

# **The New Approach to Resource Governance in Africa -Adopting a Pro-social Resource Governance Framework in Ghana**

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## **Abstract**

Africa's vast resource deposits are a sign of wealth in the continent. However, the translation of this wealth to human and economic development appears to be a wild goose chase, the major reason being poor governance. African countries have been introduced to a number of governance initiatives but the desirable results are yet to be achieved. The continent continues to lose huge sums of money through corruption as poverty deepens and sustainable development remains a mirage. One question remains unanswered: why is Africa not winning the fight against corruption? This paper identifies that one gap in resource governance in Africa lies in the non-integration of human behavior into its governance setting. This is to say that human behavior plays a role in resource governance and must be given the necessary attention. This paper attempts to address the gap by proposing a framework of eight principles designed to shift the behavior of resource managers from selfish tendencies to becoming prosocial. The eight principles evolves from the descriptive analysis of the principles of self-organization and self-governance and other principles that have worked in other jurisdictions. The objective of the paper is to create an awareness of the identified gap in Ghana to arouse the government's buy-in of the proposed prosocial resource governance framework. The flexible nature of the framework makes it adaptable to other African countries and not restricted to Ghana. The adoption of a prosocial behavior will enable resource managers to collectively generate homegrown solutions to deal with corruption and improve resource governance.

## Introduction

Africa has a governance problem. This is why natural resources have become a curse to the continent rather than a blessing. Natural resources in themselves are not a curse. When natural resources are properly managed, they will become a blessing and the converse is true. Management of any resource depends predominantly on the quality of the people managing it and the kind of system(s) used. These two factors are fundamental for resource governance. This means that it does not matter how much resource potential Africa has, if the fundamentals are misplaced, natural resources will not translate into tangible developmental outcomes for the continent. For Africa's resources to work for its people, the management system(s) and managers must respectively be efficient and ethical.

It is interesting that most often, the conversation on resource governance hovers primarily around the existence and implementation of policies, laws and/or institutions. Whereas these are important, there remains one missing link: the human factor which oversees the implementation of the policies and the functions of institutions. Yet, there is very little conversation on it and even where there is, it is mostly informal and ends up on a lighter note without any commitment to remedy the situation. The importance of the human factor in resource governance cannot be overlooked as policies and institutions neither implement nor govern themselves. The quality of human behavior or characteristics in resource governance in Africa is therefore fundamental to its success.

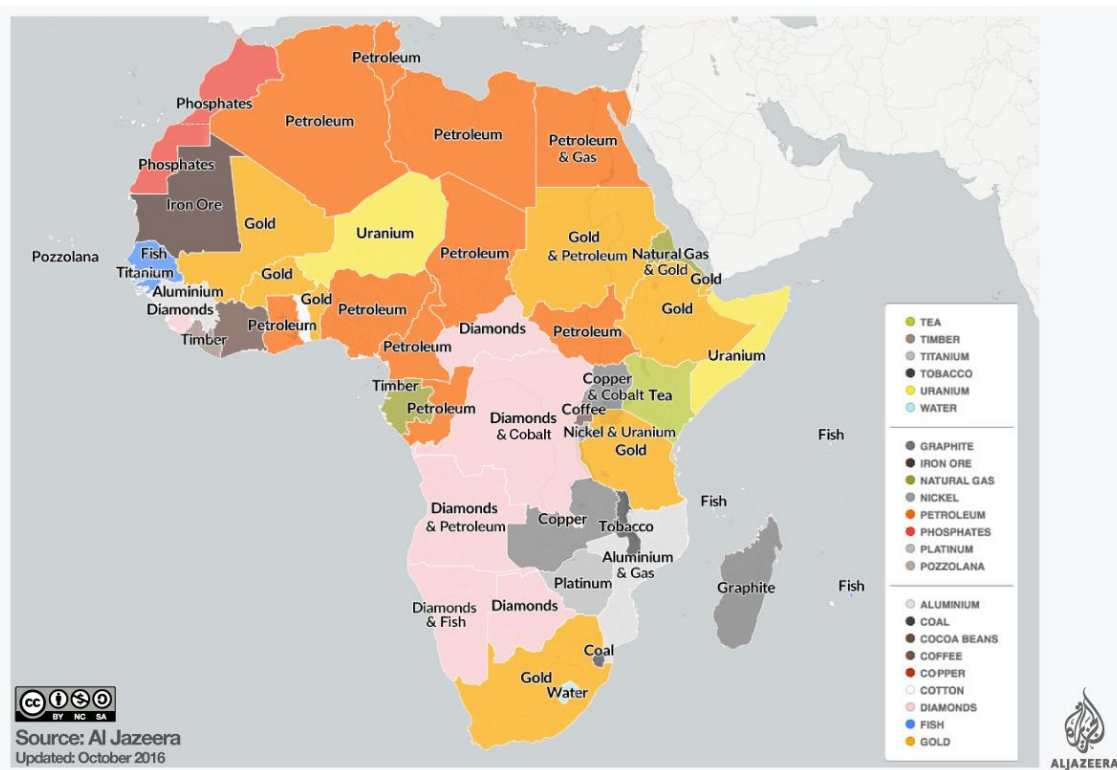
The African continent is made up of fifty-four (54) countries which possess a vast deposit of extractive resources like gold, diamond, oil, etc. It is not uncommon to find that these countries share challenges of poverty, inequality, high illiteracy, poor health, among others, mainly as a result of poor governance. Key amongst Africa's resource base include Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Cameroun, Mauritania, Tanzania, etc. Ghana is the world's tenth largest gold producer<sup>1</sup> whilst Nigeria remains Africa's largest and the world's sixth largest oil producer<sup>2</sup>. The presence of these countries and others unmentioned, in their global resource productions continue to make Africa relevant (see Picture 1).

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<sup>1</sup> GhanaTrade (2017). Ghana maintains rank as world's 10<sup>th</sup> biggest gold producer. Available at <https://www.ghanatrade.com.gh/Trade-News/ghana-maintains-rank-as-worlds-10th-biggest-gold-producer.html>

<sup>2</sup> Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (2018). Oil Production. Available at <http://www.nnpcgroup.com/nnpcbusiness/upstreamventures/oilproduction.aspx> Accessed 26th July, 2018.

Picture 1: Resource representation of African countries



The end of natural resources – emphasis on extractive - must be seen in people. In other words, the effect of having resource wealth must be seen in the people on whose behalf it is managed. If Africa possesses 12% of the world’s oil reserves, 42% of its gold, 80 - 90% of chromium and platinum group metals, 60% of arable land<sup>3</sup>, in addition to 30% of the earth’s remaining mineral resources<sup>4</sup>, then there must be a corresponding level of development seen in the African people. However, Africa remains home to most of the world’s poorest people and the story of the continent continues to be that of inequality and underdevelopment. When resources are governed without the people in mind, they do not translate into development. The approach to good resource governance therefore begins with being intentional about achieving the wellbeing of people and establishing systems or frameworks that can accomplish that.

This means that human behavior is crucial for good resource governance, and the leaders to whom management of extractive resources have been entrusted, need to adopt a prosocial behavior. Prosocial behavior refers to voluntary behavior intended to benefit others<sup>5</sup>. Prosocial behavior is particularly important in the area of extractive resource governance which often tends to be selfishly motivated. In

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2013). 2013 Economic Report for Africa. Making the most of Africa’s commodities: Industrializing for growth, jobs and economic transformation. *Economic Commission for Africa*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. 86-110

<sup>4</sup> Aljazeera (2018). Mapping Africa’s natural resources. Available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2016/10/mapping-africa-natural-resources-161020075811145.html>

<sup>5</sup> Barclay and van Vugt (2014). Prosocial behavior at the micro-level. The evolution psychology of human prosociality.

the absence of prosocial behavior, corruption will thrive, and resources will benefit the few elite instead of the masses, as is typically witnessed in Africa. To change the African story, there is the need to shift human behavior to becoming prosocial in managing extractive resources. An effective way to do so is to have in place a prosocial framework designed to help extractive resource managers take decisions that will benefit the masses rather than satisfy their personal interests.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a step. Whereas Africa's story may not change overnight, one country's commitment to effective governance can make a significant difference for its people and influence others to do same. Ghana's buy in of a prosocial resource governance framework can be the stepping stone to bringing about good governance in Africa. Ghana has demonstrated some commitment to effective resource governance, especially in the petroleum sector. The country has passed a number of laws to promote transparency in the sector. Key among this includes the Petroleum Revenue Management Act (PRMA) Act 839 (Amendment) Act 2015, the Exploration and Production (E&P) Act 2016 (Act 919), provision for beneficial ownership in the Companies (Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act 920), among others. Ghana is also signatory to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). Although these are good initiatives, a lot remains undone in tackling corruption in the sector and beyond. It is important that corruption is seen primarily as a human problem and not just that of a system failure. This is because although governance structures and institutions are necessary in fighting corruption, they cannot be effective without tackling the human aspect. This is the gap that this paper seeks to address. By underscoring the need for good resource governance, it argues the different perspectives of the subject and presents a useful concept in bridging the gap.

This paper does not claim to be an encyclopedia of extractive resource governance, but it does challenge stakeholders to address the fundamentals of good governance by attempting to influence the human behavior needed for it to be achieved. It offers a rich perspective of how prosocial behavior can be maximized in Ghana to set the pace for Africa. This paper is an invitation to engage in an exciting discourse on how human behavior can influence resource governance positively, a subject that is of both academic and real-world importance.

### **Objective**

The objective of this discussion paper is to propose a prosocial resource governance framework for Africa, with particular focus on Ghana. It aims to create the awareness of the missing link in resource governance in Ghana (and Africa) and arouse the buy-in of the Ghanaian government to embrace prosocial behaviour in its governance setting.

### **Resource governance efforts and debates– which way to go?**

Natural resource governance has been defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as the "norms, institutions and processes that determine how power and responsibilities over natural resources are exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens – women, men, indigenous peoples and local communities – participate in and benefit from the management of natural resources".<sup>6</sup> This definition outlines the fundamentals of what resource management should be, giving a

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<sup>6</sup> IUCN (n.a). Natural Resource Governance Framework A knowledge basket of the International Union for Conservation of Nature Strategy Update. Available at [https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/nrgf\\_update.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/nrgf_update.pdf)

clear indication of what governance efforts should target. In this light, global efforts have been making attempts to improve governance processes, address institutional gaps and seek legal reforms. These efforts have given birth to several initiatives like the EITI for the extractive sector, Publish What You Pay (PWYP), Open Government Partnership (OGP), among others. The impacts of these initiatives have been quite positive, with resource rich countries making attempt to become more transparent and accountable. Today, because of EITI, countries like Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, etc. publish government's share of revenues from the extractives sector. These are usually published in their country specific EITI reports which are in some cases published on their EITI websites. Again, most countries are signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, a legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument which covers many different forms of corruption, such as bribery, trading in influence, abuse of functions<sup>7</sup>, etc.

Regional participation has also been keen with the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) driving a number of initiatives. The AU in 2009 enacted the Africa Mining Vision (AMV) to promote sustainable development through sustainable mining in African countries. With this as a springboard, countries were in effect required to contextualize the AMV as Country Mining Visions (CMVs) based on their unique country contexts. On the back of this, corporate mining indabas have also been on the rise with "men in dark grey suits"<sup>8</sup> focused on attracting investors and exploring ways to increase profits. The list goes on and on with the homegrown and foreign initiatives adopted to improve resource governance not only in Africa, but the world at large.

These efforts have not been without debates. Several arguments have been on the deck on how resource governance should be improved. Some have argued that the key to good governance is for resource rich countries to focus more on institutional strengthening. According to the World Economic and Social Survey 2014/2015 Report (2015), "the departments, ministries, groups or governments which implement development policies are as important as the policies themselves". It further argues that "strengthening the authority and capacity of independent oversight institutions, such as supreme audit institutions (SAIs), enhances accountability and transparency in governance, improves development outcomes and reduces corruption"<sup>9</sup>. Another perspective argues that the type of governance a country practices determines whether or not that country will experience good resource governance. Keping (2018), articulates that "good governance can only be achieved in a free and democratic political system, as it cannot emerge without freedom and democracy. Only when citizens have sufficient political power to participate in elections, policy-making, administration and supervision can they prompt the State and join hands with it to build public authority and order". According to him, "democracy is the only practical mechanism that can safeguard the fully free and equal political power owned by citizens. Hence, good governance is organically combined with democracy. In an autocratic system, it is possible to have good government when the system is at its best, but it is impossible to

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<sup>7</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018). [Website]. United Nations Convention against Corruption. Available at <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/> Accessed 26th July, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> This term is coined by Margaret O'Callaghan, a visiting fellow, Resource Management in Asia-Pacific, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University.

<sup>9</sup> World Economic and Social Survey Report 2014/2015 Report (2015). Chapter VI Governance and institutions. Available at [https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/2015wess\\_ch6\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/2015wess_ch6_en.pdf) Accessed 26th July, 2018.

have good governance”.<sup>10</sup> This is to say that in a very efficient autocratic system, whereas it may be possible to have the required standard body of state representatives who see to the implementations of a set of rules, it is impossible for the manner and processes by which these state representatives exercise their powers to result in good governance. Stewart (2012), reflects that “easy resource revenues eliminate a critical link of accountability between government and citizens, by reducing incentives to tax other productive activities and use the revenues to deliver social services effectively. The same revenues also generate staggering wealth that facilitates corruption and patronage networks. Together, they consolidate the power of entrenched elites and regime supporters, sharpening income inequality and stifling political reform, of which the history of the oil-rich Arab Middle East has long been a case in point.”<sup>11</sup>

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights takes a different approach. It indicates that “depending on the context and the overriding objective sought, good governance can be seen at various times to encompass: full respect of human rights, the rule of law, effective participation, multi-actor partnerships, political pluralism, transparent and accountable processes and institutions, an efficient and effective public sector, legitimacy, access to knowledge, information and education, political empowerment of people, equity, sustainability, and attitudes and values that foster responsibility, solidarity and tolerance”.<sup>12</sup> The World Economic and Social Survey 2014/2015 Report (2015) buttresses this point by underscoring that “good governance in general comprises the rule of law, effective institutions, transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs, respect for human rights, and the participation of all citizens in the decisions that affect their lives”.<sup>13</sup>

These pockets of arguments, and many more not mentioned, suggest that good governance is multi-faceted and does not necessarily hinge on one factor only. Whereas the different political, economic and social contexts of a country may require the extensive application of one school of thought over the other, one thing remains clear: that good governance - whether of extractive resources or a society as a whole - affects and is affected by people. If there will be effective participation, rule of law, sustainability, etc., it requires the exercise of willpower by people in leadership, as well as the inculcation of and commitment to the values and attitudes that curb corruption – a major threat to good governance - and foster transparency, accountability and satisfactory delivery of any entrusted mandate.

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<sup>10</sup> Keping (2018) Governance and Good Governance: A New Framework for Political Analysis. 11: 1. pp 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40647-017-0197-4>

<sup>11</sup> Stewart (2012). Why natural resources are a curse on developing countries and how to fix it. TheAtlantic. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/04/why-natural-resources-are-a-curse-on-developing-countries-and-how-to-fix-it/256508/> Accessed 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018). Good Governance and Human Rights. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/development/goodgovernance/pages/goodgovernanceindex.aspx> Accessed 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> World Economic and Social Survey 2014/2015 Report (2015). Chapter VI Governance and institutions. Available at [https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/2015wess\\_ch6\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/2015wess_ch6_en.pdf) Accessed 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.

## **Fighting corruption in the governance of extractive resources in Africa – the role of human behaviour**

Although a good number of the aforementioned efforts have been made in Africa, one question remains unanswered: why has the story of the African continent not changed? To ask this in another way, why is Africa so poor if it is so rich? This question fairly challenges the perspectives of Africa's wealth, inferring the need to contextualize. Africa may be considered rich in extractive resources but poor in governance. This is demonstrated by, for example, the existence of weak institutions, weak rule of law, corruption, among others, as widely witnessed on the continent. In considering the cause of such frailties, it will be fair to point out the role of human behavior. For example, corruption is largely motivated by selfishness, where there is the innate drive to be affluent even if it robs others of a shared growth. Again, political interferences – largely driven by politicians who put their personal interests above the interest of the society - obstruct the rule of law. Without the exercise of a strong sense of willpower by people in authority to allow the rigorous implementation of established laws, rule of law cannot have its full course. Although it is a conceded fact that constructive human behavior alone cannot bring about good governance, it is impossible to achieve it without it.

It remains vital that to bolster good governance, there must be a continual fight against corruption. Corruption is defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.<sup>14</sup> It is no secret that the extractive sector, the world over, is fraught with issues of corruption such as rent seeking, tax evasion, bribery, money laundering, revenue mismanagement, etc. Such corrupt acts rob countries of huge sums of monies that could have been utilized for development and poverty alleviation. The impact of corruption in Africa cannot be underestimated. Africa loses more than \$50 billion every year from illicit financial flows. Again, misappropriation of funds account for a 25% loss of gross domestic product (GDP). These monies could have been used in providing social services and investing in job creation. The impact of corruption in Africa is not limited to the macro level only, but also affects citizens on the individual level. In sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that one in two citizens pay a bribe for registering land property or stopping their family homes from being taken away. Meanwhile, about 43% of Africans are living in poverty.<sup>15</sup>

The above statistics goes to show that corruption in Africa is multifaceted and not one single approach is adequate to combat it. In recent times, there appears to be an emerging consensus that strong policies and effective institutions are the major factors needed to fight corruption<sup>16</sup>. In light of this consensus, resource rich countries are recommended to formulate laws that promote transparency and accountability as well as establish competent institutions that play technical and/or oversight roles. In addition, resource rich countries are also encouraged to adopt initiatives such as the EITI, open contracting, open governance partnership, etc. in a bid to fight corruption. These initiatives are important because they inhibit opacity which creates a conducive environment for corruption to thrive. The call for greater transparency and accountability comes with the expectation that governance in Africa will improve and yield desired results in development. Against this backdrop, civil society is

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<sup>14</sup> Transparency International (2011). What is the corruption perceptions index? Available at [https://www.transparency.org/cpi2011/in\\_detail](https://www.transparency.org/cpi2011/in_detail) Accessed 25th September, 2018

<sup>15</sup> Transparency International (2018). How to win the fight against corruption in Africa. Available at [https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/how\\_to\\_win\\_the\\_fight\\_against\\_corruption\\_in\\_africa](https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/how_to_win_the_fight_against_corruption_in_africa) Accessed 25th September, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Forson et al (2016). Causes of corruption: evidence from sub-Saharan Africa. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences* 19 Pretoria.



becoming active in the governance space and citizens are becoming more interested in how resources are being exploited and revenues utilized. However, there still remains an unanswered question as to why no significant result has been achieved and corruption rather seems to heighten.

In her book, "Fighting Corruption is Dangerous: The Story Behind The Headlines, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala – a former Finance Minister of Nigeria - presents a perspective that corruption cannot be wished away or casually outgrown over time but rather has to be robustly fought against. Ngozi shares how Nigeria was losing about US\$1 billion per month in oil revenues due to oil theft at the pipelines. Oil theft is quite common in Nigeria and as much as 150,000 barrels of oil could be stolen in a day. Oil theft usually causes Nigeria to lose up to 400,000 barrels per day in oil production as a result of oil companies shutting off pipelines in a bid to address such thefts.<sup>17</sup> Another typical corruption case in point is captured in the 2017 annual report by the Public Interest Accountability Committee (PIAC), the oversight institution for oil revenue management in Ghana. In this report, PIAC questions the Ministry of Finance on the whereabouts of unutilized oil revenues in the sum of GHC400 million. Although this amount was budgeted for in the 2017 national budget, allocated for spending and disbursed from the Petroleum Holding Fund, it remained unspent at the end of 2017 and is yet to be accounted for. Despite persistent calls by PIAC, the Ministry of Finance is yet to provide any clarity on this matter to Ghanaians<sup>18</sup>. Again, according to the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Ghana loses more than US\$3 billion every year through corruption, usually in the area of public procurement, with public officials inflating contract prices for the provision of goods or services. Yet, it is estimated that this very amount is almost 300% of all the aid the country receives in a year.<sup>19</sup> It is not only Nigeria and Ghana that is beset by such corrupt scandals. There are many more countries on the continent which have experienced similar stories although many such countries have laws, institutions and are signatory to a number of internationally recognized anti-corruption initiatives. The aforementioned points clearly resonate the fact that it is one thing to formulate laws, or set up institutions or become a signatory to an initiative and it is another ensuring that the laws are robust enough, that institutions are effective and that stakeholders are committed to the implementation of initiatives to the letter.

In Africa, the fight against corruption is most often extrinsically motivated rather than intrinsically motivated. Extrinsic motivation refers to "the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome" meaning it is done to attain some kind of reward or avoid some sanctions. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation is the "inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one's capacities, to explore, and to learn", or "doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself".<sup>20</sup> It appears that the adoption of initiatives, laws, or institutions, etc. by African countries is merely a quest to tick the box to be recognized as following international best practices.

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<sup>17</sup> Kumar (2018). Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala memoir offers guide to fighting corruption. Corruption and Transparency. Available at <https://www.google.com.gh/amp/s/www.devex.com/news/one-woman-s-fight-ngozi-okonjo-iweala-memoir-offers-guide-to-fighting-corruption-92570/amp> Accessed on 25th September, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> GhanaWeb (2018). GHC400m oil cash 'missing'. General news of Monday 13 August 2018. Available at <https://mobile.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/GHC400m-oil-cash-missing-676234> Accessed 26th September, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> GhanaWeb (2018). Ghana loses more than \$3bn yearly through corruption – Richard Quayson. General news of Wednesday 4 July 2018. Available at <https://mobile.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ghana-loses-more-than-3bn-yearly-through-corruption-Richard-Quayson-665723> Accessed 26th September, 2018.

<sup>20</sup>Ryan and Deci (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist* 55, 68-78. DOI: 10.1037110003-066X.55.1.68

Imported models often do not work<sup>21</sup>. For example, there are instances where foreign aid comes with certain conditions, causing governments to put in place measures to satisfy those conditions. Although such measures will yield positive results if adhered to, they are not necessarily driven by a conscious and collective effort by the stakeholders and therefore the commitment needed for their implementation becomes a challenge. To win the fight against corruption, anti-corruption measures must be home-grown and initiated by the people who are likely to be culprits and those that are victims. When this happens, the effort is collective as both groups of people recognize the benefits and costs required to deal with the menace. As Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala expresses in her book, “outsiders can only assist. Corruption must be fought by insiders and from the inside.”<sup>22</sup> Even where the fight against anti-corruption is extrinsically motivated, the drive should be mainly through internalization and integration rather than to satisfy an external demand or reward, or to avoid guilt and anxiety. “Internalization refers to people's ‘taking in’ a value or regulation, and integration refers to the further transformation of that regulation into their own so that, subsequently, it will emanate from their sense of self”.<sup>23</sup> This approach to tackling corruption can stir up stakeholders to, by themselves, strengthen policies and laws and create more effective institutions, thereby resulting in an overhaul of their entire governance system.

The perception people have about corruption influences the efforts made to combat it. Corruption is a complex phenomenon, which is not only caused by political and economic factors but to some extent, is also determined by cultural and social traditions.<sup>24</sup> It is crucial that those who seek to fight corruption effectively first understand its nature and root cause(s) within a particular context. It is not enough to tackle corruption solely from one perspective. For anti-corruption measures to be effective, they must align with all relevant standards; not only market or social but also behavioural. This means adopting integrity standards in addition to economic principles. As African countries respond to the call to strengthen institutions, strengthen rule of law, improving transparency and accountability processes, it remains important for them to check the quality of behavior of the people they have placed in leadership. This is because once leadership is exercised by human beings, their behavior will always play a role. For example, leaders who are corrupt are inherently driven by selfish behavior, although extrinsically, weak laws, ineffective institutions, among others can contribute to creating an enabling environment. It is therefore critical that the behavior of people entrusted with the management of resources is influenced to become prosocial. Every human being has the potential to be corrupt, mainly because it is human nature to be selfish. Notwithstanding, like any human trait, prosocial behavior can be cultured.

Prosocial behavior encourages self-governance. Self-governance is important to resource governance in Africa, especially in the absence of strong institutions and the rule of law. This does not belittle the importance of addressing legal and institutional gaps but rather promotes a more sustainable way of ensuring good governance because where people are prosocial, they do not need intensive external checks as prosocial behavior checks people from within. This creates the advantage of minimizing corruption while simultaneously building sound legal and institutional frameworks. When adopted,

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<sup>21</sup> Forson et al (2016)

<sup>22</sup> Kumar (2018)

<sup>23</sup> Ryan and Deci (2000)

<sup>24</sup> Takáes et al (2011). Corruption as a deviant social attitude. Focus on corruption. Public Finance Quarterly 56(1), p.27-43

prosocial behavior can bring an additional benefit to African countries, by drawing the needed attention to develop the character of leaders, a major gap in the combat against corruption.

### **Prosocial behavior for resource governance**

Human behavior is emerging - although not very common - as an important phenomenon worth inculcating into any framework that is designed to promote the management of common resources in a sustainable way. As more case studies around resource management are analyzed, the more the evidence shows that the need for a comprehensive theoretical framework that integrates human behavior and include concepts such as trust, cooperation, shared risks and benefits, social norms, etc. cannot be overlooked. Over the decade, a number of scholars have undertaken research to understand the successes and failures of self-organization in the management of resources such as local fisheries, irrigation systems and forests. These experimental behavioral studies provide a good understanding that self-governance is possible in resource management. One such distinguished work was undertaken by Elinor Ostrom, a political economist who developed the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework and in 2009 won the Nobel Prize for her contributions to the study of the governance of common resources. The IAD has been a useful tool in analyzing many case studies of common resource management.<sup>25</sup>

One concept which functions primarily by self-governance is prosocial behavior. Prosocial behavior is voluntary behavior intended to benefit others. The concept was introduced by social scientists in the 1970s and is increasingly becoming popular in common-pool resource management. The concept has been considered successful in promoting sustainable management of common resources among communities which have adopted the approach. Typical success stories include Elinor Ostrom's study of a number of farmers who shared irrigation systems. From her studies, she identifies that what made the management of irrigation systems successful was as a result of a number of prosocial principles the participants applied. Without external regulation, these farmers were able to effectively manage the irrigation systems, resulting in a shared sense of satisfaction among them.<sup>26</sup> The success of prosocial behavior is not limited to the management irrigation systems. It has also been very successful in extensively minimizing violence against women in Sierra Leone. Again in Sierra Leone, prosocial behavior was used in combating the spread of Ebola disease among citizens.<sup>27</sup>

### **The relevance of prosocial behavior to resource governance in Africa**

A critical look at the trend of resource governance in Africa presents a picture of near failure, breeding cynicism among its people as to whether Africa's resource wealth will bring it any good. Figure 1<sup>28</sup> is a typical illustration of this picture. Where corruption thrives, extractive resources are poorly managed, depriving the masses of a shared growth and thus resulting in inequality. Extractive resources are finite and as they are continually mismanaged, they deplete without being utilized for development. Such

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<sup>25</sup> Janssen (2015). A behavioral perspective on the governance of common resources. ScienceDirect. Current opinion in environmental sustainability 12: p.1-5

<sup>26</sup> Ostrom (1993). Design principles in long-enduring irrigation institutions. Water Resources Research, 29(7), p. 1907-1912

<sup>27</sup> Ebert and Brandon (2017). Violence against women in Sierra Leone: can a prosocial approach help reduce it? Prosocial World. Available at <https://www.prosocial.world/post/violence-against-women-in-sierra-leone-can-a-prosocial-approach-help-reduce-it> Accessed 26th September, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> Figures 1 and 2 are drawn by author from personal introspections on the subject matter.

waste eventually renders that country subservient and dependent on others for different forms of aid, living at their dictates and fulfilling their interests.

The converse presents a better picture as illustrated in Figure 2. When leaders are prosocial, extractive resources are well managed and lead to productive investment which in turn contributes to economic and human development.<sup>29</sup> Such a country is able to drive its own developmental agenda and achieve sustainable development. Unfortunately, the reality for Africa has been that of the first scenario (Figure 1) where resources continue to be depleted without much utilization for development.

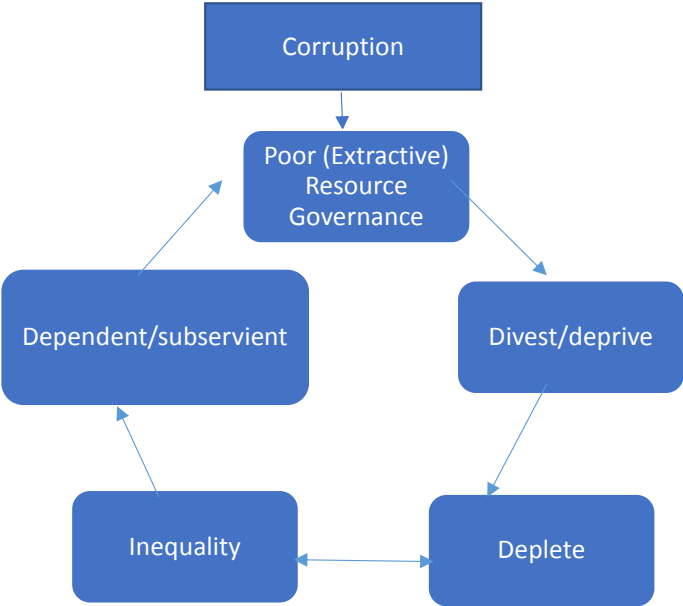


Figure 1: Corruption and resource governance

<sup>29</sup> Economic development contributes to human development and vice versa as shown in the figure.

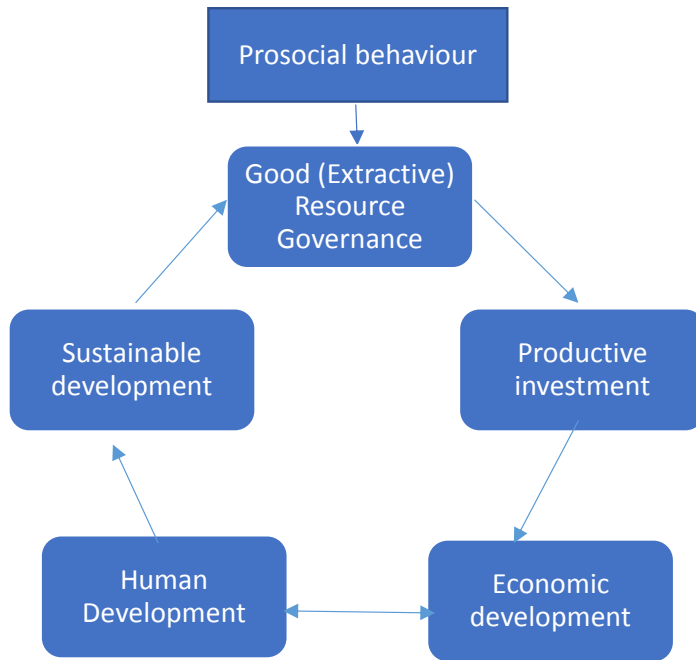


Figure 2: Prosocial behavior and resource governance

The fulcrum of Figure 2 is that, prosocial behavior places the interest of others above self, ensuring that decisions taken in managing a resource will benefit the masses thus resulting in human development and the achievement of sustainable development. The adoption of a prosocial behavior enables resource managers collectively generate homegrown solutions to deal with corruption.

#### **Factors that influence the successful implementation of prosocial behavior<sup>30</sup>**

Based on the study of the concept of prosocial behavior and analysis of the success stories where the concept has worked, the following are considered the key factors that facilitate its successful application:

**Intrinsic motivation:** the first thing about prosocial behavior is that it is voluntary. For a behavior to be voluntary, it must be intrinsically motivated. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity for inherent satisfaction. This means that even where there is no reward, people who are prosocial will still take decisions that benefit others rather than their self-interest. Where people do not enjoy being prosocial, this concept will fail when applied. Notwithstanding, prosocial behavior can be extrinsically motivated but must be internalized and integrated. In this way, individuals actively transform the behavior into their own values, until it eventually emanates from their sense of self.

**Self-governance:** this means the ability to self-regulate. In the absence of external checks or regulation, people who are prosocial are self-disciplined to take decisions that benefit others.

<sup>30</sup> These factors are derived by the Author based on her knowledge and reflections on the subject matter.

**Inclusiveness:** Prosocial behavior involves interacting and relating with others. For prosocial behavior to work, every stakeholder in question must be included in the process of its application. If all stakeholders understand the importance of being prosocial, the benefits to be obtained, are willing to share the costs involved and play the needed role in reaching their targets, positive results will be achieved.

**An enabling environment:** an enabling environment is key in ensuring the successful application of prosocial behavior. An enabling environment is where prosocial behavior is accepted as the norm and its expression is not stifled. On the contrary, where it is a norm to put self-interest above the interest of others, the concept will be ineffective and those who are prosocial will appear to be the 'losers'.

### **Prosocial resource governance framework**

Fighting corruption requires a strategic approach. It requires measures that are incorporated in a system rather than ad-hoc. The proposed framework is made up of eight principles that guides the inculcation and application of prosocial behavior in resource management. Prosocial behavior is about people. Therefore, the success of the framework depends on the willingness and commitment of the people who are to apply it. In view of this, this framework is designed with primary focus on the people who have been entrusted with resource management, to help them exercise prosocial behavior in their line of duty.

The eight principles evolve from principles of self-organization and self-governance systems that have worked in other jurisdictions and are recognized to be practical within the African setting. The concept of self-organization and self-governance is not peculiar to Africa. History shows that it was very typical of indigenous Africans to self-organize and self-govern farming activities. It was common in Ghana for a group of farmers to team up and run shifts in providing farm labor for one another. Although due to modernization, this system is no longer common, the principle behind it is still relatable. However, it is critical to note that sustaining self-governance is progressive and achieved over a period of time. In view of this, the framework is tailored to help leaders develop and exercise prosocial behavior over a long-term period. The framework is applicable to all managers across the extractive resource value chain, from the exploitation of the resource to the utilization of revenues accrued from it.

The framework is categorized into three levels. The first level tackles self, i.e. the individual. The second level focuses on others and the third the environment. These three levels are relevant because they form the basis on which the factors of successful implementation of prosocial behavior emerge.

Under each of the three levels, principles are designed necessary for the achievement of prosocial behavior as it pertains to that particular level.

### **The proposed prosocial resource governance framework**

#### ***Level 1 – Self***

Self refers to the individual who has chosen voluntarily to be prosocial, whether by intrinsic motivation or extrinsic motivation through internalization and integration. Under this level, two principles are laid out:

*Principle 1 - Public declaration of one's stance to be prosocial*

A public declaration causes a resource manager to be conscious of his actions. It also keeps one in remembrance of his or her set values. It has a psychological effect in the sense that people only declare publicly what they are proud of and uphold. This principle therefore enables one to exercise his or her prosocial value freely without fear or favor. Individuals can make this declaration in any way that best suits them, whether by hanging a badge, oral declaration, swearing an affidavit or signing a bond. One important point is that, this public declaration is entirely voluntary. Anyone who is prosocial in the first place has voluntarily chosen to be so and as such must exercise the behavior voluntarily.

### *Principle 2 – Clearly defined boundaries*

It is important for every individual to clearly define for him or herself the boundaries of his or her assigned mandate, rights and privileges. This will help avoid the abuse of power in the exercise of one's duty. For example, when a resource manager understands that he or she is not entitled to a proportion of rent accrued from the negotiation of an oil deal, and sets the boundary not to seek such rent, he or she avoids the temptation of being compromised in the negotiation process. Setting boundaries will help a resource manager negotiate deals or utilize public revenues within the restricted interest of his or her office. This principle upholds an individual's integrity. This principle is effective and is an outstanding contributing factor to the successful management of irrigation systems among the case studies Elinor Ostrom analyzed.<sup>31</sup>

### **Level 2 – Others**

Others refer to the team of people who must work together in managing resources. One of the successes of resource governance is based on the nature of the team working together. Under this level, three principles are presented:

#### *Principle 3 - Likeminded people should work together*

This principle refers to people who are likeminded in being prosocial in their line of duties. It is effective when likeminded people work together. This is because they have collective interest to see resources translate into development for the masses. When likeminded people are paired together, they are willing to make the necessary efforts to meet their shared goals and objectives. This helps reduce conflict of interest within a team. For instance, if a team member negotiates a bad deal, or mismanage public resource revenues or receives a bribe, the rest of the team are most likely to kick against it. It is near impossible for a minority in a team to retain a stand for integrity when the majority is against it. It gives room for sabotage especially where one wants to effect a positive but unpopular change. This is typically illustrated in Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's story where a group of government officials had agreed to sign a bad deal that could put Nigeria in a debt of US\$2 billion and she was the only one who objected to the deal.<sup>32</sup> When likeminded people team up, achieving prosocial behavior is easier and speeds the process of making the concept an acceptable norm among stakeholders.

#### *Principle 4 – A shared sense of meeting values*

In most cases of applying prosocial behavior, it is found out that the reason why people most often behave in an antisocial manner is because they have values that are not met. In the Sierra Leonian case

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<sup>31</sup> Ostrom (1993)

<sup>32</sup> Kumar (2018)

of violence against women, it was discovered that most men were violent towards their wives and children because they were unable to adequately provide for them and ended up venting their frustration on them when they requested for money for upkeep. The women in turn became bitter and will mostly hurl insults at the men. Through the prosocial approach, both men and women discovered how to meet their values in a manner that would benefit each other and foster a peaceful home. Tremendous positive results have been seen subsequently as a result of the prosocial approach. Again, in the case of the spread of Ebola, people were catching the virus because of contact with the dead bodies of relatives who had contracted the disease. The value of the Sierra Leonean was to express their last respect to their dead relatives and this was usually by touching. Through prosocial approach, they discovered to pay their last respect and still avoid contact with their dead.<sup>33</sup>

Bringing this home to resource governance, it is the case that most people become corrupt due to financial and other forms of pressures on them to meet certain obligations. Of course, there are certain cases of greed but the former factor cannot be ignored. When people's values to meet their personal needs and responsibilities are not met, they find alternate ways to meet them, even if by corrupt means. A prosocial team can therefore help foster among themselves prosocial behavior by identifying positive ways of helping each other meet their needs. This principle is sustainable within a prosocial team because "as long as individuals are confident that others are cooperating and joint benefits are being provided, they comply willingly to contribute the necessary resources" to achieve their set target<sup>34</sup>.

#### *Principle 5 - Agreed sanctions must be enforced*

Within any resource management team, it is important that agreed sanctions are enforced. Stakeholders are willing to comply with a set of rules when they perceive that the collective objective is achieved, and that others also comply. Enforcement increases the confidence of individuals that others are not allowed to be free riders and that those who comply are not 'losers'. For example, in the case studies of the irrigation systems, it was observed that many irrigators willingly complied with reasonable rules if they were assured that others would also comply and that those who did not would be sanctioned. It is critical to minimize government influence at this level. Authority to apply sanctions within a team should be exercised entirely according to the tenets agreed upon by the team. This is because if government agents use their authority to support those who refuse to follow the rules they have agreed to, it will be hard for the other participants to continue following the rules.<sup>35</sup>

#### **Level 3 – Environment**

This level refers to an enabling environment conducive for managing resources in a prosocial manner.

#### *Principle 6 - A prosocial friendly environment recognizes prosocial behavior as a norm*

A prosocial friendly environment is where prosocial behavior is accepted and recognized as a norm. In such an environment, people are not afraid to be prosocial and there is no direct or indirect pressure for them to succumb to a corrupt behavior. Such an environment is not constructed overnight but through a continual and deliberate process. A prosocial friendly environment can be created through a number of ways and stakeholders working together must be allowed the autonomy to create the environment

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<sup>33</sup> Ebert and Brandon (2017)

<sup>34</sup> Ostrom (1993)

<sup>35</sup> ibid



through the means that best work for them. It is important to note that such an environment is not necessarily limited to a geographical location but rather an atmosphere where people are comfortable to express and apply prosocial behavior. One simple way of creating this enabling environment is when stakeholders are prosocial towards one another in their daily interactions. The more such actions are repeated over time, they become a habit and eventually becomes the order of the day. With such an atmosphere, any new person that comes in adjusts to fit in. When resource managers are used to being prosocial among themselves, it becomes easier for them to exercise their duties in a prosocial manner.

#### *Principle 7 - Constant reminding/training is key*

There must be continuous reminding about being prosocial. This could be done through periodic refresher trainings for all resource managers, or what best suits them. Reminders could even be something as simple as a hung citation or picture that illustrates prosocial behavior. Constant reminding is important because what people continually hear over a period of time influences their personal culture and lifestyle. For prosocial behavior to be a habit, there must be perpetual reminding. Constant training also helps create an opportunity to extrinsically motivate others, enabling them to internalize and integrate the concept as their own.

#### *Principle 8 - Monitoring*

To sustain the commitment to manage resources in a prosocial manner, it is important that stakeholders monitor each other. Again, within a self-governance system, stakeholders must be allowed the autonomy to arrange their own monitoring schemes. Monitoring is critical because it is easier to pledge one's commitment to be prosocial but the significant accomplishment lies in the actual implementation, amidst temptation to do contrary. Monitoring is effective when stakeholders are transparent in carrying out their duties. Where activities are shrouded in secrecy, resource managers cannot monitor each other.

These principles appear to be general. However, it needs be to allow for self-governance. The prosocial resource governance framework is designed to guide stakeholders condition themselves, others and their environment accordingly. The flexible approach in the designed principles is to allow stakeholders tweak them as best suit their specific contexts. In view of this, these principles are not presented as the 'key' to success in resource governance but rather as a model to integrate the role of human behavior in Africa's governance setting.

### **Why Ghana needs a prosocial resource governance framework**

Ghana is blessed with gold, timber, diamond and petroleum, etc. In the midst of this wealth, Ghana continues to require financial aid for development. The president of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo has reiterated his commitment to build "a Ghana beyond aid". To this effect, the president on Wednesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018 inaugurated a 13-member committee to develop a Charter for the "Ghana beyond Aid" vision.<sup>36</sup> This sits right in the cup of the proposed prosocial resource governance framework. This is because this vision cannot be achieved without the efficient management of Ghana's extractive resources. Minimizing corruption in the extractive sector

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<sup>36</sup> Ghana News Agency (2018). Ghana beyond aid: Akufo-Addo inaugurates 13-member committee to develop charter. Available at <https://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2018/June-14<sup>th</sup>/Ghana-beyond-aid-akufo-addo-inaugurates-13-member-committee-to-develop-charter.php> Accessed 27th July, 2018.

and Ghana as a whole can contribute to reversing the trend of over reliance on aid, a typical characteristic of countries which have poor resource governance. In 2016 alone, Ghana received foreign aid to the tune of US\$2.9 billion,<sup>37</sup> almost the same amount the country loses yearly through corruption.

There is no doubt that Ghana has good laws but implementation of the laws remain a challenge. The country continues to face challenges of human development, ranking 139<sup>th</sup> out of 188 countries in the human development index in 2015.<sup>38</sup> In the midst of this, corruption continues to thrive. Ghana was perceived as the 81<sup>st</sup> least corrupt country in 2017 out of the 180 countries ranked by the 2017 Corruption Perception Index developed by Transparency International.<sup>39</sup> Ghana is in need of this prosocial resource governance framework to usher the country out of aid and into sustainable development.

## **Conclusion**

The missing link between Africa's resource wealth potential and tangible development is good governance. However, good governance is not automatic; it requires a lot of commitment, discipline, willpower, effective policies and institutions, the rule of law, transparent and accountable processes, etc. Nonetheless, it is impossible to achieve good governance without shifting human behavior from selfish tendencies to becoming more prosocial. This means that for extractive resources to work for Africa, leadership must be intentional about and committed to utilizing it for the development of its people, rather than selfish interest.

This discussion paper underscores the need for a prosocial resource governance framework in Africa at large but zeroes in on Ghana. This is primarily because although Ghana has demonstrated some commitment to good governance by passing a number of laws and establishing a number of institutions, desirable results are yet to be achieved in translating extractive resource wealth into tangible development. One major contributing factor to this challenge is corruption. Adopting the prosocial resource governance framework will enable resource managers develop a prosocial behavior in their line of duty and help minimize corruption.

The framework comprises of eight principles and categorized into three levels: self, others and the environment. The set of principles evolve from analysis of principles of self-organization and self-governance systems that are being implemented in other jurisdictions, as well as those identified to be practical in Africa. This framework will fill a major gap in resource governance in Ghana and beyond once adopted. It promises to be a significant contributor in shifting Ghana towards achieving sustainable development and its vision of a country beyond aid.

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<sup>37</sup> Dogbevi (2018). Foreign aid to countries including Ghana in 2017 was \$146.6b – OECD. Ghana Business News. Available at <https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2018/04/12/foreign-aid-to-countries-including-ghana-in-2017-was-146-6b-oecd/> Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.

<sup>38</sup> Human Development Report 2016 (2017). Human development for everyone. Briefing note for countries in the 2016 human development report.

<sup>39</sup> Ansah (2018). Ghana drops to 81 in 2017 corruption perception index. Citifmonline. Available at [citifmonline.com/2018/02/22ghana-drops-to-81-in-2017-corruption-perception-index/](http://citifmonline.com/2018/02/22ghana-drops-to-81-in-2017-corruption-perception-index/) Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.

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