

**FOCUSED CASE STUDIES – LEARNING CASE
STUDY**

**AVOIDING THE “RESOURCE
CURSE” THROUGH MULTI-
STAKEHOLDER ACTION: *The Case of
Media Oversight in Ghana’s Oil Find.***

**Focused Case Study
Parliamentary Centre, Ghana**

December, 2009



*Parliamentary Centre
le Centre parlementaire*

1. Context

Period Fourth Quarter (October–December), 2009: Within First Six Months of Project

Location Accra, Ghana

Key characteristics of location & situation Multi-party democracy; developing/low income agrarian economy; an emerging oil producer with relatively weak legal and institutional framework for the good governance of the petroleum sector but high public expectations for economic turnaround.

2. The interventions & activities

The project has provided training support on oil and gas industry governance to the institution of Parliament of Ghana (October 20-22, 2009) to be equipped with the relevant knowledge for:

- a) legislating the first set of laws and regulations before oil production in October 2010; and
- b) exercising effective oversight of revenue management by the executive.

As a follow-up to the training, a presentation highlighting the requisite legal framework, fiscal regime and revenue management in the petroleum sector was made on the floor of Parliament on November 17, 2009.

In addition to the above, selected media representatives (reporters and editors) and CSOs have been trained to better engage Parliament, undertake issue-based reportage of the petroleum sector and help manage public expectations.

The training for the media and CSOs (November 24-27, 2009) came on the heels of the session for members of the parliamentary select committees for Mines & Energy, Finance, Public Accounts, Lands & Forestry and Local Government & Rural Development.

The topics covered over the three-day trainings for both MPs and media/CSOs were:

1. The National Context for Petroleum in Ghana
2. The Ghanaian Petroleum Sector and its Potential
3. Local Content and Local Participation in Petroleum Activities
4. State Participation in the Oil and Gas Sector
5. The Regulatory Function

6. Revenue Management

These topics were determined based on a baseline study of MPs, CSOs and media. The training for the MPs was facilitated by Dr. Keith Myers, an energy analyst and partner of UK based Richmond Energy Partners; with support from Dr. Thomas Akabzaa, head of the Department of Earth Science at the University of Ghana; and Professor Joe Amoako-Tuffour, a financial management expert with the Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning.

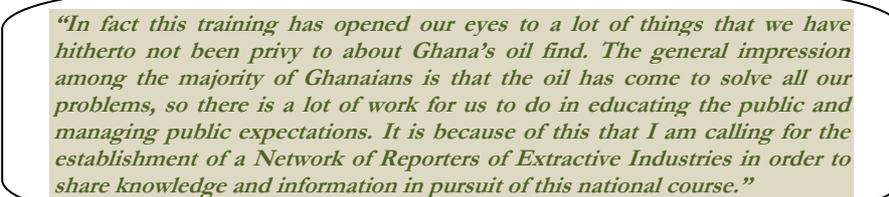
In addition to the sector-specific topics stated above, the media and CSOs were also taken through communication and advocacy strategy development processes by communications specialist Nana Akua Agyeman-Badu. The media trainees were selected from the Parliamentary Press Corps (print & electronic) and the CSO representatives were senior officers with responsibilities covering extractive industries governance.

These trainings were part of the planned activities towards the broad project objective to strengthen the capacity of Parliament to deliver on its institutional mandate for the oversight of the Executive as well as enhancing the watchdog role of the media and CSOs.

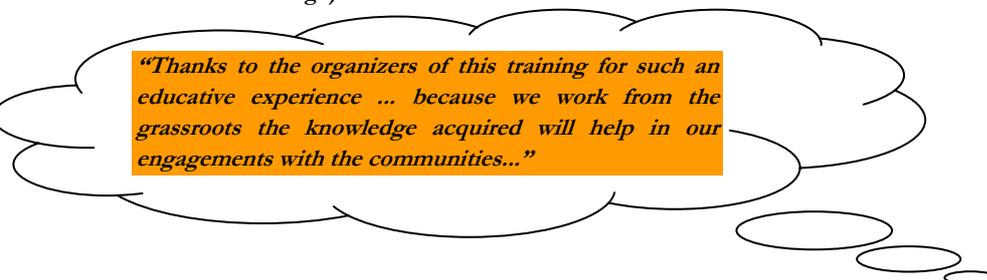
The activities implemented so far have yielded some positive results, particularly on the media front, as demonstrated in this case study.

3. Achievements

Both trainings for MPs and media/CSOs were well attended and enjoyed lively participation. The trainees attested to the relevance of the content. As some participants put it:

a.  *“In fact this training has opened our eyes to a lot of things that we have hitherto not been privy to about Ghana’s oil find. The general impression among the majority of Ghanaians is that the oil has come to solve all our problems, so there is a lot of work for us to do in educating the public and managing public expectations. It is because of this that I am calling for the establishment of a Network of Reporters of Extractive Industries in order to share knowledge and information in pursuit of this national course.”*

– Issah Shaibu, Chief Editor, Radio Ghana (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Ghana’s only electronic media house with national coverage).

b.  *“Thanks to the organizers of this training for such an educative experience ... because we work from the grassroots the knowledge acquired will help in our engagements with the communities...”*

– Daniel Owusu- Koranteng, Executive Director, WACAM
(a Ghanaian NGO that aims to aid communities that are adversely affected by gold mining in mobilizing around their concerns.)

Of the 17 participants who attended the media/CSO training, 10 were from the Parliamentary Press Corps, representing eight media houses. There were also four representatives from very active CSOs: the Centre for Democratic Governance (CDD); the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC); WACAM and the Ghana Integrity Initiative (which is the local chapter of Transparency International). Other participants included the Director of Public Affairs of the Parliament of Ghana and two representatives for the Regional Extractive Industries Knowledge Hub.

At the end of the media/CSO training, the participants identified key messages to make use of during follow-up actions to manage public expectations and ensure that Parliament exercises its functions effectively, especially in relation to oil and gas legislation and revenue management oversight.

The media participants committed to form a network of extractive industry reporters with a strong backing of the CSOs. They indicated their intention to issue a communiqué touching on the key issues of the emerging oil and gas sector based on the knowledge they had acquired.

The period after the training has witnessed a number of informative articles and other news coverage from the media houses that the trainees represent.

Below are examples of news items by some media trainees of the project.

1. **Use bi-partisan means to check oil revenue**

Story: Daniel Nkrumah

PARLIAMENT has been urged to adopt a bi-partisan approach in exercising oversight responsibility over the revenue that will accrue from the oil find in the country.

“Efforts should be made from the onset not to create divided positions on the political front regarding the use of revenue from the sector, since that has the potential of fuelling entrenched group interests that may work against the national agenda,” the Director of Africa Programmes of the Parliamentary Centre, Dr Rasheed Draman, cautioned in a speech read on his behalf by Mr Adams Fuseini at the opening of a three-day workshop on oil and gas governance at Sogakope in the Volta Region.

The three-day workshop, which was financed by the Parliamentary Centre, the German Technical Co-operation (GTZ) and Revenue Watch Institute, is being attended by members of the Finance and the Mines and Energy committees of Parliament.

Dr Draman stressed that bi-partisanship from the parlia-

... Parliament urged

gas sector in the country.

He said Parliament had a responsibility to promote and encourage accountable and transparent management of oil revenue and its equitable use in national development.

He emphasised the need for co-ordinated and participatory engagement by political leaders, on one hand, with local community members and opinions leaders in mining communities, on the other, to clarify any ambiguities such as national and local interests in the oil industry.

Dr Draman said Parliament also had a unique mandate, through public engagement, to make the resource beneficial and not a curse to the country’s development efforts.

“A deliberate public engagement on what is possible and not possible with the oil and gas find will enable Ghana to situate the oil find in proper context,” he added.

An oil and gas analyst based in the UK, Mr Keith Myers, underlined the country’s oil and



• Dr Joe Oteng Adjei – Energy Minister

By Daniel Nkrumah, Daily Graphic, 26/10/09, Page 16

2. **Ghana’s Oil Expectations too high, says expert**
• Worth only \$50 per person annually

By Ebenezer Asare, Financial Intelligence, 26/10/09, Front Page

3. Sound clip from an influential Accra-based radio station, Joy FM, containing sampled views of Ghanaians on their expectations from Ghana’s oil find as well as interviews with Dr. Steve Mantew of ISODEC and Dr. Keith Myers, reported by Araba Komson, a media participant at the training for the MPs. To listen, visit Joy FM’s website:

<http://www2.myjoyonline.com/audio/newsnite/> and select the December 15, 2009 sound clip or go directly to the story at:

http://www2.myjoyonline.com/audio/main/200912/asx/nnight_15_12_2009.ASX.

At the time of writing this report, the media group were in the process of finalizing a communiqué that will address several facets of the emerging petroleum sector.

4. Challenges

It can be observed from this case study that an immediate response to the call for action is coming from the media. Parliament has not yet been able to do much because at the time of the MP training, the petroleum bill for Ghana had not been brought before Parliament. MPs therefore could not take any concrete action but to wait until the bill was introduced.

Moreover, it was not possible to carry out action planning with the MPs as whatever would have been decided on could not bind the Parliament of Ghana as per their standing orders. The media and CSO participants, however, could act more independently.

Another challenge encountered during the organization of the training was getting editors of the selected media houses to attend. However, this was mitigated by the fact that most of the media participants were senior journalists who could equally influence editorial decision-making.

The project will have to continue to support the media in order to sustain the enthusiasm and initiative they have demonstrated thus far. The project should aim at concretizing the intended establishment of the Network of Reporters on Extractive Industries, training on the facets of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) as well as further sharpening their investigative and issue-based journalism skills for the coverage of parliamentary work in specific relation to the extractive industries.

5. Lessons Learned

The baseline study that preceded activities implementation allowed for better targeting of the project beneficiaries. The training contents were thus tailored to suit participants’ needs and served to bridge the capacity gaps identified.

A bipartisan approach ensured that both Parliament’s majority and minority sides lent their fullest support to the project. This was reflected in the high level of participation witnessed during the training for MPs.

With the media, the involvement of the leadership (i.e. the Dean) of the Parliamentary Press Corps helped to mobilise the right kind of participants for the training.

The meticulous selection of the trainers ensured that very knowledgeable and experienced technocrats facilitated the training workshops applying time-tested participatory approaches. This led to the positive signals reported in this case study.

Principles outlined above are worthy of replication in other projects, keeping particular emphasis on the multi-stakeholder approach to project implementation.

Based on the experience gathered from the project so far, future project activities could look beyond the select committees and explore the possibility of obtaining

the Speakers of Parliament involvement so that trainee MPs at workshops could undertake effective action planning that would be adopted by the House.