAID 2017c) finds that, while Ghana has made progress in encouraging investment in the power sector, major problems still remain, notably: insufficient generating capacity and load shedding; below cost-of-service end user tariffs hindering further development of the supply chain and limiting efficient maintenance of current facilities; deferred investments limiting the quality and quantity of service available; and the debt situation of the distributor. The evaluation concludes that the power sector activities were insufficient to eliminate the identified constraints within a reasonable timeframe.

The AfDB evaluation also notes that the lack of cost-reflective tariffs, high levels of system losses and poor collection ratios have placed strain on the financial health of the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG). And the resulting arrears have created liquidity challenges throughout the power sector. Most immediate risk to

the sustainability of the Bank's power sector projects was the precarious financial sustainability of the sector, which depends on implementation of planned reforms, consistent application of the tariff adjustment mechanism, and the ongoing improvement of collection ratios at the ECG.

Governance

The budget support evaluation (EU, World Bank Group 2017) finds that, while budget support helped to improve governance and achieved some institutional strengthening, the changes were not sufficient to ensure effectiveness of accountability mechanisms and to limit political interference. The accountability institutions remained largely under-resourced, and the power imbalance between the branches of governance did not significantly improve. It also finds that decentralisation reforms did not change the system of central government's appointment of district heads, and independent institutions were not effective in challenging the Government in power, while law enforcement remained weak in all areas.

The UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) review of UK Department for International Development (DFID) empowerment and accountability work in Ghana

notes the effectiveness of civil society in strengthening citizen voices through the “Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana” (STAR) multi-donor pooled funding mechanism (ICAI 2013). It finds that some promising results were achieved by empowering communities to engage constructively with the Government to resolve problems with the delivery of public services and development programmes. It notes however, that strategies to engage the government were not well developed, and funding of CSOs remained an issue. CSO grant-making resulted in fragmentation, producing a scattered portfolio of small CSO activities that were difficult to scale up or link together in a strategic way. Support for CSO advocacy at national level had limited impact and seemed unlikely to generate significant improvements in government accountability.

According to USAID’s Accountable Democratic Institutions Systems Strengthening (ADISS) evaluation (USAID 2017b), the activity raised public awareness about the risks and costs of corruption, provided citizens with entry points to engage, and offered communities the means to expose, prevent and curb corruption. It notes that citizens’ use of reporting mechanisms grew over the period 2015 to 2016, and increased the exposure of corruption. However,

the number of users still remained low, despite high awareness of these mechanisms, and it was also unclear whether exposure was leading to prosecutions and reductions in corrupt behaviour. According to the report, the activity’s weakest link was its pursuit and prosecution of corruption, and the follow-up by state-civil society coalitions on Public Accounts Committee recommendations. The absence of political will to provide capacity and resources for public accountability institutions contributed to low performance. The activity’s greatest strength was its support to grassroots networks of citizens and accountability of Community-Based Organisations; and that these actors represented a growing constituency for reform, fostering a culture of integrity in the activity’s districts that should be nurtured and sustained.

Oil and Gas Management

Norway’s Oil for Development (OfD) programme evaluation (Norad 2019) finds that, while there were important achievements with regard to institutional, organisational and skills development in the oil and gas sector, progress with governance was limited. According to the report, the OfD capacity-building support contributed to putting in place a clearer structure for the sector and developed the knowledge

The absence of political will to provide capacity and resources for public accountability institutions contributed to low performance.



Waste treatment at Zeal Environmental Technologies in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana. Photo: Marit Hverven/Norad

and operational competence of the key institutions. Mandates and functions for the Petroleum Commission and Ghana National Petroleum Company were streamlined, and the Ministry of Energy's capacity to manage these core responsibilities was strengthened, improving its role and performance.

While OfD was expected to have the greatest impact in the area of technical knowledge feeding into policy development and practice, other factors – such as local traditions and culture, and political and economic interests – influenced technical decision-making. OfD results attained were also under pressure from competing agendas. Therefore, the larger governance and accountability systems to ensure adherence to set policies and principles remained a challenge. The report notes that considerable progress has been made in developing regulations and guidelines for environmental and social impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments, both on-shore and off-shore, and in strengthening the regulatory institutions in environmental management of the oil and gas sector.

According to the evaluation of Oxfam's "Accountability through Active Citizenship" programme, (Oxfam 2017), the programme increased citizens' awareness with

regard to oil and gas revenue management, and created a relative balance between government control and citizens' participation. The capacity of key parliamentary committees that oversee the monitoring and auditing of oil and gas revenue management was strengthened. However, public availability of oil contracts was low, and monitoring of the industry remained a challenge. The report notes the concern of the Public Interest and Accountability Committee leadership that it would not be able to conduct its work properly unless the Government provided full transparency. It concludes that, with the rapid evolution of the oil and gas sector, there is a need to develop cross-organisational teams for delivering on more complex oversight and control issues, and to consolidate experiences in the context of the much more complex socio-political economic dynamics of on-shore and expanding sector activities.

Addressing Poverty and Inequality

The joint donor evaluation of budget support (EU, World Bank Group 2017) finds that budget support has played a moderate role in Ghana's considerable achievements in reducing both monetary and non-monetary poverty. The budget support mix of inputs contributed to a substantial increase in access to basic services, and to maintaining, to some extent, a focus

on pro-poor interventions, especially during the first half of the period evaluated from 2005 to 2010. The report notes that the MDBS included specific policy measures and indicators that fostered implementation of social protection programmes for the vulnerable and excluded, including the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) Programme, and the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). Development partners also supported analytical work in these areas.

An evaluation of the LEAP programme (Government of Ghana, UNICEF 2017) finds significant improvement in virtually all aspects of the economy of beneficiary households. Consumption, particularly food consumption, increased in targeted households, and subjective well-being among the households reflected the improvement in consumption. Households demonstrated further improvements in their productive activities and financial position, while their access to the NHIS increased. The programme led to limited improvements in schooling, with enrolment levels of beneficiary children remaining stable and attendance improving.

The evaluation of another social intervention, the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) (DFID 2018) finds that it had a significant impact on seven of the 28 MDG

outcome indicators. While the project did not achieve the MDG target to reduce extreme poverty and hunger at the local level (Goal 1) in Northern Ghana, the report notes that reducing poverty on this scale would be hard to achieve within the programme's five-year period and due to the complexity of the income-expenditure-savings dynamic, particularly given the local context and deeply entrenched behaviours. Although incomes have grown at the same rate for all households in the project areas, the degree of inequality remained unchanged. At the same time, well-being beyond monetary-based measures of poverty may have improved. While the project model recognised the need to address many inter-related challenges, attempting to address all at once did not deliver significant results or synergistic effects. The evaluation notes that sustainability was a problem, and that there was a need for early strategic thinking beyond the project lifecycle, particularly for approaches such as top-up allowances, community education workers and new health facilities, given their implications for government funding and delivery in the long term.

Cross-cutting Issues

The budget support evaluation (EU, World Bank Group 2017) describes the continuous degradation of the environment in Ghana: illegal artisanal small-scale



Woman works in a small shop, Ghana.
Photo: Arne Hoel/The World Bank/Flickr

mining increased and became a highly-mechanised activity. As a direct result, conflicts related to mining increased, and the environmental impact of mining worsened considerably. In the forestry sector, the resource base dwindled, and most high-value timber species were cut down. However, the forest cover expanded slightly, partly due to an increase in plantations, while the Government undertook a number of initiatives to counter environmental degradation. The report finds that sector budget support contributed to strengthening the sector's policy and legal framework, consolidating the CSO's role and expanding public actions in various areas, such as the management of protected areas and enforcement actions in the forestry and mining sub-sectors.

However, according to the report, these actions were limited in size and time compared to the scale of the needs. It identifies a number of factors related to the political economy of the sector that hampered the effects of budget support and improvement in public policies in the sector. Among these, vested interests continued to make the implementation of certain reforms difficult, limiting the welfare effects from the extraction and use of the natural resources. Furthermore, enforcement in the mining sub-sector remained a key issue that was only temporarily

addressed. And increased population and lack of employment alternatives put pressure on forest resources through agricultural expansion and drove people into illegal forestry and mining activities. AfDB's evaluation notes that the Bank placed particular emphasis on green growth among agriculture projects, including the management of forestry and water resources. At the project level, it finds mainstreaming of inclusive and green growth satisfactory.

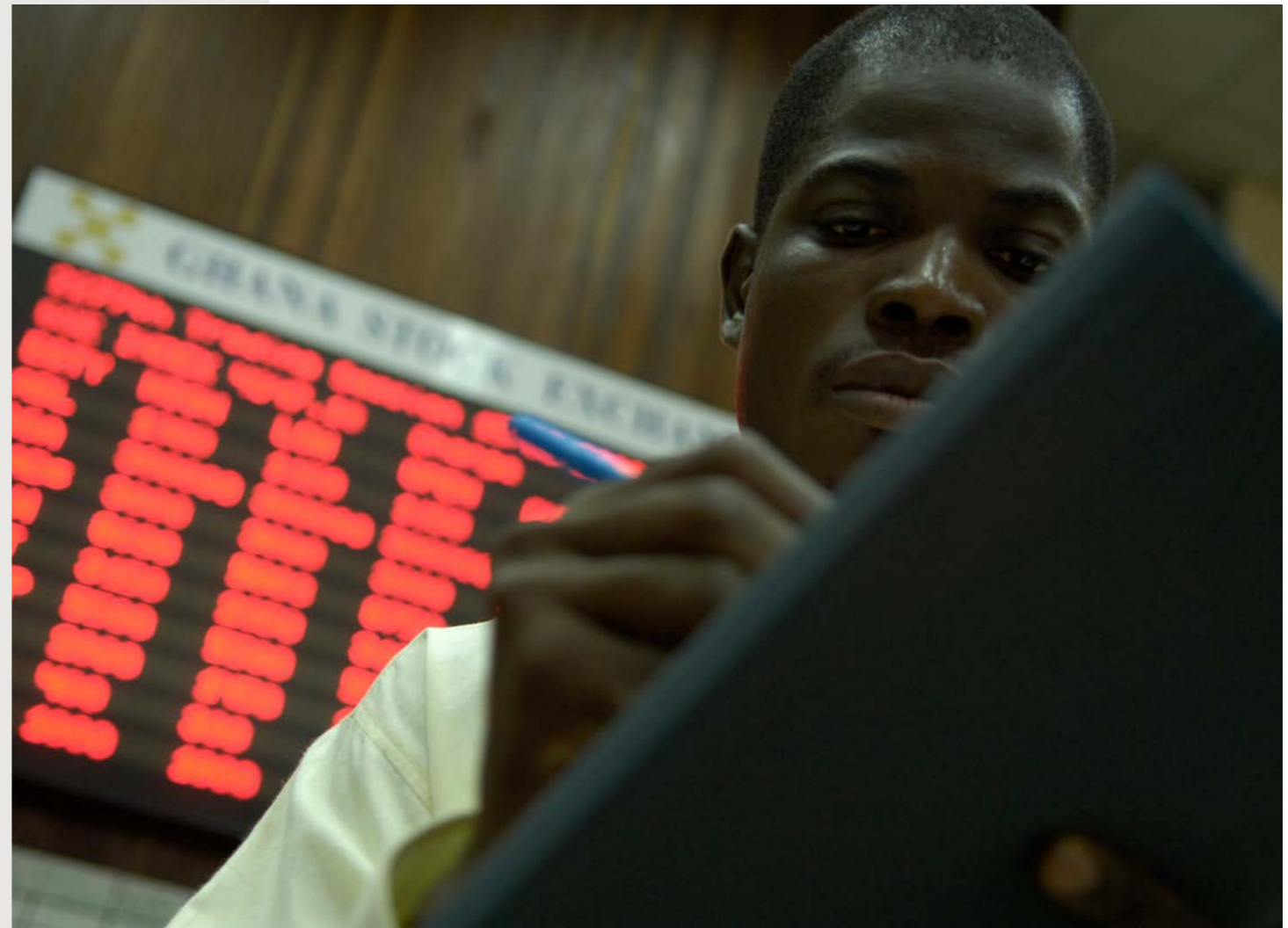
According to the budget support evaluation, the MDDBS policy matrices integrated gender equality issues in overall programming and in policy measures to bridge gender equality gaps in health and education, and they included sex-disaggregated data to strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation systems. It finds however, that the level of mainstreaming of gender elements in budget support operations – including general and sector budget support financing agreements and monitoring and evaluation activities – remained weak.

UNDP's country programme evaluation (2017) notes that although cross-cutting themes were mainstreamed into projects, gender impacts were assumed and were often not measured against gender-disaggregated outcomes. UNDP supported the production of relevant gender policies, strategies and tools to strengthen

gender statistics, budgeting and reporting. UNICEF's (2017) evaluation of training on gender-responsive pedagogy identifies factors that could compromise the sustainability of capacity development interventions in the girls' education sector. These include the need for additional follow-up training on gender-responsive pedagogy, lack of monitoring and accountability following interventions, lack of parental and community engagement in education, and the limited number of female teachers in certain areas.

Lessons

Overall, development partners have effectively contributed to achieving Ghana's development objectives in a number of areas, particularly with regards to the social sectors, development planning, policy dialogue, civil society, and evidence for decision-making. In response to the changing context for aid, donors have transformed their role from acting merely as development assistance providers to focusing on means of supporting Ghana's own efforts to foster trade, investment, and business growth.



Strengths

Ghana was the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to meet the MDG 1 target of halving extreme poverty. Development partners have contributed to Ghana's considerable achievements in reducing both monetary and non-monetary poverty, supporting increase in access to basic social services at all levels and maintaining a focus on pro-poor interventions. Donors supported the implementation of key social protection programmes for the vulnerable and excluded. Budget support and other institutional support programming helped to strengthen the country's legal and policy framework, and to promote inclusive policy formulation, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation across Government. Donors contributed to accelerate key reforms, notably decentralisation reforms and to strengthen Government ownership and intra-sector and inter-sector collaboration. In response to the changing context, donors increased technical co-operation programmes that focused on their areas of strength, to facilitate transfer of knowledge and capacity to country institutions and partners.

Donor support to Civil Society has contributed to enhancing their role in strengthening governance and accountability, implementing initiatives to increase the

capacity of citizens to hold Government accountable. In recognition of the contribution of the oil and gas sector to Ghana's socio-economic development, donors have supported legislation and policies in the sector to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency across the entire value chain, in petroleum revenue management and utilisation to support sustainable development.

Development cooperation played an instrumental role in Ghana's transition towards becoming a middle-income economy. A number of major partners worked together to review their development plans and revamp the architecture for donor co-ordination and dialogue to more fully recognise the emerging importance of the private sector and the newer, non-traditional partners, drawing on lessons from experience in comparable countries. Most bilateral and multilateral donors sought to shift their programmes towards helping the Government to strengthen institutions and management systems, and to promoting policies and approaches that would more effectively leverage the effectiveness of support of all donors.

Donors have been helping to leverage the opportunities in the international capital market for financing development, directly and through intermediaries.



Few women like Madam Laadi Forkinam, standing in her 13 acres maize farm in Nakpanduri, have access to farm land in the Northern Region of Ghana. She now owns 30 acres of farm land where she cultivates soybeans and groundnuts. Photo: International Center for Soil Fertility (IFDC)/Flickr



*A fisherman prepares his fishing nets in Jamestown Fishing Village in Accra, Ghana, October 2015.
Photo: Dominic Chavez/World Bank/Flickr*

Some are using guarantee instruments to provide reassurance to private investors and to reduce the risk profile of transactions, thus facilitating investment where there is market failure and where pure commercial financial institutions are not likely to invest or partner. Bilateral donors are increasingly working through development finance institutions.

Weaknesses

Despite Ghana's remarkable progress in reducing poverty, inequality remains a challenge, particularly spatial inequality. There is regional disparity in access to basic social services, with the regions in the north disproportionately affected. A number of donors shifted their programming focus to the region in recent years, but the effect on the region's development is yet to be assessed.

Development partners have provided extensive support to domestic resource mobilisation towards enabling Ghana to finance its own development, but progress has been limited. Most of the reasons for this have been outside the control of donors, notably the political will to effectively address the country's large informal sector. In recent years the Government has been

leveraging technology to help address the challenge. Donors supported public financial management reform to ensure effective use of resources mobilised.

Donors have supported the legal devolution of functions to local governments, but important aspects of the decentralisation policy and framework still need to be operationalised and the practical aspects of fiscal decentralisation still need to be implemented.

While evaluations show fairly satisfactory results on relevance and effectiveness, they have not performed well on sustainability. Risks to sustainability include limited capacity and resources for long-term maintenance, and limited engagement of the private sector. Several reports stress that programmes should enhance the focus on sustainability of results, making it part of programme design and reporting processes. Support should be realigned with realities on the ground if they are to generate lasting, transformative change.

While Ghana's graduation into lower middle-income status was anticipated by the Government, the graduation process was not accompanied by a coherent strategy or national financing framework to compensate for the consequences or a financing plan for the SDGs.

Government priorities are often unclear, and prioritisation is not done across sectors to reflect trade-offs among and within them. In addition, there is a lack of clarity and follow-through by the Government on what it articulates as priorities – notably, weak commitment to counterpart funds. These shortcomings undermine the effectiveness of donor support. Due to low absorptive capacity, government institutions are not able to use all external development resources within the given time to achieve defined purposes. Increased official financial inflows have exacerbated the challenge and contributed to unsustainable debt levels.

The persistence of clientelist and political patronage systems has continued to influence policy decisions and undermined the quality of policy implementation. Despite waves of largely donor-funded public sector reform programmes during the last three decades to improve core areas of state functionality, many public sector institutions remain largely ineffective. Donors were also not successful in pushing for a national capacity development plan, consequently institutional capacity building, technical assistance and analytical work remained fragmented and donor-driven. And budget constraints reduced resources allocated to sector ministries and agencies, limiting their ability to adequately plan and implement their strategies.

To ensure that reforms work, reformers need to pay attention to the fact that “the political dynamics matter for where and when public sector reforms gain traction – and, apparently, more so than the specific reform approach taken” (Appiah & Abdulai 2017).

A key lesson is that it is neither the quantum of aid nor the strength of aid conditionalities that matter in shaping the impact of external development assistance, but rather the extent to which the interests/incentives of domestic political elites and external actors are aligned (Abdulai 2014). The limits of external actors in pushing for reforms that are at variance with the interests of domestic political elites were illustrated in significant off-budget expenditures in election years, under IMF programmes with strict structural benchmarks.

In Ghana’s context, interventions that focus on system-wide reforms at the centre are often unlikely to yield the desired results. Instead, a more realistic agenda may be to support the emergence and sustenance of pockets of effectiveness.

Gaps

While civil society has played an increasingly active role in governance issues thanks to donor support,

gaps remain in strategies to effectively engage the government, particularly at the national level. As development partners step up engagement with non-State actors, there is the need to assess services that are at the core of public service responsibility, and which are highly sensitive to private sector involvement, to define what can be opened up and what should not be, and to put in appropriate safeguards to manage the risks in expanded private sector involvement.

Managing for results continues to be a concern in terms of the quality of results frameworks, the identification of suitable indicators, and the availability of data to assess results. Development programming should include requirements for establishing more effective data collection systems (baselines, surveys) in order to measure and document outcomes and impact from development interventions.

Donor programming has helped to strengthen the focus on gender and climate, but more remains to be done. There is a need to ensure that cross-cutting themes are included in project log frames and disaggregated at the outcome level. Clear data collection arrangements should be identified among stakeholders at appraisal to ensure sufficient data to assess the achievement of outcomes pertaining to cross-cutting themes.

Looking Ahead

New opportunities are arising from a number of important changes in the context surrounding development co-operation, with the strong commitment of the Government and development partners to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to address global and local challenges, including those relating to climate change. If the Government is willing to engage genuinely in new, strong, medium-term partnerships, this could be the right time to move away from piecemeal approaches and re-launch a comprehensive partnership to support some of the country's major policy reforms.

As underfunding of social sectors undermines the ability to achieve critical SDG targets, partners should explore possibilities for supporting alternative funding mechanisms within these sectors. This could be done through a more strategic SDG partnership approach, involving larger and more strategic private sector engagement/public-private partnerships.

Partners should recognise the contribution that Aid for Trade can make towards a sustainable exit strategy for aid in the long run. To be effective, Aid for Trade should address national trade-related priorities identified through domestic policy formulation processes.

The multiplicity of sources and channels have posed challenges in striving to make effective use of all development resources. Efforts to mobilise additional financial resources should be accompanied by improved regulatory and policy framework, both national and international, along with investments in absorptive capacity, in order to make more effective use of financing for development. External resources should create the incentive to build strong institutions.

As leverage and impact of ODA reduces, traditional donors need to be clear about their niche and advantage relative to competition from other kinds of providers.

The Covid-19 pandemic context is likely to see a decline in, and reallocation of, development resources. It emphasises the imperative for countries to manage their own development co-operation policies and partners. It should help Ghana to accelerate the use of technology to address development challenges across all sectors and promote more sustainable “green” approaches to development.



Kids play in boats in Jamestown Fishing Village in Accra, Ghana, October 2015. Boys in Jamestown begin fishing as young as 9 years old. The fishermen typically bring their catches back to the women in the community, who lay the fish out in courtyards to dry. Jamestown—the center of Ga culture in Ghana—is a slum, but its citizens are proud and hard working. Problems related to housing, food, and education loom large. Photo: Dominic Chavez/World Bank/Flickr

Methodology

This evaluation brief presents the synthesised main findings of 25 evaluations and reviews published since 2012 of major donor-funded programmes and large projects in Ghana.



Dignity factory workers producing shirts for overseas clients, in Accra, Ghana, October 2015. Dignity-DTRT, a garments factory in Accra, Ghana, employs 1,500 workers—75 percent of whom are women from low-income backgrounds. The company aims to enhance worker-factory relationships by providing free, good-quality meals, an in-house clinic, and efforts to create a social life for workers. Through the Skills Development Fund, the World Bank Group provides much-needed support for skills-development training for Dignity's workers. Photo: Dominic Chavez/World Bank/Flickr

The evaluations reviewed for the brief were identified through a systematic search of global development co-operation databases, websites and report databases of individual multilateral and bilateral donors and CSOs. Through this search, a total of about 50 evaluations were found, and subsequently narrowed down to 25 with the help of certain selection criteria. The selection was made to ensure that: a) the main sectors and areas for development co-operation are covered; b) a good balance between different sources and channels of ODA exists; c) the evaluations are of a high scientific quality; d) a good mix of evaluations commissioned by large bilateral donors, multinational organisations and major international CSOs is achieved. While this approach resulted in a balanced sample, the fact that Country Evaluation Briefs are, by definition, based on evaluations constitutes a degree of limitation, as the available reports do not always cover all crucial areas of development co-operation and development challenges. To mitigate these limitations, the Brief also draws on a small number of relevant academic articles, policy studies, government publications, and other types of assessment.



A factory worker producing fruit drinks at Blue Skies, in Accra, Ghana, October 2015. Photo: Dominic Chavez/World Bank/Flickr

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Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organisation	NPP	New Patriotic Party
DFATD	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Canada	ODA	Official Development Assistance
DFID	(UK) Department for International Development	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
EU	European Union	OECD CRS	OECD Creditor Reporting System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	OECD DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
GNI	Gross National Income	OfD	Oil for Development programme (Norad)
ICAI	UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact	PFM	Public Financial Management
ICTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development	PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
IDA	International Development Association	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
IMF	International Monetary Fund	UK	United Kingdom
LMIC	Lower Middle-Income Country	UN	United Nations
MDBS	Multi-Donor Budget Support	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
NDC	National Democratic Congress	US	United States (of America)
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
		USD	US Dollar

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This report is the product of the authors, and responsibility for the accuracy of data included in this report rests with the authors alone. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Evaluation Department.

November 2020

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Cover photo: Arne Hoel/The World Bank/
Flickr. *Young girl walks to school, Ghana.*
Design and layout: Fete Typer

ISBN 978-82-8369-055-2
November 2020