



GHANA'S PERFORMANCE ON THE CPI – THE UNDERLYING ISSUES

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The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) scores countries on how corrupt their public sectors are seen to be. The CPI captures the informed views of analysts, business people and experts in countries around the world.

Ghana's score on the CPI has been dropping since it achieved its highest score of 48/100 in 2014. The 2019 score of 41/100 means that Ghana's performance on the CPI remain same from the previous year (also 41/100). This score is worrying considering that it implies stagnation at a low end of the table. The score remains lower than the average global score of 43/100; which is a marginal (1%) improvement over the 2018 global score of 42/100. The Sub-Saharan Africa average is 32/100. In Africa, Ghana is 12th but 10th in Sub-Saharan Africa.

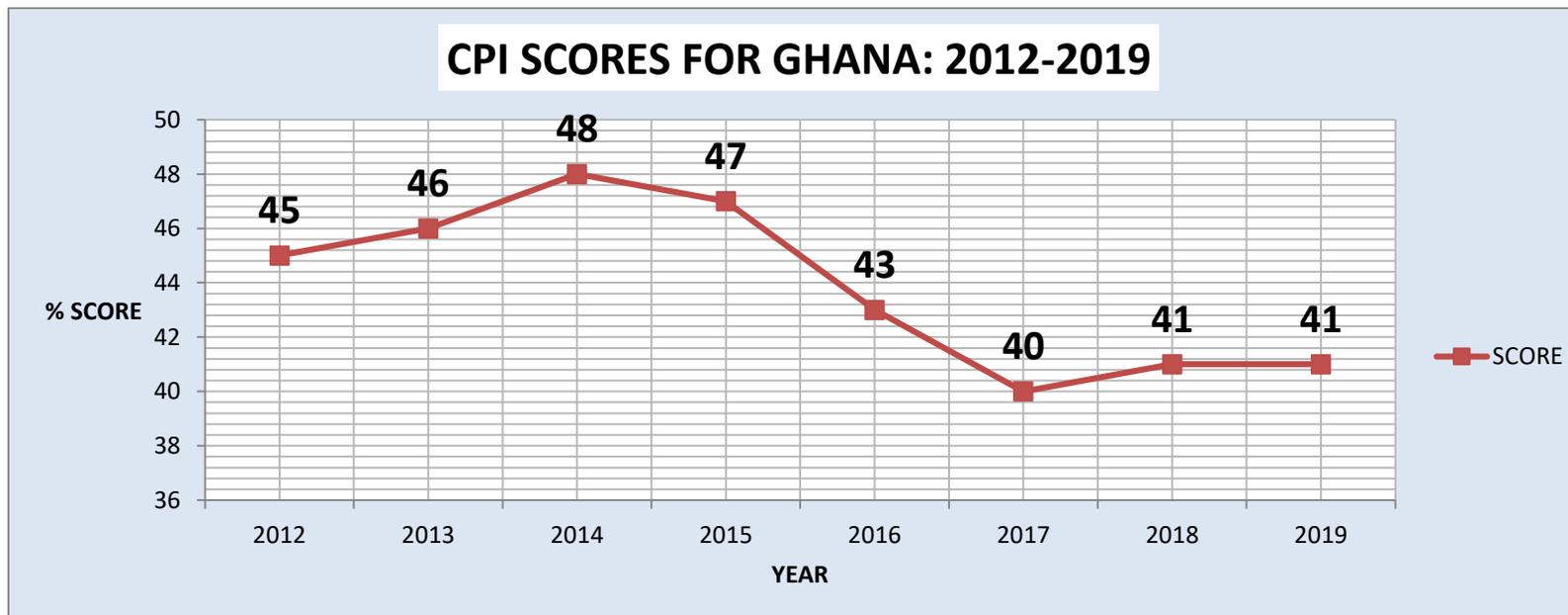


Figure 1: Ghana's CPI score; 2012-2019

The Data Sources

CPI is computed as an average score of a number of data sources. Out of the 13 data sources employed by the Index, only 9 of them are applied to Ghana. These are captured in the table below, with the specific indicators covered by these sources and their ratings of Ghana over the years:

s/n	DATA SOURCE & Indicators	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	<p>African Development Bank (AfDB) Country Policy and Institutional Assessment</p> <p>1.the accountability of the executive to oversight institutions and of public employees for their performance;</p> <p>2.access of civil society to information on public affairs; and</p> <p>3.state capture by narrow vested interests</p>	55	55	55	55	53	47	47	47
2	<p>Bertelsmann Foundation Transformation Index</p> <p>1.Extent to which public officeholders who abuse their positions are prosecuted or penalized</p>	49	49	49	45	45	41	41	41
3	<p>Economist Intelligence Unit Country Risk Service</p> <p>1.Are there clear procedures and accountability governing the allocation and use of public funds?</p> <p>2.Are public funds misappropriated by ministers/public officials for private or party political purposes?</p> <p>3.Are there special funds for which there is no accountability?</p> <p>4.Are there general abuses of public resources?</p> <p>5.Is there a professional civil service or are large numbers of officials directly appointed by the government?</p> <p>6.Is there an independent body auditing the management of public finances?</p> <p>7.Is there an independent judiciary with the power to try</p>	54	54	54	54	54	55	55	55

	<p>ministers/public officials for abuses?</p> <p>8.Is there a tradition of a payment of bribes to secure contracts and gain favours?</p>								
4	<p>Global Insight Country Risk Ratings</p> <p>1.The risk that individuals/companies will face bribery or other corrupt practices to carry out business, from securing major contracts to being allowed to import/export a small product or obtain everyday paperwork.</p>	52	52	52	52	34	35	35	35
5	<p>The Political Risk Service International Country Risk Guide</p> <p>1.This is an assessment of corruption within the political system in the form of demands for special payments and bribes connected with import and export licenses, exchange controls, tax assessments, police protection, or loans</p>	41	41	41	50	50	47	45	50
6	<p>World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment</p> <p>1.Three dimensions are examined here: (a) accountability of the executive to oversight institutions and of public employees for their performance; (b) access of civil society to information on public affairs; and (c) state capture by narrow vested interests.</p>	58	58	58	47	47	35	43	43
7	<p>World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey</p> <p>1.Prevalence of undocumented extra payments or bribes connected with the following”:</p>	29	40	37	33	30	35	37	30

	<p>a) Imports and exports;</p> <p>b) Public Utilities;</p> <p>c) Annual Tax Payments;</p> <p>d) Awarding of public contracts and licenses;</p> <p>e) Obtaining favourable judicial decisions.</p> <p>2. Prevalence of the diversion of public funds to companies, individuals or groups due to corruption?</p>								
8	<p>World Justice Project Rule of Law Index Expert Survey</p> <p>1. Government officials in the executive branch do not use public office for private gain</p> <p>2. Government officials in the judicial branch do not use public office for private gain</p> <p>3. Government officials in the police and the military do not use public office for private gain</p> <p>4. Government officials in the legislature do not use public office for private gain</p>	37	37	37	37	35	36	36	36
9	<p>Varieties of Democracy Project</p> <p>1. The index is arrived at by taking the average of (a) public sector corruption index (b) executive corruption index (c) the indicator for legislative corruption and (d) the indicator for judicial corruption. In other words, these four different government spheres are weighted equally in the resulting index.</p>	TI Bribe Payers Survey 28	TI Bribe Payers Survey 28	NA	NA	42	33	30	33
AVERAGE		45	46	48	47	43	40	41	41



From table 2 above, it could be observed that the score for Ghana has not changed from 2018 to 2019 for 6 out of the 9 sources. This is probably because the assessment of these sources of the governance climate has not changed. It may also be due to the fact that some sources do not produce their reports annually, so their last score for Ghana is repeated. With the remaining three sources, Ghana's performance in 2019 for the Political Risk Service International Country Risk Guide and Varieties of Democracy Project increased over the 2018 score by +7 and +3, respectively. However, Ghana lost 7 points (-7) on the World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey. We must be concerned by the latter.

The World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey (EOS) is the World Economic Forum's annual survey of business executives. This is the indicator where Ghana slipped by 7 points. Two survey questions are critical here:

“In your country, how common is it for firms to make undocumented extra payments or bribes connected with the following”:

- a) Imports and exports;
- b) Public Utilities;
- c) Annual Tax Payments;
- d) Awarding of public contracts and licensing;
- e) Obtaining favourable judicial decisions.

AND

“In your country, how common is diversion of public funds to companies, individuals or groups due to corruption?”

Ghana has not been performing well on the CPI since the baseline year – 2012. Almost all the sources from which Ghana's CPI is computed have assigned scores that are either consistent over the period or decreased over time. 2014 is often hailed as Ghana's best year – the nation having a score of 48 in that year. However, Ghana's relatively high score in 2014 was due to the fact that one source, Transparency International's Bribe Payers Survey, was excluded from the data sources. The Bribe Payers Survey is one of the sources that had consistently scored Ghana very low (28/100), indicating a persistent culture of bribery. The removal of this source meant that Ghana's average score increased. Thus, the seemingly good performance in 2014 was due to the exclusion of a data source where Ghana scored poorly rather than an improving anti-corruption climate in Ghana in the year 2014. Since then, the nation's CPI score has continuously decreased.



It is imperative to engage the criteria used by these sources in order to understand Ghana's performance. While the criteria used by the sources vary, there is convergence on a number of them. The top two criteria common to the sources are:

1. Bribes and undocumented payments in relation to obtaining licenses, permits, contracts and accessing public services
2. Accountability by public office holders for the use of resources, administrative decisions and results obtained; including accountability through asset declaration, conflict of interest declarations and adherence to codes of conduct

The first criterion, bribery and other undocumented payments in accessing licenses, permits, contracts and accessing public services, is the most common criterion to the data sources. Ghana's overall declining score over the last three years attests to the prevalence of bribery and other illegal payments in accessing documents and services from public offices. Public officials continue to use their positions for private gain by either actively demanding for bribes and other unapproved payments or delaying service until frustrated citizens offer them these payments.

Accessing public services remains an opaque procedure in most instances, where only the public officer is aware of the steps and the official administrative charge at each stage. In tackling this issue, it is important to have public services publish the protocol for accessing all their services and the fee for each service. It is also essential that the turnaround time for each service is published and public officers are held accountable to delivering within the stated time.

The second major issue is Accountability by public office holders for the use of resources, administrative decisions and results obtained; including accountability through asset declaration, conflict of interest declarations and adherence to codes of conduct. We live in a country where some public officers still simply do not get the fact that they are stewards that are employed by the people of Ghana, resourced by the people of Ghana and must therefore be accountable to the people of Ghana ultimately. Public office holders take decisions concerning public resources as if it is their bonafide property. When queried, they want to know who you are instead of dealing with the substantive matter of the query. You just have to look at the happenings at the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) recently to understand the attitude of some of our public officers towards the use of public resources.

Another issue we need to deal with is asset declaration – a potentially powerful anti-corruption tool for fighting illicit enrichment. Our current asset declaration laws do not prescribe verification, publication and explicit sanctions –yet, these are the very elements of a potent asset declaration regime. This is why the Auditor General must be supported to pursue a comprehensive asset declaration programme. The sections



dealing with asset declaration in the Conduct of Public Officers Bill must be reviewed to include the aforementioned elements while the Bill itself must be given priority and quickly passed. This bill should also address conflict of interest matters.

The onus of the changes required to reduce corruption must not be placed on the Presidency and political appointees alone. The institutions of state and their leadership ought to take responsibility. We must demand change from the structures already put in place to deliver and their leadership. The issues that have stagnated Ghana's CPI score in the 40s go beyond partisan efforts, or a lack thereof. The ubiquitous culture of bribery, the negligent and sometimes accessorial attitude of public officers regarding the public purse, inefficiency in the management of public resources and failure to demand accountability have become the cocktail that breeds corruption. While we do expect the President and the Executive to act, let's also begin to point fingers at the institutions that are failing us by either being corrupt themselves or failing to live up to their anti-corruption mandate.