

RESTRUCTURING THE INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE STRUCTURE IN GHANA: ADDRESSING DONOR FATIGUE, REDUCING DEPENDENCY, AND ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

NAAZIA IBRAHIM¹, MACLEAN NINSAW GBATI², HARUNA IDDRISU³

¹Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University for Development Studies, Tamale-Ghana
Email: inaazia@uds.edu.gh Phone: +233-203570830

²Graduate Assistant, Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana
Email: gbati115@gmail.com, Phone: +233-200474589

³Public Servant, Ministry of Education-Accra, Ghana
Email: harunanugs@yahoo.co.uk

Naazia Ibrahim: inaazia@uds.edu.gh

Corresponding Author: NAAZIA IBRAHIM

ABSTRACT

Ghana has long relied on international assistance to support some of the country's economic and social development particularly through civil society. However, donor fatigue, characterized by a decline in external aid due to shifting priorities and economic constraints of donor countries, poses a significant challenge to sustainable development. This paper explores the need for restructuring the international assistance system in Ghana to reduce aid dependency and enhance long-term sustainability. Key strategies include strengthening domestic resource mobilization, fostering public-private partnerships, enhancing governance and accountability, and promoting self-reliant economic growth. The paper also examines the role of alternative financing mechanisms, such as impact investing and regional collaborations, in ensuring sustainable development. By transitioning from aid dependence to a more resilient and self-sustaining economy, Ghana can mitigate the risks associated with fluctuating donor support and foster long-term progress. The paper will also map-out, track and keep a database for how much funding comes into the country as well as monitor and evaluate how these resources are distributed in the spirit of accountability. This will also help to determine the distribution of roles and how the government can pursue and break the dependency on foreign assistance. Using a quantitative research design, data will be collected through questionnaire from 750 respondents and analyzed using simple statistics such as pie charts, bar charts and histograms. Overall, this research is significant as it contributes to the existing knowledge on utilizing donor assistance in Ghana and provides insights into how civil society organizations and the international aid architecture can develop and implement sustainable sensitive policies and programs.

KEYWORDS: Global assistance, Power Dynamics, Ghana, Civil society, Sustainable development, Donor Fatigue

INTRODUCTION

In general, NGOs play a crucial role in national development by fostering people's self-reliance, developing human resources and quality of life of people, thereby increasing local people's income and increasing productivity (Fowler, 1998). The international support for Ghana encompasses both substantial development successes and numerous unresolved issues together with unmet growth prospects. International aid proves vital because it helps Ghana to grow economically while also improving healthcare services and education standards and decreasing impoverished areas (Cudjoe, 2024). According to Kumi (2017), Ghana's dependency on foreign support induces concerns about the future viability of its development roadmap, national control of initiatives and aid influence on Ghana's long-term progress. expenditure patterns of most NGOs are usually made up of the



project and overhead costs. The project costs relate to those expenses which can be directly traced to a particular project. These are the costs that donors are usually interested in funding. The overhead costs, which constitute general administrative expenses, wages and salaries and other indirect costs are seldom funded by donors. External funders tend to favor project funding because they are well defined and can be isolated from other activities. This, however, militates against NGOs institutional capacity building since funds are only provided for project-related activities and not for general organizational overheads (Gibbs, et al. 2019). Generally, only those local NGOs who can satisfy the donors with their project reports and meet their evaluation criteria will get funds (Adams, 2002). One major challenge facing NGO funding is the fact that the donors' priorities may shift in an arbitrary manner unrelated to the needs and priorities of the countries or local NGOs. These conditions and many more, coupled with the lack of trust of some western donor agencies for their partners in the developing countries have led to funding challenges (Fowler, 1998). The economic transition of Ghana towards lower-middle-income status requires the abandonment of traditional foreign aid systems. Recent discussions focus on aid delivery methods as well as its specific type rather than debating its effectiveness in general terms. The author undertakes this research to join the essential dialogue regarding international aid in Ghana while analyzing aid dynamics and discovering solutions which lead to lasting development outcomes. This research uses the intersections between international assistance and governance and development results to present fresh insights about development assistance's contribution to Ghana's growth path while creating new generation development strategies that center around Ghana's control and sustainability alongside enduring success. Recent empirical data have indicated a decline in donor funding and the folding up of most local NGOs and projects due to donor fatigue phenomenon. These trends are likely due to increased pressure on foreign aid budgets, changes in funding policy, over-reliance on single sources of funding, the increasing numbers of NGOs competing for funds for similar projects and overexposure on a particular issue (Green and Matthias, 1977).

The use of aid in Ghana policy is frequently debated in the context of scheme to make aid more responsive and supporting more dynamic framework functions to ensure faster growth. Focus on aid dependency and discuss objective criteria to assist people in need, for instance through social programs. Change is needed in regard to sustainability, the dependency on external aid and with achieving tangible results. Policy design not driven by experiences, loss independent from a predominant development type vision agenda that gets policies predetermined. The purpose of the study is to reassess the aid policy paradigm applied toward Ghana with projecting the model tackling with fundamental changes on adoption level socio economic structure on Ghana. AIDS inflows to Ghana has been a constant push factor to the country's growing economy, however there is a slow shift in donor support over the past few years and estimated to hit even lower in the years to come. This calls for a rapid study to understand the dangers that comes with this change, and the next steps to development whilst anticipating this period to unfold.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHALLENGES OF AID EFFECTIVENESS IN GHANA

Addressing challenges to aid effectiveness in Ghana is complex and problematical since foreign aid has the potential of spurring development, but numerous factors deter optimization. The sheer number of donor agencies and projects is an example: donor fragmentation and duplication of projects lead to wasted effort and resources (Birdsall, 2008). In addition, the disparity of donor alignment with Ghana's priorities means that aid is given to less helpful expenditures, further compounding the problem. Moreover, a lack of donor coordination combined with the low capacity of Ghanaian institutions such as government ministries and departments become the hurdles in attaining sustainable development fueled by aid (Barima & Farhad, 2013). In other words, local actors do not have the requisite knowledge, skill, or resources to competently run aid-sponsored projects, which thwarts the potential impact of foreign aid. The issue of aid volatility represents another challenge; irregular and inconsistent aid flows create uncertainty and disruption in planning and executing developmental initiatives in Ghana. In addition, the heavy reliance on outside actors

SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT STRATEGIES FOR AID IN GHANA

Financial donation may occur through street collections, media appeals, and targeted soliciting of support which requires time and expertise spent on planning, preparing budgets, accounting, and reporting. (Brealey et al, 2001). NGOs mobilize resources in the form of donations in cash and kind, charges to direct users for services provided, tax relief subsidies, charges for the provision of services to other organizations, lotteries, and other fund-raising mechanisms to sustain their projects and programs (Green and Matthias (1977). The donations in cash and kind may be in the form of charity shops staffed by volunteers or attracting nominal. The development landscape of Ghana has a critical challenge of forming sustainability and exit strategies concerning providing and receiving international aid with focus on supporting the country's long-term development prospects (Ali et al, 2021). With the aid of resources pushing Ghana's economy to lower-middle-income status, it becomes incrementally



important to rethink the role of aid and construct plans targeted towards diminishing external assistance. According to Sachs, (2012), this effort should concentrate on the construction of domestic capabilities alongside strengthening institutions that promote sustainable development models which perpetually do not require funding from abroad. Effective exit strategies also include the sequencing and pacing of aid disbursement, which requires collaboration between donors, government, and civil society in programmatic planning to avoid disruption and create continuity of development initiatives (Lee, 2017). Moreover, Ghana's observed growing stability provides an opportunity to seek alternative financing through aid dependent support such as private sector investment and domestic resource mobilization aimed at promoting sustainable growth. With an emphasis placed on sustainability and crafted detailed plans for withdrawal, aid can emancipation dependency while enabling consistent development (Fakoya et al, 2022).

GHANA'S MULTIDIMENSIONAL AID CONSTRAINTS: STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN DEVELOPMENT AID SYNERGY AND AID EFFECTIVENESS.

The extent to which an economy can grow and assist its population is often met with international aid, trying to achieve a blend of strategic growth and benefit for the citizens of the country. With the immense international assistance given to Ghana over the last few decades, a clear problem has emerged with contradicting results where aid dependency and its effectiveness stifles progress. According to Emeh (2013), as Ghana evolves into a lower middle-class economy, it becomes increasingly important to rethink aid dependency phenomena so that dependency does not cripple the benefits of economic and social progress. Finding novel ways using results-based financing and sector-wide approaches might deliver the desired outcome towards flipping the narrative of being considered a needy country (Dom, 2021). This case also brings need to reconsider the effectiveness of aid and how there are a myriad factors that drive aid dependency alongside the institutional framework of the county. These multilayered issues make it difficult to define clear strategies which can make aid effective while advancing development goals. According to Twerefou, (2013), by gearing aid towards sustainability, Ghana can redefine dependencies and convert surviving on aid to providing meaningful returns and building a self-reliant bandwidth ensuring flexibility to thrive alongside stably catering to core developmental needs.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper draws upon three interrelated theoretical lenses such as Dependency Theory, Post-Development Theory, and Sustainable Development Theory. These are enriched by African-centered development perspectives, particularly the African Political Economy approach and Pan-Africanist development thought, offering a grounded framework for understanding and reimagining Ghana's aid architecture.

DEPENDENCY THEORY

Dependency Theory, advanced by scholars such as Prebisch (1988), Frank (2013). and Amin (2006), highlights the structural asymmetries between the global North and South. Dependency manifests through overreliance on external funding for essential services, policy prescriptions tied to aid (such as Structural Adjustment Programs), and the marginalization of local industry and knowledge systems in the case of Ghana. Amin (2006), a leading African political economist, critiques how the global capitalist system entrenches the "extraversion" of African economies, where resources flow outwards while development remains stagnant. Ghana's economic model, heavily shaped by international aid and foreign direct investment, reflects this extraverted structure. A restructured international assistance framework should aim to reverse extraversion and promote economic sovereignty, aligning with Amin's call for delinking, not from global interaction, but from exploitative global hierarchies.

POST-DEVELOPMENT THEORY

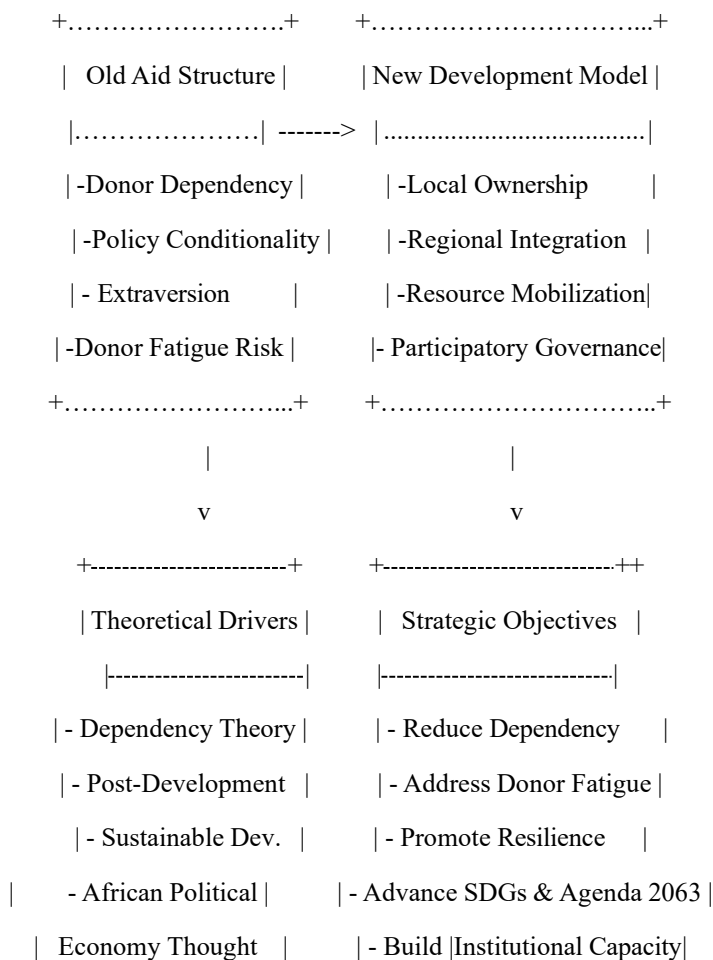
Post-Development Theory, particularly as articulated by Escobar (2007) and Rahnema (1991), critiques the ethnocentric and technocratic assumptions of Western-led development. The theory contends that development often serves as a tool for control rather than empowerment. In Ghana, externally designed aid interventions often ignore local institutions, practices, and values. For example, community-driven approaches in health, education, and agriculture are frequently replaced by technocratic, donor-defined solutions. African development thinkers like Claude Ake similarly argue that African development has been externally oriented and elite-driven, failing to account for the realities of rural and urban poor populations. Ake calls for "development from below", a participatory model rooted in popular empowerment rather than donor blueprints. This theory supports a restructuring process that centers Ghanaian voices, institutions, and indigenous knowledge systems, ensuring that aid enhances, rather than replaces, domestic capabilities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Sustainable Development Theory, as laid out in the Brundtland Report (1987), and adapted within the African context through frameworks like NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development) and Agenda 2063, emphasizes development that balances economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability. In Ghana, current aid flows often prioritize short-term macroeconomic stabilization over long-term sustainability. The restructuring of aid should prioritize capacity building, domestic resource mobilization, and environmental resilience. Drawing from NEPAD principles and Kwame Nkrumah’s vision of self-reliance, sustainable development must go beyond donor funding to include regional integration, technological innovation, and Pan-African cooperation. Aid should be redirected toward strengthening Ghana’s resilience to global shocks, promoting local entrepreneurship, and advancing inclusive institutions.

CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAM: RESTRUCTURING AID FOR SUSTAINABLE AUTONOMY

Below is a conceptual model that integrates the key theoretical insights and visualizes the transition Ghana must make to escape the aid-dependency trap:



The integration of Dependency Theory, Post-Development Theory, and Sustainable Development Theory, alongside African development paradigms, provides a comprehensive lens through which to understand the limitations of Ghana’s current international assistance structure. These frameworks collectively emphasize the need for Ghana to shift from a reactive recipient of aid to a proactive architect of its development. By restructuring international assistance along lines that prioritize autonomy, sustainability, and African-centered agency, Ghana can build a more resilient and equitable development trajectory.

METHODOLOGY

Research used a quantitative research design to analyze international aid programs in Ghana through quantitative techniques which generated holistic findings about complexity in Ghana. This research conducted a case study analysis of Ghana's development process which centered its examination the need for restructuring the international assistance system in Ghana to reduce aid dependency and enhance long-term sustainability. The researcher gathered information through intensive interviews undertaken among officials from government departments and representatives of the donors and civil society actors along with members of local communities who lead their areas. The research utilized literature reviews alongside policy evaluations to form the basis for developing survey tools that shaped data collection from development experts and policy makers. Quantitative data underwent simple statistical analysis such as calculating measures of central tendencies, chi – square and using visualizing our findings using visualizations such as pie charts, bar charts, histograms as well as variable relationships for identifying patterns within the data.

SAMPLING POPULATION

A total of 750 valid responses were collected across all 16 administrative regions of Ghana, ensuring broad geographical representation. To address low response rates and potential recall bias, incentives were provided increasing participation by 14%. Survey instruments were pre-tested (Cronbach's alpha = 0.89), and data collection was optimally timed. The achieved response rate was 82.4%, yielding a margin of error of plus or minus 3.2% at a 95% confidence level. The targeted respondents were major stakeholders in aid and development sectors, providing a relevant and sufficiently powered dataset for analysis.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The study found a near parity between male (53.6%) and female (46.4%) respondents, indicating a balanced gender distribution in perspectives on donor fatigue, dependency reduction, and sustainable development in Ghana. This gender balance enables nuanced comparative analysis across aid engagement dimensions. In terms of professional experience, 57.2% of participants reported less than ten years of work experience, while 42.8% had ten years or more, ensuring insights from both early-career and seasoned professionals in the aid landscape. Educational attainment among respondents was notably high, with a majority holding bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees. These highly educated respondents demonstrated greater depth of knowledge and higher engagement scores (85.2%) in policy and evaluation discussions compared to those with lower educational qualifications (14.8%). This trend underscores the role of higher education in shaping informed participation and decision-making within Ghana's aid and development sector.

Table 1.1 below presents a detailed statistical summary of the demographic characteristics of the study participants.

Table 1.1 Demographics

Particulars	Categories	Frequency	Percentages
Gender category	Male	402	53.6
	Female	348	46.4
Knowledge and job experience	1-5 years	225	30
	6-10 years	204	27.20
	11-15 years	117	15.60
	16 years and above	204	27.20
Educational level	Doctoral Degree	89	11.86
	Master's degree	235	31.33
	Bachelor's degree	315	42
	Others	111	14.80
Stakeholder Type	Government Officials	222	29.6
	Donor Representatives	129	17.2
	Civil Society Actors	176	23.4
	Local Community leaders	126	16.8
	Development Experts	97	13.0

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Foreign aid has created a complex mix of benefits and losses in Ghana's development process. From the study findings, foreign aid has helped contribute to areas such as healthcare and education, particularly for poor rural communities, but has also fostered aid dependency in the public sector, reinforcing development patterns based on continuous donor support rather than fostering sustainable self-reliance. The increase in the number of donor agencies and activities has resulted in fragmentation and duplication, weakening aid effectiveness and perpetuating resource inefficiencies. This is consistent with stakeholder perceptions of key obstacles to leveraging aid's full potential, which emphasize ineffective coordination and inadequate funding.

Additionally, the study emphasizes a mismatch between donor priorities and Ghana's development aspirations, further exacerbating the woes of aid programs. Nevertheless, the study also reflects the adaptive resilience of Ghanaian institutions and communities, as it shows how local actors negotiate and reframe the complexities of the aid to advance indigenous development interests. Domestic societies have utilized aid assets to meet proximate local needs while simultaneously creating new sources of revenue and pressuring policy reforms that augment national growth aspirations.

Critically, the study points out that success of aid intervention in Ghana relies on prioritizing local decision-making, capacity building, and program ownership above donor-defined agendas. Donors and practitioners have a lot to benefit from if they acknowledge and value the agency of local stakeholders, including involvement at the grassroots level, and aligning aid with Ghana's policy and sectoral goals within the "Ghana Beyond Aid" framework. By redefining aid as an incremental catalyst instead of a builder of dependency, Ghana is able to harness international support to enhance institutional capacity, deepen governance networks, and deliver important services to vulnerable groups so that development gains are both efficient and enduring.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

AID EFFECTIVENESS PERCEPTIONS

Stakeholders exhibit mixed perceptions of aid effectiveness, with “somewhat effective” or “moderate impact” dominating responses, reflecting cautious optimism tempered by dissatisfaction.

Table 1: Key findings across stakeholder groups

Stakeholder group	Dominant perception (%)	Other key perceptions (%)
Government officials	Not very effective (44.2%)	Somewhat effective (33.7%), very effective (14%)
Donor representatives	Moderate impact (43.7%)	High impact (26.3%), low impact (18.8%), uncertain (11.3%)
Civil society actors	Somewhat positive (36.6%)	Very positive (34.1%), neutral (26.8%), negative (2.4%)
Local community leaders	Somewhat positive (54.8%)	Very positive (26.2%), no impact (13.1%), negative (6%)
Development experts	Somewhat effective (55%)	Not very effective (26.3%), very effective (16.3%), not at all effective (2.4%)

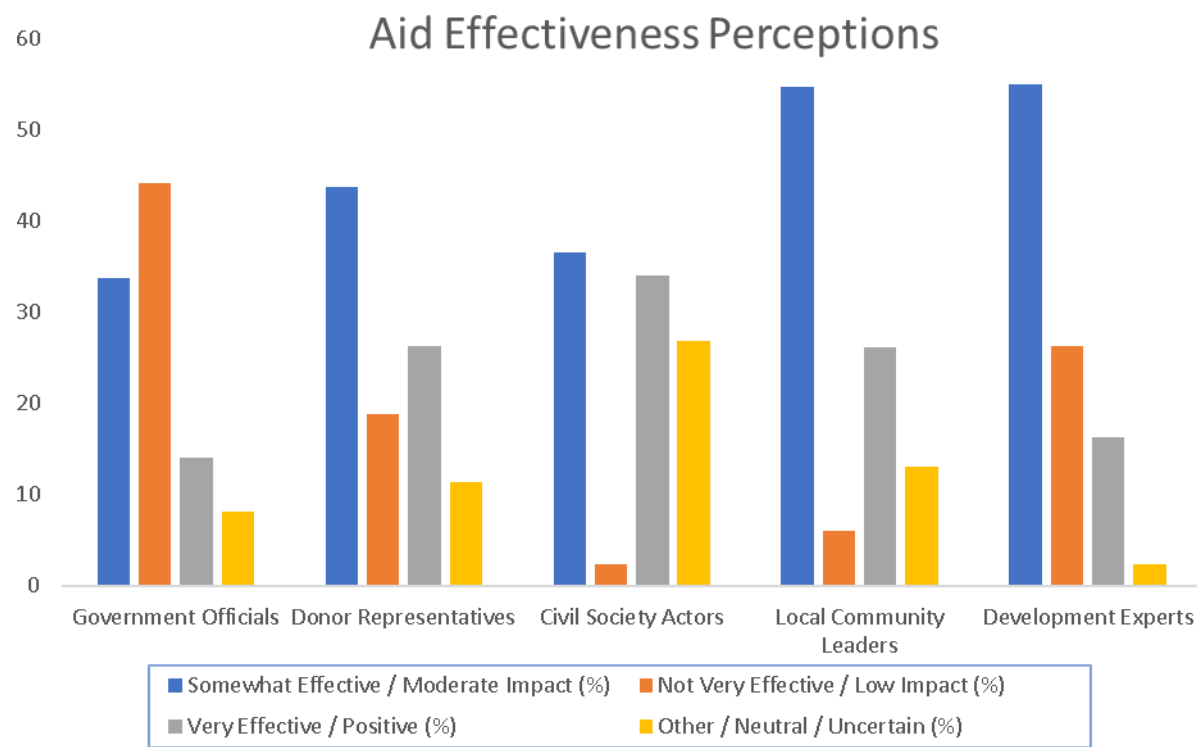
Ghanaian stakeholders' perceptions of the efficacy of aid vary nuance but significantly. Most importantly, "somewhat effective" or "moderate impact" was the net majority answer in all respondent categories: 33.7% government officials, 43.7% from donors, and 55% development professionals. Here, in local community leaders, 54.8% reported aid as "somewhat positive," reflecting a strong sense of tangible aid efforts toward schooling, health, and rudimentary community infrastructure.

But a crucial 44.2% of government respondents described aid programs as "not very effective," and 18.8% of donor respondents rated impact as "low." This shortfall reflects persistent issues undermining aid impact, such as weak coordination, fragmented delivery systems, and mismatch with local priorities. Furthermore, the 11.3% of donor respondents uncertain regarding impact also underlines gaps in monitoring and evaluation in aid arrangements.

To statistically investigate these noted differences, a Chi-square test of independence was conducted and gave $\chi^2 = 13.14$ with 4 degrees of freedom, which was greater than the critical value of 9.49 at $p = 0.05$. This confirms that the difference in perceptions of effective aid between stakeholder groups is statistically significant at 5% level, determining that stakeholder roles and institution viewpoints considerably contribute to the evaluation of aid impacts in Ghana.

This concurs with Ansell et al. (2022) and Sackey's (2023) assumption that disintegrated systems of aid erode stakeholder trust, and with the Ghana Beyond Aid vision of local ownership and differentiated interventions. Statistics employed affirm the merit of differentiated stakeholder interaction, promoting the imperative of co-designed monitoring frameworks and real-time feedback to keep interventions aligned with changing local needs.

Figure 1: Aid Effectiveness Perception across stakeholder groups



SOURCE: FIELD DATA

Implications: Statistical validation strengthens the case for reengineering aid management in Ghana. Both aid agencies and government departments must use these imbalances not as barriers but as lessons on where policy and practice can adapt to regain trust. Targeted efforts to raise transparency, strengthen monitoring, and introduce local voices can move forward perceptions and effectiveness of aid, transforming the narrative from cautious optimism to confident, partnered development impact.

CHALLENGES IN AID MANAGEMENT

Poor coordination and low funding are consistently referred to by stakeholders as the primary challenges facing aid effectiveness in Ghana. They are closely intertwined with fragmented donor interventions, limited fiscal space, and bureaucratic inefficiencies that undermine sustainable development outcomes.

The most prominent challenges are itemized in Table 2, and Table 3 provides mean and standard deviation analysis to quantify consistency among these stakeholder groups.

Table 2: Primary Challenges in Aid Management

Stakeholder group	Top challenge (% responses)	Other key challenges (% responses)
Government officials	Ineffective coordination (46.5%)	Insufficient funding (43%), Lack of local capacity (8.1%)
Donor Representatives	Insufficient funding (45%)	Bureaucratic delays (37%), Lack of local capacity (13.7%)
Civil Society Actors	Limited resource (53.7%)	Lack of transparency (26.8%), Inefficient processes (14.6%)
Development Experts	Ineffective coordination (39.2%)	Insufficient funding (34.2%), Lack of local ownership (24.1%)

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Challenges

Challenge	Mean (%)	Standard deviation (%)
Ineffective coordination	43.2	3.1
Insufficient funding	44.5	8.5
Lack of local capacity/ownership	18.7	7.9
Other (transparency, delays)	6.9	5.8

Mean analysis shows that poor funding ($M = 44.5\%$, $SD = 8.5\%$) and ineffective coordination ($M = 43.2\%$, $SD = 3.1\%$) are highest-ranked challenges among the different stakeholder groups, reflecting a general agreement on their fundamental contribution to aid management. The lower standard deviation for poor coordination reflects agreement in its ranking, while greater variation for poor funding suggests stakeholder variability in feeling short of funding based on operational settings.

The lower mean and larger variability for local capacity/ownership shortage ($M = 18.7\%$, $SD = 7.9\%$) and other difficulties ($M = 6.9\%$, $SD = 5.8\%$) indicate these are viewed with less uniformity. Civil society actors, for instance, emphasize transparency and access to resources, while government representatives and donors are focused on structural deficits in coordination. These findings are supported by Darby (2008), who also explained that non-coherent aid systems reduce the efficiency of overall aid, and Samuel (2024), who emphasized diversified, sustainable funding systems to address long-term funding deficits.

IMPLICATIONS:

The penchant for predictability in the way it positions financing and coordination gaps indicates a heightened need for coordinated mechanisms and innovative financing tools (Samuel, 2024). Addressing these gaps is part of Ghana's move towards self-reliance through the Ghana Beyond Aid strategy focused on domestic capacity building, open partnerships, and efficient use of resources. If aid is to be converted into tangible developmental outcomes, the players must break past these system barriers collectively through data-driven monitoring as well as adaptive funding models to align aid to local needs.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, OWNERSHIP, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AID ALIGNMENT

Findings reveal that community participation, ownership, and capacity building are necessary but underutilized drivers towards enhancing aid effectiveness in Ghana. Development practitioners report low levels of community participation (57%) and capacity effect (49.4%), while community leaders all agree (58.3%) on greater participation to ensure programs become responsive to local conditions and priorities. Donors also agree, with 52.5% emphasizing local capacity building as the most important driver of long-term development outcomes. However, ownership deficiencies (24.1% absence of local ownership



according to reports) indicate current risks of dependence, aligning with Cudjoe's (2024) suggestion that domestic leadership should be enhanced to constrain dependence on external assistance. Civil society actors are also concerned with the need for community participation (26.8%) in promoting accountability and contextual suitability in the implementation of programs.

Based on the aforementioned findings, stakeholders put forward reforms to improve the use of aid as well as harmonization with Ghana's development agenda. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) was the urgent one cited by 60.5% of government officials and 47.6% of civil society actors, reflecting a demand for accountability and adaptive management within aid actions (Sackey, 2023). Harmonized donor coordination (20.9–27.1%) was highlighted to address fragmentation concerns, with harmonized aid that aligns with national strategies (Darby, 2008). Community participation and ownership (38.1–58.3%) was emphasized over and over, responding to calls for local agency in shaping and maintaining aid outcomes. Prioritization of priority areas such as health and education (45.9%) was also called for to enable aid to respond to critical national priorities, in addition to the vision of "Ghana Beyond Aid."

Strategic Implications:

- **Strengthening Community Participation:** Facilitates local agency and renders programs more responsive to local needs.
- **Building Local Capacity:** Reduces dependency, enabling long-term sustainability.
- **Building Up Monitoring and Evaluation:** Enhances transparency, accountability, and learning by adapting to ensure efficient use of aid.
- **Improved Donor Coordination:** Prevents duplication and aligns aid with Ghana's policy instruments.
- **Prioritizing Sectors:** Directs aid towards priority areas to drive inclusive, sustainable growth.

Overall, these findings underscore the value of locally driven, open, and coordinated aid to enhance building capacity and national priorities as Ghana pursues self-reliance under the "Ghana Beyond Aid" agenda.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

The research captured in this study shows a dual impact of foreign aid to Ghana because it resulted in significant development advancement, yet it created enduring relationships of dependence which suppressed domestic competency. Ghana needs to implement a stronger proactive method for foreign aid which puts national resource generation above all else and strengthens public institutions while promoting independence from outside support. A change in mindset surrounding development aid must occur which transitions it from serving as a crutch to working as a supplement that strengthen the development initiatives of Ghana. The revision of Ghana's interaction with foreign support programs will lead to better development outcomes while creating economic stability and improved life opportunities for its people. The study demonstrates why Ghana requires a fresh development cooperation model based on local leadership alongside long-term prosperity through Ghanaian efforts and national priorities and vision for advancement.

This research has shown important details about international help in Ghana and established the necessity for strategic sustainable foreign aid methods. The research results demonstrate that effective foreign aid depends on local leadership together with capability development and support for national development priorities. Ghana needs better collaboration between development practitioners and policymakers together with donors for achieving context-sensitive international assistance as it continues its development pathway. Ghana can develop a stronger and enduring developmental pathway linked to its long-term strategies through facilitating development through aid rather than depending on it sustainably. This research shapes current discussions about international aid in Ghana through evidence demonstrating that Ghana needs purposeful approaches which serve its developmental targets. The research results and policy recommendations from this study should guide national development strategies to help Ghana better reach its objectives while improving citizen standard of living.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above conclusion, the study proffers the following policy recommendations. These recommendations aim to help Ghana shift from donor dependency to sustainable, locally driven development.

STRENGTHEN DOMESTIC RESOURCE MOBILIZATION (DRM)

The study recommends that Ghana should strengthen domestic resource mobilization (DRM). Ghana should do that by improving on tax collection efficiency by digitalizing tax systems, expanding the tax base, and formalizing the informal sector. Also combat tax evasion and illicit financial flows through improved monitoring, transparency, and collaboration with international partners. And enhance public financial management systems to ensure transparency, accountability, and value for money in public spending.

BUILD STRONGER NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMES

The study also recommends that Ghana builds a stronger national ownership and leadership Programmes. Ghana can do that by empowering Ghanaian institutions to take leadership in setting development priorities and engaging with donors based on national interests. Also ensuring that donor-funded initiatives align with Ghana's strategic development plans, such as the Ghana Beyond Aid agenda and enforcing local content policies in donor-funded projects to boost domestic industry and employment like the One District One Factory (1D1F) programmes.

DIVERSIFY DEVELOPMENT FINANCING SOURCES

The study also recommends for the diversification of development financing sources in our governance process. This can be done by exploring innovative financing tools including diaspora bonds, green bonds, and sovereign wealth funds. Promoting public-private partnerships (PPPs) to leverage private sector investment in national development and utilizing blended financing models to combine grants, concessional loans, and commercial funding in a strategic manner.

RECONFIGURE DONOR COORDINATION FRAMEWORKS

The paper also recommends for the reconfiguring donor coordination frameworks into Ghana's governance system. This can be done by establishing or strengthening our national agencies under the Ministry of Finance to coordinate donor engagements. Developing harmonized reporting and monitoring systems to minimize administrative costs and improve efficiency. And to Promote sector-wide approaches (SWAs) and joint donor programming to enhance policy coherence and reduce fragmentation.

FOSTER SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

The study also recommends for fostering South-South instead of South-North triangular cooperation in Africa. This can be done by deepening the engagement with emerging economies such as China, Singapore, Barbados Brazil, and India for alternative sources of development support. Participating actively in regional integration frameworks like the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) ECOWAS and AfCFTA to boost intra-African cooperation and development, and share best practices with other developing countries undergoing similar transitions from aid dependency.

PROMOTE CAPACITY BUILDING AND INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

The study also recommends the promotion of capacity building and strengthening of institutions in Ghana to handle career development programmes effectively. This can be done by investing in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to develop a skilled workforce for sustainable development. Strengthening local civil society organizations and research institutions to enhance their role in development planning and evaluation and reforming public institutions to improve efficiency, reduce bureaucratic bottlenecks, and ensure long-term sustainability.

INTEGRATE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The study again recommends for integration of sustainability and resilience in development planning in the governance system. Ghana can do this by Incorporating climate resilience and environmental sustainability into all development projects and policies. Also emphasizing on community-based development models that foster local participation, ownership, and

sustainability and implement robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks to track long-term outcomes and inform policy adjustments.

INCREASE AID TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Finally, the study recommends for increase in aid transparency and accountability in dealing with our donor partners across the globe. This can be done by developing an Aid Transparency Portal (ATP) to allow the public have access to information on donor funding and project implementation. Again, strengthening anti-corruption agencies and legal frameworks to ensure efficient and honest use of donor and government funds. Also, by encouraging donors to focus conditionalities on institutional reform and capacity building rather than overly rigid economic targets.

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