
Opinion Poll on Issues of Concern to the Ghanaian Voter in Election 2008

A Study Undertaken by the Research Department of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)

April, 2008

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CBO	–	Community Based Organization
CDD	–	Centre for Democratic Development
CPP	–	Convention People’s Party
EA	–	Enumeration Area
FCUBE	–	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FGD	–	Focus Group Discussion
GREDA	–	Ghana Real Estate Development Association
GSS	–	Ghana Statistical Service
ICT	–	Information, Communication and Technology
MOFA	–	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
NCCE	–	National Commission for Civic Education
NDC	–	National Democratic Congress
NGO	–	Non-Governmental Organization
NHIS	–	National Health Insurance Scheme
NPP	–	New Patriotic Party
NYEP	–	National Youth Employment Programme
PAC	–	Public Accounts Committee
PNC	–	People’s National Convention
PSU	–	Primary Sampling Units
SPSS	–	Statistical Package for Social Science
UNESCO	–	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Acknowledgement

This *Opinion Poll on Issues of Concern to the Ghanaian Voter in Election 2008* was undertaken by the Research Department of the National Commission for Civic Education in April, 2008.

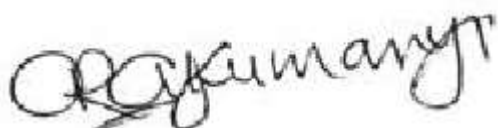
This project could not have been successfully carried out without the assistance and the support of several individuals and organisations.

In acknowledging the role of Commission members in giving direction to all our researches, we would like to thank the Chairman, Mr. Laary Bimi, in particular for his full support in pioneering the research.

The over 245 research assistants who went to the field to collect data also deserve commendation for their dedication to duty. The staff of the Research Department at the National Headquarters of the NCCE, headed by Mrs. Gertrude Zakariah-Ali, Director of Research, and the Regional Directors who were general overseers, deserve commendation for their dedication which contributed immensely to the quality of the report.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions and support of thousands of Ghanaians who were generous to spare their time to have questionnaires administered to them. In most cases not less than 30 minutes was spent going through the questionnaire.

We are also obliged to several other people whose diverse contributions were critical for the completion of this research.



Augustina Akosua Akumanyi (Mrs.)
Deputy Chairman (Programmes), NCCE

Executive Summary

The *Opinion Poll on Issues of Concern to the Ghanaian Voter in Election 2008* was undertaken by the Research Department of the NCCE in April 2008. The report hopes to provide political parties with a list of issues of concern to the voter as well voter's expectation of civil society and individuals during and after the elections.

The Key Findings of the Survey are Presented Below:

Ranking of Issues

From the rankings of the ten (10) issues provided, education came first, followed by health and agriculture. Education had 77.4 per cent of respondents ranking it third or higher (first –third), health (65.7 per cent) and agriculture (43.2 per cent).

The other issues were placed as follows in a combined first to third rankings, Women and children (30.7 per cent), economy (22.8 per cent), youth development (18.3 per cent), national security (11.3 per cent), corruption (10.9 per cent), housing (10 per cent) and social welfare (7.5 per cent)

Education

Education was the topmost issue of concern to the voter. It emphasises the fact that knowledge plays a significant role in personal and national development. In all the ten regions, both sexes and age groups had education as their first issue of concern. In terms of specific issues on education, respondents wanted the government to mainly focus on making education free, especially at the basic level. Out of a total of 7,277 responses on education 1,691 (23.2 per cent) were in favour of free basic education.

The other responses included provision of educational institutions with better infrastructure (20.1 per cent) and better remuneration and incentives for teachers (16.2 per cent). For civil society they were to help in the provision of educational materials (30.9 per cent), setting up of educational institutions (21.8 per cent) and the institution of scholarship schemes (21.8 per cent), among others. For individuals the major concerns were for parents and guardians to prioritise the education of their children and wards (29.9 per cent), send their wards to school (26.4 per cent) and provide educational facilities and materials for their wards.

Health

Health was rated second in seven (7) out of the ten (10) regions and second by females but third by males. The major expectations of the government in the health sector were for provision of health facilities (31 per cent); streamlining and nationalising the National Health Insurance Scheme (21.4 per cent) and the provision of adequately trained and highly motivated health personnel (28.5 per cent). For such respondents the key role that health personnel play in an efficient health system cannot be downplayed. Civil Society on the other hand was expected to help in equipping health facilities (31.4 per cent), provide health facilities (21.7 per cent) and embark on intensive public education on health related matters (20.5 per cent).

For individuals they were expected to observe personal hygiene and keep their environment clean (38.5 per cent), take advantage and register with the National Health Insurance Scheme (20.2 per cent) and report illness early at health facilities (14 per cent).

The call therefore was the need for society to have a serious look at the preventive sector of our health care. It is believed that majority of diseases which affect people in the country like malaria and cholera, among others, could be averted through good personal hygiene and healthy lifestyles.

Agriculture

Agriculture also featured prominently by placing third in the ratings. Apart from providing food for our daily survival, it plays a key role in the employment of citizens and to ensure their economic well-being. On specific issues for the government to focus on subsidies came top with 32.4 per cent. As such for almost one (1) out of every three (3) respondents subsidies is a necessity for the development of the agriculture sector.

Financial support for farmers (21.7 per cent) and the need to modernise agriculture by way of mechanisation (13.5 per cent) were the other major issues raised. A noteworthy statistic is the perception that the youth have a role to play in agriculture, and that the government should do all it can to encourage them (3.1 per cent).

Civil Society was expected to give financial support to farmers (37.1 per cent), provide extension services (29.8 per cent) and set up farms (20.2 per cent). Individuals were expected to work hard and expand production (31.7 per cent), adopt modern technology in farming (26.8 per cent) and form co-operatives to attract financial support (15.8 per cent).

Voting in Forthcoming Elections

A whopping majority of respondents 5,327 (96.9 per cent) said they will vote in the forthcoming elections. Only 154, representing 2.8 per cent, said they would not vote whereas 15 (0.3 per cent) were undecided. In terms of sex 97.8 per cent of male respondents as compared to 96 per cent of females expressed their willingness to vote in the forthcoming national elections.

All the ten regions had a large majority of respondents (over 90 per cent) saying they will vote in the forthcoming general election.

Political Parties Poll

No political party had the 50 plus per cent one necessary to win the general election. The National Democratic Congress (NDC) slightly topped with 2,360 (42.9 per cent) followed by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) which had 2,341 (42.6 per cent). The Convention Peoples Party (CPP) had 345 (6.3 per cent), Peoples National Convention (PNC) had 60 (1.1 per cent) and other political parties had 39 (0.7 per cent). A keener contest is therefore anticipated with a possible second round of voting.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Method of Study

1.0 Background

Elections are a part of democratic representative government. In a democracy, the authority of the government is derived solely from the consent of the governed. The principal mechanism for translating that consent into governmental authority is the holding of free and fair elections.

Ghana's Fourth Republic, the longest so far in the country's democratic governance, has witnessed four consecutive presidential and parliamentary elections. The third election saw a peaceful change of government from a party in power to one in opposition, something very rare on the African continent. The successful conduct of these elections has given a high credence to Ghana's democracy, leading to a very high rating in Africa. This year Ghana goes into an election that many believe will be the most important elections of their lifetimes.

Stakes have been raised towards these elections due to the fact that for once the two main parties in the country, namely the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), have both had the opportunity to complete their full constitutional mandate of governance which is eight years. Ghanaians as such have at their disposal the record of these two major parties to compare. Furthermore, presidential candidates of major parties have all held portfolios in government or have been running mates for their parties, at least once. A thorough assessment as such can be made of the presidential candidates' skills and abilities in handling jobs given them.

The deepening of internal democracy within the political parties themselves gives this year's election a very competitive edge. The conducted political parties primaries for selection of presidential and parliamentary candidates have been keen. This has been a great departure from the practice where sole candidates are endorsed by parties for elections. Also, new parties have been formed, all promising to engage the old ones in a competitive battle to win power. It is therefore not surprising that people have already started clamouring for debates to know which of the candidates can best handle issues thrown at him. The successful conduct of the election apart from consolidating our democracy in the Fourth Republic will also serve as a barometer against which the winning party will be judged based on the issues raised by the party during the campaign.

The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) , established in 1993 by Act 452, has as one of its main functions, "assessing for the information of government, the limitations to achievement of true democracy arising from the existing inequalities between different strata of the population and make recommendations for redressing these inequalities".

In addition the NCCE is also charged to formulate, implement and oversee programmes intended to inculcate in the citizens of Ghana awareness of their civic responsibilities and an appreciation of their rights and obligations as free people. Apart from the nationwide educational programme on tolerance, the Commission has taken the mandate to equip the voter with adequate information that will enable him or her to make an informed choice.

1.1 Problem Statement

The overall goal of democratic governance is to bring development to individuals and society. These

developments are mainly pursued by the ruling government through its policy and programmes. Many political parties have general philosophies out which manifestoes are carved. These manifestoes spell out their plans and methodology to bring change in the life of people as the country develops.

Campaign messages of political parties during elections are supposed to be carved out of these manifestoes. It is hoped that through these messages people will appreciate the party's philosophies, identify with their methodology of solving the countries problems and be ready to vote for them. Many political parties in Ghana during the Fourth Republic have come out with a manifesto which is supposed to be the bedrock of their campaign message. Issues of national importance are therefore expected to be at the center of campaign strategies and messages. Indeed, content and quality of campaign messages are important factors that enhance a party's chance of winning modern competitive elections.

The campaign practices in Ghana, in recent times, however for both inter and intra party has not been limited to issues only. Candidates during intra party primaries have attacked personalities, sometimes venturing into their private and family lives. Emotions of supporters of candidates have been raised, leading to physical and verbal exchanges in some cases. One therefore wonders that if personal attacks can be heaped on fellow party members what will stop candidates from degrading the personality of a candidate from another party.

Informed choices are made based on proper understanding of issues. The expectation as such is that the public will choose a candidate based on the person's understanding and delivery of issues of concern to them. Issue based campaign apart from giving the public good leadership also sanitises the campaign since personal attacks are avoided. People believe that lack of information on issues of concern to the voter makes politicians to dwell more on personalities. This survey hopes to fill the big gap that has been created by making available this information gathered to stakeholders

NCCE conducted its first poll on issues of concern in the election year 2004. The findings of that survey apart from providing issues for candidates to handle also shifted the focus from campaigns from personalities to issues. Stakeholders applauded the efforts of the commission and called for the sustenance of the survey. It is also expected that the issues raised by the public will be at the center of the campaign message of political parties and candidates. If the electioneering is based on issues the voting public will be adequately equipped to make informed choices.

Overall, our democratic practice will be deepened and Ghana will be the ultimate winner.

1.2 Objectives

The overall objective of this survey is to collate information on issues of concern to Ghanaian voters. Specifically, the survey seeks to provide:

- Political parties with issues that voters will like them to address;
- Policy makers and civil society groups with critical areas that Ghanaians want them to address concerning the issues raised.
- The Commission with adequate information that will help it under-take an effective civic/voter education towards the December 2008 general election.

1.3 Methodology and Survey Instruments

A two pronged methodology was employed for the assessment: one was the collection of data and

information from available secondary sources like official reports and surveys, NGO and newspaper reports etc. relevant to the study. Two main instruments were used to collect the primary data. These were a structured questionnaire and a focus group guide.

1.4 Sample Design

The study was designed as a nationwide representative sample survey, where every person in a household in the country had an equal chance of inclusion in the sample. Considering the main objectives of this survey, the basic sampling unit was determined to be households with a population aged 18 and above, which is the voting age in the country. The institutional population (hospitals, boarding houses) was excluded from the sample frame because it did not have households. A household, for the purpose of this survey follows that of the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS, 2000), which defines it as a person or group of persons who live together in the same house or compound, share the same house-keeping arrangements and are catered for as one unit. For the survey, recent demarcated enumeration areas (EAs) of the Ghana Statistical Service served as the primary sampling units (PSU).

1.5 Sample Selection Procedures

All the existing 230 constituencies in the country were involved in the survey. In all 24 questionnaires was administered in every constituency. Four (4) enumeration areas (EA) were randomly selected in each constituency. Six (6) questionnaires were administered in each EA. The household Kish Grid was used to select households based on a specified interval of three (3) and five (5) for rural and urban communities respectively. On selection of the household the respondent Kish Grid was used to select one respondent. Questionnaires were administered in households only and one (1) respondent was interviewed in each household.

In a few of the areas where there was no target group in the selected household, the research officer moved on to the next household.

1.6 Focus Group Discussions

Six focus group discussions (FGDs) were also organised during the study. The country was zoned into three sectors and two FGDs were held in every sector. One rural constituency and one urban in nature were chosen from the constituencies for the FGDs. The three sectors were the northern, middle and coastal. For the northern zone, FGDs were done in Tamale and Savelugu constituencies. Subin and Bosomtwe constituencies were for the middle zone and the selected constituencies for the coastal zone were Abokobi and Tema West constituencies.

Data from the quantitative survey was checked and beefed up with information gathered from the FGDs.

1.7 Training and Fieldwork

A one-day training was organised for all research assistants and FGDs facilitators at the ten regional capitals from April 8 to 18, 2008. Research Officers were adequately briefed on the objective and relevance of the survey. They were also taken through the research instruments (questionnaire and focus group guide) and the methodology to be implored for the survey. A practical session of questionnaire administration was held and the questionnaire was translated into the local languages which were mainly

used during the field work.

After training sessions each research officer was given his set of questionnaire to administer. Every constituency had a research assistant working in it. In all, research assistants took four days to complete the assignment.

1.8 Questionnaire Administration

A total of 5,496 questionnaires were administered in the 230 constituencies. The total number of questionnaires administered fell short of the projected 5,520 sampled for the survey. The shortfall was recorded in two constituencies, namely Nkwanta North and Nkwanta South in the Volta Region who instead of 24 questionnaires had 12 being administered in them.

The total number of questionnaires administered in a region depends on its number of constituencies. The regions, their number of questionnaire administered and response rates are presented in the table below:

Table 1.1: Questionnaire Administered and Response Rate from the Regions

Region	No. of Constituencies	No. of Sampled Questionnaires	No. of Questionnaire Administered	Percentage Rate
Ashanti	39	936	936	100
Brong Ahafo	24	576	576	100
Central	19	456	456	100
Eastern	28	672	672	100
Greater Accra	27	648	648	100
Northern	26	624	624	100
Upper East	13	312	312	100
Upper West	10	240	240	100
Volta	22	528	504	95.5
Western	22	528	528	100
Total	230	5520	5496	99.6

1.9 Data Analysis

Field data from the structured questionnaire was audited, coded and analysed at the NCCE headquarters. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16) and Microsoft Word-Excel were used to analyse the data. Information derived from the six FGDs was also synthesised and collated.

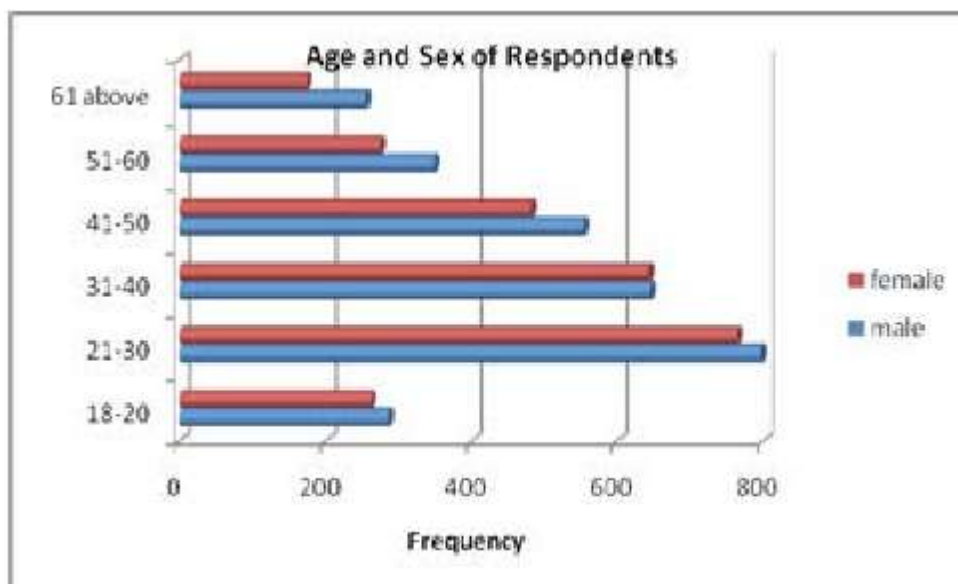
CHAPTER 2

Socio-Economic Background of Respondents

2.0 Introduction

This section takes a look at the demographic and socio-economic profile of respondents. This will enhance a better appreciation of issues raised by different segments of the population.

Chart 1: Age and Sex of Respondents



2.1 Age and Sex Distribution of Respondents

Chart 1 above highlights the age and sex structure of respondents. A little more than half (51.9 per cent) of respondents were aged between 21 and 40 years. Specifically the age group 21-30 had the highest proportion of respondents. The group of respondents, numbering 1,562 formed 28.4 per cent. It was followed by the age group 31-40 with 1,290 respondents, representing 23.5 per cent. A total of 1,036 respondents, forming 18.9 per cent indicated that they were within the 41-50 age group whereas 623 (11.3 per cent) respondents were within the 51-60 age group. One out of every ten respondents (10 per cent) was aged between 18 and 20 years and 7.8 per cent were aged above 60 years. Eight (8) respondents did not provide their ages.

The above age distribution of respondents confirms with that of the national where the population pyramid is wider at the bottom. A total of 2,887 males, representing 52.5 per cent were interviewed compared to 2,609 (47.5 per cent) who were females. The proportion of females interviewed was an improvement over the first survey figure of 40.9 per cent and a strong move towards capturing more views from females who form the bulk of the population.

The age distribution of females interviewed were as follows; 21-30 had 763 (29.4 per cent), 31-40 had 644 (24.7 per cent), 41-50 had 482 (18.5 per cent), 51-60 had 275 (10.6 per cent), 18-20 had 262 (10.1 per cent) and 61 above had 174 (6.7 per cent). Two regions Ashanti (50.1 per cent) and Brong Ahafo (51 per cent) had more females being interviewed than males.

2.2 Educational Background of Respondents

The educational profile of respondents shows that three out of every four respondents have received formal education. In contrast, 1,334 or 24.5 per cent had not received any formal education. Out of the number with no formal education 241 (4.4 per cent) said they could read and write English and or vernacular. Reasons such as adult literacy programme being pursued by the Non -Formal Division of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and literacy outreach programmes by non-governmental organisations may have accounted for this.

More than half (51.4 per cent) of respondents with no formal education were aged 40 years and above compared to 5.2 per cent aged between 18 and 20 years. Three regions had more than 40 per cent of respondents not having formal education. These are Northern (55.2 per cent), Upper West (45.4 per cent) and Upper East (41.6 per cent).

Respondents who have attained basic education formed the bulk of those with formal education. A total of 1,965 respondents forming 35.8 per cent fall within this category. The basic level refers to respondents who received education up to primary, middle and junior high school level. Respondents with secondary level of education formed 1,579 (28.7 per cent) and tertiary, 518, respondents (9.4 per cent). Persons with educational qualifications that did not easily fit into any of the educational categories numbered 44 or 0.8 per cent of respondents. Among the educational qualifications of persons in this group classified as “other” are: Arabic School, School in Cuba and Party School in Soviet Union. The Table 2.1 below gives details

Table 2.1: Educational Background of Respondents

Educational Background	Frequency	Percentage	
No Formal Education	1103	20.1	
No Formal Edu. but can read/ write	241	4.4	
Basic	1965	35.8	
Secondary	1579	28.7	
Tertiary	518	9.4	
Other	44	0.8	
No Response	46	0.8	
Total	5496	100	

An analysis of educational background and age shows that for the 1965 respondents who had received basic education; 27.9 per cent were aged 21-30, 24.5 per cent were aged 31-40, 20.4 per cent were aged 41-50 per cent and 10.9 per cent were aged 51-60. The other two ages ,18-20 and 61 above had 11 per cent and 5.4 per cent respectively.

Of the 1,579 respondents who have had secondary level of education the highest proportion of 35.8 per cent were aged 21-30. It was followed by 31-40 age group with 21.9 per cent, 18-20 had 15.3 per cent, 41-50 had 15 per cent, 51- 60 had 7.6 per cent and above 60 had 4.4 per cent.

Respondents with tertiary educational background had 32.2 per cent aged 21-30, 25.3 per cent were aged 31-40, 21.4 per cent were aged 41-50, 12.4 per cent were aged 51-60, 4.8 per cent were aged above 60 and 3.9 per cent were aged 18-20.

The educational profile of males interviewed indicates that 33.8 per cent had basic educational level, 33 per cent had secondary and 21.1 per cent had tertiary. The rest had not received any formal education. For females, 37.9 per cent had basic educational level, 24.1 per cent had secondary and 6.5 per cent had tertiary. The remaining female respondents had not received any formal education.

2.3 Occupational Background of Respondents

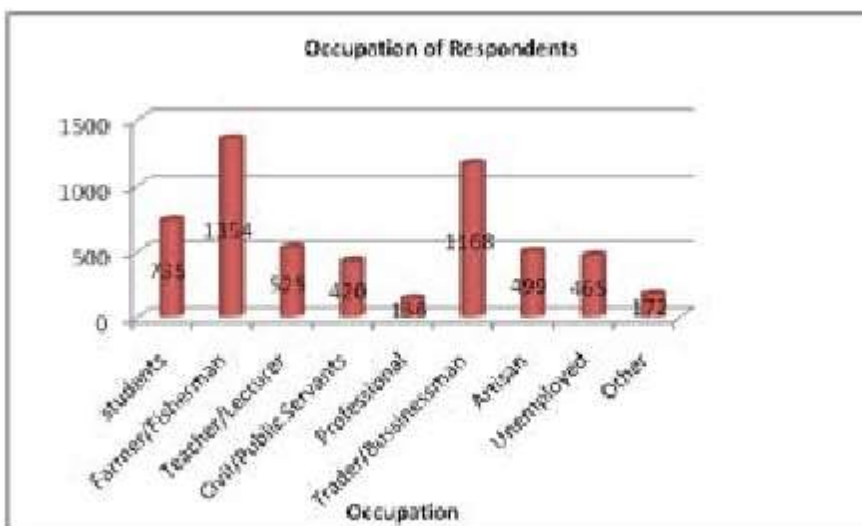
The survey sought to know the occupational background of respondents. The results indicate that the highest number of respondents were farmers and fishermen/fishmongers. This occupational group, numbering 1,354 formed 24.6 per cent. Trading was the next dominant occupational group with 1,168 respondents forming 21.3 per cent. The next occupational group was teachers and lecturers who numbered 525, forming 9.6 per cent.

Artisans such as carpenters and masons numbered 499, forming 9.1 per cent whereas civil and public servants numbered 420, forming 7.6 per cent . Other occupational groups were professionals with 120 respondents representing 2.5 per cent and others outside the categorised groups totalling 172, representing 3.1 per cent . Students numbering 735 formed 13.4 per cent whereas unemployed respondents numbered 465, representing 8.5 per cent. Twenty-two respondents did not answer the question.

As expected and in conformity with what is prevailing in the nation, majority of the traders interviewed were females. Females formed 73.8 per cent of the traders surveyed. Details of other female proportion of occupations were professionals (41.9 per cent), farming and fishing (39.5 per cent), teaching (39.4 per cent), artisans (38.1 per cent) and civil and public servants (26.7 per cent). Proportion of students respondents who were female was 42.6 per cent whilst females formed 55.7 per cent of the unemployed.

Farming and Fishing was the dominant occupation in all regions except Greater Accra where trading topped. For Greater Accra to have trading as its major occupation is not surprising since majority of respondents were drawn from Accra and its immediate environs, where majority of people are engaged in trading.

Chart 2.1: Occupation of Respondents



2.4 Marital Status of Respondents

Marriage is an important stage of human development which tends to affect ones perception of life. It is expected that issues of concern may vary based on marital status.

A total of 3,256 respondents, representing more than half (59.2 per cent) of the total are currently married. Respondents who were single numbered 1,691 forming 30.8 per cent. Next in terms of numbers were respondents who had lost their spouse, and were widowed. They numbered 233, forming 4.2 per cent . Respondents who are divorced (166) formed 3 per cent; separated ,107, formed 2 per cent and 43 respondents did not answer the question. Details are shown in table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Marital Status of Respondents

<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Married	3256	59.2
Single	1691	30.8
Widowed	233	4.2
Divorced	166	3.0
Separated	107	2.0
No Response	43	0.8
Total	5496	100

An analysis of marital status and sex indicates 60.5 per cent of males were married, 33.7 per cent were single, 1.8 per cent were widowed, 1.7 separated and 1.6 per cent were divorced. For females 57.9 per cent were married, 27.5 per cent were single, 7 per cent were widowed, 4.8 per cent were divorced and 2.2 per cent were separated. For almost 5 per cent of females to indicate that they are divorced give credence to the rampant divorce cases being reported by the media.

The three regions with the highest proportion of respondents being married are Northern (73.6 per cent), Upper West (64.6 per cent) and Western (61.7 per cent).

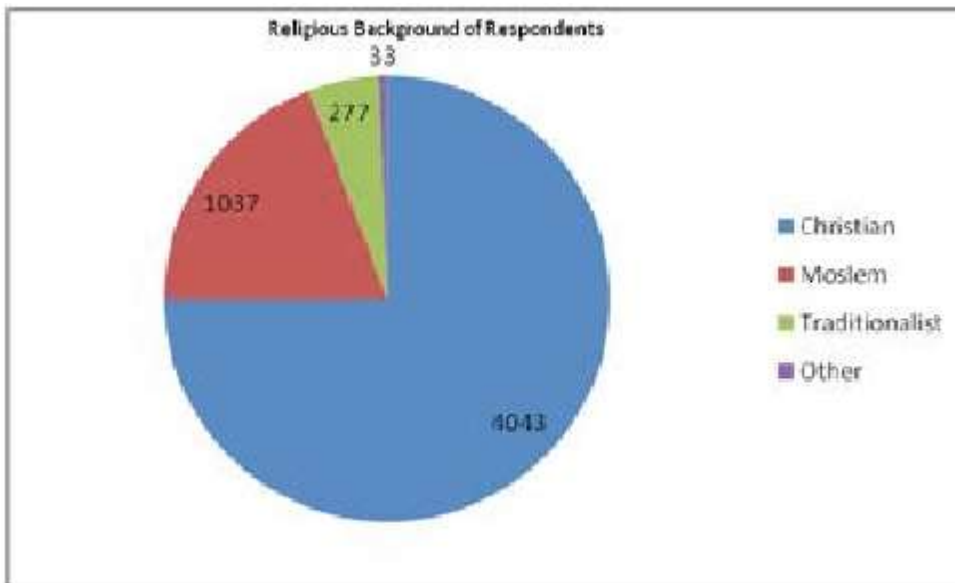
2.5 Religious Background of Respondents

Freedom of association is guaranteed by the 1992 Constitution. As such citizens of the nation are free to belong to any religious faith. The chart below shows the extent of religious diversity in the country.

Apart from 106 (1.9 per cent) who did not respond to the question, all respondents indicated that they belonged to one form of religion or another. The dominant religious faiths were Christianity and Islam. A total of 4,043 of respondents, representing 73.6 per cent said they were Christians whereas 1,037 respondents, forming 18.9 per cent said they were Muslims. Respondents who were followers of African Traditional Religion numbered 277, forming 5 per cent. A small number of respondents, numbering 33 (0.6 per cent) said they belong to religious faith classified as 'other'. This group of respondents, among others belonged to religious faiths such as Buddha and Eckanker.

On regional basis, apart from the Northern Region where Muslims dominate all the rest had Christianity dominating. The above statistics conform to the 2000 national census situation where Christians dominate.

Chart 2: Religious Background of Respondents



CHAPTER 3

Ranking of Issues

3.0 Introduction

Democratic elections involve selection of candidates. Candidates are voted for based on a number of factors. These factors include political parties or their candidate's ability to decipher issues of concern to the voter and address them accordingly during their campaigns. Organised groups and individuals have campaigned for or against candidates based on issues.

This section of the report looks at the important issues provided and how respondents prioritise them based on their rankings. In all, ten key issues, namely Women and Children, Education, Health, Housing, National Security, Youth Development, Corruption, Social Welfare, Agriculture and Economy were selected for the exercise. These issues were selected based on the effect they have on the development of the nation as the well-being of the individual.

3.1 Ranking of Issues

Respondents' ranking of the ten issues provided is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Respondents Ranking of Ten Issues in Percentages

Issues	1st Rank	2nd Rank	3rd Rank	4th Rank	5th Rank	6th Rank	7th Rank	8th Rank	9th Rank	10th Rank
Education	37.2	23.3	16.9	10	5.1	3	1.5	0.9	0.7	0.6
Health	14.2	30.6	21.9	15	8	4.4	2.3	1.3	0.8	0.5
Agriculture	11.8	11.2	20.2	13	11.4	10.8	8.2	5.8	4.9	2.2
Women and Children	8.2	6.5	7.7	13	13.5	12.6	10.4	10.1	9	8.4
Economy	7.8	7	6.9	9	9.1	10.8	11.8	13.8	12.8	11.1
Youth Development	7.2	8	9.1	10.3	13.8	13.4	13.6	9.2	8.7	5.4
Corruption	5.1	4.2	5.1	7	9.8	10.4	12.3	13	13.3	20.3
National Security	3.8	3.6	4.7	7.3	10.7	11.1	12.7	14.6	15.8	15.7
Housing	2.7	3.6	5.1	11.4	12.3	12.7	12.6	13	13.2	15.2
Social Welfare	2	2	2.4	4	6.3	10.8	14.6	18.3	20.8	20.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

A tabulation of the first to third ranking of every issue was done and used as the index of importance that respondents attached to issues. The issues were then segmented into the upper group (first to three), middle group (four to six) and lower groups (seven to ten).

3.1.1 Upper Group Issues (1st – 3rd)

Ranking of Issues By Respondents

1. Education
2. Health
3. Agriculture
4. Women and Children
5. Economy
6. Youth Development
7. National Security
8. Corruption
9. Housing
10. Social Welfare

From the tallying of the first to third rankings done, education came first with 77.4 per cent of respondents, health followed with 65.7 per cent and agriculture came third with 43.2 per cent. It therefore means that for respondents' education, health and agriculture were selected as the most important issues.

Respondents may have put premium on education for the fact that knowledge plays a major role in personal and national development. The world now is said to be a global village where knowledge through education is removing all barriers and linking people everywhere. It is therefore not surprising that respondents have prioritised education since it holds the key to our competitiveness in the world. Furthermore, the fact that all the other nine issues may depend on knowledge and education for its benefit to be fully realised may have influenced this choice.

Health understandably came second since respondents very survival depends on it. One will have to be in good health in terms of body; mind and emotions to either contribute his quota towards the development of his community or enjoy the benefits of developments.

It is worthy of note that education and health maintained their 2004 first rankings, when the first survey was held. Compared with education and health, agriculture moved from fourth to third position in this survey. That agriculture is a major issue of concern is indicative of the fact that apart from providing food for our daily survival, respondents think it plays a key role in the employment of citizens and their economic well-being. Furthermore, the activities of the Millennium Challenge Authority where agriculture is being supported through irrigation development, land tenure facilitation and rehabilitation of feeder road, among others, has given agriculture and its related activities a big push with high expectation from the public. Also, the large number of respondents, 1,354 (24.6 per cent) who are into farming and fishing may have influenced their choice of agriculture in order for problems in the sector to be rectified.

3.1.2 Middle Group Issues (4th – 6th)

When the first to third rankings were tallied women and children came fourth with 30.7 per cent, economy came fifth with 22.8 per cent and youth development was sixth with 18.3 per cent.

Issues dealing with various segment of the society such as women and children were members of this group. Women form the majority of our population and any development agenda aimed at affecting the

citizens positively should mainstream gender. Over the recent years gender has been mainstreamed in projects and programmes and rights of women have been championed by many governments and groups. The high rating of women and children by respondents may have arisen due to better appreciation of women issues.

The economy of a nation with its various indicators such as inflation have a direct effect on the living standards of people. Ability of governments to pay workers well depends on the nature of the economy. The growth of business and financial empowerment of individuals also depends on the economy. Respondents therefore may have rated the economy such high, hoping that something will be done about it for them to live better lives.

Young people are referred to as the future leaders of the nation. In other words the well-being of the nation depends on the youth. Ghana's population, according to the 2000 census, is predominantly young with 41.3 per cent being under 15 years. Any effort at equipping our youth will be addressing problems faced by a good proportion of the society. Respondents apart from the above may have also first ranked youth development to address the moral decay that has engulfed our society with the youth being the most culpable.

3.1.3 Lower Group Issues (7th – 10th)

The last four issues based on the first to third rankings totals were National Security, seventh, with 11.3, Corruption, eighth, with 10.9 per cent, housing was ninth with 10 per cent and social welfare followed with 2 per cent.

Security is connected with development in that lack of human security has adverse consequences on economic growth. Lack of development or imbalanced development on the other hand is an important cause of conflict. Recent security infractions like armed robbery, ethnic conflicts and chieftaincy disputes may have given respondents concern to rate security high.

Corruption is a recurring development issue. Corruption has a negative effect on development and is a canker which should be dealt with to minimise its impact in the society. Corruption is perceived to be rising in our society. According to recent report of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament which sat publicly during last year for the year ending 2004, money amounting to GHc1133 billion and 15,544 million dollars were not accounted for. These factors, among others, may have influenced respondent's choice.

Shelter is one of the main basic needs of human beings apart from food and clothing.

As such all human beings need proper dwelling places to fulfil a basic need. According to the 2006 annual report of Ghana Real Estate Development Association (GREDA) there is a housing stock shortage of 500, 000 to 950, 000 units in Ghana. Ghanaians in urban areas sleeping on the streets or in places unsuited for human habitation, endless litigation on land with people taking the law into their own hands with some tragic consequences and professionals like teachers, nurses and doctors refusing transfers to rural areas due to lack of suitable accommodation are evidence of problems facing the housing sector. Although the expectation may have been for more respondents to rate it high, the 10 per cent who did so put a lot of premium on housing.

Social welfare can be considered to be the well-being of the community as a whole. It deals with the government providing economic assistance to persons in need. These persons ,among others, include the physically challenged, the aged and pensioners. Government attempts at addressing social welfare issues led to the creation of the Social Welfare Department which is now under the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment. The mission of the department is to ensure social integration of the vulnerable, excluded and the disadvantaged for the development and growth of the economy. Even though social welfare is mainly attended to in the informal sector in the country, respondents by such rating may be sending a signal that it is time for the nation to have a comprehensive social welfare policy.

3.2 Regional Ranking of Issues

Variations exist in physical, social and economic development of the various regions of the country. It is expected that these variations will manifest in their ranking on issue.

The nature of 1st ranking on issues seen at the national level was to a large extent maintained at the regional level as shown in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Respondents First Ranking of Issues by Region

Issues	Ash	B/A	Cent.	East.	Gt. Accra	North	U. East	U. West	Volta	West.
Education	40.8	43.6	34.6	33.8	36.4	30.8	39.5	39.6	34	40.5
Health	12.7	12.7	9.2	10.3	15.4	20.1	15.2	18.5	11.9	18
Agriculture	8.4	11.6	11.4	13.8	9.3	15.7	18.6	18.1	10.1	10
Women and Children	8	7.6	9	9.4	6.5	8.3	9	7.5	7.3	8.7
Economy	10.7	4.3	10.3	8.5	11	5.3	1	1.7	10.9	6.8
Youth Development	6.2	6.4	8.6	12.2	6.6	3.8	3.5	6	8.5	8.9
Corruption	5.4	3.1	9.9	4.2	6.6	2.2	4.2	4.2	8.5	2.7
National Security	2.1	4.3	2.9	3.6	3.5	9.9	1.9	1.7	4.4	2.1
Housing	3.8	4.2	2.6	1.3	2.9	2.1	4.2	1	2.2	1.7
Social Welfare	1.9	2.2	1.5	2.9	1.8	1.8	2.9	1.7	2.2	0.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Education was ranked first by a majority of respondents in all the ten regions. This re-enforces the fact that Ghanaians lay premium on education more than other issues. In all regions more than 30 per cent of respondents ranked education first. The region with the highest proportion of respondents ranking education first was Brong Ahafo with 43.6 per cent while the 30.8 per cent of the Northern Region was the lowest.

Health which came second in the first ranking at the national level maintained this position in seven (7) regions. These regions were Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Greater Accra, Northern, Upper West, Volta and Western. Northern Region's proportion of 20.1 per cent was the highest in this category. The other three regions had agriculture placing second in their first rankings.

Agriculture and the economy placed third in the first rankings of four regions each. The four (4) regions where agriculture placed third in the first rankings were Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper West

and Western regions that chose economy were Ashanti, Central, Greater Accra and Volta. Two (2) other issues which placed third in regional first ranking of issues were Youth development by Eastern and Health by Upper East.

3.2.1 Ashanti Region- Order of Ranking of Issues

- Education
- Health
- Economy
- Agriculture
- Women and Children
- Youth Development
- Corruption
- Housing
- National Security
- Social Welfare

Three issues that came top in the first rankings of respondents in Ashanti Region were Education (40.8 per cent), Health (12.7 per cent) and the Economy (10.7 per cent). The proportion of the region's respondents who ranked education first was the second highest in the nation. For two (2) out of every five (5) respondents to rank education first indicates a strong desire on their part to see good educational standards in the region.

The region's rating of the economy was higher than that of the national ranking. Ashanti Region is one of the most urbanised regions in the country. Its urban population of 51.3 per cent makes it the second most urbanised region in the country, after Greater Accra (87.7 per cent). The likelihood of a good number of respondents living in urban areas with its attendant problems like high cost of feeding, accommodation and utilities may have influenced such a response.

Also the 12 per cent of the regions respondents who are unemployed think a change in the economy may alter their employment status.

The other seven issues were ranked first as follows agriculture (8.4 per cent), women and children (8 per cent), youth development (6.2 per cent), corruption (5.4 per cent), housing (3.8 per cent), national security (2.1 per cent) and social welfare (1.9 per cent)

3.2.2 Brong Ahafo Region -Order of Ranking of Issues

The region's pattern of the three first ranked issues conforms to that of the national with Education, Health and Agriculture placing first to third. Education topped with 43.6 per cent, health came second with 12.7 per cent and Agriculture was third with 11.6 per cent.

Order of 1st Rank Issues-Brong Ahafo

- *Education*
- *Health*
- *Agriculture*
- *Women & Children*
- *Youth Development*

-
-
- *Economy*
 - *National Security*
 - *Housing*
 - *Corruption*

The proportion of respondents who ranked education first in Brong Ahafo was the highest in the nation against the backdrop that the regional education statistics portrays a very discouraging picture. For instance the proportion of the population not literate (48.5 per cent), according to the Ghana districts website, is higher than the national average (42.1 per cent) and more than two fifths (42 per cent) of the population, aged 6 years and older, have never been to school. A case is therefore being made strongly for an improvement in education by the respondents.

It is not all that surprising that agriculture had such a high rating in the region, for agriculture and its related works employ the bulk (66.4 per cent) of the regions active population. It is therefore understandable that respondents gave agriculture such a high rating.

The other issues were ranked as follows, Women and Children (7.6 per cent), Youth Development (6.4 per cent), Economy (4.3 per cent), National Security (4.3 per cent), Housing (4.2 per cent), Corruption (3.1 per cent) and Social Welfare (2.2 per cent)

3.2.3 Central Region -Order of Ranking of Issues

Order of 1st Rank Issues-Central Region

- *Education*
- *Agriculture*
- *Economy*
- *Corruption*
- *Health*
- *Women and Children*
- *Youth Development*
- *National Security*
- *Housing*
- *Social Welfare*

The three issues topping the 1st order of ranking in the regions were Education (34.6 per cent), Agriculture (11.4 per cent) and Economy (10.3 per cent). Health in this region lost its place in the first three, and placed fifth.

The region's 1st ranking of education was the sixth best in the nation. Corruption made a strong showing and placed fourth with 9.9 per cent. Apart from the region having the best first ranking position for corruption the percentage of respondents who rated it was also the highest in the nation. Recent media reportage which indicates that corruption is high in the country may have influenced respondents' decision.

Another deviation from the national pattern observed in the region was the ranking of health. The proportion of respondents who ranked health first (9.2 per cent) was not only the lowest in the nation but the regional position of fifth was the worst in the nation. This calls for concern since good health is a necessity for survival in living things.

The other issues were ranked first as follows, Corruption (9.9 per cent), Health (9.2 per cent), Women and Children (9 per cent), Youth development (8.6 per cent), National Security (2.9 per cent), Housing (2.6 per cent) and Social Welfare (2.6 per cent).

3.2.4 Eastern Region - Order of Ranking of Issues

Order of 1st Rank Issues- Eastern Region

- *Education*
- *Agriculture*
- *Youth Development*
- *Health*
- *Women and Children*
- *Economy*
- *Corruption*
- *National Security*
- *Social Welfare*
- *Housing*

Interesting permutation arises from the order ranking of issues in the region. Youth development placed third with 12.2 per cent after agriculture 13.8 per cent and education (33.8 per cent).

Respondents in the region make a strong case for the young people who form the bulk of their population. It is the only region that youth development placed third in terms of first ranking. Significantly the figure of 12.2 per cent was also the only region which has an above 10 per cent of first ranking for youth development. With the youth forming a larger proportion of the population it is not out of place for respondents to prioritise issues concerning them.

Agriculture also features prominently in the region's rankings. The region's proportion of respondents who first rank it was the fourth highest in the country after the three northern regions. As such for the southern part of Ghana it is the region where respondents placed much premium on agriculture.

The other issues were ranked as follows; Health (10.3 per cent), Women and Children (9.4 per cent), Economy (8.5 per cent), Corruption (4.2 per cent), National Security (3.6 per cent), Social Welfare (2.9 per cent) and Housing (1.3 per cent).

3.2.5 Greater Accra - Order of Ranking of Issues

The economy (11 per cent) placed third in the order of rankings of issues after health (15.4 per cent) and education (36.4 per cent) which placed second and first respectively.

Order of 1st Rank Issues-Greater Accra

- *Education*
- *Health*
- *Economy*
- *Agriculture*
- *Corruption*
- *Youth Development*

-
-
- *Women and Child*
 - *National Security*
 - *Housing*
 - *Social Welfare*

The proportion of respondents who ranked the economy first was the highest in the nation. The urbanised nature of the region with its attendant problems of inadequate infrastructure, poor sanitation and unemployment, among others, may have been a contributory factor to this rating. The occupational structures of the region also shows that 42 per cent of the region's active population is engaged in the sales and service sector where the economy impacts most, it is as such no wonder that respondent rated it high.

Agriculture placed fourth with 9.3 per cent in the order of ranking. It is interesting to note that even though the region's 9.1 per cent of active population who are employed in the agriculture sector is the lowest in the country, respondents in the region rated agriculture high. For such respondents, the perception that agriculture plays a key role in the development of the country may have preempted such response.

Other issues were ranked as follows; Corruption (6.6 per cent), Youth development (6.6 per cent), Women and Children (6.5 per cent), National Security (3.5 per cent), Housing (2.9 per cent) and Social Welfare (1.8 per cent).

3.2.6 Northern Region – Order of Ranking of Issues

The region's three topmost issues as per the first ranking conform to that of the national. Education came first with 30.8 per cent followed by health (20.1 per cent) and agriculture (15.7 per cent). The region's proportion of respondents who ranked health first was the highest in the nation. Every two out of five respondents ranked health first. This may not be too surprising since it is one of the regions with the lowest level of health care and hence the greatest problem in public health. For instance only 34.9 per cent of households have access to potable water (pipe –borne plus borehole); and this has implication for water borne diseases. Respondents by this rating want a change in the state of health care.

Order of 1st Rank Issues- Northern

- *Education*
- *Health*
- *Agriculture*
- *National Security*
- *Women and Children*
- *Economy*
- *Youth Development*
- *Corruption*
- *Housing*
- *Social Welfare*

Another issue which respondents ranked first and was the highest in the nation was National Security. It had a first rank rating of 9.9 per cent. Some parts of the region have experienced ethnic and chieftaincy conflicts in recent times and its impact may have been felt by respondents, necessitating their high rating of national security. For instance in the Tamale Central Constituency which is in the Dagbon Traditional Area which experienced some conflicts, one (1) out of every four (4) respondents ranked national security first.

Other issues and their order of rank were as follows, National Security (9.9 per cent), Women and Children (8.3 per cent), Economy (5.3 per cent), Youth Development (3.8 per cent), Corruption (2.2 per cent), Housing (2.1 per cent) and Social Welfare (1.8 per cent).

3.2.7 Upper East - Order of Ranking of Issues

The three issues topping the order of rankings in the regions were, Education (39.5 per cent), Agriculture (18.6 per cent) and Health (15.2 per cent).

Order of 1st Rank Issues- Upper East

- *Education*
- *Agriculture*
- *Health*
- *Women and Children*
- *Housing*
- *Corruption*
- *Youth Development*
- *Social Welfare*
- *National Security*
- *Economy*

The proportion of respondents who ranked agriculture first was the highest in the nation. For a region that agriculture and its related works employ more than three (3) out of every five (5) people of the active population a desire to see agriculture improve is surely a priority.

Interestingly also the proportion of respondents who ranked housing first (4.2) was the highest in the nation even though it was the fifth most important issue in the region. Even though habitable places may abound in the region the need to modernise these structures may have led to such a response. The region is also one of the two regions with the highest proportion of respondents who ranked social welfare. In terms of positioning, social welfare was eighth (8th) and that was its best regional position.

Other issues and their order of ranking were as follows, Women and Children (9 per cent), Housing (4.2 per cent), Corruption (4.2 per cent), Youth Development (3.5 per cent), Social Welfare (2.9 per cent), National Security (1.9 per cent) and Economy (1 per cent).

3.2.8 Upper West – Order of Ranking of Issues

Order of 1st Rank Issues- Upper West

- *Education*
- *Health*
- *Agriculture*
- *Women and Children*
- *Youth Development*
- *Corruption*
- *Economy*
- *National Security*
- *Social Welfare*
- *Housing*

Education topped the first ranked issues with 39.6 per cent. It was followed by health (18.5 per cent) and agriculture (18.1 per cent). Even though the national pattern is again maintained here the issue of significance is the proportions. It is worthy of note that the region's proportion of respondents who ranked health and agriculture first was the second highest in the nation.

The socio-economic characteristics of the region where 72 per cent are employed in agriculture and its related works and the state of social infrastructure may have contributed to this response.

Other issues and their order of ranking were as follows, Women and Children (7.5 per cent), Youth Development (6 per cent), Corruption (4.2 per cent), Economy (1.7 per cent), National Security (1.7 per cent), Social Welfare (1.7 per cent) and Housing (1 per cent)

3.2.9 Volta -Order of Ranking of Issues

Order of 1st Rank Issues- Volta

- *Education*
- *Health*
- *Economic*
- *Agriculture*
- *Corruption*
- *Youth Development*
- *Women and Children*
- *National Security*
- *Housing*
- *Social Welfare*

The region is one of the few that the economy toppled agriculture into third place for the order of ranking. Education tops the ranking with 34 per cent followed by health with 10.1 per cent. A considerable proportion (15.4 per cent) of the active population is employed in the retail and wholesale sector and this may have influenced their rating of the economy.

Another issue which had a significant first ranking in the region is corruption. The proportion of the region's respondents (8.5 per cent) who rank corruption first was the second highest in the nation just after Central. Also the proportions of the region's respondents who first ranked National Security were the second highest in the nation. The region in time past had experienced some protracted chieftaincy and ethnic conflicts and its adverse effects on development may have influenced respondents rating of the issue.

Other issues and their first order of were as follows; Agriculture (10.1 per cent), corruption (8.5 per cent), youth development (8.5 per cent), women and children (7.3 per cent), national security (4.4 per cent), housing (2.2 per cent) and social welfare (1.7 per cent)

3.2.10 Western – Rank of Issues

Order of 1st Rank Issues- Western

- *Education*
- *Health*
- *Agriculture*

- *Youth Development*
- *Women and Children*
- *Economy*
- *Corruption*
- *National Security*
- *Housing*
- *Social Welfare*

As the national picture depicts, the issues that had the highest rating in terms of first rank were Education (40.5 per cent), Health (18 per cent) and Agriculture (10 per cent). The high rating of education in the region, the third highest in the nation after Eastern and Ashanti emphasises the premium respondents put on education which is the engine that drives development.

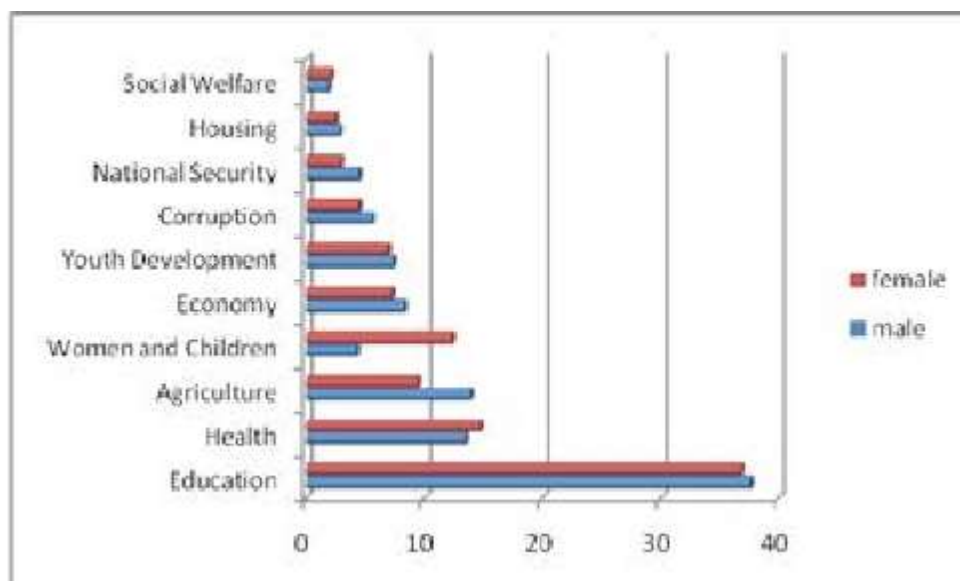
The proportion of respondents in the region who ranked Youth development (8.9 per cent) was the highest in the nation. A case is as such being made by respondents for the youth who form the bulk of the region's population.

Other issues and their order of ranking were as follows: Youth development (8.9 per cent), women and children (8.7 per cent), economy (6.8 per cent), corruption (2.7 per cent), national security (2.1 per cent), housing (1.7 per cent) and social welfare (0.6 per cent).

3.3 Order of Ranking of Issues By Sex

Differences exist in proportions and issues ranked first by the sexes. Even though education was the issues ranked first by the highest proportion of males and females respondents, differences exist in the issues that place second and third in the issues ranked first. Whereas agriculture and health followed education for male respondents, health and women/children were chosen by females. Details are shown in the chart below

Chart 3.1: First Ranking of Issues by Sex



For male respondents, the proportion that ranked education first was 37.4 per cent compared to 36.9 per cent of females. For health the proportion of females (14.8 per cent) who ranked it first was more than that of males (13.5 per cent). Factors such as pregnancy and child care where women play a key role with its health implication may have influenced the females rating of health.

Apart from health, women and children was also an issue where a higher proportion of females (13.4 per cent) than males (4.3 per cent) ranked first. Even though it was expected that women would rank issues concerning them very high the percentage point between them and the males was very outstanding. For the male respondents, women and children issues placed eighth (8th) in their first ranking of issues sending a signal that there is still the need for males to be educated to prioritise gender issues.

The key role that women play in fending for the family also comes to play once again when the order of ranking of social welfare is examined. Whereas 2.1 per cent of females rank it first 1.9 percent males did so.

Males first ranking for the other issues were agriculture (13.9 per cent), economy (8.3 percent), youth development (7.4 per cent), corruption (5.6 per cent), national security (4.5 per cent), women and children (4.3 percent), housing (2.9 per cent) and social welfare (1.9 per cent).

Females on the other hand rank the other issues as follows, health (14.8 per cent), women and children (12.4 per cent), agriculture (9.5 per cent), economy (7.3 per cent), youth development (7 per cent), corruption (4.5 per cent), national security (3 per cent), housing (2.5 per cent) and social welfare (2.1 per cent).

3.4 Order of Ranking of Issues By Age

A cross tabulation of the order of ranking of issues and age is shown in the table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: First Ranking of Issues by Age

Issues	18-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+
Education	47.4	39.3	33.9	34.2	37.7	33.2
Health	11.7	12.7	15.2	15.3	14.6	15.9
Agriculture	8	10.4	10.3	13.7	15.7	16.1
Women and Children	7.5	8.1	9.6	7	7.7	8.4
Economy	5.6	6.8	10.2	9.6	5.3	7.2
Youth Development	9.7	10.1	6	5.6	4.3	5.4
Corruption	3.5	4.6	5.7	6.6	5	3.3
National Security	3.8	3.1	5	3.9	3.4	3.3
Housing	1.3	3	2.3	2.5	3.4	4
Social Welfare	1.5	1.9	1.8	1.6	2.9	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Education was ranked first by all age groups. Understandably, the youngest age group (18-20) where it is expected that majority of them are in school had the highest ranking of education. A little below half (47.4 per cent) of the age group ranked education first.

Health placed second in terms of ranking for all the age groups except the 61 and above age group. Ageing was a factor in the health ratings. For even though health was third in the rankings, the age group 61 and above proportion of 15.9 per cent who ranked health first was the highest among the age groups.

Two age groups 18-20 and 61 and above did not have agriculture as their third highest ranked issue. The age group 18-20 as expected had youth development placing third. The oldest age group (61 and above) had the highest proportion of respondents (16.1 per cent) who ranked agriculture first.

3.5 Order of Rank of Issues By Educational Background

Details of the order of ranking of issues led by education is shown in Table 3.4

Table 3.4: First Ranking of Issues by Educational Background

Issue	No Formal Education	No Formal Educa. But Can R &W	Basic	Second	Tertiary	Any Other
Education	28.5	31.1	36	45.7	40.2	36.5
Health	17.3	14.5	14.4	12.2	11.6	15.9
Agriculture	20	17.8	10.9	7.9	7.1	9.1
Women and Children	10.6	11.6	8.5	6.5	4.8	4.5
Economy	6.6	7.9	8.3	6.8	11.6	6.8
Youth Development	4.6	4.1	9.6	7.1	6	9.1
Corruption	2.2	4.6	4.1	7	9.5	4.5
National Security	5.1	2.9	3.3	3.1	5.3	6.8
Housing	2.8	4.6	2.6	2.3	2.2	4.5
Social Welfare	2.3	2.9	2.3	1.4	1.7	2.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

For the different educational backgrounds, education was the highest ranked issue. Respondents with secondary educational background top the group with 45.7 per cent; they were followed by respondents with tertiary educational background who had 40.2 per cent. After these two groups the proportion of respondents ranking education first decreases with respondents without any formal education having the lowest percentage of 28.5 per cent.

It is also worthy of note that the order of ranking of agriculture decreased with education. Respondents with no formal education percentage rank of 20 per cent were the highest whilst the 7.1 per cent of tertiary educational background was the lowest. This is an indication that as educational background of respondents rises there is a desire to de-emphasise the role agriculture plays in the economic life of the nation. This is a bit surprising since it is generally accepted that agriculture is the backbone of our economy and need to be modernised for its full impact to be felt.

It is as hardly surprising that respondents with tertiary education background top the first ranking of the economy. Their figure of 11.6 per cent was the highest whereas that of respondents with no formal education (6.6 per cent) was the lowest.

CHAPTER 4

Critical Issues for Government to Address

4.0 Introduction

Governance has been defined as the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Government is one of the actors in governance. Other actors involved in governance vary depending on the level of government that is under discussion. In rural areas, for example, other actors may include influential landlords, associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, research institutes, religious leaders, financial institutions and political parties.

Participation by both men and women is a necessity of good governance. Participation could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives. Participation needs to be informed and organised. This means freedom of association and expression on the one hand and an organised civil society on the other hand.

Citizens in expressing their views about how problems in society can be solved are thus participating in governance. For all the issues that were ranked first to third respondents were expected to state specifically things they expect the three main stakeholders, namely the government, civil society and individual citizens to do concerning them.

This section of the report examines issues respondents will want the government to address for issues ranked first to third.

4.1 Issues on Education

A total of 7,277 responses (details in Table 4.1 below) were collated for respondents who had education in their first three rankings.

Table 4.1: Education

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Free Education	1691	23.3
Provide Educational Institutions	1474	20.1
Better Remuneration and Incentives for Teachers	1176	16.2
Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials	1016	14.0
Train More Teachers	782	10.7
Extension of School Feeding Programme	720	9.9
Focus on ICT	222	3.1
Affordable School Fees	196	2.7
Total	7277	100

For the highest proportion of these responses, payment of fees, especially at the basic level, should be abolished. The 1,691 responses, forming 23.2 per cent were for free education. Maybe respondents by this statement are calling for the full implementation of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) which is guaranteed by the 1992 constitution.

The provision of educational institutions with better infrastructure at all levels followed with 1,474 responses, forming 20.1 per cent indicating the emphasis respondents lay on the role the physical environment plays in education.

According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) an education system that aims to offer quality education for all young people should be able to count on teachers who are well trained and adequately paid. This notion was shared in the following responses where better remuneration and incentives for teachers had 1,176 (16.2 per cent) and training of more teachers had 782 (10.7 per cent). Provision of learning and teaching materials was also stated as a major educational concern of respondents. It had 1,016 responses, forming 14 per cent. The demand for an extension of the Capitation Grant programme where primary schoolchildren are fed in selected districts also featured prominently with 720 responses forming 9.9 per cent. Respondents also wanted a shift in focus of education to Information Communication Technology (ICT) with 222 responses (3.1 per cent) and school fees being made available with 196 responses forming 2.7 per cent.

For respondents who put the highest premium on education by ranking it first, 23.8 per cent of their responses were for free education, 18.4 per cent were for provision of more educational institutions and 17.1 per cent were for training of more teachers.

4.2 Issues on Health

Responses on issues on health for respondents who ranked it first to third totalled 6,277 as shown in table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Health

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Provision of Health Facilities	1946	31.0
Train and Motivate Health Personnel	1791	28.5
Streamline Operations of NHIS	1342	21.4
Reduction in Premium of NHIS	466	6.3
Provision of Health Equipment and Drugs	261	4.2
Deal Vigorously with Malaria	77	1.2
Total	6277	100

Almost a third of all responses, 1,946 (31 per cent) were for the provision of more health facilities. The lack of adequate modern medical facilities and the uneven distribution of the few available ones across the country may have influenced the above response. Statistics provided by the Ghana 2008 Health Directory shows that there are 2,341 health facilities, 13 drug manufacturing companies and 11 international pharmaceutical companies with local representatives. For a country with a population of over 20 million these facilities are inadequate and government needs to do more to make health care accessible to all.

The next highest responses received were on the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) which has been in operation in the country since 2003. The need to streamline operations of the scheme to ensure easy registration and to let members access health care in all registered health institutions nationwide had the highest number of responses, 1,342 representing (21.4 per cent). Other issues raised concerning the NHIS were a reduction in the registration premium which had 466 responses (7.4 per cent) and free registration which received 394 responses (6.3 per cent).

Another issue of concern was adequately trained and highly motivated health personnel. A total of 1,791 (28.5 per cent) responses were on the human factor in health provision. For such respondents the key role that health personnel play in an efficient health system cannot be downplayed.

Other issues raised concerning health for the government to address were the provisions of health equipment and drugs (4.2 per cent) and dealing vigorously with malaria (1.2 per cent).

For respondents who had health as their topmost issue, 33.8 per cent of their responses were the provision of health facilities, 20.3 per cent of responses were for the streamlining of the NHIS's operations and 19.2 per cent of responses were for training and motivation of health personnel.

4.3 Issues on Agriculture

A total of 4,189 on issues was derived from respondents who ranked agriculture from first to third. The debate on subsidies in agriculture and its role in enhancing the overall output and its competitiveness in the global market resurfaced. The highest number of responses totalling 1,356 (32.4 per cent) was for a call to the government to subsidise agriculture inputs and products. For almost one (1) out of every three (3) respondents subsidies is a necessity for the development of the agriculture sector.

The call for governmental support for farmers was re-emphasised by the 907 responses which were for financial support for farmers. For the 21.7 per cent a major problem being faced by our farmers is the lack of funds hence the call for government to intervene. The need to modernise agriculture to encourage large scale production by way of mechanisation had 564 responses forming 13.5 per cent. Another 399 responses, representing 9.5 per cent was for creation of land banks. For such respondents the government should make land accessible for people to farm.

Other responses on issues of agriculture were; provision of markets and storage facilities for agriculture products, 448 responses (10.7 per cent), provision of irrigation, 217 responses (5.2 per cent), reintroduction of state farms, 169 responses (4 per cent), and making farming attractive to the youth, 129 responses (3.1 per cent).

A noteworthy statistic is the perception that the youth have a role to play in agriculture, and that the government should do all it can to encourage them. For such respondents a move to attract the youth into agriculture will help reduce the high numbers who are unemployed. Details are shown in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Agriculture

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Subsidize Agriculture	1356	32.4
Financial Support for Farmers	907	21.7
Mechanization of Agriculture	564	13.5
Provision of Storage Facilities and Markets	448	10.7
Provision of Irrigation Dams	217	5.2
Reintroduce State Farms	169	4.0
Make Farming Attractive to the Youth	129	3.1
Total	4,189	100

For respondents who ranked agriculture first, 32.4 per cent of responses were for subsidising agriculture, 22.3 per cent of responses were for financial support for farmers and 13.1 per cent of responses were for mechanisation of agriculture.

4.4 Issues on Women and Children

Various issues were raised on women and children for government to address. Out of the total of 1,670 responses raised by respondents, the highest proportion of 741(44.4 per cent) was for financial empowerment of women. For such respondents the expectation was for government to provide women with soft loans to embark on economic ventures. Also it is expected that more employment will be created for women. For the part of children, 185 responses, forming 11.1 per cent were for street children to be equipped with skills.

Political empowerment of women, evident by the increased participation in governance by women with a consequential increase in female political appointments, was also an issue of concern. This concern had 236 responses forming 14.1 per cent. Even though much has been done since the Fourth Republic to empower women politically, culminating in the creation of the Women and Children’s Ministry and appointment of the first female Chief Justice, the fourth highest position in the country, respondents want a gender balance in political appointments.

Many laws have been passed and international conventions have been rectified to ensure the welfare of women and children in the society. For example laws exist on cultural practices that are harmful to women and child labour. However, they are hardly enforced. Responses which were for enforcement of laws on women and children totalled 409, representing 24.5 per cent.

Other responses given on women and children issues were that men who do not take care of their children should be punished which had 67 responses, representing 4 per cent and life imprisonment for men who defile girls had 32 responses, representing 1.9 per cent. Details of women and children issues are shown in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Women and Children

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Financial Empowerment of Women	741	44.4
Enforcing on Laws on Women and Children	409	24.5
Political Empowerment of Women	236	14.1
Equip Street Children with Skills	185	11.1
Punish Irresponsible Men	67	4.0
Punish Men who Defile Girls	32	1.9
Total	1670	100

For respondents who put the highest premium on women and children, the three most raised responses were financial empowerment of women (43.8 per cent), enforcement of laws on women (24.5 per cent) and political empowerment (13.8 per cent).

4.5 Issues on the Economy

A total of 1,763 responses were collated on issues on the economy for its first to third rankings. Out of a total of 461 responses, representing 26.1 per cent, were for stabilisation in prices of goods. It is quite understandable for respondents to call for price stabilisation since the global food prices and oil price hikes have led to persistent increase in prices of goods. It is worthy to note that 140 (7.9 per cent) responses were specifically for reduction in prices of fuel. For such respondents, the government will have to intervene to reduce the harsh impact of increases in prices of petroleum products.

Capital is a major factor of production. For any successful business to thrive, money is needed to procure raw materials, labour, among others. Accessibility to capital is therefore a prerequisite for a vibrant private sector. Ghana has witnessed an influx of financial institutions, especially in the national capital, Accra, but the cost of capital is still high necessitating a call by 288 responses (16.2 per cent) for a reduction in interest rates.

The need to create a favourable business environment had 262 responses representing 14.9 per cent. For such respondents the government has a major role to play in making the private sector the engine of growth.

The call for diversification of the economy by way of industrialisation and processing of primary products had 261 responses, representing 14.8 per cent. Other issues raised concerning the economy were better remuneration for workers 138 responses (7.8 per cent) and judicious use of state resources, 70 responses (4 per cent). Details are shown in table 4:5.

Table 4.5: Economy

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Stabilize Prices of Goods	461	26.1
Reduce Interest Rate	288	16.2
Create Favourable Business Environment	262	14.9
Embark on Industrialization	261	14.8
Reduce Fuel Prices	140	7.9
Pay Workers Well	138	7.8
Use State Resources Judiciously	70	4.0
Total	1763	100

For respondents who put the highest premium on the economy, the three most raised responses were stabilisation of prices of goods (23.5 per cent), reduction in interest rate (17.7 per cent) and creation of a favourable environment for business (16.1).

4.6 Issues on Youth Development

The major concerns of respondents who ranked youth development one to three was the provision of employment which had 1,146 (54.7 per cent) out of the 2,096 responses as shown in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Youth Development

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Provide Employment for Youth	1146	54.7
Set Up Youth Centers	686	32.7
Provide Financial Support	101	4.8
Promulgate Youth Policy	163	7.8
Total	2,069	100

The call for majority of respondents therefore was for the government to continue and expand the National Youth Employment Programme and create other sources of employment for the youth.

Almost a third of responses, 686 (32.7 per cent), was a call to the government to set up youth centers to equip the youth with employable skills. For such respondents an equipped youth will not only be employable but could even create employment by setting up their own business ventures. For such respondents who wanted to see the youth in self employment the call was on government to give financial support to these skilled youth. A total of 101 responses (4.8 per cent) was for financial support for the youth.

A need for a legal framework to regulate the activities of the youth was also mentioned by respondents. Responses calling for promulgation of a youth policy totalled 163, representing 7.8 per cent

4.7 Issues on Corruption

Among the various issues raised on corruption was the need to punish corrupt officials severely and strengthen anti-corruption institutions. A total of 470 responses, representing 37.1 per cent were for such a call. The expectation of such respondents is that the severe punishment will serve as a deterrent and reduce the incidence of corruption.

The need to intensify the fight against corruption was further stressed by 248 responses, representing 24.1 per cent of respondents who called for enforcement of laws on corruption. For respondents, the passing of laws alone may not be enough, priority should also be given to their enforcement.

Added to the above fact, 248 (19.6 per cent) responses were for strengthening of state institutions that deals with corruption. Weakness in structure and operations of institutions like the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and Auditors General Department affect their work and there is a need to make resources available to them to effectively execute their mandate. The need to curb corruption based on need was also raised by respondents.

A total of 154 responses (12.1 per cent) were for better remuneration for workers. For such respondents a living wage which makes it possible for respondents to provide the basic needs of life will make corruption less attractive to them.

Other issues on corruption were a need to review assets declaration law, which received 63 responses (5 per cent); leaders should live exemplary lives, 22 responses (1.7 per cent) and public education on corruption, 6 responses (0.5 per cent). Details are presented in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Corruption

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Punish Corrupt Officials Severely	470	37.1
Enforce Laws on Corruption	248	24.1
Strengthen Anti-Corruption Institution	-	19.6
Pay Workers Well	154	12.1
Others	91	7.2
Total	---	100

For respondents who put the highest premium on corruption the major issues raised were severe punishment for corrupt officials (37.4 per cent), enforce laws on corruption (27.4 per cent) and strengthen state institutions which deal with corruption (18.8 per cent).

4.8 Issues on National Security

Responses collated for national security for its first to third ranking totalled 1,032 as depicted in table 4.8

Table 4.8: National Security

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Better Trained and Equipped Personnel	561	54.4
Maintain Peace and Stability	208	20.2
Pay Security Personnel Well	143	13.9
Provide More Security Personnel	61	5.9
Total	1763	100

Majority of responses concerned security personnel. A need for a better trained, well equipped and better motivated security, together had 704 responses, forming 68.3 per cent. Specifically 561 responses (54.4 per cent) was for a better trained and well equipped security force and 143 responses (13.9 per cent) was for better remuneration for personnel. From the above statistics majority of respondents believed that the security of the nation depends on the security personnel and all efforts should be made to motivate them and improve their technical efficiency.

After the personnel factor in national security, the need for the government to maintain peace and stability was the next major concern. It had a total of 208 responses, representing 20.2 per cent. Other responses on national security were; provision of police station, 61 responses (5.9 per cent) and stiffer punishment for armed robbers, 59 responses (5.7 per cent).

For respondents who put the highest premium on national security the major issues raised were better trained and equipped personnel (47.2 per cent), maintaining peace and stability (25.9 per cent) and paying security personnel well. It is worthy to note that the proportion of respondents who ranked security first and want the government to maintain the peace and stability (25.9 per cent) in the country was higher than that of the first, second and third respondents put together (20.2).

4.9 Issues on Housing

Respondents wanted the government to play a major role in the provision of shelter for the citizenry.

Table 4.9: Housing

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Provision of Affordable Housing	1138	49.0
Reduce Prices in Building Materials	387	34.0
Enforcement on Tenancy and Housing Laws	98	8.6
Others	95	8.4
Total	1138	100

Almost half (49 per cent) of the 1,138 responses (table 4.9) received was a call for the government to provide affordable housing for people, especially public servants. Against the backdrop of high rental charges by landlords demanding advance payments coupled with the difficulty in acquisition of land and its cost, this call is not surprising.

The high cost of building materials was also a cause of concern for respondents. A total of 387 responses (34 per cent) were for reduction in the prices of building materials.

Buildings laws and its enforcement were also raised as a concern for the government to address. Specifically 62 responses (5.4 per cent) were for enforcement of tenancy laws and 36 responses (3.6 per cent) were for enforcement of building laws. Factors such as improper siting of buildings and advance payment necessitated such a call.

Other responses were given financial support to people to build houses 86 responses (7.6 per cent) and use of local materials to reduce the cost of building 9 responses (0.8 per cent).

4.10 Social Welfare

A total of 333 responses (table 4.10 below) were collated for issues raised by respondents who ranked social welfare first to third.

Table 4.10: Social Welfare

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Strengthening of Social Welfare Dept.	85	25.0
Assist Orphanages	72	21.6
Provision of Social Amenities	87	26.1
Involve the Physical Challenged in Governance	18	5.4
Total	333	100

Major issues raised were on the Department of Social Welfare, pension and orphanages. For one out of every four respondents (25.5 per cent), the government has to strengthen the Department of Social Welfare to fulfil its mandate.

A total of 71 responses, representing 21.3 per cent were in favour of assistance being offered to orphanages, and 72 responses, representing 21.6 per cent was for a review of the pension scheme. The call to the government to take a look at pensions was not just on the amount of money paid to pensioners but the process one has to go through after pension to assess the pension scheme.

Other issues raised on social welfare were; provision of social amenities, 87 responses (26.1 per cent) and the involvement of the physically challenged in governance, 18 responses (5.4 per cent)

CHAPTER 5

Critical Issues to be Addressed by Civil Society

5.0 Introduction

The civil society is termed as a “third sector,” distinct from the government and business. In this view, civil society refers essentially to the so-called “intermediary institutions” such as professional associations, cooperatives, labour unions, citizen advocacy organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community based organisations (CBOs), research institutes, religious groups and political parties that give voice to various sectors of society to enrich public participation in democracies.

Civil society is one of the key actors in governance. Several civil society organisations have played important roles in the development of the nation since independence. In recent times these organisations have been involved in infrastructure development, skills training and public education, among others, to complement the efforts of the government. Several civil organisations have also sprung up with the sole aim of enhancing and deepening democracy in Ghana.

A recurring problem faced by these civil organisations has been the determination of the felt need of the community they work in. Most of the time the ‘top-bottom’ approach is used to determine such needs which in some cases do not meet the expectation of the communities.

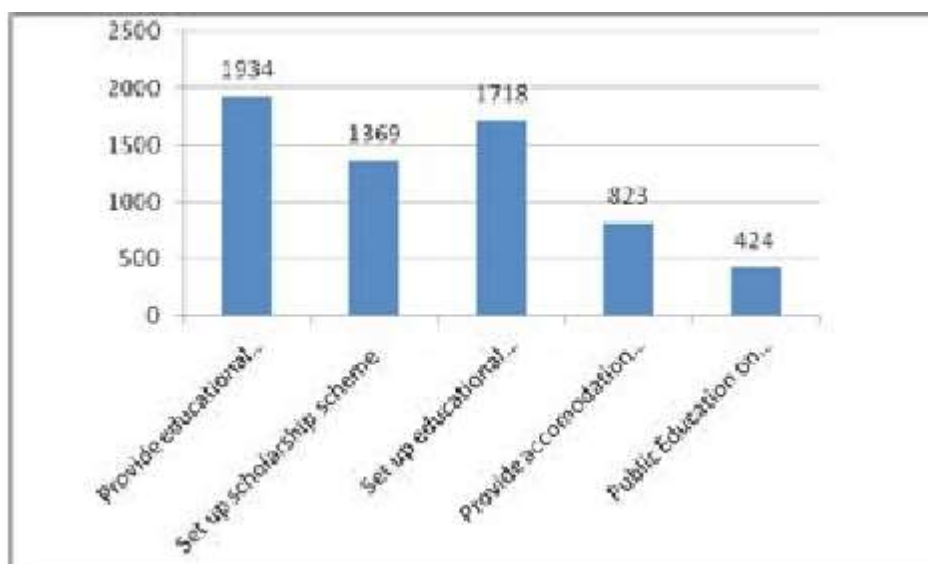
This survey captured peoples expectation of civil society on the issues provided for ranking to serve as an important resource for civil society and help them to address the felt need of respondents.

The section of the report captures issues raised by respondents for civil society to address in connection with the ten issues ranked. The issues collated were for the first to third rankings

5.1 Education

Expectation of civil society was high, evidenced by the high number of response (6,268) collated. The highest proportion of responses (1,934), representing 30.9 per cent were in favour of the provision of educational materials. (Chart 5.1 below)

Chart 5.1: Educational Issues-Civil Society



The expectation of civil society was to provide teaching and learning materials to educational institutions. Factors like inadequate learning materials and teaching aids, especially in the rural areas account for such a call.

Another 1,369 responses, representing 21.8 per cent were for civil society to set up educational institutions to beef up the numbers of the existing ones. The need to help people to pay for the cost of education was evident in the 1,369 responses (21.8 per cent) which were in favour of setting up scholarship schemes. The concern being expressed here is that affordability still plays a critical role in accessing education, especially at the higher level and efforts should be made to help people who are poor but brilliant.

Motivation of teachers also featured prominently in the responses, with a total figure of 823 responses (13.1 per cent). Specifically civil society was called on to provide accommodation for teachers, and to sponsor their training. The rest of the responses 424 (6.8 per cent) was for public education on the relevance of education.

5.2 Health

The need to fully equip our hospitals had the highest proportion of responses for issues on health.

Table 5.1: Health Issues –Civil Society

Issues on Health	Freq	Per cent
Provision of Equipment and Drugs	1716	31.4
Provision of Health Facilities	1186	21.7
Embark on Public Health Education	1118	20.5
Embark on Clean up Campaigns	947	17.3
Motivation of Health Personnel	373	6.8
Provision of Good Drinking Water	123	2.3
Total	5463	100

The 1,716 responses formed 31.4 per cent of the total of 5,463 given. (Table 5.1) Civil society is thus expected to help in the provision of a modern day state of the art equipment and drugs for our health institutions.

The other issue of major concern for civil society in connection with health was the provision of health facilities which had 1,186 responses (21.7 per cent). The expectation is that civil society will help the government to provide health posts, clinics and hospitals for the citizenry.

The need for society to have a serious look at the preventive sector of our health care was emphasised strongly by the 1,118 respondents (20.5 per cent) who called on civil society to embark on intensive public education on health related matters. It is believed that majority of diseases which affect people in the country like malaria, among others, could be averted through good personal hygiene and healthy lifestyles. Further to the above, 123 (2.3 per cent) responses were in favour of the provision of good drinking water to reduce the incidence of water borne diseases.

A total of 947 responses, forming 17.3 per cent were for civil society to embark on clean-up campaigns in communities they operate in. Once again the focus is on the preventive aspect of health care.

Civil society is expected to play a major role in the provision of and retention of health personnel in the country. Respondents through their 373 (6.8 per cent) responses called on civil society to motivate health personnel, advocate better conditions of service and educate health personnel to refrain from embarking on strikes. A total of 123 respondents were in favour of the provision of good drinking water

5.3 Agriculture

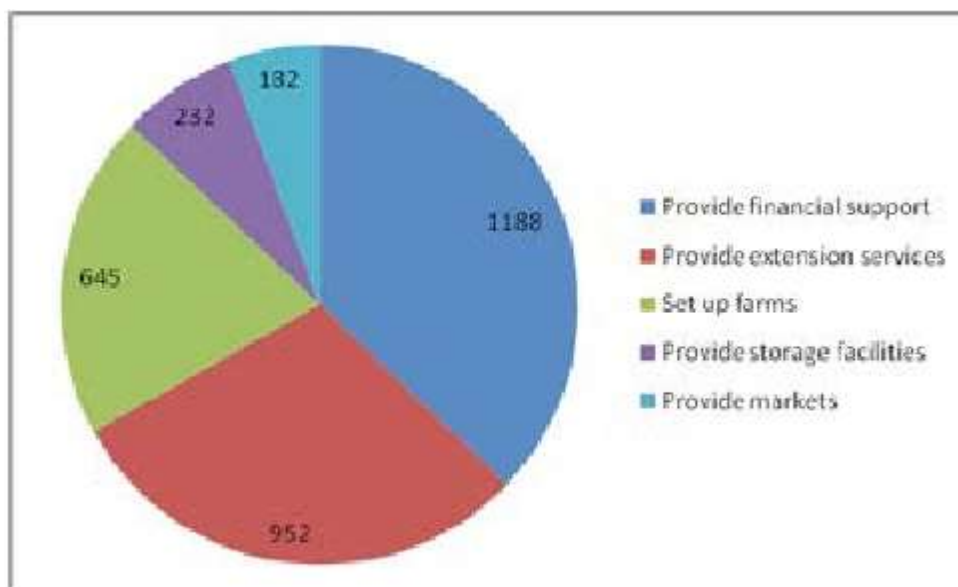
A total of 3,199 responses were collated for issues on agriculture. More than a third of these responses (1188), representing 37.1 per cent were a call on civil society to give financial support to farmers. Farmers need money to acquire lands, buy inputs and machinery to expand their farms, and respondents expected civil society to help in this direction.

A significant proportion of 952 respondents (29.8 per cent) were in favour of civil society providing extension service to farmers. Agricultural production can be enhanced if, among others, improved seedlings are planted at the right time using the right methodology and chemicals. The concern here is for civil society to complement the efforts of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) Extension Officers, both in numbers and output.

With the critical role that agriculture plays in the economy of the country the expectation would have been that the nation would have been able to feed itself. This expectation has not been met and there is a huge shortfall in food production. Respondents in seeking solutions to this shortfall said by the 645 responses (20.2 per cent) that civil society should set up farms for food production.

A major problem the agriculture sector faces is post-harvest losses. This problem arises as a result of lack of markets and storage facilities. A total of 414 responses, representing 13.3 per cent were in favour of efforts to tackle post harvest losses. Specifically 233 responses, representing (7.3 per cent) were in favour of the provision of storage facilities and 181 responses, representing (5.7 per cent) were in favour of the provision of markets. Details are provided in the charts below.

Chart 5.2: Respondents Issues on Agriculture for Civil Society to Address



5.4 Women and Children

Various issues were raised by respondents on women and children, the top most being public education on laws protecting women and financial empowerment.

The need for intensive public education on laws protecting women and children had 621 responses, forming 39.6 per cent. For respondents, adequate knowledge will enable women not only to fight for their right but inform them on what to do when they become victims.

Out of the total response of 1,571, 485 representing 30.9 per cent were in favour of financial empowerment. The concern being expressed is to give women money to set up business or expand already existing ones. Added to the financial need of women is the low level of employable skills. The lack of skills makes it difficult for women to be employed or set up their own business. To rectify this anomaly, respondents showed that by the 412 responses (26.2 per cent) that civil society should train women and children to acquire skills. For children, respondents wanted civil society to provide them with recreation centers. Such a call had 53 responses forming 3.4 per cent. Details are provided in table 5.2 below

Table 5.2: Women and Children Issues – Civil Society

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Public Education on Laws Protecting Women	621	39.6
Provide Financial Support to Women	485	30.9
Provide Skills Training for Women and Children	412	26.2
Provide Recreation Centers for Women	52	3.4
Total	1571	100

5.5 Economy

Financial support for business had the highest proportion of responses for issues dealing with the economy. 317 responses (27.9 per cent) out of the 1,137 total respondents called for support for businesses. With this support business will be able to acquire the necessary equipment and inputs in order to expand and contribute substantially to the growth of the economy.

Another noteworthy statistic was the concern raised on tax issues. Respondents (370 responses, representing 32.6 per cent) either wanted civil society to honour their tax obligation or educate its members to pay their taxes. For respondents, an increase in tax revenue will make resources available to the government to prosecute its development agenda.

Other responses for the economy were the establishment of businesses, 257 responses (22.6 per cent), patronage of made in Ghana goods, 173 responses (15.2 per cent) and advocate for reduction in prices of petroleum products, 20 responses (1.8 per cent). Details are shown in table 5.3

Table 5.3: Economy – Civil Society

Issues	Freq	Per cent
Fulfill Tax Obligations	370	32.6
Provide Financial Support for Businesses	317	27.9
Establish Businesses	257	22.6
Patronize Made in Ghana Goods	173	15.2
Advocate for Fuel Price Reduction	20	1.8
Total	1571	100

5.6 Corruption

The major concern expressed under corruption was for civil society to embark on public education. More than half (52 per cent) of the total responses (1,138) collated was a call on civil society to educate people on the effects of corruption on individuals and society as a whole. Support for anti-corruption activities (19.9 per cent), strong monitoring of government activities (19.8 per cent) and refraining from corrupt activities were the other issues raised.

5.7 National Security

Out of a total of 874 responses, 335 (38.3 per cent) were for intensified public education on security issues. For respondents, the concern here is not only to educate people to be security conscious but on how also to resolve conflicts and live harmoniously. More than a third of responses 319 (36.5 per cent) were for providing logistics for security personnel to adequately perform their duties. The perception is that a well equipped security force will be efficient in its duties. Respondents wanted a more direct participation in security matters by civil society by the call on them to help set up watchdog committees.

5.8 Housing

The three major issues raised in connection with housing were investment in housing (61.6 per cent), housing loans (19.5 per cent) and research into appropriate technology for housing (18.9 per cent). All these responses are geared towards increasing the housing stock in the country. It is interesting that

respondents are yearning for a housing technology which makes maximum use of local materials. It is perceived that this will reduce the cost of housing in the long run.

5.9 Social Welfare

Majority of responses (62.2 per cent) were for civil society to support orphanages. Respondents' expectation was for civil society to donate in cash and in kind to support the activities of orphanages. Civil society was also expected to embark on advocacy for the handicapped and marginalised in the society. A total of 104 responses (37.8 per cent) were for advocacy for the handicapped in society. Concerns for such respondents were to bring pressure to bear for the implementation of the disability law that has been passed by Parliament.

CHAPTER 6

Critical Issues for Individuals to Address

6.0 Introduction

The ultimate goal of democracy is to better the living standards of people. The individual is thus a stakeholder in governance since all government programmes are intended to ensure the welfare of people.

In democratic states, sovereignty resides in the citizens from whom the government derives all powers and authority as specified by law. In Ghana, the 1992 Constitution spells out the rights and responsibility of the individual citizen.

This survey did not only solicit for issues for government and civil society to address but also roles that individuals can play in development were examined. Respondents were asked what specific things an individual can do to ensure that challenges concerning the issues are tackled.

This section of the report present findings on issues raised for individuals to address for all issues ranked first to third.

6.1 Education

Majority of the collated responses was for a call on parents and guardians to assume greater responsibility for their children or ward's education. Out of a total of 6,827 responses, 2,039 (29.9 per cent) were for parents to prioritise their children's education and 1,802 (26.4 per cent) were for parents and guardians to send their children and wards to school. Respondents as such expected parents to cut down on their personal expenses like buying a new cloth for every funeral they attend and invest in the education of their wards and children. Parents were also to take full advantage of the FCUBE programmed being pursued by government and send their children to school.

For respondents, the role of parents in the education of their children does not end with sending them to school but they are to support in the provision of educational facilities and materials. Thusand, two hundred and seventy-two (1,272) responses (18.6 per cent) and fully participate in Parents Teachers Association (PTAs) activities 903 responses (13.2 per cent). Individuals are expected to pay levies and participate in communal labour aimed at giving educational institutions a facelift in their communities.

Other expectations of individuals were for well-to-do individuals to set up or contribute to scholarship schemes and educational funds (6.4 per cent), individual students should learn hard in school (3.1 per cent) and motivation of teachers (2.4 per cent).

6.2 Health

With respondents expressing concerns for major stakeholders in the health sector to take a major look at the preventive aspect of the health care system it was not surprising when 2,180 responses (38.5 per cent) out of a total of 5,666 was for individuals to observe personal hygiene and keep their environment clean. It is perceived that a clean person living in a clean environment will lead to reduction in diseases

like malaria and cholera which frequently attack people. Added to the above, a call was made for a healthy lifestyle through taking in balanced diet, 466 responses (8.2 per cent) and exercising regularly, 88 responses (1.6 per cent).

Individuals were also called upon to take advantage of the NHIS scheme. A total of 1,147 responses (20.2 per cent) were for individuals to register with the scheme and not abuse it. It is expected that through the scheme health care will be affordable to people.

Among problems the health sector in the country faces is self-medication and patients seeking medical care at a later stage of the disease. In rectifying such anomalies, 835 responses were in favour of individuals putting a stop to self-medication and consult the doctor early when they fall ill. Another 792 (14 per cent) responses were for individuals to contribute to the construction and maintenance of health facilities. This is expected to be done through payment of development levies and participation in communal labour.

Other responses on health were motivation of health personnel (1.2 per cent) and health personnel treating patients well (1.1 per cent).

6.3 Agriculture

The highest proportion of responses, 31.7 per cent or 1,014, were in favour of farmers working hard to increase production. The notion that the nation has not fully exploited its agriculture potential to be self sufficient in food production may have influenced the above call. In order to achieve such increases in food production, individuals were called on to adopt modern methods of farming through mechanisation, improved seedlings and frequent consultations of Agriculture Extension Officers and other experts. A total of 857 responses, representing 26.8 per cent were in favour of the call to modernise agriculture.

The financial implication of modernising agriculture was not lost on respondents who said through 504 responses (15.8 per cent) that individual farmers should form co-operatives to attract finance. Another note worthy statistic, 488 responses (15.3 per cent), was the call on all individuals to go into farming and engage in backyard gardening. The concern being expressed here is the ability for the individual to feed one self.

Other responses were for chiefs to release land for farming (7.9 per cent) and patronising of local goods (2.6 per cent) which will provide and enlarge markets for farmers.

6.4 Women and Children

The main demand for individuals was to show a greater interest in the affairs of women and children. Out of a total of 1,625 responses on issues concerning women and children 440 (27.1 per cent) were for this gender mainstreaming at all levels of the society. Any issue of concern for one out of every four respondents (25.6 per cent) was a stop to women and children abuse in all forms. For such respondents victims of such abuses should also be bold to report perpetrators. Responsible parenthood was also mentioned by respondents. A total of 358 responses, representing 22 per cent wanted parents to provide the needs of their children.

Another 188 responses (11.6 per cent) were for well-to-do individuals to help needy children by sponsoring their education or apprenticeship training. Other responses were for women to access loans and other micro-finance schemes (7.9 per cent) and individuals to advocate gender balance in political appointment (5.8 per cent).

6.5 Economy

Individuals were expected to play critical roles in the economy. The highest proportions of responses were for individuals to pay their taxes. A total of 455 responses, representing a third (33 per cent) were on the taxes. Factors such as many individuals, especially in the informal sector not paying their taxes as well as the need to increase government revenue necessitated such a call. Increased productivity through hard work made up 31.6 per cent of responses whereas the establishment of business ventures had 26.7 per cent. The establishment of ventures is to create employment whereas the increased productivity is to increase income which will contribute to economic growth.

The other issues of concern for individuals was the need to patronise made in Ghana goods (8.7 per cent) in order to provide market for our industries and improve their scale of production.

6.6 Youth Development

Individual contribution to skills training of the youth was the top most concern. Almost a third of responses 560 (31.6 per cent) were for artisans to help in the training of young people. Apart from artisans adopting people to train, respondents also wanted them to avail their workshop for internship and attachments for graduates from educational institutions. The need for the youth to have a strong moral background was demanded by respondents who called on individuals to educate the youth on moral issues. For the 445 responses (25.1 per cent) on moral issues an area of concern was mentorship and parents and opinion leaders living exemplary lives for young people to follow.

Individuals were also called upon to create employment avenues for the youth 390 responses (22 per cent) and young people were also expected to avail themselves for apprenticeship and join the NYEP scheme when there is the opportunity.

6.7 Corruption

More than half of responses (53.2 per cent) were for individuals to report corrupt officials they come into contact with. There is therefore a need to form strong partnership between individuals and stakeholders in the fight against corruption. Individuals are supposed to report culprits, and authorities are to enforce laws and prosecute offenders to serve as a deterrent.

In the fight against corruption, individuals were expected to refrain from corrupt activities such as giving and taking of bribes (40.5 per cent), and the usage of government funds for the intended purpose (6.3 per cent).

6.8 National Security

The concern with the highest proportion of responses, 471 (47.4 per cent) were for individuals to co-operate with security agencies. This co-operation is to be seen in areas such as volunteering information

and obeying orders during security operations. Respondents said they also expected individuals to be law abiding; (36.2 per cent). Not only are respondents calling on individuals to live in harmony with one another but the desire is also to see to early resolution of conflicts.

Other responses were for individuals to form watchdog communities in their localities (9.2 per cent) and provision of logistics to security services (7.2 per cent).

CHAPTER 7

Voting and Polls on Political Parties in the Forthcoming Elections

7.0 Introduction

The sovereignty of the nation, according to the 1992 constitution, resides in the people who ultimately exercise such power in the selection of people to govern them. According to article 42 of the constitution “Every citizen of Ghana of eighteen years of age and above and of sound mind has the right to vote and is entitled to be registered as a voter for the purposes of public elections and referenda”.

This ‘power’ invested in the individual will be exercised during the forthcoming general election in December. This section of the report attempts a forecast voter turnout for the elections and examines the voting pattern.

7.1 Willingness to Vote

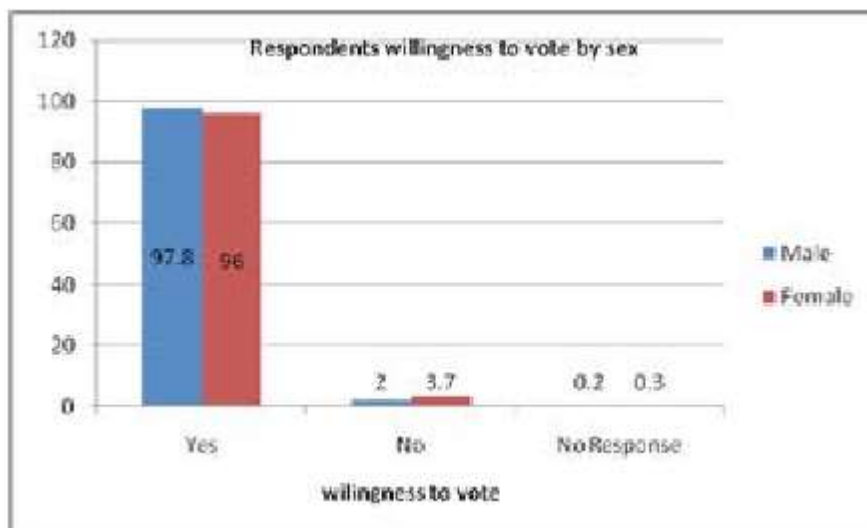
When respondents were asked the question **“Will you vote in the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections”** a whopping majority of 5,327 (96.9 per cent) said ‘Yes’. Only 154, representing 2.8 per cent said No whereas 15 (0.3 per cent) did not respond.

It is thus expected that the high voter turnout (over 80 per cent) recorded in the last general elections may be maintained or exceeded. Factors such as the joy of voting for the first time for respondents who have just turned 18 years and exercising ones civic responsibilities and power to elect leaders may have contributed to the situation. The above picture may also have arisen as a result of the continuous and intensive voter’s education that has been undertaken by the NCCE since its inception. A call to resource the commission to undertake its civic and public education activities is in the right direction.

For the few respondents who said they will not vote in the forthcoming elections, religion, unfulfilled promises of politicians, apathy and voter fatigue may be contributing factors.

In terms of sex 97.8 per cent of male respondents as compared to 96 per cent of females expressed willingness to vote in the forthcoming national elections. Details are shown in chart 7.1.

Chart 7.1: Respondents Willingness to Vote by Sex in Percentages



7.2 Willingness to Vote By Region

All the ten regions had a large majority of respondents saying they will vote in the forthcoming general election as depicted in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Willingness to Vote by Region

Willing to Vote	Ashanti	B/A	Central	Eastern	Gt. Accra	Northern	U. East	U. West	Volta	Western
Yes	96	98.4	95.4	96.1	95.1	99	97.1	96.7	98.4	97.5
No	3.8	1.4	3.7	3.4	4.9	0.6	2.6	2.5	1.4	2.5
No Response	0.2	0.2	0.9	0.5	0	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.2	0

The region with the highest proportion of respondents who said they will vote was Northern. It had 99 per cent against Greater Accra (95.1 per cent) which was the lowest among the regions. Greater Accra Region therefore had the highest proportion of respondents who said they would not vote. For such respondents the failure of politicians to find solutions to the negative effects of urbanisation, evident by the high unemployment rate, lack of social amenities and high crime rate have made them to lose hope in elections as the way to better their lot in life. Simply put they have not gained any benefits from voting in elections and as such do not see the need to continue.

7.3 Willingness to Vote By Age Groups

All age groups had majority expressing their willingness to vote during the forthcoming national elections. The age group, 41-50 had the highest proportion of respondents (98 per cent), saying they will vote whilst the age group 21-30 (96.1 per cent) was the lowest. It is interesting to note that even though members of the 41-50 age group may have been voting since the Third Republic they are still willing to vote. This may be an expression of hope in democracy and acceptance to change government through the ballot box. Details of age groups willingness to vote are shown in table 7.2 .

Table 7.2: Respondents Willingness to Vote by Age Group in Percentages

Age Group	Yes	No	No Resp	Total
18-20	96.4	3.5	0.1	100
21-30	96.1	3.6	0.3	100
31-40	97.4	2.4	0.2	100
41-50	98	1.9	0.1	100
51-60	97	2.6	0.4	100
61+	96.7	2.8	0.5	100

7.4 Willingness to Vote By Educational Background

The average proportion of respondents (97.3 per cent) with no formal education who were willing to vote was higher than those with formal education who had 96.8 per cent. This is an interesting statistic which calls for further investigation since the general expectation is that the level of one's participation in governance increases with one's level of education. Maybe these educated people are just expressing their dissatisfaction with politicians by refusing to vote. The fact is further given credence by the 3.5 per cent of respondents with tertiary educational background, the highest among the various educational groups who said they will not vote. Table 7.3 gives details

Table 7.3: Respondents Willing to Vote by Educational Background

Educational Level	Yes (%)	No (%)	No. Resp.	Total
No Formal Educ.	97.4	2.2	0.4	100
No Formal Educ. but Reads/Write	97.1	2.9	0	100
Basic	96.9	2.8	0.3	100
Secondary	97.1	2.7	0.2	100
Tertiary	96.5	3.5	0	100
Other	95.5	4.5	0	100

7.5 Political Parties Poll

With a large majority of respondents expressing their willingness to vote in the forthcoming general election respondents were asked the question **“Which political party do you think will win the presidential election”**. Interesting results emerged with no political party having the 50 plus one per cent necessary to win the general election. The National Democratic Congress (NDC) slightly topped with 2,360 (42.9 per cent) followed by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) which had 2,341 (42.6 per cent). The Convention Peoples Party (CPP) had 345 (6.3 per cent), Peoples National Convention (PNC) had 60 (1.1 per cent) and other political parties had 39 (0.7 per cent)

A considerable number of respondent 351(6.4 per cent) were not able to indicate which party will win. For these respondents either the question was too political to merit an answer or they will not readily talk about the party they will vote for.

Even though the question was not directly on which political parties respondents will vote for during the elections their response surely gives an indication of their preferences.

The results indicates that respondents preference for the governing party NPP is decreasing compared to the last general election where they won, and this may not be all that surprising due to several factors. The period of the survey witnessed a hike in oil prices on the world market and increases in food prices. This may have brought hardship on respondents, resulting in their low rating of the government.

Nevertheless with no political party having a clear majority needed to win the election, a keener contest is anticipated with a possible second round of voting.

CHAPTER 8

Focus Group Discussions - Summary of Reports

8.0 Introduction

Six focus group discussions (FGDs) were also organised during the study to beef up the information gathered from the structured questions. The country was zoned into three sectors and two FGDs were held in every sector. One rural constituency and one urban in nature were chosen from the constituencies for the FGDs. The three sectors were the northern, middle and coastal. For the northern zone FGDs were done in Tamale and Savelugu constituencies. Subin and Bosomtwe constituencies were for the middle zone and the selected constituencies for the coastal zone were Abokobi and Tema West.

Willing participants were identified, selected and recruited for the nationwide study based upon their ability to represent broad categories of people in the community. These categories included religious, traditional leaders, women groups, youth groups and opinion leaders. In all six (6) – eight (8) respondents participated in each study.

Questions were developed and used to provide a framework for the discussion, but focus groups are designed to encourage knowledgeable participants to identify the salient issues for themselves. Therefore, while the questions were centered on the issues of concern to the Ghanaian voter, every member in every group wanted to also talk about governance and development in general.

8.1 Ranking of Issues

Groups were made to collectively rank ten issues namely women and children, education, health, housing, national security, youth development, corruption, social welfare, agriculture, and economy.

From the first to third rankings done by the group education topped with five (5) groups either choosing it first, second or third. It was followed by health with four groups choosing it in the first three rankings, agriculture and youth development came third with three groups. The other two issues which came up in the first three rankings of the group were corruption and national security where at one group chose it.

So the pattern of ranking of issues in the structured questionnaire where education, health and agriculture came top was maintained.

8.2 Specific Issues on Education for Key Stateholders to Address

8.2.1 Government

For most members of groups who chose education in their first to three rankings, emphasised the critical role that human resource played in an educational system. To such people Ghanaians can only enjoy good education at all levels if more teachers are trained and highly remunerated and motivated. Participants felt that motivation in terms of accommodation, means of transport and scholarships for teacher's wards will motivate them to accept posting to all parts of the country, particularly rural areas.

Educational infrastructure and teaching materials were also talked about by participants. Participants expected governments to provide more classrooms, laboratories and test books among others at all levels

of education in the country. The issue of establishment of more educational institutions and affordable school fees was also mentioned by respondents. Participants said their wards could only access higher educational if the fees are affordable.

8.2.2 Civil Society Organisations

Participants' main expectation of civil society organisations in terms of education was the provision of educational materials. Mention was made specifically of the provision of writing desks, textbooks, writing boards, sports equipment and technical tools. Another area that participants expected civil society to help in the educational sector was support for needy brilliant students. Civil society was expected to institute educational scholarship schemes.

8.2.3 Individuals

In groups that education was ranked either first to third every participant agreed that individuals have key roles to play in the education of the wards. According to respondents participants are to take full responsibility for their ward education and ensure that they go to school always, provide their daily needs and supervise their studies in the house. Participants also said individuals were to take keen interests in how their wards welfare in schools by visiting schools to interact with their teachers and also participate fully in Parent Teachers Association meetings. Parents were also urged to prioritise their wards education and spend money on it.

8.3 Specific Issues on Health for key Stakeholders to Address

8.3.1 Government

Two issues that kept recurring during discussions on health were the provision of health amenities and proper functioning of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). In groups that health was highly ranked participants agreed that for an effective health system to be in place, health facilities should be put up in every community. There was as such a call for more health posts, clinics and hospitals. The need for such facilities to be equipped with drugs, equipment and well motivated staff were raised in some communities.

The NHIS was also an issue for discussion on health. A high proportion of participants wanted the scheme to be networked in that with the NHIS card health care can be accessed in any part of the country. Issues were also raised on the premium paid for the NHIS in that whereas some respondents wanted it to be scrapped for the scheme to be free others wanted the premium to be reduced. Some participants also talked about the need to fast track the issuance of NHIS cards after registration in order for people to access health as early as possible.

8.3.2 Civil Society

Majority of participants in groups that highly rated health thought that civil society had a key role to play in supporting government in its preventive health care drive. To these participants, majority of the diseases affecting people such as malaria and cholera are environmentally related and could as such be prevented. The call was for CSOs to embark on intensive public health campaign and undertake clean-ups as well.

Civil society was also urged to continue their work in the area of provision of health facilities and drugs. They were also expected to motivate health personnel in the areas of accommodation, means of transport and scholarship for further education.

On NHIS, majority of participants said civil society should help the poor in society to pay their premium.

8.3.3 Individual

Almost all respondents who talked about roles individuals could play in terms of health care dwelt on preventive health care. To them an individual who lives in a clean environment and observe healthy lifestyles will be less prone to disease. Participants therefore stressed on the need for individuals to keep their environment clean at all times, observe personal hygiene and exercise regularly.

8.4 Specific Issues on Agriculture for Key Stakeholders to Address

8.4.1 Government

In groups that agriculture was highly rated, majority of participants talked passionately about the critical role agriculture has played in the development of the nation. Participants were quick to point out the high number of people employed in the agriculture sector and agriculture contribution to the Gross Domestic Product as their evidence. To such participants the only way the country can experience continuous economic growth is for government to focus on agriculture and develop.

On specific issue for the government, majority of respondents wanted the government to subsidise agriculture to encourage production and make the prices of agriculture products competitive on the world market. Participants also expected the government to mechanise agriculture in order to ensure large scale and all year long farming. Some respondents also stressed the need for the government to embark on irrigation schemes and provide storage facilities.

8.4.2 Civil Society

For civil societies, groups' expectations were in the areas of helping farmers with capital (loans) to acquire inputs to expand their activities. Specific mention was made of loans to purchase tractors, harvesters, chemicals and seedlings. Mention was also made of the provision of storage facilities and the buying of local agriculture products.

8.4.3 Individuals

Individuals involvement in agriculture was the recurring theme in all groups who ranked agriculture high. Specific mention was made of individuals expanding their farms, practicing backyard farming and the youth venturing into agriculture as an alternative source of employment.

8.5 Conclusion

The FGDs support the findings of the quantitative survey. Issues raised by respondents in the structured questionnaires resurfaced during the FGDs. It can as such be inferred that the issues are of real concern to Ghanaians and all stakeholders should play their role in getting them addressed.

CHAPTER 9

Field Experience of Research Assistants

9.0 Introduction

During the training of Research Assistants for the survey, among others, research assistants were tasked to write a report on the survey. The report, among others, was to provide information on the receptiveness or otherwise of the public to the survey. Taking cognisance of the fact that the questionnaire cannot touch on issues not related to the survey, research assistants were to incorporate in their report social, economic and political issues distantly (or remotely) related to the questionnaire but which nevertheless hold some relevance for civic education.

9.1 Response to the Survey

Generally, respondents were receptive to the exercise. One of the reasons that accounted for such a reception was the opportunity to make an input to the decision making by politicians concerning the needs of their communities.

It was noted that respondents (mostly illiterates) in certain remote areas did not understand some of the issues but upon careful explanation they were able to respond. There is therefore the need to intensify adult education in the rural areas.

There were some few eligible respondents who declined the interview. They either claimed that the outcome of the poll would not yield any fruitful results, owing to what they have experienced in the past with regards to such polls or it had political undertones.

Specifically on the question on which political party will win the 2008 general election, some of the respondents declined due to its political nature or they felt if their prediction did not come true they would be traced and victimised.

Those who did not respond at all to that question felt strongly that their vote and for that matter, which particular party would win the election should be a secret.

9.2 Noteworthy Issues

9.2.1 Politics/ General Election

The need for political parties to simplify their campaign messages to the understanding of the electorate, especially the illiterate, was a major concern.

Politicians were lambasted for their failure to honour promises they make to the people during election campaigns. Respondents therefore called on politicians to talk about how they will implement their ideas during the campaign.

Members of Parliament were also called upon to regularly visit their constituency so that they will be abreast with their needs.

Respondents condemned leaders of political parties as well as some of the electorate for giving and

receiving monies to influence the outcome of elections.

Most respondents made reference to the political unrest in certain African countries. They therefore appealed to political parties, the Electoral Commission, the electorate and other stakeholders to avoid any actions or inactions that may disturb the peace of the country.

Some respondents suggested that specific roles should be assigned to the different spectrum in society such as pastors, chiefs, opinion leaders and other stakeholders towards ensuring free, fair and peaceful elections.

9.2.2 Infrastructural Development

Most of the constituencies Research Assistants worked in lacked facilities like electricity, pipe borne water and good roads, among others.

The most affected communities are in the Northern, Upper West and Upper East Regions. The recent flood that hit these areas has made the situation worse, according to respondents. They therefore called for expedited work on collapsed bridges, eroded roads and other development structures.

Respondents in some areas also complained about the neglect of their towns in terms of infrastructural development.

9.2.3 High Cost of Living

Majority of respondents complained about the harsh economic situation in the country which has affected the cost of living. They lamented the high cost of food, transport fares, petroleum products, farm inputs etc and appealed to the government as a matter of urgency to put in place mitigation measures.

9.3 Challenges

The exercise was very successful, however, the scattered nature of the settlements in several communities made the use of the Kish Grid difficult. Poor road network and difficulty in accessing commercial vehicles in certain areas as in Sissala West for instance did not augur well for the exercise.

The intermittent rains also did not help as it impeded the movement of the interviewers. Some respondents were also not readily available as they had gone to their place of work and hence interviewers had to book an appointment and return later.

9.4 Suggestions/Recommendations

It was the general opinion among research assistants that the survey had been a useful exercise. The NCCE, they pointed out, should be financed to carry out another opinion poll before the general election. The Commission for its part, however, must make strenuous efforts to provide the necessary logistical support to research assistants for future surveys.

CHAPTER 10

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

This report on issues of concern to the voter was conducted in April 2008. The purpose of the study was to provide political parties with issues of concern to voters for them to address during the electioneering. Ultimately it is hoped that the survey would contribute in shifting the focus of electioneering from personalities to issues. Five thousand, four hundred and ninety-six potential voters were interviewed for the study. The report presents a number of issues that policy makers, politicians, civil society, and individuals are supposed to address in our political dispensation.

From the rankings of the ten (10) issues provided, education came first, followed by health and agriculture. Education had 77.4 per cent of respondents ranking it third or higher (first –third), health (65.7 per cent) and Agriculture (43.2 per cent).

The other issues were placed as follows in a combined first to third rankings; women and children (30.7 per cent), economy (22.8 per cent), youth development (18.3 per cent), national security (11.3 per cent), corruption (10.9 per cent) housing (10 per cent) and social welfare (7.5 per cent)

Education was the topmost issue of concern to the voter. All the ten regions, both sexes and age groups, had education as their first issue of concern. Specifically, respondents wanted the government to mainly focus on making education free, especially at the basic level. Maybe respondents by this statement are calling for the full implementation of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) which is guaranteed by the 1992 constitution. Other calls were the provision of educational institutions with better infrastructure and better remuneration and incentives for teachers.

Civil society was also called upon to help in the provision of educational materials; set up educational institutions and scholarship schemes.

Health was also highly rated by respondents during the survey. The major expectations of the government in the health sector were for provision of health facilities; streamlining and nationalising the National Health Insurance Scheme and the provision of adequately trained and highly motivated health personnel. For such respondents the key role that health personnel play in an efficient health system cannot be downplayed and all efforts should be made not only to train them but maintain them.

The need for society to have a serious look at the preventive sector of our health care was expressed prominently by respondents. Calls were therefore made on civil society to embark on intensive public education on health related matters and individuals were expected to observe personal hygiene and keep their environment clean.

Agriculture also featured prominently by placing third in the ratings. Apart from providing food for our daily survival, it plays a key role in the employment of citizens. Government was called upon to focus on subsidies. Almost one (1) out of every three (3) respondents saw subsidies as a necessity for the development of the agriculture sector. Financial support for farmers and the need to modernise agriculture by way of mechanisation were other issues raised. A noteworthy statistic is the perception that the youth have a role to play in agriculture and government should do all it can to encourage them

(3.1 per cent).

From the study it was evident that majority of respondents were willing to vote in the forthcoming elections. Only 3.1 per cent said they won't vote or were undecided. All the ten regions had a large majority of respondents (over 90 per cent), saying they will vote in the forthcoming general election. Exercising ones civic responsibilities and power to elect leaders may have contributed to the above situation. Continuous voter education that has been undertaken by NCCE since its inception may also have been a contributory factor.

From the survey, no political party had the 50 plus one per cent necessary to win the general elections. The topmost parties were the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP). A keener contest is therefore anticipated with a possible second round of voting.

10.2 Conclusion

Ghana's democracy has been steadily growing, evidenced by the four (4) successive elections held during the Fourth Republic. It has even witnessed a peaceful change of government from one party to the other. Challenges however exist in the development of political parties and their activities. Over the years electioneering, both inter and intra, have veered off the mainstream of issues into personality attacks. There is therefore the need to urge political parties and their functionaries to focus their message on issues. This survey as such hopes not only to enhance an issue-based campaign but it is only to provide specific issues for politicians and policy makers to address.

The NCCE is determined to make the findings of this survey public as part of its responsibility to enrich the campaign of political parties and empower the electorate to make informed decisions, particularly during the forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections.

Appendix

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE: OPINION POLL ON ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE GHANAIAN VOTER IN ELECTION 2008

PLEASE BE ASSURED THAT YOUR RESPONSES WILL BE TREATED WITH UTMOST CONFIDENTIALITY. CONSEQUENTLY, YOU NEED NOT PROVIDE YOUR NAME)

NAME OF INTERVIEWER.....

DATE OF INTERVIEW.....

PLACE OF INTERVIEW

CONSTITUNCY

REGION.....

DISTRICT.....

SECTION A

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. AGE
 - i. Below 21
 - ii. 21-30
 - iii. 31-40
 - iv. 41-50
 - v. 51-60
 - vi. Over 60

2. SEX
 - i. Male
 - ii. Female

3. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
 - i. No Formal Education
 - ii. No Formal Education (But Can Read and Write English and/or Vernacular)
 - iii. Basic (Primary, Middle, Jss Etc)
 - iv. Secondary (Sss, Training College, Vocational Etc)
 - v. Tertiary (Polytechnic/University, Etc)
 - vi. Any Other (Please Specify).....

4. OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND
 - i. Student
 - ii. Farmer/ Fisherman
 - iii. Teacher/Lecturer
 - iv. Civil/ Public Servant
 - v. Professional
 - vi. Trader/ Businessman
 - vii. Artisan (Specify)
 - viii. Unemployed
 - ix. Other (Specify)

5. MARITAL STATUS
 - i. Single
 - ii. Married
 - iii. Widowed
 - iv. Separated
 - v. Divorced
 - vi. Other (Specify)

6. RELIGION
 - i. Christian
 - ii. Moslem
 - iii. Traditionalist
 - iv. Any Other (Specify)

7. WILL YOU VOTE IN THE FORTH COMING PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS?
YES NO

- 8 WHICH OF THESE AREAS ARE OF IMPORTANCE AND CONCERN TO YOU AND SHOULD BE ADDRESSED BY POLITICAL PARTIES IN ELECTIONS 2008 (PLEASE RANK 1-10)
- i. Women And Children
 - ii. Education
 - iii. Health
 - iv. Housing
 - v. National Security
 - vi. Youth Development
 - vii. Corruption
 - viii Social Welfare
 - ix Agriculture
 - x Economy

SECTION B

- 9. Which specific critical issues do you want government to address concerning the issue ranked first 1st Ranked (Specify).....
- 10. Which specific critical issues do you want others (individuals, civil society) to address concerning the issue ranked first 1st ranked Specify)
- 11. Which specific critical issues do you want government to address concerning the issue ranked second. 2nd Ranked (Specify)
- 12. Which specific critical issues do you want others (individuals, civil society) concerning the issue ranked second. 2nd Ranked (Specify)
- 13. Which specific critical issues do you want government to address concerning the issue ranked third. 3rd Ranked (Specify).....
- 14. Which specific critical issues do you want others (individuals, civil society) concerning the issue ranked third. 3rd Ranked (Specify)
- 15. Which political party do you think will win the Presidential elections.

Roundtable Discussion on Opinion Poll on Issues of Concern to the Ghanaian Voter in Election 2008

Introduction

The *Opinion Poll on Issues of Concern to the Voter in Election 2008* was undertaken by the Research Department of the National Commission for Civic Education in April, 2008.

The main objective of the survey is to collate information on issues of concern to the Ghanaian voter. It also seeks to provide ;

- Political parties with issues that voters would like them to address;
- Policy makers and civil society groups with critical areas that Ghanaians want them to address concerning the issues raised.
- The Commission with adequate information that will help it undertake an effective civic/voter education towards the December general election.

The Conference was held at M-Plaza Hotel on Monday, August 18, 2008. Seventy two participants from Political Parties, Organisations, NGOs and the Media were present. The programme began at 10.05 a.m. with majority of respondents seated. The opening prayer was said by Mr. Benjamin Ato Afful. The MC, Mrs. Janet Sarney-Kumah called on Mrs. Jefferey Amoako to introduce the chairperson.

The Chairperson, Mrs Augustina Akumanyi (Deputy Chairperson-Programmes) warmly welcomed the participants to the meeting and introduced the Deputy Chairman (Finance and Administration), Mr. Baron Amofo, who had come to grace the occasion.

The Director of Research, Mrs Gertrude Zakariah-Ali, was then called on to present the report. She said the NCCE has the mandate to create civic awareness based on information. Hence the Commission approved for the department to undertake the research on an Opinion Poll on *Issues of Concern to the Voter in Election 2008* due to the success of a similar exercise in 2004. Mention was made of the mandate of the commission as enshrined in the Fourth Republican constitution. There is the need to improve Democratic Culture through Civic Education as Development goes hand in hand with democracy. Ghana's democracy should be consolidated through development by making informed choices as the basis for the Opinion Poll.

Objectives

The general objective of the exercise is to find out issues that are key to the Ghanaian voter in Election 2008.

The specific objectives are:

- To provide some content for the campaign of political parties.
- To provide critical areas for CSOs Advocacy and action.
- To inform NCCE's civic education towards the 2008 elections.

Methodology

The methodology for the exercise was rigorously formulated.

- The poll was a Nationwide Sample Survey.
- A total of 5,496 questionnaires were administered.
- The Primary Sampling Unit was the Enumeration Areas of the Ghana Statistical Service.
- The Enumeration Areas were the Electoral Areas of all the Constituencies Stratified under Rural and Urban with 4 questionnaires administered in each Constituency.
- The Household Kish Grid and the Respondent Selection Grid were used.
- A one-day training exercise was conducted by Research Department's Staff at the Head Office for the Research Assistants at the various Regional Capitals.
- The spoken language of the respondent was used in the administration of the questionnaire.
- Coding and Entry was done at the Head Office using the Statistical Package For Social Sciences(SPSS 16)

Questionnaire Administered and Response Rate from Regions

Region	No. of Constituencies	No. of Sampled Questionnaires	No. of Questionnaire Administered	Percentage Rate
Ashanti	39	936	936	100
Brong Ahafo	24	576	576	100
Central	19	456	456	100
Eastern	28	672	672	100
Greater Accra	27	648	648	100
Northern	26	624	624	100
Upper East	13	312	312	100
Upper West	10	240	240	100
Volta	22	528	504	95.5
Western	22	528	528	100
Total	230	5520	5496	99.6

Educational Background of Respondents

Educational Background	Frequency	Percentage
No Formal Education	1103	20.1
No Formal Education but can read/write	241	4.4
Basic	1965	35.8
Secondary	1579	28.7
Tertiary	518	9.4
Other	44	0.8
No Response	46	0.8
TOTAL	5496	100

Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	3256	59.2
Single	1691	30.8
Widowed	233	4.2
Divorced	166	3.0
Separated	107	2.0
No response	43	0.8
TOTAL	5496	100

Willingness to Vote By Region

Region	Yes	No	No Response
Ashanti	96	3.8	0.2
Brong Ahafo	98.4	1.4	0.2
Central	95.4	3.7	0.9
Eastern	96.1	3.4	0.5
Greater Accra	95.1	4.9	0
Northern	99	0.6	0.4
Upper East	97.1	2.6	0.3
Upper West	96.7	2.5	0.8
Volta	98.4	1.4	0.2
Western	97.5	2.5	0

- Interestingly, the Northern Region had the highest ranking of people willing to vote whereas the Greater Accra Region recorded the lowest.
- More than 95 per cent from each region said they would vote, a higher voter turnout is hence expected in the 2008 elections.

Respondents Willingness to Vote by Age Group

Age Group	Yes	No	No Response	Total
18-20	96.4	3.5	0.1	100
21-30	96.1	3.6	0.3	100
31-40	97.4	2.4	0.2	100
41-50	98	1.9	0.1	100
51-60	97	2.6	0.4	100
61+	96.7	2.8	0.5	100

Respondents Willingness to Vote by Educational Background

Educational Level	Yes	No	No Response	Total
No Formal Education	97.4	2.2	0.4	100
No Formal Education but can read/write	97.1	2.9	0	100
Basic	96.9	2.8	0.3	100
Secondary	97.1	2.7	0.2	100
Tertiary	96.5	3.5	0	100
Other	95.5	4.5	0	100

- A higher proportion of those with No Formal Education are willing to vote as compared to those with formal education.

Respondents Ranking of the Ten Issues in Percentages

Issues	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Education	37.2	23.3	16.9	10	5.1	3	1.5	0.9	0.7	0.6
Health	14.2	30.6	21.9	15	8	4.4	2.3	1.3	0.8	0.5
Agriculture	11.8	11.2	20.2	13	11.4	10.8	8.2	5.8	4.9	2.2
Women and Children	8.2	6.5	7.7	13	13.5	12.6	10.4	10.1	9	8.4
Economy	7.8	7	6.9	9	9.1	10.8	11.8	13.8	12.8	11.1
Youth Development	7.2	8	9.1	10.3	13.8	13.4	13.6	9.2	8.7	5.4
Corruption	5.1	4.2	5.1	7	9.8	10.4	12.3	13	13.3	20.3
National Security	3.8	3.6	4.7	7.3	10.7	11.1	12.7	14.6	15.8	15.7
Housing	2.7	3.6	5.1	11.4	12.3	12.7	12.6	13	13.2	15.2
Social Welfare	2	2	2.4	4	6.3	10.8	14.6	18.3	20.8	20.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Respondents First Ranking of Issues by Region in Percentages

Issues	Ash.	B/A	Cent	East.	Gt. Accra	North	U.East	U. West	Volta	West
Education	40.8	43.6	34.6	33.8	36.4	30.8	39.5	39.6	34	40.5
Health	12.7	12.7	9.2	10.3	15.4	20.1	15.2	18.5	11.9	18
Agriculture	5.4	11.6	11.4	13.8	9.3	15.7	18.6	18.1	10.1	10
Women and Children	8	7.6	9	9.4	6.5	8.3	9	7.5	7.3	8.7
Economy	10.7	4.3	10.3	6.5	11	5.3	1	1.7	10.9	6.8
Youth Development	6.2	6.4	8.6	12.2	6.6	3.8	3.5	6	8.5	8.9
Corruption	5.4	3.1	9.9	4.2	6.6	2.2	4.2	4.2	8.5	2.7
National Security	2.1	4.3	2.9	3.6	3.5	9.9	1.9	1.7	4.4	2.1
Housing	3.8	4.2	2.6	1.3	2.9	2.1	4.2	1	2.2	1.7
Social Welfare	1.9	2.2	1.5	2.9	1.8	1.8	2.9	1.7	2.2	0.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

First Ranking of Issues by Age in Percentages

ISSUES	18-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+
Education	47.4	39.3	33.9	34.2	37.7	33.2
Health	11.7	12.7	15.2	15.3	14.6	15.9
Agriculture	8	10.4	10.3	13.7	15.7	16.1
Women and Children	7.5	8.1	9.6	7	7.7	8.4
Economy	5.6	6.8	10.2	9.6	5.3	7.2
Youth Development	9.7	10.1	6	5.6	4.3	5.4
Corruption	3.5	4.6	5.7	6.6	5	3.3
National Security	3.8	3.1	5	3.9	3.4	3.3
Housing	1.3	3	2.3	2.5	3.4	4
Social Welfare	1.5	1.9	1.8	1.6	2.9	3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

First Ranking of Issues by Educational Background in Percentages

ISSUES	No Form. Edu.	No For. Educ 2	Basic	Secondary	Tertiary	Any Other
Education	28.5	31.1	36	45.7	40.2	36.5
Health	17.3	14.5	14.4	12.2	11.6	15.9
Agriculture	20	17.8	10.9	7.9	7.1	9.1
Women and Children	10.8	11.6	8.5	6.5	4.8	4.5
Economy	6.6	7.9	8.3	6.8	11.6	6.8
Youth Development	4.6	4.1	9.6	7.1	6	9.1
Corruption	2.2	4.6	4.1	7	9.5	4.5
National Security	5.1	2.9	3.3	3.1	5.3	6.8
Housing	2.8	4.6	2.6	2.3	2.2	4.5
Social Welfare	2.3	2.9	2.3	1.4	1.7	2.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

Political Parties Poll

Party	Percentage
NDC	42.9
NPP	42.6
CPP	6.3
PNC	1.1
OTHERS	0.7
NO RESPONSE	6.4

- No Political Party had the required 50%+1 votes and hence a keener contest is anticipated.

Presentation by Dr. Esther Ofei-Aboagye, Discussant

Introduction

The Fourth Republican Constitution makes provision in Chapter Nineteen for a National Commission for Civic Education. The Commission's functions are:

- To create and sustain within the society the awareness of the principles and objectives of the Constitution.
- To educate and encourage the public to defend this Constitution at all times against abuse and violation.
- To formulate for the consideration of government from time to time, programmes at the national, regional and district levels aimed at realizing the objectives of this Constitution.
- To formulate, implement and oversee programmes intended to inculcate in the citizens of Ghana awareness of their civic responsibilities and an appreciation of their rights and obligations as free people..

These functions were further elaborated in the Act of Parliament 452. Given these functions, the conduct of opinion polls on issues provided for in the Constitution and for national development is a critical starting point for creating awareness and inculcating in Ghanaians awareness of their responsibilities, rights and obligations.

The study under review *Opinion Poll on Issues of Concern to the Ghanaian Voter in Election 2008* was conducted in April 2008. Questionnaires were administered to 5,496 respondents. 245 research assistants were involved in the exercise under the supervision of regional supervisors and research and field staff of the NCCE.

The purpose of the study was to provide political parties with a list of issues of concern to the voter as well as voters' expectations of civil society and individuals during and after the elections. The survey sought to provide

- Political parties with issues that voters would like them to address.
- Political makers and civil society groups with critical areas Ghanaians would want them to address.
- The Commission with adequate information to undertake effective civic/voter education towards the December, 2008 general elections.

The resulting 65-page study has been presented in Nine Chapters as follows:

The first chapter provides the setting of the study providing a background, the understanding of the problem and its objectives. It sets out the methodology, the survey instruments, sampling process and design and the ways in which the process was implemented – through questionnaire administration and focus group discussions. It sets out the methodological issues such as the training, field work and data analysis.

The first chapter provides the reader and other interested parties in NCCE's study with a basis to judge the exercise, representative-ness of the sample and therefore, the validity of its findings.

The second chapter – Socio-Economic Background of Respondents – provides us with considerable material from the over 5,496 respondents from whom data was collected. This chapter indicated that data was collected from as wide and as an extensive a sample as was practical.

The third chapter presents ten (10) issues of concern to the respondents, representing the priorities of voters as they ordered these, generally. They are further discussed taking into consideration, regions, age sex and educational background. These issues are education, health, agriculture, women and children, economy, youth development, corruption, national security, housing and social welfare.

This aspect of the study demonstrates the importance of having inputs from all sections of the population on matters of national concern, and the implications for the responsiveness of national planning, programming and policy making. It also reminds us that while every conceivable thing in development is important, it is important to prioritize, given the scarce resources.

Chapters four, five and six deals with the thematic issues of concern and what respondents (potential voters) would like government, civil society and individuals to do to address these. This underlies the idea of a collective responsibility for good governance and development.

Chapter Seven taps right into an increasing national weakness for instant gratification. It presents information about the willingness of respondents to vote in the forthcoming elections (thus predicting voter-turnout), generally; by region; by sex and by educational background. Finally it presents the poll of presidential candidates and political parties.

Chapter Eight ably sums up the findings and conclusions of the study.

Chapter Nine presented the valuable qualitative inputs for the conduct of future research from the 245 research assistants who went into the field. It was appropriate for the NCCE to attempt to harness their observations from the field and the related explanatory data that they must have distilled from the opportunity that ordinary people had to speak.

General Comments: In the context of the functions of the NCCE and the information the study generated, the study is a very important one. Given its scope and coverage and the number of respondents involved, it provides inputs of interest not only to political parties, which is its stated intention, but to national development planning, civil society advocacy and rights-based development interventions.

While the authors justified the work by one of the functions identified in its Act (Act 452) “to assess for the information of government, limitations to achievement of true democracy arising from existing inequalities between different sections of the population and make relevant recommendations” what was generated provide information for more than that purpose.

The study should be taken seriously. Five thousand, four hundred and ninety-six (5,496) respondents from all over the country reliably sampled provides interesting insights for our consideration.

The study also had other advantages. It involved two hundred and forty-five (245) research assistants who had the opportunity to administer the questionnaire. Given the dearth of capacity for field research especially on social issues, it provided an opportunity to make a contribution towards addressing it.

However, as in many such reports, there is still quite some editorial work to be done.

Also, given that the study was targeted primarily at political parties, the report comes rather late in the day. By now, the study’s findings should have been available to influence the manifestos of the parties. As at now, all serious parties should have articulated their agendas and indeed, the People’s National Convention (PNC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) have out-dooed their manifestos.

However, the content is valuable for a national development agenda/ planning framework (2008 to 2015) exercise that has been initiated by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC).

Again, another missing element is the lack of reference to the people’s expectations of parliamentarians. While the sections on the expectations of civil society and individuals were important, they seemed out of place in this particular report relating to the elections and hardly provided some new information. I acknowledge that the information they provided on civil society expectations and individuals as an additional validation (appears to reinforce service delivery and welfare roles for civil society, in this day of rights-based approaches).

Content Issues

Chapter One: The background of the study observes that free and fair elections are the principal mechanism for translating the consent of the people into governmental authority. At the recent Graphic Dialogue, an issue that came up was that elections observers are beginning to shy away from describing an election as free and fair, preferring to describe elections as credible and the results of the election reflecting the wishes of the electorate. To describe an election in its entirety as “free and fair” seems

to suggest that it took place under perfect conditions with perfect laws, administration, politicians and voters. Again, in the background statement, the idea that all the presidential candidates of major parties have held portfolios in government certainly does not give them the skills and abilities to handle the job of president, since that has a substantially different job description from any they have held.

In the problem statement, the study makes reference to importance of party manifestos; their content depicting the plan, philosophy and proposed methodology of the party and being the basis for their campaign messages. Therefore, this study presumably is to guide them in the formulation of what the people want and should have. As indicated earlier, this whole enterprise is coming out late. The parties have already started campaigning and in the absence of substance, personal attacks and recriminations are presented to the electorate.

Political party manifestos are often (a) late – given that we are in August; we shall be voting in December and most candidates are campaigning, already in the absence of a documented agenda (b) not available to the public – they are not widely and adequately disseminated; quite often, it is impossible to lay hands on these manifestos after the elections; (c) even where they exist, do not form the basis of the messages. It is very difficult to make an informed choice on a late or unavailable manifesto.

Perhaps, the NCCE could assist in facilitating the manifestos or invite the various parties to come and share what their priorities are as a counterpoint to the identified priorities of the potential voters.

The problem statement makes a very bold claim for the NCCE; that its 2004 poll on issues of concern apart from providing issues for candidates also shifted the focus from campaign on personalities to issues. I beg to question this claim. What evaluation took place, demonstrating credibly the impact of this survey? The campaign remained firmly focused on personalities. In-the post survey period, it would have been useful to have the 2004 study as a barometer for assessing the kinds of campaign messages (in the media etc) to establish whether the NCCE study had made a difference.

The study makes reference to the increasing internal democracy within political parties. One wonders the basis for this statement. If it is anecdotal or an educated guess, then NCCE must make the study of this part of a research agenda arising from this study (Of which there are several other potential studies).

The methodology, survey instruments, sample design and selection procedures point at a very valiant effort to achieve a credible report on such a sensitive subject. It was evident that considerable attention was paid to sampling to ensure a random selection and therefore, representative-ness.

The report refers to a two-pronged approach to data collection and assessment. It refers to the use of available secondary sources. In the version I have, there is no bibliography or references section indicating what was referred to. Apart from a few fleeting references to national statistical data, the text itself does not acknowledge any sources.

The report also refers to a structured questionnaire (which is included in the report version I have) but also a focus group discussion guide.

My version of the report did not have that FGD guide. In the entire country, only six FGDs were held. The report is remarkably silent about who were invited into these FGDs, the numbers, the characteristics of the participants and what they talked about.

It is also not clear whether the constituencies were randomly chosen; geographically, they were too close to effectively represent the sectors (for instance choosing Tamale and Savelugu to represent the entire northern sector; or Subin and Bosomtwe for the entire middle zone and so on).

It was also not sufficiently clear when in the sequence of events, these FGDs were conducted. If they had been conducted after the survey, it would have been helpful to use these discussions to explore some of the reasons underlying the choices respondents made. As of now, the explanations the report attempts are speculative.

If for resource reasons FGDs are to be limited, then future focus groups could be conducted on a regional basis and organized with respondents with some homogeneity – age, gender, educational attainment (since efforts were made to analyse the results on the basis of these) or some other interesting characteristic.

The use of households as a basis for selecting respondents was justified, given the geographical context of the exercise of one's franchise (presumably, we vote in places where we live with our households).

The report does not explain why there was a shortfall in questionnaire administration in Nkwanta North and South and what steps were taken to correct them. It also does not explain the discrepancy.

Indeed, the NCCE research department is to be congratulated for a virtual total recall of the administered questionnaires – 5,496. This is quite a rare occurrence. However, at some points, the reader is confused by the number of respondents; the indication of responses on education in the executive summary was 7,277 responses. Yet the number of questionnaires administered was about a thousand eight hundred less.

Other Methodological Issues: It would have been useful to know in what ways the 2008 research strategy and techniques vary from those used in 2004; what lessons had been learnt and incorporated from the 2004 experience?

Structurally, it would have been very interesting for some of us, if there had been a section comparing the results of the 2004 poll to the 2008 one; what had changed between the two periods; what could be as a result of actions taken during the four-year term of office; the extent to which issues raised in the 2004 poll and been borne out, addressed etc.

Chapter Two on Socio Economic Background of Respondents: How does the age and sex structure of respondents compare to the real profile of the voting population? Does it reflect the age and sex structure, adequately? It would be useful to know and compare. The statement that the “above age distribution confirms...” needs further support.

Again, it is difficult to be definitive because did the study methodology did not indicate that researchers had been instructed to find so many women or so many young people. How can we therefore be assured that the researchers spoke to whom they found and those who were willing to talk? They have spoken, but will they be voting?

Apart from age distribution, did the marital status, religious characteristics reflect national characteristics? Can the national profile of education be that three out of every four Ghanaians received formal education?

In Chapter Three, respondents prioritized ten areas: education, health, agriculture, women and children, economy, youth development, corruption, national security, housing and social welfare. Consistently, education was identified as the highest priority issue, generally and across regions. Health and agriculture came second and third. In our quest for food security, the priority accorded agriculture is to be expected.

I was however, disappointed that social welfare was so low down in the list of the priorities of Ghanaians. It would appear that awareness about issues of disability, ageing and vulnerability need to be more strenuously advocated so that Ghanaians understand it as being tied to issues of democracy and sustainable development.

It was re-assuring that issues of national security and corruption were further down the list of priorities of potential voters. Evidently, there were other things that voters needed addressed more urgently.

My worry is the extent of speculation in trying to explain the priorities that respondents identified. Eg. The world is now said to be a global village where knowledge through education is removing all barriers and linking people so ... it is therefore not surprising..." (page 14). The FGDs would have been very useful in trying to provide explanations.

The linkage of the reasons to support agriculture in the third place to the Millennium Challenge Account/ Authority is also debatable.

Again, fuller comparison of the rankings with the 2004 results would have been interesting. There is just a fleeting reference to education and health maintaining their 2004 rankings.

There have been efforts throughout the discussion of the rankings to explain these. However, there are several "may haves.." especially linking it to national news (eg corruption to the work of public accounts committee etc page 16; recent media reportage.. Page 20), which were certainly not substantiated in the report. All of the reasons for the rankings could be the subject for further, qualitative research in the future.

On page 17 in the last paragraph, last sentence of Section 3.1 there is a statement that is not clear: "Even though social welfare is mainly attended to in the informal sector in the country, respondents by such rating may be sending a signal that it is time for the national to have a comprehensive social welfare policy".

Regional ranking of issues provided food for thought (See Section 3.2). It provided information on how the parties could prioritize their messages for the different regions – to be tailored. However, is there any reason why the Central, Eastern and Upper East Regions not ranking health second? What is the basis for the strong case for youth development in the Eastern Region?

It may have been useful to do a situation analysis of these regions vis-a-vis the priority areas. What is the state of affairs and of service delivery in these regions? Would it help to explain the order of ranking issues in the various regions? There were efforts to make some fleeting references to national data eg 3.2.5 Greater Accra and the proportion of the region's active population engaged in agriculture; and the Northern Region linkage to some statistics to social services delivery and population characteristics. But this was certainly not the norm.

Sections 3.3 and 3.4 that analysed the prioritization by sex and age were very important. Though the study had been justified on the basis of that function of NCCE that involves identifying inequalities

that may limit participation and therefore true democracy, points out that these inequalities do exist. Yet the study DID not draw inequalities that could come out sufficiently. It merely hinted at different expectations and patterns here and there.

Section 3.3 is interesting for the nation given the ongoing efforts at gender mainstreaming and a basis for gender budgeting. The comparison between how men and women prioritized is instructive. Men and women rated education, health, youth and housing quite closely. The difference between them in relation to education was under 1 per cent difference, both scores rounding up to 37 per cent. Again, prioritization of youth development was similar, rounding up to 7 per cent.

However, the difference in health was about 1.3 per cent with women rating health higher. Finding that women rated health higher than men did, may indicate that from their perspective there is a lot of work to be done. NCCE can do a qualitative exploration here, given the rights indicated in the Constitution.

The gap in the prioritization of women's and children's issues was the most shocking. While it was to be expected that women would certainly consider it important, the gap between them and the men, 13.4 per cent of women rating it first as compared to 4.3 per cent of men suggests that very few men sees the concerns about women's empowerment as issues. It ranked eight in the ranking of issues for men and I agree with the NCCE that it provides prospects for public education. The qualitative study I would like the NCCE to conduct is why, after several years of activism and advocacy, so few men would prioritize women and children's issues?

There may be some need to check the consistency of some of the figures in this section.

In Chapter Four, respondents identified responsibilities for government all of the ten areas. However, there were very few surprises. The concern with extending the operations of the NHIS by about one in every five respondents points to a critical area of improvement in our health care.

The proposal for the restoration of agricultural subsidies, financial support and modernization of agricultural practices is to be expected. It would appear that some of the issues are things that governments have been called on to do for decades – such as the provision of micro-credit to farmers; subsidies; mechanization etc Perhaps, qualitatively we can explore further, why these interventions are still required? Were similar requests made in 2004? What has happened between then and now? How did prospective voters feel about these interventions?

On page 35 the call on government to establish youth centres to equip the youth is an indictment on the Youth Leadership Centres; the persisting absence of a widely-disseminated, comprehensive youth policy bedeviling successive governments is a critical gap that needs to be taken seriously.

On page 37 of my version, the call on government to maintain peace and stability is interesting. Two things that I wondered about (a) what did this mean beyond the other choices of better training, motivating and equipping of security personnel (b) the effects of such key interventions in conflict prevention and resolution such as mediation, arbitration supported by government agencies, development partners, NGOs and civil society.

This study suggests to me that our own understanding of social welfare as a nation is severely limited. This is attested to by the findings that we expect government action to focus on orphanages, social amenities and including the disabled in governance. It also accounts for the priority which we have

accorded social development, social protection. I was surprised to note that the only reference to ageing was about pensions. There is work to be done with what goes on within families, inimical cultural practices which is certainly social issues.

In Chapter Five where respondents identified the roles for civil society, it was interesting to note that Ghanaians wanted civil society to continue how it has done for decades: provision of educational materials, establishment of educational and health institutions, support schemes, provision of equipment, drugs, public education, motivation amongst others.

That our people perceive micro-credit for farmers as being more important than managing post-harvest losses through provision of storage facilities and marketing opportunities was interesting (Page 43). Perhaps, a qualitative study on this prioritization would be helpful.

What was surprising however was that responsibilities were not identified for civil society in youth development. Civil society is already doing a lot in this area and has roles to play in advocacy, creation of alternative employment and educational opportunities, and on the moral front that the NCCE report suggests it is the reason for key prioritization of the issue.

It is important that NCCE in its education and advocacy emphasizes the role of civil society as complementary to governments. Therefore, advocacy work of civil society to make relevant inputs into policy formulation, review and implementation should be something Ghanaians can conceptualize and demand of civil society.

Chapter Six also did not identify responsibilities for individuals in housing/shelter. It is not clear whether respondents did not think there were responsibilities or just the survey neglected to capture these; or the relevant results were not written up.

The high proportions of respondents indicating they were interested in voting indicated in **Chapter Seven** is reassuring. High voter turnout can be interpreted as the people's faith in this particular system of multi-party democracy. Therefore, this country may not yet be going the way of western countries where civic responsibility has taken a down turn in recent years; the cynicism has not yet set in.

This belies the position some people suggested during the recent registration exercise that the massive turn-out of the youth was due to the fact that they merely wanted means of identification.

However, did the researchers ascertain the reason why the 2.8 per cent of respondents who were eligible voters did not want to vote? The language relating to their unwillingness (pages 52 and 53) indicated "may be due to...".

There is an observation on page 52 that gives credit to the NCCE for the high voter turn out and the desire to exercise civic responsibilities. I quote "the above picture may also have arisen as a result of the continuous and intensive voters' education that has been undertaken by NCCE since its inception". Others would challenge this position by indicating that this attribution cannot be proved! They may even accuse the Commission of speculative self-congratulation! There is certainly scope for NCCE to make its presence felt, even with its resource challenges.

There may be an arising agenda for further investigation by the Commission, the suggestion that it may be people of higher education that appeared to be those less willing to vote.

As observed by the authors of the report, the responses of those interviewed relating to the winning party suggest a close or keen contest. I believe that this points to the vibrancy of our political system; it is not a fight to death but a maturing of the system with citizens taking a keen interest in decisions that affect them. That for me is a positive step that must be guarded and used wisely.

Chapter Nine: The inclusion of a chapter devoted to the experiences of the Research Assistants is commendable. It was a clear opportunity to (a) encourage the RAs to engage in observation to complement the questionnaires (b) to record nuances and other aspects of the business that could not be strait-jacketed into the structure of the questionnaire. The report fulfils the first of the assignments – receptiveness or otherwise of the public. However, it was a bit disappointing in the second assignment which was to incorporate social, economic and political issues of relevance for civic education.

Was this what provided the inputs for the efforts to explain the response patterns?

Some noteworthy points for this reviewer were:

- NCCE does have a lot of work to do to re-assure those who feel elections do not yield any fruitful results; or could be victimized for their political beliefs.
- It is note worthy the importance of simplifying campaign messages – not only for the illiterate (as the study suggests) but even for literates.
- It would have been interesting to know prospective voters’ views on some trends in our political culture such as the extensive monetization of the processes – beyond condemnation; how had it arisen? Why was it being sustained? What were they as individuals prepared to do to protect the integrity of our political process?
- Is there a role for NCCE to play with our members of parliament, given the messages by the parliamentarians?
- How can the NCCE work with other civil society organizations such as the faith leaders, traditional leaders and opinion leaders proposed by the electorate in promoting civic education and peaceful elections?

The comments of the research assistants on the challenges to the exercise were interesting. Scattered nature of settlements and poor road networks are facts of research life as are multiple appointments, rains and transport difficulties, an occupational hazard. The issue is how it will allow for better planning by NCCE for future research endeavours.

- What lessons are being learned from the 2008 experience for future studies.
- What alternative sampling tools can be used as a substitute for the Kish grid with households and communities.
- What import did this have exercise have on their research capacities? Where did the research assistants drawn from? (245 respondents) what did they learn about research? What trends emerged and patterns emerged for them?

The Next Steps: The survey was a very important undertaking. The numbers of people polled, the methods of sampling were quite reliable to form the basis for a serious discussion. However, the results are coming in rather late – particularly for the voter and advocates of governance who could have use these to quiz both presidential and parliamentary aspirants.

In view of NCCE’s constitutional provisions, the ideal would have been to provide the Commission with the basic resources to undertake continuous assessments throughout the four-year period: matching interventions, national plans and budgets and policies against the expectations of the voters. This study will greatly help in the call to assess politicians’ “track records”.

The findings would provide a continuous basis for dialogue on public policy and inputs for continuous civic education. It will also provide qualitative inputs to explain the poll. As at now, quite some sections of the report attempting to explain the reasons for the choices of respondents were speculative and could not be proven to be the case.

All of these would go some way in establishing NCCE as a credible research and advocacy organization. This in turn, would assist the Commission to attract interesting funding for its work, complementary to government's resources.

As indicated earlier, there are a lot of qualitative issues that have arisen that need to be investigated further, some of which the report itself noted. Others related issues can form part of a prospective follow-up research agenda:

- The development of internal democracy within political parties
- Exploring qualitatively, the explanations for the reasons for the differential ranking of the priority areas by different genders and age groups.
- The linkage between higher education and the desire to vote.
- The match between the 2004 survey and party manifestos.
- Tracking the match between the 2008 survey and party manifestos and message contents.
- Tracking message content against voting patterns. Were the parties and actors that said the “preferred things” of voters the ones who were voted for? Helping to establish whether voting was on issue basis.

However NCCE must work to protect the good work it has done. Its research department in spite of its resource limitations has produced some important research. Some key questions are

- Who knows about the work the Commission is doing in this regard?
- Is it cited? To what extent is it quoted?
- What research links has the Commission built?
- With whom does it have information exchange linkages?
- What are its modes of information dissemination? Who are the recipients of the Commission's research reports
- Apart from the Commission, who is referring to the 2004 study, citing it in public? Recalling it?
- Who used it for a mid-term assessment of the government currently in power?
- How does the Commission intend to use these findings beyond the 2008 general elections? Are there going to be assessments of manifestos and campaign messages? Are there going to be mid-term assessments of politicians on the fulfillment of this agenda? And so on.

Conclusion

While I congratulate the Commission on this valuable addition to Ghanaian knowledge and civic awareness and say “more grease to your elbows”, I also take the opportunity to encourage you to take action on the areas I have indicated above.

The discussant, Dr. Esther Ofei-Aboagye, commended the Research Department for a good work done and called on the NCCE to be proactive in its roles as enshrined in the Constitution by strengthening its research and advocacy activities.

The Commission was further called on to do a post election exercise to find out the extent to which focus shifted to an issues based campaign.

A proposal was also made to the commission to undertake a research work on the impact of the activities of parliamentarians on their constituents' wellbeing.

General Discussion

When the floor was opened for discussion on the issues raised so far, the leader of the DPP stated that he believes the indiscipline in the country and the several constitutional breaches are as a result of inactiveness of the NCCE.

The General Secretary of the NDC called on all stakeholders to be up and doing. He further postulated that the media has not done the nation any good by mis-informing the public on the intent of the exercise as it is not about the political party likely to win the elections but rather on Issues of concern to the Ghanaian voter. He said he could not agree more with the discussant on the roles of parliamentarians and said focus must also be on the dDecentralization system.

The need for the NCCE to be adequately resourced received much mention as it is seen that limited funding is the bane of the Commission.

The Chair in a remark stated that the previous government and the current have not done much to resource the Commission. She lauded the government for the provision of 40 pick ups for the 147 districts and said it was woefully inadequate and opined that there is more room for improvement.

The Deputy Chairman (Finance and Administration) called on all stakeholders to ascertain the possibility of using a percentage of the GETFUND or the Common Fund to finance the commission.

Group Discussions

After a short break, participants broke into three different groups with each group given a topic to on which they were to make a presentation within 30 minutes.

Each group nominated a chairperson and a secretary. The chairperson steered affairs at the sitting whilst The secretary presented the group's report.

Group 1 (Attaining Free and Fair Elections)

Three questions were posed to the group. These were:

- 1) What can be done to achieve higher voter turnout?
- 2) How to attain free and fair elections?
- 3) How to educate the voter on voting procedure to reduce conflict during election period?

Deliberations were sunbsequently based on the above questions.

Deliberations on Question 1 - What can be done to achieve higher voter turnout?

The group generally agreed that it is necessary for all hands to be on deck to ensure that higher voter turnout is registered. This could be achieved in the view of the group through the following:

- Electorate must have faith in the electoral process.
- Voters must have their free mind to vote.
- There should be no acts of violence.
- Political Parties must be encouraged to deepen internal democracy.
- People should believe that their vote should make a difference.

Deliberations on Question 2 - How to attain free and fair elections?

As to what could be done to achieve higher voter turnout, the group opined that;

- The constitutional provision that all eligible voters must be allowed to vote must strictly be adhered to.
- The Electoral Commission should ensure that there is a credible voters register.
- There must be equal access to state owned media by all political parties.
- There should be transparency and accuracy in the collation and declaration of results.
- There should be free movement to and from the polling stations.
- There must be a credible system of post election disputes.
- Party agents must be given more access to observe the process.
- The Voting process must be free from intimidation.

Deliberation on Question 3 - How to educate the voter on voting procedure to reduce conflict during election period?

The group called on all political parties to respect the NCCE, The Electoral Commission, The Media and the various Civil Society Organizations.

One thing which the group bemoaned is the collaboration between the National Commission For Civic Education and the Electoral Commission. In their view, it will serve the Nation a great deal of good if the two organizations work hand in hand much more better than they do at the moment. A case cited was the registration exercise.

Group 2 (Expectations From Government)

Issues Involved:

- 1) How to Motivate Teachers.
- 2) How to provide more Education, Infrastructure, Equipment and Materials.
- 3) How to ensure a Nationalized Health Insurance Scheme.
- 4) How to modernize and subsidize agriculture.
- 5) How to Empower Women.

How to Motivate Teachers

- The government should provide incentives such as accommodation, increment in allowances and salaries.
- Opportunities for continuous training should be provided-refresher courses, seminars and workshops.
- More learning and teaching materials should be provided.

How to provide more Education Infrastructure, Equipment and Materials

The group generally agreed that much resources would be needed to provide more educational infrastructure, equipment and materials.

How to ensure a Nationalized Health Insurance Scheme

- There should be more education on the NHIS.
- Stop playing politics with the NHIS.
- The premium should be reduced especially for those in the rural areas.

How to modernize and subsidize agriculture

- Farmers should be educated on the modern practices of Agriculture.
- The government should channel more resources to the sector.
- Give farmers incentives to go on a large scale.
- Farming should be made more attractive.

How to Empower Women

- Women should be encouraged to take up leadership positions.
- Affirmative action should be implemented.
- Women should educate themselves and build themselves up for challenges ahead.

Group 3 (Expectations From Civil Society)

Issues For Consideration;

1. How to ensure higher standards in the educational sector.
2. How can the community help improve on the school system.
3. How can NGOs help improve the Health System.
4. How can CSO/NGO help contribute to environmental cleanliness.
5. How CSOs can help Reduce Self Medication.
6. How can civil society help in improving agriculture.

The group defined the civil society as a group of like minded individuals with clear objectives of working or facilitating the interest of individuals, groups or communities.

To ensure higher standards in the educational sector, it is an acceptable norm that the totality of the individual which comprises physical, intellectual, psychological and moral wellbeing is imperative.

The list of Civil Societies includes but not limited to Churches, PTAs and NGOs

- Civil Society can support in attaining higher educational standards through awareness creation .
- They can also lobby government and educational authorities to allocate substantial budget for effective management of our educational institutions.
- Civil Societies can also make inputs through policy proposals to government on education.
- Civil Societies also can make inputs through policy proposals to government on education.
- Civil Society can help monitor developments in our schools and help provide the needed support where necessary and help in maintaining discipline in our schools.

On Health;

The group agreed that NGOs can help improve on the Health system through:

- Effective public education.
- Providing health facilities.
- Training of health personnel.

On what CSOs and NGOs can do to contribute to Environmental cleanliness, it came to light that:

- They can embark on effective Public Education.
- They may also undertake clean up campaigns.
- CSOs and NGOs may also provide litter bins at vantage points.

The group believes that to reduce self-medication, intensive awareness on its side effects of are necessary.

Civil Society can help improve agriculture through the provision of extension services.

Closing

For her closing remarks, the Chair thanked the discussant for an excellent work done and all the participants for their time and immense contribution towards the success of the programme.

Mrs. Ewuraesi Jeffery Amoako gave the vote of thanks with Mrs Doris Acheampong, the Greater Accra Regional Director of the NCCE, saying the closing prayer. The meeting ended at 1:35 p.m.