**Danida’s support to Ghana’s Parliament**

**Basic Information**

**Support at-a-glance**

***Duration of support:***

1993 – 2018 (26 years)

***Total disbursement:***

DKK 8 million (approx.)

***Key National Partners***

Parliament of Ghana, STAR Ghana (support to CSOs) and Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA)

***Key Outcomes:***

* Improved professional capacity of Members of Parliament (MPs), Parliamentary committees and Parliamentary staff through several long-term/short-term training and capacity building programmes.
* Development of a Strategic Plan (2004-2009).
* Enhanced work space as a result of provision of committee rooms and research facilities.
* Establishment of a donor coordinating unit to align and harmonise development partner support to Parliament.
* Quality local and national level Parliamentary oversight and engagement with citizens held over time (issues have included effectiveness of Parliament and MPs, child marriage and its impact on girl child education, inclusion of people living with disabilities in the selection of key development priorities 2018-21).

Danida’s support to the Parliament of Ghana dates back to 1993 and was provided as stand-alone projects focusing on staff training and capacity building of members of Parliament (MPs) and the Parliamentary Service. In 2003, the support was through a one-year capacity building project implemented by a private institution, the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA). It consisted of recruiting and training research and legislative assistants (junior university graduates) for parliamentarians as well as organising workshops on specific themes to enhance the capacities of the various parliamentary committees.

In order to support Parliament in a more structured and strategic way, Danida formulated the first phase of the Good Governance and Human Rights Programme (GGHRP I: 2004-2008). The programme component which was aimed at enhancing the capacity of Parliament to perform its legislative function comprised the development of a strategic plan; building of committee rooms with research and conference facilities for MPs; improving the professional capacity of members of Parliament and the Parliamentary Service in research and project management; procurement of equipment; reviewing the parliamentary service (staff) regulations; upgrading and implementing a human resource and financial management information system; and developing an induction, continuous learning and development policy for MPs.

The support to Parliament continued under the second phase of the Good Governance and Human Rights Programme (GGHRP II: 2009-2013) through the first (5-years) phase of the Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness (STAR 1: 2010-2015) Ghana pool-funding mechanism. This facility was established by a group of donors (DFID, EU, USAID and Danida) committed to supporting and enhancing the influence of Ghanaian civil society and Ghana’s Parliament in the governance of public goods and service delivery. Activities under the support to Parliament were mainly strengthening parliamentary roles and structures, including Parliament’s role in consolidating accountable, democratic governance.

The final phase of support to Parliament was executed under Danida’s Right to Services and Good Governance Programme (RSGGP: 2014-2018) and through the second (5-years) phase of STAR Ghana’s (STAR 2: 2015-2020) support to Parliament. Although Danida’s support ended in 2018, STAR 2, which is building on the foundation laid under STAR 1, is still supported by DFID and EU. Specific activities being supported include addressing constraints to Parliament’s effectiveness, particularly in the exercise of its oversight functions; and strengthening spaces for interaction between legislators, CSOs and citizen groups and the executive to enhance citizens’ access to inclusive and quality public goods and services. Specifically, six Parliamentary Select Committees are being supported, including Leadership, Parliamentary Service, Health, Education, Gender and Local Governance.

**Results and Key Achievements:**

The Joint Evaluation of the Ghana-Denmark Development Co-operation (1990-2006) Final Thematic Paper on Good Governance, Human Rights and Democracy noted that Danida’s support to the independent governance institutions including Parliament was commendable with regards to the involvement of staff of these institutions to ensure sustainability after the support. Staff of Parliament confirmed this to the Evaluation by stating how they were applying their newly acquired knowledge in project management to their other functions in Parliament. Programme results for the respective programmes periods are given as follows:

GGHRP I: 2004-2008:

Development of a Strategic Plan (2004-2009); refurbishment of an existing building for use as committee rooms and research; improved capacity in Parliament through training of committee chairpersons, ranking members and committee clerks in public policy analysis; commissioning of research papers on legislature to be passed to aid Parliamentarians in their discussions of bills; setting up of a donor coordination unit helped to align and harmonize all development partners’ support; increased parliamentary outreach and civic interaction activities contributed greatly in improving public view and understanding of the work of Parliament.

GGHRP II: 2009-2013: Establishment of the Parliamentary Institute to focus on in-country capacity building of Parliament; strengthened Parliament based on an enhanced self-image of parliamentary committees and structures and their role in consolidating accountable democratic governance; and proactive engagements by national parliamentary committees with civil society around thematic priorities including anticorruption.

**Lessons Learned**

The Joint Evaluation of the Ghana-Denmark Development Co-operation (1990-2006) Final Thematic Paper on Good Governance, Human Rights and Democracy noted the slow commencement of the support to Parliament after the 2004 elections. This slow take off was followed by slow implementation of activities resulting in little progress in the expected outcomes and budget spent. The implementation of the support was in many ways affected by bureaucratic processes and legalities in Parliament. Additionally, the absence of key decision makers, who had either travelled abroad or were on their ministerial duties, did not allow for continuous implementation of activities. The turnover of Parliamentarians after elections has been a challenge to programmes focusing on training individual MPs.

A useful lesson learnt was that proactive engagements between the national parliamentary committees and civil society around thematic priorities were made possible mainly due to an investment of social capital and key relationships built overtime on trust among STAR Ghana, parliamentarians, and civil society.

**Links**

* Evaluation of the Ghana-Denmark Partnership 2007-2017 (2018): <http://danida-publikationer.dk/publikationer/publikationsdetaljer.aspx?PId=8c80db97-19aa-4f83-858a-ee1189f4033d>
* Joint Evaluation of the Ghana-Denmark Development Co-operation 1990-2006 (2007): <https://um.dk/en/danida-en/results/eval/Eval_reports/publicationdisplaypage/?publicationID=78EEFD4A-6547-4CB8-A628-C0C3981817E1>
* Documentation study ‘Pioneering Democracy’ (2018): <https://ghana.um.dk/en/News/newsdisplaypage/?newsID=24DECCDC-9A56-442B-B891-078D07EA63AD>