

SPEECH BY MR. ENOCH H. COBBINAH, CHIEF DIRECTOR, MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC PLANNING(MOFEP) ON THE OCASSION OF A DISSEMINATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING WORKSHOP ON 'MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) SYSTEM OF GHANA: HOW THE EXPERIENCES OF OTHER COUNTRIES MAY BE UTILIZED' HELD AT LA PALM BEACH HOTEL FROM 9.30 AM TO 2.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY, 28TH MARCH, 2012

H.E. Mr. Noato Nikai, Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary of Japan in Ghana,

H.E. Mr. Jiro Inamura, Resident Representative of Japan International Co-Operation Agency (JICA) In Ghana,

Chief Directors, (Office of the President/ Ministry of Local Government

Prof. Akosa- Commissioner, NDPC

Directors,

Directors,

Distinguished Ladies And Gentlemen,

Introduction

I am indeed very happy to be associated with this Knowledge Sharing Workshop on the topic: 'Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System of Ghana: How the Experiences of other Countries may be Utilized'.

Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation

2. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the importance of Monitoring and Evaluation as a management tool for the promotion of transparency and accountability, and consequently the attainment of good governance is recognised by Government. For this reason, I am happy that the Government of Japan is actively supporting Ghana, not only to strengthen its M&E capacity but more importantly to institutionalise M&E in this country.

3. Your Excellency, Distinguished Ladies, and Gentlemen, the organisation of this Workshop by itself is an indication of the fact that M&E is now assuming its rightful place in Ghana. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) which was hitherto weakly conducted or simply ignored is now becoming an integral and indispensable part of the policy cycle in Ghana allowing for feed-back into policy planning. M&E is important as a tool for the:

- a) Improvement of institutional decision-making;
- b) Improvement of programme and project implementation;
- c) Promotion of accountability; and
- d) Promotion of institutional learning.

Purpose of Workshop

4. Your Excellency, this Workshop marks the end of a 2-year technical assistance project on 'Strengthening M&E Capacity' under which 70 Ghana Government officials drawn from twelve (12) MDAs have received training in M&E in Japan and elsewhere abroad.

I am also informed that the Workshop is to afford a cross-section of the Ghanaian Public Service and the Media directly connected with Monitoring and Evaluation, the opportunity to learn from the M&E experiences of Japan, Indonesia and Vietnam and how Ghana could draw lessons from these countries to improve its own M& E System.

5. Your Excellency, Distinguished, Ladies, and Gentlemen, the Country-Focused training programme in M&E with both theoretical and practical content, is the first of its kind organised by JICA for any African country. It is therefore my fervent hope that JICA, and for that matter the Government of Japan, would support the Government of Ghana to implement successor M&E projects, to broaden as well as deepen M&E

knowledge and skills of Government officials, at all levels of governance in the country utilising those already trained by this project.

MOFEP M&E Capacity Development

6. Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, given its mandate in economic planning and financial management, MOFEP takes significant responsibility in M&E of Government programmes and projects, including donor-funded projects/ programmes. In line with this mandate, MOFEP has created a coordinating M& E Unit to coordinate the M&E activities of the various departments and provide direct and oversee or capacity building, consequently, we wish to appeal to the Government of Japan to continue to support MOFEP in its M&E capacity development, especially in getting the coordinating M&E Unit fully functional and in the implementation of MOFEP's M&E Plan (2012/2013) through the Japanese Government Counter-Value Fund.

We also wish to appeal to JICA to consider and approve a successor technical assistance project to the project ending today to further strengthen M&E practice in Ghana.

Ghana-Japan Bilateral Relations

7. Your Excellency, Distinguished, Ladies, and Gentlemen, the relationship between Ghana and Japan dates back to more than 80 years since Dr. Hideyo Noguchi set foot on the soil of the then Gold Coast. Japan established the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical

Research, the first medical research institute in Ghana, in 1979 and since then Ghana - Japan bilateral relations have grown from strength to strength.

8. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, Japan still remains one of the most important bilateral development partners of Ghana even after it suspended Yen loans to the country, when Ghana joined the ranks of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in 2001. This event culminated in the write-off of around US\$ 1 billion of Ghana's indebtedness to Japan when the country reached the Completion Point of the HIPC in July, 2004.

9. Your Excellency, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank the Japanese Government for the lifting of the moratorium it placed on Yen Loans (concessional loans) to Ghana. I am happily informed that the first post-HIPC Japanese Yen loan to Ghana is in the offing.

10. Your Excellency, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, Ghana has made tremendous strides in creating a favourable macro-economic environment and political stability over the past two decades. Even in the wake of the global economic downturn, the economy of Ghana has remained buoyant, growing at an unprecedented 13.6% in 2011. The future prospects for the country are bright.

11. Your Excellency, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, investors' confidence in the business environment of the country is high. There is a significant number of satisfied foreign investors operating efficient and growing enterprises in Ghana.

12. The commencement of oil drilling in the country opens avenues for the development of a wide range of oil and oil-related economic activities in the country. The current stance of Government to embark on a massive infrastructure development also provides more opportunities for Public Private Partnership. In this connection, I wish to encourage Japanese firms to consider investing more in Ghana

Conclusion

13. You Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, in conclusion, let me thank the Government of Japan for its continued support to Ghana in diverse areas, even at a time when Japan itself is grappling with challenges resulting from the devastating Earthquakes and Tsunamis it experienced a year ago. Ladies and Gentlemen, by its continued support to Ghana, Japan has proved beyond all doubts that it is an all-weather friend and therefore a friend indeed.

14. Thank you for your attention.

15. Long live Ghana-Japan bilateral relations.