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**Special points of
interest:**

- Social Public Expenditure Financial Accountability (SPEFA) project duly launched in the Ga East Municipal Assembly.
- Advocacy for government to cut spending on ministerial portfolios and invest in social initiatives

ADP in Conjunction with SNV Launches Social Public Expenditure Financial Accountability (SPEFA) Project in the Ga East Municipal Assembly

On the 23rd of July, 2014, the Social Public Expenditure Financial Accountability was launched at the Ga East District Assembly to officially introduce the project to community members and set the tone for subsequent activities.

Ga East Municipal Assembly forms part of the 35 MMAS selected for the phase 2 of the project. The launch was done together with the public hearing of the assembly. The program was graced with dignitaries from the assembly such as the Municipal Chief Executive Hon. John Kwao Sackey, the Municipal Coordinating Director, Chiefs and Assembly Members. Community Members and Newly constituted SPEFA group members also took part in the program. National Coordinating Unit of SPEFA were also duly represented at the launch.

The program which was chaired by the Presiding Member of the Assembly. In his opening remarks he urged all in gathered to join hands and work together to ensure that the assembly moves forward and achieves its development objectives for the coming years.

A brief statement was made by Mr. Charles O. Abbey

Head of Programs ADP on SPEFA. In his statement he mentioned that CSOs and Citizens have a role to play to support the assembly in providing services by demanding accountability. He noted that citizens groups can help in development through its participation in Public Hearing and Town Hall meetings. However, citizens need to be equipped with the right information to hold duty bearers/ assembly accountable. To this end the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in Collaboration with SNV through a World Bank loan have instituted the Social Public Expenditure Financial Accountabil-

ity (SPEFA). The aim of the SPEFA project is to help citizens understand public management so that they can engage with the duty bearers very well..

Mrs Sarah Agbey, Head of NCU (SPEFA) in her presentation took participants through the concept of Social Accountability. SPEFA affords citizens a platform to learn things about governance so they can demand accountability. To this end there would be six (6) meetings in a year. Four (4) to learn about issues on governance and accountability tools and two (2) to participate in town hall meetings. She urged participants and SPEFA group members to make use of

the SPEFA platform to expand their horizon through knowledge.



Above: A cross section of the public at the SPEFA launch

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The MCE, on his part shared some development works the assembly has been engaged in and what the assembly hopes to do. He reiterated that social Accountability is one of the pillars of the assembly and applauded the initiative. He declared the SPEFA project duly launched after his presentation.



left: Hon. Mr Sackey (MCE) GA East delivering key note address at the launch of SPEFA

GHANA NEEDS TO CUT GOVERNMENTAL SPENDING FOR INVESTMENT IN SOCIAL SERVICES



The African Development Programme has called on the Government of Ghana to take practical steps towards reducing governmental spending so as make more funds available for social spending.

This call was made during 2 different radio discussions with some Accra-based FM stations (Pink FM and Breeze FM) in July 2014. According to the Head of Programs of ADP, Charles Othniel Abbey, reducing the number of sector ministries and appointees to achieve greater efficiency would cut down on spending on government machinery for other critical areas which are starved of resources. The call comes in the wake of current fiscal challenges and government's efforts towards seeking assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Mr. Abbey noted that in the event of obtaining assistance from the IMF, just as Ghana's recent history has shown, there are likely to be cuts in social spending especially programs that target the vulnerable and excluded. Furthermore, delays in releases for social interventions such as the school feeding program and health insurance have worsened the plight of beneficiaries of these social interventions.

In this regard, the government of Ghana needs to do more in demonstrating in practical measures its desire to address the concerns of citizens benefitting from the social interventions that have suffered delays in monetary releases. He contended that one of such ways is reducing the size of ministries and appointees to save some of its meager resources in order to channel in social spending.

Left: Mr. Charles Othniel Abbey Head of Programs.