Aligning the Promises of Political Parties with the expectations of the Ghanaian Voter

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Table of Contents

Acronyms ................................................................................................................................. 4

1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 5

2. Methodology ....................................................................................................................... 6
   2.3 Subject Population ........................................................................................................... 6
   2.3.1: Sampling Methodology ............................................................................................ 7
   2.4 Basis of choice ................................................................................................................ 8
   2.5 Data Collection Method ............................................................................................... 8

3 Presentation of Results of Survey ....................................................................................... 9
   3.1 Governance .................................................................................................................... 9
   3.1.1 Reduction of Corruption ........................................................................................... 9
   3.1.2 Recovery of Money Lost to Corruption ................................................................... 10
   Regional Dynamics & Population Swing: ........................................................................... 11
   3.2 Decentralization of Political Authority ......................................................................... 11
   Regional Dynamics & Population ....................................................................................... 13
   3.3 Gender ........................................................................................................................ 14
   3.4.1 Access to Primary Education .................................................................................. 16
   3.4.2 Access to Secondary Education .............................................................................. 17
      3.4.3 Cost of Education .................................................................................................. 18
   3.5 Health .......................................................................................................................... 19
      Access to Healthcare Facilities ...................................................................................... 20
      3.5.1 Cost of Healthcare ............................................................................................... 21
      3.5.2 Quality of Healthcare Facilities ......................................................................... 22
      3.5.3 Presence of Health Personnel ............................................................................ 23
   3.6 Agriculture .................................................................................................................... 24
      3.6.1 Support for Cash Crop Production ....................................................................... 25
      3.6.2 Agribusiness Promotion ....................................................................................... 26
      Subsidization of Seedlings and Fertilizers .................................................................... 28
**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SADA</td>
<td>Savannah Accelerated Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GYEEEDA</td>
<td>Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCEs</td>
<td>District Chief Executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEs</td>
<td>Metropolitan Chef Executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHIS</td>
<td>National Heath Insurance Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Value Added Tax</td>
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</table>
1. Introduction

The election year of 2016 comes at a very pivotal time in the history of the 4th republic. This election is just after the first constitutional review process completed in 2015. It also comes on the back of an energy crisis that has drawn back economic growth.

The 2012 general elections were held within a tense political context. The political tension was exacerbated when Hon. Nana Akufo-Addo, flagbearer of the New Patriotic Party (NPP); his running mate, Dr Mahamadu Bawumia, and the then National Chairman of the NPP, late Mr Jake Obetsebi-Lamptey, filed a petition under Article 64 of the 1992 Constitution; Section 5 of the Presidential Election Act, 1992 (PNDCL 285) and Rule 68 and 68 A of the Supreme Court (Amendment) Rules 2012, CI 74, challenging the election of President John Dramani Mahama. A ruling was declared in August 2013 in favour of President John Dramani Mahama by the Supreme Court of the Republic Ghana.

Evidently, the stakes in the 2016 general elections appear to be very high; especially between the NPP and the NDC.

However, sadly, with less than 100 days to the elections, both parties have not released a holistic view of what their main focus areas would be in any significant detail.

Indeed, prospective voters have had to hazard guesses and glean from vague promises and second hand news reports what issues the presidential candidates are proclaiming in very informal circumstances any substantive plans that will shape the upcoming administration. While an analysis has been done of same by IMANI, it would present a balance of aspirations if a collation of public aspirations were made, tied to certain central themes to effectively be used as a barometer of expectations.

IMANI’s pre-election report highlighted various persistent topical areas in governance, economy, agriculture, health and gender, education and others as a yardstick to measure expectations.

First, this report examines how resonant the themes are in the minds of voters and on the other hand establishes an alignment or correlation with the promises of the various political parties.
2. Methodology

On the ground enumeration was conducted by Oxford Research Group, which helped design the approach to the data collection processes.

To achieve the objectives of the data collection exercise and the assessment as a whole, we propose a total sample size of 10,000 respondents nationwide.

2.3 Subject Population

The respondents were chosen on a region-by-region basis, with reference to the latest data from the Electoral Commission, where voter data was retrieved per region to establish a representative ratio of respondents according to population of voters in these regions. At the regional level, most of the respondents were chosen from high density population areas.

Table 1 below depicts the sampling process and sample size of the study.

Table 1: Sampling Process and Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Population of Region</th>
<th>Study Locations In Region</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashanti Region</td>
<td>2,557,110</td>
<td>Kumasi</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obuasi</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Accra</td>
<td>2,792,537</td>
<td>Accra</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tema</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Region</td>
<td>1,429,681</td>
<td>Koforidua</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nkawkaw</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Region</td>
<td>1,425,154</td>
<td>Sekondi-Takoradi</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Sample Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Region</td>
<td>1,263,459</td>
<td>Tamale</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yendi</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brong Ahafo</td>
<td>1,815,408</td>
<td>Sunyani</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Techiman</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volta Region</td>
<td>1,156,739</td>
<td>Ho</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aflao</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Region</td>
<td>1,231,462</td>
<td>Cape Coast</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agona Swedru</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper East</td>
<td>512,378</td>
<td>Bolgatanga</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Navrongo</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper West</td>
<td>417,206</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jirapa/Lambussie</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.3.1: Sampling Methodology

The study used probabilistic sampling approach to sample target respondents from both rural and urban areas within the country, across the various socioeconomic classes. 55 enumerators were involved. They went from district to district, town to town, village to village. Data was captured using electronic devices (Computer Aided Personal Interviews-CAPI). Each region had a field coordinator who monitored the process.

For the purposes of this study, the total number of registered voters was used or assumed as the total population. To ensure that this survey is a true reflection of views pertaining on the ground, the research design and sample size considerations, the research adopted a confidence level of 95%, with a
critical number of 0.975. Adopting the alpha value of 5% in this approach, against the total population of Ghana at 24,000,000 gives us a recommended sample size of 9,998 which is approximately the 10020 respondents who were interviewed in the course of the survey.

### 2.4 Basis of choice

For the purposes of this study, the selection criteria are as follows:

1. Highly populated areas in all the regions have the best evidence of infrastructural and socio-economic development that could be identified by respondents and help elicit better perspectives
2. Each respondent is above 18 and an eligible voter

There was no granular selection based on gender, educational qualifications or social status because the scope was just to test the “ordinary man on the street” since the objective around the selection was to cast a wide net which would best mimic an electoral scenario.

### 2.5 Data Collection Method

The Data collection instrument was be developed by the IMANI Ghana team for the study. Ten teams were deployed to conduct the data collection concurrently across the 10 regions. Each team included 1 Field coordinator with between 5-9 field research assistants conducting data collection for 14 days across the sampled regions. It is imperative to state that, these field enumerators underwent intensive training on how to handle respondents.

Digital Data Collection methods (DDC) were used in collecting all the necessary data. This methodology involves the use of digital devices like Android tablets for data collection. Programming of survey instruments were done using Open Data Kit (ODK) compliant frameworks such as Kobo and SurveyCTO. By this approach, paper surveys were electronically translated (i.e. programmed) into software interfaces used for data collection both offline and online.

The surveys were ran on digital devices such as mobile phones with screen sizes greater than 5 inches or tablets with much bigger screen size.

Programmed survey forms (instruments) were be hosted on an encrypted server on the cloud. The hosted survey could be downloaded onto individual digital devices for the data collection. Data collection didn’t require internet connection as the data could be collected in an offline mode and securely stored locally. The securely stored data offline could be uploaded to the server once internet connection was available.

Amongst the numerous advantages of DDC are:

1. Reduced amount of errors
2. Reduced cost of data collection
3. Provides secured data storage through encryption
4. Eliminate data entry and reconciliation to the minimum
5. Provides a system that allows for close monitoring of data set

3 Presentation of Results of Survey

The main guideline with regards to parameters that were used to gauge citizens’ responses were through the use of core areas in the IMANI Pre-Election Report (See: IMANI’s 2016 Pre-Election Report: Whoever Wants to Win Election Must Pay Attention). The data gathered will be discussed with those themes at the core of the descriptive elements of this study.

3.1 Governance

3.1.1 Reduction of Corruption

The biggest reality facing the Ghanaian voter is the prevalence of corruption. Instances of scenarios where the nation has lost monies from corruption include scandals such as SADA, GYEEDA, the payment for contracts such as the bus rebranding exercise in 2015 among others made significant headlines and defined the talking point around corruption towards the 2016 elections.

It is imperative therefore that corruption as a systematic defect is tackled head-on by any government that seeks the “blessing” of prospective voters. Gauging the expectation of prospective voters gives a sense of the desirability of this trait, or the kind of attitude that any government that wants the mandate of the voters of Ghana should have.

“Survey results indicate that voters from the Ashanti and Upper East Region are the most amenable to this requirement with 84% of prospective Ashanti Region voters viewing it as a very important action that any incoming government is expected to undertake, or at the very least, a necessity.”

Of all the regions, only two regions, the Upper West and the Volta Regions did not deem reduction of corruption as a Very Important attribute of the incoming government. In both cases, 32% and 41% determined reduction of corruption to be a priority but nothing more.
In terms of corruption perception therefore, it is clear that voters in the Ashanti Region are much more prone to react to news about corruption and make it influence their decisions more than voters in the Volta Region, given that such news has been very prominent in national discussions over the past 3 years. There is also the underlying assumption of ethnic allegiance of certain regions, their political leanings and perception of preference for certain political parties.

### 3.1.2 Recovery of Money Lost to Corruption

To determine whether Ghanaian voters cared about the losses to the state due to corruption, respondents were asked if they considered the recovery of such funds as an important priority for any incoming government. The levels of priority defined ranged from Not Important as the least level of priority, to actionable, a priority and Very Important as the highest level.

Respondents in the Ashanti Region were most assertive about its importance, with 68% of them indicating it to be at the top level of importance as far as they were concerned. In the Volta Region, 8% of respondents did not find it to be an important issue that any incoming government should pursue. However, only 22% of Upper West respondents ranked the recovery of monies as Very Important. Between these two were a median of around 53% of the response tagging it as Very Important.
[Figure 2: Importance of Recovering Lost Monies to Voters]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

Whichever way the ballot goes, it is obvious that a majority of voters will like to see the new government take some definite action on remedying the wastage due to corruption on the national coffers. It will be instructive that governments in waiting create an agenda that this issue as one of the first actionable activities, since these actions are purely in the purview of executive will and power.

**Regional Dynamics & Population Swing:**

Any party that targets a clampdown on corruption as a main agenda stands to gain from the reactive nature of the Ashanti Region bloc of voters and those of the Greater Accra region as strategic allies in voting them into power based on the will to reduce corruption. The relatively ambivalent nature of the Volta Regional bloc to perceptions of corruption will matter to parties who stand to be tainted as having track records of corruption.

While Ashanti Region voters comprise 18.16% (using 2012 election data) of the population, parties wishing to stamp out corruption might have an edge if they prioritize this message.

**3.2 Decentralization of Political Authority**

Major stakeholders in the development and evolution of Ghana’s democracy have continuously clamoured for a further deepening of the practice of democracy by further decentralizing political
authority to the local level. A major component of this decentralization included suggestions after the last constitutional review that District and Metropolitan Chief Executives should be elected by the local people and not appointed by the Executive.

Voters in the Brong-Ahafo, Upper-East, Upper-West, Northern and Volta Regions do not deem decentralization of political authority as significant enough to influence their schedule of expectations. In all of these cases, less than 35% of respondents in these regions ranked it as a very important aspect of governance as far as its execution by an incoming government was concerned.

While they all deemed it as either a priority or a necessity, it can be determined from the responses that as far as voters in these regions were concerned, the devolution of power and the ability to select DCEs and MCEs were not significant enough to attract their interest.

For example, it could be easily gleaned from the data that voters in the Upper West Region for instance would not be swayed by a party that makes it paramount on their agenda since only 15% of respondents in the region deemed it as a very important aspect of governance.

On the contrary, any party that does not have on its agenda an acceleration of the process required to allow people in a district to elect their DCEs and MCEs would not impress voters in the Ashanti and Western Regions, and to some extent the Central, Greater Accra and Eastern Regions.

The nation seems to be split into two zones on this particular topic, with most respondents in the south of the country seeing decentralization as desirable, while those in the northern areas of the country not attaching much importance with the exception of the Volta region. Interestingly, the regions demanding the most centralization based activity are also those in the southern belt of the country.
What might be interesting to observe is whether aspects of local government activity are handled more satisfactorily in the northern sector of the country than the other areas that is prompting this rather stark and noticeable duality of opinion. It would be interesting to further explore some causative elements of this division and consistency of approach in another study.

Regional Dynamics & Population.
In terms of the dynamics in relation to party chances, it is evident that to get the numbers behind them to win the elections, parties will be better off adding this aspect to their agenda but strengthening that perception among the more densely populated southern regions where this has a significant weight of importance, especially in the resource rich Western Region where local populations seem to wish to want more say in who runs their local affairs for them.
3.3 Gender

The prominence of gender issues in a nation reflect a maturity of the recognition of basic human rights as well as equality of opportunity that serves to fulfil a lot of development metrics such as the SDG Goal 5 which directly affects gender equality and women’s rights.

With its importance as a cardinal element of a democratic dispensation, it was important for this study to establish if voters shared the aspirations of such, and as to whether political parties that had women high on the agenda would reap the necessary benefits in terms of voter interest and elasticity to the topic.

Regions like the Brong-Ahafo, Central, Greater-Accra, Upper East and Western Regions had over 50% of prospective voters interviewed in favour of any incoming government that made gender equality issues a very important part of its message. It would be interesting to note the strong interest in gender issues in areas like the Brong Ahafo and Upper East regions which are bordered by other regions that didn’t even recognize gender issues as a very important attribute.

![Figure 4: Importance of Gender Inequality as a Voting Issue](source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016)

The Upper West region for example had only 10% of prospective voters indicating gender issues as very important in an area with similar characteristics both socially and economically as against that of the Upper East region that had a whopping 54% of prospective voters indicating it as a matter of importance.

The Brong-Ahafo Region is also bordered to the north by the Northern Region, and to the south by the Ashanti Region, both of whom had 29% and 38% of respondents seeing gender issues as very important.
for an incoming government. It could either be that gender interventions in some regions had a better
effect than others in terms of policy implementation activities across some of the regions accounting for
sharp discrepancies in contiguous geographical zones.

### 3.4 Education

Closely related to the matter of gender is the matter of youth, children, access to, and quality of education.
On the general theme of whether access to education was a matter of importance this year, almost all
regions thought it was either a very important factor or at least a priority. Interestingly, there was a huge
buck in that trend of thought. Only 28% of respondents in the Upper West region thought access to
education was very important.

It is interesting to note that in the case of gender inequality, a similar trend against the norm was noticed
in the Upper West region. This could be the outcome of two possible scenarios: Either there has been a
lot of work related to improving gender and access to education in the region, or most local people are
not aware of it’s importance and significance in relation to it being a matter of policy required enough to
attract their vote.

![Figure 5: Voters’ Level of Interest in Access to Primary Education](source)

In the future, a study targeted at the region should determine what informs what could either be a high
satisfaction or lack of interest in this particular region that makes it deviate from the norm as far as these
topics are concerned.
In addressing other issues such as the access to Primary, Secondary and Tertiary education, only Primary education had 40% of respondents describing it as a very important aspect of their ‘shopping list’ with regards to desires and expectations when it comes to education in the Upper West Region.

In comparison with the above, and in comparison with the trend in the other regions, one is tempted to instruct a more detailed interest in the apparent ambivalent nature of voters in the Upper East Region. Possibly, so much effort has been placed into issues of gender and issues of education and its access so much that it is not an important attribute they want to see in any incoming government. Either way, important insight will lead to either a replication of the success there or doubling up on efforts to raise awareness.

3.4.1 Access to Primary Education

Voters in the Upper East region are most likely to be swayed by a candidate who is interested in providing better access to Primary/basic level education. 74% of the respondents there indicated it as a very important expectation of any coming government. With the exception of Volta and Central regions, where just over 45% of respondents rated access to Primary education as very important, most of the other regions had their expectations ranging around the median expectation rate of 58%. The only other remarkable exception was that of the Upper West region, whose discordant expectation characteristics have been discussed previously.

### ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

![Bar chart showing access to primary education across different regions](source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016)

Access to primary education is therefore an important issue that will have the potential to sway larger percentages of voters if they have expectations in this regard.
3.4.2 Access to Secondary Education

Desires of voters in their expectations of governmental interest in expanding primary education also reflected in Secondary Education. Upper West region had the lowest level of importance attached to this while the Upper East, Ashanti and Western region expressed determined that access to Secondary level education was very important to them. The Volta and Brong-Ahafo regions however did not deem it a paramount item on their scale of preferences as regards what an incoming government should provide in terms of education.

Linked probably to the discussion on secondary education is that of technical education. While the education reforms primarily dwelt on making this aspect of education an essential part of national discourse on education, it has been sidelined in terms or its relevance.

![Figure 7: Access to Secondary School Education: Voters’ Perception of Relevance](source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016)

The Ashanti region again had the highest number of respondents ranking the access to tertiary education as very important, with 61% of respondents indicating that. This was followed by the Upper East, Greater Accra and the Western regions. As has been the trend with respect to education, there was a more muted interest by the Upper West Region, followed by the Volta Region. It appears these two regions consistently are very satisfied with amenities at their disposal and within their reach as far as education is concerned.
3.4.3 Cost of Education

While basic education has been ‘progressively free’ for a while now, there are still certain costs that are incurred by parents of school-going children at different levels. In analysing the significance of cost of education, it is an important determinant of access to education and educational facilities in itself.

With so much discussion about the cost of education in this country, and with the controversy that raged during the 2012 election on the adoption of free education at the SHS level, this study wanted to establish if cost issues were still a significant pull factor in determining a desirable candidate. This question was put to test and the reactions of the respondents were segmented into two aspects, one for pre-tertiary education, and one for tertiary education.

The reason for the distinction is that there is now an unprecedented level of enrolment at the tertiary level, which is becoming a common part of the educational expense burden. In light of this, the current government has upgraded some polytechnics into universities and is creating a few more to address the gaps in tertiary enrolment. However, these can only succeed if the costs are within the reach of most parents, or complementary financial arrangements are sufficient to support students.

![Cost of Pre-Tertiary Education](image)

[Figure 8: Level of Importance of Pre-Tertiary Education Costs]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

While most respondents deemed it important, the levels of importance attributed were not as high as in previous responses, with most regions having a range of 50% to 57% of their respondents seeing the cost of education as important. Indeed, the Western and Ashanti regions were the most interested at 57%, followed by the Eastern and Greater Accra regions at 55% and the Upper East at 54%. Like in other cases, the Volta, Upper West and Brong Ahafo regions tallied the lowest levels of interest, with both Upper West
and Volta Regions showing the least amount of interest by with only 25% and 24% seeing the cost of education as a very important determinant of a new government.

On the issue of tertiary education, a similar, if more muted interest was shown. Regions with typically high emphasis placed on other aspects of educational desires were less concerned. Respondents in the Western region were the most concerned as 59% of the respondents thought it was very important. Importantly, only 49% of Ashanti Region respondents were of the opinion that cost of tertiary education was a very important factor. Between 52% and 54% of respondents from the Upper East, Greater-Accra and Eastern regions ranked the cost of tertiary education as very important.

![Figure 9: Importance of the Cost of Tertiary Education to Election Issues]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

Probably, because of relatively low enrolment levels in the transition of students from the secondary level to the tertiary level, it has not generated a significant level of attention for it to be a very topical issue. The accelerated development of institutions of higher education in recent times will create enough attention since increase access will definitely make more of the related issues increasingly apparent.

### 3.5 Health

Ghana’s growing population has added a strain to existing healthcare infrastructure, and while aggressive attempts to improve healthcare, like the creation and implementation of the NHIS among others have helped, there is still a gap between expectations and delivery.
The role of government is very crucial in facilitating the growth and level of quality of health, and policies, interventions and programs initiated by government should be centered along several parallel themes to ensure better holistic healthcare outcomes. Benchmarks defined by development paradigms such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among numerous other interventions have been instrumental in ensuring some progress.

In examining the expectations of prospective voters, the study wanted to establish common expectations of the healthcare system as it is to determine the areas of the system that will attract more attention from voters, and how voters will react to how aspects of proposed solutions will impact on their expectations and hence their preferences.

**Access to Healthcare Facilities**

From the responses gathered, people in the Upper East Region are most concerned about access to healthcare facilities. About 71% of respondents there indicated that it was very important to them. If you combine the next level of importance, a combined 93% of respondents considered it either a very important expectation or at the very least, a priority area of any incoming government.

Similarly, the Ashanti, Western and Greater-Accra region held the aspect of access to healthcare as a paramount matter of importance. Responses ranged between 57% and 58%, while regions like the Brong-Ahafo, Volta and Upper West regions had the lowest interest in the issue of access to healthcare. The Upper West region had the lowest need for access to healthcare, resulting in only 31% of respondents seeing it as an important requirement, while Volta Region respondents had 38% describing it as a very important issue and 40% in the Brong-Ahafo region.

“71% of respondents in the Upper East Region indicated that healthcare was very important to them.”
It appears therefore that the status quo in these regions is relatively more satisfactory than other areas in the Upper East, Ashanti Region and the Western Region. It will be instructive to investigate the main causes of concern for the apparent lack of access to healthcare facilities.

### 3.5.1 Cost of Healthcare

Outside most urban enclaves, conventional healthcare is mainly funded through interventions such as the NHIS and community healthcare programmes by some development partners. Perhaps, this aspect of the study will give a good background on whether its impact is satisfactory in addressing most people’s concerns about the cost of healthcare.

The objectives of comprehensive healthcare policies are compromised not only by lack of access, but also a lack of affordable alternatives to good healthcare. In that direction, respondents were sampled on their perceptions on whether an incoming government should address the cost of healthcare as an important issue. This would be used as a yardstick or precursor to looking into which parties would adopt a better system than the one currently in place and iron out any inefficiencies.
The group of people with the biggest complaints were those in the Western Region, where 58% of them described a government that concentrated on these issues as very important being a more favourable alternative. Similarly, respondents in the Ashanti, Eastern, Greater-Accra and Upper East regions ranked them as very important.

![Figure 11: Cost of Healthcare](image)

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

Residents in the Brong-Ahafo, Upper West and Volta Regions however do not see cost as a problem, especially the latter 2 regions, where only 36% and 27% of respondents ranked them as very important.

### 3.5.2 Quality of Healthcare Facilities

The mere presence and access of healthcare facilities and their affordability alone do not mean that there is a full level of satisfaction with regards the policy directions towards healthcare. Even more important, the quality of the facilities, amenities available and quality of care go a long way to instill confidence.

Residents in the Upper East region appeared to be the most concerned about the quality of their health facilities, while 61% of those in the Ashanti Region felt the same way. While other regions like the Western, Eastern, Greater-Accra and Northern regions had relative higher levels of importance in relation to the quality of their healthcare facilities, residents of the Brong-Ahafo Upper West and Volta regions, as
has been the case, were less concerned and less likely to be swayed by an incoming government that made these areas a priority.

![Quality of Health Facilities](image)

[Figure 12: Quality of Healthcare Facilities: Importance to Voters By Region]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

There probably has been a lot of investment into health facilities in these areas that are more satisfied, hence the prevailing situation presents a healthy scenario as far as they are concerned. It will be important to observe what interventions happened in these localities to generate this level of enthusiasm and satisfaction.

### 3.5.3 Presence of Health Personnel

As has been the case in related aspects, residents in the Upper East, Western and Ashanti Region have been most concerned about the presence of health personnel in their localities. The Northern region also indicated a lot of concern in that regard, although it is very consistent with the trend of their levels of satisfaction on the presence of health personnel. Residents of the Greater-Accra and the Eastern Region also indicated similar levels of concern which is consistent with the level of concern they expressed to other aspects of healthcare policy and delivery.
Perhaps, the deviation that bucked the trend significantly was in the Volta Region where the level of concern has been relatively higher, since in all other aspects, the median level of concern among respondents have been around 38% while in this particular case, there were 53% of respondents who were reactive to the adequacy of the presence of health personnel. Perhaps on the issue of health, the human resource policy related to healthcare delivery will be of very great importance and capture the attention of possible voters in the region.

The Brong-Ahafo, Central and Upper West regions recorded responses that have been consistent with the trend of ranking of importance of health related themes so far.

### 3.6 Agriculture

Agriculture and derivative activity are responsible for the livelihoods of some over 56% of Ghanaians directly. Agricultural growth in the last few years has seen very limited growth. In fact, in 2015, the contribution of agriculture to the GDP actually shrunk by a negative margin in comparison to previous years. This is a cause of worry as it directly has a bearing on the income generating ability of most...
Ghanaians, especially the rural poor, who live directly from their land through limited commercial and subsistence level farming.

This means that it offers numerous opportunity for improvements and better policy outcomes provided there is enough will and support to change the most adverse and variable factors that can boost agricultural output.

Keywords derived from the IMANI pre-election report were used to determine key areas of government intervention to weigh the expectations of people who were most probably going to vote in the upcoming elections.

Key among these were government assistance and intervention in cash crop production, agribusiness promotion, encouraging the youth in agriculture, subsidization of fertilizers and education and training in agricultural practices and methods.

3.6.1 Support for Cash Crop Production

Cash crops have direct benefits to Ghana as a whole. Apart from diversifying the export portfolio of the country, it is a direct source of foreign exchange and a more lucrative option for farmers due to the use of more superior and efficient methods of production, which on the aggregate provide better agricultural practices and better production.

Because of the nature of production, which must conform to a myriad standardization processes and procedures in order to meet stringent quality standards, cash crop production is not a very easy option for the traditional Ghanaian smallholder farmer, as issues like irrigation and mechanized agro-inputs are almost prohibitive in terms of procurement.

Most respondents in were of the opinion that it was a very important activity, with 63% of respondents in the Upper East region seeing it as a very important activity for the next government. Respondents in the Western, Ashanti, Central, Eastern, Greater Accra and Northern regions also determined that support for cash crop related activity and production was very important. To this end, most of the respondents rated it between 48% and 55% by level of importance.
Notable exceptions were the Brong-Ahafo Region, the Upper West region and the Volta region. In the case of the Upper West region, about 14% of the respondents gave it the least level of priority in their opinion. This is the highest level of de-prioritization of a concept of growth in the whole study so far. More interesting is that those who deemed it important were for the first time less than those who gave it other levels of importance, save the attribute of Actionable. It might be that no effort has been made in the Upper West region to sustain any growth or interest in cash crops, hence a total lack of concern in that regard.

3.6.2 Agribusiness Promotion

Of the respondents interviewed, those who were most interested in agribusiness promotion as a relevant national policy for boosting agriculture were mostly in the Ashanti, Western and Upper West regions. Interestingly, the Brong-Ahafo region, which is one of Ghana’s more agrarian regions, only 32% of
respondents indicated it as a matter of utmost importance for an incoming government. Other regions that deemed it very important were the Central, Greater-Accra, Eastern and Northern regions.

Also remarkable was that respondents in the Upper West region rated it as a matter of priority, but not of significant importance. Additionally, 14% rated it at the lowest level of relevant importance. This also mirrored that of Volta region where 15% of respondents also thought it was of a far lower scale of importance, as just an actionable attribute of a new government, while 4% thought it was of no importance at all.

![Agribusiness Promotion Focus](image)

[Figure 15: Attractiveness of Agribusiness Promotion Policies to Voters by Region]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

It is getting obvious that issues related to the improvement of agriculture are not bound to sway the opinions and preferences of most voters in the Upper West and Volta regions. They seem very satisfied with what is happening now and will not demand any significant change in the near future. A further interrogation of the results to identify the causal factors will be necessary in another study.
Subsidization of Seedlings and Fertilizers

Most campaign promises over the last 16 years have highlighted the subsidization of essential inputs such as seedlings and fertilizers to farmers. It is almost a given that most farmers will expect these freebies by anyone who attempts to use their mandate to boost agriculture in Ghana.

Voters in the Western region see the subsidization of these inputs as still a matter of importance. About 57% of the respondents thought this was a very important intervention any coming government should implement, as well as 52% of Ashanti region residents, and 51% of both Greater-Accra and Northern Region voters.

Interestingly, voters in the Upper East Region this time around did not attach a lot of importance to this aspect of agricultural interventions. Only 38% of them believed it should be important, while 34% of them thought it should be a priority and nothing more. This time, their views were similar to those of their neighbour, the Upper East Region. Both Volta and Brong Ahafo regions were more neutral or ambivalent, with 29% seeing it as a necessity in the Volta region, and 31% seeing it as a matter of high importance in the Brong-Ahafo region.

[Figure 16: Importance of the Subsidization of Seedlings/Fertilizer by Region]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

There might be a few more complex parameters to evaluate in this instance, as most of the subsidization activity would probably be targeted at cash crops and not staples, and regions that produce staples will really not be very interested as by convention they are always purchasing improved seedlings as a matter
of business activity. However, those into cash crops will want to gain access to the latest approved plant breeds for export, some of which are more expensive due to the characteristics of procurement and the cost of the particular breeds, and hence to be viable, might require initial inputs in order to be able to produce to scale.

3.6.3 Education and Training

Agricultural practice in Ghana, apart from the major cash crops have always been one of subsistence, very low productivity and efficient farming methods. While a lot of work has gone into changing that perspective, it is still a pre-dominant characteristic of agro related activity in Ghana. In order that more smart agricultural methods are used, farmers need to be educated and trained. With regards to that, it will be interesting to find out if voter populations are aware about this fact, and whether they care about it well enough to see it as a basis for choosing a particular candidate.

In this direction, respondents were asked about whether they thought that policies related to education and training were relevant enough to warrant any kind of expectation from an incoming government.

![Figure 17: Agric Education & Training Relevance by Region](image)

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]
In the Western Region, there are very high expectations when it comes to farmer education and training. About 62% of interviewed respondents indicated it as a very important issue. Similarly, respondents in the Ashanti, Eastern, Central, Northern and Greater Accra regions thought this was important. About 39% of respondents in the Brong-Ahafo and Volta regions both scored issues related to education and training of farmers as very important, indicating that at the moment they did not deem it a very important issue. More interestingly, only 19% of respondents in the Upper West region indicated education and training of farmers as a very important issue. However, 34% put it as a priority, which means that although it isn’t an issue of overriding importance, they do attach a certain level of importance to it.

### 3.6.4 Export Promotion

A final stage in the thinking towards agriculture was to weigh the aspirations of voters towards whether farming should promote exports. In that direction, respondents were asked if there should be a focus toward activities that enabled agro-related activities that promoted exports.

A lot of respondents in the Upper East region thought that export promotion related activity in the agro space was very important. 69% of the respondents indicated that, in addition to 22% who indicated that it should at least be a priority. Respondents in the Western Region mirrored similar sentiments to those of the Upper East, with 61% of them thinking export promotion was an important focus in developing agriculture.

Residents of the Ashanti, Central, Eastern and Greater-Accra regions had similar perceptions of the importance of export promotion, with between 53% and 58% attributing a response of very important to it.

![Figure 18: Importance of Export Promotion Focused Policy by Region]
As has been the trend, Brong-Ahafo residents attributed less importance to export promotion with 30% of them indicating it as very important, as did the Volta Region, where 32% described it as of importance while only 19% had this level of importance attached to export promotion related agricultural policy in the Upper West Region.

Overall, there is a very high interest in policy related to better agriculture related outcomes in the national consciousness, and the survey results indicate that. It is also important to note that some regions feel more strongly about national issues related to agriculture more than others.

3.7 Economy

The economy is probably the most hotly debated issue in Ghana today. In order to weigh expectations more accurately, aspects that most people are familiar with were used to measure these expectations. These were also premised on how public statements with regard some of these issues were raised, as well as certain keywords that brought more complex phenomena into simpler perspectives.

Six major keywords were used as a basis for questioning, ranging from perceptions and expectations on the ease of doing business in Ghana, the value of the currency, unemployment, attractiveness of the business climate, the general cost of goods and services and perceptions on income inequalities.

3.7.1 Ease of Doing Business

A lot has been said and done about the ease of doing business as an important requirement for a solid business climate in Ghana. It is therefore expected that policy towards a better business environment will be paramount in the expectations of an incoming government and therefore color their campaign messages and proposed policies. The voter expectation will also go a long way to help craft intended policy narratives on the matter.

Voters in the Greater-Accra region were most passionate about this aspect of the economy. About 63% of them indicated the ease of doing business as a very important issue that need looking into, while 58% of those in the Ashanti Region thought along the same lines. Similar to that, 55% of respondents in the Western Region were of the view that it was very important, while 54% in the Central Region and 52% in the Upper East thought so.
In the rest of the regions, the response had a more neutral tone, with the Brong-Ahafo Region being vanguard with about 50% of respondents deeming the ease of doing business as important. Remarkably, only 16% of voters in the Upper West Region and 28% of voters in the Volta Region were of the view that the ease of doing business was very important. Rather, they held the view that it was either at best a priority (30% in Upper West and 34% in Volta). Even more profound, a majority of respondents in the Upper West Region ranked it as only a necessity.

It will be interesting therefore to juxtapose the number of businesses in these areas and attempt to establish a correlation of the types of business activities, especially in the regions like the Volta and Upper West regions to examine why these are not primary concerns of the people there.

3.7.2 Attractive Business Climate

An attractive business climate constitutes many different activities. Paramount among these are the ability to set up businesses easily, the absence of obstacles for activities such as incorporation, licensing, tax appraisals and other statutory activities required for a business to function properly. It also includes other aspects like general fiscal policy on inflation, import duties, interest rates and other macro factors that attract investment and a vibrant and thriving business-friendly ecosystem.

These are desirables that might have the same goals but different methods or policies to achieve. All the political parties aspiring to be in power in the 2017 – 2020 period have laid out various ambitions and
plans to achieve this purpose. As to whether voters will be impressed depends largely on whether they are reactive to the thoughts of an attractive business climate.

Residents in the Greater-Accra, Ashanti and Western regions seem to agree on the fact that these desirables are important. In these three regions, both the Greater-Accra and Ashanti regions had 58% of their respondents indicating that this was very important while the Western Region had 57% of such respondents, with a further 21% and 22% indicating it was a priority in all the three regions mentioned.

![Figure 21: Attractive Business Climate Perceptions by Region](image)

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

The other regions had similar responses to the earlier questions posed in relation to the value of the Cedi. As has been the trend, Central, Eastern, Northern and Upper East respondents had between 42 and 48% of respondents indicating an attractive business climate as very important, which is around the median figure of 44% of total respondents who thought this issue was very important.

Similarly, 40% of respondents in the Upper West Region thought that an attractive business climate was a mere necessity, as did 31% of respondents in the Volta Region and 25% in Brong-Ahafo. Only 23% of Upper West Region respondents thought this was a matter that was very important, as did 31% in Volta and 35% in the Brong-Ahafo Region.
3.7.3 Unemployment

This is also a common theme that is used by the general public as a barometer of good economic performance or otherwise. A lot has been said by many political parties as to their plans on poverty alleviation and a better standard of living through providing jobs and opportunities. Indeed, the ruling party, the NDC, had as part of its slogan providing jobs for the people, among others. The NPP for example also has public campaign promises with job creation and opportunities as a central theme.

For the respondents who are the main consumers of this message, the Upper East Region seemed to have the biggest level of interest in an incoming government that will address the issue of removing unemployment. About 69% of them were very keen on this, while 64% of respondents in the Ashanti Region felt the same way, and 59% of Greater-Accra based respondents. These formed the higher range of reactions.

![Figure 22: Dealing with Unemployment]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

About 51% to 55% of respondents in the Central, Eastern, Northern and Western regions thought that matters of employment were very important for any incoming government. However, residents of the Brong-Ahafo and Volta Regions did not think that issues of employment were very important. In the Upper West region, it is safe to say that issues related to removing unemployment will be mostly deemed as simple priorities or necessities, and not matters that are very important.
**Value of the Cedi**

A main concern for a lot of people in Ghana is the value of the Cedi. Its fall in 2015 was a matter of concern for many observers, and while the Central Bank put in place measures that have largely succeeded in stalling the free-fall of the Cedi, its effects on the purchasing power of most people has not been forgotten. To that extent, and with Ghana being a net importer of goods and some services, the strength of the currency means a more stable and predictable working environment for businesses and an essential ingredient for economic growth through stimulated business activity.

On the average, from the survey conducted, 44% of respondents agree on the fact that an incoming government should make it a very important item on their proposed activities. Most notable was the Western Region which had 58% of respondents most likely to pay attention to a government that will enhance the value of the cedi. Both Ashanti and Greater-Accra Regions had 54% of respondents acknowledging the value of the cedi as an important activity that an incoming government should tackle, while 53% of Eastern Region residents had the same view.

![Figure 19: Value of the Cedi](image)

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

Those respondents that fit into the middle in terms of ranking of the issue included the Brong-Ahafo (42%), Central Region (47%), Northern (45%) and Upper East (48%).

Residents of both the Volta and Upper West region seem satisfied with the value of the Cedi as they do not see it as a very important issue economically. Only 20% of respondents in the Upper West Region and 24% of Volta Region respondents thought the question of the Cedi’s value was of importance for an
incoming government. In fact, in both regions, the highest responses were to the fact that the Cedi’s stability was just a matter of necessity, which in the order of magnitude means it is not the foremost item that should be prioritized on any agenda.

### 3.7.4 Inflation

Inflation seems to be a big concern for respondents in the Ashanti Region. About 61% of the respondents determined that it was a matter of importance while 58% of respondents in the Western Region, 54% of Eastern and 52% of Greater-Accra respondents thought the same. Just about 50% of Central region respondents thought it was very important for an incoming government to look at matters of inflation.

![Figure 24: Prices of Goods and Services (Inflation)]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

Interestingly, residents in the Brong-Ahafo Region this time were more in the norm as 43% of them acknowledged that inflation was very important, as did 44% of respondents both in the Upper East and Northern regions. However, only 34% of Volta respondents and 21% of Upper West respondents thought inflation was a very important area for an incoming government to tackle.

### 3.7.5 Income Inequalities

A progressive goal of any government is to be able to achieve equitable income distribution, and in that way alleviating poverty and achieving other broader development goals. People in the Western Region seem to be the most concerned about the perceived gap between the rich and the poor, and 57% of them expect an incoming government to look into it as an important issue. This is the same with 54% of
respondents in the Greater Accra Region. Interestingly, 49% of residents in the Central and Eastern Regions feel the same way.

![INCOME INEQUALITIES](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>A necessity %</th>
<th>A priority %</th>
<th>Actionable %</th>
<th>Not important %</th>
<th>Very important %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Western</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volta</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper West</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater-Accra</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brong-Ahafo</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashanti</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Figure 25: Income Inequalities]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

In the Ashanti Region however, only 45% of respondents feel strongly about this, while 41% of residents in the Brong-Ahafo think the addressing the gap is important. Respondents in the Upper East also had 43% of them seeing income equalities as important, while 39% felt the same way in the Northern Region.

The Volta Region had 37% of respondents thinking that addressing those inequalities are only a necessity, while 38% of respondents in the Upper West Region felt the same. However, only 19% of respondents in the Upper West Region thought that income inequalities were very important.

Issues of economic nature seem to affect the cross-section of Ghanaians, yet it is clear that while some regions see them as priorities, there are others who still seem to be satisfied with the way things are, and therefore do not perceive some of the ideals as worthy of being important or foremost on an incoming government’s agenda.

### 3.8 Social Interventions

#### 3.8.1 Most Relevant Social Interventions that should be continued

Social interventions have been a pivotal part of the attractiveness of political candidates. In 2012, the free SHS policy was the flagship of the NPP presidential campaign, while the NDC campaigned on the implementation of other social interventions such as SADA, 200 new community day SHS’s and others.
In 2016, the situation is no different, with the NDC touting its interventions as socially relevant and a reason for them to be kept in power. Similarly, the NPP is grounding its campaign on interventions such as allowances for trainee teachers and nurses, tax reduction, among others.

Core in determining the relevance and continuity of existing projects, as well as reception and attractiveness of these new interventions will be how the existing ones are seen as favourable.

Respondents were asked generally to indicate which projects and initiatives in these areas were their top three. The table below shows the different ones that were ranked highest by the respondents themselves. This was an open-ended question intended to filter out from people questioned whether they noticed and understood the impact of these interventions.

[Figure 26: Most Preferred Social Interventions that need to be continued]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

Top on the list is the NHIS. This initiative seems to have had the most profound impact on the lives of many people and their families, and it should be a matter of protecting this intervention as feelings for it are very strong. Of the 10,000 respondents, 20% of them listed it as one of their top 3 interventions, meaning it is probably one of the most visible and respected government interventions currently running.

Improved access to education through the building of schools and elimination of schools under trees also comes in this list as the second most intervention. Closely related to this is the School Feeding Program which attracted 10% of the respondents. Together, these three interventions seem collectively to be 3 of the most recognizable interventions socially.
Others worthy of mention are that of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) which had 8.92% of respondents mentioning it, as well as road infrastructure, Free uniforms and exercise books, among others.

3.8.2 Government Interventions that should be discontinued

Top on the list of most unfavourable government interventions that respondents thought should be discontinued is the SADA scheme. Over 28% of respondents listed in their top 3 interventions that they believed should be scrapped completely. Perhaps, with all the negative attention that it has received, it probably is seen as a big failure in the eyes of many Ghanaians.

The GYEEDA scheme was the second one that respondents had the most negative views of. With over 19% of respondents not approving of it, this intervention has become a notorious example of good intentions and misplaced focus. Its recent overhaul has done nothing to salvage its poor image and perception, and the respondents reflect that perception.

Interestingly, one of the most favourite interventions, the NHIS is also one that had the third highest responses against its continued existence. This probably makes the NHIS one of the most controversial in terms of perception and impact. While its impact has been widely appreciated, especially in cases of the poor, the NHIS has had its share of controversies and sore points when it comes to engaging with other partner stakeholders. Coupled with the fact that it is levied together with VAT, it seems to have drawn the ire of about 17.5% of the respondents. It therefore finds itself in a position to be loved by all and hated by all.
Worthy of mention is the current employment freeze in the civil and public service. This freeze has drawn a lot of criticism both within the civil service and without, and tends to be amongst one of the most disapproved interventions of government. Others include the Free Uniform and associated interventions like exercise books and free education, fuel subsidy removals, student loans, youth in agriculture, and among the least among others.

### 3.9 Infrastructure

Pursuant to the interest in government interventions, a major recurrent theme that has colored the expectations on the political scene is the focus in infrastructural development. While some have been loud in their praise for the boost in infrastructure, others have seen it as a waste of monies due to leakages and loopholes in spending and procurement that only offers limited advantages. Recent reports of the high national debt incurred, some of these due to the loans that have been used for these projects, have
sparked debate as to whether these debts are sustainable and the borrowing culture should be encouraged.

Respondents across the regions were asked a simple question as to whether the government should still borrow excessively for infrastructure development regardless of the debt situation.

[Figure 28: Should the Government Still Borrow Excessively for Infrastructure?]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]

Residents in the Volta Region were even in their response, with 50% of them agreeing that Ghana should still borrow, similar to the Eastern Region where it was 51% saying No. Respondents in the Central Region were the biggest opponents of increased debt, with 95% of respondents saying the borrowing was not the prudent way to go. Respondents in the Greater Accra, Western and Ashanti regions followed next in opposition, with 87%, 86% and 84% responding No to the question at hand. Remarkably, for the first time, respondents in both the Upper East and Upper West Region had the same views, 60% saying “No” and 40% saying “Yes”.
4.0 Analysis of Results of Findings

4.1 Governance

Corruption is a major menace that needs to be curbed. On a regional level, aggregated responses listed below will indicate the rate of responsiveness of the various voter populations to the issues of governance in particular. It will be instructive on how this data is used to strategize and craft messages across these areas and deepen better the results they need to achieve in sending their messages across.

Findings will focus on responses that were identified as Very Important as they would be the paramount items on the agenda to confront.

The heatmap below shows the regions where governance is more likely to be an expectation of voters there and hence the outcome of their votes towards the 2016 elections:
In the diagram above, the heatmap shows clearly the areas where governance is an issue, and these are the aggregated responses on all the governance issues and the general feeling in these areas. It is clear that regions like the Ashanti and Upper East regions are very responsive to improvements in government policy, while those of the Upper West and Volta will not be influenced greatly by any outcome in areas of governance.

Considering that issues like recovering monies lost to corruption, enactment of better laws and decentralization were all factored in, it appears that the aspirations of regions like the Western, Ashanti and Upper East Regions are higher.
Considering the spread of voters in these areas, particular attention will have to be paid by parties to the regions with higher heat to impress them on their attitudes towards governance.

**General Conversations – (Respondents from the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions):**

Almost all the respondents were not pleased with the government’s administration in terms of governance. To them, the government has failed terribly in terms of promoting good laws and attitude towards corruption. For that matter, most people believed that this trend seems not to be changing since the government is not putting things in place to curb these problems. Most of the respondents, however, urged the government to be vigilant in solving these issues.

On the whole, the people of the Northern Ghana (Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions) considered the performance of the government to be very poor. In all areas of administration, they complained about corruption activities on-going in the country citing the cases such as Woyomes’, Roland Ayambire (RLG boss), Asuntaaba Group, GYEEDEA, Abugapele’s Sada Saga, Dr. Gilbert Eddi (former SADA boss) and the use of state funds for personal gains.

### 4.2 The Economy

The economy has presented many themes for passionate discussions among Ghanaians and political parties. The recent internal policy ineffectiveness as well as external shocks on the economy-and the fluctuating prices of traditional exports have affected economic activity locally. One of the more direct effects came from the increased costs of fuel, which led to an attendant increase in costs of basic goods and services, as well as electricity.

Promises by the government to solve some of these problems were not fulfilled on time, and these had adverse effects in areas like the manufacturing sector, which over the 2014 to 2015 period seen very marginal growth, with a lot of companies either laying off workers or cutting down production.

Another marker that lowered confidence in the economy was the rapid depreciation of the Cedi in 2015, which served further to exacerbate some adverse outcomes. In a year when public debt has ballooned tremendously, and government’s expenditure has had to be shored by bonds at very high rates, there has not been much to be enthused about in the economy.

However, while some of these parameters are markers on the policy level, the man on the street has a bigger focus on issues such as inflation on their disposable income, unemployment, ease of doing business and a more positive business environment.

The nature of responsiveness on an aggregate looks at how all these factors combine into a composite to determine the level of satisfaction and expectation as regards an incoming government. The aggregate also helps to understand the regions of the country most to gain from improvements in the economy as their concern will directly reflect their aspirations.

Parties can also tailor specific interventions at the regional level to look at addressing some of these issues should they get the nod for the mandate.
The pattern above in shows that most possible voters in the Ashanti, Western and Greater-Accra region will be more prone to respond to issues related to the economy by the political parties, and this will possibly sway their choices towards the party that will be able to share a better vision with respect to the economy (assuming the trends evinced result in an actual voting patterns).

Any political party that ignores this trend will pay dearly since the areas with the highest response tendencies are also the areas with higher numbers of voters (assuming the trends evinced result in an actual voting patterns). According to figures from the electoral commission in 2013 for example, the voter distribution per region is as follows:
While the numbers would have changed in 2016, the general direction of population would not change significantly, if anything, the urbanized enclaves of the Greater-Accra, Ashanti, Eastern and Western Regions would have more people than those of the other regions. As such, expectations from these regions will generally shift the direction of the elections based on the expectations of the voters in these regions.

### 4.2.1 Government Spending

Ghana’s bloating wage bill and efforts at infrastructural development have put the debt to GDP ratio in perspective. Voters have also noted some of these trends, and it seems from the results of the study that there is a bit of disaffection among voters at this phenomenon. A heatmap to test the reactions to spending on infrastructure reveal that the main blocs of high population, (which are usually beneficiaries of these investments) do not seem in favour with the fact that these developments are taking an unnecessary toll on the country’s debt profile.
The Figure above should send clear signals to proponents of high spending, as a majority of prospective voters are not in favor of this level of spending. In addition to not being positively disposed, the level of reaction indicates that there will be very strong repercussions if an incoming government adopts this policy as far as public approval is measured or concerned (assuming the trends evinced result in an actual voting patterns).

With particular reference, respondents in the Ashanti, Upper East and Western Regions have shown similar patterns of high reactions with regard to certain aspects of the economic trends, such as
unemployment and inflation, meaning that these are prominent areas of concern that need to be addressed by the parties gunning for power.

4.2.2 Energy
While talking about power, it is important to examine one aspect of the discourse around the economy that has had a profound impact on voters – electricity and energy in general. The effects of the power crisis in Ghana might not immediately be quantifiable, but the issue has generated a lot of discussion about the future of the country should this situation persist.

It is a sore issue that is sure to direct voters in one direction or the other depending on the message of the parties to prospective voters. Of interest would be whether voters sensitivity on this issue would be a determinant of their expectations of the next government.

A heatmap showing the responses of various respondents as to whether they are still concerned about the availability and cost of electricity will help in identifying the risk of disappointing the electorate if these matters are not fully taken into consideration.

[Figure 33: Cost of electricity]

[Source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016]
It is obvious that voters in the Upper East, Ashanti, Greater-Accra and Western regions seem to expect a higher level of accountability for any issue they believe is in the domain of political will. It will therefore be expedient to have a responsive nature to national issues related to the economy if voters in these regions are expected to support one motion or the other in the bid to alleviate some of the nation’s problems.

Party messages and manifestoes must have concrete solutions to address these problems if they are to win the confidence of the electorate to get their mandate as far as the discussions remain in the domain of the issues above.

4.3 Health

One of the most controversial interventions in health in Ghana has been the introduction and implementation of the NHIS. While both major parties have claimed credit for its success, it has also been a point of concern for most voters because of some of its shortcomings.

In this study, this angst is evidenced by the fact that it is at the same time one of the most praised interventions by the government as well as one of the most disliked. Other areas of concern in the area of health are the facilities available to patients and the availability of health personnel to man the facilities.

A national heat map clearly shows the regions with the most concern for health related activity.
Again, with the exception of the Brong-Ahafo and Volta regions, all the other regions with higher levels of concern are also the more densely populated ones.

Health related policy still has a long way to go if its implementation is going to generate the right kind of goodwill a government would want. There are gaps that need to be filled by the recruitment and posting of more health personnel to more areas of the country. Indeed the ratio of doctors to patients is still way off ideal targets.

It is surprising to note that in whereas a WHO report identifies that the ideal doctor-patient ratio be around 1:600, here in Ghana, the doctor to patient ratio in the northern parts of the country can be as much as 1:36000 patients. For a country like Ghana, this is completely unacceptable. However, even in the most favourable of situations, the total doctor to nurse ratio is around 1:10170. Why respondents in the Upper West region for instance do not bemoan the issue of the poorest doctor-patient ratio at around 1:53064, respondents in the region seemed satisfied with the availability and quality of health facilities.

It is also disheartening that even though there have been improvements in the infrastructure related to healthcare, personnel recruitment by the nation is still not adequate to solve the problem of presence of personnel. Almost 50% of all trained doctors are in Accra, while the rest are clustered mainly around urban locations and municipalities.

Trained nurses and other healthcare assistants are finding it difficult to get postings into public institutions of health. The issue is not that the staff are not needed, but because there seems to be a strain on the health budgetary allocation, out of which around 80% goes into payroll alone. This seems to have necessitated a slowdown in recruitment.

Additionally, Ghana spends just below 5% of its annual budget on health, and it is believed that without added support, the healthcare system will be in dire straits. About 81.9% of funds internally generated by public hospitals and health centers. The fact that payments for insurance related activities are erratic leads to even more problems as hospitals get indebted. Indeed, at the time of writing this report, the Accra Psychiatric Hospital, one of only three such facilities in the whole country, was closing its doors to new admissions because it was indebted to the tune of over GHS 2million.

### 4.4 Agriculture

Agriculture sustains more people in Ghana than any other occupation. Figures from the 2010 Ghana population census indicate that over 2.5 million households are directly engaged in agriculture in Ghana. Of particular importance in this space is the need to modernize agricultural activity and move from pastoral and subsistence type farming and livestock rearing to much more sustainable and efficient commercial farming activity.

What the study has indicated is that in some regions of the country is that voters are now sensitive to these issues and becoming increasingly aware, and in some cases demand government action to influence some of these outcomes.
Indeed, the recent debates sparked by the NPP flagbearer’s promise of 1 village one dam in the northern parts of the country to improve irrigation is one of the reactions to the vision of improving farming and agro activity. Similarly, the PNC indicated that it would promote the cultivation of almonds in order that Ghana becomes a leading producer of the crop worldwide.

In late 2015, the issue of quotas for the export of cashew nuts became explosive as local industries set up to buy the product were being out-competed by exporters who were getting better prices for the product, forcing farmers to leave produce rotting on the farms.

This is indicative of the existence of a large variance between the expectations and the activities of farmers and those of policymakers. Poor rains in the 2015 peak rain period have meant that produce in the lean season of 2016 had some of the highest price hikes, with staples like plantain having prices per finger increasing by four or five fold, and higher than prices of the same product in some London supermarkets.

Perhaps the most surprising issue in the survey is the fact that there was a very tepid response to promotion of youth-based agro activity. While there are higher levels of youth unemployment, and agriculture is a field that does not require high levels of education, it is baffling to notice that there exist very few incentives to drive younger populations to agriculture.

Even voters did not seem very concerned about its promotion. A look below at the table shows the relationship between the same respondents and their reactions around education for agriculture and the same reaction when asked about youth in agriculture:

![Figure 35: Comparison of Responsiveness to Agriculture (Education vs. Youth in Agriculture)](source: Public expectations survey results – Imani, 2016)

One of the biggest problems facing cocoa production in Ghana for instance is the growing average age of cocoa farmers. The average age has risen consistently as able-bodied men and women are moving from
the rural areas to the urban areas in search of a living. Apart from the Upper East and Volta regions, none of the other regions were able to have a co-prioritization of the promotion of youth in agriculture.

Since expectations are low, incoming governments will like to capitalize on that and provide good incentives for a fresh interest in agriculture, since these low expectations only mean good opportunities.

4.5 Education

The biggest question in Ghana today is about access, quality and cost of education. Indeed some of the biggest promises that voters have looked up to in the run-up to the 2016 elections is how education will be handled policy-wise by governments. According to estimates in 2016 (CIA Factbook), the population of Ghanaians under 24 is around 57%, and with a youth dependency ratio of 67.2%, a large percentage of Ghanaian voters are intervening for dependents in some form of formal education.

While some have argued that the cost of education has been the main problem that Ghanaians face, a school of thought has been suggesting that the quality of education is also a matter of concern. In assessing voter’s expectation, data gathered amongst the same respondents indicated that the matrix between cost and education has some measurable differences:
With the exception of the Eastern Region, voters in the rest of the country seem to rate more importance on the quality of education rather than the cost, although they feel strongly about both. What this reveals is that policies in pre-tertiary education, and the underlying vision by major political parties will be key to engaging voters and which party is more favourable to the wishes of the electorate.

5.0 Summary

In analysing the spread of voting based on issues (assuming the trends evinced result in an actual voting patterns), the level of responsiveness on the aggregate is more profound in more regions than others. This necessitated the use of heat-maps in certain contexts to allow for strategic decision-making by political parties and help inform the reading public about which regions will lead voting patterns.

The most reactive regions on the major thematic issues sampled on are the Ashanti, Western, Upper East and Greater Accra regions, while the least reactive are the Brong-Ahafo, Volta and Upper West regions.

If these were to be index as satisfaction of the status quo, as in the continuity of what the current regime has been implementing, then it is very safe to assume that regions with the least reaction to the prioritization of thematic issues see the current state of affairs as very satisfactory. This is because they would not prioritize a change in direction or revamp of these thematic areas, and therefore would have a very high tendency to vote back the current administration.

The regions with the highest indexes for change based on the aggregation of issues will be more influential in shaping an electoral scenario that will not be supportive of the incumbent. If there is a juxtaposition of voter figures in all these regions, it is evident that a bigger proportion of the population that will be eligible to vote are clustered in higher proportions in the regions with a higher propensity for dissatisfaction with the incumbent.

While this does not lead to a fully conclusive discussion of the matter, since voters will be making decisions on a matrix of other variables with their own weights, should there be a sole dependence on the thematic areas above, there will be a very close margin of voters switching from the incumbent.
About IMANI Center for Policy and Education

Founded in 2004, IMANI Center for Policy & Education (IMANI Africa) is a Think Tank of considerable global repute and significance. We have carved a niche in Africa’s and to a very large extent Ghana’s policy environment for putting out objective, independent and constructive analysis and critiques on many issues, using tried and tested techniques that apply across different disciplines.

Through effective communication skills and the ability to work with public-spirited media and civil society, we are shaping national, regional and global agenda in order to close the “citizen participation gap” in the governance process.

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Office Loc: No, 4 Kinshasha Avenue, East Legon, P. O. Box AT 411, Accra Ghana
Tel: +233 554309966 | Email: info@imanighana.org