

NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN GHANA



DIPD

DANISH INSTITUTE FOR PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY

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Frontpage photo:

The New Patriotic Party (NPP) holds a rally in the Ashlebotwe region of Accra, Ghana.

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ABBREVIATIONS

NPP	-	New Patriotic Party
NDC	-	National Democratic Congress
CPP	-	Convention Peoples' Party
DBD	-	Danquah-Busia-Dombo
PNC	-	Peoples' National Convention
PPP	-	Progressive Peoples' Party
LPG	-	Liberal Peoples' Party
IPP	-	Independent Peoples' Party
MMDCEs	-	Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Chief Executives
CDD	-	Centre for Democratic Development
MLGRD	-	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
ChaLoG	-	Chamber of Local Governance
IDEG	-	Institute for Democratic Governance
PNDC	-	Provisional National Defence Council
UP	-	United Party
NHIS	-	National Health Insurance Scheme
TESCON	-	Tertiary Students Confederacy
TEIN	-	Tertiary Education Institution Network
NASARA	-	Nasara Clubs
KAS	-	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
SPMD	-	Smaller Parties and Multiparty Democracy
EC	-	Electoral Commission
NEC	-	National Executive Committee
MMDAs	-	Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies
IEA	-	Institute of Economic Affairs
NDP	-	National Democratic Party
NCCE	-	National Commission for Civic Education
DACF	-	District Assembly Common Fund
ISD	-	Information Services Department
DLE	-	District Level Elections
GJA	-	Ghana Journalists Association
GCPP	-	Great Consolidated Peoples' Party

Executive Summary

Ghana's democracy may have existed for only three decades, has been touted as a model for many African countries to emulate. Emanating from the era of democratic wave, Ghana's democratic advancement has moved through various stages, with much credit to political parties who have turned to be the main tenets of the democratic development. Political parties have played and continue to play essential roles in the sustenance of Ghana's democracy. One ramification of the democratic dispensation is the local government system, introduced to ensure that the governance process is closer to the citizenry.

Ghana's local government system has provided enormous development in the country. Over the years, there have been several reforms to ensure that it meets up with the world's best practices. As part of these reforms, there has been the advocacy by several groups including civil society organizations (CSOs) and political parties to make local governance partisan in nature. As such, most political parties included it to their manifestos in the lead up to the 2016 elections.

The Akufo-Addo government upon assuming power set out the processes to ensure that the local government structure is made partisan. In view of this, the President submitted to the House of Parliament, requesting of the amendment of Articles 55(3) and 243(1), which was to pave way for a referendum by the citizens. The proposal was met with a lot of opposition, however, the President went ahead with the processes.

The Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) as part of the sensitization processes set out to engage the political parties and identify their needs, as they prepare for the referendum and the reform that awaits. The needs assessment involved six political parties selected based on peculiar criteria. The parties included the New Patriotic Party (NPP), National Democratic Congress (NDC), Convention Peoples' Party (CPP), Peoples' National Congress (PNC), Progressive Peoples' Party (PPP), and the Liberal Party of Ghana (LPG).

The various parties expressed differing views, both in support for and against the reform that would have seen local government being partisan. The needs assessment done, unveiled the lack of preparedness of the parties to adopt to the new structure. Whiles the major parties thought of being permanent losers in their opponent's strongholds, the smaller parties envisioned the yet-to-be established reform, as an avenue to display what they can do, and in turn gain larger political control.

Dominating however from the needs of all the parties included the need to strengthen their local relations, lack of logistics, and financial constraints. Nevertheless, they were virtually ready to adjust to the new process should the referendum be passed. Unfortunately, the referendum was aborted because of the lack of consensus that existed among the parties.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Ghana has received much commendation for being a model of successful democracy in Africa. Scholarly assessments of the quality of democracy in Ghana have often referenced its flourishing electoral democracy. Of particular interests are the successful power alternations that have occurred at different junctures. Others have singled out the role played by the governance institutions such as the Electoral Commission, Parliament, the Judiciary and the Executive in promoting law, peace and order in the society. Recent reviews have pointed to the immense role the nascent political parties have played in sustaining the democratic momentum. At the beginning of democratic renewal in 1992 dozens of political parties emerged to position themselves to participate in the transition elections. Since then, the number has mushroomed to over 24. Interestingly, some of the parties that resurrected to participate in the new democratic order were those of yesteryears that went into habitation during the long hiatus of multiparty politics. They include, the New Patriotic Party - NPP (that draws ancestry from the Progress Party of Danquah/Busia/Dombo (DBD), Convention Peoples Party and People's National Convention (the inheritors of Kwame Nkrumah's party) and the National Democratic Congress – NDC (a conglomeration of Nkrumah and DBD followers, among others. But of these, only the NPP and NDC have proven their mettle in the democratic consolidation process – the three power alternations have taken place between these two dominant parties.

These political parties have been taunted as the bedrock of Ghana's multi-party democracy. Some have even argued that without the political parties, it would have been impossible to record the gains made in the democratic consolidation effort. They have served as the principal incubators for nurturing the citizens' democratic values to sustain the current democratic order; aggregated diverse interests and perspectives in the polity; provided the structure for popular participation and education of the broad masses on their civic duties and rights; formulated coherent policies and programmes around salient national issues albeit some of them framed around personalities; offered avenues for representation and alternatives (Norris 2005; Debrah 2016; Scarrow 2005). Yet, the ability of these political parties to build strong organizational capacity to perform their tasks largely depends on the availability of funds. Indeed, it has been noted that money is the oil that greases the wheels of the parties' machinery and the lifeblood that sustains their effective functioning. Thus, the Ghanaian parties need money to run their election campaigns, organize civic education, and pay the numerous staff they recruit to perform several election tasks, and manage the various offices across the country (NDI, 2005; Saafu 2007; Debrah 2016).

While the parties have organized to participate in the elections and recruited men and women into political offices, there is a growing concern among many democrats about their capacity to sustain the democratic consolidation agenda. The parties have been accused of political inactivity after every general election. It has been observed that their organizational infrastructure is weak and becomes weaker at the sub-national (constituency and sub-constituency) levels. It is only at the national level where the parties' presence could be felt. It may be the case that the electoral misfortunes of the smaller parties such as the CPP, PNC and PPP are about problems of the lack of organizational capacity (Debrah 2016). Yet, in August

2019, the Government of Ghana introduced a proposal to amend a constitutional entrenched provision that seeks to make local government elections partisan and another legislative alteration to promote the direct election of Metropolitan/ Municipal/ District Chief Executives (MMDCEs). While some Ghanaians have welcomed the amendment proposals to reform local government politics, at the same time, some academics and civil society groups have raised concerns about whether the political parties have the capacity to run successful local government elections to choose their community leaders (assembly members and MMDCEs)? Simply put, in an environment where political parties cease to exist (function) after general elections, there is little confidence in the parties' ability to participate in the local assemblies' politics – and integrate conflicting views and demands into coherent ideologies and manifestoes, provide voters with choices on a range of leaders and policy programmes; select and train local legislative candidates and political leaders; organize the business of government and play formal opposition role at the local level.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to assess the extent to which the Ghanaian political parties have the capacity to participate in the election of local leaders (district assembly members and MMDCEs) and sustain institutionalization of local democracy in the country. Only six political parties, namely, the NPP and NDC (two parties that have alternated power in the Fourth Republic), CPP and PNC (that have won, at least, a parliamentary seat), PPP and LPG (that are relatively new in the political process and have not won any parliamentary seat but obtained at least, one (1%) of the Presidential election results and maintain a presence in some of the constituencies).

1.2 The Methodology

This study deployed the qualitative tools to collect data from several respondents. Specifically, it relied on Focus Group Discussion and Interviews. The stratification method was used to obtain responses from interviewees. In other words, respondents were drawn from the national, regional and constituency offices of the political parties. The participants chosen for the one-on-one (face-to-face) in-depth interviews were the National Chairmen, General Secretaries and Party Administrators. These interviewees are the principal party officers who have had a long experience with party administration since democratic renewal in 1992 and were in the best position to provide useful information regarding the organization of the parties at all levels.

The Focus Group Discussion was based on the purposive method because the respondents/interviewees that participated in the interactions were the parties' executive officers at the national, regional and constituency offices, namely, the chairmen, secretaries, organizers, electoral officers, women organizers and youth organizers. These participants were also chosen because they represent specific interests and have a broad understanding of the workings of the parties at the different level of the structure. Their knowledge on the key managerial aspects of the parties' organizations and insights into their organizational requirements and needs were solicited to shape the researchers' perspectives on the capacity building deficits of the parties. Additional information was obtained from key opinion leaders (chiefs, civil society groups such as the Center for Democratic Development (CDD) and the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) in the constituencies who have deeper knowledge

of the activities of the political parties, including their organizational efficacy and challenges that have impeded their ability to mobilize the critical masses of the people for democratic participation. State actors such as the Electoral Commission, National Commission for Civic Education, as well as the media that have been connected to the political parties 'activities provided useful information for the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER 2

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND GEOGRAPHICAL STRONGHOLDS OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN GHANA

2.1 Regulatory Framework of the Political Parties

Ghana's 1992 Constitution guarantees general fundamental freedoms such as free speech and association. Also, Articles 162-163 guarantee the freedom and independence of the media. In particular, Article 163 provides equitable access of all groups including political parties to the media: 'all state-owned media shall afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and opinions'. The formation of political parties is based on the constitutional provisions on freedom of association, movement and political participation. This means that political parties in Ghana draw their strength from both the 1992 and other legislations. First, Ghana's 1992 Constitution has elaborate space for multiparty politics. The liberal Constitution guarantees the rights to form political parties. Article 55 (3) of the Constitution permits that 'every Ghanaian citizen of 18 years and above the right to join political parties of his/her choice:

a political party is free to participate in shaping the political will of the people, to disseminate information on political ideas, social and economic programmes of a national character and sponsor candidates for elections to any public office (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

Second, the right to form political parties is reinforced by the Political Parties Act, 2000 (Act 574). This legislation, which replaced the earlier Political Parties Law (PNDC Law 281) 1992 abolished the restrictions on the formation of political parties. The law promotes organization of political parties beyond parochial interests, i.e. parties must have a national character. For instance, Article 55 (7b) of Act 574 insisted that "... a political party shall have branches in all the regions of Ghana and be organised in not less than two-thirds of the districts in each region" (Republic of Ghana 2000). For instance, it stipulates that 'a political party shall not have as a founding member, a leader or a member of its executive, a person who is not qualified to be a member of Parliament or to hold any other public office" (8). Thus, party organization must be extensive to encapsulate the overwhelming elite groups in the country. The high standards set for parties are reflected in the democratic value of inclusiveness. To this end, members of the national executive committee are expected to be chosen from all the regions of Ghana, and membership of parties is not to be 'based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional divisions'. A salient feature of the legislative provision is the emphasis on internal party democratic ethos. In other words, the law mandates political parties to maintain a high level of

democracy in their internal affairs. Campaign financing is streamlined by the law. In Section 23 (1) of Act 574, ‘only a citizen of Ghana can make a contribution either in cash or kind to a political party. Also parties could draw funds from Ghanaian businesses. This means that firms, partnerships, or enterprises that have at least 75% of the capital owned by a citizen are allowed to support political parties. However, non-Ghanaian citizens are strictly disallowed to donate funds to Ghanaian political parties. As Section 24 of Act 574 indicates ‘a non-citizen shall not directly or indirectly make a contribution or donation or loan whether in cash or in kind to funds held by or for the benefit of a political party and no political party or person acting for or on behalf of a political party can accept contribution, donation or loan from a non-citizen’. Yet, the laws did not make any provision for public funding of political parties

While parties are allowed to participate in national elections, they are prohibited from local government elections. In Article 55(3), political parties are prevented from contesting ‘elections to District Assemblies or local government units’. (5). PNDC Law 281 also banned the use of names, symbols and mottos of previously existing parties but that was repealed by Act 574.

2.2 Geographical Strongholds of the Political Parties

Ghana is divided into 16 administrative regions and 275 electoral constituencies. The strengths of the parties in particular regions and constituencies are coterminous with their respective historical traditions and ethnic configurations even though this nomenclature is not cast in iron and bricks. Overall, only the NPP and NDC are spread across the 16 regions and the constituencies.

- The **National Democratic Congress (NDC)** until 2016 had **four** regional strongholds of the then 10 (Volta, Northern, Upper East & Upper West) where it won every presidential election and majority of the seats in the parliamentary elections. With the increase of the regions to 16, the NDC is potentially strong in eight: Bono East, Northern, Oti, Savannah, Upper East, Upper West, Volta and Western North.
- Also, the **New Patriotic Party (NPP)** until 2016 was formidable in two regions, namely Ashanti and Eastern: For instance, since 1992, it has won all presidential elections and majority of parliamentary seats in Ashanti, and in Eastern the party since 2000, it has captured the presidential elections and majority of the parliamentary seats. With the increase of the regions to 16, the NPP is a potential force in five (Ahafo, Ashanti, Bono, Eastern and Western) regions.
- Significantly, four of the previous 10 regions (Brong-Ahafo, Central, Greater Accra & Western) had been swing regions and had alternated support between NDC and NPP in every two elections. The creation of the six new regions is likely to affect the regional dynamics of the two dominant political parties.
- The **People’s National Convention (PNC)** has on a number of occasions, between 1992-2000, won a few parliamentary seats in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions. However, since 2004, its electoral fortunes have dwindled drastically – it has

neither won any parliamentary seats not obtained any significant voters in the presidential elections in the regions it used to be strong.

- Similarly, the **Convention People's Party (CPP)** has showed strength in Central and Western regions by winning a few parliamentary seats between 1992 and 2004.
- On the other hand, since its formation, the **Progressive People's Party (PPP)**, has not won any parliamentary seat. Its narrow focus reflects its dominance in a few constituencies in the Central and Volta Regions even though these areas cannot be regarded as its strongholds. Yet, what is interesting of this party is its ability to consistently maintain about a one percent valid votes in the presidential elections.
- Similarly, the **Liberal Party of Ghana (LPG)** is one of the parties struggling to make an impact on the electoral field. It lays claim to some constituencies in the Greater Accra Region yet, it has won any parliamentary seat and performed abysmally in the presidential elections.

CHAPTER 3

THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

3.1 Introduction

There are particular historical exigencies that catapulted the formation of the political parties. It is also true that certain historical contexts have shaped the degree of formidability of the political parties. For instance, the strengths of the parties have been largely influenced by the pre-independence and immediate post-independence political developments. Incumbency has always proven to be an advantage to the governing party to the extent that parties that have never been to power lag behind in capacity and efficacy. This section is devoted to an analysis of the six (6) political parties' history, function and policy principles as well as their organizational structure, internal processes, strategy of mobilization. Membership, legislative profile, capacity building, funding, communication, and electoral campaigns.

3.2 National Democratic Congress NDC

3.2.1 History, Function and Policy Principles

The NDC was founded in September 1992 to contest the 1992 transitional elections that ushered in Ghana's Fourth Republic in 1993. It was founded largely by the functionaries of the then ruling quasi-military junta, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) to guarantee continuity in the rule of its chairman, J. J. Rawlings. As Rawlings' 11 years reign drew to a close because of the changes in the world political affairs – fall of the Berlin Wall, which brought pressure to bear on authoritarian regimes such as the PNDC, Rawlings and his gang of military rulers looked for an opportunity to enter mainstream civilian politics. By acquiescing to relinquish military rule in favour of multiparty politics, Rawlings settled for the NDC to indicate that he was a repented democrat who could transform his military PNDC into a civilian political party. Rawlings, who had managed to bring disgruntled politicians from past regimes into his PNDC did not find it difficult to retain their loyalty after converting it to a new political party, the NDC.

The complex ideological mix in Rawlings' NDC led the party to denounce extreme socialism and capitalism by choosing the social democracy philosophy. Its core values are equality and egalitarianism. In other words, the NDC believes in the equal treatment of all persons irrespective of their social, cultural, educational, political, religious and economic relations in a multi-party environment (NDC Constitution 1992, Article 5). While affirm market economy, it promotes special policy interventions to mitigate the effects of capitalist-oriented markets on the vulnerable. Hence there is a heavy concentration of the ideals of redistribution, which takes money from the rich to the poor.

As a party, the NDC has an intriguing electoral history in the fourth republic. It has won power four times during the period: for instance, it won three presidential elections in a single round: 1992 (58.3%), 1996 (57.4%) and 2012 (50.7%); and in 2008 in a run-off with 50.2% after

47.8% in the first round. At the parliamentary level the party has won a majority of seats namely: 1992 (189 of 200), 1996 (133 of 200), 2008 (116 of 230) and 2012 (148 of 275), and also played a minority role thrice in 2000 (92 of 200), 2004 (94 of 230) and 2016 (106 of 275).

3.2.2 Party Organizational Structure

The NDC has a written constitution promulgated at its first delegates' conference at Sunyani in 1992. Since then the constitution has gone through several amendments. It has a well-developed organizational structure which extends from the national to the branch level. The party's organized is structured along hierarchical lines. At the apex is the National office followed by the Regional, Constituency and Branch offices. Each of the offices is run by Executive Officers. The National Chairman is the overseer of the party structure. But the operational and day-to-day administration is vested in a General Secretary (with side assistance from two deputies). With the exception of the General Secretary who enjoys full-time appointment, the other officers run on part-time basis and are remunerated on allowances. The National officers operate from the party's headquarters – a magnificent building constructed during the tenure of President Evans Atta-Mills. The headquarters boasts of some modern office equipment but the lower offices are under-resourced. The structures of the parties are well-integrated. Some Branch Officers are found on the Constituency Executive while representatives of the constituency officers are made members of the regional executive who also have a place on the national executive council. This arrangement has enhanced unity of purpose and worked to avoid the emergence of balkanization.

3.2.3 Internal Party Processes

The party upholds democratic principles in the selection of its executives and candidates for national elections. At every level of party organization, the executives are duly elected based on guidelines agreed upon by its rank-and-file. For instance, leaders are elected from the polling station, constituency, regional and national levels. The elected leaders from the polling stations become the Electoral College to elect the constituency leaders and representatives of the constituency officers choose the regional officers. However, a larger electoral college which includes non-executive members of the party now select the national leaders and presidential candidate. This process is carried up to the election of national executives. The party has 25 elective national executive positions, namely the Chairman, Three (3) Vice Chairpersons, General Secretary, Organizer, Communications Director (formerly Propaganda Secretary), National Zongo Caucus Coordinator, Five (5) National Executive Members, Youth Organizer, and Women's Organizer. The deputy national executive positions: Two (2) Deputy Secretaries, Two (2) Deputy Organizers, Two (2) Deputy Communications Officers, Two (2) Deputy Youth Organizers and Deputy Women's Organizers respectively. Of the 25 national position holders the gender ratio is 19 males: 6 females.

The party used to be personified by ex-President J. J. Rawlings. Article 6 of the NDC Constitution names him as the founder on whose ideas and leadership the party is formed. In

recent times however, his influence has gradually diminished since Presidents Atta-Mills and John Dramani Mahama ascended to the presidency.

The party organizes national conferences every four years to elect party executives and extraordinary conferences when the need arises. The conferences are organized from the constituency to national levels. These conferences are only limited to party members even though other parties are often invited to give solidarity messages. At each level only delegates electoral colleges to the executives.

The party is regulated by a codified Code of Conduct and Disciplinary. Members who flout the codes are arraigned before a disciplinary committee. Sanctions ranging from reprimand, suspension and dismissal may be applied depending on the nature of the offence.

In the area of policy development, the party provides a consultative platform involving various stakeholders such as chiefs and opinion leaders at the constituency level to provide input for the manifesto. However, at the national level, until recently, the process was not consultative and did not capture much of local perspective. Changes introduced in its national delegates composition has widened to members thereby ensuring that local units participate in the national decision-making process.

3.2.4 Membership and Funding

The NDC could not explicitly give the total number of the party members. Membership is defined as anyone who votes for the party in general elections. Only records of executive members and party delegates are kept at the party's national, regional and constituency offices. Thus, the party measures its expansion and growth based on its performance in general election. Once there is a percentage increase in the valid votes cast in favour of the party's presidential candidate, the executives are quick to conclude that the party has increased in membership. Yet, there are formal membership registration processes. Article 8 of the constitution indicates that membership is opened to all Ghanaians irrespective of the ethnic, religion, place of birth, social and economic status. On paper, the NDC has several means of reaching out to new members notably, its youth wing in tertiary institutions (TEIN), register students and the women wing sponsor apprenticeship training for young ladies who are into handicrafts, hairdressers and dressmaking, among others. While on paper, membership dues become the source of income to run the party's activities, the lack of reliable membership data means that payment of dues is non-existent. Only parliamentarians and key figures are the financiers who provide campaign funds to executive the programmes.

3.2.5 Legislative Profile

Since 1992, the NDC has won power four times and majority seats in four of the seven parliamentary elections. The party was the first to win presidential power in 1992 with 58.3%. In 1996, the party won a second term with 57.4%. The party, however, lost in its bid to win for the third time in 2000. It later came back to win the 2008 elections with 50.2% in the presidential round-off after losing in the first round by 47.9%. It went ahead to win the 2012

elections with 50.7%. At the parliamentary level, the NDC has won majority of seats in parliament in four elections: 1992 (189 of 200 seats after the boycott of the NPP), 1996 (133 of 200 seats), 2008 (116 of 230), and 2012 (148 of 275). In the current parliament, in particular, the party occupies 106 out of the 275 seats. By regional representation: Ashanti (3 of 47), Brong Ahafo (9 of 29), Central (4 of 23), Eastern (6 of 33), Greater Accra (13 of 34), Northern (18 of 31), Upper East (12 of 15), Upper West (6 of 11) Volta (25 of 26) & Western (10 of 26), the NDC seems a formidable political party.

3.2.6 Capacity Building

It has also engaged with the Danish Social Party on various areas of cooperation since 2015. It has established an ideological school, the Institute of Social Democracy (ISD) that trains its youths to serve as anchors of mass socialization and drive its membership-seeking agenda. The party collaborates with research think-tanks and other civil society organizations that are non-for-profit whose interest to see democracy flourish in the country such as institutions the FES, CDD, IDEG and IEA, among others.

3.2.7 Communication

The party has a vibrant communication structure which is headed by a Communications Director (an appointed portfolio, formerly the Propaganda Secretary) with two deputies. Its communication structure extends from the national to the grassroots level. At each level, there a team of party communication volunteers who offer services in terms of projecting the image and defending the party's policy positions on any critical national or local issue. The communication directors are responsible for appointing and delegating people to represent the party on various media platforms. The party uses diverse communication channels and platforms such as press conferences, press releases, civil demonstrations and social media (Whatsapp, Facebook and Twitter) to project its case to the electorate. Information is drawn from the various constituencies through their communication directors, who in turn furnish the national executives of happenings at the sub-national levels.

3.2.8 Electoral Campaign

After delegates have chosen their candidates at the constituency level and filed their nominations with the Electoral Commission, a formed campaign team at all levels, supervises the dissemination of the election campaigns to the electorate. Usually, the team is not limited to the party executives but include co-opted leading party members. The national campaign trams builds direct relationship with the constituency group to propagate the party's cherish message for the voters. The campaigns are often framed around the party's philosophy. Since, the party is ideologically connected to Social Democracy, its policy stands are underpinned by the Social Democracy ideals and also draws inspiration from socially-minded international associations such the Socialist International (SI), an international association of parties who share in the socialist ideology.

3.3 The New Patriotic Party (NPP)

3.3.1 History, Function and Policy Principles

The NPP that traces its roots to the United Gold Coast Convention and the Progress Party of Dr Danquah, Dr Busia and Dombo was formed in July 1992 after the ban on political party was lifted by the erstwhile PNDC government. It belongs to liberal conservative tradition and therefore believes the supreme dignity of man and common brotherhood of all persons including freedom of conscience, association and expression. These ideals sprang from the UGCC era in the 1940s, the United Party (UP) in the aftermath of independence and Progress Party (PP) in late 1960s and early 1970s and personify its leaders such as Dr Danquah, Dr Busia and Dombo which is now referred to as Danquah/Busia/Dombo political tradition.

The party prides itself in its forebears, the Danquah-Dombo-Busia tradition. In the Fourth Republic, ex-President J. A. Kufuor and incumbent President Nana Akufo-Addo have been the dominant personalities at various times but it does not pinpoint a single person as its founder.

Since 1992 the NPP has won power thrice and majority in three of the seven parliamentary elections. It won its first presidential election in 2000 by 56.9% in a run-off after garnering 48.2% in the inconclusive first round but had won straight single round in other two elections, namely, 2004 (52.5%) and 2016 (53.9%). At the parliamentary level, after the 1992 parliamentary election boycott, it has won majority in three parliamentary elections; 2000 (100 of 200 seats), 2004 (128 of 230 seats) and 2016 (169 of 275 seats); and played minority in three other elections as well: 1996 (61 of 200), 2008 (107 of 230) and 2012 (123 of 275).

As a liberal conservative party, its ideological position is centre-right, which among other things, have pursued development in freedom, efficient economic management, free-market economy, open media, vigorous participation by citizens in economic activities within a climate in which free enterprise thrives for wealth creation and prosperity for the citizens (well-captured as property-owning democracy). Yet, it as a liberal conservative party, it has spearheaded several ground-breaking social intervention policies such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Free Senior High School (Free SHS), Capitation Grant, and Free Maternal Healthcare, among others.

3.3.2 Party Organizational Structure

Similar to the NDC, the NPP is hierarchically organized with power flowing from top-down continuum, namely national, regional, constituency, electoral area and polling station levels. It has overseas branch and special organs such as the youth and women's wings, tertiary institution (TESCON) and NASARA (Zongo) wings.

There is a national executive committee which is responsible for directing and overseeing the operations of the Party, but the day-to-day running of the party is in the hands of the General Secretary who is also the head of the party's national secretariat assisted by two deputies. This structure is replicated at the regional and constituency levels. While holders of executive positions work as non-salaried officers, the General Secretary and staffs at the National Secretariat receive regular remunerations based on the determination by the National Executive

Committee. However, beyond the national level, the party's infrastructure is weak with motley of office staff and equipment at the regional and constituency offices. The structure of the party ensures close relationship between the headquarters, the region and constituency levels. The National Executive Committee is made up of regional chairmen, and the regional executive committee also include constituency chairmen and MPs in the region.

3.3.3 Internal Party Processes

The party is internally democratic. All officers of the party are selected through direct and indirect elections through a transparent process. It also yields to inclusivity in the choice of its leaders and candidates. For instance, leadership selection at all levels reflects ethnic, religious, demographic and gender diversity. All 10 national executive positions: Chairman, First Vice, Second Vice, Third Vice, General Secretary, Treasurer, Youth Organizer, Women's Organizer and NASARA Coordinator are elected. Additional 10 are indirectly elected (appointed by the national executives) comprising two Deputy General Secretaries, Deputy Organizers, Deputy Youth Organizers, Deputy Women's Organizers and Deputy NASARA Coordinators respectively. Of the current 20 national officers, the gender ratio is 15 males: 5 females. Indeed, apart from the first vice and one deputy youth organizer, the other three positions are strictly reserved for females. Despite this, gender positions across all levels of party structure weigh heavily against the women.

Decision-making reflects bottom-up processes. While the national executives have control over many facets of the party's activities and programmes, the lower structures can influence policies from downwards to the top. For instance, in recent past, the youth women's, tertiary (TESCON) and NASARA wings at the various levels have been most influential in party campaigns, policy developments. Its annual delegates' conferences at the constituency, regional and national levels as well as other extra-ordinary delegates conferences have provided platforms to debate critical issues and taken far-reaching reforms to advance the course of the party programs.

3.3.4 Membership and Funding

The party is organized around its membership. The internal policy allows all manner of persons to join through a registration process. Once a person has satisfied the requirement for registration, a membership card is issued to him/her. However, like the NDC, membership registration remains a paper work. The large numbers of supporters of the party are non-registered members – they vote during elections but have no formal registration that admits them into the party. Therefore the growth of the party is determined on the percentage of votes it records at the polls. Only those members of the party that hold executive positions and the 150000 that attend the annual delegates' conferences have their records inscribed in the party's books. However, the party has accurate details of delegates who form the electoral college for elections at various levels. Much of its membership mobilization has depended on the wings such as the TESCON (for tertiary students), NASARA (for the Zongo Communities), among others. Ironically, the party officers said the party funds its programmes with generated revenues from membership dues. Unfortunately, they could not produce records showing

membership dues-payment. The fact, however, is that only influential party financiers make contributions to drive the programmes. This situation leaves them to be the dictators of the party's critical decision-making.

3.3.5 Legislative Profile

A glimpse of the legislative history reveals encouraging performance. Apart from winning three presidential elections in 2000, 2004 and 2016, the party's performance at the legislative elections has been impressive as the NDC. It has controlled majority seats in parliament during three regimes. Aside the 1992 parliamentary election boycott, it has won majority seats in 2000 (100 of 200 seats), 2004 (128 of 230 seats) and 2016 (169 of 275 seats). It has also formed the minority group in parliament thrice, namely 1996 (61 of 200), 2008 (107 of 230) and 2012 (123 of 275).

In the current parliament, the party has 169 out of the 275, and are largely drawn from Ashanti (44 of 47), Brong Ahafo (20 of 29), Central (19 of 23), Eastern (27 of 33), Greater Accra (21 of 34), Northern (13 of 31), Upper East (3 of 15), Upper West (5 of 11) Volta (1 of 26) & Western (16 of 26).

3.3.6 Capacity Building

The party has organized some form of capacity training for its members. The party is currently putting up a training centre, which will help sharpen their party members about its programmes, their political career and attachments to the tradition. It has received support from its partners such as the KAS, CDD, IDEG among others, in areas of institutional strengthening.

3.3.7 Communication

The party views communication as one of its top priorities. Hence, it has created a communication directorate, which is headed a Communications Director (an appointed portfolio). It draws support from eleven deputies, who together form a chain of party communicators from the national to the constituency levels. The communication capacity of the party is always augmented by some selected and vociferous Members of Parliament and government appointees when the party is in power. The party utilizes several channels of communication such as press conferences, press releases, demonstrations, social media (Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter) to disseminate vital information to the electorate.

3.3.8 Electoral Campaign

One of the crucial moments of the party is the drawing up party manifesto to direct its election campaigns. Parliamentary candidates are chosen by the Constituency delegates while the national delegates; conference selects the presidential candidate. A campaign committee usually chaired by an eminent party functionary who would carry wide consultations with differing groups and interests to fashion a comprehensive view about what the electorate what

government to do. Some of the teams that facilitate the development of manifestoes and education policies include research team, communication team, and a logistics team. The party has trained its internal party agents to protect the ballot and prevent unlawful partisan interferences.

3.4 The People's National Convention PNC

3.4.1 History, Function and Policy Process

The party was inaugurated in 1992 to continue the unfinished political agenda of Dr. Hilla Limann and his People's National Party (PNP), which was ousted from power abruptly in a military coup on December 31, 1981 by the military junta headed by Jerry Rawlings (Frempong, 2017). Since its formation in 1992, the PNC has contested all general elections except one of the parliamentary elections. However, its electoral performance in the presidential election has been somewhat disappointing – its votes have dwindled in every election. This is evidently shown as: 1992: 6.7%; 1996: 3.0%, 2000: 2.9%; 2004: 1.9%; 2008: 0.9%; 2012: 0.22%, and 2016: 0.21% for the presidential votes. By contrast, with the exception of one, it has won, at least, one seat in the parliament elections it participated. This includes one seat in 1996; three in 2000; four in 2004; two in 2008; one in 2012; and none in 2016.

As a socialist party (drawing from the ashes of Nkrumah's CPP), the party is ideologically centre-left. The party believes in policies that will help reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. Against this background, the party looks forward to implementing some social intervention policies that will help in achieving this goal. It claims that the NHIS implemented by the NPP under the Kufour administration was the brain-child of the PNC. The party believes also in ensuring a high level of transparency and accountability in governance. The party leans on the ideals of Kwame Nkrumah which has a vision to deliver inclusive and sustainable development in order to bridge the class gap, and the promotion of equity, social justice and self-determination for Ghanaians. It believes that all citizens should have equal opportunities to personal security, employment, self-fulfilment and human dignity. It is a party for the poor and marginalized and inclusiveness that is premised on its core values of honesty, integrity, social justice and accountability.

3.4.2 Party Organizational Structure

The structure of the party is well elaborated in its constitution. The national, regional and constituency offices give the party an extensive presence in the country. Officers have been elected to occupy the positions at all levels of party organization. Interestingly, beyond the headquarters the party is not visible in the countryside. Some of its offices at the regions are not functional due to financial constraints and lack of logistics. . Currently, the party is trying to secure some additional offices in the newly created regions. The General Secretary is in charge of the daily operations of the party. There are only two paid staffers in the office at the national headquarters while the rest of the staff who are mostly some national executive officers are not paid for the services they render to the party.

The party's headquarters has some equipment (computer, printer, photocopier machine) that are used to support the administrative activities at the national office. The weak financial standing of the party has made it difficult to procure logistics for the regional and constituency offices. Even though the party is financially and logistically weak, there exist a cordial and regular relationship between the headquarters and the party offices, officers, and members at the local level.

3.4.3 Internal Party Processes

Policy development in the party is always drawn from the ideological position of the party. The party's policy formulation process employs both the top-down and bottom-up approaches. Thus, the local branches (constituency and regional offices) play some roles in the formulation process. Even though these roles may not be regular as the party would want, the ideas gathered into the various policy documents of the party are drawn from the constituencies and the regional offices.

The party observes internal democracy. All party leaders are elected at every level. The party has eight national leaders who are all elected. These include the positions of Chairman, Two Vice-Chairmen, General Secretary, National Organizer, National Treasurer, Women's Organizer, and Youth Organizer. Out of the eight national executives, only one is a female. The presidential candidate, rather than the National party chairman is the moving star of the party.

The party regularly organizes national conferences, mostly prior to the holding of general elections. Again, due to financial constraints, the party is unable to organize regional and constituency conferences to choose its executives. However, during the national conferences, delegates are drawn from the constituencies and regions. It has always extended invitations to other parties to its delegate conferences to express their solidarity with the party. Currently, the party is a member of the Socialist International Africa, an international organization of parties that are ideologically aligned to the centre-left.

3.4.4 Membership and Funding

The party has laid down procedures for admitting members. Yet there are no official records on members. It is evident that the weak nature of the party is also reflected in shrinking membership. If Ghanaian parties count on their performance at the polls to determine their membership, then the PNC lacks the members. Hence, there is no formal development policy on membership recruitment. Therefore, only a few loyalists provide financial support to keep the national office somewhat active. Party executives admit that the nature of funding for the party is not sustainable and if the situation is not reversed, the party machinery may grind to an eventual halt.

3.4.5 Legislative Profile

Currently, the party has no seats in parliament. This is the first time since the party started contesting in parliamentary elections. The party has won at least a seat in parliament in all but one of the parliamentary elections they have contested. This includes one in 1996; three in 2000; four in 2004; two in 2008; one in 2012; and won none in 2016. Anytime the party has won seats in parliament, there had been a mutual relationship between the members of parliament and the party.

3.4.6 Capacity Building

The party does not have its own training facilities. However, the party is given some training opportunities by some civil society to build the capacity of its members. For instance, it is a beneficiary of the Smaller Parties and Multiparty Democracy (SPMD) programs that has been organized by the IDEG. The program has offered small grants to the smaller parties to equip them to develop their party machinery.

3.4.7 Communication

Despite receiving the assistantship, the party still faces structural communication deficiencies. This is because, it has not been able to motivate its party communicators to defend the party policy positions and disseminate its programs to the electorate. Yet, it is true that occasionally, the party executives contribute to national debates, press releases, statements and press conferences.

3.4.8 Electoral Campaign

The party's presidential candidate is the main instrument for propagating the campaigns. Once, national delegates have chosen the candidate, the candidate interacts with the voters with the manifesto, which are often not accompanied by fanfare as other parties often do in election years. The presidential candidate is supported by an election campaign team that is also responsible for managing the campaign activities of the party for the election at all levels. The national campaign team is usually made up of the national executives. On the day of elections, the party sends out polling agents to constituencies where the party had fielded parliamentary candidates to monitor the polls.

3.5 The Convention People's Party CPP

3.5.1 History, Function and Policy Principles

The CPP is one of the political parties formed after the democratic transition in 1992. The transition provisions prohibited the formation of parties in the name of past political parties. However, the CPP won a court case in the Supreme Court in 2000 that had challenged the legitimacy of the ban, since then the name has become legally accepted. When seen from this

angle, it can be said that the CPP is one of the offshoots of the CPP of yesteryears formed on June 12, 1949 by Kwame Nkrumah after he had severed relationship with the UGCC. The post-democratization CPP aims, among other things, to offer a government based on Nkrumahist principles; consolidate or deepen and sustain the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Ghana; ensure the political, economic and social progress of Ghana; and promote national reconciliation and unity.

Since adopting ancestral name in 2000, it has performed poorly at both presidential and parliamentary elections: for instance, in the Presidential elections of 2000: 1.8%; 2004: 1.0%; 2008: 1.3%; 2012: 0.2%, 2016: 0.24%; and Parliamentary seats show: 1996: 5 as PCP; 2000: 1; 2004: 3; 2008: 1; 2012: Nil, later 1 in a by-election; 2016: Nil

3.5.2 Party Organizational Structure

The party structure has offices from polling stations, electoral areas, constituency, regional, and national levels. The structures are managed by the elected executive officers. Most of the offices at the polling stations and electoral areas are dormant due to inadequate monetary resource to back their activities. The General Secretary is responsible for the daily operations of the party. Per the party's constitution, each of the structures should be managed by administrator. However, due to monetary and logistical constraints, most of these administrators have abandoned their work. Currently, the party offices are run by volunteers. The party is guided by a constitution that was amended in 2012.

3.5.3 Internal Party Processes

The party has a formal structure for policy development. It is spearheaded by the Central Committee, whose task is to gather ideas from the broad masses of the people at the local level. The central committee collates the views and synthesise them into coherent policies to guide the operations of the party. Party leaders at all levels are elected. The party leadership at the national level comprises: National Chair & Leader, 3 National Vice Chair, General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary, National Treasurer, Deputy national Treasurer, National Organizer, 2 Deputy National Organizers, National Women's Organizer, 2 Deputy national Women's Organizers, National Youth Organizer, 2 Deputy National Youth Organizers, Deputy National Youth Organizers, Director of Education (CPP Constitution, Article 9). The party is personified by the ideals, legacies and vision of its founder, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Every policy and major activity undertaken by the party is directly or indirectly influenced by the ideals of its founder.

The party holds annual conferences at the constituency and regional levels. At the national level, the national delegates' congress is organized not later than 12 months after the last General elections. The congress is used to elect the National Chairperson, National Vice-Chairpersons, the General Secretary, the National Treasurer, the National Organiser, and the National Women's Organizer of the Party, under the provisions of this Constitution. It is also used to consider and approve the Manifesto and matters of general policy submitted to it by the National Executive Council, receive and consider reports on activities and audited accounts of

the Party presented to it by the National Executive Council and issue directives for actions on them.

The congress is the period for the rank-and-file to confirm, amend, repudiate or revoke any decision made by any subordinate organs of the Party. It could amend or suspend in whole or part any provision of the constitution by a resolution, decide on any proposal or matter, and transact any other business which shall be submitted by the Central Committee or the National Executive Council, delegate any of its functions or powers to any subordinate organ of the Party, and perform such other functions as are necessary for the attainment of the aims and objectives of the Party through the appropriate organs of the Party, as provided for by this Constitution.

3.5.4 Membership and Funding

The CPP is the only party that is pursuing the collation of the membership data. Unlike the other parties, the CPP has a database that is used to accurately and concretely provide information on their members. The current data covers over 3000 party members.

The party's formal membership process is explicitly outlined in Article 10 of the party's constitution, which stipulates that membership of the Party is open to any citizen of Ghana who is eighteen years of age and above, and has accepted the aims and objectives of the Party. It is expected that a person applying to be a member of the CPP is also not a registered member of any other political party whose policies are inconsistent with those of the CPP. To this end, every application for membership is vetted by the Constituency Executive Committee. Where an application is refused, the applicant could appeal to the Regional Executive Committee. Upon enrolment, the member receives Membership and Dues Cards.

Funding of the party is theoretically derived from the dues paid by members. However, the financing has fallen on a few loyal members who periodically provide resources to keep the party functioning, at least, at the headquarters. In some of the regional offices of the party, a welfare strategy has been adopted to help boost the party's funding. This involves encouraging members to make contribution in the form of welfare dues, which is then, use to support members during times of need. The party retains a percentage to run the party offices and activities.

3.5.5. Legislative Profile

The performance of the CPP in the Fourth Republic is disappointing. Apart from not winning the presidential elections, it has also been a weak minority in parliament where some of its candidates won parliamentary seats. In 1996, the party won 5 seats at a time when it could not use the name CPP and contested the elections under the People's Convention Party (PCP). In 2000, the CPP won 1 seat and another 3 in 2004 and then 1 in 2008. In 2012 the party won no seat in the parliamentary elections, but later on went ahead to win 1 seat in a by-election.

3.5.6 Capacity Building

The party is a beneficiary of the SPMD program that is administered through the IDEG. It has also enjoyed other training programs provided for its members by other CSOs in the governance space. The programs have built the capacity of the leaders. A few office equipment are found at the national office while the grassroots offices are without the basic equipment such as computers, printers etc.

3.5.7 Communication

The party has a communication structure that serve to project its policy positions to the electorate. Its communicators are deployed to various radio and TV stations to defend the position of the party. The party also communicate through memos and mobile telephony, symposia and other forms of media engagements.

3.5.8 Electoral Campaign

The party runs in accordance with democratic tenets. Hence elections form the means for the selection of the party leaders. The delegate system is used in the decision-making process. The delegates are drawn from all constituencies (usually it is limited to the executives) to form the Electoral College to choose the leaders and presidential candidate. After delegates have elected the leaders, they are subjected to the approval of the Central Committee. In cases where an individual is elected but has grave limitations, the central committee has the power to declare the election as invalid, which would lead to the withdrawal of the person from the position. The party trains and dispatches its agents to monitor polling day activities.

3.6 The Progressive People's Party (PPP)

3.6.1 History, Function and Policy Principles

The PPP was formed on 28th December 2011 by Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom with the objective of mobilizing the progressive and independent-minded people to rise and cause to be formed an alternative political movement to compete for political power in order to achieve a major transformation of the Ghanaian society. In January 2012 the party submitted an application to the Electoral Commission (EC) for registration in accordance with the Political Parties Act. It is instructive to note that, after the receipt of the official registration forms from the Electoral Commission, the party was able to complete and submit the forms to the EC within 48-hours.

The party received its provisional certificate on Friday 3rd February 2012 from the Electoral Commission and convened its first National Convention on 25th February 2012 at the Accra Sports Stadium. The final certificate was received on Thursday 15th March. Yet, the PPP was a break-away from the CPP. The party believes in the liberal philosophy mixed with pragmatism. The party's policy position is directed by its 10-point agenda, referred to as the "Agenda for Change". This includes, among other things to: work to achieve peace and prosperity with a sense of urgency; promote national reconciliation and unity; offer a

government based on principles of self-determination, social justice and regional integration; and protect and enhance Ghanaian culture, heritage and institutions (Article 7, PPP Constitution). In particular the agenda for change is anchored on four pillars of Stewardship, namely, Quality Education, Preventive Healthcare, and Jobs. The party seeks to implement the agenda using the spirit of inclusiveness, full participation of women and the youth; and above all, provide a leadership that is incorruptible.

3.6.2 Party Organizational Structure

The party has a written constitution which dictates much of its activities but has no explicit code of conduct. The party has national, regional and constituency offices. The Executive Director runs the day-to-day activities of the party. There are seven (7) full-time workers at the national office and other eleven (11) executives that provide voluntary services to the party. The party is structured as follows:

National Committee – it is a body charged with the management of the party organization. All important decisions of the party are taken by the National Committee (NC). The only body of the party which has more powers than the National Committee is the National Convention when properly constituted. The National Committee is constituted by members of the National Executive Committee, all Regional Chairmen, Regional Representatives, and Members of the Council of Elders. It meets once in a month to review party performance and offer direction as to how the party must move.

National Executive Committee – The NEC is made up of all National Executives of the Party. The PPP currently has 13 National Executives and these executives constitute the NEC. The NEC principally is responsible for implementing the NC decisions as well as the day to day administration of the party. The NEC reports to NC and takes further policy directions from the NC when the need arises.

Regional Executives Committees – The regional Executive committee is the meeting of all regional Executives as well as Constituency Chairmen. This body is responsible for the management of the individual regions.

Constituency Executives Committees – it is made up of all constituency executive members as well as the polling officers.

Polling Station Executive – Responsible for their polling stations – the lowest of the grassroots structure.

National Convention – the PPPs' National Convention is properly constituted when members of the National Committee, Regional Committee and at least 4 other members of each constituency have come together in one place. This is the highest decision making body of the party and meets, at least once, in a year. However, the National Committee has power to cancel meetings in any given time of the year if there is no urgent matter to be discussed and there is sound justification for doing so.

The party engages in annual conferences to discuss issues of concern to the party and the nation as a whole. The conference issues are developed from the polling station, through to the

constituency, regional and then to the national level. Even though the conferences are mostly constituted by party members, it is also opened to the public. All party card-bearing members in good standing in a particular polling station/constituency/ region can participate in the election to determine the officers of the party (PPP Constitution, Article 15).

3.6.3 Internal Party Processes

The party has a formal structure for policy development. Policies are developed through the combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches. The local branches are permitted to express ideas as input into the formulation of the final policies by the national executives. Party leaders are selected through elections at all levels (Article 9, PPP Constitution).

The party has a 13-member executive committee comprising; the National Chairman, 3 Vice Chairpersons, National Secretary, National Treasurer, Executive Director, Director of Operations, National Women Coordinator, National Youth Coordinator, Director of Communications, Director of Research, and Director of Policy. Of the 13 members, the gender ratio is 11 males: 2 females.

3.6.4 Membership and Funding

The party could not explicitly state the number of party members but the officers said the numbers keep improving over the years. The party claims to be strong interest in women and the youth. The party constitution provides for 20% of women in the executives at every level. The party has no seat in parliament and looks forward to winning some in the coming elections. The party is financed through the dues of a few party members and donations from some benevolent individuals who are mostly senior citizens.

3.6.5 Legislative Profile

The party has never won a seat in parliament even though its founder had been a member of parliament as an independent candidate. The party has contested two presidential elections (2012 and 2016) and its candidate ended a third place: 2012: 0.6% (3rd); 2016: 1.0% (3rd). In the parliamentary elections in the two elections, PPP candidates contested 211 of the 275 and 150 of the 275 seats in 2012 and 2016 respectively but did not won a single seat.

3.6.6 Capacity Building

The party is a part of the SPMD program which the IDEG administers. The party also engages periodic training for the members/agents that are involved in election monitoring. The offices have computers, photocopiers and printers. There exists a hierarchical relation between the national officers, regional officers, and the constituency officers.

3.6.7 Communication

A combination of formal and informal communication methods and channels are used by the Party to propagate its ideals. It is formal at national level and informal at regional and constituency levels. However, extreme relevant that required the party's input, the communication flows from top-down. Thus, the National Secretary is empowered to issue statements on behalf of the Party. On a whole, the party has used print and electronic media to communicate to the public. The Party has a functional social media and also uses issue-specific bulk SMS from time to time. Phone calls also play a part of the information dissemination. The Party also has access to active traditional media resources – 1 newspaper, 3 TV stations, and 21 community radio stations across the country. Its communication outlet is headed by the communication director, who ensures that members comply with the party's communication strategic policy valid from 2016 to 2021.

3.6.8 Electoral Campaign

For the two elections the party has contested, a campaign team has been responsible for the drafting of its messages to the electorates. The team is made up of national executives and some volunteer who form part of the most active members. Same is replicated at the regional and constituency levels. Due to inadequate resources, the party has not been able to contest all the parliamentary seats in the country. In view of this, the party monitors only the constituencies it has fielded candidates.

3.7 Liberal Party of Ghana (formerly, Independent People's Party) LPG

3.7.1 History, Function and Policy Principles

The party was formed after 2016 as a successor to the Independent People's Party (IPP) that was inaugurated in 2012. The party is ideologically centrist and therefore claims membership of the Liberal International and the African Liberal Networks. Hence, it seeks to, promote the needs of the middle class, women and the pursuit of youth empowerment is one key policy goal even though it still hangs on to free enterprise as opposed to the statist paradigm to economic management and development.

The party has been noted for its policy position of legalizing and regulating the commercial production, sale and export of marijuana: the party believes that the socio-economic and health benefits of marijuana are too enormous to ignore, regardless of other negative connotations associated with the drug (GNA, 19/8/19). The party also seeks to liberate Ghanaians from their current enslavement through grassroots mobilization and educating voters to vote on their conscience (Ghana Crusader, 9/6/19)

3.7.2 Party Organizational Structure

The party's activities are guided by a written constitution with a code of conduct embedded in several sections. The party has a national office located in Kumasi. At its inception, it did not

have visibility beyond its Kumasi headquarters. However, recently, it has opened branches in all the 16 regional capitals and offices in some of the constituencies such as Bekwai, Obuasi, Ejura, Keta, Ho, Ketu South, Agona West, Cape Coast, Sunyani, and Hohoe. There are seven officers that constitute national executive council. It is worth mentioning that four of the seven national executives, namely, the General-Secretary, National Women's Organiser, Treasurer, and Communication Director are women. The dominance of women in the executive reflects the party's policy of women empowerment and gender balance quota system. Yet, there are no paid staffs and basic equipment such as computers, printers and photocopier machines. The party is largely operated by the founder who seems to be in charge of the daily activities at the party headquarters.

3.7.3 Internal Party Processes

The party's policy is centrally developed because its internal activities solely revolve around the founder. The party has organized two party congresses at Prempeh College and the Agriculture Centre in Kumasi respectively. The party is financially handicapped and this may explain the reason for not holding the mandatory annual conferences and congresses to elect its national leaders.

3.7.4 Membership and Funding

The party has about 20,300 members and sympathisers. Yet, there is no membership register to confirm this assertion made by the party executives. Hence membership dues payment is not something party executives have enforced on the fluid membership. It is feared that making dues-payment a rigid requirement may discourage membership drive. Thus, funds for the activities of the party are provided by the founder with supplements from the national and regional executives. It is anticipated that the party may face severe financial crisis in election years when money is needed to reinvigorate party machinery.

3.7.5 Legislative Profile

The party has never contested any of the general elections since its formation. But before it metamorphosed into LPG, the IPP contested 5 parliamentary seats in the 2012 elections and did not win any seat. In the election, its candidate received 0.01% of the votes and in 2016 the candidate who filed to contest on the ticket of IPP was disqualified.

3.7.6 Capacity Building

The party forms part of the SPMD program being ran by the IDEG. The party also engages in periodic training for its members/agents that are involved in election monitoring. The party is currently engaging some students to take up leadership positions.

3.7.7 Communication

The party has a Communication Director who spearheads the communication department. The nature of the party's communication is formal and informal. The national directors, collate issues from the various regions and then communicates the party's position on critical national issue to the communicators who in turn provide the information to the general public. The communication directorate of the party is not as vibrant as it is in other parties (like the NPP and NDC) because it is evolving and the fact that it lacks funds to develop the needed structures and build the capacity of the communicators.

3.7.8 Electoral campaign

The party has never contested any election since it metamorphosed into LPG. However, it contested 5 parliamentary seats when it was IPP. During the period it contested the elections, the party put together campaign teams, which drew up plans to engage voters, deployment of logistics and monitoring of the polls.

3.8 Summary of Political Parties' Needs

All the political parties that were contacted had one need or the other. Their capacity needs are summarised below: the first category were expressed by the big parties

- Campaign strategy support, such as sharing of resources in a manner that enhances the attainment of free and fair elections; assistance with the development and drafting of policies, workshop and development of skills; exchanges, capacity building on internal party organization, policy development processes, fundraising, communication strategies.
- Policy development to improve the quality of ideological discussion and policy development.
- Strengthening the organization of the party, focusing particularly on improving communication structures and skills. Approval and distribution of communication strategies. Capacity building of party communicators for political debates.
- Mainstreaming gender and youth participation in politics by revitalizing the women's and youth wings, preparing more youths for political positions and inclusion in decision-making

On the other hand, the smaller parties forwarded the following needs:

- They all agreed that some form of capacity building will help them build their party organizations and position them to implement their international best practices in their internal affairs. Inasmuch as they would need training, they prefer to have it on party basis because of ideologies and strategic differences among them.

- They need logistics such as vehicles, motorbikes, bicycles, office equipment (computers, printers, photocopier machines) to propel their structural capacity and mobilization.
- Engagement with developed parties in the form of exchange programs especially those that target the youth and women.

CHAPTER 4

FROM A NON-PARTISAN TO PARTY-BASED LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

4.1 Existing Local Governance Structure

The existing local government structure comprises metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDAs), which form the basic political units even though Unit Committees are the lowest of the structure. Membership of the MMDAs is 70% elected on non-partisan basis and 30% appointed by the President (who is elected on partisan basis in national election). In addition, the political heads of the MMDAs, the metropolitan/municipal/district chief executives (MMDCEs) are nominated by the President and approved by two-thirds majority of the assembly members.

This existing non-partisan local governance is rooted in local government system during the PNDC era in 1988/89: During the transition to democratic rule in 1992, the regime transposed the system onto the 1992 Constitution. Various arguments were adduced to the adoption of a non-partisan district assemble system. On the involvement of the central government appointed MMDCEs, it has been argued that a unitary system requires a delicate balancing arrangement to ensure the presence of the state at the local level. It is further argued that the nomination of MMDCEs and their approval by the assemblies is to make them doubly accountable to the government and the assemblies. The 30% appointed members is intended to infuse persons with special skills, professions, expertise and knowledge into the Assemblies. On its non-partisan nature, the main argument had been about local development. That is, nonpartisan system is require for the effective mobilization of the mass of the people for the development – partisanship will encourage will promote division among the local populace – which is counterproductive to local development (Ahwoi, IEA, 2000).

Over the two decades of the operation of the existing non-partisan system, a number of challenges have emerged: The existing system which allows the President to appoint MMDCEs and 30% membership of MMDAs has allowed the ruling political party to foist political appointees on a supposed non-partisan structure and has made the MMDCEs subservient and accountable to the appointing authority while weakening accountability to the citizens they are supposed to serve. It has become a mechanism for dispensing political patronage (Debrah 2014; Ayee, 2004). It centralizes executive power and promotes the ‘winner-takes-all’ syndrome. Parties which lose national elections are denied the consolation of electing MMDCEs even in their geographical strongholds. This situation breeds conflict as the appointed MMDCEs ignore the concerns of the local people, while they in turn try to undermine and sabotage the agenda of the MMDCEs (Gyampo 2016). In a sense, this has made elections at the national level a ‘do-and-die’ affair.

There are inherent contradictions as well: It is anomalous to have political parties at the national level and ban them at the local level which is to serve as the training ground for future national leaders. Article 55 (3) which prohibits political parties from participating in local governance

in a sense contradicts Article 55(1-2) which guarantee the right to form political parties and enjoin every Ghanaian of voting age to join a political party. Article 55 (3) also contradicts Article 35 (6d) which states that the State shall take appropriate measures to. ‘make democracy a reality by decentralizing the administrative and financial machinery of government to the regions and districts and by affording all possible opportunities to the people to participate in decision –making at every level in national life and in government...’.

Above all, the political parties do not abide by the existing system of non-partisan elections. There have been (initially clandestine but increasingly overt) campaigns by political parties to get their preferred candidates elected to the MMDAs, thus, perpetuating an illegality (Gyampo 2016).

4.2 Towards Party-Based Local Governance

It is against this background that it has become necessary to reform the existing government structure to remove the anomalies and indeed move in the direction of international best practice of party-based local government system. There are two dimensions to the on-going discussions about local government reform: for the president to give up his power of appointing MMDCEs (Article 243(1) and making the position elective; and making the whole local governance system party-based by amending article 55(3) of the 1992 Constitution. While the former is not an entrenched clause which can be amended by two-thirds majority in Parliament, the latter is entrenched and requires a referendum to approved by 40% voter turnout and 75% ‘yes’ vote.

Generally speaking, making the position of MMDCEs elective would provide the people the opportunity to decide for themselves, who heads the local government, offer another avenue for their full participation in governance and make MMDCEs more accountable and responsive to the needs of the citizenry at the local level. It would also avoid the situation where defeated parliamentary candidates of the ruling party are rewarded with MMDCE positions at the displeasure of the majority which had voted against them. On the other hand, making the local system multi-party-based would, first, well align governance at local level with the national, and increase the significance of the former. Second, it is also expected to promote inclusiveness and reduce winner-takes all politics as all parties, major and minor, will have the opportunity to take part in executive power at the local level. Third, not only would parties as mobilizing agents improved the relatively low voter turnout the local level, but party-based local government would allow political parties to impose their discipline on their representatives. Fourth, by successfully contesting elections at every level of government, politicians would rise through the ranks of their parties and enter national office already knowledgeable in governance procedures. Above all, having a party-based local government would remove the deception where local party executive and other card-bearing members contest local elections as non-partisan candidates.

But the political parties and other stakeholders have divergent views of these issues. While they generally agree to the election of MMDCEs, there is no consensus on whether they should be

elected on partisan or non-partisan basis. On the broad issue of making the entire local government system party-based, the views are even more divergent.

The move from a non-partisan to a party-based local governance system in Ghana has had a chequered history throughout the Fourth Republic and demonstrated the dilemmas of balancing national presence in local governance in a unitary state. The NDC under Rawlings (1993-2001), whose predecessor PNDC regime initiated the existing non-partisan local governance, stoutly resisted suggestions to tinker with the system. The NPP which in its 2000 election manifesto promised the direct election of MMDCEs, throughout the Kufuor administration (2001-2009) not only failed to implement that but at various times held contradictory positions on the matter. The succeeding Mills (NDC) administration (2009-2012) set up the Constitutional Review Committee which in 2011 recommended a non-partisan election of MMDCEs and a partisan election of members of MMDAs, both of which were rejected by the government. The Mill's government's alternative of the President nominating a minimum of five persons to be vetted by the Public Service Commission was never implemented by the successor Mahama government. In the 2016 election, while all the parties pledged some form of election of MMDCEs, they were silent on the role of political parties in the process. However, the Akufo-Addo-led NPP promised in the manifesto to elect MMDCEs within 24 months on assumption of office. In 2018, Akufo-Addo in his state of the nation address extended the debate to the election of MMDCEs on partisan line and called for the amendment of Article 55(3) of the 1992 Constitution, an entrenched clause, which requires a referendum with 40% voter turnout and a 75% approval (IDEG, 2018).

It was against this background that the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) and other stakeholders mounted a spirited campaign to make a case for multiparty local governance in Ghana leading to the impending referendum. There was apparent consensus at various stakeholder consultative fora among the political parties.

The following excerpts of party positions at the end of a Multi-Stakeholder Conference organized by the Ghana Catholic Bishop's Conference in June 2019 are instructive for understanding the dynamics (www.GhanaWeb.com, 9/6/19; www.thefinderonline.com, 10/6/19):

- Frederick Blay (NPP National Chair), expectedly, pledged the NPP and the government's commitment to ensuring the election of MMDCEs. He argued that 'All over the world, the tendency is to go for elections, and so the NPP is holding the bull by the horn and insisting that Ghanaians want it irrespective of the fact that we are in power now'.
- Asiedu-Nketia (NDC, Gen Sec) indicated, interestingly that having operated the 1992 constitution for more than a quarter of a century, it has become clear that the provisions that bar partisan politics at the district level has become obsolete, hence the need to have a second look at it.
- Kwabena Bomfeh (Ag. Gen. Secretary, CPP) called for the amendment of both Article 243 (1) that will take away the power to appoint MMDCEs from the President and fail

to amend Article 55(3) which stops political parties from participating in local governance.

- Allotey Brew Hammond (PPP National Chair), insisted that the PPP since its formation has been committed towards ensuring that MMDCEs were elected to guarantee accountability at the local government level.
- Mohammed Frimpong (NDP, Ag Gen Sec) described the purpose of the referendum that could lead to the election of MMDCEs as ‘a floating light ball that could not be submerged by anybody’.
- The only dissenting party voice was Bernard Mornah (PNC, National Chair) who was of the view that there was the need to tread cautiously on the issue of the election of MMDCEs because at the local level, monetisation would equally affect the chances of the smaller parties(www.GhanaWeb.com, 9/6/19). He bemoaned the over-monetisation of the country’s politics, adding that politics was no longer about better ideas. “Now we are now transmitting this system of monetization into the local level, where these two larger parties will consume the smaller ones with money” (www.thefinderonline.com, 10/6/19).

Party functionaries (past & present) and other stakeholders who spoke on the issue at various times and fora for most part of the year were in favour of amending Article 55 (3) to make local governance party-based as illustrated below:

- Peter Mark Manu (A former NPP National Chairman) sees the existing local government system not as ‘non-partisan’ but rather a virtual ‘one-party’ system which allows the President and the ruling party to, exclusively, appoint all the MMDCEs as well as 30% of the members of the MMDAs (Field interview, 14/11/19)
- Asiedu-Nketia (NDC Gen Sec) had argued that the election of MMDCEs on party lines would eliminate the problem of winner-takes-all politics in Ghana. He explained further that in a system where control over local government institutions could be shared among the political parties; even the smaller political parties could focus on one particular district and make sure they get an MMDCE elected, so they have a chance to participate. He therefore saw it as the best form of power-sharing and that will make our elections more peaceful; because if a party lost the Presidency, it would not have lost everything, at least it would have a chance to participate in the election of MMDCEs (GNA, 14/6/19).
- Hajia Ibrahim (CPP Acting National Chairperson) indicated that electing MMDCEs has the potential to advance development at the community level and at the same time deepen Ghana’s democratic potentials (GNA, 8/10/19).
- For John Ameka (LPG, Ag. National Chair), a system that would enable political parties to put forward candidates for district level elections would enhance local governance and multi-party democracy and insisted that the competition would be idea-based and not necessarily on money to influence the people who were desperately in need of

development and that voting would be based on track record and not necessarily on mere promises (GNA, 8/10/19; 24/10/19)

- To the PPP which claimed it has been in the forefront of this national crusade to amend the 1992 Constitution to make it possible for all MMDCEs to be elected, the time has come to bring accountability and development to local government through competitive politics to give a great boost to local initiatives and self-reliance (www.myjoyonline.com 14/6/19)
- For Mohammed Frimpong (NDP Ag. General Secretary), it was a dream come true for his party which had called for powers to the local people to elect their own political-administrative heads to ensure accountability and development of their communities (GNA, 8/10/19).

4.3 Other explanations have been provided by groups and individuals in favour of the referendum (that seeks to amend Article 55(3):

- It has been explained that election of MMDCEs would help reduce the winner-takes-all situation because no one political party can win all the MMDCE positions. It would also reduce acrimonies in national elections because political parties would have another opportunity in that of MMDCEs to share in government. In addition, the opposition would use local government as a training ground to inform the people what they would have done if they won the elections and provide the government with alternative ideas to reshape policies (GNA, 14/1/19).
- The Ghana Journalist Association believes that the proposed multiparty local governance system would help with economic development within the local communities (GNA, 7/10/19).
- The NCCE opined that the amendment of 55(3) would correct a lot of anomalies in the country's rural development, especially areas which depend on various assemblies for development (GNA, 7/10/19). Also, the provisions of the 1992 Constitution reflected the prevailing conditions at the time and since the country was evolving, it is necessary to amend the constitution to suit the contemporary era. The referendum is a move to improve and strengthen the decentralization (www.nccegh.gov, 18/10/19). It further explained that voting yes is to return 'political and administrative power to the grassroots (Ghana Business News, 11/10/19).
- On their part, many government officials such as the Eastern Regional Minister argued that the Amendment of 55 (3) would enable political parties engage in grassroots electoral activities to whip up public interest and ensure transparency and accountability in the local governance system(GNA, 15/10/19). Similarly, the district Assembly common Fund (DACF) Administrator indicated that amendment of Article 55(3)0 would ensure that political parties will have their own trusted agents of development in their strongholds so that everything will not belong to the party that wins power but

those in opposition will also have their parts to play in developing the country(www.Peacefonline.com, 16/10/19).

- Furthermore, according to the Central Regional Minister, ‘the election of MMDCEs would reduce the much talked-about excessive powers of the President to appoint MMDCEs’ (Ghana Business News, 11/10/19). The same point was emphasized by the Ashanti Regional Minister that, the rationale behind the referendum is to allow political parties ‘to be free to participate in shaping the political will of the people, disseminate information of political ideas, social and economic programmes of national character and sponsor candidates for elections to any public office’ fully (Modern Ghana, 21/10/19). The Deputy Local Government Minister noted, ‘since the agenda was put on the table, the attitude of MMDCEs has changed. They have become more accessible to the people because they know that once the process was seen through, the people would have to vote for them to be in office’ (GNA, 7/10/19).

4.4 Dissenting Views

Given the constitutional threshold of the referendum, its success hinges on the continued collaboration among all the political parties, particularly between the two dominant parties, NPP and NDC; a clear roadmap on the number of related non-entrenched clauses in the constitution and other acts to be amended and whether they were to be amended simultaneously with or as consequential to the referendum: to ensure a high voter turnout and prevent further polarization of the country.; as well as intensified sensitization and mobilization of the citizenry on the purpose of the referendum to ensure high turnouts.

Clearly in addition to the discordant note from the PNC, there were levels of caution and fears among the other parties:

- The PNC National Chairman elaborated on why amendment of Article 55(3) would not be in the interest of smaller parties but rather destroy the multi-party system in favour of a two-party system dominated by NPP and NDC. To him NPP and NDC would have the power and influence to hijack the district elections the same way they had done at the national level; the smaller parties would not be in a position to field many candidates because of the huge financial burden that would bring; and, competent and abled individuals who might decide to contest district assembly elections would not stand the chance to compete with candidates of the two big parties (Daily Graphic 18/10/19). This stance of the national chairman was rather curious because given its electoral history and relative strength in the regions in the North, the PNC was potentially the best beneficiary of the party-based local government system. The Deputy Eastern Regional Organizer of the party, for example, was convinced that the PNC could win a number of MMDCE and assembly member positions particularly in the Sissala East and Sissala West (Upper West Region) and Builsa South (Upper East Region) (Field Interview, 15/11/19).

- William Doworkpor (PPP, National Vice Chair) while throwing the party's support behind a 'yes' vote in the referendum, he insisted that there was the need for other amendments to enable Ghanaians benefit reap the full benefits of participatory democracy and also take active part in the development of their communities. The proposed amendments to all related legislation and policies must be assessed concurrently. "We need to ensure that we do not only amend Article 55 (3) to have the election of MMDCEs on party basis, which standing on its own is too limiting, but the whole gamut of related acts and policies set to be affected as a consequence of the amendment". The party believes that the 'proposed amendments to all related legislation and policies must be put on the table now, in a comprehensive way, to ensure that we know exactly what outcome to expect of the whole process after we have voted 'Yes'. Among the related articles in the Constitution are 242 (d) on the appointment of 30% of the Assembly members by the President and 243 (b) on the power of the President to remove the MMDCE (www.Graphic.com.gh, 15/10/19). Thankfully, these views were confirmed by the party's national executive committee in a focus group discussion (Fieldwork, 14/11/19).
- NDC Deputy National Youth Organizer, Eric Agbana: called attention to the processes leading to the referendum: 'the process with regards to the registration of voters, the exhibition of the voters' register and the conduct of the referendum itself is critical in this process. Let us not only be interested in the outcome of the referendum, we should be interested in ensuring the processes leading to the outcome are free and fair. The Party says the EC must be keenly monitored to supervise a free fair and just referendum (Citi Newsroom, 3/10/19).
- Hajia Ibrahim (Ag. CPP National Chairperson) cautioned that electing MMDCEs was one thing, while empowering them with needed resources to develop the communities was another (GNA, 8/10/19).
- The constituency branch of the NPP in Ho Central in the party's 'weakhold' of the Volta Region. In an interview with the constituency deputy secretary, he indicated that the party members would be 'permanent losers, as they would be denied the chance to have MMDCE and government appointees even when the NPP was in power. However, as party manifesto, they were prepared to assist the President in his belief in giving power to the people (Field Interview, 11/11/19). On the other hand, the in a focus discussion with the NPP regional executives, it was revealed how when the NPP was in power the election of MMDCEs could be beneficial to the party as the NDC may not be too keen to work with NPP President (Field Interview, 12/11/19)
- On his part, the NDC Ho Central Constituency Vice Chairman was not particularly enthused about party-base local election, because he felt it would transport to the local level, the tension that has characterized NDC parliamentary primaries in the region. However they were prepared to follow directives from national headquarters (Field Interview, 11/11/19).

4.5 Benefits (Major Parties and Smaller Parties)

The political parties are conscious of the benefits they would accrue from the party-based local government system. For the two major parties, it is clear that they would always capture seats and positions whether as government or opposition. They will always have control over resources and power in their strongholds. The NDC, in opposition, would effectively control the MMDCE and assembly positions in Volta, Oti, Savannah, Northern, Upper East, Upper West and Western North, while it will share ‘spoils’ in Central, Greater Accra, among others. On its part the NPP under similar circumstances could effectively control Ashanti, Ahafo, Bono and Eastern.

For third parties, party-based local elections are of special significance since voters may be inclined to deviate from their regular party preferences, among other things because: local elections do not result in the formation of new government and changes in national policies; voters may also do that to protest at their favoured party’s performance in national politics; or they may vote for a particular party associated with a particular cause they are interested in. As a result small parties can do better in local government elections

Among the third parties studied, the CPP and PPP in particular are bracing up to reap the benefits of the party-based system. The CPP Ag. General Secretary drew attention to his party’s history of parliamentary victories in Effia-Kwesimintim, Ellembelle, Evalue-Dwira, Jomoro and Tarkwa-Nsuaem (all in the Western Region), Kumbungu and Mion (Northern Region) and others in Central Region, he was sure the party could control some districts (Field Interview, 14/11/19). The CPP Volta Regional Secretary was confident that the party could win some MMDCE and assembly positions in districts such as Hohoe, Anlo, KpandoAkatsi North and Akatsi South (Field Interview, 11/11/19). Similarly, in a focus group discussion with the CPP Eastern regional executive, it was revealed that party would make serious impact in Lower Manya, Upper Manya and YiloKrobo districts (Fieldwork, 15/11/19).

Similarly, in the focus group discussion with the PPP executive, they admitted though without a history of parliamentary, their party’s competitive parliamentary contests in Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem (KEEA) in the Central Region and South Dayi in the Volta Region, would give them control over some MMDAs (Fieldwork, 13/11/19). The national executive further revealed that the party was targeting 20 constituencies in the 2020 elections and looking forward to winning about 5-10, and hoping the same for the MMDCEs arguing that comparative advantage it has over the NPP and NDC was because most of their candidates are professionals (Fieldwork, 13/11/19).

4.6 Sensitization and Mobilization towards the Suspended Referendum

There were conflicting views about the extent to which the public was being sensitized towards the referendum. Whereas, the latest Afrobarometer report issued by CDD-Ghana indicated that only 42% of Ghanaians were aware of the upcoming referendum, the NCCE in another study reported of a 70% voter turnout for the referendum. What is not in doubt is the belated sensitization programs initiated by various stakeholders. As illustrated below all such programmes were mostly from October this year:

4.6.1 Government (MLGRD)

- Minister of LGRD, Alima Mahama, at a DLEs & Referendum Citizens Education and Awareness Campaign in Accra called on the NCCE, the Information Services, CSOs, the media and other stakeholders to educate the public on the need to participate in the upcoming DLEs and Referendum which affords Ghanaians the opportunity to decide whether or not to introduce multi-partisan elections at the local level through the amendment of Article 55(3). (www.graphic.com.gh, 24/9/19)
- The Ashanti Regional Minister, Simon Osei Mensah at sensitization campaign workshop organized by the Information Services Department (ISD) in Kumasi, urged information officers in the region to campaign vigorously to ensure massive turnout at this year's DLEs and referendum (Modern Ghana, 21/10/19).

4.6.2 State Institutions

- NCCE Deputy National Vice Chairperson for Finance and Administration Kathleen Addy, speaking at the launch of 2019 District Level Elections and Referendum sensitization campaign in Cape Coast. She called for the support of the media, traditional and religious leaders for the process especially with regards to educating the citizenry about initiative and its importance to good democratic governance (Ghana Business News, 11/10/19).
- The NCCE is thus using strategies including regional level lectures, community durbars, stakeholder meetings, focus group discussions, film shows and sensitization and awareness programmes in schools and lorry stations to educate people on the exercise (Ghana Business News, 11/10/19).

4.6.3 The Political Parties

- The NPP General Secretary, John Boadu has embarked on a nationwide tour of the 16 regions to rally party executives of the 275 constituencies to actively participate in the campaign for an overwhelming yes vote in upcoming referendum. He urged the executives of his party across the various levels and indeed all Ghanaians to see the referendum as a crucial political exercise, not only for NPP but also for the Republic and therefore should be approached with all the seriousness it deserves. Speaking to party executives at an orientation workshop for all constituency executives in Western North Region on 31-10-19, he noted that 'the success of this referendum would mean a fulfilment of one of the key manifesto promise and more importantly something that would strengthen local governance to advance the cause of national development and prosperity' (www.GhanaWeb.com, 31/10/19).
- The Regional NPP executive in Volta indicated that it has put in measures to ensure that the referendum passes, by getting people to vote for 'YES'. Meetings had been held from the polling station levels to the regional level to ensure that the party communicators are well equipped to explain the policy to the masses (Fieldwork, 12/11/19).

- The NPP Eastern Regional executive indicated on-going meetings with the constituency and polling station executives to educate them more on the process and urge them to intensify the campaign. It was admitted that the issue was initially viewed as a national agenda but had become partisan with the opposition NDC advocating a ‘no’ vote (Fieldwork, 15/12/19).
- Ag. National Chair: The CPP was already using its platforms to educate Ghanaians on the benefit of voting ‘yes’(GNA, 8/10/19)
- CPP Ag. General Secretary, Kwabena Bonfeh: expressed his party’s support for the referendum at a DLEs & Referendum Citizens Education and Awareness Campaign in Accra, charged party members across the country, leaders at the regional and constituency levels to actively take charge of the campaign for the referendum. (Prime News Ghana, 19/9/19).
- PPP’s Executive Secretary, Richard Amar: worried ‘If we don’t sustain the momentum and the campaign enough, we may not get the 40% requirement (without which) this referendum will fail and the story will look as if Ghanaians did not want to elect their own MMDCEs ... Let’s all make it personal and try and get people to participate in this year’s local Assembly elections. Otherwise, if we fail to get that 40% mark the whole referendum will fail and the election of MMDCEs will never come back to the table again in our lifetime’(Citi Newsroom, 3/10/19).
- Party founder and leader of LPG, Kofi Akpaloo had begun his ‘education campaign, touring institutions to mobilize support to amend Article 55 (3) (GNA, 8/10/19)
- Ag. General Sec. of NDP indicated that he will use its various offices in the constituency and regional levels to educate the citizens (GNA, 8/10/19).

4.6.4 Other Stakeholders

- GJA President Roland Affail Monney: the GJA which comprises all media bodies in the country is in support of the initiative and has embarked on ‘Agenda 40/75) to raise awareness for the referendum and urged the media to consciously contribute to the agenda and help educate the public using their mediums to vote yes (GNA, 7/10/19).
- At a stakeholder engagement on the election of MMDCEs under the auspices of IDEG the NPP, NDC, CPP, PPP, NDP, GCPP & LPG have all pledged to work at the realization of what they variously termed as ‘the aspiration of the people’ (Citi Newsroom, 3/10/19).
- Pius Dzinyela, Vice Chairman, Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) pledged full support for the public sensitization and awareness raising campaign and urged all citizens to get involved (www.ncegh.gov, 18/10/19).

4.7 The Strategies

On the part of the major parties, they indicated that they will use their strategy at the national level to win seats at the local level should the referendum pass. This may have some tacit difference due to the differences between the various contexts.

On the part of the smaller parties however, they outlined several strategies that will be used by them in winning some seats, should the referendum pass. These include better articulation of policy stand, advocating for a cap in the expenditure of political parties in elections, public funding of political parties. They also added that, some of the parties will have to collaborate in some of the electoral areas and MMDs, to be able to win some of the seats. They also unveiled that, they will convert their members who contested and lost the parliamentary seats to contest the various MMDCs positions of the referendum passes.

In pursuing the collaboration, parties who share a common ideology and have some close ties are likely to be together

The smaller parties also seek to employ the principle of seat targeting. This calls for smaller parties to contest for MMDCs at places they have relative strength. For example, the PPP has some targeted seats like in Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirim (KEEA) and South Dayi constituencies. In each of these constituency, the party came second in the 2016 elections. The PNC as well has targeted some seats like Sissala East and West, where they believe they can win.

CHAPTER 5

REACTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The NDC ‘U-Turn’

The prospect of the December 17 referendum meeting the threshold of 40% voter turnout and 75% affirmative vote has been seriously affected by the events following the 12th November 2019 press conference advocating a ‘no’ vote. The reasons offered by the NDC relating to divisiveness and rancour at the local level, over-monetization of politics, exclusionary politics and issues of related amendments, have all been previously discussed and apparent consensus built on; creating the impression that they were a deliberate propaganda ploy to win political points towards Election 2020.

Be it as it may, it has effectively shattered the apparent consensus on the issue and left Ghanaians divided and increasingly polarized. Instead of a national project, the referendum has assumed entrenched partisan positions between NPP and NDC. While the NDC has been vociferously campaigning no, the pro-yes NPP appear dazed and conducting a half-hearted campaign. The third parties, the potential beneficiaries of the party-based system appear undecided or at best lukewarm in their support. The National House of Chief, presumably a citadel of non-partisanship has been severely divided along partisan lines; the media is no longer united in its support for a ‘yes’ vote as high profile journalists have taken divergent position. Civil society is also divided, while groups such as IDEG, CDD-Ghana, IMANI-Africa which have championed the ‘yes’ cause have been considerably mild in their defence while hitherto non-existent or little-known groups including One Ghana Movement, Human rights & Governance Centre, National Concerned Drivers Association, have emerged vociferously campaign ‘no’. Others groups, ironically, including the Technical Advisor of the MLGRD on the referendum are advocating postponement and/or further consultative dialogue.

5.2 Withdrawal of the Bills

In December 1, 2019, the President announced the withdrawal of the bills that had been submitted for the amendments of Articles 243 (1) and 55 (3). He explained that the decision had been contingent upon consultations with broad opinions regarding the way forward to holding the referendum. According to the President the withdrawal was necessary in order to forge a broad national consensus on the amendment proposal. This includes a further consultation with political parties that are key interest group.

5.2.1 Reactions to the withdrawal by the key political actors

The decision by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to call off the referendum was met with mixed reactions from the key actors. Some of the opposition political parties such as the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the Progressive People's Party (PPP) and the People's National Convention (PNC) expressed disappointment. These parties felt vindicated by the withdrawal because they had favoured the election of the Metropolitan, Municipal and District

Chief Executives (MMDCEs) and the assembly and unit committee members on non-partisan basis rather than on partisan platforms. According to the NDC, it represents a defeat of the President and victory for ‘the collective will of a determined people who are tired of the NDC-NPP partisan politics and, therefore, do not want it to see it in the local government system’ (Interview, NDC Communicator, 2019). The NDC General Secretary chastised the government for withdrawing the bills because it was a self-serving decision – it saved him from public ridicule and shame – because majority of the electorate were going to reject the amendment bills. The party would even go to the extent of accusing the government for causing a financial loss to the state.

The other smaller parties such as PNC argued that the withdrawal of the bills suggests that the president was paranoid of an imminent humiliation of a mass rejection of the amendment bills. On its part, the PPP said, the withdrawal affirms the suspicion that the President was not committed to the partisan elections of the MMDCEs.

On the contrary, the NPP was divided in their support. One faction acquiesced with the withdrawal on the basis that it will afford the opportunity for credible consultation with diverse groups. Yet, there was another faction that had opposed the amendment of the article that sought to make the position of the MMDCEs elective on partisan basis. To the group, the withdrawal would ensure that the status quo remains so that the party hacks would continue to exert their influence on the selection of MMDCEs and Assembly Members and capture the local political and economic processes.

5.3 CSOs’ Response to the Withdrawal

In addition to the parties’ opinion, civil society groups in the country expressed their individual concerns on the withdrawal. Prominent among the opinions submitted by the civil society organizations are the Center for Democratic Development (CDD).

5.3.1 Centre for Democratic Development (CDD)

The CDD recognized the fact that, no single political party could amend an entrenched or enshrined (non-entrenched) provisions in the Constitution because the two-thirds support required of the MPs is difficult to obtain. Thus, it welcomed the government’s withdrawal so that consensus could be built around the two issues. It believes that the articles for amendment needs consensus from across the key stakeholders. The CDD would like to see a bi-partisan approach to the amendment of the two Constitutional provisions. It indicates that beyond inter-party consensus, there is also the need for intra-party consensus. In particular, the withdrawal will give the two dominant parties (NPP and NDC) the opportunity to resolve the internal differences regarding the amendment of the Constitution.

5.3.2 Institute of Democratic Governance (IDEG)

The IDEG is one of the leading non-state actors that facilitated inter-party dialogue prior to the withdrawal of the bills. It supports inter-party and intra-NPP and NDC consensus building over the issues that precipitated the withdrawal of the bills. The IDEG believes that the

hostilities in both the NPP and NDC regarding the fundamental basis of the referendum should be resolved before the reintroduction of the bills for amendment.

According to the IDEG, the internal squabbles over the referendum revolved around whether political parties should forward candidates to contest the MMCEs and Assemblies' elections? It observed that the current arrangement where MMDCEs and 30% membership of the MMDAs are appointed by the President gives the local party executives control over the local government system. Therefore, the party executives and local politicians believe that popular election of the local leaders would not inure to their interest. Thus, in the current non-party based local governance system, the political parties are able to reward their party parliamentary candidates and activists who could not win in the strongholds of their opponents by appointing them as MMDCEs. For example, the NPP parliamentary candidates that have struggled over the years to win seats in the NDC stronghold of Volta Region have been appointed MMDCEs. Therefore, a change in the system to make the position elective on partisan basis will lead to the loss of the privileges that have enjoyed. In the case of the NDC, its opposition to the referendum stems from the argument that it is the principal architect of the non-partisan based local level governance and a change means dismantling a system which they have built for about 30 years.

The NDC felt that a successful referendum in which a majority of the electorate voted in favour of the proposed amendment would have meant political endorsement of the incumbent President and his party – and would have been disastrous for the leading opposition party. Therefore, changing from support to opposition at the last hour was a major political strategy to cause political embarrassment to the regime in order to score political points. Indeed, according to the IDEG, the President had engaged all political parties as early as 29th July 2019. During the consultation and the parliamentary debates that followed, none of the parties opposed the amendment of Article 243 (1). It was the NDC that pushed for the amendment. The only thing the NDC MPs disagreed was how to amend some key articles of the constitution to pave the way for a partisan-based local governance system: The NDC wanted Act 55 (3) which will bring in the political parties to be amended first before amending the article that will enable the people to elect their MMDCEs. The IDEG met with the political parties at the Kempinski Hotel to bring the disagreement gap, and both sides agreed that they will amend Article 243 (1) to allow the people to elect the MMDCEs, and any other law that the NDC wanted to amend, the NPP expressed willingness to support in order to enhance the process.

There was a follow up with the NPP National Chairman and General Secretary and other leading members after meeting the MPs. The NDCs national executives also agreed with the proposals but some powerful figures in the NDC led by Kwamina Ahwoi opposed the proposals that had been accepted by the MPs and the national executives of the NPP and the NDC. They argued that the issue was an important matter that should be discussed at the level of the party's National Executive Committee (NEC) and later managed to convince some of their influential party members to reject the amendment proposal and subsequently issued a public statement to register their opposition to the referendum.

The IDEG thinks that the engagement with the parties should have been extended to other influential members of the NDC and NPP. According to the IDEG, ‘if we had spoken to the other leading and powerful figures of the NDC such as Kwamina Ahwoi, Doe Adjaho and Marietta Brew Appiah-Oppong, what happened wouldn’t have happened’ and the government itself should have approached the NEC of the NDC and reach a gentlemanly agreement with them before setting modalities for the referendum’ (Interview, Jonah, IDEG, Accra, January 2020).

5.3.3 Chamber of Local Governance (ChaLoG)

The Chamber of Local Governance (ChaLoG) expressed disappointments over the President’s decision to withdraw the bills from parliament, and cancellation of the planned referendum. ChaLoG indicated that the move shows that the President is not committed to the promise made in his party’s manifesto. The ChaLoG thinks that the government should have gone ahead with the referendum so that Ghanaians would have had the opportunity to elect their MMDCEs.

5.3.4 OneGhana Movement

The OneGhana Movement also expressed disappointment over the aborted referendum. While the group had campaigned against the possible amendment of Article 55(3), they pushed for the support of the amendment of Article 243 (1) in order enable Ghanaians elect their MMDCEs.

5.4 Recommendations on consequential reforms

Should the referendum be revisited in future the following recommendations would contribute to the successful implementation of the party-based local government system

- Reduce overload of elections by holding presidential, parliamentary, MMDCE, assembly and unit committee elections at the same time.
- There should be a cap on the creation of MMDAs to ensure that the existing ones are supported to be viable.
- Measures (preferably proportional representation) to ensure that women, youth and persons with disabilities are adequately represented. Some form of proportional representation at the local level may be a first step towards its introduction at the national level
- An upward adjustment the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) from the current 10%, loosening of the bureaucratic strings around it, reduction in its irregular disbursement and removal of central government-directed expenditures deducted at source to make the operations of the MMDAs viable and attractive. This is one of the surest ways to ensure that people have control of the development agenda of their local areas based on their established priorities. Electing MMDCEs without giving them the

needed funds to operate will create disaffection at the local level and undermine the democratic

- Ensure better regulation of political parties to give all parties fair opportunities to operate.
- Provide public funding for specific party activities at local level. In a sense, it would be a continuation of the public sponsorship of common platforms for candidates in the existing system.
- Parties should prepare for local governance politics which is somewhat different from participation in national politics. Local governance involves devising solution for problems in smaller communities and solutions must be carefully tailored for locally specific problems. Thus political parties must develop and present platforms and policies that respond to the challenges communities face at the local level.
- Change management teams must be put in place to handle capacity building issues such as orientation, sensitization and public education of the stakeholders and restructuring.
- Orientation for political parties which have been excluded from local governance for more than six decades, to change them from being electoral machines to being development-oriented entities. In this respect, it would be most prudent for political parties to source collaboration with like-minded parties abroad, with long experience in party-based local governance to seek support for capacity building and access best practices.
- More public education on the role of political parties in the operations of decentralized local governance to build trust between them and the citizens
- There should be concerted effort to allay fears because some of the potential risks represent the fears of people who do not know how the new system will work.
- The media must play advocacy roles in setting the agenda to make local governance more vibrant; the country's media plurality must translate into relevance of the ordinary Ghanaian with respect to local governance
- Citizens participation in local governance must improve and there must be various interventions to address this. Here there is the need for effective utilization of the media as tool to promote understanding and participation of citizens in governance at the local level
- The media must play a crucial role in bridging the gap between the local government authorities and their citizens, as they provide platforms for local people to demand accountability from their local leaders and offer them suggestions for community development.
- Policy decision makers must be mindful of challenges that minority and marginalized groups (women, youth, persons with disabilities, ethnic minority) may face in their attempt to compete. There should therefore be amendments to encourage representation of such groups

- Local government bodies and civil society organizations should educate and sensitize citizens to enlighten them on the responsibilities of elected local government officials and the citizens' own role in local government. This will enable citizens to effectively demand accountability in everyday governance as well as at election time. Such education or sensitisation programmes should also re-orient the electorate towards making demands for collective goods rather than personalized demands on elected local leaders to avoid a replication of what we continually witness with demands on MPs.
- There is the urgent need for a blueprint for the operation of Local Authorities under the new regime to give a picture of how the system will look like since the referendum will drastically change the dynamics and operation of the Local Assemblies. This blueprint will define and guide the expected relationship between the elected MMDCE and members of the MMDA, the DCOD, the Heads of the Decentralized Departments on the other, as well as the relationship between the elected MMDCE and the appointed Regional Minister.
- Smaller parties must concentrate their meagre resources in contesting local government elections and winning assembly seats and MMDCE positions to showcase what they can do and that would serve as training grounds and keep them in the political and electoral limelight for future national elections.
- Various stakeholders have respective roles in helping party-based local governance work: Parliament, the Presidency, CSOs and the Parties themselves.
- To win an electoral area election may be easier than winning a whole constituency. Often the smaller parties may be strong in some electoral areas but lose out when votes are aggregated for the whole constituency. Thus if they concentrate their efforts in such electoral areas, they can win some assembly seats.
- The media must change its attitude that politics in Ghana is a two-horse race and educate the smaller parties and the electorate the important roles such parties can play particularly at the parliamentary level.
- Similarly, the media must shift their over-emphasis on national issues and take steps to highlight issues of local governance, particularly the achievements of MMDCEs in their MMDAs and assemblymen in their electoral areas.
- Political parties must undertake membership drives to deal with the challenge of high levels of party identification with but low card-bearing membership.
- Political parties must collaborate with civil society organizations at the grassroots for effective public education on the broad range of functions and roles the parties are capable of performing.
- Political parties must impress the public with positive behaviour and attitudes in order to defuse the perception and cynicism that associate political parties with the 'dirty' side of politics and democracy.

5.5 Conclusion

Ghana's move from non-partisan to party-based local government system is caught in a dilemma that was aptly captured by Nicolo Machiavelli in his book, *The Prince* (1513):

We must bear in mind ... that there is nothing more difficult and dangerous, or more doubtful of success, than an attempt to introduce a new order of things in any state. For the innovator has for enemies all those who derived advantages from the old order of things, while those who expect to be benefitted by the new institutions will be but lukewarm defenders. This indifference arises in part from fear of their adversaries who were favoured by the existing laws, and partly from the incredulity of men who have no faith in anything new that is not the result of well-established experience. Hence it is that, whenever the opponents of the new order of things have opportunity to attack it, they will do it with the zeal of partisans, whilst the others defend it but feebly, so that it is dangerous to rely upon the latter.

Nevertheless, the issues that caused the government to withdraw can be surmounted to allow for the reintroduction of the bill and a determination by the electorate.

As IDEG indicated, a rigorous and robust engagements with the parties' National Executives and senior party officers to sort out their apprehensions could be a first step towards mending the disagreements to achieve consensus on the technicalities around the issue.

Once consensus is achieved, it would not be out of order to add the two issues on a separate ballot to the presidential and parliamentary elections in December 2020. Adding the referendum to the general election will reduce the costly dimension of the argument and possibly settle the minds of those who think that the withdrawal led to a financial lost. On the other hand, the government may use the election year to broaden the consultation process with the political parties, and other identifiable groups such as traditional authorities on making the local government elections partisan. This done, the referendum can be a feature of 2021 election calendar.

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