

# GHANA: Experience with Partnerships between Government and CSOs

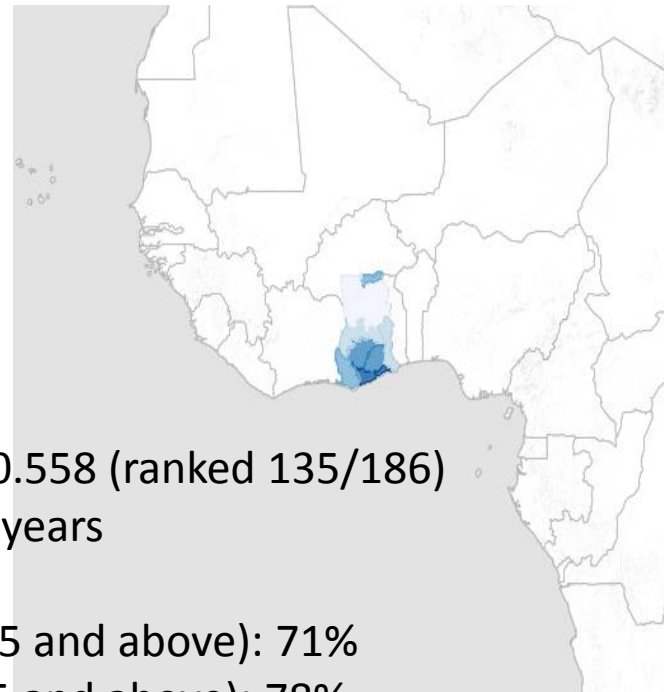
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# Ghana Country Context

## FAST FACTS:

- Population (2012): 25.37 million
- GDP (2012): \$40.71 billion
- GDP per capita (2012): \$1,605
- GDP growth (2012): 7.9%
- Inflation (2012): 9.2%
- Human Development Index (2012): 0.558 (ranked 135/186)
- Mean Years of Schooling (2010): 7.0 years
- Literacy Rates (2010):
  - Adult total (% of people ages 15 and above): 71%
  - Adult Male (% of males ages 15 and above): 78%
  - Adult Female (% of females ages 15 and above): 65%
- Life Expectancy at Birth (2011): 61 years
- Poverty Headcount at national poverty line (% of population):
  - 2006: 28.5%
  - 1998: 39.5%
  - 1992: 51.7%
- Access to Information Law: Legislation Pending
- Form of Government: Unitary Multiparty Republic with one legislative house



## Population Density Per square kilometer

32.35 ~ 56.15

56.15 ~ 104.9

104.9 ~ 121.1

121.1 ~ 237.5

237.5 ~ 1187

# Characterization of Government-CSO Relationship in Ghana through Time

- Evolution of a constructive engagement **from discordant, confrontational, and limited relations to increased engagements, accommodation, and partnership.**
- Post-independence Ghana (1957 onwards):
  - Growth in **number and the formal organization of CSOs** in pursuit of their political, economic, and social interests.
  - However, CSOs tended to function mainly as **co-opted or affiliated organs of the government or political parties.**
  - This trend of organizational or leadership affiliation with ruling political parties, for official recognition and/or opportunity to participate in the State's decision-making processes, continued to be the **basis of State-CSO relations** in the successive military and civilian regimes from 1966 to 1992.

# Ghana's Enabling Environment

- The most influential forces of State-CSO partnership have been the country's **Constitutional provision** and **deliberate government policy of inclusion**.

## Constitutional Autonomy

- Ghana's 1992 Constitution guarantees **freedom of association, freedom of speech, freedom of political participation/representation** and **free movement of persons, goods and services**. Thus, *CSOs are not legally constrained*.

## The Consultative Principle of Governance

- What has really driven the closer collaboration and partnership between the State and CSOs in the course of Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> Republic has been the **principle of consultation**.

# Factors and Forces Conducive to Constructive State-CSO Relations

## ***The Consultative Principle of Government (continued)***

- In 1991, a **Consultative Assembly that embraced the representation of virtually all occupational groups and associations**, met for 18 months to deliberate and adopt or modify a draft constitution drawn by a sub-committee of experts of the NCD.
- In April 1992, the Report of the Consultative Assembly was subjected to a **National Referendum**. The **Report's ratification at the Referendum** paved the way for the **resumption of multi-party politics and national Presidential and Parliamentary Elections** in November and December 1992.
- On the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 1993, the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic of Ghana was born, with the promulgation of Parliament and the swearing-in of the President. **Since then, after four peaceful successions of Government, Ghana's process of consultation and State-CSO partnership has continued unabated.**
- The **most recent test case** has been the **nation-wide and Diaspora consultations that preceded the constitutional amendments presented to the Government** in 2012 by the Constitutional Review Commission. These amendments are awaiting implementation by Parliament and, where necessary, by national Referendum.

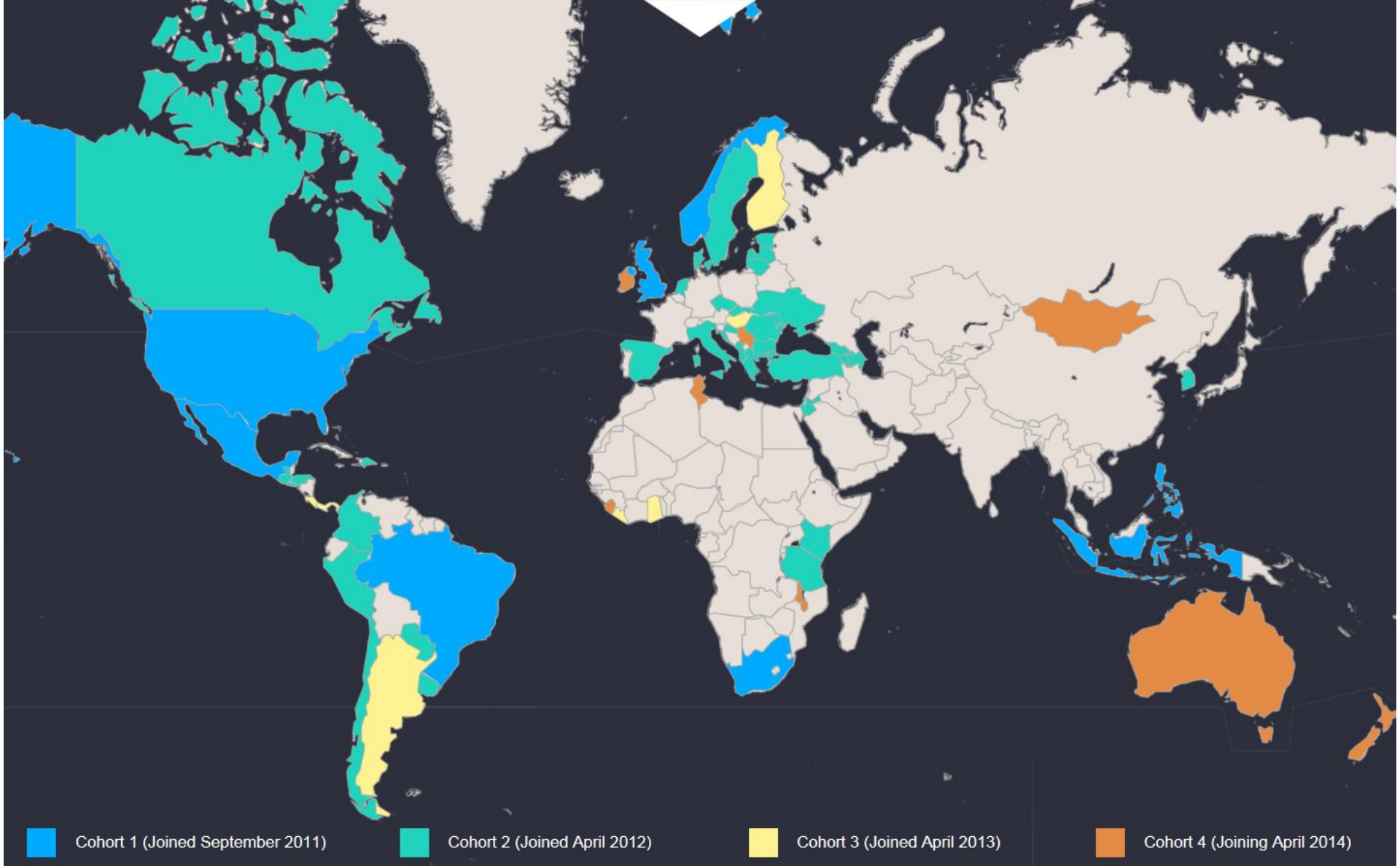
# Growing Collaboration and Partnership between Government and CSOs

- State-CSO relations have, over the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic (1992 onwards), been **progressively closer, more cordial and developmentally constructive**.
- Currently **over 500 CSOs** operating in the country of which **447 are formally registered and officially recognized** by the government.
- Their activities span the wide spectrum of human rights advocacy, environmental protection, anti-corruption campaigns, the championing of democratic rights and freedoms, and economic and political policy advocacy.
- Examples of this **growing collaboration and partnership** include:
  - Ghana signing on to the **Open Government Partnership** in September 2011
  - **State-CSO dialogue** for either the resolution of policy differences or project implementation has preceded the OGP as far back as the mid-1980s.
  - National Development Planning Commission has engaged CSOs since 1993
  - Government withdrawing the NGO bill from Parliament in 1993

# State-CSO Collaboration in the Open Government Partnership (OGP)

- In September 2011, the government of Ghana signed onto the Open Government Partnership, that has a membership of 57 countries and is financially sponsored by the World Bank.
- Ghana joined the OGP as it provides a good framework for the **coordination of policies and programs that promote transparent and accountable government.**
- Ghana's OGP has a national Steering Committee that **embraces the equal representation of the State (Executive, Parliament, and Judiciary) and the CSOs.**
- In December 2012, the Steering Committee finalized Ghana's National Action for the achievement of the OGP's commitments of:
  - ***Transparency***
  - ***Citizen participation***
  - ***Accountability***
  - ***Technological Innovation***
- The National Steering Committee adopted the Action Plan after it had been **publicly discussed in *nationwide consultative forums* organized in three zones.**

# Open Government Partnership (OGP) Countries





# State-CSO Dialogue on National Political and Economic Issues

- PAMSCAD (Programme of Amelioration and Mitigation of the Social Cost of Adjustment ) - **CSOs were a major agent in its implementation.**
- **CSOs have also had representation on several statutory boards of the State**, such as the USA-funded Millennium Development Authority (MIDA) which **managed the US\$560 million Millennium Challenge Account** targeted at agricultural and infrastructure development (2007-2012).
- The National Development Planning Commission (a constitutional body) has, since its inception in 1993, **engaged CSOs** in the preparation of advisory, policy documents for the President's presentation to the Parliament.
- In 1993, **dialogue was the medium of conflict resolution** between the Government and the CSOs, whereby, the Government withdrew from Parliament the NGO Bill which the CSOs felt was aimed at their control by the State.

# Challenges Confronting the Future Progress of State-CSO Relations in Ghana

- Partisan Politics
- Inter-party competition for power
- Mushrooming of CSOs which are really sub-groupings within their parent political parties.
  - This Damages CSO credibility.

# Dimensions of Lack (or Perceived Lack) of CSO Credibility

- CSOs vying for equal political space with the government due to historical origins of some CSOs as pressure groups and liberation organizations.
- Some CSOs lack transparency and accountability:
  - They fail to register for recognition by the government.
  - Some don't provide information on the scope of their activities. They don't submit annual or periodic reports on their operations to state authorities.
  - Some CSOs embark on projects without coordinating with district and regional planning authorities, creating problems of duplication, diverting attention, and leading to the inefficient use of limited resources.
- Most CSOs get their financial support from foreign donors without the knowledge or inter-mediation of the government.
  - CSOs do not report on the usage of these funds, although such funding counts towards foreign donors' total claim of support to the country.
- Others: Misapplication of foreign donor funds for personal purposes, Tax evasion, inter-CSO rivalry and competition, Bad CSO governance
  - The fraudulent practices of some CSOs hurt credibility of all CSOs.