

IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE ON THE 2014
BUDGET ESTIMATES OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
CIVIC EDUCATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Minister for Finance, Hon. Seth Terkper presented the Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government for the year ending 31st December, 2014 to Parliament on Tuesday, 19th November, 2013 in accordance with Article 179 of the 1992 Constitution.

Pursuant to Order 140(4) of the Standing Orders of the House, the draft annual budget estimates for the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) was referred by the Speaker to the Special Budget Committee for consideration and report.

The Committee met with the Chairperson of the Commission, Mrs Charlotte Osei and officials from the NCCE and the Ministry of Finance and discussed.

2.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Committee referred to the following documents:

- i. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.
- ii. The Standing Orders of the Parliament of Ghana.
- iii. The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2013 Financial Year.

- iv. The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2014 Financial Year.
- v. The 2013 Annual Budget Estimates for the National Commission for Civic Education.

3.0 **STRATEGIC POLICY OBJECTIVES RELEVANT OF THE COMMISSION**

The National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework (NMTDPF) contains six policy objectives that can find expression in the broad policy objectives of the NCCE. These are to:

- a. Expand and sustain opportunities for effective citizenry engagement;
- b. Strengthen and promote the culture of rights and responsibilities;
- c. Promote social accountability in the public policy cycle;
- d. Enhance public education on level aid, justice delivery and administration;
- e. Work towards improving internal security for human safety and protection;
- f. Instil a sense of duty and civic responsibility (patriotism).

4.0 **VISION AND MISSION OF THE COMMISSION**

The Vision of the Commission is to be an effective independent governance institution delivering civic education to all Ghanaians and working towards sustaining Ghana's democracy and the Mission, to promote and sustain democracy and inculcate in the Ghanaian citizenry the awareness of their rights and obligations through civic education.

5.0 PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF 2013 BUDGET

5.1 An amount of Eighteen Million, One Hundred and Three Thousand, One Hundred and Forty-Nine Ghana Cedis (GH¢18,103,149.00) was allocated to the NCCE for its planned programmes for the 2013 fiscal year. The breakdown of the allocation was as follows:

| | GH¢ |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Compensation (Salaries and Allowances) | 14,397,402.00 |
| Goods and Services | 2,239,897.00 |
| Assets | <u>1,465,850.00</u> |
| TOTAL | <u>18,103,149.00</u> |

5.2 The Committee noted that as at August ending, a total amount of GH¢20,094,191.53 had been released to the NCCE by the Ministry of Finance. The approved allocation for 2013 as against actual releases is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

BUDGET PERFORMANCE IN 2013 (January – August)

| Item of Expenditure | Approved Allocation GH¢ | Actual Releases GH¢ | Variance GH¢ |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Employee Compensation | 14,397,402.00 | 19,441,631.58 | (5,044,229.58) (35%) |
| Goods and Services | 2,239,897.00 | 652,559.95 | 1,587,337.05 (29.13%) |
| Assets | 1,465,850.00 | - | 1,465,850.00 |
| TOTAL | 18,103,149.00 | 20,094,191.53 | (1,991,042.53) |

5.3 As shown in Table 1, an amount of GH¢14,397,402.00 was allocated to the NCCE for the compensation of its employees. As at August ending, actual releases for Employee Compensation was GH¢19,441,613.58 thus, indicating an overrun of 35% of the 2013 allocation for Employee Compensation. The overrun, as explained to the Committee, was due to unrealistic budgetary allocation which was not commensurate with expenditure on employee compensation.

For Goods and Services, an amount of GH¢652,559.95 representing about 29% of the approved budgetary allocation of GH¢2,239,897.00 had been released to the NCCE as at August ending whilst up-to-date, nothing has been released for expenditure on Assets.

Irrespective of the above, the Commission performed relatively well in the delivery of its planned programmes and activities. Some key achievements of the NCCE in year 2013 are as follows:

- i. Under its Citizen Week Programme to inculcate civic responsibility in citizens at an early age, the Commission achieved a coverage of 1.2 million pupils in 4000 basic schools whilst 3000 tree seedlings were also planted in the process.
- ii. The Project Citizen Programme on Public Policy issues was successfully re-launched to help to expand the number of participating schools. A national board of patrons was also inaugurated for the Project Citizen Programme. The re-launch afforded twenty-two selected civic education

officers from all the regional offices of the Commission to be trained as trainer of trainers for Project Citizen Programmes.

- iii. The second Annual Democracy Lecture themed, “Advancing Together and National Cohesion following the 2012 Elections” was successfully held at the Accra International Conference Centre (AICC) where His Royal Majesty Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene, advocated for national peace and unity. The programme was attended by over 2000 participants. Millions of Ghanaians were also reached through the print media and live telecasting of the lecture on the electronic media.
- iv. As part of activities marking the 20th Anniversary of the 1992 Constitution, a media engagement programme was organised to sensitise about 30 senior Editors and representatives of both print and electronic media houses and members of the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA) on the role the of the media in promoting a healthy and stable democracy.
- v. As part of measures to promote peace, political tolerance and avoid conflict following the Supreme Court verdict on the Election Petition, the Commission proactively sought funding to undertake over 90 community engagement programmes in possible flash point zones across the country.

5.0 **OUTLOOK FOR 2014**

- 5.1 The main focus of the Commission in 2014 will be on the need to strengthen the foundations of our democracy. Some planned programmes to that effect will include extensive public education drive on:

1. separation of powers between the three arms of government and the roles of different arms & institutions of state, such as, Parliament, Council of State, Judiciary and others);
2. the role of district assemblies i.e. work, structure and improving participation of people with disabilities (PWDs) in local governance;
3. the upcoming district assembly elections and referendum on the entrenched provisions in the 1992 Constitution;
4. the declining role of chieftaincy institutions in a modern democracy;
5. corruption and national development; and
6. public awareness on the prevalence of early/forced marriages in the country.

5.2 For these programmes, the Commission submitted a budgetary requirement amounting to **Thirty-three Million, Seven Hundred and Forty-Four Ghana Cedis (GH¢33,744,000)** to the Ministry of Finance. However, a total of sum of **Twenty Six Million, Nine Hundred and Eighty Two Thousand, Four Hundred and Ten Cedis (GH¢26,982,410)** has been allocated to the Commission in the 2014 Budget. The breakdown of the allocation is shown in Table 2.

Table 2
ALLOCATION FOR 2014

| Expenditure Item | 2014 Allocation GH¢ | 2014 Budgetary Requirement GH¢ | % |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-----------|
| Employee Compensation | 24,003,989 | 24,511,000 | 98 |
| Goods & Services | 2,316,308 | 4,901,000 | 48 |
| Assets | 662,113 | 4,333,000 | 15 |
| TOTAL | 26,982,410 | 33,744,000 | 80 |

5.3 The allocations in Table 2 indicate that almost 98% of budgetary requirement for Employee Compensation has been allocated to the Commission, but allocation for Goods and services expenditure represents just about 48% of the budgetary requirement of the Commission, whilst only 15% of the requirement for Assets expenditure has been allocated. Approximately, 80% of the overall requirement has been allocated. The appreciable percentage is mainly driven by the high Compensation expenditure.

6.0 **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 **Challenges in the performance of the 2013 Allocation**

The Committee noted that less than thirty percent (29.13%) of approved allocation for Goods and Services had been released to the NCCE as at August 2013. As a result, work on ongoing projects had to be discontinued. The Committee also noted with great concern that despite the overwhelming need for the NCCE to undertake community engagements to

promote peace and tolerance during and after the electoral petition, only 29.13% of the Goods and Service Votes was released to fund these programmes. The Committee further noted that, but for the resourcefulness of the Commission to solicit for donor support from the European Union, its community engagement programmes could not have been realised.

The Committee further noted that no releases were received by the NCCE for its expenditure on Assets for the 2013 fiscal year. According to officials of the NCCE, this situation had a great impact on the acquisition of logistics such as vehicles, cinema vans and motorbikes for the implementation of civic education programmes and the completion of a regional office accommodation at Ho, amongst others.

Aside the non release of some requests, the Committee noted that the epileptic nature of the releases for the implementation of the programmes and activities of the Commission also affected the work of the Commission.

Considering the fact that most of the programmes of the Commission are time-bound, late or irregular releases of funds affects the implementation of planned programmes and sometimes defeats the purposes of the programmes. The Committee therefore entreats the Ministry of Finance to endeavour to adhere to the established cash release plan for the proper implementation of the programmes of the Commission.

6.3 Inadequate Allocation for 2014 Goods and Services and Assets Expenditure

The Committee was informed by the Commission that the 2014 Goods and Services allocation of GH¢2,316,308 representing 48% of the budgetary

requirement will leave each NCCE district office with just about only GH¢300.00 per month to cater for administrative expenses, rent, utilities, vehicle maintenance, fuel and programs. Again, only 15% of budgetary requirement for expenditure on Assets was allocated for 2014.

The Committee is of the view that, the allocation would not be adequate to fund most of the laudable programmes set out by the Commission. As usual the Commission would have to solicit support from Donor Partners, thereby further compromising its independence. Independent Governance Institutions such as the NCCE need to be adequately resourced to maintain its integrity.

6.4 Additional Resources needed for Voter Education on District Assembly Elections and Referendum

The Committee noted that district assembly elections and possibly, referendum on the amendment of entrenched provisions in the 1992 Constitution would be held in 2014. The Commission estimates that, additional resources of about Two Million Ghana Cedis (GH¢2,000,000) would be required for voter education, referendum and peace building exercises.

The Committee was also informed of the need for additional resources amounting to Nine Hundred and Eighteen Thousand Ghana Cedis (GH¢918,000.00) for the rental of official accommodation, furnishing and vehicles for two new deputy chairpersons in accordance with the provisions of article 71 of the Constitution.

In the view of the Committee, these are constitutional requirements which should have been provided for in the 2014 Budget. The Committee

therefore urges the Ministry of Finance as a matter of urgency, to make special arrangements for the allocation of additional resources to the Commission to cater for the following:

- a. an additional amount of Two Million Ghana Cedis (GH¢2,000,000.00) for voter education on the district assembly elections and referendum
- b. an amount of Nine Hundred and Eighteen Thousand Ghana Cedis (GH¢918,000.00) for the rental of official accommodation, furnishing and vehicles for two new deputy chairpersons

6.5 Voter and Electoral Education

The Committee noted that presently, voter and electoral education is carried out by the Electoral Commission concurrently with the NCCE. In the opinion of the Committee, the NCCE has the expertise and laid down structures for carrying out civil education in the country. Thus, a major aspect of voter and electoral education should be the preserve of the NCCE and not the Electoral Commission. The mandate of the Electoral Commission should be restricted to the administration of elections.


The Committee is of the view that if the role of the NCCE and the Electoral Commission in voter and electoral education is clearly demarcated, it will enable appropriate resources to be allocated to each of the Institutions by the Ministry of Finance to ensure effective voter and electoral education. In the light of the above, the Committee has agreed to meet the NCCE and the Electoral Commission to try and agree on which aspects of voter and electoral education each of the two institutions should be responsible for.

7.0 CONCLUSION

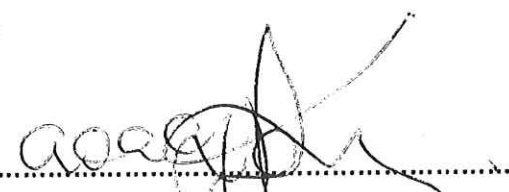
The NCCE plays a major role in the democratic dispensation of the country. It is therefore critical that the NCCE is adequately resourced to enable it carry out its mandate effectively and independently. In the opinion of the Committee, the budgetary allocation to the Commission for year 2014 is inadequate. Thus, additional funding should be allocated to the Commission by the Ministry of Finance to enable it carry out its planned programmes in fulfillment of certain constitutional provisions.

To this end, the Committee recommends to the House to approve the sum of **Twenty Six Million, Nine Hundred and Eighty-Two Thousand, Four Hundred and Ten Ghana Cedis (GH¢26,982,410.00)** for the National Commission for Civic Education for the 2014 fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted.



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HON. BENJAMIN KUNBUOR (DR.)
(MAJORITY LEADER & CHAIRMAN,
SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE)



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MRS. AKUA DUROWAA OWUSU AGYEKUM
(CLERK, SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE)

DECEMBER, 2013