ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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To all the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), we are grateful and hope the insights serve as a point of reflection for further improvement in service delivery from your various institutions.
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INTRODUCTION

Inspirational Public Sector Leadership Awards (IPSLA) is a prestigious annual public service excellence award that seeks to recognize public sector institutions in Ghana based on the successful and effective delivery of services to their stakeholders in the year under review. This year, the awards event was held at the Tang Palace Hotel in Accra on September 25, 2019.

In attendance were H.E. Philipp Stalder (Ambassador of Switzerland to Ghana) and Mr. Marricke Kofi Gane (International Development Expert and a Presidential Aspirant for Ghana’s 2020 Presidential Election).

Other dignitaries present included Mr. Daniel Yaw Domelevo (The Auditor General of Ghana); Mr. Sam Opoku (The Board Chairman-Imani Centre for Policy and Education); Mr. Franklin Cudjoe (CEO and Founding President-Imani Centre for Policy and Education) and Senior Vice-President-Imani Centre for Policy and Education, Mr. Kofi Bentil.

Representatives from some of the participating Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and selected media.
Mr. Franklin Cudjoe, President and CEO of Imani Centre for Policy and Education in his opening remarks, commended the participating Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs) for opening to scrutiny of their operations. He emphasized the need for IMANI to host events such as IPSLA, as these programs support the mission of the organization to “subject public policy to critical analysis with the vision to promote freer and more prosperous society”. He acknowledged among others, the support of the Embassy of Switzerland in Ghana, the Chamber of Bulk Oil Distributors and the Axis Pension Group for this Year’s awards.

Mr. Franklin Cudjoe
CEO and Founding President-IMANI Centre for Policy and Education
H.E. Philipp Stadler, the Ambassador of Switzerland to Ghana welcomed the audience to the programme. In his address, he highlighted the importance of the adoption of innovation in public sector service delivery. In his view, the adoption of innovation in service delivery will not only lead to economic growth and prosperity, but will help build the confidence the public has in the institutions established to serve their interests. He injected that the Swiss people (his homeland) trust key institutions like the central or local government highly. This assertion he backed with a study done in 2017 by OECD which reported that nearly 80 percent of Swiss citizens have confidence in the federal government. Explaining the high level of trust for Switzerland public sector, H.E. Stadler relayed that in Switzerland, one can only expect a high level of goods and services delivered by the various public institutions. He is of the belief that adopting new approaches on how to deliver services faster, better and cheaper is the business model for survival in the 21st century. Been a witness to the advancement stories of two Asian countries (countries he was posted prior to Ghana) he believes Ghana has what it takes to achieve a higher level of development through innovation.

Juxtaposing the happenings in the private sector of Ghana to its public sector, H.E. Stadler posited that the public sector has more to emulate from the private sector, the leader in innovation adaption dynamics. He mentioned that the ‘Ghana Beyond
Aid Agenda’ (which is an agenda by the Akufo-Addo led administration to create a nation that would be self-sufficient and prosperous, governed according to the rule of law, respect for human rights and individual liberties as well as the principles of democratic accountability) can be possible provided public institutions shift focus from traditional means of delivering services and include innovative approaches.

Based on some observations made by some researchers after the December, 2018 referendum which was summed to suggest that trust towards the public sector tends to be higher where there is greater political participation. The Ambassador, therefore, drew a conclusion from this that, there is the need for trustworthy and visionary people in the public sector in combination with constant application of innovation, to provide citizens with the best solutions.

He commended IMANI Centre for Policy and Education and its partners, as well as the participating MDAs and winners of IPSLA 2019 for making the conscious effort to advocate for and highlight innovation reforms and recognize individuals who are making these advances.
The Keynote address was delivered by Mr. Marricke Kofi Gane whose delivery was centred around the benefits of efficiency in the operations of the public sector. Among other things, he suggested two effective ways of shaping professional culture whether in the private or public sector: (a) to provide systems that punish irresponsibility without fear or favour and (b) to provide systems that deliver praise and reward for achievement whether in the short or long-term. Based on this proposition, he congratulated the top-five performing institutions for this year’s IPSLA and commended IMANI Centre for Policy and Education, for the efforts in identifying the befitting institutions.

Mr. Gane summarised the definition of efficiency as getting value for money, which is ‘getting more out of every cedi spent’. He explained further by saying that every decision of a public servant should answer the question “how can this decision or action give more to the average Ghanaian for every cedi spent?” and this question must guide every action of the public sector in the process of recruiting, procuring and authorizing. It must be central to the Ghanaian and must push the agenda for the public to get more irrespective of the prevailing condition of the country characterised by increasing debts, high costs of operation, huge borrowings and general inefficiencies. This agenda, he believes can be achieved when the public sector innovates to cut costs and get more out of less.

The above, he indicated, models the definition for efficiency and that the formula used to ensure that the right funding for providing better services is generally a
simple one, the difficulty he stipulated lies in politicians or the ruling government adhering to this simple formula.

The public will at all times require that services delivered to them are of high quality, convenient, cheap and easily accessible. The only way governments can keep the equation balanced is to focus on efficiency at all levels in the short term and on effectiveness in the long term. This is the only approach for governments and public institutions to attain a Value for Money status.

On the theme for this year’s awards, Mr. Gane opined that innovation “does not just mean finding entirely new ways of delivering services to the public, but [it] is equally about improving the way current services are delivered”. Innovation must not only be about the operations, machinery and procedures needed to deliver better public services, it must also be about the decision making processes. Innovation must be about how money is raised to deliver public services and it must cover how relationships with citizenry who receive services are managed. The way to become and remain efficient in the face of minimal resources and higher demands from the public is to innovate.

Mr. Gane outlined the following three benefits of employing efficiency in public sector service delivery:

1. Budgetary Flexibility: Due to the huge budgetary allocations to the Ghanaian public sector, Mr. Gane is of the opinion that any attempt to improve efficiencies in the public sector is bound to have huge impacts on the country’s Budgets. He went further to demonstrate that improved efficiencies across the public sector achieving just a 2 percent reduction in costs could possibly generate Ghs1.4 billion which will mean that total expected Grants of Ghs 1.1 billion from Donors will not be needed and that, for him, is a more sustainable way to achieve a Ghana Beyond Aid.

2. Reduction in Systemic Corruption: Mr. Gane expressed that any attempt to push for efficiency will require that all processes that are adding to bureaucracies are removed; procedures are simplified and yet secure; waste and idleness are cut down; duplicate responsibilities and staffing for political agendas are corrected and spending justifications are enforced. These requirements he believes if not targeted, are the very things which will
produce “divine opportunities” to engage in corruption. Efficiency can and does reduce system-based corruption and that, in itself has the potential to save Ghana an estimated Ghs 3 billion and more which the country loses to corruption annually.

3. Improvement in Education and Staffing in the Public Sector: Mr. Gane expanded on this benefit by saying that the Public sector is by far the single biggest absorber of university graduates and therefore should the public sector go on an Aggressive Efficiency Drive it will over time give preference to recruiting staff who are educated-in and driven-by innovation. This biased recruitment strategy, combined with the fact that government is the single biggest employer of university graduates can mean that government and by extension public sector will begin to see the self-serving benefit in ensuring that one of the focus of tertiary learning becomes innovation.

He made a humble appeal to IMANI Center for Policy and Education that, going forward, IPSLA should monitor and review the performance of previous winners to ensure that these winners are still adhering to their success strategies.
The summary of the IPSLA 2019 report was presented by Mr. Patrick Stephenson and Mr. Mudasiru Mahama. The presentation established the rationale behind IPSLA; as a means to award excellence in the delivery of public goods and services by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) in the country.

Mr. Stephenson began the presentation by taking the audience through what IPSLA means to Imani Center for Policy and Education and why the Think Tank annually organize this event. He unveiled the theme for this year's IPSLA as primarily focusing on measuring innovation in public service delivery by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) operating with the mandate to ensure services to the citizenry are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner.

Mr. Mudasiru, the second presenter explained to the audience the methodology adopted for the IPSLA 2019 survey. He threw more light on the findings after the survey and expatiated on the reasons some participating MDAs are ranked as they are.

In summary, the survey recorded an overall average innovation score of 77.9 percent. This according to the presenter shows a good performance by the participating
MDAs. The innovation outcome had the lowest score of 72.8 percent which goes to imply that MDAs should put measures in place to deliver their innovative ideas to the final user in order to chalk the impacts intended. In all, 11 percent of the institutions had an excellent score, approximately 39 percent scored very good and good. Only two institutions (11 percent) had an average score with no institution having a poor score.

Mr. Mudasiru also presented some general observations the study outlined on the approach to innovation in the country.

1. Decision making in the various institutions where innovation initiatives are concerned should lean in to involve all the staff in the innovation decision making. It was evidenced in the survey that most institutions that failed to perform did not largely involve subordinates in the decision making process.
2. The study acknowledges the extensive use of modern technologies (ICT) in the public service delivery of most participating institutions. The study encourages that this practice should be strengthened to help deliver service to the public in a faster and efficient manner.
3. The participating institutions were seen to be doing a lot in the innovation space. Bringing out new projects and programmes tailored to increase the level of public service delivery. However, there was little awareness created around some of the initiatives. It is therefore important that the public is well educated and made aware of these initiatives.

**IPSLA 2019 WINNERS**

At the end of the assessment, the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), emerged as the overall winners. This was due particularly to their outstanding performance on the ‘Innovation process and output’ indicators. The Vehicle Driver License Authority (DVLA), National Service Secretariat (NSS), Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Business Development made up the remaining top five institutions in Ghana using innovative means to effectively and efficiently execute their mandate to the public.

Certificates of Participation were also given to the other 13 participating MDAs.
TOP 5 INSTITUTIONS

1st Place – National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA)

2nd Place – The Vehicle Driver License Authority (DVLA)

3rd Place – National Service Secretariat (NSS)

4th Place – Ministry of Energy

5th Place – Ministry of Business Development
The closing remark was given by Mr. Daniel Yaw Domelevo, the Auditor General of Ghana. He expressed his zeal for the work of the public sector and the need for the sector to be efficient in its dealings. He made a striking statement that “the public sector looks up instead of looking down”. This he explained as the situation where public servants seek to satisfy the President or Minister; forgetting that the main mandate of the public sector is to serve the public. He reminded public institutions that the masters of the public servant are the public, hence all public servants should work to serve the interest of Ghanaians.

He also appealed to IMANI Centre for Policy and Education to extend the scope of this assessment to cover the whole public institutions in the country where the bottom five will be penalized somehow inasmuch as praise and rewards are given to the performing institutions.
PHOTO GALLERY
Representatives of the Top 5 Institutions with their award plaques; alongside Mr. Kofi Bentil (IMANI Vice President – First from left), Mr. Franklin Cudjoe (IMANI CEO & Founder – Second right) H.E. Philipp Stadler (Swiss Ambassador to Ghana –First from right)