International Institute of Social Studies

Erasmus

We are part of the society, we should support:
Exploring CSR as an alternative to Social Outsourcing in crisis or disaster situation in Ghana. A case study of Mepe.

A Research Paper presented by:

Deborah Adag-bana Afulani

(Ghana)

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

Social Policy for Development

(SPD)

Members of the Examining Committee:

Supervisor:

Dr. Gerard McCarthy

Second reader:

Dr. Peter Knorringa

The Hague, The Netherlands
December 2024

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the International Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

Inquiries:

International Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

t: +31 70 426 0460
e: info@iss.nl
w: www.iss.nl
fb: http://www.facebook.com/iss.nl
twitter: @issnl

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Maps

List of Appendices

List of Acronyms

GRA   Ghana revenue Authority

NADMO   National disaster management authority

UNICEF   United Nations Children's Fund

USAID   United States Agency for International Development

VRA   Volta River Authority

WFP   World food programme

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to God for granting me the opportunity, strength and people to aid my journey in this master's programme.

I am also grateful to my supervisor Dr. Gerard McCarthy and my second reader Dr. Peter Knorringa who guided me throughout the process of my thesis.

I am grateful to my SPD Major convener and other members of the faculty for the SPD field research fund which enabled me to travel to Ghana to conduct the interviews and to visit Mepe, the study site.

Gratitude to my parents Mr. Alfred Afulani Ajene and Mrs. Esther Afulani, my siblings Patience, Francis, Emmanuella, and other relations especially Dr. Asunka who encouraged and supported me throughout this period.

Lastly, I am grateful to all my friends in and outside the ISS who constantly checked in on me and encouraged me throughout the Master programme.

Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a common practice in Ghana, especially during religious and traditional festivities of the various ethnic groups. There has however been a growing number of organizations stepping up to support communities that experience disasters. Despite these trends, CSR activities are largely voluntary with no proper national CSR policies regulating them as noted by other researchers except the organizations' own internal policies, mostly coined around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Several calls from academia and corporate Ghana, have articulated the policy gap and called for government action. This study seeks to contribute to the literature on CSR in the development of Ghana and especially focusing on how government can encourage and streamline CSR, leveraging it as social outsourcing in cases of crisis or disaster, using Mepe, a small town in Ghana as a case study.

This study documents the role of organizations in filling service delivery gaps by providing subventions in a variety of sectors including education, health, water and sanitation, climate action and others that should ordinarily be provided by government. It also finds that collaborations exist between organizations, government and other stakeholders to support communities during disasters or crisis since organizations deem it appropriate to support the communities for the social license to operate (SLO). Crowdfunding has emerged as a financial avenue to support communities in crisis it results very visible in Mepe. And as organizations are doing their bit, government needs to put in place measures to encourage and streamline their activities. One approach is for the organizations interested or involved in CSR to establish a coordinating body on their own or the government leads this action by forming an independent coordinating body that oversees CSR by first setting clear guidelines for organizations depending on their size, industry and roots (International organizations, Ghanaian organizations with government interest and private Ghanaian organizations) and also

creating a database that actively accounts for support given and what more needs to be done to fill any gaps.

This study falls short in its scope as it is limited to one locality in Ghana. There is therefore need for a wider study on different disaster situations either natural or man-made. A wider study on the practices of public and private organizations is also suggested to better understand their various policies and how to develop them into a cohesive national CSR agenda.

Relevance To Development Studies

This research sought to explore how CSR can be leveraged as an alternative to social outsourcing in Ghana during crisis using Mepe, a small town in Ghana as case study, Mepe experienced severe flooding in 2023, resulting in the loss of lives and property and displacement of many families. It explores the role that government played in encouraging other stakeholders in a collaborative effort through CSR as a response to SDG 17 that is, its emphasizes on "partnerships for sustainable development" touching in crowdfunding, global and local policy frames and the role of government.

This study contributes to SDGs 3,4,6,9,12,13 (Good health & well-being, quality education, clean water & sanitation, industry, innovation & infrastructure, responsible consumption & production and climate change). It also focuses on a vulnerable community, Mepe because of a flooding that displaced over 1000 people in that community.

It provides empirical data in the context of a developing country that contributes to Development studies on how government can encourage CSR during a crisis and provides some recommendations to enable the formulation of policies on partnerships for development.

Keywords

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Social Outsourcing, Organizations, Social License to Operate, Ghana.

Chapter 1 Overview

1.1   Moving beyond profit to community and environmental purpose

Faith-based values have motivated Christians, Muslims, and other traditional religions to engage in socially responsible conduct and activities toward various groups and individuals in Ghana (Amo-Mensah, 2022). There has however been a rise in Corporate social responsibility activities by organizations in Ghana to support their own strategic business plans and to support communities they operate in. According to McLennan and Banks (2019), the rise of CSR as an emerging field of study and rising attention to 21st century business stems from the recognition that organizations and society are inextricably linked in ways that go beyond vital relations between their employees, customers, suppliers, and communities they operate (Mahmud et al., 2021). One other most visible situation where CSR support is rampant is during disaster or crisis situations. This support is however usually for just a short period. This paper will contribute to the literature on CSR practices in Ghana and how it could be re-engineered as social outsourcing assessing the role government in fostering CSR in crisis or disaster management.

1.1.1   The expectations of citizens: "Government has to provide"

Governments worldwide are primarily responsible for providing basic services for the well-being of its citizens, including education, healthcare, and infrastructure development (World Bank, 2015).

There are however issues of corruption which impedes economic growth by decreasing domestic investment, discouraging foreign direct investment (FDI), raising government expenditures, and rerouting priority from infrastructure maintenance, healthcare, and education to less successful public initiatives (Wei, 2019).

Also, the issue of increasing population has resulted in limited financial resources, thereby constraining the government's ability to provide adequate basic services for citizens. Governments have therefore tended to fall on the support of philanthropists and other non-state actors to fill some of the service delivery gaps. For instance, the government of Ghana has been relying more and more on private players to support in the well-being of citizens (Sasse et al., 2019) and this has proven to be a useful instrument to encourage their involvement in nation building through social outsourcing. This strategy even though advantageous, may also produce concerns regarding efficacy and accountability (McCarthy, 2023).

Africa's natural resources and other endowments have attracted numerous corporate organizations, who do not just set up their businesses, but employ many citizens, obey the law and take up projects in the name of CSR to support in the development of the economy. CSR is not new in Africa, but its diverse applications are giving it an identity crisis (Tuokuu & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). According to Wirba (2023), Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been used as guiding philosophy that commercial firms use to voluntarily contribute to communities and societies in which they operate, without being legally obliged to do so. It is however constantly being revised to accommodate evolving demands and circumstances of the country, organization and others (Atuguba & Dowuona-Hammond, 2006).

An elaboration by the European Commission on corporate social responsibility emphasizes on "going beyond compliance and investing in human capital, the environment, and relations with stakeholders" (Ibid). It is therefore common for organizations to for instance assume social responsibility through infrastructure development, vocational training, social advocacy, relief support for victims of disaster and several others as their contribution to development.

Ghana has seen tremendous economic progress in recent decades but ensuring the well-being of the people continues to be a complicated task. Complicated in the sense that various

factors like population growth have hindered the frequent support from government to the citizens. The 2021 Population and Housing census general report from the Ghana statistical service shows a rapid population growth since the post-independence era (see Table 1).

Table 1 Ghana's population in census years

Pre independence		Post Independence	
Year	Count	Year	Count
1891	764,613	1960	6,726,815
1901	1,549,661	1970	8,559,313
1911	1,503,911	1984	12,296,081
1921	2,296,400	2000	18,912,079
1931	3,160,386	2010	24,658,823
1948	4,118,459	2021	30,832,019

Figure 1 Bar chart showing Ghana's pre independence and post-independence population growth count
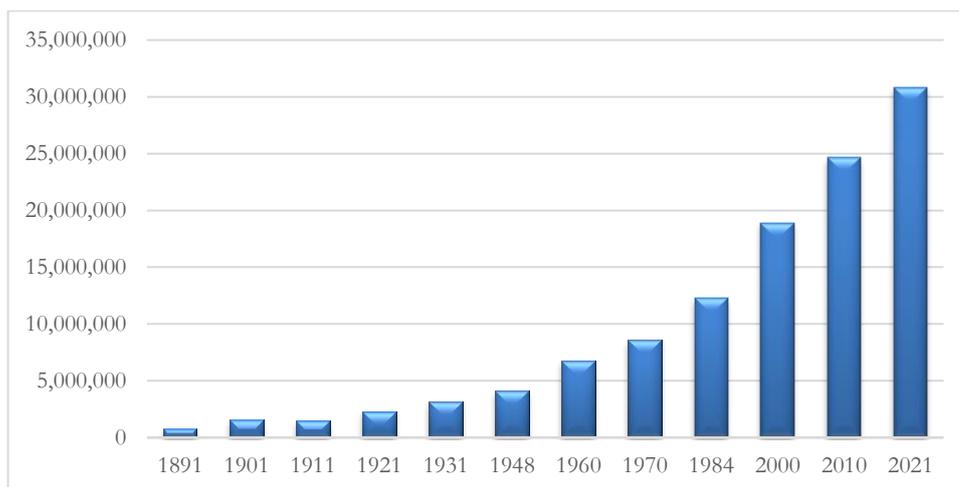
Source: Author's illustration using data from Ghana Statistical service (2021); Ghana's population in census years.

The table and chart above show the historical growth of the population of Ghana as per each census count year. It helps to understand the rate of growth and the need for various strategies and actors to help in the development of the nation.

The Ghanaian government has been proactive at encouraging organizations both international and local to contribute and support the well-being of citizens in various ways. For instance, a tax incentive is made available for business charitable sponsorship, sports promotion, educational scholarships, and community development programs (Atuguba & Dowuona-Hammond, 2006 pp.105). Organizations that therefore engage in any of the activities can apply for a tax relief from the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA).

There however has not been a systematic study on CSR as a mechanism for social outsourcing in Ghana. This research seeks to fill this gap by assessing the contributions of CSR and the role government can play to leverage CSR as social outsourcing in disaster or crisis situations.

The approach to this research will be a case study of the Mepe community in the North Tongu district of the Volta Region in Ghana which was hardest hit by floods in October 2023 after a "controlled spillage of the Akosombo dam" by the Volta River authority (VRA) intending to protect the dam from failure after torrential rains had caused it to exceed its capacity (VRA.com, 2023).

Map 1 Map of Ghana

Source: (Ontheworldmap.com with author's highlight of volta region)

The above map shows the map of Ghana, and the circled portion is the Volta region which is the location of Mepe. This will be further elaborated in chapter 5.

1.2 Relevance and justification of the research topic

Nations globally are endeavoring to enhance public service provision for the well-being of citizens, yet there are no readily accessible standardized solutions (World Bank 2024) to tackle this.

In Ghana, social outsourcing in which the state hires national or international organizations to provide basic services like healthcare and education—has become a popular tactic. The government has on many occasions partnered with international development partners like the World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB) and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) to support in providing educational infrastructure and materials, healthcare, disaster and crisis management as well as other essential infrastructure to cater for the needs of citizens. There are however worries about accountability and access (McCarthy, 2023) which has sparked attention in other strategies. This study therefore seeks to assess the

increasing popularity of CSR in Ghana and assess it as a possible mechanism for social outsourcing focusing on the role government can play in encouraging CSR activities in a crisis or disaster situation using the Mepe flooding incident as case study.

1.3. Research objective and questions

This research seeks to fill the gap by Wirba (2023) to assess the role of government in encouraging CSR in the context of a developing country but examining it through a crisis or disaster situation.

1.3.1 Questions of the study

1. What is the motivation for CSR and are there clear criteria for CSR activities by organizations in Ghana?
2. How can CSR be leveraged as an alternative to social outsourcing in Ghana?
3. What role can the government play in encouraging CSR in a crisis or disaster situation in Ghana?

1.3.2 Research question

How can CSR be leveraged as an alternative to social outsourcing in a disaster or crisis situation and what role can the government play to encourage CSR in Ghana?

1.4 Chapter outline

This study is presented in six parts.

Chapter 1 introduces the study, providing data on trends in Ghana and the study's relevance, the research objectives, and questions.

The theoretical principles identified for this study are developed in Chapter 2. This chapter also covers the perspectives of others on CSR around the world, including Ghana.

Chapter 3 goes into detail about the study's methodology and technique. It also details the sampling approach.

Chapter 4 discusses the research findings during a semi-structure interview highlighting the views of ten (10) respondents from ten (10) organizations to assess their CSR activities.

Chapter 5 focuses on a case study of a flooding crisis that occurred in Mepe, a town in Ghana's North Tongu District in the Volta region. This chapter provides an overview of the cause of the flood, its impact on Mepe, and the assistance received from the government and other organizations. The state of victims during the field visit and engagement in focus group discussions are also discussed in a narrative.

Chapter 6 presents the outcomes and recommendations.

Chapter 2 Theorizing CSR As An Alternative To Social Outsourcing To Attain A Social License To Operate (SLO)

2.1 Introduction

Ghana is a democratic country that elects its leaders through the ballot box based on the manifestos during political campaigns, expectations for development, political preferences of the citizens, and others. All these in one way or the other heightens the expectations from government to be the first provider of the well-being of the citizens. In 2022, the then Finance Minister, Ken Ofori Attah in his speech on mobilizing domestic revenue as the way to go for Ghana indicated however that only 8.2% of Ghanaians who are working pay income tax (Nyabor, 2022). Despite this limited revenue collection and the strategies government tries to put in place to convince the rest of Ghanaians to pay their taxes, the average taxpayer expects that the government utilizes taxes in providing for the basic needs of citizens like education, healthcare, and others while making provision to support the poor in the country. Aside the financial burden on the government to enable adequate provision to Ghanaians other factors including corruption, rapid population growth and rural-urban migration, high unemployment and others have necessitated other actors supporting the country through CSR.

This chapter looks at some views on CSR and how it has been practiced to gain a social license by organizations. It also examines the framing of CSR policies within the SDGs, views on social outsourcing and how they interact as a discourse for this research and models of crowdfunding as a financial tool for CSR.

2.2   Views on CSR and CSR Practices

Caroll, (1991) describes how CSR is an important part of running a business because it requires companies to do what's right by the groups of people they deal with most often. In action-oriented terms, he proposes a CSR pyramid that requires organizations/businesses to

be profitable, obey the law, be ethical, and be good corporate citizens. Van Marrewijk (2003) on the other hand recognizes how several overlapping concepts have been used in academia to describe CSR including business sustainability, business ethics, philanthropy, corporate sustainability (Crifo and Rebérioux, 2016). This then reflects how organizations choose the most suitable concept to practice their CSR activities or initiatives. In choosing the path for organizations to organize these initiatives there are several factors that come into play to further drive them to meaningfully engage with communities or the countries they operate.

These factors range from global CSR principles like the OECD (guidelines) , National CSR policies, internal organizational policies and enhanced cultural norms. Regarding National CSR principles for instance, in India, companies with a net worth of more than Rs.500 crore ($60 million), sales of more than Rs.1000 crore ($120 million), and net income of more than Rs.5 crore ($600,000) are required to follow CSR rules (Acharya 2024). The Board of Directors must also make sure that the company spends at least 2% of its average net income from the last three financial years, or 2% if the business has not been around for three years yet (Ibid). Ghana on the other hand lacks a formal CSR legislation, but many organizations follow globally recognized standards like ISO 26000, Triple Bottom Line, UN Global Compact, UN 2030 Agenda, and Global Reporting Initiative (Amo-Mensah (2021) for their CSR activities.

The next portion explores the CSR landscape and it has been aligned with global agreements.

2.2.1   The influence of global agreements, National development and the social license to operate (SLO) on CSR in Ghana

CSR directs organizations to be aware of the impacts of their activities on their stakeholders and to consider the interests of the wider society and the environment in their business pursuits. It is therefore necessary for organizations to have a bigger picture in mind when framing policies for their CSR activities.

According to Dartey-Baah et al., (2015 pp. 83) in Ghana, organizations are collaborators with governments to promote nation-building through CSR initiatives aligned with the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) I, Growth and poverty reduction strategy (GPRS) II, and Ghana Shared Growth Development Agenda. (The GPRS I, GPRS II, and GSGDA were introduced by the government of Ghana between 2003-2013 to supplement the MDGs since only the MDGs were not enough to enable the country achieve its strategic goal of moving from a Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) to a middle income). These organizations use socioeconomic advancement in health, education, sports, and the environment by providing infrastructure, education access, scholarship programs, and community-development efforts like potable water and sanitation clean-ups (ibid). They further argued that other African nations like Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya due to the philanthropic nature of their CSR activities also supported with socio economic advancement like those done in Ghana. Amo-Mensah (2021) also noted how CSR in Ghana has been influenced by global agreements, conventions, and standards, including the Brundtland Commission, UN Summit, European Commission Strategy, Triple Bottom Line Concept, Millennium Development Goals, and now the UN Sustainable Development Goals. These factors have contributed to Ghana's growth in CSR since organizations use these global agreements to frame their activities to give them both local and international relevance in all they do. According to the OECD (2024), organizations are the engine of an economy, influencing the planet, how work is done, what is produced, consumed and how we live. Responsible business conduct is therefore encouraged as an essential tool for guaranteeing long-term economic viability and improving the lives of current and future generations. Maier (2021, pp. 449) also indicates that organizations fill regulatory gaps by promoting ethical corporate activity through public-impact policies, delivering public goods like education and better working conditions, and minimizing "public bads" like corruption and inequality.

Dartey-Baah et al., (2015) however argues that inspite of initiatives such as clean-up exercises, advances in sanitation continue to be mostly unmet since there are not enough specialized investments being made in this area on a continuous basis. Idemudia et al., (2022, pp. 4) also highlight that CSR faces challenges in addressing sustainable development in Africa (Idemudia, 2014; Kumi, Yeboah, & Kumi, 2020) due to lack of coordination, disjunction between CSR priorities and community needs, and skewed practices focusing on social aspects rather than environmental dimensions. Malan (2016) also argues how there is no data evidence of various organizations' actively contributing to address sustainable development issues (ibid).

2.2.2 Supporting communities through CSR for a SLO

Organizations use the term "social license to operate" (SLO) to describe their legitimacy in society, especially when they think that people might not like them, which could lead to objections that could hurt their business (Demuijnck & Fasterling, 2016 pp. 275). According to Morrison (2014), the SLO is used to curb "possible disapproval" especially when this disapproval could lead to pushbacks that can negatively affect the interest of organizations (ibid). Wirba (2023) also indicates that CSR as an emerging concept stresses how organizations should think about the social and environmental effects of their actions aside the financial ones. This implies that for every activity that organizations undertake in any sector, they need to know that the society is ok with it. According to Morrison (2014) the SLO was first used in the extractive sector but is applicable to any organizational activity that may cause controversy. Tuokuu and Amponsah-Tawiah (2016) describe how organizations use their CSR activities to help the community and get permission to do business there thus giving capitalism a "human face" and encouraging people to live in harmony with their neighbours. They also indicate that this will improve the relationship between businesses and communities and make sure that businesses are run responsibly for everyone's benefit and long-

term growth. Famiyeh et al., (2021) also reveal that ethical, mimetic, investor, and community factors are the most important drivers of CSR. They however suggest that suppliers and customers should continue to put pressure on companies to start CSR activities, and that community members and investors should support businesses with strong CSR records. In a study in Kosovo, in Europe to determine the practices of CSR by companies and its benefits, Nimani et al., (2022) found that about 87% of the assessed companies engage in CSR through the communities they operation. The Managers believe it enhances the organization's financial performance, market share, competitive advantage, reputation, work environment, employee productivity, loyalty, and retention of high-caliber personnel. The next section will explore practices of CSR as an alternative to social outsourcing to attain an SLO.

2.2.3   Social Outsourcing and its impact for a SLO

Many scholars and research support the idea that CSR might be used in Ghana as a form of social outsourcing technique. For example, Amo-Mensah and Tench (2015, pp. 25) contend that certain Ghanaian organizations use CSR projects to avoid criticism and evade closer interaction with societal concerns. They also propose for organizations to participate in CSR initiatives that are visible while discounting deeper structural issues needing long-term commitment and financial support.

Famiyeh et al., (2021) also noted that the key factors that drive companies to start CSR programs in Ghana are the demands of society, businesses, and the community, with regulators having little impact on their social license. Likewise, Abugre and Nyuur (2015, pp. 170) disclosed that certain Ghanaian organizations essentially promote their CSR initiatives to improve their brand image instead of really attending to societal issues. This result implies that CSR might be a strategic instrument used to outsource social duties to the corporate sector, therefore perhaps absolving the government and other stakeholders from their tasks. Wood and Gough (2006, pp. 1705) furthermore emphasize that in underdeveloped nations

12

like Ghana, inadequate social systems and limited governmental capability may leave a need that companies might fill via CSR projects. They caution, nonetheless, that if CSR replaces thorough social policy, this strategy may help to maintain social inequality.

The above reveals a complex and multi-faceted relationship between social outsourcing and CSR in Ghana. Some research suggests that CSR is being used to avoid social responsibilities, while others highlight the positivity it might have on the Ghanaian society. The impact of CSR therefore seems driven by the context- and project, as well as goals of organizations. Funding is however needed to be able to execute their plans or crisis. The next section looks at crowdfunding as an emerging funding alternative for CSR projects.

2.2.4 Crowdfunding as a model to fund CSR

To be able to undertake any CSR activity, aside policies, the next necessity is funding. It is however difficult for some organizations to raise funds due to financial obstacles such as gaining public financing, the instability of charitable grant funding, and the need to monetize their own operations (Tang & Zhang, 2023). According to Huang et al. 2021b and Cheng et al. 2023, crowdfunding is an emerging approach to collecting small contributions from socially conscious people to support projects run by well-known non-profit organizations and businesses (ibid). Amo-Mensah (2021) argues that ample evidence of the practices of organizations in the area of CSR are mostly philanthropic and mainly taking the form of donations and charitable giving.

It is therefore gaining grounds as an alternative to conventional fundraising routes such as venture capital and angel investment because of its perceived ease of acquiring funding (Tang & Zhang, 2023). Rijanto (2018), recognizes how CSR initiatives may enhance consumer purchases and contributions to "corporate-sponsored non-profit organizations". These activities will not only improve sales performance and consumer satisfaction but

will also allow firms to generate revenue via corporate social initiatives, such as donation-based crowdfunding, which may effectively be used to leverage CSR efforts.

According to Gerber and Hui (2013), Crowdfunding is an alternative source of raising funds for both for-profit and non-profit projects (Nielsen 2018). It entails a platform that enables interaction between entrepreneurs seeking financial backing and a broad, dispersed group of "crowdfunders" (individuals, organizations and groups) who invest, pledge, lend, or contribute funds for various initiatives and projects (Flórez-Parra et al., 2020 pp. 1). They also identified two primary categories of crowdfunding: investment-based, which include investing in stocks, royalties, and loans, and reward and donation-based, where contributors support campaigns for a product or cause, or a mix of both (2020, pp. 2).

In Ghana, aside organizations using their profit or revenue to fund CSR activities, donation-based crowding has emerged as a strategy employed by organizations or individuals based on the need, allowing individuals or organizations to open bank accounts or digital platforms where people donate to assist crises or disasters or any other social cause that people believe in and are willing to support. According to Rijanto (2018 pp. 82) donors in the donation-based crowdfunding model are typically philanthropic, without expecting financial compensation. This model can therefore be tailored to a specific community to reduce fulfilment and fraud risks.

Figure 2 Crowdfunding model
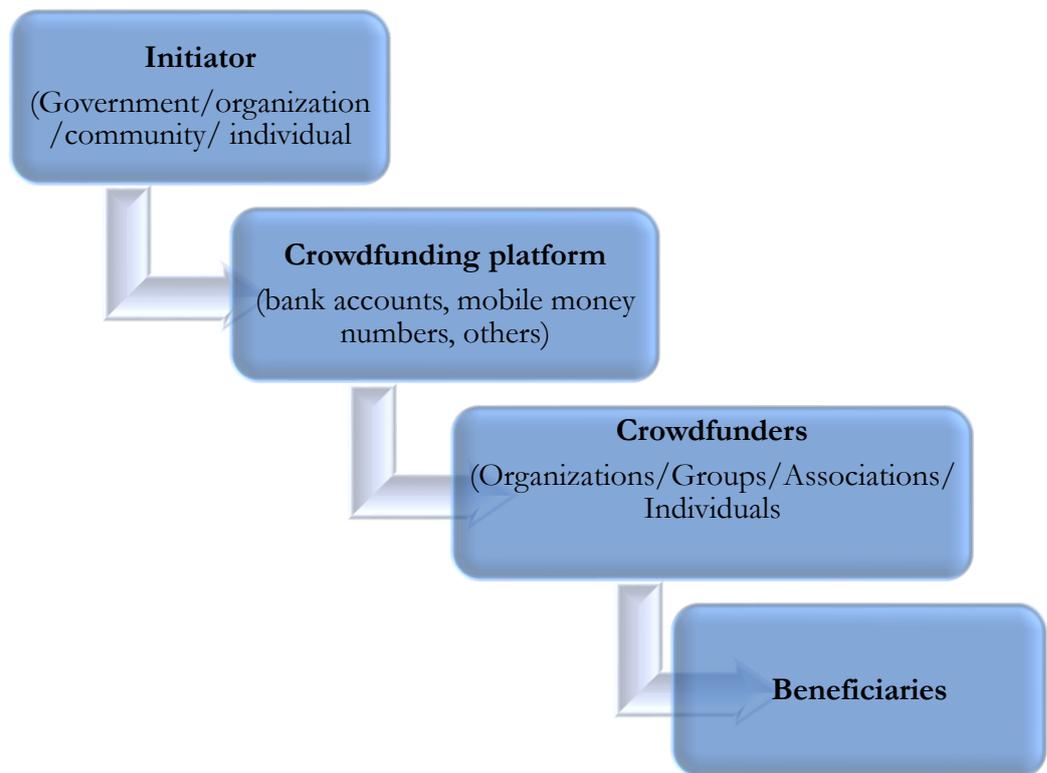
The emphasis in crowdfunding is raising small amounts of money from several people and institutions as donations without necessarily depending on a substantial number of wealthy investors or contributors (Ibid pp2).

The above frame describes how crowding starts with an individual or organization identifying a social intervention, does the math in relation to how much the project will cost, creates a digital platform and then communicates this to other stakeholders (crowdfunders) who then contribute small amounts to cover the cost of the project.

During the era of COVID-19, the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwah Akuffo Addo established a Covid-19 National Trust Fund which enabled organizations and individuals to donate to assist in sensitization to limit the spread of the virus. Organizations therefore exercised their CSR support by contributing to this fund. Ghana Commercial Bank for instance donated GHS 100,000 as part of their CSR to collaborate with government in

national development (gcb bank, 2024). Zenith bank Ghana donated GHS 1,000,000 to this fund (Zenith bank Ghana, 2020), Bishops of the Catholic Church donated GHS 70,000 (Vatican News 2020). While the government set up the COVID-19 National Trust fund, the Ghana COVID-19 Private sector Fund was also set up by some Ghanaian business executives as a response to the call by the president for a concerted effort by all citizens to fight the pandemic. This was a crowdfunding initiative to put up a 100-bed infectious disease centre at the Ga East Municipal hospital which attracted CH Foundation (the CSR wing of CH Group in Ghana) to donate US$ 100,000 (Citi newsroom (2020), US$ 59,000 donated by two diplomatic missions of Ghana in the United States (Ghana Permanent Mission to the United Nations (2021) and several other donations done in collaboration with the telecom companies through unique short codes to facilitate easy donation.

The examples demonstrate how organizations including government may match funding and CSR initiatives, boosting social projects' legitimacy, involvement, and financial possibilities. The reward aspect in relation to reward and donation-based crowdfunding is quite unassuming. This is because businesses may utilize this to increase their brand visibility, raise awareness, engage the public, engage the community, and acquire a social license (Rijanto 2018, pp. 81). All they have to do is publish this on their social media handles, their websites or receive an acknowledgement for the funds received.

Chapter 5 further elaborates how some CSR crowdfunding initiatives played out in the Mepe crisis.

2.4 The nexus between CSR, SDGs, social outsourcing and the SLO

For any CSR activity to be fully accepted by the community there needs to be a dynamic engagement by organizations to distinguish its genuine effectiveness in being responsible and when it is acting as social outsourcing. Tuokuu & Amponsah-Tawiah (2016, pp. 31) for instance posit that beyond donations, CSR includes human rights, staff welfare, environmental

safety, child labor, community-company partnerships, transparency, accountability, tax governance, and legal issues all of which contribute to the well-being of employees, consumers, and communities. It is therefore important for CSR frames to touch on the interest of all stakeholders. According to Business for Social Responsibility (2003), good stakeholder engagement enables firms to operate freely and without resistance in certain communities, especially in the extractive industry, by engaging in CSR initiatives, possibly offering them a "license to operate" (Famiyeh et al., 2021 pp. 435).

To ensure the right people benefit from a company's CSR initiatives, there however has to be a lot of openness and harmony in the government (Wirba, 2023 pp. 15).

Figure 3 Conceptual framework
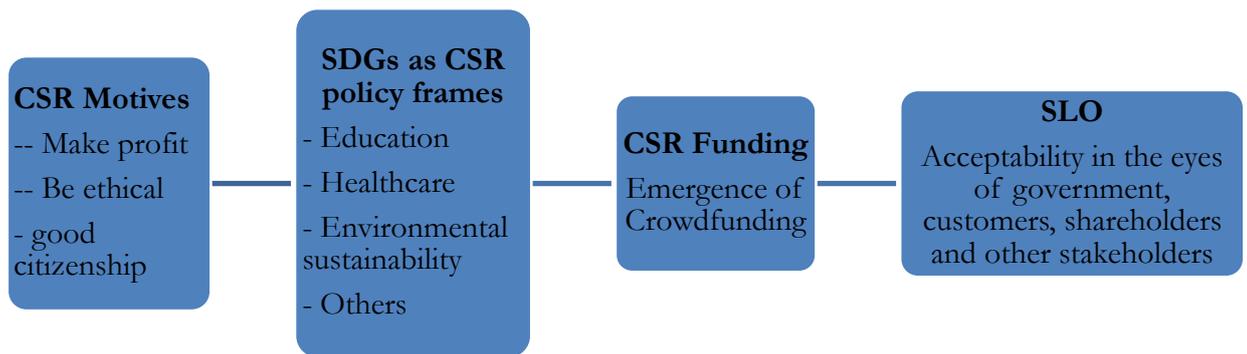
Source: Author's frame using Kuada & Hinson's (2012) analytical framework

In conclusion, the above conceptual framework can be described as one of the ways organizations project their CSR activities. They strive to first make profit, obey the laws of the land and also be considered good corporate citizens. To achieve this, they need policies as their internal guide and what better way to do that than framing to align with international agreements. For instance, in Ghana, party-based governance condenses development goals, making it difficult for organizations to align their CSR initiatives with local strategies due to potential party biases as compared to global objectives like the SDGs (Dartey-Baah et al., (2015, pp. 87). Organizations will therefore prefer to play it safe and run their activities

without a political or party bias. To do this however, they need funding, and so they plan yearly by budgeting for CSR but when a disaster or crisis hits, the good citizens in them would rather collaborate support either based on their already prepared budgets or collaborate through crowdfunding to support affected communities. This then enables them to attain or maintain goodwill or a social license from their operational communities.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study uses qualitative research methods: a combination of reviewing secondary material and collecting primary data through semi-structured interviews.

3.2 Secondary Data collection

The secondary data collection focused on academic literature to understand the practice of CSR and social outsourcing. Media reports and website information from various government organizations like the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO), and the Volta River Authority (VRA) were assessed to understand current CSR incentives and the activities of government before and after the Akosombo spillage and other information.

3.3 Methods for Primary Data collection

The following methods were used to collect the primary data at Mepe.

3.3.1 Purposive Sampling Strategy

A purposive sampling technique was employed in the selection of ten (10) organizations from various sectors for a multi-sectoral analysis of their CSR practices in Ghana. The initial focus for this sample was to get information from NADMO and community leaders or members in Mepe on the support received from organizations to support the victims of the flood. The names of some organizations were shared from logbooks that two of the camps kept registering all who visited and made donations to them but this was not enough to cover the intended multi-sectoral analysis. This then required a further media search on organizations that are generally active in CSR. All the organizations were contacted from Accra, the capital of Ghana and which is the Headquarters for government organizations (including the ministries and their agencies) as well as most local and international organizations. These organizations were also sampled with a focus on comparing the CSR activities of

international organizations with the Ghanaian owned organizations including government organizations. Ten individuals from ten different organizations' CSR or related departments were therefore interviewed for this research. The demographics of these organizations are below.

Table 2 Profile of Organizational respondents

	Respondents	Sector	Status	Department	Date
1	Organization 1	Oil and Gas	Quasi-government	CSR	June 2024
2	Organization 2	Media	Ghanaian	Foundation	June 2024
3	Organization 3	Beverage & Alcoholic	Ghanaian	Sales and Marketing	June 2024
4	Organization 4	Food and Drink processing	International	CSR and Sustainability	July 2024
5	Organization 5	Fast Moving Consumer goods (FMCGs)	International	CSR	July 2024
6	Organization 6	Telecom Company	Ghanaian	Foundation	June 2024
7	Organization 7	Quasi-NGO	International	Executive secretary	July 2024
8	Organization 8	Government organizations	Ghanaian	CSR and Sustainability	July 2024
9	Organization 9	Financial Institution	Ghanaian	Corporate Affairs	August 2024

| 10 | Organization 10 | Automobile Company | Interna-tional | Sales and Market-ing | August 2024 |

Quasi-government organization was used by this organization considering ownership of about 70% from government related organizations and 30% shares on the stock market. The quasi-NGO is an independent body but entitled to government subventions due to an act of parliament.

Out of the total 10 organizations interacted with, two of them are Foundations that have been created by organizations to manage their CSR activities. Their assigned sector is therefore based on the mother organization. Further elaborated on this in chapter 4.

Mepe was also chosen as the only case study because of the state of the victims still living in tents at the time of my field visit which was about 8 months after the community had been flooded.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews for Organizations

A semi- structured interview format was chosen for this research to enable a free flow of conversation from the respondents, and it enabled me to ask follow-up questions or use insights from a previous interview to refine the next interview session. This enabled me to understand how CSR is organized and received by beneficiaries and to assess its purposeful-ness as an alternative to social outsourcing.

To document this data collection, questionnaires were prepared as a guide for the inter-views and field notes taken with a notebook and audio recorder used with the consent of the respondents. The analysis was done based on the structure of the research questions. The interviews in Mepe were done in twi, a Ghanaian language spoken by about 80% of the Ghanaian population (Expat life Ghana, 2024). They were translated to English first and then transcribed and coded manually. The transcription from the organizational respondents

were done with artificial intelligence (AI), Turboscribe ai and then manually coded based on themes in the research questions.

3.3.3 Focus group discussion (FGD)

This approach was only used in Mepe but was not part of the initial plan for the data collection. Before going to Mepe the plan was to walk through the town and observe CSR projects, with the help of a friend (Aku not her real name), who comes from Mepe but lives in Accra and speaks Ewe (the main language of this community), to facilitate interactions with some of the victims of the flood. She got in touch with her cousin (Afi, not her real name) who lives in Mepe and after reaching the first camp and seeing the willingness of the camp leaders to interact with me, this approach was used there and in the other two camps.

Table 3 Demographics of FGDs and period of data collection

Re-spondents	Methods	Number of partici-pants	Camp sites at MEPE	Gender composition	Date
Focus group 1	Semi-structured interview	4	(Degome camp 1 leaders)	4 Males, 1 female	June 2024
Focus group 2	Semi-structured interview	4	(Degome camp 2 leaders)	2 Males, 3 females	June 2024
Focus group 3	Semi-structured interview	5	(MPs Alternatively safe Haven leaders)	2 male, 4 females	June 2024

Com-munity leader		1	Town square	Male	June 2024
Total community members= 14					

*The responses from these interviews were done in Twi and Ewe and translated into English.

This is further elaborated in chapter 5.

3.4 Reflecting on Ethics and positionality

I have 5 years' experience in staff philanthropy in my former place of work where I started an initiative with my colleagues to give back to the community. This required searching for "vulnerable" target groups within the greater Accra Region to enquire their needs and then to collaborate with my colleagues including executive management to contribute funds, purchase the needed items and donate to them. With this knowledge and experience, I went to these organizations with an open mind to learn instead of imposing my experience on what could have been done better.

The target interviewees for this research were the Heads of corporate affairs units of the Organizations, government officials and camp leaders at Mepes. The interviewees were found through my personal social network, through friends and family members. They were contacted via telephone calls, WhatsApp messenger and emails for an appointment at their earliest convenience. Due to bureaucracies and protocols that needed to be followed before speaking with some personnel, the whole process took longer than expected. For every contact person, their consent was sought for the interview, for recording and note taking and the anonymity of their responses was communicated and ensured. Despite the protocol to be followed for approval/consent before officials of an organization could freely

communicate and share their CSR activities, I was not required to seek permission from all the heads of the sampled organizations. I also requested for an introductory letter from the ISS TLST department which enabled me to authenticate my affiliation with ISS and allow organizations to be comfortable with me. This research was done with an open mind and respectful considerations given to the time of the interviewees. A time slot of 20 to 40 minutes was therefore communicated to them but sometimes took longer due to the respondents providing emphasis on certain issues that they felt should be well documented and communicated for resolution. I also at every interview iterated my role as a student researcher.

3.5 Limitations

Certain factors affected the scope of this research. Time constraint was the major factor since the contacted interviewees kept rescheduling due to other official matters that needed their attention.

The other limitation was the language barrier, as much as the camp leaders could speak Twi which I also speak, they often got carried away by the sentiments of their current situation and started to speak Ewe among themselves for which I had to redirect their attention back to the discussion at hand and with the help of Aku and Afi they interpret what was mentioned at the time of the language switch.

The other limitation that could have impacted the research negatively is transportation arrangements. The travel time to Mepe is about 2 hours by road each way from Accra. This however could have been affected by the waiting time for a public bus to get full on time coupled with the uncertainty of traffic on the Tema – Battor road. Also due to the many reschedules from the organizational interviewees it was going to be a huge expense doing that with taxi or uber. With the help of the subvention from the SPD data collection fund, a

private vehicle was fuelled and used for the visit to Mepe Community as well as in visiting

organizations to schedule meetings or to attend meetings.

Chapter 4 Exploring The Impact Of Organizational Csr: Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to highlight the findings to the research questions based on the semi structured interviews conducted with the 10 organizational respondents. The responses and analysis will therefore be examined based of the sub research questions.

4.1.1 Giving back to the community- The understanding of CSR

Engaging in any activity necessitates an initial comprehension or insight into its significance. Different organizations perceive CSR differently.

> *"CSR is about integrating social and environmental concerns, how we bring that into our operations in a very transparent manner" (Organization 4, June 2024)*

> *"CSR basically is about adding value to society, making impact where it matters, giving back to the communities, especially within which you operate as a business." (Organization 5, July 2024)*

> *"It is key in all that we do, we believe in the triple bottom review thus to be socially responsible, running our business in a sustainable manner to make our profit and leave our footprints in society" (Organization 8, August 2024).*

One common thread across these replies is how organizations understand CSR to mean contributing to their local surroundings, whether through people or the environment. It describes how organizations have understood the importance of "corporate citizenship" where there is the need to improve the standard of living of their environs not just financially but the human resource as well (Caroll 1991, pp. 42) to enable them to attain a social license.

4. 2 The core believe is the force to do good- Motivation for engaging in CSR activities

4.2.1 Responsibility, policy, and finance as motivation of CSR

In the field of CSR, one important area of research is figuring out what motivates an organization to engage in any CSR initiatives (Famiyeh et al., 2021).

There are numerous reasons why organizations engage in CSR.

"…we went for the Annual General Meeting (AGM), Some of the shareholders were complaining that we were spending too much, but others came in and said that, we were even providing too much information on CSR. But we came in and said that those are the things that we need to do because if we don't do it, nobody does it" (Organization 1, June 2024).

The above response reflects the absence of government in adequate provision and so the need for other government related businesses to step in to fill this gap to support the interest of government even though they are not mandated to do so.

"Yes, CSR XXX is not just a voluntary effort to improve the environment, social or economic impact. It is also a means to demonstrate our commitment to responsible practices which not only enhance our reputation but also contribute to a more sustainable future (Organization 6, June 2024).

It was observed that one of the most common reasons why organizations engage in CSR is the desire to be somewhat responsible for the society in which they operate in, and this applies to both government-related organizations, private Ghanaian organizations, and international organizations. This responsibility is however practiced as a matter of necessity for Ghanaian organizations.

"we support our communities wherever we find ourselves" (Organization 3, June 2024).

The unique aspect of this responsibility trend is how the empathetic disposition of senior management can influence the organization's motivation to participate in CSR initiatives.

"Okay. In all honesty, we just want to help. And we are coming from a place where the head of all of us is a very compassionate person. And sees the good in people when others don't see. And so, like from the top, it has some sort of a covering over all of us. So, the need to give back is one of our core items as a company" (Organization 2, June 2024).

Naturally, it is expected of company owners to support the local economies in which they operate (Kuada & Hinson 2012). The above response therefore exemplifies how the expectations of heads of organizations trickles down to the rest of the company to provide an impactful CSR.

Also, organizations are using CSR to mentor talent in fields that could benefit their organizations in the future.

"We believe that as an institution with a whole lot of engineering and science background ... we have a lot of engineers; mechanical, chemical, there are a whole lot of them,... So it would be better for us to help in grooming them up, I mean encouraging the education of talent like that in the schools". (Organization 1, June 2024)

International organizations, while they acknowledge their obligation to assist the communities in which they operate, they simultaneously leverage this responsibility as a strategic business approach to promote sustainability initiatives and build their reputation in the country.

"Our Core believe is the force to do good to create a positive impact by making sustainable living so purpose is the heart of everything" (Organization 4, July 2024).

"If the community is helped then obviously the returns will come back to us. If we can maintain the communities within the SDG goals, then we also thrive as a company" (Organization 10, August 2024).

This latter response aligns with the win-win strategy argued by Mahmud et al., (2020) when using CSR as a tool for achieving sustainable development by (Mahmud et al., 2021 pp. 2). This implies that the community is helped with a particular social need, the

organization attains their brand visibility and probably become a preferred choice for customers due to the support given.

4.2.2 Adopting SDGs as CSR guidelines and for crisis or disaster support

Even though organizations are motivated by this responsibility to help the country through its communities, the increasing prominence of CSR as a business strategy has made it necessary for organizations to set up a well-defined framework for the implementation of their CSR initiatives (Nimani, Zeqiraj, and Spahija, 2022). Dartey-Baah et al., (2015 pp. 72) for instance noted that in the era of the MDGs, organizations framed their CSR policies to align with them and the national agenda of Ghana but because the MDGs alone were not comprehensive enough to attain the development goals of the government then, other strategies were introduced.

It however was observed from respondents that now, organizations have developed internal policies aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3,4,6,9,12 and 15, specifically focusing on "good health and well-being, quality education, clean water and sanitation, industry, innovation and infrastructure, responsible consumption and production, and climate action" (WWW.UN.org, 2023). The major distinction however is that the private Ghanaian organizations are more skewed towards SDGs 3 and 4;

> *"We have an internal CSR policy manual on Education and sometimes health" (Organization 9, August 2024).*

While the Ghanaian organizations with state interest and international organizations frame their policies to cover SDGs 3,4,6,9 and 15.

> *"Our CSR basically encompasses three main areas and pivoted around SDG Goals 3,4 and 6 thus good health and well-being, quality education, clean water and sanitation" (Organization 1, June 2024).*

"We mainly practice our CSR through, Nutrition, health and wellness but we engage in other activities like Community development projects, support the provision of educational facilities, we support farmers with training, support youth in the cocoa farming communities to go to school. We also create job opportunities by engaging them technical and vocational skill training periodically" (Organization 5, July 2024).

Some international organizations however also focus on SDG 12 by encouraging their suppliers to reduce plastic use.

"So, there's a big one that we do on plastics. So, we want to make sure that all the materials that we're using in our production of the brands that we have is reduced by a certain number" (Organization 4, July 2024).

Organizations in Ghana are recognized for their commitment to providing support to the nation during times of crisis or disaster. This is usually evident in media reporting of the donations that have been made to individuals or affected communities as elaborated in chapter 4 in the case of Mepe. This study, however, revealed that while most organizations express support for disaster situations, they do not incorporate it into their policy frameworks. They deem it fit to provide support in disaster scenarios, as they are part of the Ghanaian society or employ individuals who may be directly or indirectly impacted by such circumstances.

"As for crisis support, we do. In fact, we did a lot during the COVID times, supporting a lot of the hospitals with PPEs and other facilities to be able to cope with the kind of pressure that was coming …Those ones, we had to count it as part of our health support that we give. But it was in a crisis period, so we had to support" (Organization 1, June 2024).

This statement from a respondent then defines how CSR can be framed to any form to support a particular agenda. Mahmud et al., also asserts to the importance of organizations to improve their financial performance while also offering abundant benefits to society to help people survive a crisis (2021 pp 2). There have however been concerns on organizations

contributing more to health to the detriment of the other SDGs like education and therefore the need for organizations to do more in that sector (Fusheini et al., 2021 pp. 72).

4.2.3 Allocating financial resources for CSR

Organizations prefer to allocate specific funds to carry out their CSR operations, although this varies by sector, whether it is a Ghanaian organization with government interest, a private Ghanaian organization, or an international organization. International organizations normally have budgeted funds from their global operations or designate a percentage of their profits depending on the project, and they also have collaborations in which the collaborating organization contributes funding for CSR related activities.

> *"A percentage of part of our annual profit is declared and put into social responsibilities that we think will help the communities we operate in" (organization 5, August 2024)*

> *"Funds are also raised from partnerships with organizations" (Organization 4, July 2024).*

Organizations with Government interest mainly had a portion of their yearly budgets allocated for CSR and this is not dependent on profit since they have CSR departments that oversee their activities.

> *"We have a yearly budget for our CSR activities and projects" (Organization 1, June 2024)*

> *"We use our internally generated funds for CSR activities and this is usually budgeted for yearly"(organization 8, August 2024).*

The Ghanaian private organizations on the other hand, depending on their sector of operation varied on their funding sources.

It was noted that there are instances where earmarked funds from specific products are used to cater for some CSR activities.

> *"We have a xxx fund where proceeds from the sale of every bottled water is kept aside to support 2 major hospitals"* (Organization 3, June 2024).

This is an indication that there are products that organizations introduce into the market with specific CSR agendas. This puts the organizations in a good light in the eyes of the society and encourages the purchase of that product because the good that money will achieve.

There are instances where funding is mobilized from internally generated funds from the organization and from their staff.

"From the organizations' generated funds and also from staff members" (Organization 9, August 2024).

This scenario often arises when the staff recognize a situation they wish to address, yet upon attempting to mobilize funds, they discover a shortfall. Consequently, they engage management to secure additional funding, thereby augmenting the initially gathered funds for the project.

The foundations receive funding from their parent organization

"We are funded by our mother company –XXX Ghana" (Organization 6, July 2024).

Also more peculiar is the "distributive" role that some play by mobilizing support from the general public to enable them support vulnerable communities and cases of crisis or disaster.

"Our funds are generally mobilized from viewers and listeners in the form of donations, and these include individuals, companies, associations, clubs and others" (Organization 2, June 2024).

This is usually done through crowdfunding where the organization (the initiator) identifies a need after consultation with the beneficiary community especially during a crisis or disaster and then informs crowdfunders who either want to be known or not to donate to this cause. The case study on Mepe in the next chapter will highlight how crowdfunding initiatives resulted in two major infrastructure developments. It was however noted from this respondent also that as much as they are willing to support the community they also experience "initiator fatigue"

And then, they funds started coming in but we had to stop at some point. Because, that is not our core business. And, we can't do it forever ((Organization 2, June 2024).

4.3 CSR as an alternative to Social outsourcing

4.3.1 Societal inclusion, communication and stakeholder collaboration

According to McCarthy (2023), the practice of social outsourcing entails the delegation of the government's customary obligation for the provision of social services to non-state actors.

In assessing how CSR can be utilized as an alternative to social outsourcing in general and in disaster or crisis situations, a few assessments were made; what is provided, who are the beneficiaries, how are beneficiaries identified and given the necessary support, whether there exist stakeholder collaborations and others.

This was gathered that organizations have carved two major niches in undertaking CSR activities.

i.   Support the communities they operate in

In supporting the communities they operate, their support varies from training, equipment provision to schools and health facilities and community outreach.

"We support Communities that are directly impacted by our operations and also Communities that will go a long way to benefit the society or have a drive to develop themselves" (Organization 8, July 2024).

The support of individuals and organizations is crucial in both crisis and regular situations, as it significantly impacts their customers, communities, and nations, emphasizing the significance of organizations communicating their CSR initiatives to enable them acquire a social license (Wirba, 2023).

"So, the communities where we source raw materials from. We provide basic training to farmers, their spouses and youth in these communities. For example, we have this project. I can tell you for a

fact that, yes, there may be other farmers in other communities, but you have to start from where you

are sourcing from. If there are issues of child labour in the communities where you are sourcing from,

I think it is prudent to start your initiative from there, address those issues before you extend it to

other communities" (Organization 5, July 2024).

It was revealed that organizations play a crucial role in ensuring that producers of raw materials from their sourcing communities acquire some other basic knowledge in their business for the sake of their own accountability and business growth. It goes to agree with Barnett (2007) referring to CSR as a deliberate allocation of resource to improve societal welfare and stakeholder interactions especially with external stakeholders (Mahmud et a., 2021) who have a huge role to play in their social license.

ii.   Supporting vulnerable and deprived communities

Support for the vulnerable is provided in a variety of ways, with scholarship schemes playing a significant role. They are helped to pay their school stipends or provided with other essentials to continue their education, primarily in Ghana.

> *"So, what our company does is to first and foremost cater for brilliant but needy students, which*
>
> *we've termed …, we have our orphan outreaches and also mobilize support for Communities that*
>
> *have experienced some disaster". (Organization 2, June 2024).*
>
> *"We support Women, children, and youth in deprived communities" (Organization 6, June 2024).*
>
> *"Funds not given directly except as a donation to pay for educational materials for instance pay for*
>
> *a stipend at school" (Organization 10, August 2024).*

According to Mahmud et al., the primary focus of CSR during a crisis especially during the COVID-19 pandemic was on ensuring human health and safety, as well as assisting vulnerable individuals in society (2021, pp. 2). This data however suggests that organizations support vulnerable communities or individuals because they are vulnerable but not because they are facing a peculiar issue.

4.3.2 CSR's contribution to SDGs in Ghana

Despite the above niches, it was revealed that organizations focus their CSR activities in SDG goals 3,4,6,9,12,13 (Good health & well-being, quality education, clean water & sanitation, industry, innovation & infrastructure, responsible consumption & production and climate change);

> *"Our CSR basically encompasses three main areas and pivoted around SDGs 3,4 and 6 thus good health and well-being, quality education, clean water and sanitation" (Organization 1, June 2024).*

> *"We have a policy on hygiene, improving livelihoods, health and environmental sustainability" (Organization 4, June 2024)*

> *"Primarily, XXX does nutrition, health and wellness. Okay, so anything that will contribute to this path. We also have objectives to provide young people opportunities". (Organization 5, July 2024).*

> *"Our CSR hinges on four pillars thus Education, health, environment and road safety" (Organization 10, August 2024).*

Regardless of whether an organization engages in niche 1 or 2, the execution occurs within the framework of the aforementioned SDGs. The support provided therefore typically aligns with these goals, covering initiatives such as funding scholarship programs, supplying hospital equipment, drilling boreholes, minimizing plastic usage in product packaging, and distributing relief items (hygiene kits, mattresses, water storage containers, tents, food stuff, etc) and more.

> *"We usually provide them with water systems, educational materials, social infrastructure projects, Health facilities like CHPS, Clinics. We also engage in environmental sustainability projects through Stakeholder engagements and engage in Sanitation related projects" (Organization 8, August 2024).*

This study showed that it was more common for international organizations to provide skill training for the benefit of their suppliers and the communities that these suppliers operate in.

> *"We do basic business training for our suppliers (like book-keeping, stock management). We also embark on campaigns for good hygiene practices for children and families in communities where we source our products from" (Organization 4, June 2024).*

Ghanaian organizations with state interest however organized training when it is to curb a future situation of disaster or create awareness in a particular field.

4.3.3 Identifying specific needs to provide through the SDGs

Nevertheless, in order to ascertain what is required for these beneficiaries, organizations either receive applications from individuals or community members, form their own engagement with a community or occasionally, needs assessments that have already been produced by the municipal or district assemblies.

> *"We plan according to the programme of activities through a selection from applications received mostly before the beginning of a new calendar year"* (Organization 1, June 2024).
>
> *"District Assemblies are also consulted on their needs assessment to support their priority areas"* (Organization 8, August 2024).

The responses provided illustrate the strategic planning undertaken by organizations that have government interest. Their connection to the government drives them to support its mission of serving the communities.

The size and the objective of an organization will define what to keep an eye out for, even though private Ghanaian organizations engage in a different practice and do not prioritize supporting the agenda of the government. There are instances in which they receive requests for assistance from individuals and communities.

"Requests are usually received from communities and individuals on the various assistance that is required" (Organization 2, June 2024)

Mahmud et al., (2021 pp. 4&5) identifies that community pressure significantly impacts firms' social licenses to operate within societies (Skouloudis et al., 2015: Boadi et al., 2019) as these firms often perceive that they must provide various benefits through social initiatives to make up for the negative consequences of their business activities (Mahmud et al., 2020).

However, to distinguish themselves in their CSR activities, they conduct feasibility studies to then choose what to provide.

"We wanted to give back to people. We realized that, okay, how do we do something new? How do we create a niche for ourselves? I mean, water and heart correlate. So, we started to research into the facilities in Ghana. The ones that support the heart. So initially it was the xxx. Then we skewed towards the xxx because we realized that the heart surgeries are very expensive" (Organization 3, June 2024).

Twum and Nimako (2022), highlight the importance of communicating CSR activities. This response revealed that communities can reach out to organizations because of the media coverage of organizations engaging in CSR. Some organizations tend to communicate their CSR activities via social media, on their websites, via newspaper publications, the labels that are made on infrastructure provided and on souvenirs that they send out to their customers and stakeholders at the end of the year. This enables communities and individuals to know where to seek support.

"They see from the support we have given others in the past and we showcase these projects on all our media channels" (Organization 2, June 2024).

"when we do an Activity, of course, there would be the labelling of XXX If it is a building, if it is a structure and whatever item we are giving out, you see some kind of branding from XXX on it. So that in itself was selling us … We do some publications in the news media. We've done calendars that shows our CSR activity. So, at the end of the year when we are giving calendars out to Customers

and also to our corporate partners. We have some of these activities showing in the calendars what we've done". (Organization 10, August 2024)".

This procedure of showcasing CSR activities cut across all sectors for both international and Ghanaian and so the special role that the media plays. The proposed four (4) communication pillars by Twum and Nimako (2022) as indicated in Chapter 2 is therefore crucial in this case not just for organizations but also for communities to identify which organization can support them when need be. This however undermines the role of government since communities should rather rely on their local government authorities.

CSR provides organizations with societal advantages. These benefits include goodwill, the acquisition of social licenses, and, in the case of organizations that play a redistributive function, the ability to seek assistance from the general public whenever they find another critical initiative to sponsor.

> *"Gives us social license to operate in communities, as a means of brand awareness for us and enhances our reputation in the country" (Organization 8, August 2024).*
>
> *"We mainly enjoy good will from society. Others also see what we do for the vulnerable and are always willing to donate whenever we ask for donations for a new project" (Organization 2, June 2024).*

4.4 Stakeholder CSR Collaborations

Organizations in Ghana are increasingly collaborating with each other and sometimes with government institutions like schools, hospitals, and others to enable an effective support system to communities and individuals. These collaborations are necessary since an organization cannot go into a community and for instance put up an infrastructure without first acquiring a designated land from the community or the right land permits from the appropriate authorities.

"We have collaborated with the Ghana Education Service (GES) on STEM related quizzes (Organization 1, June 2024).

"So, we're currently in partnership with an international organization. I think it's a four or five-year contract. We're in the last year or two where we're doing sustainability as a post-COVID intervention. How businesses are trying to help their communities survive if there is another pandemic. So, I mean, we've been drilling boreholes. We've done a couple of boreholes in towns in Ghana" (Organization 3, June 2024).

"We partner with government agencies, NGOs, private organizations and individuals because of the expertise in disaster response" (Organization 7, July 2024).

Despite the desire for collaborations in CSR, some international organizations stay away from government related collaborations to avoid any political stigma.

"*We have received letters for support from government but we shy away from his support because we do not want a political tag to our activities" (Organization 4, August 2024)***.**

4.4.1 CSR in crisis or disaster management

As indicated in 5.1 above, most organizations do not have a specific policy framework on crisis or disaster management, but they choose to do so because they consider it appropriate to take action.

"There is nothing wrong if organizations support such situations. We are part of the society so we need to help out" (Organization 1, June 2024).

"It is appropriate since their staff or businesses could be part of these organizations" (Organization 5, July 2024".

According to McCarthy (2020, pp 13), organizations that help others during a crisis improve their own social awareness and create the moral ties needed for a more inclusive and equitable society. According to Wirba (2023), organizations, the government, and other stakeholders should come together at times of crisis or calamity to form a powerful force

that can overcome the circumstance. These times should be seen as "extraordinary times" when the strength of the human spirit must be recalled.

Most organizations are of the view, however that this support should not be forced but voluntary based on their capacity and expertise and if possible, collaborate also with government and other stakeholders to be able to adequately support when there is a crisis.

"They should use their specialized skills to make a lasting impact not just provide food and cash" (Organization 4, August 2024).

"They have to collaborate with the government organizations either from the district or National level" (Organization 8, August 2024).

"There should be collaborations between organizations to form a consortium that enables enough resources and expertise to tackle different situations at a time" (Organization 10, August 2024).

There is a consensus that government should be the main provider in cases of disaster or crisis but organizations, religious bodies and associations always seem to be more active.

" Government has to be the first provider to do a needs assessment and then make public their assessments and encourage organizations, societies and individuals to support if they can. We always hear NADMO is on site but private organizations and individuals tend to be seen as been more active" (Organization 2, June 2024)

"Government should be the key provider but Organizations like churches, companies, NGOs are always more active but for a short while" (Organization 4, August 2024).

This limited presence of the government could be attributed to the government agencies embracing their responsibilities and therefore not communicating their actions like the private business and international organizations or might do.

4.4.2 What organizations stand to benefit from government in their CSR endeavours

Unlike governments in the global North that have thorough policies to encourage CSR (Wirba, 2023), Ghana currently does not have a national policy to govern CSR and so its current voluntary nature.

There however exists; a "practice note on contribution or a Donation to a worthwhile cause under the Income Tax Act, 2015 (Act 896)" (Ghana revenue Authority, 2016) which serves as a guide to the benefits organizations can get when the engage in CSR. This note is specific to schemes that provide academic, technical, professional and other fields a scholarship, rural and urban area development, promotion of sports or development in the sports sector as well as approval received from the Commissioner-General of the GRA on any worthwhile cause.

This study revealed that some organizations know about these benefits, but others do not or think they are not clear enough to make easy claims for tax incentives. There is also the perception that the economy of Ghana is currently facing some economic hardships and because the government needs money, it is increasingly becoming difficult to prove CSR initiatives.

"I am not sure if there is a special benefit from the government since we are a government organization". (Organization 8, August 2024)

"The tax incentive is Insignificant that you can't really quantify it. So the bottom line is not really touched" (Organization 10, August 2024".

"The process of proving that you are doing CSR has become tighter. Because the government needs money. (Organization 1, June 2024).

Upon a further probe with the finance department of one of the private Ghanaian organizations, it was revealed that they get a tax waiver for CSR activities usually covering only the amount that was utilized on CSR. For the international organizations, however it is difficult to ascertain the tax relief benefits since the global nature of these organizations

probably enable them streamline their taxes in such a way that it might not be known to the manager who is fronting CSR for the local organization. Also due to the lack of data from the GRA to ascertain the amount the government forfeits yearly due to tax relieves or incentives, is it is difficult to assert what "insignificant" tax incentives means as purported.

4.5 Role of government in encouraging CSR

Ghana as a democratic nation that selects its leaders through multiparty competition and this year (2024) being an election year, the role of government in providing for the well-being for the citizens is very high. In exploring the role of government in encouraging CSR and CSR in crisis or disaster situations, 3 aspects were looked at.

4.5.1 Is the government encouraging CSR during crisis or disaster situations?

There are a variety of responses to the question of whether the government is encouraging CSR. This variety of responses is a result of some organizations believe that the government is not doing much but can start now,

> *"Government is not doing much but can start making calls based on the help needed and seek expert support from organizations" (Organization 3, July 2024).*
>
> *"They are not doing much, They should ensure that they complete their part of support for communities (Organization 5, July 2024)*

Others also believe the government is doing its best but there are certain companies that are avoiding the idea of working with the government on their corporate social responsibility initiatives, as was mentioned in the previous section (5.2). Moreover, there is the idea that the government has been talking about corporate social responsibility (CSR) but has not yet implemented the appropriate standards or guidelines for corporations to follow like a CSR policy.

> *"Yes! They basically talk about it when they meet Corporate Ghana" (Organization 9, August 2024).*

To understand the above responses on whether the government is encouraging CSR or not the next aspect is crucial.

4.5.2 What are the expectations of the government in any crisis or disaster?

It was noted that organizations view our government is not encouraging CSR enough because they do not clearly see the role that government plays in situations of disaster.

> *"They should be much more involved themselves and let the public also know the actual situation on the ground. They should keep a database that tracks all the support from organizations even if they want to be anonymous of CSR for victims of disaster". (Organization 2, June 2024).*

This goes against the concern of social outsourcing where accountability and transparency is questioned and gives the impression that CSR can fill this gap if government is ready to provide the right tools for organizations to support though CSR.

NADMO for instance is the main government agency that is responsible for disaster management in crisis situations but based on the response below, their role probably not understood and therefore the need for the government to sensitize citizens on their role to avoid misconceptions and expectations beyond reach.

> *"NADMO is always present for assessment and coordination but not in adequate provisions" (Organization 10, August 2024).*

4.5.3 What were the expectations of the government in the case of Mepe?

Considering that Mepe is the main case study for which this study seeks to examine the possible role of government in encouraging CSR, Organizations shared their views on some of the expectations they had for the government in supporting the displaced victims after the control spillage.

> *"Government should have been at the forefront and be the first to provide immediate decent shelter since this was caused by a government organization" (Organization 2, June 2024).*

"Government should have made their resettlement its responsibility and committed and given a time-line to supporting them all" (Organization 5, August 2024).

The above responses indicate that expectations of the government were very high and some necessary steps expected to have been taken to seek support if that is what was needed. Transparency and accountability is one such expectation since there has not been a confirmed timeline for resettling all the displaced victims and any resettlement package announced. This will be further elaborated in the next chapter on the state of the displaced victims who are relying on the government and other actors resettle them.

"Government could have collaborated with organizations to use their expertise to coordinate support for the victims" (Organization 4, July 2024).

"A needs assessment should have been done quickly on the affected communities and the extent of damage with a clear budget on how organizations can support to resettle the victims within a specific period" (Participant 8, July 2024).

4.6 What can government do to encourage CSR?

4.6.1 Encourage CSR through incentives

It was noted that the respondents of the various organizations did not have enough knowledge of whether tax incentives exist for them, even though the Income Tax Act, 2015 (Act 896) serves as a guide to tax incentives for some CSR initiatives.

"Giving tax waivers for socially responsible organization". (Organization 9, August 2024)

"Business bids can be used as an incentive for CSR so organizations get to grow their business from contracts by government awarded due to their CSR footprints" (Organization 10, August 2024).

"Create recognition programmes for organizations who actively engage in CSR" (Organization 8, August 2024).

"They should call for the help of organizations if they need it and Show proper accountability to citizens" (Organization 8, August 2024).

Also, the calls from organizations indicates the need for accountability and transparency. Transparency to be able to inform citizens or organizations what is needed and what can be done to support. There also calls for collaborations to utilize the expertise in the various organizations to support in crisis.

And as per the SLO that is based on trust, legitimacy and credibility (Thomson and Boutilier 2011 in Demuijnck & Fasterling, 2016, pp. 680), organizations want the government to patronize from them or acknowledge their CSR initiatives to in a way boost their business credibility.

4.6.2 CSR governing body and policies in Ghana

Henderson (2001) emphasizes the importance of considering a nation's local population and cultural context when formulating laws, as universal rules may not apply in every country (Tuokuu & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016, pp. 34).

> *"CSR activities by organizations is currently scattered so a wing of government should be in charge of coordinating, harmonizing and controlling CSR activities by putting policies in place and give some advantage to organizations who engage in CSR" (Organization 10, August 2024).*
>
> *"The country needs a one stop shop for all our CSR activities" (Organization 8, August 2024).*
>
> *"Establishing a national CSR reporting framework to encourage transparency and accountability" (Organization 6, August 2024).*

The above responses align with the calls for Ghana to have a proper CSR legislature that are context and locality specific to support the government in providing for the welfare of the citizens.

4.7 Key insights of this chapter

In this chapter, I showed the responses from discussions with the organizational respondents looking at the views of CSR, the motivation to engage in CSR, CSR practices as

social outsourcing and the role of government in all of this unpacking what is expected and what is needed. CSR in crisis or disaster situations using Mepe as a case study. As indicated by Wirba (2023), civil society and governments cannot operate independently, and the COVID-19 epidemic made it clear to us how interdependent and interwoven communities are. Kigo also contends that human health and well-being are interdependent, and that this idea exceeds national boundaries (Ibid). We can therefore overcome obstacles and strive for a more peaceful society if we come together (ibid) and CSR is currently assisting with this.

I chose to focus on the activities of Ghanaian and international organizations in this multisectoral analysis and it was observed that the activities of Ghanaian organizations with government interests where very different from that of the private Ghanaian organizations. Mainly because the organizations with government interests even though they framed their CSR policies around the SDGs, they also aligned them with government's national agenda. The private ones organized their CSR based on their financial capacity and their organizational policies but largely focused on contributing their quota to achieving SDGs 3,4. International organizations on the other hand, lean more on CSR as a business strategy where there is a win-win situation for them and the economy or communities they source their raw materials from. The diversity of CSR across board however supports the notion of its voluntary and philanthropic nature based on the interests of organizations.

Chapter 5 A Case Study Of Mepe

5.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to give an overview of the flooding incidence that had about 25% of Mepe submerged after the Volta River Authority (VRA) embarked on a controlled spillage of the Akosombo dam. It also elaborates on some support received from government, organizations, groups and others through CSR and philanthropy. Finally, a narrative of events during field visits to the displaced victims will also be shown with the responses from 3 focused group discussions and a community leader.

5.1.2 An overview of the 2023 Akosombo Dam Spillage

The Akosombo dam, Ghana's main source of hydroelectric power on the Volta River was established in the 1960s and serves neighbouring countries including Togo, Burkina Faso and Cote D'Ivoire has 150 billion cubic meters of storage capacity and a maximum operational level of 276 feet (Arku, 2023). The impact of climate change in 2023 however resulted in considerable increases in rainfall, pushing water levels over the dam's maximum operational capacity. Faced with the potential of dam breakdown which could affect three hundred thousand (300,000) people in the country, a spillage exercise began on September 15, originally at a discharge rate of 183,000 cubic feet per second (cfs/day) but was later increased on October 9 owing to the rising water level (Ibid).

While the spillage was required to avert dam collapse, it caused considerable flooding in downstream areas affecting thousands of people in Ada East, Central Tongu, Shai Osudoku and North Tongu districts and consequently damaging homes, crops, infrastructure, livelihoods and others (ibid). Mepe which is in the North Tongu district was the hardest hit.

5.2 The effect on Mepe, its people and the surrounding communities

Map 2 North Tongu district
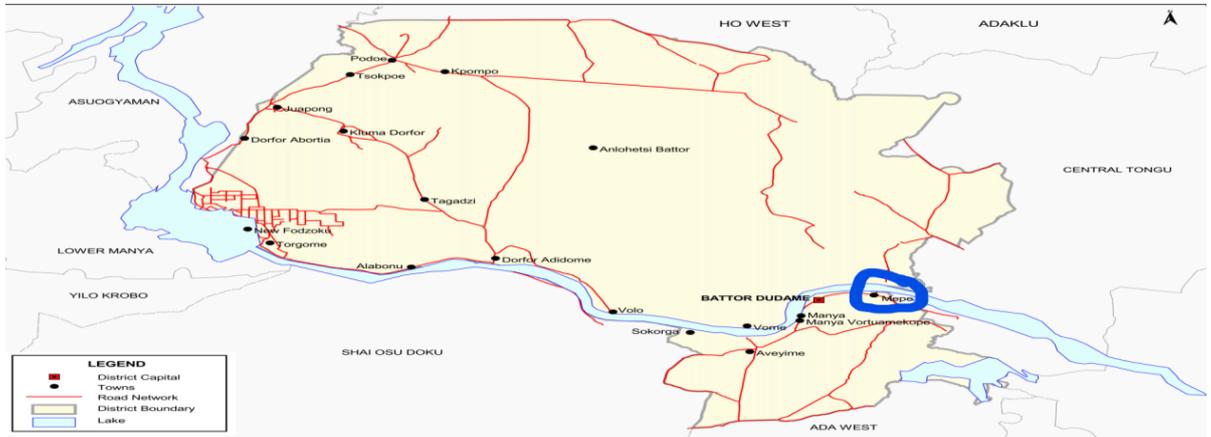
Source: (Ghana Statistical service, 2010 with author's highlight of Mepe)

The map shows the location of Mepe very close to the Volta Lake which speaks to the reason it was hardest hit during the spillage.

Prior to the spillage, the VRA collaborated with National disaster Management Organization (NADMO) and other stakeholders like the Ghana Police Service, Ghana Navy and others on a "simulation exercise" called "Da woho so" to prepare for possible floods (Arthur, 2023). This simulation termed was carried out in some communities in the North Tongu district, Ada East Districts within the Greater Accra, Eastern and Volta Regions of Ghana (Arku, 2023).

Figure 4 Simulation exercise organized by VRA and other stakeholders

Source (VRA.com, 2023).

A picture showing the simulation exercise where a search and rescue was done by some security personnels in Ghana.

Despite this simulation thousands of inhabitants were displaced as homes, schools, personal possessions and farms were flooded. According to Arthur (2023), the spill harmed over 26,000 people from North Tongu, South Tongu, Central Tongu, and other areas in the Volta Region. Mepe was however hardest hit because of its nearness to the Volta River and had about 25% of the community submerged in water (Citinewsroom.com 2023).

Figure 5 A picture showing how buildings were submerged in water after the spillage

(Source; MyJoyonline, 2023)

The above picture shows the extent of damage after the spillage. The inhabitants of Mepe lost their homes, farmlands, and livelihoods, forcing many to live in improvised camps and shelters. The Mepe Development Association and the member of parliament for the area requested emergency help, citing worry over the delayed response from both government and non-governmental organizations.

5.2.1 Support received in Mepe from government Organizations and their staff

In relation to the crisis, the government and numerous groups rallied to give assistance. President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo paid visits to the afflicted districts, notably Mepe, and promised to help the victims (Arthur, 2023). The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) provided various items to displaced households, including food, water, and beds. Furthermore, financial assistance was offered to people who had lost

property   and   livelihoods   (Mofep.gov.gh,   2023).
The Volta River Authority (VRA) also helped with the relief operations and also created an
access road from Mepe to Battor since part of the main road was submerged in water and
posed as a treat to various organizations who wanted to visit the community to support them
(VRA.com, 2023).

5.2.2 Support for Mepe from other actors and organizations

Aside support from the government, the community also received various support from
the Member of Parliament, Hon. Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa and other organizations who
had taken it upon themselves to support through "crowdfunding" and other sources.

In February 2024 for instance, the Hon. Okudzeto and partners provided a 64-unit
housing to accommodate over 300 victims of the flood. As part of this project, the residents
of this 64-unit housing will not have to pay rent or utilities for about 3 years by which time
it is expected that they would have been resettled by the government (GH educate online,
2024). Below is a picture of that project.

Figure 6 MP and Partners Safe alternative housing for spillage victims

(Source: Field work, June 2024).

Citi foundation which is the CSR wing of Citi fm and Citi tv (now Channel 1 tv) in
collaboration with the Ghana Chamber of Mines and other stakeholders donated an ultra-

modern health centre with four housing units for medical personnel (citinewsroom.com, 2023). Below is a picture of the health centre situated in Mepe, North Tongu district.

Figure 7 Ultra-modern Mepe Health centre

(Source: Field work, June 2024)

Aside the health centre (picture above) that was a collaborative effort, the Citi Foundation also set up the "Relief for Volta fund" which enabled organizations and individuals to donate to this fund not just in cash but various items ranging from food, clothes, diapers, water and others. Access bank Plc for instance during its initiative for "more love for Volta" partnered with Citi Foundation with a cash donation and other items as part of their "commitment for CSR and community investment" (Access Bank, 2024). Crowdfunding was actively used to support the construction of the health centre and it shows from the donations that crowdfunding does not only cash donations but donations in other non-monetary terms like clothes, food items and others.

The United States (US) government through its agencies USAID and UNICEF also partnered with Ghana's Ministry of Education to provide support with educational materials worth USD 500,000 to the children in all the affected communities and this was commemorated by a visit to Mepe from Virginia Palmer, the US Ambassador to Ghana, to meet some

flood victims and community leaders and express their support to restore teaching and learning to these communities (US Embassy in Ghana, 2024).

It is important to state that the above overview does not compressively cover all the support that was given to Mepe but rather just a few to give a context to some of the support that was given.

The next portion will highlight observations and interactions through focus group discussions in 3 camps at Mepe also called "safe havens".

5.3   Field observation and focus group discussions

5.3.1 What happened here?

On arrival at Mepe at about 10am on Monday which happened to be a public holiday (the Muslim Eid-al-Adha), we first met with Aku (Afi's cousin, not her real name) and then went to see the Assembly man of the area for the community entry procedure and also due to his active involvement during the Media interviews after the Akosombo spillage. One of the most noticeable things was the state of the road which looked eroded with a lot of potholes. There were water marks on buildings as an aftermath of the buildings that were submerged water during the flood.

We did not meet the Assembly man upon arriving at his place of residence and work.

I then requested to visit areas where I could meet some victims of the flood and was taken to the farthest first which is the Mepe Adedome camp 1. Upon arriving at the camp, we noticed several tents by a school building with some trees in between. Afi was the first to react with "ah, is that where they are still sleeping?".

Figure 8 Tents used for shelter in Degome camp 1 and 2

(Source: Field work, June 2024)

We see some women cooking and children playing in the sand with washed clothes spread on the grass and 2 men sitting on plastic chairs and chatting.

The initial plan was to go walk around the area where victims had relocated and then interact with a few but upon seeing that they were in tents, 8 months after the flood, the decision changed to rather speak to the leader or leaders of the camp.

We walk to the 2 men and Aku greets them in Ewe and introduced me as a student and my mission to interact with them. She asked if they could speak English or Twi since I spoke those languages and they spoke Twi confirming it was OK to communicate in that language. I introduced myself, my school, where I come from and my research. One of the men was

part of the leadership of the camp. He asked that we wait for him to check if there were other leaders to join us for the discussion. He calls out some names and 2 other men came to join us. He informs them of my mission and they all then introduce themselves and offer us seats. Based on this turn of events I decided to have a focus group discussion (FGD) with them and used the same approach for the other 2 camps that were visited to ascertain how they came to live in these locations, what they have lost, the support they have received from government and organizations and their expectations.

Table 4 A summary of discussions in the 3 camps

Infor-mation	State of shelter	Length of stay in the camp as at time of field visit	House-hold size	Initial sources of livelihood	Some items do-nated	Needs and expec-tations
Focus group 1	42 Tents and classroom blocks	7 months	5-10	Farm-ing, fishing, Ma-sons, Petty traders, etc	-Tents -Mat-tresses -Hy-giene kits -Food stuff -Jerri-cans for water stor-age - cash donations of GHS 600 to GHS 1,700.00 (thus USD 36.86 to USD 104.00)	- Food supplies - Reset-tlement into their own homes - Liveli-hood support programmes
Focus group 2	14 Tents classroom blocks (29 house-holds)	6 months	2-5 people	Farm-ing, fishing, Ma-sons, trad-ers, etc	The same as above	- Food supplies - Reset-tlement into their own homes

						- Liveli-hood support programmes
Focus group 3	Con-crete 64 housing unit	Over 3 months	3 to 5	Farm-ing, fishing, Ma-sons, trad-ers, etc	The same as above ex-cept the tents	- Food supplies - Reset-tlement into their own homes - Liveli-hood support programmes

The above table is a summary of some major responses gathered from the FGDs.

"Our homes were flooded because of the Akosombo dam spillage between September and October 2023. We received prior information somewhere in May 2023 about the possibility of a spillage due to heavy rains but we did not expect this magnitude of damage and honestly some of us forgot about it. We lost our homes, livelihoods and possessions aside the visible effects on our roads and others". (FGD 1, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi)

The above statements gave an account to show how the victims came to be at their current locations. They indicated that the MP, District Chief executive, Chief and NADMO personnel coordinated their temporary location. They further indicated that at the initial stage of the floods they were first given shelter at the St. Kizito secondary school but had to be relocated to these camps because schools had reopened, and the students needed to go back to school or risk lagging-behind in the academic year. They had therefore been at their current location between November 2023, December 2023 and February 2024 respectively.

"We were not given a specific period for our stay here". (FGD 2, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi)

The above response was given by displaced victims in the Degome camps 1 and 2 since there has not been any timeline or a schedule communicated to them on their resettlement. The victims in the 3rd camp had however received information that they had a maximum of 3 years to reside there. Worthy of note is the fact the residents of the 3rd camp are from 3

other communities aside Mepe and the selection to live in this camp depends on selection by the MP depending one's level of vulnerability (old age, pregnancy, have young children, etc).

> *"2 of the tents are currently faulty so these households have moved into the classroom block". (FGD 1, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi).*

The tents were provided by Redcross Ghana and WFP and therefore had their brand names on them. They indicated they had received various support from government and other organizations. They mentioned that NADMO and the VRA which are government organizations have been very proactive in providing support in terms of food stuff, water and VRA is for instance putting up toilet and bath facilities to supplement the old ones present at the school facility. I asked where the students of that school were since they were occupying the place and was informed that

> *"the students are not many here so they were moved to another school so that it is used as temporary shelter for us". (Mepe Focus group 1, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi).*

The camp 2 still had functioning tents but indicated

> *"that they were getting bad by the day". (FGD 2, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi).*

One of the leaders beckoned me to come and see his tent which he complained was leaking and when I got to the tent, I noticed he had improvised with a black rubber bag sewn to it to prevent rain water from seeping through when it rains. He pointed to 4 other tents in similar condition. They also mentioned that they had received support and visits from

> *"The President of Ghana, staff of Ghana's Ministry of Finance, the EP church, Catholic Church, other churches, student associations, and individuals…" (FGD 2, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi).*

They also indicated the benevolence of a retired police man who had donated his 3 bed house to also help accommodate them. This house shares a compound with a defunct vocational training school which is the same location the camp 2 is located. The also indicated

that VRA had provided a bus which was transporting the children to and from school due to the distance of the camps been far from the main town centre where most of the schools are also located. The leaders of the camp however could not give a vivid account of most of the support received.

> "*the donations usually go to the MP and other community leaders to be distributed to us. We receive the ones from the MP but the ones to the other community leaders, we do not know where that goes because we hear bout them but it does not get to us*" (FGD 3, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi).

The leaders from camp 2 also made the same assertion and therefore stated that it will be better for the support to come to them directly

> "*the cash donations should come to us directly as leaders then we will share among the other victims for transparency and accountability*" (FGD 2, June 2024 interpreted to English from Twi).

5.3.2 Expectations verse reality: Did government encourage CSR?

It was noted from the focused group discussions that the victims were more expectant from government than with organizations considering that the spillage of the dam was done by a government organization.

> "*It is not our fault that our houses were flooded, the government has to resettle us*" (Focus group 2, June 2024).

> *We are not safe in this location, since we are subtle to reptile attacks at night because we do have lights within the tents*" (Focus group 1, June 2024).

They did not have information as to whether calls were made by the government for people to support them, but rather indicated that

> '*We noted that NADMO visited us with some organizations to distribute items sometime back. Apart from this we cannot tell exactly how government played a role in that*" (Focus group 1, June 2024).

They on the hand commended the MP indicating that he had been with them since the incidence and has supported them in diverse way

"He has really done well for us and all we can say is God bless him (Focus group 3, June 2024).

5.3.3 How do you want to be supported?

"we have not received any support in over a month and it could be because people think government has settled us, the government should let Ghanaians know we still need support" (Focus group 1, June 2024).

"The media use to troupe here to give feedback but that has also stopped, the government should therefore appeal on our behalf for people to support us" (Focus group 3, June 2024).

"We need to get back on our feet but do not have the capital to do so, organizations that support us with loans should help us to reestablish our businesses (Focus group 2, June 2024)

The above assertions presupposes that the victims are more expectant of government support but are also aware of the power that government has and can encourage organizations to come to their aid.

5.3.4 Key insights

I consider the Mepe crisis as a manmade one even though it was supposed to avert a possible catastrophe. The government therefore had a huge role to play to not just support the people in a systematic resettlement but also to keep all stakeholders of Ghana adequately informed on the best support necessary. The president in his speech when he visited Mepe after the flood said;

"I came here because Ghanaians are having difficulties and are suffering, and it is my responsibility to try and help. Because, if it is a question of counting who votes for me and who doesn't vote for me, then I shouldn't be here, because you don't vote for me. But that is not my concern. And, in any event, one day you will vote for me and my party…" (Ankrah, 2023).

58

This speech was supposed to an assurance of help without political bias. The above case study and some of the support received from government however indicates a bit of a mismatch or government's self-interest rather than the victims or the community. The SDGs that are the guiding principles for organizations' CSR did not play out much here since the victims were provided with what was needed and this was a collaborative effort from the government, organizations, community leaders and others. A lot more needs to be done for their livelihood sustainability and considering the current effects of climate change, a dialogue to curb a similar situation in the future which could be "tomorrow" is urgently required with all stakeholders.

Chapter 6 Conclusion And Recommendations

6.1   Unpacking CSR In Ghana, In A Crisis And The Case Of Mepe

The motivation for which organizations engage in CSR is in relation to their desire to be socially responsible, framing of policies within the SDGs to contribute their bid to sustainable development through good health & well-being, quality education, clean water & sanitation, industry, innovation & infrastructure, responsible consumption & production and climate change. Budget for funds or making enough profit to fund these initiatives and knowing that there are alternative ways of sourcing funding like crowdfunding also motivative them to be good corporate citizens.

The resemblance of CSR to social outsourcing stems from community members reaching out to organizations for certain social interventions, the kind of deciphering that organizations need to do to select the best support within their budgets, the partnerships that exist or are possible with other organizations or government to provide social interventions, essential support during a crisis despite it being outside their policy frames and the benefits of good will and a social license within the community and citizens of the country in general.

This motivation and practices however differ between Ghanaian private organizations, government related organizations and international organizations. The short-term nature of CSR initiatives can however be problematic since it speaks to it mimetic nature in a crisis where everyone wants to be onboard because there is a clear communication of who is providing based on what is needed but, in the case, where the media loses interest then everyone loses interest as well. In the case of Mepe, aside the food and hygiene supplies, infrastructure for well-being like housing was one of the most important things needed. Infrastructure is however not a short-term project and so even though all the displaced have not been fully provided shelter, the ones that have been provided can be used by the community later for other social interventions like a student hostel. The health centre is also solving a

major health concern within that locality. This is to therefore indicate, that intentions may be considered short-term but depending on the support given, it could provide long-term solutions in other areas.

The role of government in encouraging CSR during crisis is therefore needed since the data indicates that they are not currently doing much. There is therefore a call for education on incentives to be clearly defined for transparency, a database to enable organizations know where support is needed or the expertise that can be provided and lastly government just showing concern and running a thriving economy where organizations make enough to support. It is worth noting that 2024 is an election year in Ghana and the sitting president has served the constitutional 2-term limit and can no longer contest. This could probably explain the gap between the expectations of organizations and victims and the support that was given to the people. That notwithstanding, the following recommendations could foster a better environment for organizations to support though CSR in a disaster or crisis.

Conceptually, the case study in Mepe reveals how support is skewed towards the social aspect of the SDGs with little to no intervention on the environmental impact as cited by Idemudia et al., (2022, pp. 4). Considering that the dam exceeding its holding capacity was as result of the changing patterns of the climate and so the heavy rains that occurred, some interventions should have also been made here for the future. Crowdfunding however played an effective role in the major infrastructure for not just the victims but also the community. These staged interventions by organizations and individuals have therefore put them in a good light in the eyes of not just the victims, but the community and country as a whole attaining for these organizations that were reported to have supported a positive SLO. Despite these results, this research is limited by the narrow scope on just Mepe which is a small community and further research encouraged on a wider crisis. Also, the activities of government related organizations, private Ghanaian organizations and their sectors should be further explored to understand their motives, activities and funding. The next section will pose

some recommendations for policy makers like government to consider for the development of CSR in Ghana and on a wider scope, for other African countries to emulate.

6.2 Ways to encourage CSR: Recommendations

These recommendations are in relation to the findings and suggestions made by respondents.

First, there needs to be a CSR coordinating body made up of representatives of both Ghanaian and International organizations. This should be an independent body not run by government to allow flexibility, trust and accountability of all CSR activities and to encourage organizations who do not want any political stigma to freely support in crisis situations or provide general support to vulnerable communities and the communities they operate in. This coordinating body could also spearhead the formulation of well-defined CSR policies to improve CSR education, enable proper clarity of CSR benefits, CSR reporting standards and data base kept on CSR activities.

Secondly, the role of the media is very critical in a disaster situation. Information that is put out there could either make or unmake the situation. As in the case of Mepe, the respondents perceived that because there was no media coverage over their plight anymore, the level of support had also reduced drastically. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) is a government-owned media organization which manages both radio and television stations across the country; the government can garner support through them by ensuring consistent coverage of any crisis and thus help the CSR governing body draw up a database that shows what is needed in total, what has been provided and what is still left so organizations know what they can support with at every point in time.

Thirdly there needs to be a monitoring system in place by the municipal and district and assemblies to ascertain whether the infrastructure provided by organizations through CSR are sustainable and maintained to ascertain whether what is provided is required long term or just for short while.

Finally, a thriving economy means that more profit is likely made by organizations, and more support easily provided through CSR since organizations cannot support if they do not have enough financial resources to do so. The government should therefore create an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, which would go a long way to enhance their charitable giving.

As much as these recommendations seem to undermine the competence of the government, it is worth noting that CSR practices are embraced in the Global North and supporting with sustainable growth of their nations, the Global South, specifically Ghana, needs to also take a step because the government cannot do it all.

Appendix 1 Semi Structured Interview guide for Organizations and FGD

<u>For Organizations</u>

 Overview of the organization and their understanding of CSR

- What do you do as an organization?

- Who is your target market?

- What do you understand by CSR?

1. **The motivation for CSR and whether there are clear criteria for CSR activities by organizations in Ghana?**

- Why does your organization engage in CSR?

- What policy guides your CSR activities?

- How do you fund your CSR activities?

2. **How can CSR be leveraged as an alternative to social outsourcing in Ghana?**

- Who benefits from your CSR activities?

- What do you provide to these beneficiaries and how often?

- How do you know what they need?

- Which organizations have you collaborated with on CSR?

- Do you consider your activities as a responsibility or philanthropy?

- What benefits do you get from CSR as an organization?

3. **The role of government in encouraging CSR in a crisis or disaster situation in Ghana?**

- What can government do to encourage CSR activities in Ghana?

- What benefits do you get from government when you engage in CSR?

- Who should be the key provider in a crisis or situations of disaster? Is that currently the case?

- How appropriate is it for organizations to respond to crisis?

- What roles can organizations play when there is a disaster or crisis?

- What examples of successful or unsuccessful disaster responses by organizations do you know of?

- Referring to the various crisis/disasters that the country has experienced in the past, e.g the situation in Mepe and other areas where there was flooding, how could government have supported the affected communities or victims of the flood? And did government do that? What could be the reason?

- Did your organization support the 2023 flooding incidence at Mepe? If yes, how did you know what to provide?

- Is government encouraging CSR in Ghana? If yes, how are they encouraging CSR? If no, what can they do to encourage CSR?

- Any other suggestions or recommendations?

For Focus group discussions

General overview of how the community was affected

- How long have you lived in the community?

- What is the average household size of the victims living in the camp?

- What do you do for a living?

- Did you receive any prior caution before the spillage? If yes by who?

- How were you affected by the Akosombo Dam spillage? Have you experienced this before?

1. How CSR could relate to social outsourcing in Ghana

- What kind of support did you receive and from whom?

- How were relief items distributed?

- To what extent did the support help you and your household?

- Which organizations visited and provided support?

2. The role of government in CSR activities

- How did government support the community after the spillage?

- What role did government play in the support received by various organizations?

- What could have been done differently by government in supporting you after before, during and after the crisis?

- How can the government encourage CSR in this community and others in a crisis/ disaster situation?

- How can you and your household be supported?

References

Abugre, J.B. and Nyuur, R.B., (2015). *Organizations' commitment to and communication of CSR activities: insights from Ghana.* Social Responsibility Journal, 11(1), pp.161-178. Available at https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-06-2013-0066.

Access Bank (2024). *Access Bank (Ghana) Plc - Access Bank Support Victims of Akosombo Dam Spillage in 'More Love For Volta' Campaign.* [online] Accessbankplc.com. Available at: https://www.ghana.accessbankplc.com/pages/Media/Press-Releases/Access-Bank-Support-Victims-of-Akosombo-Dam-Spilla.aspx. Accessed on September 09, 2024.

Acharya, M. (2024). *Corporate Social Responsibility Under Section 135 of Companies Act 2013.* [online] cleartax. Available at: https://cleartax.in/s/corporate-social-responsibility. Accessed on October 21, 2024.

Amo-Mensah, M. and Tench, R., (2015). *In the club but out of the game. Evaluation of Ghana club 100 CSR communication.* Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations, (37), pp.13-34.

Amo-Mensah, M., (2021). *Corporate social responsibility in contemporary Ghana: A literature Review.* International Journal of Business and Management Review, 9(5), pp.78-93. Available at https://doi.org/10.37745/ijbmr.2013.

Amo-Mensah, M. (2022). *A History of Corporate Social Responsibility in Ghana.* Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal, 9(10). 21-35. Available at https://doi.org/10.14738/assrj.910.13191.

Ankrah E. (2023). *If it was about who votes for me, I shouldn't be here - President tells Akosombo Dam spillage victims - MyJoyOnline.* [online] Available at: https://www.myjoyonline.com/if-it-was-about-who-votes-for-me-i-shouldnt-be-here-president-tells-akosombo-dam-spillage-victims/. Accessed on November 10, 2024.

Anyidoho, N.A. and Kpessa-Whyte, M., (2023). *Africa's Social Policy Trajectories since the Colonial Period.* Available at Ghana_Country_Report.pdf (ug.edu.gh). Accessed on May 11, 2024.

Atuguba, R. and Dowuona-Hammond, C., 2006. Corporate social responsibility in Ghana. *A report to (FES-foundation), Ghana.*

Carroll, A. B. (1999). Corporate Social Responsibility: Evolution of a Definitional Construct. *Business & Society*, *38*(3), 268-295. https://doi.org/10.1177/000765039903800303.

Carroll, A.B. (2016). Carroll's pyramid of CSR: taking another look. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, [online] 1(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-016-0004-6.

Carroll, A.B., 1991. The pyramid of corporate social responsibility: Toward the moral management of organizational stakeholders. *Business horizons*, *34*(4), pp.39-48.

Citi newsroom (2020). *CH Group Foundation donates $100,000 to Ghana Covid-19 Private Sector Fund.* [online] Citinewsroom - Comprehensive News in Ghana. Available at: https://citinewsroom.com/2020/06/ch-group-foundation-donates-100000-to-ghana-covid-19-private-sector-fund/. Accessed on October 16. 2024.

Citi newsroom (2023). *How to support victims of Akosombo Dam spillage through Citi FM/Citi TV's campaign.* [online] Available at: https://citinewsroom.com/2023/10/how-to-support-victims-of-akosombo-dam-spillage-through-citi-fm-citi-tvs-campaign/. Accessed on September 15, 2024.

Crifo, P. and Rebérioux, A., (2016). Corporate governance and corporate social responsibility: A typology of OECD countries. *Journal of governance and regulation*, *5*(2), pp.14-27.

Demuijnck, G. and Fasterling, B., (2016). The social license to operate. *Journal of business ethics*, *136*, pp.675-685. Available at https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2976-7.

Famiyeh, S., Asante-Darko, D., Kwarteng, A., Gameti, D.K. and Asah, S.A., (2020). Corporate social responsibility initiatives and its impact on social license: some empirical perspectives. *Social Responsibility Journal*, *16*(3), pp.431-447. Available at https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-06-2018-0147.

Flórez-Parra, J.M., Rubio Martín, G. and Rapallo Serrano, C., (2020). Corporate social responsibility and crowdfunding: The experience of the colectual platform in empowering economic and sustainable projects. *Sustainability*, *12*(13), p.5251. Available at **https://doi.org/10.3390/su12135251**.

Fusheini, K., Alfa, A.A., Salia, H., Kumasey, A.S. (2021). Assessing the Contributions of CSR Activities to the Educational Sector. In: Adae, E.K., Kosiba, J.P.B., Hinson, R.E., Twum, K.K., Newman, N., Nutsugah, F.F. (eds) Responsible Management in Emerging Markets. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. Available at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-76563-7_3.

Gcbbank.com.gh. (2024). *GCB Bank Donates GHC100,000 To Covid-19 Trust Fund.* [online] Available at: https://www.gcbbank.com.gh/news-from-gcb/733-gcb-bank-donates-ghc100-000-to-covid-19-trust-fund. Accessed on October 23, 2024.

Ghana Permanent Mission to the United Nations (2021). *Ghana Missions abroad donate US$59,000 to Ghana Covid-19 Private Sector Fund - Ghana Permanent Mission to the United Nations.* [online] Available at: https://www.ghanamissionun.org/ghana-missions-abroad-donate-us59000-to-ghana-covid-19-private-sector-fund/. Accessed on October 16, 2024.

Ghana Revenue Authority (2016). *Contribution or a Donation to a Worthwhile cause under the Income Tax Act, 2015 (ACT 896).* Available at: https://gra.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Practice-Note-on-Contribution-or-a-Donation-to-a-Worthwhile-Cause.pdf. Accessed on September 06, 2024.

Ghana Statistical service (2021). 2021 Population and Housing Census: General Report, Volume 3F, Difficulty in Performing activities. Table 1.1: Ghana's population in Census years.

Idemudia, U., Tuokuu, F.X.D. and Liedong, T.A., (2022). *Business and Sustainable Development in Africa.* Routledge.

Kuada, J. and Hinson, R.E., (2012). *Corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of foreign and local companies in Ghana. Thunderbird International Business Review*, *54*(4), pp.521-536. Available at https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.21481.

Mahmud, A., Ding, D. and Hasan, M.M., (2021). Corporate social responsibility: Business responses to coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. *SAGE open*, *11*(1). Available at https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020988710.

Maier, A.L., (2021). *Political corporate social responsibility in authoritarian contexts. Journal of International Business Policy*, *4*(4), pp.476-495. Available at https://doi.org/10.1057/s42214-020-00085-3.

McCarthy, G. (2023). *Outsourcing the Polity: Non-state Welfare, Inequality, and Resistance in Myanmar*. Cornell University Press.

McCarthy, G., (2020). *Bounded duty: disasters, moral citizenship and exclusion in Myanmar. South East Asia Research*, *28*(1), pp.13-34. Available at https://doi.org/10.1080/0967828X.2020.1715240.

Morrison, J., (2014). The social license. In *The social license: How to keep your organization legitimate* (pp. 12-28). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Nielsen, K.R., (2018). *Crowdfunding through a partial organization lens–The co-dependent organization. European Management Journal*, *36*(6), pp.695-707. Available at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2018.01.006.

Nimani, A., Zeqiraj, V. and Spahija, D., (2022). The importance of corporate social responsibility for companies: The developing market study. *Journal of Governance and Regulation/Volume*, *11*(4), 314-320. Available at https://doi.org/10.22495/jgrv11i4siart11.

Nyabor J., (2022). *Ghana turns to domestic taxes to finance development over money market woes - The Africa Report.com*. [online] Available at: https://www.theafricareport.com/167885/ghana-turns-to-domestic-taxes-to-finance-development-over-money-market-woes/. Accessed on October 13, 2024.

OECD. (2024). *Responsible business conduct*. [online] Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/policy-issues/responsible-business-conduct.html. Accessed on October 30, 2024.

Ontheworldmap.com. (2021). Available at: https://ontheworldmap.com/ghana/map-of-ghana.jpg Accessed on September 16, 2024.

Rijanto, A., (2018). *Donation-based crowdfunding as corporate social responsibility activities and financing. Journal of General Management*, *43*(2), pp.79-88. https://doi.org/10.1177/0306307017748125.

Sasse, T., Guerin, B., Nickson, S., O'Brien, M., Pope, T. and Davies, N., (2019). *Government outsourcing*: what has worked and what needs reform?

Tang, Z. and Zhang, X., (2023). *Public welfare crowdfunding decision-making of environmental nonprofit organizations based on social responsibility*. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, *30*(44), pp.99992-100005. Available at https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-023-29114-3.

Tuokuu, F.X.D. and Amponsah-Tawiah, K. (2016), *"Corporate social responsibility: is it an alternative to government?"*, *Journal of Global Responsibility*, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 26-38. Available at https://doi.org/10.1108/JGR-05-2015-0007.

Twum, K.K. and Nimako, R.K., (2022). *Communicating corporate social responsibility initiatives: A focus on COVID-19. Marketing Communications in Emerging Economies, Volume II: Conceptual Issues and Empirical Evidence*, pp.93-123. Available at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-81337-6_5.

United Nations (2023). Global Partnerships - United Nations Sustainable Development. [online] Available at: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/. Accessed on August 15, 2024.

US Embassy in Ghana (2024). *The United States and UNICEF partner to provide $500,000 in school supplies for Akosombo Dam spillage impacted communities*. [online] U.S. Embassy in Ghana. Available at: https://gh.usembassy.gov/the-united-states-and-unicef-partner-to-provide-500000-in-school-supplies-for-akosombo-dam-spillage-impacted-communities . Accessed on September 09, 2024.

Vatican News. (2020). *Bishops in Ghana donate to national Covid-19 fund*. [online] Vaticannews.va. Available at: https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2020-05/ghana-ian-episcopal-conference-donates-to-national-covid-19-fund.html. Accessed on October 23, 2024.

Vra.com. (2023). *Volta River Authority | News - VRA Achieves Great Success with Exercise 'Da Woho So' 2023*. [online] Available at: https://www.vra.com/media/2023/VRA-Achieves-Great-Success-with-Exercise. Accessed on September 09, 2024.

Wei, S.-J. (2019). *Corruption in economic development - beneficial grease, minor annoyance, or major obstacle?* [online] World Bank. Available at: https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/175291468765621959/corruption-in-economic-development-beneficial-grease-minor-annoyance-or-major-obstacle. Accessed on November 09, 2024.

Wirba, A.V., (2023). *Corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of government in promoting CSR.* Journal of the Knowledge Economy, pp.1-27. Available at https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-023-01185-0.

Wood, G. and Gough, I., (2006). *A comparative welfare regime approach to global social policy.* World development, 34(10), pp.1696-1712. Available at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2006.02.001.

World bank (2015). *Public service delivery.* Available at Public Service Delivery (worldbank.org). Accessed on May 11, 2024.

World bank (2024). *Future of government: The Social Contract.* Available at Social Contract Role (worldbank.org). Accessed on May 07, 2024.

Zenith Bank Ghana. (2020). *Zenith Bank supports COVID-19 Fund with GH¢1,000,000 - Zenith Bank Ghana.* [online] Available at: https://www.zenithbank.com.gh/media-centre/news/zenith-bank-supports-covid-19-fund-with-gh-1-000-000/. Accessed on October 23, 2024.