



Ghana's 2020 Voter Registration Exercise: Implications For the December Elections and Beyond

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Presentation

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Outline

- Executive summary
- The 2020 voters' registration exercise in perspective and voting trends
- Analysis of swing constituencies
- Issues of concern to the Ghanaian voter
- Political economy analysis of manifestos and fiscal space (2021-2025)
- Ongoing research work

Executive Summary

The 2020 voters' registration exercise

- Bloated voters register theory propounded by incumbent administration not fully explainable by statistical trends.
- There is a 14% average gap in turnout between change elections (2000, 2008 and 2016) and second term elections (1996, 2004, 2012), indicating degree of apathy with core voter base and increased opposition momentum.

Policy priorities of the Ghanaian voter

- Addressing unemployment remains the single most important for Ghanaians. This is despite citizens rating governments well in how their education and basic health services needs are being addressed overall.
- The increasing recognition of corruption as a problem that needs addressing by government is a positive development.

Analysis of swing constituencies

- None of the two main parties has a dominant edge, based on a review of polling data from 1996-2016.
- No party can do without winning the coastal regions (Greater Accra, Central and Western Region) in any election.



The 2020 voters' registration exercise in perspective and voting trends

Allegations of bloated register goes back to 1992; renewed traction following Ghana's 2012 elections and protracted Supreme Court petition



OPINION

Opinion: Why NPP insists that voter's register is bloated with Burkinabes

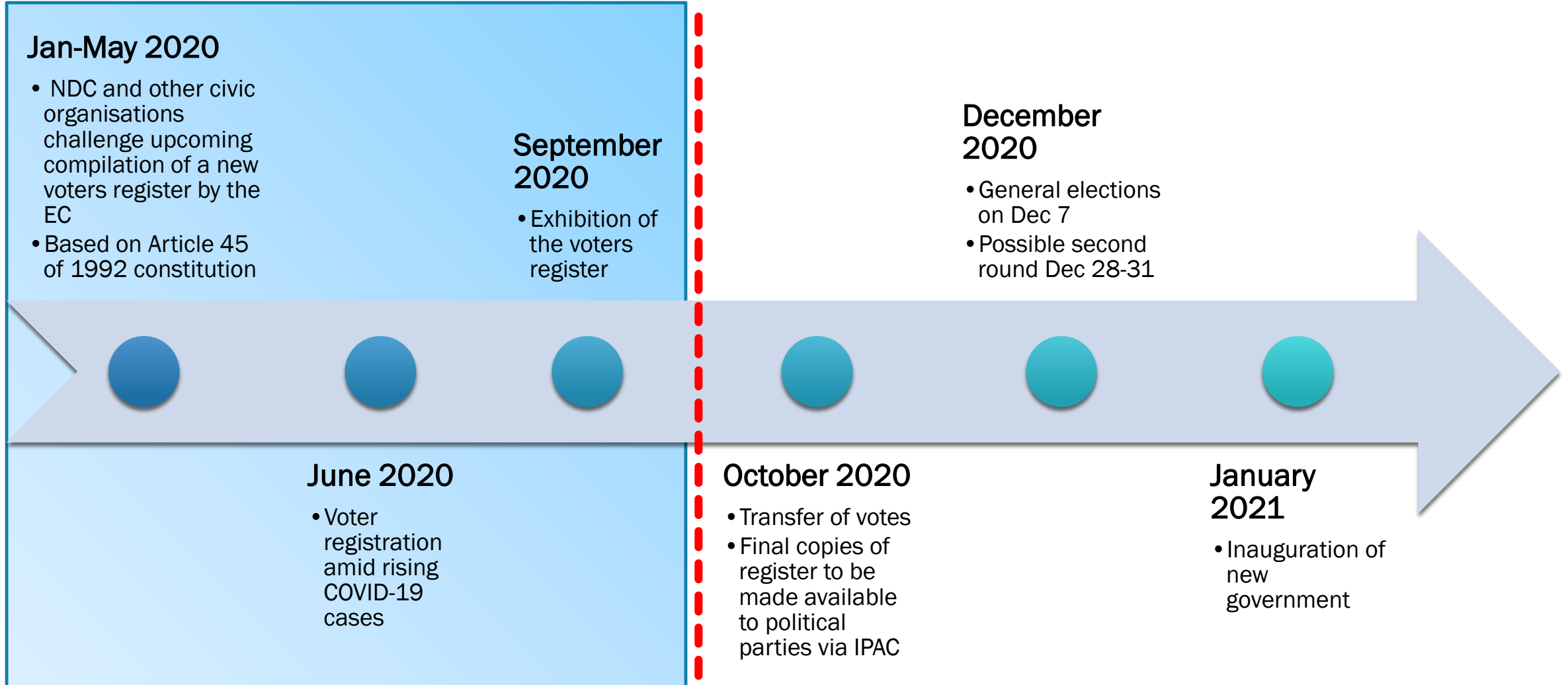


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By MyNewsGH



The 2020 voters' registration exercise in perspective



Recently completed 2020 voter registration exercise shows the Ghana Card was the most widely used proof of eligibility; new biometric register likely to be utilised until 2028 elections



ELECTORAL COMMISSION
GHANA

NO. OF PERSONS THAT
SUPPORTED THEIR
REGISTRATION WITH

GHANA CARD

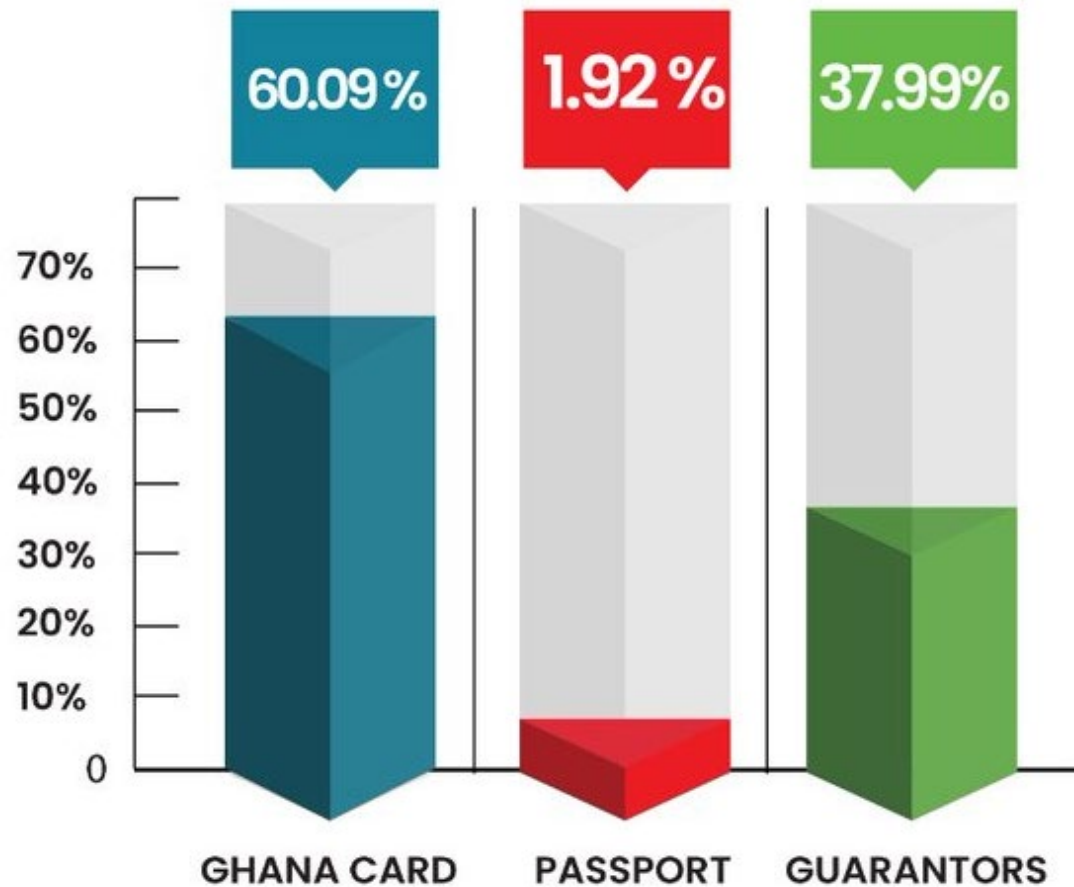
10,192,825

PASSPORT

325,676

GUARANTORS

6,444,805



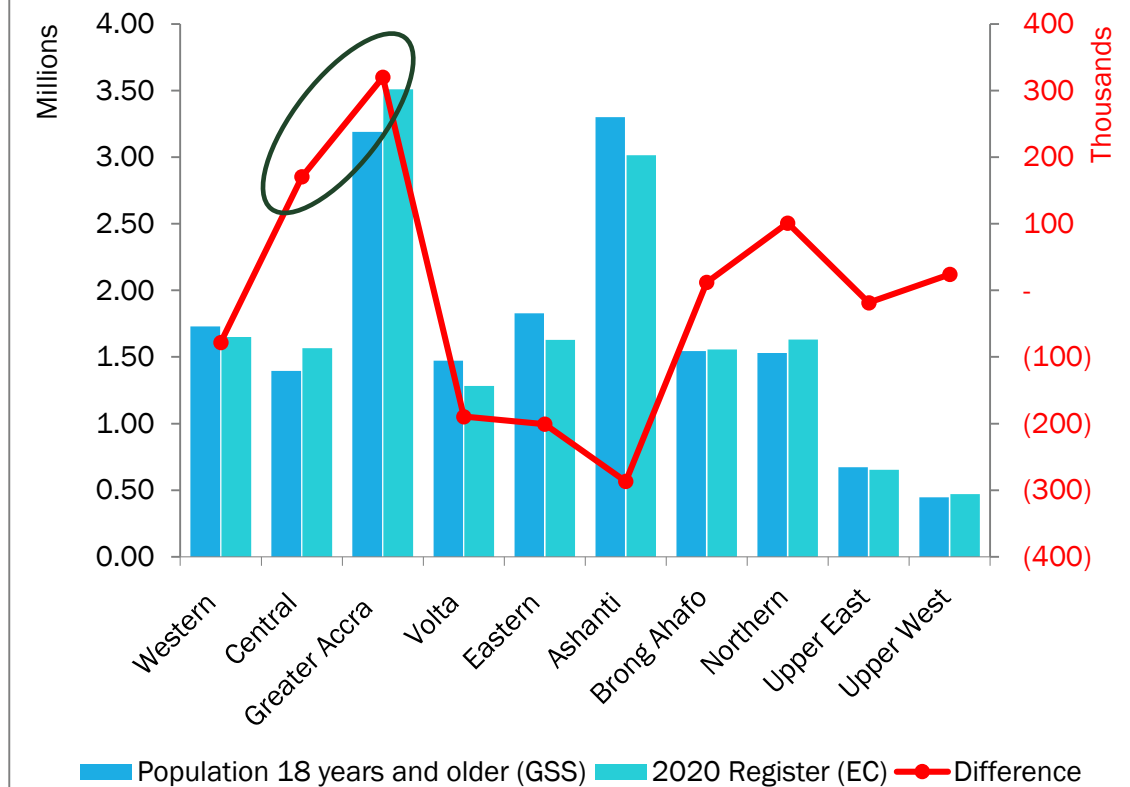
Source: Electoral Commission Ghana (2020)

Greater Accra and Central will be key deciding regions

REGIONS	2020 PROVISIONAL REGISTER FOR THE 10 ORIGINAL REGIONS	2016 FINAL REGISTER	DIFF. 2020 & 2016 WITH 10 REGIONS	
			DIFFERENCE (2020 VR - 2016 VR)	% OF VOTERS GAINED
WESTERN	1,650,759	1,582,491	68,268	5.46
CENTRAL	1,566,061	1,405,976	160,085	12.80
GREATER ACCRA	3,509,805	3,063,990	445,815	35.64
VOLTA	1,282,814	1,282,306	508	0.04
EASTERN	1,628,180	1,605,943	22,237	1.78
ASHANTI	3,013,856	2,872,619	141,237	11.29
BRONG AHAFO	1,556,250	1,406,934	149,316	11.94
NORTHERN	1,631,580	1,427,917	203,663	16.28
UPPER EAST	653,730	648,788	4,942	0.40
UPPER WEST	470,271	415,541	54,730	4.38
TOTAL	16,963,306	15,712,505	1,250,801	7.37

Source: Electoral Commission Ghana (2020)

Change in population 18+ years and 2020 provisional voters register



On demographics, 8.1% of those registered (1.374 million persons) are between ages 18-19 years

**AGE
CATEGORY
(NUMBERS)**

18 YEARS

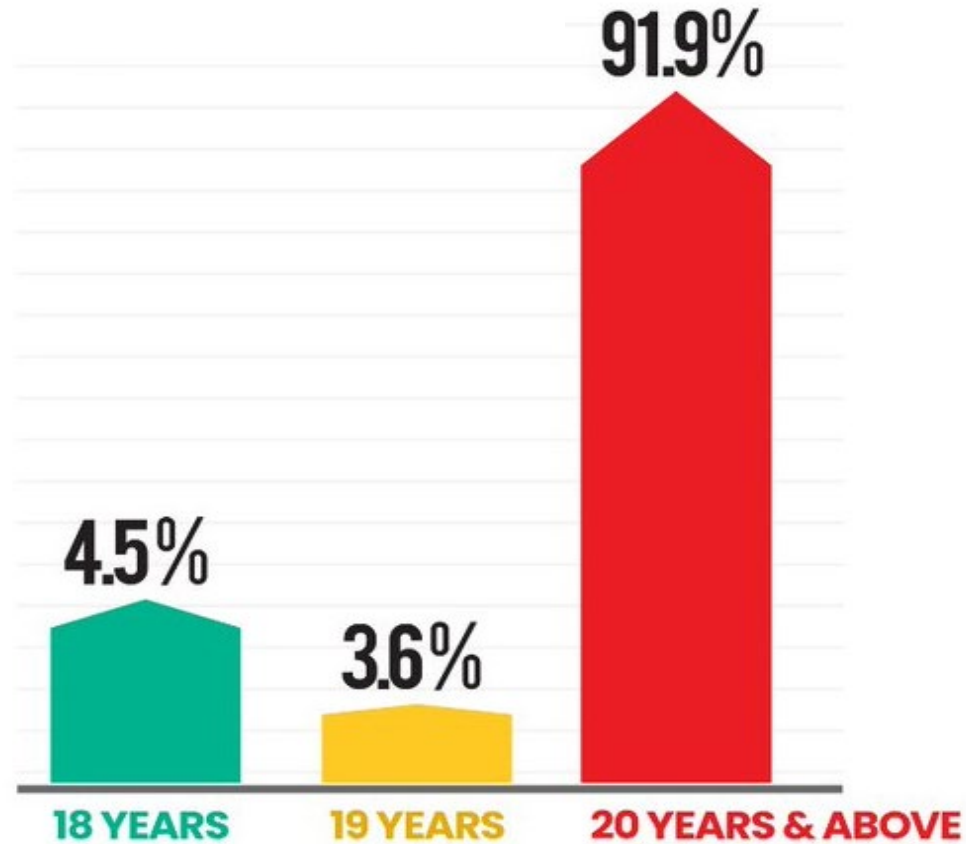
762,944

19 YEARS

612,104

20 YEARS & ABOVE

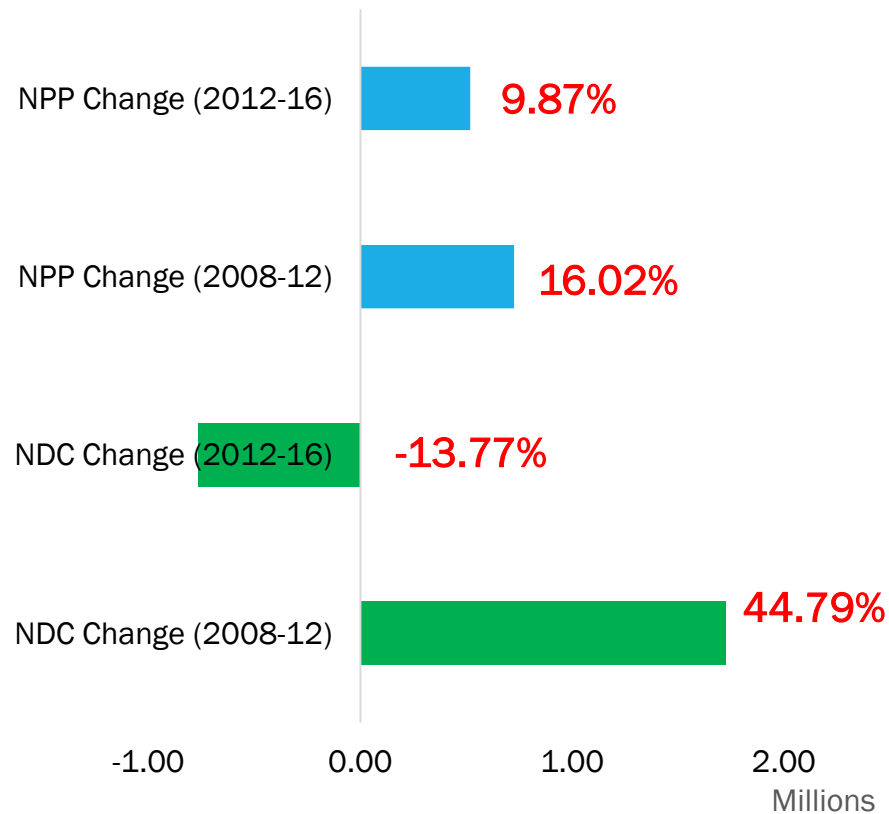
15,588,258



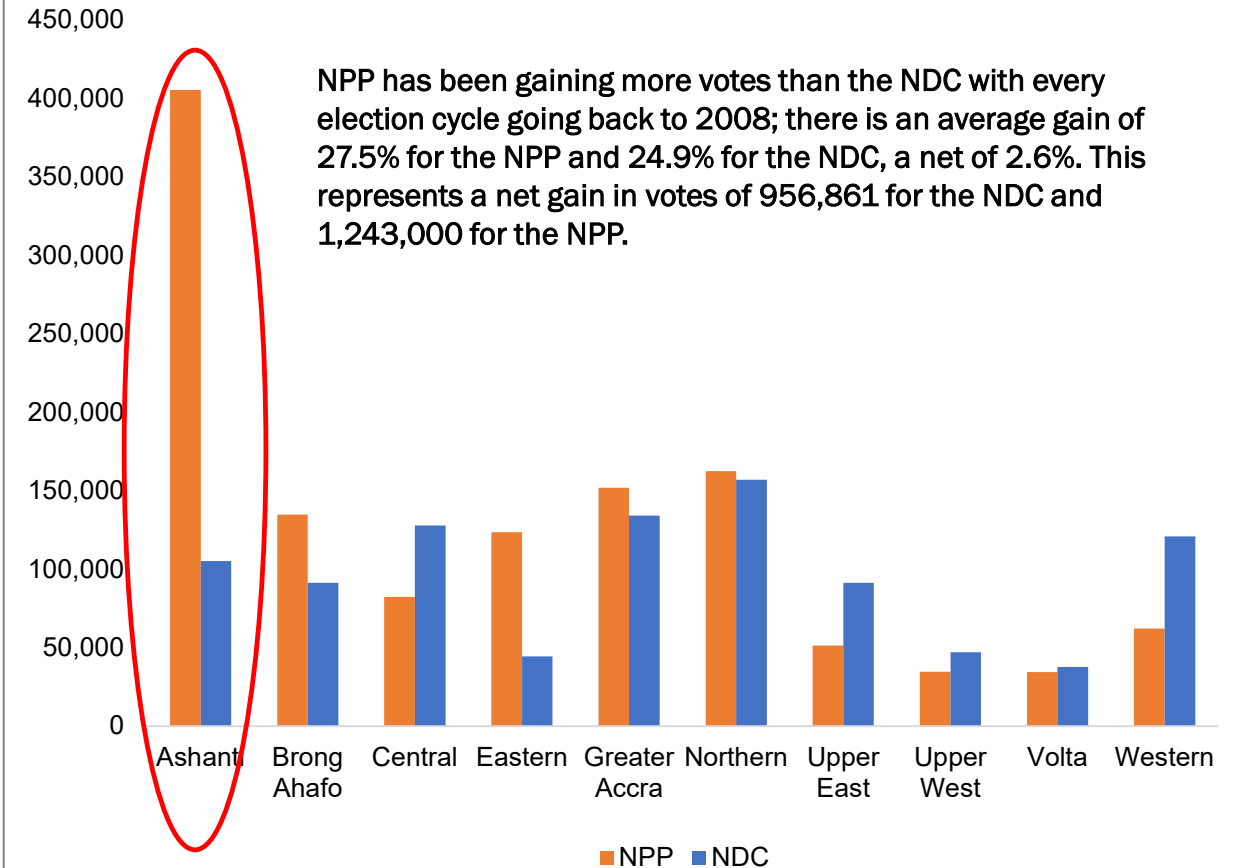
Source: Electoral Commission Ghana (2020)

Ghana has become relatively bluer (NPP) although the only pure or safe region remains Ashanti region, measured by change in votes between 2008-2016 (3 electoral cycles)

National change in votes (2008-2016)



Regional change in votes (2008-2016)





Analysis of swing constituencies

Analysis of swing constituencies

- We develop a framework for grading and rating a constituency based on historical voting pattern and vote margins between the two main political parties – NPP and NDC.
- We use constituency presidential voting data from 1996 to 2016.
 - We find that for constituencies that have ever voted for the two parties before, the average vote margins in the last election before the voted switched their vote to the other party ranges from 0.06 to 27 percentage points.
 - We also find that only nine (9) constituencies have voted for every winner of the presidential election.
 - Greater Accra (3), Central Region (4), Western Region (2).
- Based on parameters from the data we develop the following rating and grading scale:
 - Safe NDC/Safe NPP – Grades (A+ to C)
 - Likely NDC/Likely NPP – Grade (D)
 - Lean NDC/Lean NDC – Grade (E)
 - Toss – Grade (F)

No party can win without winning Central/Western/Greater Accra: Combined they account for 45% of lean and toss up constituencies (33 out of 73) or 9 out of 14 toss up constituencies

	Ashanti	Ahafo	Bono	Bono East	Central	Eastern	Greater Accra	North East	Northern	Oti	Savannah	Upper East	Upper West	Volta	Western	Western North	Total
Safe NDC	1	0	0	2	1	3	6	2	7	7	3	8	7	18	0	5	70
Safe NPP	36	0	3	0	4	12	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	66
Likely NDC	1	0	1	5	2	2	4	2	2	1	3	4	1	0	1	3	32
Likely NPP	5	3	3	0	3	10	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	34
Lean NDC	2	1	1	1	2	2	6	1	3	0	1	3	1	0	5	0	29
Lean NPP	2	2	2	2	6	4	2	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	3	1	30
Toss	0	0	2	1	5	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	14
Σ lean + toss ups	4	3	5	4	13	6	11	2	8	0	1	3	3	0	9	1	275

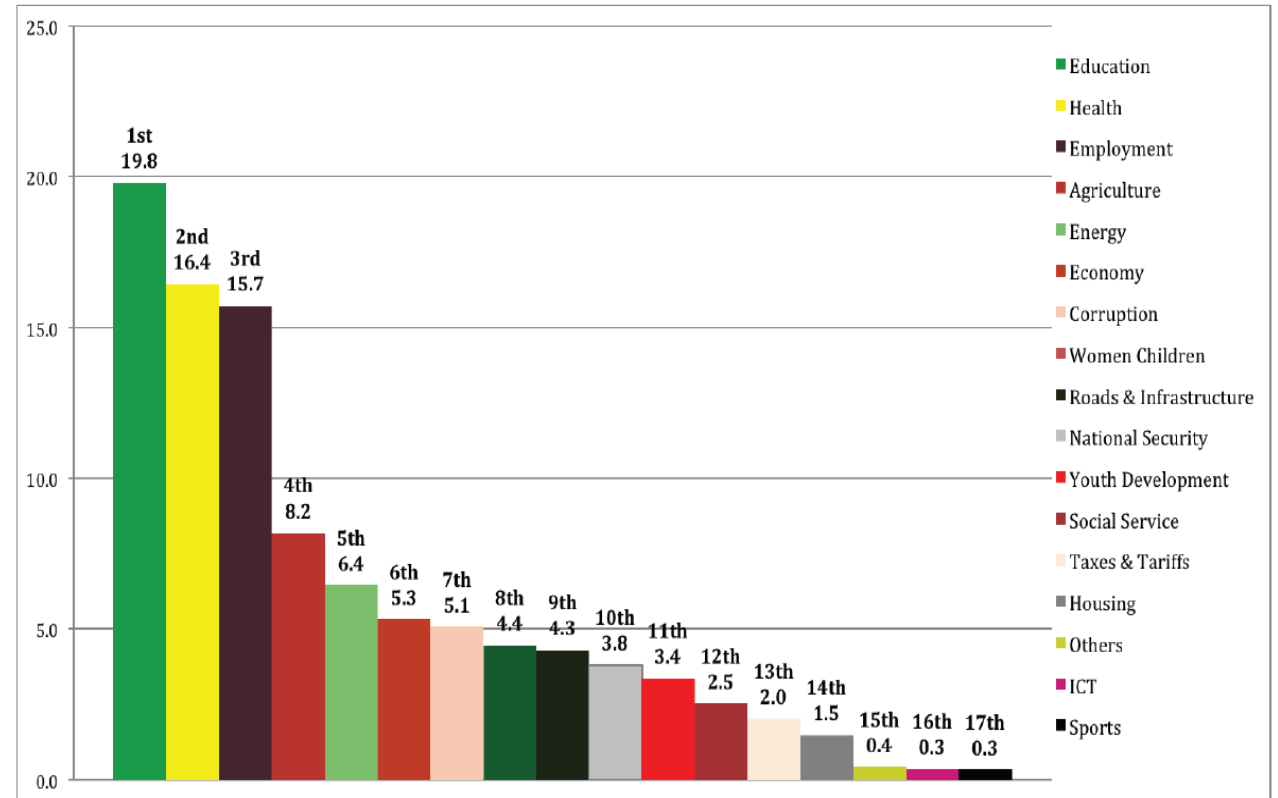


The Policy Priorities Of The Ghanaian Voter & Their Level Of Satisfaction With Government Performance So Far

Unemployment is the topmost concern for the Ghanaian voter. Education, health and the economy continue to be of concern too.

	Most Important Problems – 1 st Choice		
	Problem 1	Problem 2	Problem 3
2002	Unemployment	Poverty	Economy
2005	Unemployment	Education	Economy
2008	Unemployment	Poverty	Economy
2012	Unemployment	Education	Health
2014	Economy	Unemployment	Education
2017	Unemployment	Infrastructure	Education
2019	Infrastructure	Unemployment	Education

Source: Afrobarometer Survey, R2 to R8. Respondents were asked “In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address?”



Source: NCCE Respondents' Ranking of Issues (National Ranking) 2016

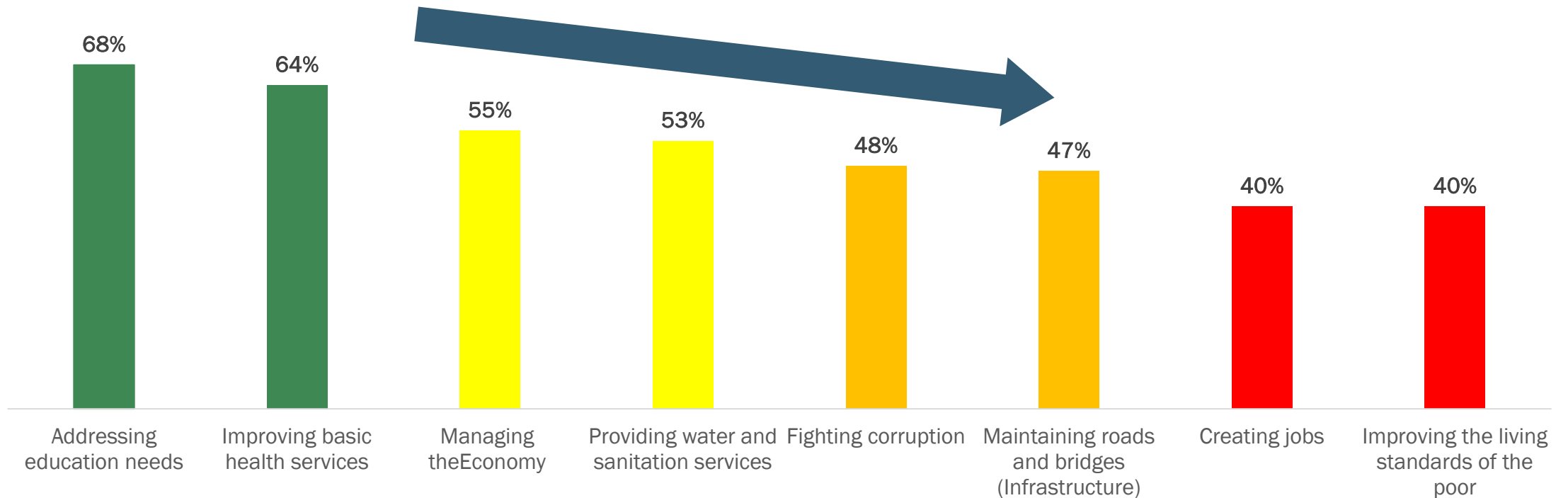
Citizens' rating of government performance on selected policy areas is mixed. The most important problem, creating jobs, receives the lowest average rating.

Afrobarometer Round	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7	Round 8
Year	2002	2005	2008	2012	2014	2017	2019
Policy area							
Creating jobs	45%	39%	54%	32%	21%	45%	42%
Managing the Economy	67%	59%	68%	46%	25%	66%	51%
Improving basic health services	63%	73%	84%	63%	36%	64%	62%
Addressing education needs	49%	64%	70%	83%	59%	80%	74%
Maintaining roads and bridges (Infrastructure)			73%	50%	29%	46%	39%
Providing water and sanitation services	56%	59%	63%	48%	31%	60%	56%
Improving the living standards of the poor			50%	34%	21%	53%	41%

Source: Afrobarometer Survey, R2 to R8. Respondents were asked “How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven’t you heard enough about them to say.” % of respondents saying fairly well or very well.

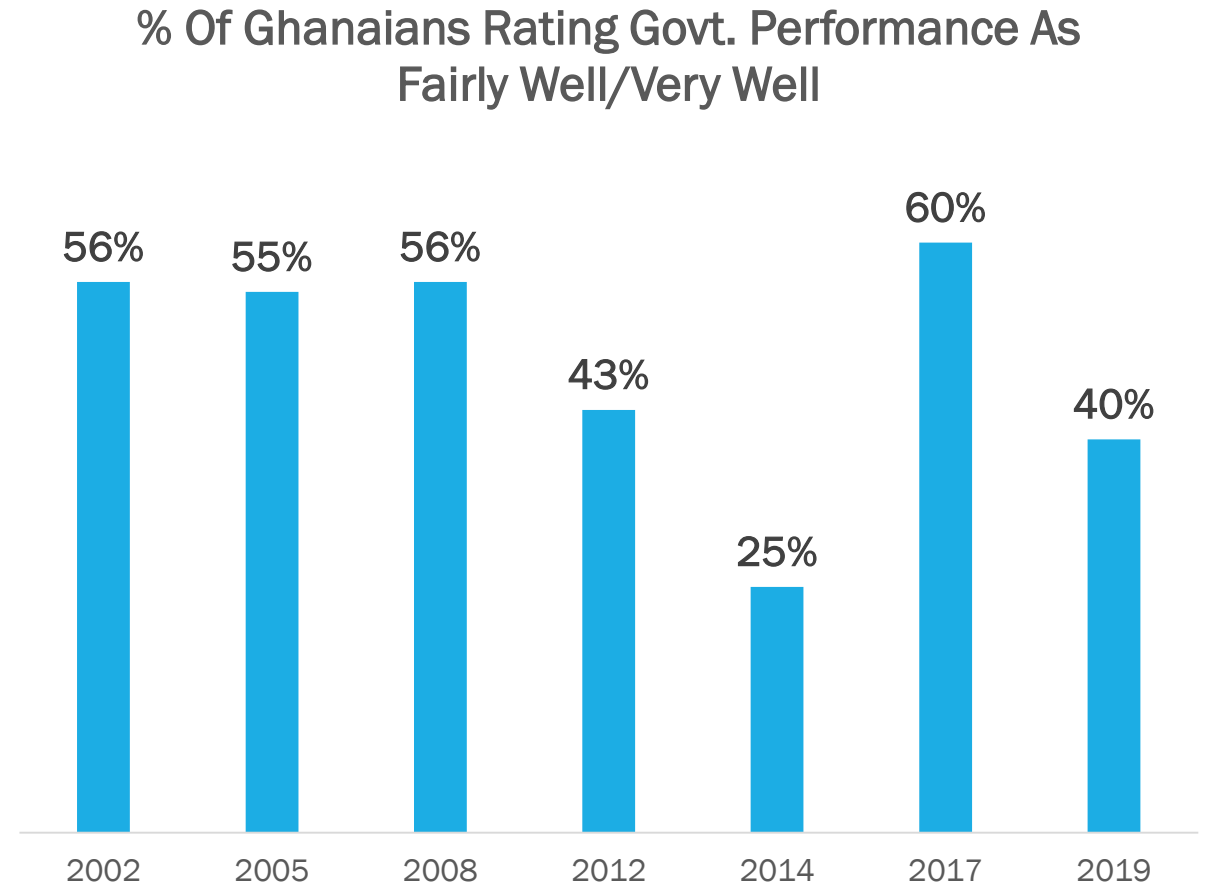
Overall, Ghanaians appear to rate well government performance in the areas of addressing their education needs and improving basic health services. Other areas, especially job creation and improving the living standards of the poor remain of great concern.


% of Ghanaians (on average) who rate government performance as 'fairly well or very well'



The ranking of corruption by voters as an important problem has improved. Results from the Afrobarometer Survey shows that citizens rating of government performance when it comes to fighting corruption is mixed.

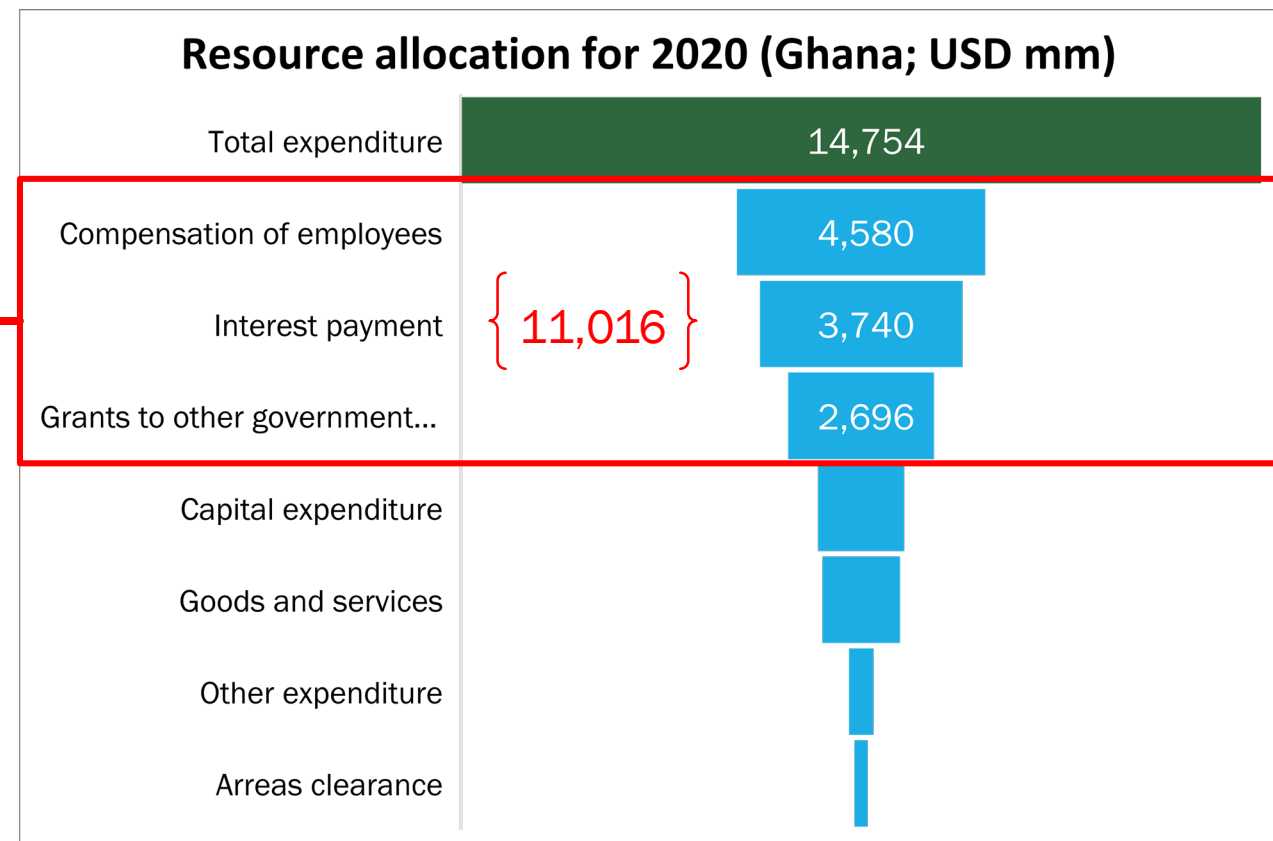
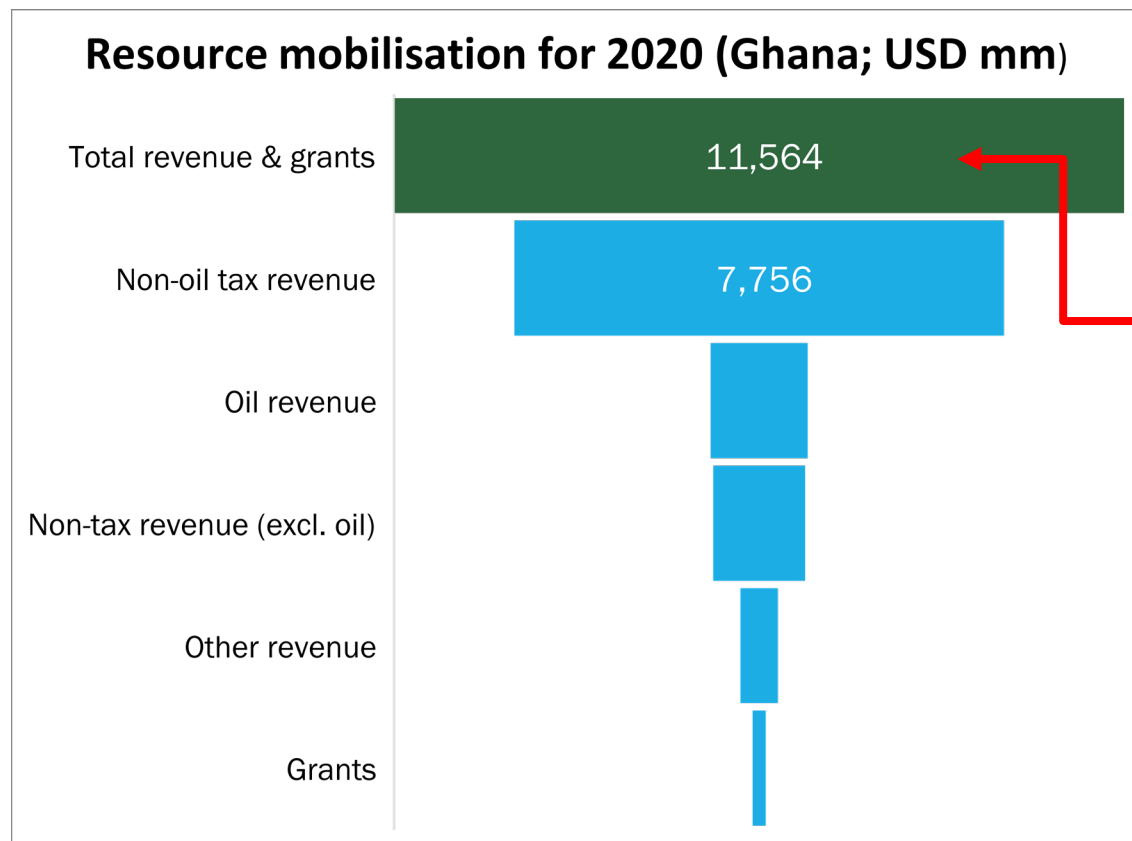
Year	Ranking as 1 st Response (Afrobarometer Survey)	Ranking (NCCE Survey)
2002	16/26	n/a
2004	n/a	9/12
2005	16/29	n/a
2008	14/32	8/10
2012	12/33	7/14
2014	9/32	n/a
2016	n/a	7/16
2017	5/29	n/a
2019	7/28	n/a





Political economy analysis of manifestos and fiscal space (2021-2025)

Structural rigidities in Ghana's budget contributes to the lack of fiscal space; this is likely to continue into the medium from 2021-2025



Data Source: Ministry of Finance Ghana (2020)

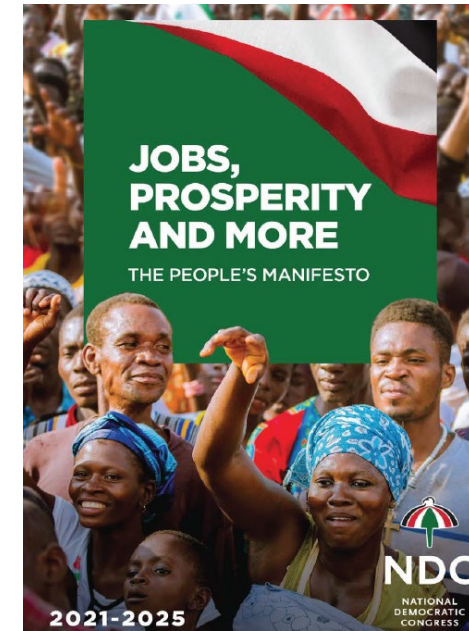
This is further compounded by the fact that Ghana is not collecting enough taxes to finance development despite becoming lower middle-income country

Ghana: Before and After GDP Rebase, 2017 in percent of GDP

Variables	Before	After	Diff.
Debt	71.8	57.3	-14.5
Fiscal Deficit	6.0	4.7	-1.3
Tax Revenue	17.5	13.9	-3.6
Capital Expenditure	3.1	2.5	-0.6

PROMISES OR TRACK RECORD: how will the parties finance their post-COVID-19 manifesto promises in a constrained fiscal space?

- NPP is measured in promises, manifesto aimed at consolidating gains made since 2017
 - Growing push to move from debt to equity and other securitisation schemes to create more fiscal space (>70% debt to GDP): Sinohydro (swap/barter arrangement); Agyapa SPV; ESLA, Road Fund; GETFund escrows.
 - US\$17.5 bn (GHS100bn) Ghana COVID Alleviation and Revitalisation of Enterprises (Ghana CARES) Programme 2020-2023 – mix of private (70%) and public funds (30%)
- NDC making ambitious spending plans - uncanny resemblance to NPP's 2016 manifesto.
 - US\$10 bn (GHS 60bn) accelerated infrastructural plan, dubbed the 'Big Push',
 - Fixing the Economy and Uniting Against Poverty; Providing Infrastructure for Accelerated Growth; Creating Sustainable and Decent Jobs "Edwuma Pa"
- Gresham's law (reversion to the mean) - e.g. Okada legalisation in Accra



LEADERSHIP OF SERVICE:

Protecting Our Progress,
Transforming Ghana for All

FOUR MORE TO DO MORE FOR YOU
THE BATTLE IS STILL THE LORD'S
2020 MANIFESTO

THE GHANAIAN AGENDA UNDER THE PROPOSED GOVERNMENT OF MARRICKE KOFI GANE



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What next?

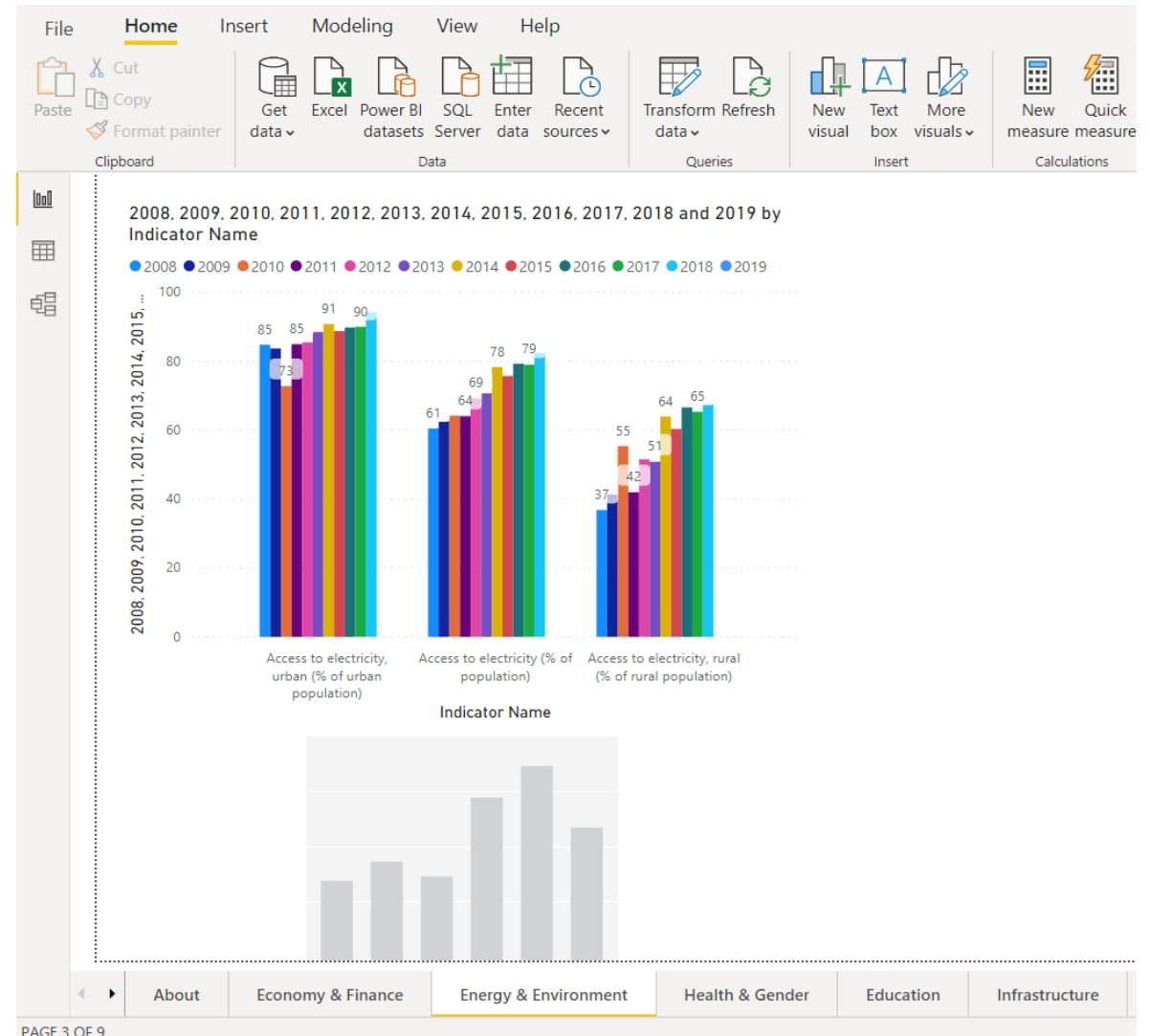
Work in Progress 1 - Election Opinion Poll

- Conduct a public opinion poll relating to Ghana's upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.
- The emphasis of the poll is to gauge voting intents in the presidential election. The poll and subsequent analysis would be focussed on the swing regions and constituencies
- There would be about ten (10) maximum questions to be administered over the phone by our research partners (mobile call centre based out of Accra, Ghana).



Work in Progress 2 - Ghana Development Data Dashboard

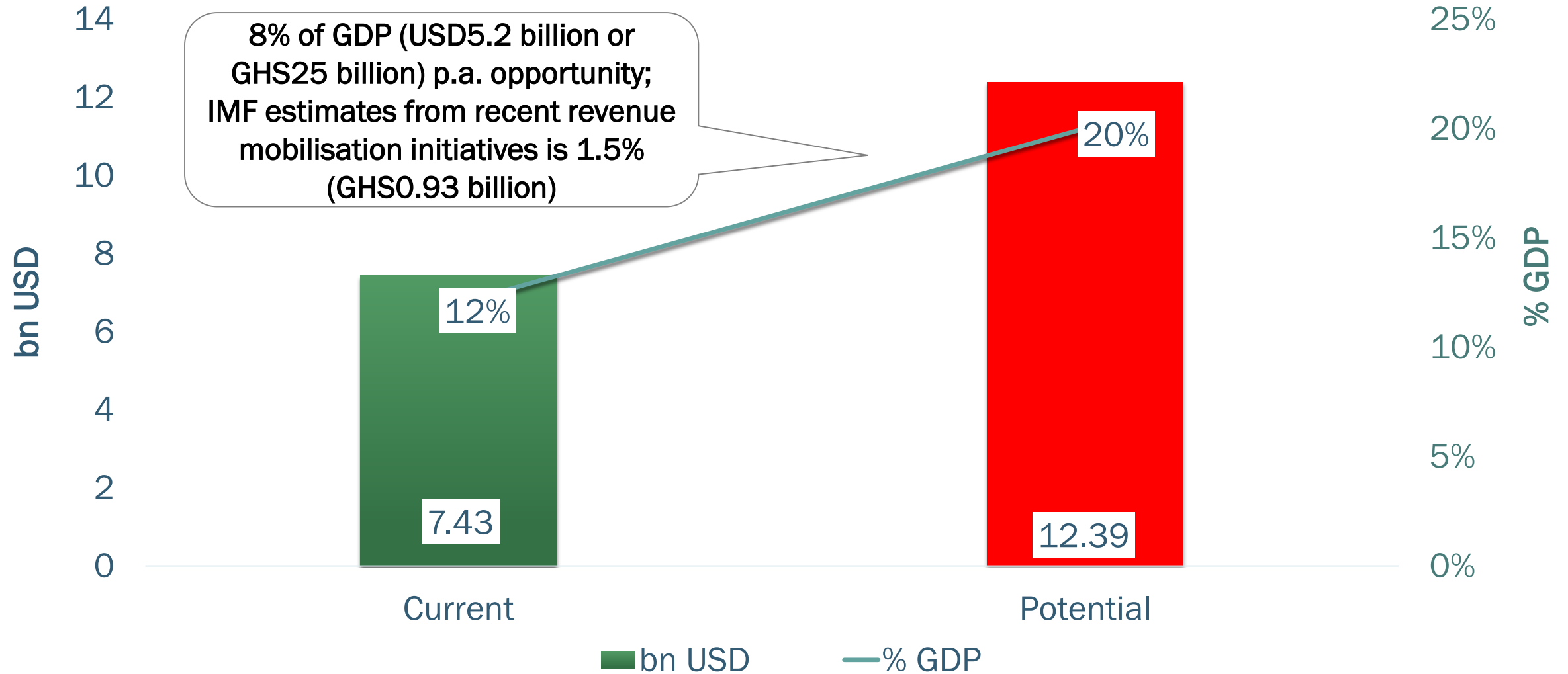
- Development of data dashboards in Tableau or Microsoft Power BI showing Ghana's comparative performance on various socioeconomic and governance indicators to inform voter choices.
- The dashboard is being developed from the perspective of an ordinary Ghanaian who is confused about questions such as where we are, who (which party) has done what, and what impact have they created? That is, basically assessing the inputs-outcomes and impact based on an underlying theory of change narrative.
- Citizens would be able to assess and benchmark the performance of the political parties on up to 30 core indicators for each theme.





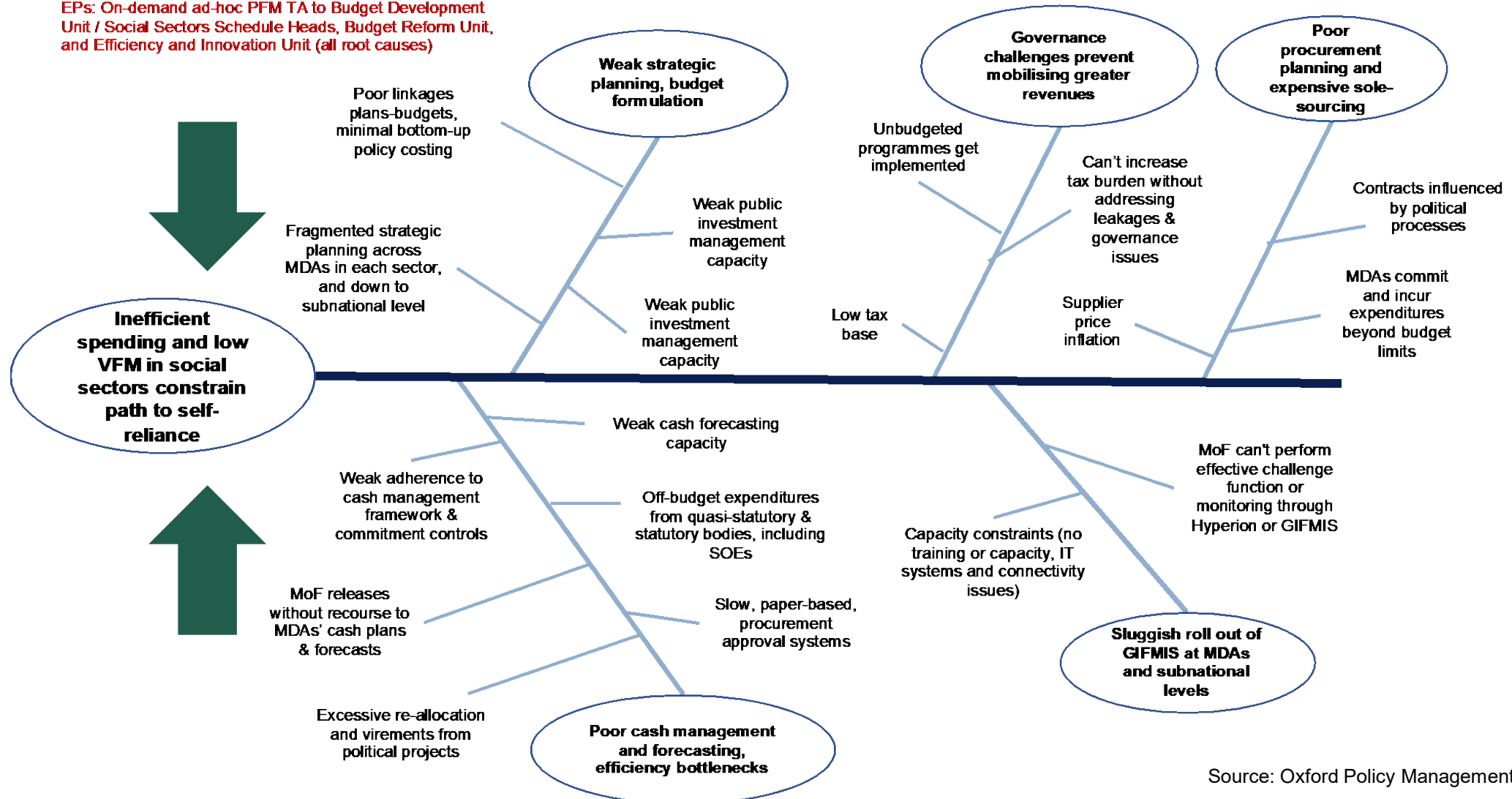
Back up slides

Tax revenue opportunity beyond commodities – crisis offers another opportunity to pursue diversification efforts and digitalisation to improve tax collection



Any new government would need to do more with less resources, so strong emphasis on value-for-money needed announced spending plans in manifestos

EPs: On-demand ad-hoc PFM TA to Budget Development Unit / Social Sectors Schedule Heads, Budget Reform Unit, and Efficiency and Innovation Unit (all root causes)





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