

Annex C: Field visit to Ghana

As part of the peer review of Denmark, a team of examiners from Belgium and France, and representatives from DCD, OECD, visited Ghana in February 2016. The team met with Denmark's Ambassador to Ghana and her team, Ghanaian government representatives and civil servants, regional authorities, other bilateral and multilateral partners, and representatives from civil society and private sector organisations.

Towards a comprehensive Danish development effort

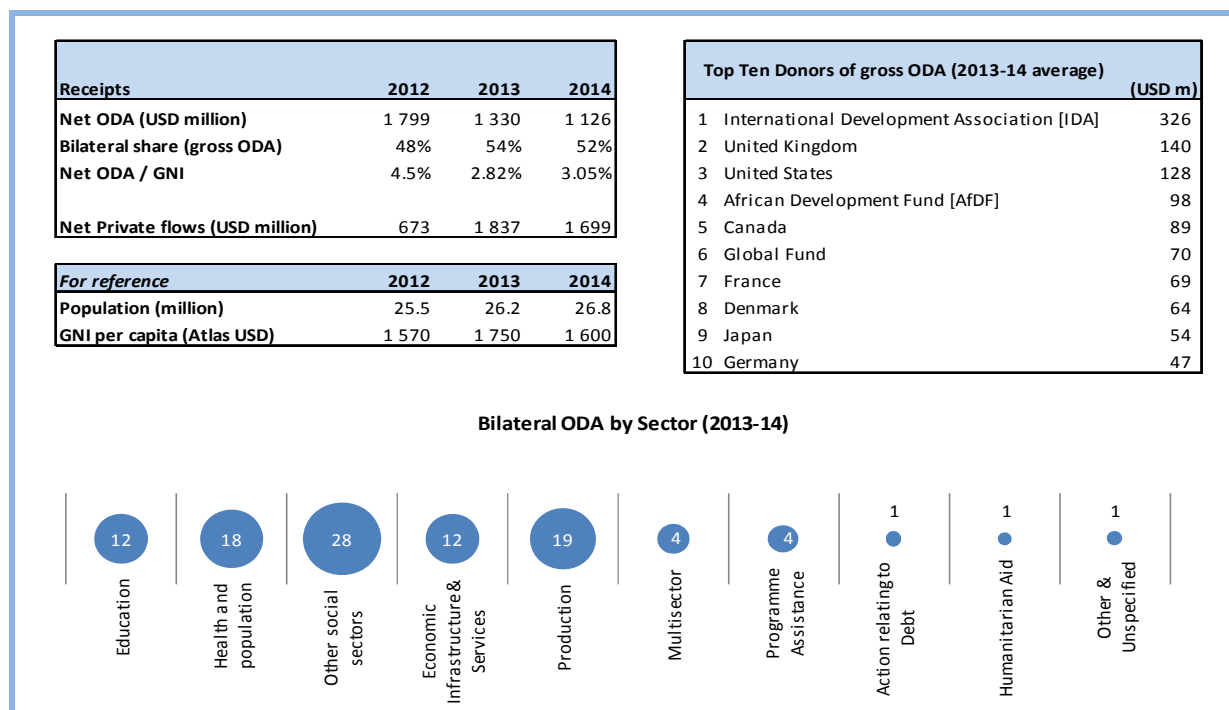
Ghana: a key strategic partner for Denmark

Ghana has been widely hailed as an African success story. The second largest economy in West Africa, it has experienced sustained economic growth over the past two decades, with gold, cocoa and oil exports driving the economic boom. Over the same period, Ghana has also demonstrated strong performance in democratic governance (OECD et al., 2016).¹ In 2006, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan African country to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving extreme poverty, well ahead of the 2015 deadline. By 2011, Ghana had attained lower middle-income status, becoming a favoured destination for foreign investment (World Bank, 2011).² Despite the recent slowdown in Ghana's growth and related economic development challenges,³ official development assistance (ODA) has continued to decline relative to other development flows, making up just 3% of Ghana's gross national income in 2014,⁴ and is expected to drop to 1% by 2016.

Denmark began providing aid to Ghana at its independence in 1957, nominating Ghana as an official priority country in 1989. In 2010, Denmark began to transition to a new strategic relationship with Ghana, focusing on commercial and political co-operation. For example, the high level of political co-operation between the two countries, most notably on sexual and reproductive health and rights and other human rights issues, has led to strategic alliances to successfully lobby for inclusion of these issues in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Denmark is also harnessing Ghana's geo-strategic position in the Gulf of Guinea region to strengthen regional integration, improve peace and security and fight against piracy and armed robbery – with potential benefits for Denmark's international maritime industry.⁵

Denmark will exit from all ODA-based development co-operation with Ghana by 2020. As it continues to deepen its new partnership with Ghana, Denmark might consider how to ensure that its own objectives are meeting demand in Ghana, particularly in a shifting economic and political context. In doing so, Denmark will also need to address how it responds to Agenda 2030 at both domestic and international levels. This will also enable Denmark to engage at a more strategic level on the SDGs, based on how it can best contribute to Ghana's sustainable development, particularly given that Ghana has already set up its own high-level SDG planning mechanism.

Figure C.1 Aid to Ghana at a glance



Sources: OECD - DAC, World Bank; www.oecd.org/dac/stats.

Denmark is strengthening its whole-of-government approach in Ghana, with variable success

Denmark is implementing a new comprehensive whole-of-government approach in Ghana, with a focus on the private sector. In addition to standard Trade Council representation, the Investment Fund for Developing Countries’ (IFU) Accra office provides on-location advice to Danish companies wishing to set up operations in Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon or Liberia. Demand for this service has grown significantly in recent years, and advice is provided on a purely commercial basis.

In another new development, Denmark has also deployed a growth counsellor for its Ghana mission to work specifically on the maritime sector, in close co-operation with Denmark’s Ministry of Business and Growth and Maritime Authority (Box C.1). However, the resources provided for this initiative do not seem to match the level of ambition, with only one full-time staff member working on this significant reform agenda from within the offices of the Danish embassy in Ghana. Further policy co-ordination and resources are required to consolidate this process, using demand from Ghana as a starting point.

These efforts also link to Danida's business and green growth activities in Ghana, which have two distinct pillars: the Support to Private Sector Development programme and Danida business instruments.⁶ All private sector staff and resources are located together within the embassy in what is dubbed the “Wall Street Wing”. Recently, the embassy has also opened a business incubator, which facilitates the interaction between the Danish company BlueTown and both embassy staff and other companies visiting the embassy. This is leading to new synergies, including through fostering new partnerships between Ghanaian and Danish companies.

Box C.1 Denmark's work with the maritime sector in Ghana

As a seafaring nation, with a 10% share of the global sea trade, Denmark has substantial trading interests in West Africa, as well as a strong commitment to its development. Over 90% of Ghana's cross-border trade is by sea. Along with infrastructure, Ghana needs improved maritime governance and regulation, as well as more skilled marine workers.

To meet these challenges, the Danish Maritime Authority, Ministry of Business and Growth and Ministry of Foreign Affairs have joined forces with Ghanaian authorities to build capacity and create better framework conditions in the sector. A Danish growth advisor joined the embassy staff in August 2015, funded by ODA, under the Partnering with Denmark initiative (Chapter 4). Proposed co-operation includes support for regulatory reform, qualification of ships' inspectors and a capacity-building programme for harbour pilots.

However, securing ongoing operational-level action in co-ordinating the initiative from the Ghanaian authorities is proving difficult and formalising further co-operation may take some time. In late 2015, the two governments announced a bilateral agreement for the mutual recognition of seafarer certificates between Ghana Maritime Authority and the Danish Maritime Authority. A course in International Maritime Organisation audits, including a mock audit, took place in January 2016. Meanwhile, the Danish Maritime Authority has also carried out a fact-finding mission to Ghana and 16 areas were identified for further co-operation. In addition, the International Maritime Organisation is scheduled to undertake an audit of the sector in Ghana in 2017, which may provide a new incentive for reform. A new engagement strategy should consider how to ensure high-level political support based on mutually agreed objectives.

Denmark is increasing its engagement with the private sector in Ghana, but past experience shows mixed results

Denmark has engaged in development co-operation with, and through, the private sector in Ghana since 1992. However, the way in which Denmark is engaging in this area is changing, with increasing emphasis on developing synergies between Danish and local companies as well as support for pro-poor business strategies for Danish companies interested in extending their businesses to the country (Box C.2).

This new direction is in line with the Danish Government's 2014 strategy on Export Promotion and Economic Diplomacy and is also expected to be strongly reflected in the forthcoming 2016 strategy for development co-operation (Chapter 2). At the same time, the evidence on whether Denmark's ODA has played a catalytic role in mobilising development finance and ensuring sustainable development in the past is mixed (MFA, 2014a and c). Grants made under previous Danida business instruments, including the Business-to-Business programme, resulted in high failure rates. As such, the ex-post developmental additionality of these instruments warrants further investigation.

Nevertheless, a handful of success stories have emerged. In one case, Danida grants in 2007 of DKK 10 million to the West African Fish company (a joint Ghanaian-Danish venture) was later complemented by soft loans and IFU support. Over the past decade, the company has created 100 Ghanaian jobs and tilapia production grew from 28 to 4000 tonnes. There are four other cases where synergies have been created between Denmark's development and commercial private sector co-operation.⁷ In one of these examples, a grant to Danish jeweller Pernille Bulow to work with Ghanaian suppliers took 10 years to show commercial and developmental results, illustrating the importance of ex-post evaluations.

Until 2016, challenge funds – offering grants to Ghanaian companies to support economic growth and investment in Ghana, business associations and civil society advocacy groups – were key mechanisms for delivering Danish ODA for private sector development in Ghana. Denmark's work on business advocacy⁸ in support of the business-enabling environment

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and its joint Skills Development programme with the World Bank have also funded two such challenge funds.⁹ A results and verification study recently carried out on the Denmark-World Bank Skills Development Fund (SDF) showed substantial impacts across a range of indicators, but with high administrative and transaction costs.

The IFU has been working in Ghana since 1989 and almost 8% of its commercial funding is invested in the country. While the IFU notes that aggregate level returns for its investments in Ghana to end-2015 (including loans, equity and guarantees) are positive, there is no public information available on returns at country level in Ghana. Meanwhile, the IFU reports that total investments in Ghana over this period of approximately USD 48 million (DKK 268 million) have mobilised USD 89 million (DKK 500 million) in financing from other sources, typically private investment and have created up to 2300 jobs. The IFU has a long experience in making ex-ante assessments of financial additionality, but has less experience in undertaking ex-post evaluations of measuring the value of development additionality and has recently engaged a consultant to work on this issue. As the use of blended finance instruments increases - and the lines between public and private financing sources fade - it will also be important improve the transparency of returns on investments to the taxpayers who finance them and to the countries that benefit from them.

Therefore, further analysis on how ODA-funded private sector development in Ghana can catalyse trade and investment objectives, and vice versa, would benefit the transition from an aid to a trade-based relationship. In the future, it will be important to ensure development co-operation is demand-driven, supports sustainable development beyond the success of an individual business, and is flexible enough to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving development landscape. Finally, more robust measurement of developmental additionality and impact would help Denmark make the best use of its resources and private sector instruments for effective co-operation with Ghana. These elements are likely to represent challenges for Denmark.

Box C.2 Examples of Denmark's private sector engagement in Ghana with no ODA component

Novo Nordisk – a global healthcare company headquartered in Denmark – has opened six diabetes clinics in Ghana since 2014, servicing an area of more than half a million people. The initiative is established under Novo Nordisk's Base of Pyramid programme; a patient-centred innovation project that aims to address the needs of people with diabetes living in developing countries. The Danish embassy in Ghana has a commercial agreement with Novo Nordisk based on a specific number of hours per year for strategic and operational support.

The embassy also has a commercial agreement to support Danish company Blue Town, working on internet connectivity in remote areas of Ghana. Blue Town's operations have been based within the embassy in its business incubator facility in its start-up phase in 2016. The embassy is supporting the company in identification of, and introduction to, key stakeholders, as well as providing guidance on the business enabling environment and local government architecture.

In the water sector, Denmark's Grundfos pumps has partnered with an Accra-based company, Sustain Ghana, to design and install a solar-driven water pumping system for two communities of 30 000 people.

Source: Interviews in Ghana.

Denmark's policies, strategies and aid allocations

A strategy facilitating responsible phasing out of ODA-funded development co-operation

Denmark's engagement in Ghana is framed by the Denmark-Ghana 2014-18 partnership policy paper (MFA, 2014b). The paper was drafted by the embassy in close collaboration with the Government of Ghana and in consultation with civil society organisations (CSOs) engaged in the country. This participatory approach led to a strategy that is well aligned with both Ghana's Shared Growth and Development Agenda (Government of Ghana, 2014) and Denmark's Right to a Better Life strategy (Danish Government, 2012). The centrality of civil society's role in design and implementation of programming reflects Denmark's human rights-based approach to development co-operation.

The 2014-18 policy (MFA, 2014b) also reflects Denmark's decision to exit from development co-operation in 2020, a decision taken during the previous programming cycle. In particular, the policy paper introduces political and commercial co-operation as key objectives of the partnership. Such transparent and long-term planning facilitates a responsible phasing out. It has also supported the selection of relevant sectors in a context of transition, provided predictability to Ghanaian partners and assisted with the identification of future funding gaps. At a time of ongoing macroeconomic instability in Ghana, such predictability is critical, especially as Denmark has been a key funding partner for the country.

Denmark faces challenges with balancing its strategic level agreement with the government of Ghana with shifting priorities and ODA budget cuts

Denmark's development co-operation work in Ghana is built on a long tradition of aligning allocations with the Ghanaian government's priorities in areas where it can best add value. For example, Denmark has been a key partner for Ghana in health, local service delivery and governance. Allocations to these sectors still make up the bulk of Denmark's allocations in Ghana, with a budget of USD 152 million over 2014-18 (Figure C.1), although Denmark is planning to phase out support to these sectors by the end of 2018.

In line with its new focus on economic growth, Denmark also began co-operation with Ghana on tax and development in 2015, working with other donors and through the secondment of experts to Ghana's Revenue Authority, with a provisional budget of USD 35 million. However, following the 2015 cuts in the ODA budget, Denmark has since then reduced allocations to CSOs to support their advocacy work on tax.

Denmark and Ghana have also agreed on prioritisation of private sector co-operation. The overall budget for Danish ODA-funding for private sector co-operation in Ghana from 2016-20 is DKK 140 million, with these allocations targeted at catalysing new development flows and creating new synergies with political and trade co-operation.¹⁰ In addition, Denmark manages DKK 85 million for the European Union (EU) and USAID under the delegated co-operation agreements for its business advocacy and skills development programmes. However, ODA allocations targeted at the private sector have varied considerably, largely due to recent budget cuts. In addition, following concerns over the lack of demonstrable impact from working through government in the current phase of Denmark's Private Sector Development Programme, Denmark is reorienting its support in favour of direct allocations to business associations and other advocacy channels. Future work in this area will increasingly concentrate on support for synergies with Denmark's commercial and trade work in Ghana.

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Denmark mainstreams support to gender and the environment with additional targeted actions where required

Denmark promotes gender equality in Ghana through both targeted and mainstreamed programming in its health and private sector support. At the design stage, all interventions are screened for gender issues. Where relevant, the embassy can commission gender experts to support the formulation of gender-sensitive interventions. For instance, it recruited a local gender consultant to assess and scale up effective interventions aiming at gender equality in the private sector programme. Attention to gender is facilitated by a joint commitment from Ghana's government and the Danish embassy. However, other than biennial gender meetings organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen and access to a dedicated gender expert in Copenhagen, Denmark's gender focal point in Ghana has limited access to synthesised information and knowledge. The planned establishment of a centralised gender platform and clear roles for the gender focal points should be useful to strengthen gender mainstreaming.

Integrating the environment and climate change as cross-cutting issues will be important for Denmark's new focus on trade and investment. Denmark's private sector programming systematically addresses the environment and climate change. While a targeted programme for sustainable energy for business has been cut following the unforeseen budget cuts of 2015, Denmark has committed DKK 65 million (approximately USD 11.6 million) to support the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre through a trust fund arrangement with the World Bank.

Box C.3 Donor co-ordination and mutual accountability in Ghana

In 2011, at the time Ghana attained lower middle-income country status, the government's multi-donor budget support group (MDBS)¹ was a key mechanism for donor co-ordination and alignment. The mechanism included a mutual accountability framework and was supported by a dedicated secretariat based within the Ministry of Finance. In 2012, the government and development partners agreed on a joint compact – Leveraging Partnership for Shared Growth and Development – recognising key risks ahead for Ghana's development as a lower middle-income economy. In addition to highlighting how the government of Ghana will tackle these challenges, the compact also set out the role that development co-operation could play over the critical years ahead. The compact nominated the Government Development Partner Group (G-DPG) as the highest-level aid co-ordination body responsible for overseeing the implementation of aid effectiveness principles.

However, since that time, there has been a significant drop in grant aid allocated through budget support. Over the same period, the growth of Ghana's economy and increase in other development flows has meant that ODA makes up an increasingly small proportion of Ghana's gross national income (GNI), currently expected to account for just over 1% in 2016. Bilateral development partners have also ceased to provide general budget support.² These trends have reduced incentives for co-ordination, both on the bilateral donor side as well as on the government side, where the transaction costs of aid co-ordination outside the MDBS system are perceived as too high to commit to an alternative mechanism. As a result, the G-DPG, scheduled to meet annually, is currently dysfunctional.

In order to facilitate co-ordination, division of labour and demand-driven programming, donors are continuing to work together through the 14 sector working groups under the MDBS framework, which also include representatives from government ministries and civil society. Some of these groups, for example the health sector working group, are functioning well. However for others, such as the private sector working group, ensuring government buy-in has proved particularly difficult.

1. MDBS is a joint support mechanism of 11 Development Partners (DPs) and the government of Ghana. It is based on the contribution of financial resources by DPs directly to the government's treasury to complement Ghana's domestically generated revenues. MDBS facilitates the implementation of Ghana's development and poverty reduction policies. In 2010, MDBS donors provided just over USD 400 million (5% of GDP) to Ghana's national budget. At the time, there were 11 members of the MDBS group, the African Development Bank, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the World Bank. The Netherlands and Japan exited the group in 2013 and 2014 respectively, group which ceased to function effectively in 2015.

2. Some donors, including Denmark, have shifted this support to sectoral budgets (e.g. in health) or tax (e.g. through basket funding and other joint funding mechanisms).

Sources: Interviews held in Ghana; Government of Ghana (2012), *Leveraging Partnership for Shared Growth and Development: Government of Ghana – Development Partners Compact 2012-2022*.

Organisation and management

Denmark's decentralised management arrangements in Ghana do not hinder co-ordination

The decentralised nature of Denmark's development co-operation with Ghana facilitates management of programming and relationships with government and other partners, without compromising on co-ordination with headquarters. Biannual meetings with management in Copenhagen, reviews carried out by the Technical Advisory Service (UFT) and corporate reviews enable regular quality and systems checks, along with benchmarking against other missions, even though direct communication between embassies is limited. In the Danish mission in Ghana, weekly meetings and monthly programme committees with staff engaged in development co-operation, including IFU staff, improve co-ordination of Denmark's development activities in the country.

However, as Denmark moves away from ODA-based development co-operation in Ghana and as overall resourcing for Danish development co-operation is reduced in Copenhagen, it will be important to ensure that these co-ordination mechanisms, which have served Denmark well, are fit for the future. In particular, information systems and review capabilities will need to capture information from across government in Copenhagen as part of an overarching SDG framework.

A need for new skills

Denmark matches staff skills to sectoral and technical needs in its Ghana programme through a mix of posted and local staff. Given the reduction in human resources and the increasing need for new skills combining both private sector and development expertise, it will become increasingly important for embassies to be able to select staff, taking into account the existing skills mix within the post. In this context, it will also be critical to build the technical capacity of local staff, and support their career paths through opportunities in Ghana or at other Danish missions.

Partnerships, results and accountability

Denmark applies the Busan principles when partnering with government

Denmark's highly decentralised institutional setting and budgetary mechanisms give the embassy and its implementing partners ample predictability and the flexibility to adjust to evolving needs in a timely manner and within the agreed results frameworks. However, the unforeseen budget cuts decided in Copenhagen in 2015 have affected the predictability of some engagements with CSOs, as well as the coherence of the overall programme in Ghana.

Despite ending its general and health budget support in 2014, Denmark is still using Ghana's systems to implement its programmes. Indeed, each programme is implemented directly by Ghanaian partners and follows the partners' processes. In addition, Denmark promotes alignment and harmonisation through the use of joint funding mechanisms aligned to national systems to fund non-governmental organisations and private sector associations.

Finally, detailed risk assessments, regularly updated to take into account changes in the context, inform programme delivery design. For instance, corruption risk assessments have influenced Denmark's choice of implementing partner for the third and final phase of the Support to Private Sector Development Programme, resulting in a move away

from government support in favour of funding programmes with private sector actors. Being transparent with the government of Ghana on the risk mitigation strategy, including corruption concerns, has also facilitated effective risk management.

Decreasing engagement in donor co-ordination

In a context of limited ownership of donor co-ordination by the Government of Ghana (Box C.3), Denmark has played a leading role in supporting the implementation of aid effectiveness principles in the country. By actively engaging in the various co-ordination forums and using its political relationship with the government, Denmark has supported co-ordination between the government and the donor community, often playing a useful mediation role.

Denmark is now decreasing this level of engagement and leadership in donor co-ordination, including its participation in the co-ordination group for EU joint programming. The rationale for this withdrawal is based on Denmark's exit from ODA-based development co-operation in 2020. However, given Denmark's ongoing interest in the catalysing role its ODA finance plays, and its broader development goals in Ghana, this withdrawal may be premature.

Denmark partners with the private sector and NGOs to design and implement its programme

The human rights-based approach developed within The Right to a Better Life (Danish Government, 2012) has guided Denmark's partnerships in Ghana. Since 2012, Denmark has moved from a government-to-government relationship with Ghana to engagement with a wide range of rights holders, notably private sector and non-governmental organisations. For instance, Denmark supports business associations in its private sector programme and relies on the advice of a private sector sounding board to influence its strategy on private sector development. This holistic approach helps Denmark address development challenges from different entry points. In particular, support to local CSOs has been instrumental in implementing Denmark's development co-operation in Ghana while strengthening their advocacy role. This approach to civil society is in the spirit of Agenda 2030.

Denmark is putting a strong emphasis on strengthening the institutional and individual capacities of its partners, using a wide range of instruments such as technical assistance and training facilities. This is consistent with Denmark's phasing-out objectives, as capacity building activities can help strengthen sustainability once ODA-funded development co-operation ends.

Partnerships focused on results

Denmark's relationship with partners is focused on results: it agrees expected results jointly, supports partners to build their own monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and discusses output indicators annually with partners. Such discussions on outputs inform Denmark's decision on budget allocations. Evaluations also inform decision making as evidenced by the use of findings from the evaluation of the Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund's evaluation to design the third phase of Denmark's private sector programme in Ghana. However, its results-based management is focused at the level of each intervention and there is no overall results framework for the country programme.

Notes

1. Notably thanks to peaceful elections, a multi-party political system, improved institutions, press freedom and vibrant social activism.
2. With projected growth rates of 13.4%.
3. By 2015, Ghana's growth rate had slowed to an estimated 3.7% (AfDB et al, 2016), owing to major challenges in the form of a sharp currency depreciation, a severe energy crisis, deteriorating macroeconomic imbalance, and rising inflation and interest rates. Meanwhile, there is evidence of growing spatial disparities and increasing income inequality across regions, especially in the three northern regions. While previously high levels of growth have helped Ghana to make overall progress against the MDGs, performance is uneven with notable lags on MDGs 4 on 5 (reducing child and maternal mortality) and MDG 7 (sanitation). In the run-up to the November 2016 elections, tensions are expected to heighten as public resentment grows at ongoing electricity and fuel shortages, high inflation and currency depreciation (EIU, 2016).). Ghana's growth rate is projected to rise to 5.8% in 2016 and 8.7% in 2017.
4. In 2014, net ODA to Ghana was USD 1.126 billion, of which 52% was provided bilaterally.
5. Denmark is responsible for more than 10% of global sea transport, measured in value.
6. The third phase of the Support to Private Sector Development Programme focuses on enhancing the business-enabling environment through business advocacy and skills and development activities; Danida business instruments provide support for local private sector development through seed funding and other incentives.
7. Of all companies funded through Danida business instruments in Ghana, key success stories include West African Fish, Margins Group (ICPS) , FK Slamson, Gom Space.
8. In 2016, Denmark's business advocacy programme in Ghana (BUSAC) assisted the cashew industry in Ghana, including an IFU portfolio company, MiM Cashew to make their case to the Ministry of Trade and Industry for local processing of cashew before export. This will facilitate regulatory reform and new export opportunities for local processing firms once firmly enforced (information based on interviews with the embassy of Denmark in Ghana).
9. Through its business advocacy programme in Ghana (BUSAC), Denmark has contributed to a signification reduction in the days required to register a business (from 85 to 2 days) and to an increase in the number of commercial courts (from 6 to 12).
10. Of the total budget of DKK 140 million, DKK 35 million is allocated to the BUSAC fund for business advocacy work, DKK 95 million is allocated to the Skills Development Fund and DKK 10 million funds Danida aid for programme coordination, reviews, research, and M&E.

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