Assessing Ghana’s Performance on Governance using the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG).

Imani Center for Policy and Education
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB – African Development Bank
APRM – African Peer Review Mechanism
CDD - Center for Democratic Development
CHRAG - Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CPI – Corruption Perceptions Index
CSO - Civil Society Organisation
GG – Good Governance
IEA – Institute of Economic Affairs
IIAG – Ibrahim Index of African Governance
LEAP - Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
NACAP - National Anti-Corruption Action Plan
NGO’s - Non-Governmental Organisations
OSP – Office of the Special Prosecutor
RTI – Right to Information
STAR Ghana - Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana
TI – Transparency International
UN – United Nations
WB – World Bank
Introduction

“Governance” is a broad term that is often used to describe a government’s overall responsibility and duty of controlling, regulating and managing a nation’s affairs. According to Baker (2011), however, governance is much broader than government.\(^1\) Governance involves “all power relationships, including non-state, sub-state, and supra-state relations.”\(^2\) Moreover, governance is about the exercise of power and authority.\(^3\) This is clearly portrayed in the World Bank’s definition of governance, which it describes as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development.”\(^4\) To understand governance therefore, is to acknowledge that it entails various actors who use (or misuse) “their power and authority through the institutions in place to manage the resources available for growth and sustainable development.”\(^5\) Common actors involved in the governance process include “politicians, civic institutions, media, religious and cultural organisations, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), as well as government agencies.”\(^6\)

In the 1980’s, international development agencies and aid donors such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank (WB) began to emphasise the critical role that governance plays in shaping the economic growth and social development of a country. They specifically concluded that “many of Africa’s development problems were due to poor governance” which was characterised by wide scale abuse of power (corruption) and poor allocation and weak management of resources. This discussion led to the emergence of the term ‘Good Governance’ (GG); a term that was coined to shed light on how the quality of governance was positively linked to growth and development; it highlighted GG as “essential to promot[ing] development, build[ing] capacity, and combat[ing] poverty,”\(^7\) through the focus on “participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness, and equity”\(^8\) within a “properly functioning democratic system.”\(^9\) Since its emergence however, the ‘Good Governance Agenda’ has been widely criticised for being idealistic, overloaded (containing “a very [long list and] wide range of institutional preconditions for development)\(^10\), westernised and overly technocratic, conveniently ignoring the political dynamics that exist in societies, as well as imposing a “one size fits all solution” for a group of countries that

\(^2\) Ibid
\(^3\) Ibid
\(^6\) Ibid
\(^10\) Ibid
each have unique contexts. Despite the flaws of the GG agenda, a number of African scholars, prominent leaders and organisations have continued to promote the general idea of GG, agreeing with the need for governance to significantly improve if the continent is to enjoy sustainable growth and development. Ghanaian and former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan emphasises this, referring to GG as being perhaps, “the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development”\(^{11}\) in Africa. The President of the African Development Bank, Akinwumi Adesina, shares similar sentiments, stating that “good governance is not only a worthy goal […] but also a prerequisite for sustainable development and poverty reduction in the longer term.”\(^{12}\)

Indeed, the promotion of GG in Africa opened up the discussion on corruption, accountability and transparency in governance, pushing many African countries to focus on these areas. Some efforts so far have been regional including i) the establishment of organisations such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which was created “as an instrument for monitoring performance in governance among Member States,”\(^{13}\) and ii) the enforcement of regional standards such as the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which was adopted in 2007 and “entered into force on February 15, 2012”.\(^{14}\) On a national level, countries like Kenya have taken practical steps towards good governance by creatively incorporating anti-corruption lessons and clubs into primary and secondary schools. While these efforts are commendable, the underlying question remains: Are these efforts making a significant difference? Ghana is an ideal case study to examine in this area. This is because the country has made significant gains in democratic governance since it returned to constitutional rule in 1993. Since then, the country has experienced the rapid rise of an independent media, increased political participation of citizens and civil society organisations and the establishment of watchdogs and anti-corruption agencies, among many others. Despite this, Ghana still battles with persistent corruption and bureaucracy, transparency, accountability and weak management of public resources and finances, all of which undermine Ghana’s efforts to achieve good governance.

Using graphical representation and cross-country comparisons of data from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation’s database, this report seeks to assess Ghana’s performance on the MO Ibrahim Index of African governance (IIAG) from 2012 to 2016, addressing the following questions: i) What are the factors or issues that have affected Ghana’s performance in ensuring quality governance over the past five years? ii) What are Ghana’s strengths and weakness as compared to other well (or not so well) performing African countries and iii) What strategies can Ghana adopt to improve upon her performance in ensuring good governance?

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\(^{12}\) Ibid


Background

Ghana is not only well-known for being the first African country to gain independence from colonial rule. Ever since its return to constitutional rule in 1993, Ghana has been recognised and respected for its political stability and relatively peaceful transitions of power, especially on a continent which this is not always a common phenomenon. International media has even gone as far as to label Ghana, the “shining democratic star on the African continent,” often referring to it as “a success story of democratisation in Africa.”

In the 25 years of the stable democracy that Ghana has enjoyed, each government that has come into power has promised to improve governance, particularly in the areas of combating corruption and increasing accountability and transparency into the management of resources and public finances. For example, “throughout his two terms in office (2001–2009), former President John Agyekum Kufuor promised to run a zero-tolerance corruption policy and established [...] the Office of Accountability [to be] in charge of monitoring political appointees.” This Office however, was found to have “released no public reports during his presidency”, defeating the purpose of its existence. Similarly, during the rule of his successor, former President John Evans Atta Mills (2009–2012), “promised to take important steps towards fighting corruption,” specifically promising to direct “all his appointees to declare their assets within seven days instead of six months.” This was never enforced.

Other steps that the state has taken to improve governance in Ghana include i) the passing of laws like the “Public Procurement Act (Act 663); Internal Audit Act (Act 658)” and the new Public Financial Management Law (Act 921) to promote accountability and transparency in management of public funds ii) the passing of laws to protect the rights of citizens. This includes the 1998 Children’s Act, “Labour Act in 2003; Disability and Whistleblowers’ Act in 2006; and the Domestic Violence Act in 2007” iii) the development of the “Code of Conduct for the Ghana Civil Service; Guidelines on Conflict of Interest of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) to assist public officials in identifying conflicts of interest; [and the] Code of Ethics for Ministers and Political Appointees in Ghana of 2013 iv) the approval of the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) in 2011. In addition to the efforts of the Ghanaian government, there has been rapid growth in the participation of non-state institutions in the governance process. Their

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17 Ibid
18 Ibid
19 Ibid
20 Ibid
22 Ibid
23 Ibid
role has involved keeping government accountable and the citizens of Ghana informed, as well as providing relevant policy recommendations towards good governance. Some examples of these organisations include ABANTU for Development, Center for Democratic Development (CDD), Human Rights Advocacy Centre, Imani Center for Policy and Education, Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) and Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana (STAR-Ghana)\textsuperscript{24}, just to name a few. The Ghanaian media (especially radio stations, news channels, newspapers and social media) have also played and continue to play a crucial role in the governance process. They keep the public informed and engaged; they also keep political discussions running and hold politicians accountable for their (in)actions.

Indeed, the efforts outlined above appear encouraging. According to Transparency International (TI), judging by “the various governance and anticorruption reforms undertaken by successive governments since independence, Ghana holds relatively good positions on various indices of corruption and governance when compared to other countries in Africa.”\textsuperscript{25} Similarly, The World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Control of Corruption Indicator also places Ghana “well above the regional average, and even above the average for lower middle-income countries”\textsuperscript{26} such that “Ghana’s corruption rating in both of these composite indicators is comparable to the score of more economically developed countries such as Romania, Slovakia or Brazil.”\textsuperscript{27} This is interesting, since surveys completed by Ghanaian citizens convey a different narrative. These surveys reveal that a\textsuperscript{28}. Research also shows that this scepticism is growing, as the Global Corruption Barometer revealed that in 2010/11, “37 per cent of the surveyed households considered the government’s efforts in fighting corruption as ineffective”\textsuperscript{29} compared to 55 percent in 2013. Participants in the survey further revealed that, “petty and grand (or political) corruption are still widespread in Ghana” \textsuperscript{30} and that “patronage networks still play an important role in politics”\textsuperscript{31} with the distribution of power being restricted to the political elite.\textsuperscript{32}

These responses on corruption and governance are rather bleak in comparison to the relatively good position on governance that Ghana has held in the past. Are the citizens of Ghana right? Is governance in Ghana deteriorating? This report shall address this question, assessing Ghana’s most recent performance on governance not only in comparison to other countries, but also on its own.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid
**Method**

The MO Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) is a unique indicator which adopts a comprehensive method of data collection, compiling and combining over a hundred variables from thirty-six independent African and global sources. This report uses the IIAG because it is “the most comprehensive collection of data on African governance”\(^{33}\), conveniently and clearly highlighting “continental, regional, national and thematic governance results [and patterns]” over time.\(^{34}\) The IIAG is made up of four main indicators: Safety and Rule of Law; Participation & Human Rights; Sustainable, Economic Opportunity and Human Development, within which there are several sub-indicators and variables that help provide a more nuanced assessment of African governance. Due to the large number of sub-indicators however, this report focuses on sixteen variables. These variables were purposefully chosen because they appeared to relate closest to the sub-indicator compared to other variables. So, for example, under accountability, “accountability of public officials” was chosen over “Online Public Services”. The final chosen variables were believed to best inform overall governance in Ghana. Variables were also considered based on the availability of data. Some variables did not have any data available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Indicator</th>
<th>Sub - Indicator</th>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Rule of Law</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Accountability of public officials, Corruption investigations, Diversion of public funds, Public sector accountability and transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Human Rights</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Political participation, Civil society participation, Election monitoring agencies, Free and Fair Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable, Economic Opportunity</td>
<td>Public management</td>
<td>Public administration, Budget management, Fiscal Policy, Budget balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Development</td>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>Poverty, Welfare services, Social safety nets, social exclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{34}\) Ibid
To provide a deeper analysis and more holistic assessment of governance in Ghana, this report specifically carries out i) cross country comparisons using graphs displaying the chosen IIAG indicator results from 2012 - 2016 (in Table 1.1) from Ghana, Mauritius, Botswana, Senegal, South Africa and Nigeria ii) analysis of additional governance indicators from the World bank (the government effectiveness indicator) and Transparency International (the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)) to support the IIAG results, as well as highlight any similarities or differences to the IIAG.

Limitations

Data on the IIAG indicators are only available till 2016. This is the same for the “government effectiveness” indicator from the World Bank. Data on the CPI from Transparency International however, is available up until 2017. Accordingly, overall data in this assessment is not in a uniform manner, creating slight inconsistencies in both representation and analysis. The unavailability of data for 2017 is further limiting because the analysis, which is only up to 2016, fails to capture the (in)effectiveness of the reforms that were implemented in Ghana in 2017.

Data and Analysis

Ghana’s general performance on the MO Ibrahim Index of African Governance for the past years can be described as satisfactory. Some might even describe it as more than satisfactory, referencing the fact that in 2016, Ghana ranked 8th out of 54 countries, with an overall governance score of 65 out of a 100, a score higher than the regional average. Though Ghana was part of “the ten best performing countries on the continent” however, the country has failed to improve upon its performance on some governance indicators, leading to the increasing deterioration in overall governance. This is shown in Fig 2.1 below, where Ghana and seven other countries (Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Gambia, Libya, Mauritania and Mozambique) are found in the red category, representing annual average declines over a period, with worsened conditions in the last five years. This is worrying, especially since over the years as discussed in the background, the government of Ghana has supposedly adopted and implemented certain policies and programmes to improve upon its governance. According to the IIAG, Ghana was registered as the fifth largest deteriorating country on the African continent in overall governance in 2016. Furthermore, the most recent 2018 Ibrahim Forum report which focused on Public Service in Africa revealed that “eight of

the 12 countries registering decline over the past decade are showing no signs of turning things around [...]. This group includes Botswana, Ghana, Libya and Mozambique.”

Map of Overall Governance in Africa and Ghana

Fig 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing Improvement</td>
<td>Annual average improvement over both periods, accelerating in the last five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slowing Improvement</td>
<td>Annual average improvement over both periods, losing momentum in the last five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warning Signs</td>
<td>Annual average improvement over the decade, but decline in the last five years *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouncing Back</td>
<td>Annual average decline over the decade, but improvement in the last five years *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow Deterioration</td>
<td>Annual average decline over both periods, decelerating in the last five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing Deterioration</td>
<td>Annual average decline over both periods, worsening in the last five years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MO Ibrahim Index Report of African Governance

Breakdown of Ghana’s Performance in Mo Ibrahim Governance Indicators in 2015

The fact that Ghana ranks better than most countries in the IIAG can therefore be quite misleading. Fig 2.2 serves as evidence to this, showing that in 2015, Ghana remained within the top 15 positions concerning the four specific indicators that are used to measure overall governance. This suggested that Ghana did relatively “well”. However, closely analysing the Sustainable, Economic Opportunity indicator reveals that Ghana scored 48.4 out of 100, a score that is low for a country that is aiming towards good governance and towards positive growth and development. The revelation that governance in Ghana is increasingly deteriorating suggests that there has been. Indeed, it is important to look beyond “rankings”, and focus on the individual indicators and sub- indicators that can provide a closer and more genuine picture into the quality of governance. It is only through this that the Ghanaian government can begin to tackle problem areas that undermine effective and sustainable governance in Ghana. The following section therefore attempts to do this, focusing on Accountability and transparency, Participation, Public Management and Welfare.

**Accountability and Transparency**

Accountability is a key principle of good governance. This is because it “is of critical importance to the well-being of any society [...] that their government, and the people who manage it, are held highly accountable for their actions or, in some cases, their failure to act”\(^{37}\). Accountability is made up of two aspects: answerability and enforcement. Answerability, according to the World Bank, “refers to the obligation of the government, its agencies and public officials to provide information about their decisions and actions and to justify them to the public and those institutions of accountability”\(^{38}\). Enforcement, on the other hand, refers to the ability of the “public or the institution responsible for accountability” to sanction offenders and “remedy [...] contravening behaviour”\(^{39}\). Accountability is important because it helps evaluate the effectiveness of public officials and government appointees, ensuring that they “are performing to their full potential, providing value for money in the provision of public services, instilling confidence in the government and being responsive to the community they are meant to be serving.”\(^{40}\)

From Fig 3.1, Ghana is shown to have the second lowest score in accountability (55), with Nigeria trailing behind with only 33 out of 100 points. Though Ghana’s performance can be described as average, Fig 3.2 reveals that accountability in Ghana significantly dropped in 2013 and only began to recover gradually in 2014, and then rapidly in 2015. This is interesting and suggests that overall accountability in Ghana is improving. Looking at the sub-indicators in Fig 3.3 however, it is clear that Ghana has some difficulty in sustaining proper accountability. Fig 3.3 portrays several fluctuations in accountability, with the

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\(^{39}\) Ibid

\(^{40}\) Ibid
variables: Accountability of public officials, Corruption Investigations and Public Sector Accountability and Transparency showing an overall decline. Thus, while Ghana ranked 11th in overall accountability in Africa in 2016, it is not a complete picture of the unstable nature of accountability in Ghana. As highlighted in the background section, each party that has assumed power since 1993, has promised to put accountability and transparency mechanisms in place. Most of these “problems” are never enforced, and the ones that are, remain ineffective and unsustainable. This year, Ghana hired its first Special Prosecutor to help fight corruption. It is Ghana’s hope that such efforts will not be in vain but instead, will ensure steady improvement in overall accountability.

Source: MO Ibrahim Index Report of African Governance

Fig 3.1

Fig 3.2

Fig 3.3
**Participation and Human Rights**

Ghana has made some remarkable achievements under the Participation and Human Rights category. From Fig. 4.1, Ghana’s performance appears to be relatively strong, although it declined by 2% between 2014 and 2015. Despite this decline, Ghana’s actual scores remain high and stable, staying within the mid to low 70’s range. According to a Mo IIAG 2015 report on Ghana, “Participation & Human Rights is the only category in which Ghana has progressed over the past decade, although at a very minimal level”\(^{41}\). As shown in Fig 4.3, this increase in participation “has been solely driven by positive trends in [...] participation sub-category[ies]”\(^{42}\) such as political and civil participation shown in Fig 4.3, both of which have remained strong and steady with slight increases between 2012 and 2016. Ghana’s good performance in participation can be attributed to the establishment and empowerment of civil society groups, the growth of independent media, and the rise of digital platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook which easily allows the spread of information among citizens, giving them an opportunity to participate and be included in relevant political discussions. This increase in participation has also helped ensure a very basic level of accountability that somewhat keeps public officials in check, if even to a minor degree.


\(^{42}\) Ibid
Ghana ranked 26th (with a low score of 47.6) in public management in 2016. This proved to be the lowest ranking out of all four indicators discussed in this report. According to the IIAG, Ghana is the “fifth most deteriorated country on the continent” with the “negative trend [...] mainly driven by the deterioration registered in public management (-7.7)”.

Public management makes up a significant portion of governance activities and is specifically concerned with issues related to budget management, sustainability and effectiveness of fiscal policy and public administration, among others. Fig 5.1 shows that Ghana ranked as low as Nigeria in 2016, both scoring 47 points in public management. Fig 5.2 provides a more insight into this, revealing that public management was lower in previous years, particularly in 2014, and then began to improve between 2014 and 2015. This is not surprising, as “the Auditor-General’s Report for 2014 revealed that Ghana lost GHc2.6 billion to corruption and mismanagement” alone. The fact that public management is the weakest part of Ghana’s governance is concerning. This is because public management involves critical decision-making, especially in terms of the national budget and fiscal policy, both of which directly influence the growth and development of the country.

From Fig 5.3, it is clear that similar to accountability, public management in Ghana fluctuates often, with an overall decline in Public Administration and Fiscal Policy. Poor public administration in particular, is a chronic problem in Ghana that has been identified as a major challenge in almost every sector, from health and education to the agriculture (land) and legal

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44 Ibid

sectors. For example, due to poor administration, the legal system in Ghana suffers greatly from a high caseload burden. It was found that in 2000, only 1,777 out of the 28,665 were addressed\textsuperscript{46}. Similarly, in 2004 and 2005, only 34\% of cases were filed\textsuperscript{47}. Statistics from this trend conclude that “year after year 66\% to 94\% of the cases that go to the court are left hanging in the air”\textsuperscript{48}. The judicial system in Ghana is therefore well-known for the backlog of cases and long delays in its services. This clearly depicts how poor administration can undermine and weaken public institutions, rendering them ineffective and inefficient. At the same time, poor fiscal policies have also played a major role in weakening overall governance in Ghana. Indeed, continuous bad fiscal management has left the country with “a track record of high fiscal deficits”\textsuperscript{49}, since “primary spending has consistently been higher than revenues, with spending particularly higher during election periods.”\textsuperscript{50} Governments in power often become less concerned with the financial health of the country and more preoccupied with retaining power, leading to several attempts to secure the support of individuals and groups in society. This desire to win often then leads to the implementation of “convenient” policies including “substantial wage increases”\textsuperscript{51} and “ambitious capital projects”\textsuperscript{52}, all of which result in increased fiscal deficits and growth in public debt in the long-run. The lack of fiscal responsibility, discipline and laws in Ghana therefore serves as a free pass for the abuse and mismanagement of the nation’s finances by some public officials. The implementation of fiscal management laws pursuing fiscal consolidation, and the presence of increased accountability in this area will significantly help to improve Ghana’s performance in public management and subsequently, overall governance.

\textbf{Fig 5.1} \hspace{0.5cm} \textbf{Fig 5.2}
Welfare

Welfare, in this case, refers to the provision of basic social services such as health and education, as well as safety nets, to ensure the happiness and well-being of every individual in society. Unfortunately, welfare is another area of increasing deterioration in Ghana. The 2018 Ibrahim Forum Report revealed that 20 of the 33 African countries covered by [the improvement in health services] indicator have deteriorated over the last decade [with] Algeria, Burundi, Liberia, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Tanzania declin[ing] by more than -20.0 points, and Ghana, Madagascar and Mozambique by more than -30.0 points”53. From Fig 6.2, Ghana’s performance started declining in 2013, dropping from a score of 67 to 60 in 2016. The increasing deterioration over the four-year period is not satisfactory. According to the IIAG, Ghana’s abysmal performance for the past years has been driven by declines in health and welfare services. The delivery of quality healthcare in Ghana has particularly been and continues to be a challenge within the health sector. For example, there is a huge deficit in the nurse to population ratio; in 2016 the nurse to population ratio was 1:725. This implies that government failed in providing some essential services to improve upon health care delivery.

The National Protection Strategy was implemented by government to guide the provision of policies and programmes aimed at poverty reduction and to provide relief for the poor and vulnerable in the Ghanaian society54. Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) is a flagship programme which appeared under the National Protection Strategy to provide cash

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transfers to the poor in society. LEAP happens to have limited research assessing the effectiveness of the policy\textsuperscript{55}. From 2009 after its implementation, progress of this social cash transfer program remains elusive\textsuperscript{56}. The program has faced challenges of meeting its targets over the years\textsuperscript{57}. This could be a contributing factor to the poor performance on the IIAG when compared to Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa as indicated in Fig. 6.1.

\textbf{Fig 6.1}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig6_1.png}
\caption{Comparison of scores in "Welfare" among six African countries in 2016}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Fig 6.2}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig6_2.png}
\caption{Ghana's performance in "Welfare" between 2012 and 2016}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Fig 6.3}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig6_3.png}
\caption{IIAG score for Ghana}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{56} Maud Martei (2015) IMANI’s Initial Verdict on LEAP and what can be done to get value for money. Available at: http://www.imaniafrica.org/2015/06/22/imanis-initial-verdict-on-leap-and-what-can-be-done-to-get-value-for-money/
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid
Other Important Indicators

Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

The CPI is an annual score generated by Transparency International which highlights the extent of corruption within the public sector in each country. While it “cannot capture the individual frustration of this reality”\(^{58}\), it does send a message to governments all over the world, forcing them to be accountable and take practical steps towards fighting corruption. Corruption is the bane of Africa, to the extent of it being described as a “cancer” and a “plague”, suggesting the immense distress that it brings as well as the supposed inability for it to simply end. Indeed, it is one of “the most formidable challenges to good governance, development and poverty reduction' in Africa”\(^{59}\).

Ghana has been no stranger to the plague of corruption and has watched it persist despite the many solutions that have been targeted towards fighting it. Fig 7.1 shows that in 2016 and 2017, Ghana had the second lowest CPI scores (43 and 40 respectively), only just above Nigeria (28 and 27). Fig 7.2 shows an even bleaker picture on how Ghana’s CPI scores have been decreasing since 2014, suggesting that corruption in the public sector in Ghana is increasing. This is an interesting observation, especially since accountability in Ghana was lowest in 2014, as shown and discussed in the accountability section above. If this really is the case, then it highlights a very important issue, that accountability measures are not effective and thus, particularly unable to control, let alone eliminate public sector corruption. At the same time, the decline in CPI scores is analogous with the IIAG sub indicators:

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Accountability of public officials, Corruption Investigations and Public Sector accountability and transparency, all of which also decreased between 2012 and 2016. Nevertheless, receiving the lowest score in the past 6 years should be a warning sign to the government of Ghana, that all efforts to improve governance in Ghana will be greatly undermined if corruption is not aggressively tackled. Certainly, corruption will continue to increase in Ghana if accountability efforts also continue to fluctuate and are not taken seriously.

Fig 7.1  
Source: Transparency International. Available at: https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017

![CPI score of each country in 2016 and 2017](image)

Fig 7.2  
Source: Transparency International. Available at: https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017

![GHANA'S CPI SCORE FROM 2012 - 2017](image)

Government Effectiveness

Similar to the IIAG, the World Bank employs a combination of different indicators to measure overall governance. According to them, governance is made up of six dimensions: Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, Control of Corruption and Government Effectiveness. Government effectiveness, like public management, is a particularly useful indicator to analyse because it “captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies” 60. From Fig 8.1, Ghana has a percentile rank of 46 and comes in 4th place after South Africa with 65, Botswana with 71 and Mauritius with 78. Compared to the top 3 countries however, Ghana’s percentile is quite low. Looking at Ghana alone in Fig 8.2, where -2.5 represents “weak” and 2.5 represents “strong”, government effectiveness appears to decrease between 2012 and 2016 getting worse (weaker) as it approaches -0.3. This is concerning and suggests that the government of Ghana is not doing enough to become increasingly effective and efficient. In an Afrobarometer survey carried out before the 2016 elections about what Ghanaians expected of their new president, “more than 8 in 10 Ghanaians reported that the government was not effective in battling inflation (rates of inflation rose to over 18 percent in

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Additionally, “the vast majority of Ghanaians also thought the government was not doing enough to create jobs (76 percent), provide a reliable supply of electricity (75 percent) or fight corruption (71 percent)”\textsuperscript{61}. Furthermore, a comparison of Afrobarometer survey results displayed in Fig 8.3 shows that confidence in the effectiveness of the government of Ghana significantly decreased between 2008 and 2014.

One specific area that this decrease can be attributed to is the low quality of civil service in Ghana. While there are civil servants who have genuinely laboured and served the country, there are others who have greatly undermined the role. The 2018 Ibrahim Forum report provides evidence of this, revealing that “in the 2017 survey of 23,000 public servants across ten developing countries including Ghana […], recruitment appear[ed] to be the most subject to political and personal connections”\textsuperscript{62} and that “public servants for whom political and personal connections were important for recruitment [we]re less motivated to work hard and to serve the public, [we]re less committed to staying in the public sector, [we]re lower performing and [we]re less satisfied with their jobs.”\textsuperscript{63} This information could explain the poor quality of civil service, because appointments are “more dependent on political connections than on ability,”\textsuperscript{64} which in turn affects overall government effectiveness. Interestingly, the only positive evidence about civil service in Ghana was the fact that it recorded “a score of 100.0 out of 100.0, where civil servants operate[d] freely without political interference.”\textsuperscript{65} This is an extremely impressive score and should be an indicator to Ghana to also depoliticise appointments into the public service, employing only competent, qualified staff who can help make the government and public institutions more effective.

To conclude this section, being inefficient and careless leads to ineffectiveness and overall dissatisfaction on the ground, as revealed in the surveys. Striving for efficiency will automatically lead to the strengthening of public institutions, improvement in quality of social services and finally, the rise in government effectiveness and overall governance.

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\textsuperscript{62} Ibid

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid
Recommendations

From the observed trends above, it is clear that though Ghana holds a higher than average score and relatively high ranking in the IIAG, its overall governance is deteriorating especially in the areas of public management, accountability, welfare, corruption and government effectiveness. The initial score and ranking is therefore misleading of the reality on the ground. As such, below are some recommendations towards improved governance in Ghana, specifically in the areas of accountability, transparency and corruption, since if these areas are improved, other areas are bound to improve also.

Accountability, Transparency and Corruption:

As highlighted in the analysis section, participation is one of Ghana’s strengths. Ordinary citizens, Media and Civil Society Organisations (CSO’s) are all beginning to understand and make use of the power they possess to hold the government and public officials accountable. In 2015 for example, Anas Aremeyaw Anas, a renowned Ghanaian investigative journalist exposed the severe corruption that was taking place within the judicial system. Thirty four Supreme Court judges were caught taking bribes and “extorting money from litigants”67. This caused a public uproar, forcing many of the culprits to resign. At the core of this narrative however, is the power that an ordinary citizen (Anas) used to hold public officials accountable.

accountable. From this perspective then, it is important for every Ghanaian citizen, including the media and CSO’s to understand the importance and need to be alert and assertive to continuously hold government and public officials responsible for their (in)actions. This will help to keep them honest, alert and efficient, for fear of being exposed in public.

In light of the many corruption scandals that occurred in Ghana especially in 2014 and 2015 (including the bus branding saga and the guinea fowl and tree planting scandal), the current government has hired Ghana’s first ever special prosecutor to deal with corruption cases. The Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) is officially expected to act as a “specialized agency to investigate specific cases of corruption involving public officers, politically-exposed persons as well as individuals in the private sector implicated in corrupt practices and to prosecute these offences on the authority of the Attorney-General”\(^{68}\). It also meant to “help reduce the workload on existing investigative agencies and, thereby, enhance their effectiveness”\(^{69}\). It is our hope that this will complement the Auditor General’s duties through which several corruption cases in Ghana are exposed but not acted upon or treated seriously. This was to the extent that the Auditor General himself requested permission from the Attorney General to personally “prosecute persons indicted in the Auditor General’s report,”\(^{70}\) because very little was being done beyond his office simply informing the media and the public. The government is being urged to therefore ensure that the OSP takes action on every single corruption case exposed by the Auditor General, making sure that all culprits are exposed and appropriately sanctioned. It would also be useful to set up an independent accountability body that will closely monitor the OPS, making sure that no “overlooking” or favouritism is taking place, especially in regards to party loyalty. These efforts go a long way in exposing corruption, enforcing accountability and promoting transparency.

**Public management and Government effectiveness**

Improving accountability and transparency alone is not enough to improve Ghana’s scores in public management and government effectiveness. It is important to pass and strictly enforce laws that will restrict public officials from implementing bad fiscal policies that satisfy their personal agenda yet hurt the country in the long run.

One of the bills that is still waiting to be passed is the Right to Information (RTI) Bill. This bill is “expected to make information easily accessible by the media and Ghanaians to boost the fight against corruption.”\(^{71}\) Unfortunately, this bill which is extremely crucial to public sector transparency “has been in legislation for well over 17 years because successive

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\(^{69}\) Ibid


governments have failed to ensure its passage despite several assurances.”

Accordingly, there have been “efforts by several advocacy groups to put pressure on the duty bearers to have the Bill passed, [yet these] have also not yielded any positive results until now.”

If the government is serious about fighting corruption and increasing accountability and transparency, then they are called upon to see the passing of the RTI bill to the end, unlike all the previous governments who have been criticised “for lacking the political will to pass the Bill.”

Another weak area for Ghana in relation to laws is ensuring strict enforcement. For instance, like Ghana, Botswana has a number of laws that “ensure that the collection and custody of public funds is safeguarded and that funds are disbursed with proper legislative authorisation and according to intent”.

Where Ghana and Botswana part ways, is with the strict enforcement of these laws. Thus, in Botswana, “there have been regular arrests and convictions of government officials for corruption.” In Ghana, this is not the case. With the amount of corruption that takes place in the public sector, there are very few people who are held responsible, let alone arrested and convicted. Indeed, the enforcement of these laws is extremely weak. It has to be that in cases where this law is broken, public officials are exposed and appropriately sanctioned. The government is therefore encouraged to gain the trust of citizens by taking corruption seriously and dealing with corrupt public officials appropriately.

In regard to improving public administration, the government must invest in appropriate infrastructure, technology and in quality training on the use of these technologies in order to become more efficient and effective. Efforts have recently been made in this area, as the current government has introduced a paperless system into Ghana’s ports. It would be interesting to observe the effects of this digitised change. Indeed, global digitisation is happening at an extremely fast pace. While this is understandably hard to keep up with, Ghana’s public sector in particular, is often found using or sticking to extremely archaic forms of record keeping and processing. This often leading to backlogs, long queues, misplacement of files and data and an overall slow and ineffective system. It is important therefore, to speed up these processes by investing in technology that can help boost and sustain public institutions, and in the end, overall governance. Lastly, a more defined, and challenging application process must be adopted in the recruitment of civil service so that it is largely based on ability and competence rather than on political favours and connections. In the United Kingdom for example, applications for the civil service are known to be very difficult and intense. In the long run however, the civil service benefits because they have recruited the best employees.

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72 Ibid
73 Ibid
74 Ibid
75 Ibid
76 Ibid

Conclusion

This report has taken a critical look at governance in Ghana using the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG). It began by recognising the fact that governance is more or less the exercise of power and authority, and as such, the undermining of the concept is most often to do with the abuse of this power. Employing four sub-indicators of the IIAG and 12 variables, this report set out to discover Ghana’s performance in overall governance over the past five years. Results revealed that there are two sides to Ghana’s story. On the one hand, Ghana’s ranking (8th out of 54) in overall governance is stellar compared to a majority of its African peers. This good performance even extends to the sub-indicators such that in 2015, Ghana ranked 4th in Safety and Rule of Law, 6th in Participation and Human Rights, 11th in Human Development and 15th in Sustainable, Economic Opportunity. At first glance, and on the surface, these rankings are not terrible, especially out of 54 countries.

A closer look at the individual variables presents an interesting picture with some negative implications. In comparing Ghana to five other countries (Botswana, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa) over the past five years, using the sub-indicators and specific variables, it was discovered that governance in Ghana is actually “increasingly deteriorating”. Areas contributing to this deterioration included decreasing accountability, which appeared to fluctuate significantly, a fall in public management (especially in public administration and fiscal policy) and government effectiveness, worsening in the provision of welfare and finally, a rise in corruption. The government of Ghana has been called upon to ensure the OPS properly complements the Auditor General in prosecuting corrupt officials. They have also been encouraged to make sure that even the OPS is monitored, to not leave room for favouritism and negligence. Other recommendations included the need to ensure and speed up the passing of the RTI bill, strengthen the enforcement of these laws by arresting the guilty and finally, the need to invest in technologies accompanied by training that can help speed up old systems (within public institutions) that contribute to the poor state of public administration.

To conclude, Ghana must not fall into the complacency trap by solely focusing on its “good” rankings. It must remember that there is still a long way to go to and hard work to be done if Ghana is to genuinely and sustainably practice good governance.