

TRAINING OF HUMAN CAPITAL IN VIEW OF DEVELOPMENT
CHALLENGES
The Ghana Civil Service Perspective

Introduction

The Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS) of Ghana serves as the central management agency (**a Central Management Agency (CMA) refers to a core government institution that has central responsibility for the overall management, coordination, and oversight of the Public Service**) for the Civil Service, which comprises Ministries and Departments. A key mandate of the OHCS, the Human Resource Office for the Ghana Civil Service, comprises four Directorates (Recruitment, Training and Development, Career Management, Research Statistics and Information Management, Finance and Administration). The Office also has some Units under it. Through its Recruitment, Training, and Development Directorate, it oversees staff recruitment and ensures continuous professional development and career progression throughout an officer's career. This Directorate has 3 Schools under it.

From entry to exit, Civil Service staff are supported with the requisite training to enhance performance, align with government priorities, and contribute to national development.

Ghana Civil Service Experience

Ghana's own experience in the Civil Service.

The *Civil Service Training and Development Policy (2018)* provides the framework for training and development within the Civil Service. The Office of the Head of Civil Service oversees pre-service, in-service, and study leave with pay programmes, with support from institutions such as the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) and Development Partners.

Training succeeds when it is aligned with national priorities, adequately funded, and linked to career progression. It fails when skills are underutilised, when officers fail to follow through after training, or when the impact is not properly measured.

The Ghana Civil Service has increasingly used digital platforms for e-learning and blended training (virtual and in-person). The introduction of the Learning Management System (LMS) by the Civil Service Training Centre aims to allow for inclusivity.

Training in the Ghana Civil Service

Training is essential to developing employee capacity, enhancing productivity, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

- The training and development policy of the Ghana Civil Service requires that each staff member complete a **mandatory 40 hours of training annually** in addition to ad hoc training as needed.
- Selected Officers (Training of Trainers (ToT)) are trained with specialised skills to cascade knowledge within their colleagues.
- Human Resource Directors in Ministries/Departments prepare training plans based on performance appraisals, identifying gaps that are submitted to the Office of the Head of the Civil Service for harmonisation and implementation.
- The government of Ghana, through the Ministry of Finance, is the primary funding source. Still, the lack of centralised funds for the training directorate poses a significant challenge as Sector Ministries execute training for staff and report back to the Office of the Head of the Civil Service. Donor support is often leveraged to address gaps, with many sessions conducted virtually to reach regional staff.

Training Institutions of the Civil Service

The Civil Service operates three dedicated training schools:

1. Civil Service Training Centre: Offers training for all categories of staff, from junior to middle level.
2. Government Secretarial School: Specialises in training the secretarial class, both in-service and external.
3. Institute of Technical Supervision: Training for Drivers, cleaners, security, etc

Additionally, the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) offers courses for Senior Management and postgraduate programs, including a master's in Public Administration, a master's in Monitoring and Evaluation, and a master's in Business Administration, among others. Our University of Ghana Business School offers similar programmes where Civil Service staff participate, either through self-tuition or on scholarship. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is currently being crafted for signature

between GIMPA and the OHCS, outlining support and exchange programmes for facilitators to gain practical experience.

Partnerships with the Ghana Scholarship Secretariat and institutions such as RITNAK Training Institute (**a globally acclaimed 360-degree training hub with an overarching aim to support organisations in unlocking their potential by providing high-quality, needs-assessment-informed training programmes that utilise modern delivery methods**) have helped bridge identified skills gaps. The OHCS signed an agreement with the Ghana Scholarship Secretariat for sponsorship of master's and Ph.D. programmes.

The Service has equally partnered with Institutions of higher learning to train Civil Service staff to attain professional qualifications. These include Administration, Human Resources, Project Management, Planning, Accounting, Procurement, and Supply Chain, among others.

The OHCS recently developed an Onboarding Policy and Mentorship guide for the Civil Service. These are particularly to ensure that new Officers are appropriately trained to appreciate their new roles and responsibilities. Senior Officers are also required to mentor new officers to help improve service delivery.

Development Partnerships

Ghana maintains strong cooperation with development partners, including the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japan Development Scholarship (JDS), the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (MOFCOM), and the Government of Singapore Cooperation Programme (GSCP), which provide training and capacity-building support and fund training programmes. As an example, through bilateral relations between Ghana and Singapore, they are sponsoring a session for the Chief Directors (bureaucratic heads) of sector ministries as part of an exchange programme in Singapore in September.

- Officers who gain admission to pursue long-term training are granted study leave (with or without pay) to pursue further studies.
- Beneficiaries on study leave with pay are required to sign a bond agreement and provide guarantors, requiring them to return and serve a specified bond term or reimburse the state funds with compounded interest at a prevailing rate upon default.

Talent Management Strategy

The OHCS has adopted a strategic approach to talent management, focusing on building a pipeline of future leaders—a concept inspired by the Emerging Public Leaders of Ghana. This strategy targets young Civil Service staff to develop their capacity to have a greater impact on the Service, thereby improving service delivery.

Its objectives include:

- Identifying and developing high-potential officers.
- Enhancing employee engagement and retention.
- Strengthening leadership development and succession planning.
- Equipping officers with the requisite skills, attitudes, and knowledge for excellence.
- Promoting ethical leadership and a culture of continuous learning.

The plan is anchored on monthly virtual training sessions with seasoned Civil Service Staff, both serving and retired, to support this strategy. It was informed by doctoral-level research undertaken by the Director of Training and Development, with a focus on nurturing new talents in the Civil Service.

Compliance and Monitoring

How does the Office ensure compliance with the regulations set?

- Mid-year reports are requested on the implementation of training plans.
- There is on-site Monitoring of study leave beneficiaries to ensure officers resume duty after completion of programmes.
- End-of-year reports are submitted to assess progress and gaps.

Some targeted training towards addressing developmental challenges

A well-equipped civil service staff is better positioned to assist the government of the day in implementing policies aimed at addressing various developmental challenges. For Ghana to address developmental challenges, various training programmes have been implemented by successful government initiatives, including the;

Free Senior High School policy: The Free SHS Program will address the Social Challenge of Access to quality Secondary Education and the disparities in access to education. It is a strategy aimed at achieving SDG target 4.1, which seeks to ensure that by 2030, all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Technical and Vocational Education: As Ghana's economy shifts toward industrialisation and skills-based employment, TVET is becoming more relevant. TVET in Ghana provides practical, hands-on training that leads to jobs or entrepreneurship.

Under the TVET sub-sector, the Ministry of Education, the implementing institution, aims to empower students, and by extension, the youth of Ghana, with the requisite skills and knowledge to help bridge the gap between education and industry. This helps create a seamless transition for the youth into the world of work.

The various apprenticeship programmes implemented by the Government, including the National Apprenticeship Program, are major Government initiatives to address youth unemployment, close the Skills Gap and eventually promote economic growth and national development.

Training in entrepreneurship at the various levels of education (pre-tertiary, tertiary and TVET sectors) is aimed at equipping our students with the skills and knowledge to start and manage their own businesses, fostering economic growth, job creation, and national development.

Under the Complementary Education Agency, the Ministry offers Adult and Lifelong Learning programs designed to improve literacy and vocational skills among adult learners, thereby contributing to poverty reduction and economic growth.

Other notable areas of training for national development include Digital Skills and STEM. These will help address the economic challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

Youth Development Programmes: Girls in ICT by the Ministry of Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations. The main objectives of the project are:

- To support the education of women and girls in ICT in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5, which is aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls through ICTs.
- To arouse the interest of young girls to take up studies in sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).
- To expose young girls to opportunities existing in the ICT sector through mentorship workshops and open day programmes to encourage them to consider professions in the ICT sector, which is perceived to be male-dominated.

- To serve as a deliberate measure taken by the Ministry to bridge the gender digital gap as well as meet SDG 4, Quality Education.

Digsmart: The Government, through the Ministry of Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations, in partnership with Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI), aimed at building digital skills, culture and leadership within the public sector to determine a more cohesive and accelerated digital transformation for service delivery

All these programmes are operated by the Civil Service, who are the policy initiators and implementer.

Challenges

- Insufficient centralised resources to address training needs comprehensively.
- Training programs often suffer when budgets are tight.
- Brain drain as some of the staff fail to resume duty to utilise the knowledge acquired towards the development of the country. They fail to fulfil their bond term, which results in financial loss to the taxpayer.
- Restricted movement and outreach due to limited access to vehicles.

Conclusion

The Ghana Civil Service recognises that training and development are indispensable for addressing contemporary development challenges. Despite funding and logistical constraints, the Service continues to innovate through partnerships, virtual platforms, and strategic talent management. Sustained investment in human capital remains essential to building a responsive, ethical, and future-ready Civil Service that can drive national development.