**Are Duty Bearers Supporting the Fight against Galamsey?**

By

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Mineral resources belong to the current and future generations and are vested in the President in trust for the people of Ghana.

In accordance with the governing provisions of the Constitution, the President appoints ministers, local government heads; chief executives, heads of ministries, departments, among other officials, to help him perform these functions among many other duties. These heads coordinate and direct the administrative machinery under their ambit for the welfare of the people. They owe citizens a sacred duty to own efforts to stimulate community and institutional ownership of a national action as in the case of the current fight against illegal mining also known as galamsey.

More often than not, leadership especially the political class, have failed to cooperate with well-meaning citizens in their efforts to abate this menace. This piece aims at identifying the level of cooperation by relevant duty bearers to calls by the Media Coalition in its fight against galamsey.

**Brief Background**

The Media Coalition Against Galamsey (MCAG) was formed in April 2017, to carry out public education on the ills of illegal mining activities; carry out advocacy with stakeholders to ensure the eradication of galamsey and to promote sustainable mining.

With support from STAR-Ghana (a donor pooled funding organization), stakeholder engagements, town hall meetings and editors’ fora, are organized to create platforms for dialogue. Twenty-five (25) ministries, department and agencies were identified as key partners to help achieve set objectives.

Before engagements are held in intervention arears, letters of invitation are extended to heads of ministries, department and agencies to attend events in person or delegate. This affords them the opportunity to share with citizens, government position, plans, efforts and also hear from the citizenry.

Within a period of over 10-months of citizens’ engagement in the eight (8) affected illegal mining regions, some duty bearers have honoured invitations to these events whiles other have disregarded same. (See table below).

**Invitations Given vs. Number of Invitations Honoured**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | **Duty Bearer**  **Ministry/Agency/Department**  **Stakeholder** | **Sep-17** | **Oct-17** | **Nov-17** | **Feb-18** | **Apr-18** | **Apr-18** | **May-18** | **Jun-18** | No. of invitations honoured out of eight invitations |
|  | Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation | х | х | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | Ministry of Lands & Natural Resources/MMIP Secretariat | √ | √ | √ | х | х | х | √ | √ |  |
|  | Ministry of Information | х | х | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development | х | х | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | District /Municipal Chief Executives | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Regional Minister | √ | х | х | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Inter-Ministerial Committee on Mining | х | х | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | Environmental Protection Agency | х | х | х | х | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Ghana Water Company Limited | х | х | х | х | х | х | √ | √ |  |
|  | National Disaster Management Organization | х | х | х | х | х | х | √ | √ |  |
|  | Minerals Commission | х | х | х | х | х | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Forestry Commission | х | х | х | х | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Ghana Grid Company Limited | х | х | х | х | √ | х | х | √ |  |
|  | Ghana Armed Forces | √ | √ | х | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Ghana Immigration Service | √ | √ | √ | х | х | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Ghana Police Service | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Ministry of Water & Sanitation | х | х | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | Ministry of Interior | х | х | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | Member of Parliament | √ | √ | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | CSIR - Water Research Institute | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Traditional Rulers | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | National Commission for Civic Education | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
|  | Ghana Prisons Service | х | √ | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  | Ghana Ambulance Service | х | √ | х | х | х | х | х | х |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Data source: Media Coalition Against Galamsey Legend: √ Attended or delegated Х Did not attend or delegate**

**Findings**

1. From the table above, it is evident that, the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Inter-Ministerial Committee on Mining, Ministry of Water & Sanitation and Ministry of Interior have shown no support for community engagements and by inference, the fight against galamsey as one would have thought, they should have rather led this crusade.
2. It is worth noting that, a key Ministry like the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, who has its leader being the Chairperson for the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Mining has not shown support for this crusade.
3. The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources especially the MMIP Secretariat, Municipal/District Chief Executives, Regional Ministers, Ghana Grid Company Limited, Ghana Armed Forces, Ghana Immigration Service, Ghana Police Service, CSIR - Water Research Institute, Traditional Rulers and the National Commission for Civic Education have demonstrated support to end the menace.

**Conclusion**

It is our expectation that, all stakeholders, especially state agencies, ministries and committees collaborate to tackle this issue head-on to save our environment whiles we leverage on this natural resource in a sustainable manner.

#StopGalamsey

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