

**ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES AND HOW THEY
BOOST FINANCIAL HEALTH IN WEST AFRICA**

BY

Lawrence Ehizode ODIGIE

PG/LAW0802213

**FACULTY OF LAW
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY.**

OCTOBER, 2025

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**A PROJECT WORK WRITTEN IN, AND SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
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OCTOBER, 2025

CERTIFICATION

I, **Lawrence Ehizode ODIGIE (Mat. No. PG/LAW0802213)** hereby certify that apart from references made to other people's work as duly acknowledged herein, this entire project is the product of my personal research, and has neither in part nor in whole been presented for another Degree elsewhere.

.....
Lawrence Ehizode ODIGIE
PG/LAW0802213

APPROVAL

We certify that this project work was completed and written by **Lawrence Ehizode ODIGIE** (Mat. No. **PG/LAW0802213**) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Laws (LL.M) Degree of the University of Benin.

Prof. (Mrs.) O. A. Odiase Alegimenlen
Project Supervisor

.....
Signature & Date

Prof. Dennis U. Odigie
Co-ordinator, PG. Programme

.....
Signature & Date

Prof. Bright Bazuaye
Dean, Faculty of Law

.....
Signature & Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to God Almighty for His goodness, favour and mercy upon my life.

Also to my sweet daughter, Tovia Oseahumen Ehizode, and my Son, Godswill Ehizode.

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Pension Reform Act, 2004

Petroleum Industry Act, 2021

Price Control Act, 1977

Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act, 2022

United Nations Convention against Corruption

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFJOC	-	African Joint Operation against Cybercrime
AIIB	-	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ALAC	-	Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre
CA	-	Court of Appeal
CCT	-	Code of Conduct Tribunal
CFSP	-	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CHF	-	Swiss Franc
CHRAJ	-	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
DeMPA	-	Debt Management Performance Assessment
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EFCC	-	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
EUR	-	Euro
INTERPOL	-	International Criminal Police Organization
JPY	-	Japanese Yen
NCB	-	National Central Bureau
SARS	-	Special Anti-Robbery Squad
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals-SDGs'
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Program
USD	-	United States Dollar

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ABSTRACT

The rising cases of public corruption within the West African Region involving a substantial proportion of the resources of the various States has become a transnational phenomenon that affects most West African societies and economies. It has threatened the political stability and security, weakened public institutions, undermined the rule of law and hindered sustainable development in most West African States. The affected States such as Nigeria, Cameroun, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia, Mali and Ivory Coast concerned about the negative effects of corruption and impunity on the economic and social development of the African people, acknowledged the need to address the root causes of corruption in the African continent through preventive measures, the formulation of legislations, penal policies and other non-penal measures aimed at protecting the society against corruption. The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption is the principal regional instrument in the continent and the West African region designed to combat public corruption through preventive measures that prohibit acts of corruption and corrupt practices. There is need for West African States to adopt measures that prohibit illicit enrichment, promote access to information and transparency in public offices and institutions, prosecution of corrupt public officials and other strategic measures such as confiscation and forfeiture of instruments and proceeds of corrupt practices, extradition in cases of trans-boarder corrupt practices within the territorial jurisdiction of two or more States. The principle of bank secrecy expounded by the International Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation (FATF Recommendations) 2012 and the spirit of international cooperation are part of the anti-corruption measures that will be examined in the course of this research. The research shall also examine the benefits and effectiveness of the various penal and non-penal measures employed by West African States in their various jurisdictions in combating corruption with a view to determine the extent to which these measures adopted have been effective in addressing corrupt practices. The research shall then proceed to determine how anti-corruption measures can improve the financial health and economic development in West Africa. The concluding part of this research shall suggest possible ways or make recommendations on how anti-corruption measures can be improved through sincere commitment and adequate enforcement.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

West African States have been paying increased attention to corruption and how to control it as it is a major challenge to sustainable economic and political development in the region. The failure of institutions and larger framework of social, political, judicial and economic checks and balances needed to govern effectively have been responsible for the persistence of corrupt practices. According to the United Nations Development Program 2004, the persistence of corrupt practices in African Countries has undermined the rule of law and has led to a violation of human rights by fostering an anti-democratic environment characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, declining moral values and disrespect for constitutional institutions and authorities.¹

The member States of the African Union concerned about the negative effects of corruption and impunity on the political, economic, social and cultural stability of the African people resolved to pursue as a matter of priority, a common policy aimed at protecting the society against corruption including the adoption of appropriate legislative and adequate preventive measures.²

The anti-corruption measures adopted by West African States are aimed at preventing, detecting, punishing and eradicating corruption in the region in order to promote and strengthen development in the continent.³

¹ O Bamidele, 'Corruption, Conflict and Sustainable Development in African States', *The African Symposium Vol.13 No 1, June 2013*

² Preamble to the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, 2003

³ Article 2, African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, 2003

The benefits derived from anti-corruption measures are majorly economic benefits as public resources are the major target in every act of public corruption. Where measures are put in place to ensure accountability, honesty and transparency in the use of public resources, the integrity of public institutions is restored. In addition, economic development is felt and political stability is experienced in such a State.⁴

The United Nations Development Program initiated anti-corruption strategies that are instrumental in advancing the transparency, accountability and integrity agenda at global, regional and country levels. The UNDP integrates anti-corruption solutions in service delivery sectors, strengthening the institutional capacity of government, civil society organizations and the private sector to prevent and address corruption, leveraging technology and innovation, aimed at anti-corruption knowledge and global advocacy.⁵

The extent to which the anti-corruption strategies have succeeded in maintaining an accountable and sustainable use of public resources for the development of African Nations shall be the basis for this research in order to determine how economically effective the anti-corruption measures are and how they have improved the financial health of West African Countries. Selected West African Countries shall be examined in terms of the different anti-corruption strategies adopted within their jurisdictions and the economic benefits that have been derived from those strategies. The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) which is the leading anti-corruption agency in Ghana shall be examined and the extent to which it has been effective in its operations towards combating corruption shall be assessed. In Burkina Faso, the Autorite'

⁴ Transparency International, 'The Benefits of Anti-Corruption and Corporate Transparency', *Working Paper #01/2016*

⁵ United Nations Development Program, 'Governance for People and Planet'
<<https://undp.org/governance/inclusive-and-future-smart-public-goods-and-services/anti-corruption>>

Superieure de Controle d'Etat et de Lutte contre la Corruption (Higher Authority for State Control and the Fight Against Corruption) which is the national anti-corruption body shall also be examined in terms of its effective approach towards combating corruption and economic protection. In Nigeria, the dedicated agencies vested with the mandate to prevent and combat corruption shall be discussed and assessed in terms of the successes recorded and the economic benefits of their operations in anti-corruption crusade. The non-penal measures of informal and formal education as a tool to prevent corruption shall be discussed as a vital strategy that creates re-orientation on the need to desist from corrupt practices in order to avoid its negative impacts. The role of the family, educational institutions, religious organizations and the community in teaching integrity, responsibility, honesty and discipline with a view to creating a mindset and attitude which reflects the behavior of anti-corruption shall be emphasized in the course of this research.

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Notwithstanding the avalanche of anti-corruption legislations in West African Countries, corruption has systematically enured in the public offices, institutions and organizations.⁶ There are still increasing reports of illicit flow and transfer of public funds from African Countries by public officials to foreign financial institutions through various means. In Nigeria, there are numerous reports of public office holders, past Governors and Legislators indicted of corruption related offences on daily basis. The cases of *Federal Republic of Nigeria vs Depreya Alameiseigha & 6 Ors.*⁷, *Federal Republic of Nigeria vs. Orji Uzor Kalu*⁸ amongst others are

⁶ P.D Ocheje, 'When Law Fails: A Theory of Self-Enforcing Anti-Corruption Legislation in Africa' *The Law and Development Review: Vol. 4; No. 3, Article 8 (2011)*

⁷ FHC/L/328C/2005

⁸ SC. 622C/2019

instances where high profile public office holders have been indicted for corrupt practices involving public funds and public properties. In the Republic of Ghana, the European Union's research and innovation program 2023,⁹ disclosed that the former Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Cecilia Dapaah was accused of corrupt practices involving illicit financial dealings in July 2023. In Burkina Faso, Transparency International reported that international corruption within the defence and security sector resulted in the diversion of resources from security needs, weakening the military operational capabilities while eroding public trust in government institutions.¹⁰ The persistence of the various acts of corrupt practices despite the existence of anti-corruption legislations and the benefits enshrined therein shows that the measures in the various anti-corruption legislations in the various West African Countries taken as case studies have not effectively met their objectives in combating public corruption and improving financial health in West African States.

1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the anti-corruption measures currently in place in the West African region?
2. Are these anti-corruption measures effective in preventing and combating corruption as well as improving the financial health of West African States?
3. What are the factors that determine the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures in West African States?
4. How can the financial health of West African States be improved by anti-corruption measures?

⁹ Annalaura Vigano, 'Corruption in Ghana: The Cecilia Dapaah Case' (2023) <<https://corruptiondata.eu/corruption-in-ghana-the-ceciliadapaah-case/>> accessed 17 February 2025

¹⁰ Transparency International, 'Defence & Security' (2025) <<http://ti-defence.org/country/burkina-faso/>> accessed 17 February 2025

5. What possible lessons can be drawn from other regions and continents on anti-corruption measures?

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. A review of the current legislative and non-legislative anti-corruption measures in West African States.
2. An evaluation of the impact of these existing anti-corruption measures on financial health in West African States.
3. The research shall identify general and specific factors that determine or influence the effective operation of anti-corruption measures in West African States.
4. Identify possible ways of improving the financial health of West Africa States through anti-corruption measures.

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research examines measures on preventing and combating corruption and its related practices in the West African region particularly in the public sector through international and regional instruments, policies, institutions and programs designed to improve the financial health of West African States through international cooperation, foreign technical assistance, integrity, accountability and proper management of public affairs and public property. The research shall also examine the effectiveness of existing anti-corruption measures enshrined in international and regional conventions such as the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, the World Trade organization

Agreement on Government Procurement 2012, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act 1977 and the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Officials in International Transactions.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcome of this research will be relevant in policy formation and execution in the public sectors and public institutions in West African States. The outcome of the research will also be of much significance to the Parliaments and Legislators in the various West African States in the enactment and review of anti-corruption legislation in order for the objectives of such legislations to be actualized. The research will serve as a guide to the Courts where corruption cases are tried on the aspect of forfeiture, restitution and compensation to the State and the direct victim of corrupt practices. Law Enforcement Agencies in the various anti-corruption institutions in West African will also find this research very useful as it will serve as a guide in their daily operations and handling of corruption cases.

1.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the course of this research, a comparative approach shall be adopted in examining the various anti-corruption measures in the selected West African States and how the identified measures have been effective in preventing and combating corruption in West Africa.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

According to Integrity Matters, an independent privately held partnership firm dedicated to promoting ethics and good governance, Anti-bribery and anti-corruption compliance is more critical than ever in the present business environment. It was suggested that anti-bribery and anti-corruption law compliance is essential for any organization or society that wants to maintain its reputation.¹¹

Transparency International proposed that anti-corruption measures should demonstrate a Nation's response to the legal obligation and responsibility to reduce the risk of corruption and a commitment to operate a clean business.¹²

According to Jacob Garuba (Phd), the introduction of non-penal anti-corruption legal mechanism aimed at preventing incidence of corruption will help to eliminate or at best reduce the incidence of corruption in Nigeria and other West African Countries. The anti-corruption measure suggested by the author is the formal and informal education. The author further advocated the need to deploy anti-corruption education measures to prevent corruption by teaching younger generation such values that abhors corruption or corrupt practices because the younger generation today will certainly become tomorrow's leaders.¹³

¹¹ Integrity Matters, 'Importance of Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Training,'(2025)
<<https://integritymatter.in>> assessed 20 February, 2025 at 1:56 am

¹² Transparency International, 'The Benefits of Anti-Corruption and Corporate Transparency', (2016)
<<https://images.transparencycdn.org>> assessed 20 February, 2025 at 2:13am

¹³ JO Garuba, 'Implementing the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Nigeria Through the Instrumentality of Education: Prospects and Challenges', *Jus Gentium Journal of the Department of Jurisprudence and International Law*, (2022) Vol.1

Francis Wokabi proposed that formal and informal education foster ethical reasoning and formation of virtue. Moral reasoning involves reflection on the rightness or wrongness of human intentions and actions. Moral awareness facilitates debate on corruption which is useful in promoting ethical reasoning.¹⁴

In most West African Countries, African Traditional Religion is dominantly practiced. Peter Genger proposed the use of African Restorative Justice System as an anti-corruption mechanism in combating corruption in African Countries. The African Traditional Restorative Justice System employs the principles of humanism, personhood, community harmony, common good, duty and responsibility in combating corrupt practices in African Criminology.¹⁵

Pascale Dubois and Kathleen Peters discussed the measures the World Bank can employ in combating corruption. The authors examined the use of debarment as a tool to check corrupt practices of developing Countries especially in West Africa where grants from the World Bank are invested without supervision on how those grants are expended. The World Bank introduced a sanction system founded on the pillars of good governance, transparency, stakeholders participation, the rule of law and accountability to ensure that funds and grants made available to developing Countries are used for their intended purposes. The authors proposed an independent sanction system devoid of internal and external interference in order to attain its objectives in combating corrupt practices.¹⁶

¹⁴ FG Wokabi, 'The Value of Moral Education and Leadership in Fighting Corruption in Kenya', *International Journal of Education and Research* (2019) Vol. 7

¹⁵ P Genger, 'Combating Corruption with African Restorative Justice Tradition: Suggested Steps for Nigeria' *Arthur Mauro Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Manitoba, Canada*

¹⁶ P Dubois, K Peters, 'The World Bank's Sanctions System: Using Debarment to Combat Fraud and Corruption in International Development', *Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) (2019)*

Jamin Ginting expounded asset recovery as a veritable anti-corruption measure that is effective in ensuring that looted or stolen public treasuries are recovered from corrupt public officials. According to the author, the importance of asset recovery can be seen through effort from the World Bank and United Nations as contained in the United Nations Convention against Corruption which made provision for the recovery of public loot across borders. The Author further examined the provisions of Articles 51, 53, 54 and 57 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption which specifically provided for Asset recovery as a mechanism for checking and combating corrupt practices. The process of asset recovery can be done by a civil or criminal procedure through tracing, freezing, forfeiture, seizure, extradition and restitution. The Author suggested that mutual legal assistance (international cooperation) is required between States in order to ensure assets and public treasuries stalked in foreign destinations are recovered.¹⁷

In employing asset recovery as an anti-corruption measure, Abdullahi Shehu in his research on prosecuted case of corruption in Nigeria and other West African States observed that Law Enforcement Agencies in specialized in corruption related case lacked the synergy required to combat money laundry and asset looting. There are no inter-agency committees that meet regularly to evaluate the performance of the various anti-corruption agencies. In addition to strengthening the institutional framework for asset recovery, the author is of the opinion that there is also need to strengthen the framework on the prohibition of economic crime and confiscation of the proceeds of crime through civil or criminal procedure.¹⁸

¹⁷ J Ginting, 'Asset Recovery Principles in the United Nations Convention against Corruption 2003 (UNCAC 2003) to Support Corruption Eradication in Indonesia', *Indonesian Journal of International Law*, Vol. 8 (2021)

¹⁸ AY Shehu, 'Key Legal Challenges in the Recovery of the Proceeds of Crime: Lessons from Nigeria', *School of Arts and Social Sciences, National Open University of Nigeria, Lagos, Nigeria*

Due to the transnational nature of corruption, anti-corruption measures should also extend beyond the municipal boundaries of the Victim State. John Hatchard in his research discovered that African Countries face challenges when seeking to tackle transnational crime effectively. One of such challenge is how to deal with crimes that emanate from outside their jurisdiction. The challenge is experienced due to the bribery of local enforcement officials by foreign based entities. The local enforcement officials are compromised and their essence is undermined by the corrupt act of the foreign entities are also receivers of the stolen public treasuries from West Africa Countries. The author suggested that States should criminalize the bribery of public officials in their domestic laws and enforce such law in a manner which shall not be influenced by considerations of national economic interest.¹⁹

The United Nations Convention against Corruption 2003, made provisions for preventive anti-corruption measures in the form of policies and practices. Each State Party to the Convention shall in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system, develop and implement or maintain effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies that promote the participation of society and reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability. The policies and practices should aim at the prevention of corruption.²⁰

In addition to policies and practices, States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption are to ensure the existence of a body or bodies that prevent corruption through implementation of policies, increasing and disseminating knowledge about the prevention of

¹⁹ J Hatchard, 'Combating Transnational Crime in Africa: Problems and Perspectives', *Journal of African Law*, (2006) Vol. 50 pp. 145-160

²⁰ Article 5, UNCAC

corruption.²¹In the West African region, the bodies created to prevent and prosecute corruption are organized as “Association of Anti-Corruption Agencies in Common Wealth”. The association comprises of the following:

- a) The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (Ghana)
- b) The Economic and Organized Crime Office (Ghana)
- c) Office of the Special Prosecutor (Ghana)
- d) Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Nigeria)
- e) Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (Nigeria)
- f) Anti-Corruption Commission (Sierra Leone)
- g) High Authority for the Prevention and Fight against Corruption and Related Offences (Togo)²²

On public procurement and management of public finances, the United Nations Convention against Corruption provides that each State Party shall establish appropriate systems of procurement based on transparency, competition and objective criteria in decision making that are effective inter alia, in preventing corruption.²³ According to Christopher Yukins, anti-corruption policies have shaped public procurement by introducing integrity and transparency in the procurement process embarked upon by various governments in the West African region. The author discussed the nine desiderata which should serve as common goals for every procurement system in Africa. Competition, integrity, transparency, efficiency, customer satisfaction, best value, wealth distribution, risk avoidance and uniformity are some of the values

²¹ Article 6, UNCAC

²² Association of Anti-Corruption Agencies in Common Wealth, ‘Our Members-Western Africa’, <<https://aaacoa.org/western-members>>

²³ Article 9, UNCAC

suggested in procurement system in order to prevent corrupt practices. Of these nine values listed, competition, integrity and transparency are the core values.²⁴

Anti- money laundering regime is a core anti-corruption measure provided for in the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Each State Party to the Convention shall institute a comprehensive domestic regulatory and supervisory regime for banks and non-bank financial institutions in order to deter and detect all forms of money laundering. The State Parties to the Convention are also required to develop and promote global, regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation among judicial, law enforcement and financial regulatory authorities in order to combat money laundering.²⁵

Within the African Continent, the principal international instrument on anti-corruption measures is the African Union Convention on the Preventing and Combating Corruption. This instrument introduced the role of civil societies and the media in the fight against corruption. The States who are Parties to the Convention shall fully engage civil societies and the media to hold government to the highest levels of transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs.²⁶ Due to broadcasting regulations in most West African Countries, the media is often held liable for libel and slander when certain publications or remarks are made calling or criticizing the government on policies and actions that lack transparency and accountability.²⁷

In Nigeria, the role of the media and civil society organization in criticizing corrupt practices of public and government officials led to the initiation of the Bill on hate speech. The Bill was

²⁴ CR Yukins, 'Integrating Integrity and Procurement : The United Nations Convention Against Corruption and the UNCITRAL Model Procurement Law', *Public Law Contract Journal by the American Bar Association Spring 2007, Vol. 36*

²⁵ Article 14, UNCAC

²⁶ Article 12, AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption.

²⁷ Paragraph 9(a) Ghanaian Guidelines for Broadcasting

criticized by jurist and academics on constitutional grounds as it infringes on the right to freedom of speech.²⁸ The Nigerian Government made a regulation requiring a 48-hour prior notification for live programming on issues that touches the administration. The constitutionality of the regulation made by the Nigerian Government was tested in the ECOWAS Court in *Ogwuche v. Federal Republic of Nigeria*,²⁹ the fundamental right to freedom of speech and right to disseminate information was upheld by the Court. The regulation of the Federal Government of Nigeria requiring a prior notice before information is disseminated was held to be contrary to the fundamental rights to freedom of information.

2.1. Gap in Knowledge

The sources reviewed above did not examine the economic impact of the various anti-corruption strategies and measures and how they improve the financial health of West Africa Countries where corruption is mostly dominant.

2.2. Conceptual Framework

There are concepts that are germane to this research and they are isolated for detailed examination hereunder. These concepts are; economic benefits, anti-corruption measures and financial health. Each of these concepts will be examined in line with their significance in preventing and combating corruption in West African Countries.

2.2.1 Economic Benefits

²⁸ S Bakare, 'Social Media is one of the last Remaining Places where Nigerian can Express their Opinions Freely', *Amnesty International Nigeria*, (2019)

²⁹ Judgment of the ECOWAS Court in Suit Number ECW/CCJ/APP/02/18

Economic benefits are gains quantifiable in monetary terms. In relation to anti-corruption measures, the economic benefits referred to are increase in capital investment, promoting economic growth, infrastructural development, accountability and transparency in government procurement. It also extends to sustainable development and stability.³⁰

2.2.2 Anti-Corruption Measures

Anti-corruption measures are legislative, institutional and non-legislative strategies aimed at preventing and combating corruption and corrupt practices in public institutions and offices. Anti-corruption measures can also be referred to as activities that oppose or inhibit corruption.³¹

In Equatorial Guinea, Transparency International records that anti-corruption measures are at a very low state ranking about 1% in the World. Public authorities are held to function for personal gains and there are no anti-corruption group which focuses majorly on preventing and combating corruption.³²

In Nigeria, anti-corruption measures are institutional and legislative measures. The Anti-Corruption laws establish specific institutions vested with the responsibility to combat corruption in public institutions. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act was first enacted in 2002 and amended in 2004. The Act established the Financial Crimes Commission responsible for the adoption of measures to eradicate the commission of economic and financial crimes as well as the adoption of preventive measures aimed at combating

³⁰ Z Smidova. 'Building the Evidence for the OECD Integrity and Anti-Corruption Agenda: The Current Situation and Avenues for Future Analysis' *OECD Economics Department Working Papers No. 1614*

³¹ L Jere, 'The Grand Challenge: Effective Anti-Corruption Measures in Projects', *International Journal of Project Management* pp. 347-361

³² Transparency International, 'Corruption in Equatorial Guinea', <<https://transparency.org>> accessed 1/5/2025

economic and financial crimes.³³ There is also the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission in Nigeria. The Commission was established to prohibit and prescribe punishment for corrupt practices and other related offences in public offices and institutions.³⁴

In Liberia, the principal Anti-Corruption Commission which is independent and autonomous is commonly known as the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission. It is the primary agency vested with powers to investigate and prosecute all acts of corruption in Liberia. The Commission has a broad mandate to implement appropriate measures and undertake programs geared toward investigating, prosecuting, combating and preventing acts of corruption including educating the public about the ills of corruption and the benefits of its eradication.³⁵ Unlike the EFCC Act and ICPC Act in Nigeria, the Liberian Anti-Corruption Law introduced education as a tool in preventing corruption. This provision for education as an anti-corruption measure aligns with the proposition of Francis Wokabi who suggested that formal and informal education should be employed as a veritable tool in preventing and combating corruption.³⁶

The anti-corruption measures in the various legislations in West African Countries are generally classified into the following:

- a. Preventive Measures
- b. Administrative Measures
- c. Institutional Measures

³³ S 6, EFCC Act 2004

³⁴ S 3, Corrupt Practices and Other Related offences Act 2000

³⁵ S 5.1, Liberia Anti- Corruption Act 2022

³⁶ FG Wokabi, 'The Value of Moral Education and Leadership in Fighting Corruption in Kenya', *International Journal of Education and Research* (2019) Vol. 7

- d. Legislative Measures
- e. Judicial Measures
- f. Socio-Cultural Measures

Preventive Measures

The preventive measures are proactive approach aimed at avoiding incidence of corruption before they occur. The first step in preventing corruption is to educate and enlighten the public on acts and behaviors that constitute corruption and the effect or dangers of such act of corruption. Anti-corruption education is key to building a culture of integrity as it fosters attitudes that do not tolerate corruption and it develops skills that empower individuals to resist social and cultural pressures when faced with corrupt practices.³⁷

The benefit of education as an anti-corruption preventive measure is that teaching about the values of ethics and integrity from a young age and throughout one's educational journey creates a sense of consciousness and awareness of the threats and negative impacts of corruption in the society and institutions. Also, anti-corruption education creates a sense of responsibility and accountability among young people in their various roles in the society.³⁸

Administrative Measure

The second anti-corruption preventive measure is described as an administrative measure. It entails strengthening institutional frameworks through adequate enforcement of code of conduct in public service delivery, transparency in financial transactions and public procurement as well as effective system of auditing public account periodically to ensure accountability. In Botswana, the success in combating corruption is attributed to its strong public institutions that promote a

³⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Corruption and Economic Branch, 'National Anti-Corruption Strategies and Risk Management', <<https://unodc.org/corruption>> accessed 6th May, 2025

³⁸ United Nations, 'Anti-Corruption Agencies and Commissions', <<https://undoc.org>> accessed 8th May 2025

culture of integrity. There are strong anti-corruption agencies like the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime vested with the authority to investigate and prosecute corruption cases. There is also an effective financial management and auditing system which prevent misappropriation of public funds and treasuries. The judicial system in Botswana is built institutional integrity and independence.³⁹

A core aspect of administrative anti-corruption measure is effective monitoring and evaluation system in the public sector. Mechanisms to monitor the performance of public officials, evaluate their effectiveness and access their level of integrity in public service should be put in place. This can be achieved through periodic audits, inspections and assessments. In addition, the feedback or responses from citizens on their experiences with public officials in public institutions and agencies should be examined regularly and given consideration where necessary in assessing the performance level of public institutions.⁴⁰

Institutional Measure

Anti-corruption institutions are pioneer enforcement agencies that play a crucial role in the preventing and combating corruption in any society. The various legislations establishing these institutions define their respective roles and functions with prevention and combating of corruption as the major duty. In Nigeria, despite the existence of anti-corruption agencies, corruption still persists due to the challenges encountered within the anti-corruption institutions. The leadership of these institutions is highly politicized and their effective operations are

³⁹ SNATIKA, 'Combating Corruption in Public Administration: Strategies and Best Practices', Public Administration (2024) <<https://snatika.com>> accessed 8th May, 2025

⁴⁰ Ibid

influenced by the Executive arm of Government. The appointment of key officials of anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria is done by the President.⁴¹

Michael Owhoko argues that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission is undermined by presidential interference due to the current appointment process. The law empowering the President to appoint EFCC Chairman has rendered the Commission vulnerable to political influence, limiting its effectiveness in fighting financial crimes. Owhoko called for reforms to ensure the EFCC's autonomy, urging a review of the appointment and removal process to shield it from the President's control.⁴²

Legislative Measures

Legislations are enacted to regulate public behavior and to check the excess display of human tendencies. In Liberia, the principal anti-corruption legislation is the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission Act. In Nigeria, the principal anti-corruption legislation is the Corrupt Practices Act 2000 and the Economic and Financial Crimes Act 2003. Though these legislations exist, corruption has persisted due to lack of political will on the part of government to effectively implement the provisions of these legislations. The lack of political will is often invoked as a reason for failure of anti-corruption reforms and a major obstacle to economic performances and the achievement of development goals. Political leadership and a commitment to fight corruption at the highest level through effective enforcement of anti-corruption legislations is a pre-requisite for initiating and sustaining reforms over time. Beyond making laws, the funds required for the

⁴¹ S 2(3) Economic and Financial Crimes (Establishment) Act 2004

⁴² M Owhoko, 'The Problem with EFCC', <<https://thisdayliveofficial.com>> accessed 8th May 2025

adequate implementation of the laws and effective operation of anti-graft agencies should also be effectively appropriated.⁴³

Judicial Measures

The Judiciary as an organ of government plays a significant role in preventing and combating corruption. The constitutional powers of the Judiciary as an organ of government are exercised through the courts where legal issues are determined in accordance with principles of law and judicial precedents.⁴⁴

Corruption charges proffered against corrupt public officials are brought before the respective Courts having the requisite jurisdiction to hear and determine such cases. In Nigeria, the powers of the Judiciary in preventing and combating corruption were displayed in the *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Tafa Adebayo Balogun*.⁴⁵ The Federal High Court in Lagos State convicted the Defendant of corruption related charges in line with the provisions of the EFCC Act 2003.

In the Republic of Cameroon, the Judiciary also demonstrated its commitment towards combating corruption. The former head of the defunct national carrier Camair, Yves Michel Fotso was convicted and he was sentenced to twenty-five years in prison by the special criminal tribunal for embezzling about \$56 million when he was chief executive of the Cameroon Airline.⁴⁶

⁴³ RM Kukutschka, 'Building Political Will', *Top Guide Compiled by the Anti-Corruption Helpdesk 2014*

⁴⁴ S 6, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended

⁴⁵ Suit Number FHC/ABJ/CR/14/2005

⁴⁶ Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission, 'Former Cameroon Airline Boss Jailed for \$56m Graft', <<https://icpc.gov.ng>> accessed 7th May 2025

In Liberia, the Courts also showed their commitment towards combating corruption in the trial and prosecution of the former Liberian President, Charles Taylor who was sentenced to fifty years in prison for corruption and other crimes committed while in office.⁴⁷

The Amnesty International in expounding the significance of the role played by the Judiciary in combating corruption, called for the protection of whistleblowers who announce or expose corrupt practices in their domain. They should be protected from attack, intimidation, harassment and persecution for exposing the truth. Governments in the West African region are expected to live up to their international human rights obligations to protect, respect and promote the rights of those who take a stand against corruption and defend human rights. They must address the pervasive culture of impunity that continues to fuel endemic corruption, contributes to further violations of human rights and denies victims' access to justice and effective remedies.⁴⁸

The judicial measure in combating corruption makes room for the recovery of stolen public funds and looted resources through forfeiture orders, asset freezing and asset recovery orders made in anti-corruption proceedings. Upon an application filed by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Godwin Emeziele*⁴⁹, the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory made an order for the forfeiture of \$1.4 million being public funds looted by the Defendant who was the former Governor of the Central Bank. This forfeiture order in anti-corruption proceedings, bestows economic benefits on the government and the populace on whose behalf government holds these resources in trust.

⁴⁷ Punch Editorial Board, 'Convictions for Corrupt Former African Leaders', Punch Newspaper 24th December 2019

⁴⁸ Amnesty International, 'West & Central Africa: Authorities must Fight Corruption and uphold the Human Rights of those who expose it', published on 11th July, 2023 <<https://amnesty.org>> accessed 7th May 2025

⁴⁹ Charge Number FCT/HC/CR/577/2023

Where properties are suspected to have been derived from unlawful activities, the Court is enjoined to make a preservation order upon an application filed by the investigating agency for the purpose of restoring such property to its originating sources in the public treasury.⁵⁰

Socio-Cultural Measures

Socio-Cultural anti-corruption measure refers to the use of the African traditional justice system in combating corrupt practices in African societies. The retrospective traditional justice system is deeply rooted in the African traditional religion, customary practices and values that were practiced before the emergence of colonial rule in Africa.⁵¹

The traditional justice system exists at the local or community level to manage disputes within the indigenous African societies in accordance with the prevailing customary practice in each locality. In most localities, the traditional justice system consists of elders and leaders who provide leadership for their various communities. An aggrieved or offended party who resorts to the traditional justice system to seek redress is expected to make a complaint to the elders who are in charge of the administration of the traditional justice system.⁵²

Researchers on anti-corruption measures have advocated for the use of African traditional justice system as a tool in fighting corruption. The researchers are of the opinion that the constitutional oath of office administered to public office holders upon their appointment or election did not specify the object with which the oath is taken. Due to this constitutional omission, embezzlement, corruption and dishonesty have become the prevailing practices in public offices

⁵⁰ S 9(1) Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act 2022

⁵¹ FE Olawale, KY Hooi, KS Balakrishnan, 'The Dynamics of African Traditional Justice Systems: Perspective and Prospective' (2024) pg 229-244

⁵² J Atotso, G.O Achar, 'The Nature of Traditional Justice in Africa: A case study of the Bukusu People in Kenya', *Institute of Theology and Religious Studies, Africa University*

and government institutions. The researcher further opined that the Christian religion and the Islamic religion are for peace and salvation while the African Traditional religion is for justice.⁵³

In relation to combating corruption in West Africa, another researcher suggested that government institutions will be able to control corruption when backed by a strong political will and a reputable administrative institution with an upright justice system and an uncompromising enforcement system. The researcher recommended the African traditional justice system as the reputable and uncompromising in combating corruption.⁵⁴

There are criticisms on the African traditional justice system due to its compatibility with certain constitutional principles.

- i. **Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion:** The African traditional justice system is practiced majorly on the principles of the African traditional religion. Rituals, invocations, oath taking and appeasements commonly done in traditional worship are adopted in administration of justice under the African traditional justice system. These practices are not in accordance with certain religions as Christianity. A party who does not believe in African Traditional worship system cannot be subjected to the African traditional justice system irrespective of the offence such a party may be accused of committing.⁵⁵

⁵³ SM Ekwenze, 'The Use of the Holy Bible, the Holy Quran, Juju and Others for Oath of Office: To fight Corruption in Nigeria', Faculty of Law, Anambra State University.

⁵⁴ P Genger, 'Combating Corruption with African Restorative Justice Tradition: Suggested Steps for Nigeria', *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies Vol. 11* (2018)

⁵⁵ S 38 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended.

- ii. **Absence of Prescribed Sanctions:** The anti-corruption legislations define specific acts as criminal due to the elements of corruption embedded in those acts and sanctions are prescribed for each of those defined criminal acts. In the African traditional justice system, there are clear definitions of criminal offence as what constitutes a crime in one society may not constitute same in another society. In addition, the sanctions under the African justice system are not clearly defined. A particular offence may be punished in different manner depending on how the trial was conducted. There is no codified precedence to guide in future administration of justice in similar situations under the African traditional justice system. As part of the principles of fair hearing, a party shall not be convicted for a criminal act unless the act is defined and punishment prescribed in a written law.⁵⁶
- iii. **Absence of a Medium for Appeal:** A party who is not satisfied with the judgment under the African Traditional justice system may not be able to appeal or seek further redress as the judgment is executed instantly at the point of pronouncement. The various deities invoked during the traditional trial are activated at the point of pronouncement of judgment.
- iv. **Compromise and Bias:** Due to economic factors and the continuous need to earn a meaningful living, ministers of justice in the African traditional justice system are sometimes compromised for financial benefits.

Irrespective of the criticisms highlighted above, the African traditional justice system has recorded some success in curbing corrupt practices. In Benin-City, Edo State the African traditional justice system was employed in 2005 at the Oba market when there was a fire out

⁵⁶ S 36(12)

break and looters invaded the goods and properties of traders not minding the fire outbreak. The effective administration of the traditional justice system known as “ayelala” compelled the looters to return all their loots with any measure of force from the State or its enforcement agencies. Researchers on African traditional justice system commended the effectiveness of the system in combating corrupt practices due to the prevailing life style in most African societies where success is celebrated irrespective of how it is attained.⁵⁷

2.3 Financial Health

Financial health is an average estimation of a nation’s financial status in terms of internally generated revenue, foreign reserve, debt management and adequate budget funding.⁵⁸ A country’s financial health is strong where there is a steady flow of income, rare changes in expenses, strong returns on investments and a steady growth in gross domestic production.⁵⁹

Most West African countries are currently facing financial difficulties occasioned by corrupt practices and looting of public resources. Economic meltdown, high inflation level, stagnated economic growth and depreciation of currency value are some of the prevailing symptoms of financial challenges experienced in West Africa.⁶⁰

Structural transformation in West Africa has been slow due to the persistence of corruption. Addressing this challenge requires a transformation of the global financial architecture to meet the region’s development financing needs.⁶¹

⁵⁷ SM Ekwenze, ‘The Use of the Holy Bible, The Holy Quran, Juju and Others for Oath of Office: To Fight Corruption in Nigeria’ Faculty of Law, Anambra State University.

⁵⁸ Financial Health Network, ‘What is Financial Network?’, <<https://fiancialhealthnetwork.org>> accessed 7th May 2025

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ African Development Bank Group, ‘Nigeria Economic Outlook: Recent Macroeconomic Outlook’ (2024) <<https://afdb.org>> accessed 10th May, 2025

⁶¹ Ibid

The Petroleum and energy sectors in Nigeria are greatly affected by corruption because of the huge revenue accruing from these sectors. Between 2015 and 2022, the economic growth rate declined significantly due to monetary and exchange policies introduced then by the government in power. In 2023, the petroleum subsidy removal also impacted on the financial health of the country. The prices of goods and services were inflated in a consistent manner due to the rising cost of petroleum products.⁶²

Subsidy removal policies in Nigeria were accompanied by promises of reinvesting savings into social programmes and infrastructure development initiatives. For example, the Nigeria National Petroleum Company Ltd. proposed the establishment of a special fund to channel subsidy savings towards critical infrastructure projects and poverty alleviation programmes. However the effectiveness of such measure in addressing socio-economic inequalities and promoting inclusive growth has been a futile effort. Embezzlement and misappropriation funds formally budgeted as petroleum subsidy funds are the present state of affairs in the petroleum sector in Nigeria. These corrupt practices have impacted negatively on the financial state of the country.⁶³

There are also reported cases of government officials soliciting bribes from stakeholders in the energy sector such as oil marketers or refinery operators to influence subsidy allocation or procurement process. Subsidy claims are falsified and associated cost of refining and importation of petroleum products are inflated for personal gains.⁶⁴ There are regulatory agencies vested with to responsibility monitor key sectors prone to corruption and to implement policies to check

⁶² World Bank Group Economic Overview on the financial state of Nigeria since 2022 till date.

⁶³ OB Adebogun, OJ Olatunji & Ors, 'Subsidy Removal, Corrupt Practices and Implications o the Nigerian Economy', *African Journal of Stability & Development Vol. 16 (2024) pp 214 -232*

⁶⁴ OB Adebogun, OJ Olatunji & Ors, 'Subsidy Removal, Corrupt Practices and Implications o the Nigerian Economy', *African Journal of Stability & Development Vol. 16 (2024) pp 214 -232*

corrupt practices. The effectiveness of the operations of these regulatory agencies shall be examined in subsequent headings.

2.3.1 Impact of Corruption on the Financial Health within key Sectors in West African Countries

- a) **Petroleum Sector:** In Nigeria, the Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission and the Mid-stream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority are the principal agencies in charge of regulatory compliance vested with the statutory duties to check corrupt and illegal practices within the oil and gas sector.⁶⁵ These agencies have recorded significant progress in oil production, gas reserves and monitoring regulatory compliance in the energy sector. However, there are still incidents of oil theft and economic sabotage in oil producing areas due to compromise, political influences and interference, security lapse and corrupt practices.⁶⁶

In Niger Republic, the Ministry of Oil, Energy and Renewable Energies is the principal agency that regulates the petroleum sector. The four oil production areas in Niger Republic under the supervision of the Ministry are Termit in the east of the country where about one billion barrels of crude were recovered during oil exploration. The second production area in Niger Republic is Kafra in the North of the country where SONATRACH group has embarked on an ambitious exploration. There are also production areas in the North-East on the Libyan border and another in the West.⁶⁷ Due

⁶⁵ S 4 and 29, Petroleum Industry Act 2021

⁶⁶ A Olaitan, 'Nigeria: Oil Companies Blame Local Communities for Oil Theft and Pipeline Vandalism', *Business & Human Rights Resource Centre* (2024)

⁶⁷ African Business, 'Come to Niger and See Our Exceptional Oil Opportunities', <<https://african.business/2021/10/energy-resources/come-to-niger-and-see-our-exdeptional-oil-opportunities>> accessed 11th May 2025

to the country's high dependence on electricity from Nigeria as its major source of energy, corrupt practices in the Oil and Gas sector is minimal.

In the Republic of Mali, the National Petroleum Office under the supervision of the Ministry of Hydrocarbons is responsible for the implementation of government's policies on hydrocarbon. It also regulates trade of petroleum products between Ghana and Mali. There are limited corruption cases in the petroleum sector in Mali however; there is generally a low level of transparency in public affairs.⁶⁸

b) Military and Defence Procurement: Military and defence procurement refer to the process of acquiring military operational weapons, equipments, technology and apparatus. The United Nations Convention against Corruption mandates each State party to establish appropriate systems of procurement based on transparency, competition and objective criteria in decision making.⁶⁹ In compliance with the Convention, Nigeria enacted the Public Procurement Act 2007 but it excluded military and defence procurement from the operations of the Act. It provides "the provisions of this Act shall not apply to the procurement of special goods, works and services involving national defence or national security unless the President's express approval has been first sought and obtained".⁷⁰ The rationale for the exclusion of defence procurement and the requirement for the express consent of the President is not disclosed in the Act. Legal critics and academics are of the view that the provisions of section 15(2) of the PPA 2007 is to aid looting of public funds in the guise of defence procurement.

⁶⁸ M Bak, 'Overview of Corruption and Anti-corruption in Mali', *Transparency International Anti-Corruption Resource Centre* <<https://knowledgehub.transparency.org>> accessed 11th May, 2025

⁶⁹ Article 9(1) UNCAC

⁷⁰ S 15(2) PPA 2007

In 2024, Punch Newspaper reported that the Federal Government in Nigeria acquired thirty two billion naira weapons for the military in Nigeria. The funds were reportedly disbursed by the Ministry of Defence in July 2024.⁷¹ There is no corresponding report that insecurity, civil unrest and banditry have been reduced as a result of the acquisition of these military weapons.

The corrupt practices within the military and defense sector have weakened the military's ability to significantly address security threats and the negative impact of such threats on national development. Public funds are wastefully expended on substandard military equipments with negative effects on the operations of the armed forces in defence and national security.⁷²

- c) **Infrastructure and Capital Development:** In Liberia, one of the most critical impacts of corruption is its negative effect on the country's infrastructure, public service and governance. Corruption manifests in various forms such as bribery, embezzlement and mismanagement of public resources. The country's road infrastructure has remained underdeveloped despite millions of dollars in foreign aid and government spending. The education and healthcare sectors also suffer as a result of the diversion of designated funds budgeted for developing those sectors. The educational system in Liberia is plagued with inadequate teachers, overcrowded classrooms and poor teaching facilities.⁷³

In Nigeria, corruption has left its footprint on infrastructure and development. An investigation into the Lagos-Ibadan expressway project disclosed a case of embezzlement and discriminatory law enforcement in contracts awarded between 1999 and 2009. In

⁷¹ S Odeniyi, 'FG Acquired N32bn Weapons, others for Military in 2024', Punch Newspaper 16th February 2025.

⁷² DK Banini, 'Security Sector Corruption and Military Effectiveness: The Influence of Corruption on Countermeasures against Boko Haram in Nigeria', *Small Wars & Insurgencies Vol. 31, (2020)*

⁷³ JT Kogar, 'Corruption and its Impact on Liberia's Development', *Democracy Watch 2025*

2009, the Federal Government of Nigeria engaged Bi-Courtney Nigeria Limited in a public-private partnership agreement to construct about 105 kilometers long section connecting Lagos State and Oyo State. There was no publicity for the competitive bidding as required by the provisions of the Public Procurement Act 2007. In addition, the Federal Ministry of Works misapplied about fifty billion naira allocated for the twenty-five years concession agreements. The construction company reportedly abandoned the road construction.⁷⁴

According to the report filed by the African Development Bank, the fight against corruption is not just a question of good governance. It is a means of driving economic growth across the continent of Africa. The report further disclosed that in order to prevent the persistence of diversion of valuable resources and public funds through corrupt means and practices, the battle against corruption must be at the core of development strategies for Africa. Every developing nation in Africa must take cognizance of measures designed to prevent and combat corruption in order for the objectives of the developmental effort to be attained.⁷⁵

- d) **Health Sector:** The World Health Organization estimates that a large number of the population in African Countries lacks access to essential healthcare. The United Nations General Assembly identified corruption as the vital factors undermining efforts to accomplish universal health coverage. The two specific channels through which corruption affects healthcare are as follows:

⁷⁴ V Oladipo, 'Corruption's Footprint on Infrastructure in Nigeria', *VerivAfrica* 2024

⁷⁵ African Development Bank, 'Fighting Corruption Critical to Africa's Economic Growth', <<https://afdb.org>> accessed 10th May 2025

- i. Loss of income
- ii. Loss of trust in public institutions⁷⁶

Loss of income is responsible for the frequent industrial actions by the medical and health workers who are poorly paid for their essential services. Loss of trust in public institutions on the other hand is responsible for the continuous patronage of foreign healthcare services by African elites who can afford such. Medical personnel who are trained in Africa migrate to Western Countries to sell their skills and services due to the trust built by such foreign medical institutes. The migration of health workers from Africa has resulted in increase in clinical workload, reduction in the quality of care given by skilled health workers, increase in mortality and morbidity patterns arising from lack of access to essential health care services.⁷⁷

- e) **Education:** The most damaging effect of corruption in education is the decline in educational standard. The quality of academic output from institutions in Africa cannot be compared to the quality produced in developed countries. Study conducted by the United Nations Independent Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) and the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption disclosed that children in Africa bear a disproportionate burden of the discriminatory effects of corruption due to their reliance on public services and reduced capacity to challenge corrupt practices.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ C Bukari, S Seth & G Yalonetzky, 'Corruption can Cause Healthcare Deprivation: Evidence from 29 Sub-Saharan African Countries', *Elsevier Journal* 2024

⁷⁷ K Yakubu, J Shaanthosh & ors, 'Scope of Health Worker Migration Governance and its Impact on Emigration Intentions among Skilled Health Workers in Nigeria', *National Library of Medicine 8600 Rockville Pike Bethesda*

⁷⁸ African Union, 'Stolen Futures: The Impact of Corruption on Children in Africa' (2025)

According to Transparency International, the educational system in West Africa is characterized with improper funding, poor teaching practices, corruption and nepotism which have robbed millions of young people of their right to knowledge and decent future.⁷⁹

Corruption in education has immediate economic and social impacts on education. Economically, corruption has occasioned the award of academic qualifications to unqualified persons who are able to offer bribes instead of building their intellectual capacity. Socially, corruption acts a barrier to qualitative education due to high cost of accessing private institutions that offer qualitative learning. Public institutions are poorly funded and equipped for academic learning which has resulted to high patronage of private and foreign educational institutes.⁸⁰

The University World News reported that corruption discourages students in Africa from investing in higher education because they are more tempted by the easy gains of corrupt activities.⁸¹

The impacts of corruption on the key sectors discussed above in African Countries that are concerned about the negative effects experienced as result of impunity on the political, economic, social and cultural stability in their various regions agreed to on measures that will prevent and combat corruption within the African continent. The measures are modeled after the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

⁷⁹ Transparency International, 'Corruption in Education Threatens Children's Prospects in Africa and must be Tackled' <<https://transparency.org>> accessed 11th May, 2025

⁸⁰ United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes, 'Cost of Corruption in Education', *Knowledge Tools for Academics and Professionals Module 9*

⁸¹ W Sawahel, 'Corruption is a Real Brake on Human Capital Development', *University World News 2023*

2.4. ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES ADOPTED BY AFRICAN STATES

The most recommended anti-corruption measure is the preventive measure because it plays a crucial role in combating corruption before it results in serious negative consequences and it helps to address its root causes. Effective preventive strategies and measures strengthen integrity of public institutions and public officials. It promotes public trust and confidence in economic investment done within African countries where such preventive measure is effectively implemented.⁸²

The steps required in implementing preventive anti-corruption measures are as follows:

- i. **Code of Conducts:** Rules that prohibit certain types of conduct in public offices should be made and effectively implemented. The public service rules and code of conducts regulate the behaviors of public officers and civil servants in order to ensure that the character displayed aligns with the objectives of their respective agencies and institutions. The code of conduct should prescribe penalties and punishment for non-compliance.⁸³
- ii. **System of Reward and Incentives:** A system that rewards hard work and penalizes corruption in public sector is a sure foundation for preventing corruption in public service. Merit based appointment, good working environment, a decent wage, promotions and continuous human capacity training and development help to prevent corruption in public institutions. It promotes efficiency and effective service delivery.

⁸² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 'Preventive Measures' Chapter II <<https://unodc.org>> accessed 11th May, 2025

⁸³ S 19, Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act

- iii. **Accessibility:** Equal opportunity should be given to all firms and individuals to access government contracts. Public procurement should be competitive and transparent without any form of bias in contract award. Palliatives provided by governments should be accessible without discrimination.
- iv. **Citizen and Stakeholder Participation:** Participation of citizens is important in any administration. It draws government closer the people and it encourages public support for government policies and programs.⁸⁴
- v. **Change in Organizational Culture:** A more passive or indirect means of preventing corruption is to focus on creating a high level cultural change within an organization. An organization that promotes values associated with anti-corruption will instill these values in their employees. The presence of ethical leadership can also influence a change of culture across an organization as the actions of the leaders and executives are key in influencing the actions of the employees.⁸⁵
- vi. **Corruption Reporting System:** The existence of a medium or channel through which corrupt acts can be reported helps to prevent such act from occurring. A whistle blowing policy or feedback channel where a public official can conveniently raise concerns and feel protected from being indentified or retaliated against is an essential measure in preventing corruption.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 'Preventing Public Sector Corruption', <<https://unodc.org>> accessed 11th May, 2025

⁸⁵ B Sauve, J Woodley & Ors, 'Methods of Preventing Corruption: A Review and Analysis of Selected Approaches', *Public Safety Canada Report Number 2023-R010*

⁸⁶ Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, 'Prevention of Corruption' <<https://cpib.gov.sg>> accessed 12th May, 2025

- vii. **Reform in Public Administration and Finance Management:** Reforms focusing on improving financial management and strengthening the role of auditing agencies are crucial steps in preventing corruption. Budgetary allocations should be disclosed in order to avoid wasteful spending and to promote transparency.⁸⁷

Preventing corruption is the most cost effective strategy for tackling corruption. If preventive measures are applied effectively, there would be minimal incidence of public corruption in government and the society.

⁸⁷ Transparency International, 'How to Stop Corruption: 5Key Ingredients', <<https://trasnparecy.org>> accessed 12th May 2025

CHAPTER THREE

FINANCIAL HEALTH IN WEST AFRICAN STATES

Research has disclosed that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of West African Countries declined from 4.4% to 3.8% which indicates a downturn in economic growth and development. In Gambia, Guinea, Mali and Niger Republic there are reported deceleration in each of the Country's gross domestic product.⁸⁸ The decline in gross domestic products in West African Countries is attributed to heavy reliance on imported products due to unavailability of competent local manufactures or effective local processing and manufacturing industries.⁸⁹ The unavailability of operational processing and manufacturing industries for locally manufactured products is due to corrupt practices persisting in various West African countries where budgetary allocations for industrial development are looted and misappropriated for personal interest to the detriment of the nation. Sustainable development has been undermined due to the prevalence of economic loss, inefficiency, poverty and inequality.⁹⁰

3.1 An Overview of the Impact of Corruption on the Financial Health of West African Countries

3.1.1.Huge Foreign Debts

Foreign debt is a common financial challenge in West African countries due to their dependence on foreign aids and grants from International Institutions, International Organizations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for funding their respective municipal budgets. In

⁸⁸ J Anoma, 'West Africa Economic Outlook 2023', *African Development Bank Group Mobilizing Private Sector Financing for Climate and Green Growth*.

⁸⁹ National Geographic Society, 'Gross Domestic Product', <<https://education.nationalgeographic.org>> accessed 14th May, 2025

⁹⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, 'Effects of Corruption', <<https://unodc.org>> accessed 14th May, 2025

Nigeria, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal for instance, the debt profiles have increased significantly.

In 2024, Nigeria's foreign debt stood at ₦121.67 trillion which represents about 24.99% of the entire public debt which resulted in inflation.⁹¹ Inflation in Nigeria is also caused by increase in the real exchange rate which is traced to endogenous demand shocks or exogenous foreign producer pricing shocks. These two factors influence the cost of production and manufacturing in Nigeria thereby resulting in a persistence increase in price. A country with a persistent inflation rate cannot be said to be financially healthy.

In Ghana, external debt profile in 2024 is accessed at 31969.53 dollars.⁹² Ghana has a record of strained public finance, decline in capital investment and development as well as economic instability due to the country's huge debt profile. National resources and foreign exchange that would have been channeled towards developing the Country are expended in liquidating foreign debts incurred by corrupt public leaders who never accounted for the foreign debts incurred.⁹³

In Cote d'Ivoire, the national debt of the country amounts to approximately 55.66 billion US Dollars in 2025.⁹⁴ In Senegal, the Court of Auditors released the Country's report on audit which disclosed that the country's foreign debt is 99.67% of its gross domestic product.⁹⁵

⁹¹ National Bureau of Statistics, 'Nigerian Domestic & Foreign Debt Q1 2024', *Executive Summary 2025* <<https://nigerianstat.gov.ng>> accessed 14th May, 2025

⁹² Trading Economics, 'Ghana Public External Debt' <<https://tradingeconomics.com>> accessed on 14th May, 2025

⁹³ B Frimpong, A Fumey & EN Amponsah, 'Effects of Public Debt on Public Infrastructure Investment in Ghana', *Cogent Economic & Finances Vol. 12, 2024*

⁹⁴ A O'Neill 'National Debt from 1997 to 2030 in the Ivory Coast', *Statista* (2025)

⁹⁵ Reuters, 'Audit shows Senegal's Previous Government Misreported Debt, Other Key Data', *Voice of Africa News February 2025* <<https://voanews.com>> accessed 13th May 2025

The key drivers of huge debt accumulation in West African Countries are fiscal deficit, interest rate movements, instability in foreign exchange value and the debt relief mechanism under which foreign financial institutions waive foreign debts for developing countries.⁹⁶

The huge foreign debts in West Africa have strained financial stability in local markets and it has weakened economic fundamentals. The huge debt profiles of West African Countries have placed pressure on capital outflow and depreciation in currency value.⁹⁷

3.1.2 . Infrastructural Deficit

Infrastructural deficit exists where there is huge gap between the existing infrastructure and the needed infrastructure required to meet the expectations or demands of an economy or a society. Where the population in any society or economy out numbers the available road, housing, health facilities, power supply and educational facilities, there is infrastructural deficit.⁹⁸

In Nigeria, infrastructural deficit is occasioned by diversion or looting of public funds designated for infrastructural development. Budgetary allocations for federal road construction and maintenance across the country are often misappropriated. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission arrested and arraigned a former Deputy Director of Highways in the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, Augustine Olowoniyen and a surveyor, Sulaiman Muhammed before the Federal Capital Territory High Court on charge of alleged diversion and

⁹⁶ Nigerian Economic Summit Group, 'Key Drives of Public Debt Accumulation in ECOWAS', *Open Society Initiative for West Africa* <<https://chrome-native://pdf/link?url>> accessed on 14th May, 2025

⁹⁷ T Adrian, V Gaspar & P Olivier, 'The Fiscal and Financial Risks of a High Debt, Slow-Growth World', 2024 <<https://imf.org>> accessed on 14th May, 2025

⁹⁸ S Tsie, 'Addressing Infrastructural Deficit', *Sanlam Corporate Investments* <<https://assets.ctfassets.net>> accessed 18th May 2025

misappropriation of funds allocated for the acquisition of titles for federal roads across the country between 4th March, 2019 and 17th July, 2020.⁹⁹

The impact of infrastructural deficit is experienced in the form of increase in unemployment rate due to lack of manufacturing and production industries that employ human capital, increased poverty rate due to inability to earn a proper living, a decline in business productivity and economic growth, limited access to education, healthcare and food, there is a persistent migration from rural areas to urban areas in search for better and improved living conditions due to the perceived provision of basic amenities and infrastructure in urban areas.¹⁰⁰

In other West African Countries, infrastructural deficit is a common experience due to unaccountability of public office holders and politicians on the funds allocated for development and infrastructural acquisition. Less than 40% of the region's population has access to electricity, about a third of the rural population has access to good roads and only 5% of agriculture is under irrigation. For social infrastructures, only 34% of the population has access to improved sanitation and a slightly better situation for clean water at about 65%.¹⁰¹

In response to the growing effects of infrastructural deficit in Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development was formed by a merger of the Millennium Partnership for Africa's Recovery Programme (MAP) and the Omega Plan. The goals and priorities of NEPAD are to promote accelerated growth and sustainable development, eradication of wide spread and severe poverty and to halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process. It is expected that

⁹⁹ M Ubanagu, 'EFCC Presents Witnesses in N1.9bn Road Funds Diversion Trial', *PUNCH Newspaper* 16th May, 2020 <[5https://punchng.com](https://punchng.com)> accessed 16th May 2025

¹⁰⁰ J Ogundeji, 'Stakeholders Worry as Weak Infrastructure Slows Economic Growth', *PUNCH Newspaper* 28th March 2025

¹⁰¹ African Development Bank, 'Infrastructure Deficit and Opportunities in Africa', *Economic Brief Vol. 1* 2010

the implementation of these goals is expected to bring about economic growth and development, increased employment, a reduction in poverty and inequity, the diversification of productive activities, enhanced international competitiveness and increased integration of the African continent.¹⁰²

The major infrastructural achievements are recorded in health care capacity building in African Countries, economic growth and job creation through interventions aimed at enhancing infrastructure development, trade and productivity as well as increase in agricultural and food productivity to ensure food and nutrition security.¹⁰³

3.1.3 Underdevelopment

The economic underdevelopment of a country can be measured on its balance sheet and by its gross national product. The standard of living and vital statistics for birth, health and death are indices for determining the state of economic development in any country. The diverse corrupt practices in West African countries ranging from misappropriation, looting, bribery, falsification of financial records and crude oil theft in oil producing nations within Africa have distorted incentives and market forces leading to misallocation of resources.¹⁰⁴

In Mali, the economy has shown resilience with GDP growth estimated at 4.0% in 2024 (1.0% per capita), supported by agriculture and services. The country experiences persistent electricity shortages and a decline in gold production led to a contraction in the secondary sector. The

¹⁰² New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD)

¹⁰³ African Union Development Agency, 'Assessing NEPAD Achievements after 20 years: Perspective and Challenges', <<https://NEPAD.org/news/assessing-nepad-achievements-after-20-years-perspectives-and-challenges#:~:text=improving access to essential health, ensure food and nutrition security>> accessed 19th May, 2025

¹⁰⁴ TA Makar, A Ngutsay & Ors, 'Impact of Corruption on Economic Growth: An Empirical Evidence from Nigeria', *Journal of Public Administration, Finance and Law* 2023

poverty rate is projected to remain largely unchanged in 2025 and it may begin to decline from 2026 onwards.¹⁰⁵

In Liberia, the leaders have been accused for the country's underdevelopment due to failure of the leaders to maximize the economic resources of the country in a manner that is beneficial to its citizens. The political leaders in Liberia are commonly engaged in looting of public wealth which has left the country in its current state of underdevelopment. Persistent economic challenges, slow growth, high inflation, limited job opportunities and inadequate social protection are the major impacts of underdevelopment occasioned by corruption in Liberia.¹⁰⁶

In Burkina Faso, there is a record of significant economic underdevelopment occasioned by corrupt practices of political leaders that resulted in the military takeover of government. Poverty rate in the country is attributed to the failure of the political leaders to utilize national resources for the common benefits of its citizens.¹⁰⁷ Recently, the military government in Burkina Faso has taken significant developmental steps that projected an economic growth of 4.3% in 2025 through investment in agricultural production and mineral extraction.¹⁰⁸

3.1.4 Economic Recession

Economic recession is a prolonged period of low economic growth especially when economic growth over a certain period fails to exceed 2%. Recession can persist due to low investments in

¹⁰⁵ World Bank Group, 'The World Bank in Mali', April 09, 2025 <<https://worldbank.org/en/country/mali>> accessed 19th May, 2025

¹⁰⁶ World Bank Group, 'The World Bank in Liberia', April 01, 2025 <<https://worldbank.org/en/country/liberia>> accessed 19th May, 2025

¹⁰⁷ UNU-WIDER, 'Burkina Faso-Growth Without Poverty Reduction', *Research Brief 2015/10*

¹⁰⁸ African Development Bank Group, 'Burkina Faso Economic Outlook: Recent Macroeconomics and Financial Developments', <<https://afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/burkina-faso-economic-outlook>> accessed 19th May, 2025

an economy as a result of lack of trust by investors in the economy. Where investors are uncertain on the outcome of their investments due to corrupt public practices and manipulative policies by corrupt government officials, such investors withhold their investments in order to safeguard ageing economic loss.¹⁰⁹

Economic recession in Nigeria has led to a reduction of the standard of living and an increase in poverty rate. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, economic recession in Nigeria occurred in the first quarter of 2016 when economic activities were contracted due to acrimonious government legislative squabbles in budget approval, the significant devaluation of the Naira in the foreign exchange market, pipeline vandalism and economic sabotage, trade and import restrictions as well as lack of foreign direct investments.¹¹⁰

The United Nations Independent Children Emergency Funds (UNICEF) in its research and report on West and Central Africa, disclosed that economic recession due to the corrupt practices of African leaders in economic management in their respective countries within the continent has occasioned economic challenges such as currency devaluation, soaring inflations, stagnated production, food crisis and trade barriers in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Mali which are the most affected West African countries. The affected countries depend heavily on importation in order to meet the rising need of its citizens due to the absence of local manufacturing scheme that meet the needs of the populace.¹¹¹ In order to revive the economy and financial health of West Africa Countries, local manufacturing of consumer goods should be encouraged and

¹⁰⁹ P Boyce, 'Stagnation: Definition, Causes & Examples', *Macroeconomics* March 22, 2023 <<https://boycewire.com/stagnation-definition>> accessed 19th May, 2025

¹¹⁰ BS Shido-Ikwu, 'Economic Recession in Nigeria: A Case for Government Intervention', *SSRG International Journal of Economics and Management Studies (SSRG-IJEMS)* Vol. 4 (2017)

¹¹¹ J James, 'Worsening Hunger Grips West and Central Africa amid Persistent Conflict and Economic Turmoil', *Unicef for Every Child* (2024) <<https://unicef.org.wca>> accessed 1st June 2025

government policies of local manufacturing should be designed to encourage entrepreneurs and foreign investors who are desirous of investing in local manufacturing.

3.1.5 Trans-boarder Laundering of Public Resources

Money laundering is a major economic and financial challenge in almost all African Countries. According to the Economic Development Report 2020 by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Africa loses about 88.6 billion dollars annually in illicit financial flows through foreign bank accounts. Trade mis-invoicing, tax abuse, cross-border corruption and transnational financial crime drain resources from sustainable development as well as worsen inequalities, political instability, economic hardship, infrastructural deficit and damage public trust.¹¹²

The corrupt practices of government officials were recently unveiled in Nigeria when about 43, 000, 000 pounds were recovered from the former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke been public funds illicitly concealed through international financial centers.¹¹³

Research on the illicit flow of finance from Africa to financial institutions shows that while some of the private assets held outside the continent by African nationals may be legitimate, the bulk of such funds are certainly not. Due to the preference of African investors for the use of foreign currencies in bilateral and multi-lateral trade, the African continent now has share in private external assets in other continents with the aid of international financial institutions. The proceeds of international trade that should be for infrastructural and developmental purposes are

¹¹² M Moyo, 'Tackling Illicit Financial Flows, a Matter of Survival for Africa's Development', (2021) <<https://un.org/africarenewal/magazine/july-2021>> assessed 2, June 2025

¹¹³ C Ewonor & N. Booty, 'US Returns \$50m in Alleged Stolen Funds to Nigeria', <<https://bbc.com/news/articles/cvg8djpn845o>> assessed 2, June 2025

retained by these foreign institutions on the instructions of local political leaders who have retained such proceeds for their personal benefits.¹¹⁴

Apart from Nigeria, the Republic of Congo also has a record of illicit financial flow and money laundering. Denis-Christel Sassou Nguesso, the son of the President of Congo was accused of embezzling public funds in dollars from the Country's oil sector through the instrumentality of Shell Companies which aided him in purchasing luxury real estate in Florida.¹¹⁵ The role played by Shell in aiding corruption in the Republic of Congo was to "aid the diversion" of public funds generated from the sale of the Country's petroleum resources and to act as a "luxurious real estate acquisition agency" for Dennis-Chrsitel to the detriment of infrastructural, social and economic development in the Republic of Congo.

In the course of this research, it was discovered that properties, bank accounts and luxury goods spread abroad across 74 jurisdictions amounting to approximately 3.7 billion dollars are looted from the African continent and held abroad far from where the funds were looted. The styles adopted by African leaders and International Financial Centres in moving funds from Africa are as follows:

Anonymous Companies

The British Virgin Island (BVI), Panama and Seychelles are listed by the Transparency International as top incorporations that serve as hub for anonymous companies used in

¹¹⁴ LE Odigie, 'How the International Financial Centres have aided Corruption in Africa', *Seminar presented at the Faculty of Law, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria* February 2025

¹¹⁵ Transparency International, 'Dirty Money's Spots: How Corruption Funds Disappear Overseas', <<https://transparency.org/en/news/dirty-money-hidding-spots-how-corruption-funds-disappear-overseas-billions-africa-assets>> assessed 2nd, June 2025

concealing assets and stolen funds.¹¹⁶ Due to their corporate personality, corrupt leaders in Africa stock looted funds in these corporate entities whereas the majority shareholders and executives of these entities are African leaders and politicians. The doctrine of lifting the veil to aid discreet unraveling of corruption via a corporate entity does not seem to be effective in its operation due to their registration in secrecy and in jurisdictions where the information of real owners of those corporate entities is difficult to access.

Real Estate and Trust Holding

Due to the growing desire for industrialization and development in Africa, foreign direct investments are often invited from countries outside the African continent. In the Petroleum sector, leases and licenses are issued by the governments in African countries to multi-national incorporations in return for taxes and royalties. African leaders adopted the style of acquiring real estate with the proceeds of these taxes and royalties through the aid of these multi-national corporations in their domicile countries. In the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates and the United States, Transparency International reports that Nigerian leaders and politicians including the former Vice President Atiku Abubakar own unaccounted and undisclosed developed properties in these locations acquired with funds looted from government's treasuries.¹¹⁷

In the course of this research, it was discovered that the multi-national companies operating in Africa pay their taxes and royalties to foreign real estate companies who then acquire real estate

¹¹⁶ Transparency International, 'Dirty Money's Spots: How Corruption Funds Disappear Overseas', <<https://transparency.org/en/news/dirty-money-hidding-spots-how-corruption-funds-disappear-overseas-billions-africa-assets>> assessed 2nd, February 2025

¹¹⁷ Transparency International, 'Dirty Money's Spots: How Corruption Funds Disappear Overseas', <<https://transparency.org/en/news/dirty-money-hidding-spots-how-corruption-funds-disappear-overseas-billions-africa-assets>> assessed 2nd, June, 2025

and hold same in trust for corrupt African leaders in order to conceal the source of the looted funds.¹¹⁸

Foreign Bank Accounts

Foreign banks offshore are often interested in shady dealings with political and business elites in Africa on a continuous basis. Looted public funds and proceeds of corruption in Africa are stalked in undisclosed foreign bank account usually operated in the dollar currency. Corruption in Africa is facilitated by banking institutions in Europe, North America, Switzerland, Britain and France which accept financial instruments from African leaders without questioning the source of such funds. In the regime of late General Sanni Abacha, a former military leader in Nigeria, Tell Magazine reported on 7th October 2002 that between 12 billion dollars and 16 billion dollars were looted and received by foreign financial institutions in Australia, New Zealand Banking Group Frankfurt Branch; ANZ London; ANZ New York; Bank Len Zurich; Banking Trust Company Frankfurt and a host other foreign institutions. The funds are held at the instance of the late Military leader, General Sanni Abacha¹¹⁹

In Garbon, the former President Omar Bongo who was brought before the French Court in 2009, was found to have nine foreign bank accounts containing several millions of euros being proceeds of corruption in Garbon. The bank accounts were frozen by the French Court.¹²⁰

In Kenya, research disclosed that the Kenyan Moi and his family bought several multi-million-pound properties in London, New York and South Africa while the majority of Kenyans live in

¹¹⁸ Ibid

¹¹⁹ LA Aikins, 'Hiding Africa's Looted Funds: The Silence of Western Media', *TWN Third World Resurgence Archive* (2016) 309 pp 21-23

¹²⁰ Ibid

slums and in rural areas with little roofing over their heads. They lack water and other basic necessities of life whereas a significant proportion of the nation's resources is been used by corrupt political leaders to acquire properties outside the continent.¹²¹

Kick Backs by Western Corporations

Western Corporations encourage corruption, bribery and stealing of public funds in Africa by paying bribes and kick backs to induce government officials in awarding lucrative contracts in African Countries. In September 2002, the Canadian firm, "Acres International" was convicted by a High Court in Lesotho in the Southern African Region for paying 260, 000 dollars bribe to secure an 8billion dollars dam contract.¹²²

When the contracts are awarded to these foreign corporations, public funds designated for the execution of such contracts are shared among the facilitators with the aid of foreign accounts and foreign financial institutions. The corrupt practices by Western Companies seeking contracts in Africa are one of the reasons poverty and underdevelopment still persists in Africa.

In a swift reaction to the excruciating state of the African Countries occasioned by the rising level of public corruption and financial embezzlement, the African Union Convention of the Prevention and Combating of Corruption was entered into by concerned African leaders to enhance a collective response to the challenges posed by corrupt practices in the continent. Countries under the African Union are mandated by virtue of the Convention to adopt such measures necessary to empower their courts or other competent authorities to order the confiscation or seizure of banking, financial or commercial documents for the purpose of

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² D. Pallister, 'Canadian Firm Found Guilty of Lesotho Dam Bribery', *The Guardian Newspaper*, Thursday 19 September, 2002

unraveling banking secrecy on doubtful accounts.¹²³ In the course of this research, it was discovered that the Convention on the prevention and combating of corruption lacks effective implementation. This lack of effective implementation is the reason why corruption has persisted in West Africa.

3.1.6 Increased Poverty and Structural Inequality

Structural inequality refers to the systematic and institutionalized barriers that prevent certain group of persons from accessing resources and opportunities as a result of corrupt governments and institutions that formulate discriminatory policies and promote unequal distribution of resources and limited access to education and healthcare. Due to the deprivation or limited access to resources and opportunities, poverty is reinforced among the deprived group which results in economic inequality and continuous struggle to break free from the cycle of poverty.¹²⁴

Persistent public corruption across West African countries is a significant cause of poverty and infrastructural deficit. Basic physical and organizational structures needed for the functioning of society such as a good communication system, good road network, water supply, effective and reliable electricity are short in supply.¹²⁵ In order to reduce poverty and breach structural inequality, government in various West African countries should invest in education, capital projects, small and medium scale business empowerment programs that will encourage entrepreneurship and job creation¹²⁶.

¹²³ Article 17, AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption

¹²⁴ Mayekoo, 'The Main Causes of Poverty in Africa', <<https://mayekoo.com/blogs/news/causes-of-poverty-in-africa>> accessed 3rd June 2025

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Renew Capital Newsroom, 'Three Ways to Reduce Poverty in Africa', December 2022 <<https://renewcapital.com>> accessed 3rd June 2025

Due to the impacts of corruption on the financial health of West African Countries discussed above, legal and institutional frameworks were designed by various Countries in the region to prevent and combat public corruption. These institutions and their roles in improving financial health of African countries will be discussed subsequently.

3.2 Legal and Institutional Framework on Corruption and Financial Health in West Africa

African Countries convinced of the need to formulate and pursue as a matter of priority, a common penal policy aimed at protecting the society against corruption included the adoption of appropriate legislative and adequate preventive measures that will build partnership between government and all segments of civil society, agreed to formulate a legal framework for corruption in Africa. The principal legislation within the continent is the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. The Convention serves as a model for all African countries to adopt in enacting their municipal anti-corruption legislations that prescribe measures on preventing and combating public corruption. The measures are classified into two broad headings namely:

(a) National Control Measures

(b) Regional and International Control Measures

3.2.1 National Control Measures

i. Asset Declaration and Code of Conduct

As part of efforts to prevent and combat corruption municipally, “asset declaration” is a vital tool that is employed by Governments as a measure in preventing public officials from unjustly enriching themselves with public funds. All designated public officials are

to declare their assets at the time of assumption of office during and after their term of office in the public service.¹²⁷

In order to ensure compliance with the requirement for asset declaration by public officials, Governments in Africa are required to establish a code of conduct and to monitor its implementation, sensitize and train public officials on matters of ethics in public service.¹²⁸ Though effort is made by the Code of Conduct Bureau in Nigeria to implement the provision on asset declaration by public by public officials, the record of prosecution of defaulters is still very slim.

According to Transparency International, asset declaration helps to detect abuse of public powers and unaccounted wealth. It is a tool for uncovering bribery, money laundering and illicit flow of public resources.¹²⁹

There are criticisms on the use of asset declaration as a national anti-corruption control measure. Research carried out disclosed that some critics are of the view that asset declaration by public officials, violates the right to private life and right to own properties which are fundamental rights of citizens. In *Wypch v Poland*¹³⁰ the European Court of Human Rights rejected the complaint of a local council member in Poland who refused to submit his asset declaration claiming that the obligation to disclose details concerning his financial situation and property portfolio imposed by legislation was in breach of Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights. The court held that public disclosure of the private assets of public officials does

¹²⁷ Article 7(1) AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption

¹²⁸ Article 7(2)

¹²⁹ Transparency International, Asset Declaration: An Effective Tool to Fight Corruption?', Transparency International Working Paper 2014 <<https://images.transparencycdn.org>> accessed on 3rd June 2025

¹³⁰ (2005) Application number 2428/05

not constitute a violation of the constitutional right to private and family life as well as the right to own moveable and immovable properties. Fundamental rights are not absolute and they can be restricted on grounds of serious and legitimate national interest.¹³¹

Benefits of Asset Declaration

Asset declaration guards against the accumulation of illicit wealth by public officials. All public officers are constitutionally mandated to declare their assets upon assumption of office in order to build integrity and combat corruption. According to the World Bank research, over 160 countries around the world have introduced asset declaration system in different with the help of institutional setups and methods to enforce the disclosure of assets by public officials.¹³²

Challenges Experienced During Asset Declaration

A major challenge during asset declaration is verification of the disclosed assets. Assets outside the continental shores are often difficult to trace for documentation purposes. Also, due to the developing state of West African countries, the technical expertise required to track and find assets located outside the shores of Africa are not in currently in place.¹³³

There is also the challenge of poor implementation of the rules of asset declaration by the Code of Conduct Bureau. Research carried out in Nigeria, Gambia, Liberia and Sierra Leone identified poor implementation as a major setback in ensuring that public officials declare their assets. The factors responsible for the poor implementation of the rules of asset declaration are general

¹³¹ D Kotlyar, U Pravda, 'Asset Declarations: A Threat to Privacy or a Powerful Anti-Corruption Tool?' *World Bank Group 2016*

¹³² Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative, 'Asset Declarations', The World Bank and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime <<https://star.worldbank.org>> accessed 3rd June 2025

¹³³ Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative, 'Asset Declarations', The *World Bank and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime* <<https://star.worldbank.org>> accessed 3rd June 2025

weakness in leadership of the Code of Conduct Bureau, the syndrome of leniency, lack of knowledge, ignorance about the code, weak enforcement, moral issues confronting public servants, ineffective reward in public service, inadequate punishment system, weak supervision of public officials and undue societal pressure.¹³⁴

ii. The Use of Legislations, Penalties and Sanctions

In demonstration of commitment towards preventing and combating corruption, the various Parliaments in West African countries enacted anti-corruption legislations with sanctions and penalties where there is non-compliance. In Nigeria, the Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Act 2000 is a principal legislation designed to curb corrupt practices in public institutions. Penalties in the form of fines and terms of imprisonment are prescribed in the legislation where there are violations.¹³⁵

Economic Benefits of Legislations, Penalties and Sanctions

Legislations safeguard against cruel and unjust discretion. They serve as legal guide for public officials and civil servants in exercising their discretion on public related issues within the standard and procedure clearly defined. Economically, anti-corruption legislations instill legal certainty and business confidence due to the ability of investors to predict the likely outcome of their investments.¹³⁶ When investors are certain on their returns on investments and they are sure that corrupt practices will not frustrate their various businesses, investment and growth will be facilitated.

¹³⁴ DO Okafor, EA Egbo, 'Challenges of Assets Declaration Policy and Anti-Corruption Strategy', *African Scholars Multidisciplinary Journal (ASMJ)*, Vol. 8 2024

¹³⁵ S7 Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000

¹³⁶ D Dettman, 'Upholding Prosperity: The Economic Benefits of the Rule of Law', *Center for Global Programs News September 13, 2024* <<https://americanbar.org/advocacy/global-programs/news/2024>

In addition, effective anti-corruption legislations promote competition and market efficiency. These legislations help to unhealthy monopolies and ensure an effective allocation of resources in an efficient manner that leads to high productivity and economic viability.¹³⁷

Penalties and sanctions on the other hand help to prevent violation of laid down rules, principles and policies. The fear of being sanctioned upon violation compels obedience and compliance with policies, rules and legislations. Sanctions and penalties provide behavioral expectations and standards that make social and economic interaction possible without strive or violation of the rights of one another.

3.2.2 Regional and International Control Measures

Corrupt practices are not limited or restricted to a certain locality. A certain act of public corruption can be plotted in a certain location and then executed in other location. Due to this unrestricted nature of corrupt practices, the principle of “international cooperation” was enshrined in the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Each State Party to the United Nations Convention is required to take such measures as may be necessary to encourage cooperation between its public authorities, private sector and public officials responsible for investigating and prosecuting corruption cases.¹³⁸

Within the continent of Africa, Countries are required to provide each other with the greatest possible technical cooperation and assistance in dealing immediately with requests from

¹³⁷ D Dettman, ‘Upholding Prosperity: The Economic Benefits of the Rule of Law’, *Center for Global Programs News September 13, 2024* <<https://americanbar.org/advocacy/global-programs/news/2024>

¹³⁸ Articles 37 and 38 UNCAC

authorities that are empowered by virtue of their national laws to prevent, detect, investigate and punish acts of corruption and related offences.¹³⁹

Economic Benefits of International Cooperation

- i. International Cooperation as an anti-corruption measure strengthens the global fight against corruption. It enables West African countries to access assistance and technical expertise required in tracing looted funds, treasuries and public resources looted and stored in other continents and regions. International cooperation enhances investigation and prosecution of cross-border corrupt practices.¹⁴⁰
- ii. International Cooperation aids asset recovery from foreign countries and foreign financial institutions. It allows for the identification, freezing, seizure and return of stolen treasuries and assets.
- iii. International Cooperation promotes the transfer of knowledge on asset recovery and anti-corruption skills on identification, seizure, confiscation and return of assets between developed countries and West African countries.¹⁴¹
- iv. International Cooperation as an anti-corruption measure promotes good governance and economic development. It improves government structure. Promote economic growth and enhance international relations.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Article 18(1) African Union Convention of Preventing and Combating Corruption

¹⁴⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 'Corruption and Economic Crime Branch: International Cooperation'. <<https://unodc.org/corruption/en/learn/what-is-uncac/international-cooperation>> accessed 3rd June 2025

¹⁴¹ CH Lau, 'Advancing the Anti-Corruption Cause through International Cooperation: Lessons from the Hong Kong Experience', GPPG 4, 297-307 (2024)

¹⁴² Basel Institute on Governance, 'Action on International Cooperation for Anti-Corruption: Submit for Democracy Recommendations', 2023 <<https://baselgovernance.org/news/action-international-ccoperation-anti-corruption-submit-democracy-recommendations>> accessed 3rd June 2025

Political commitment on the part of West African leaders and international cooperation are the key measures in preventing and combating corruption. Beyond enacting legislations, governments in the various West African countries should demonstrate real commitment towards preventing and combating public corruption. Public offices should be sort not for personal gratification but to serve the interest of the nation. A harnessed anti-corruption networking system between the anti-corruption agencies in West African countries is essential for improving the financial health of West African States.

3.3 Harnessing Anti-Corruption Measures for Economic Benefits in West Africa States

Countries in West Africa have put in place diverse anti-corruption measures to secure their public treasuries and national resources from looting, diversion and unlawful conversion of national resources for private interest. Despite the measures put in place, corrupt practices still persist and there are increasing cases of trans-border economic sabotage within West Africa. There is therefore a need to harness the various anti-corruption strategies and measures employed by different countries within the region in order to effectively combat public corruption and improve the financial health in the region.

According to the United Nations Development Program on fighting corruption, to effectively harness anti-corruption measures, the various strategies already operational in West Africa should be harmonized having regard to the peculiar circumstance of each Country in the region.¹⁴³ The approach towards harnessing anti-corruption measures is multi-pronged and it consists of the following:

¹⁴³ United Nations Development Program, 'Fighting Corruption in the Health Sector: Methods, Tools and Good Practices', *UN Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Plaza, New York, USA*
<<https://undp.org/governance and poverty>> accessed 4th June 2025

- i. **Institutional reforms and capacity building:** All anti-corruption agencies including the national police of all West African countries should be strengthened with well defined codes for public service and rules of engagement to regulate the behavior of public officials in discharging their various public duties. Transparency in leadership and accountability in administration as well as operation should be the watchword in the various anti-corruption agencies. In addition, appointment and employment into public offices should be on a merit system basis and a good reward system with adequate incentives for compliance with extant rules should be put in place. Public officials should be trained and retrained periodically to get acquainted with the demands of their various offices and the rules of operations.¹⁴⁴
- ii. **Effective Implementation and International Collaboration:** Legislations, policies and rules of conduct aimed at preventing and combating public corruption should be effectively implemented in accordance with their objectives. Whistleblowers that expose corrupt practices should be adequately protected and there should be synergy among anti-corruption agencies in various African Countries for dissemination of information and strategy on how to combat corruption within the region.¹⁴⁵
- iii. **Deploying Emerging Technology to Fight Corruption:** The International Federation of Accountant launched its action plan for fighting corruption and economic crime in 2022. The action plan incorporates the use of technologies in public service on a monitored platform with automated service delivery that can easily detect corrupt tendencies. Mobile applications, software and transparency portals are some of the components of

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 'Preventing Public Sector Corruption', *University Module Series: Anti-Corruption Module 4*

¹⁴⁵ LN Hoffmann, 'Taking Action Against Corruption in Nigeria', *Research paper published 18th March 2025*

this measure employed to combat corruption.¹⁴⁶ A right and properly monitored application of this measure in a consistent manner will reduce the persistence of public corruption.

3.4. International Cooperation and the Principle of Non-Intervention

International cooperation is the collaboration between countries to criminalize and collectively punish the practice of secret commissions and other forms of corrupt practices in public offices and international trade transactions. It extends to a collective effort by various countries in a given region to prevent corrupt public officials from enjoying ill-acquired assets by freezing their foreign accounts and facilitating the repatriation of stolen or illegally acquired funds to the countries of origin.¹⁴⁷

Non-intervention on the other hand is a principle of public international law that prevents Sovereign States from interfering with the internal affairs of other Sovereign States. The principle prohibits unsolicited interference in the domestic affairs of Sovereign States by foreign powers. For the purposes of collaboration on the fight against trans-border corruption, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) was formed by 196 countries in the world to create a global network of police. Each country hosts an INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB) which links the local police with a global network in combating trans-border crimes. The INTERPOL collaborates with local security agencies in providing

¹⁴⁶ R Jaiyesola, 'Deploying Technology to Fight Corruption', *IFAC Content Series*, 2023

¹⁴⁷ Article 19 African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption

effective border security with access to range of databases to assist them in checking criminal activities of immigrants and emigrants.¹⁴⁸

In order not to violate the principle of non-intervention, where there are cross-border crime and corrupt practices, the local anti-corruption agencies engage the INTERPOL which comprises of personnel from different countries who operate on International Criminal Law that enables their universal operation in all member countries. INTERPOL authorities in seven African countries have arrested 306 suspects and seized 1, 842 devices in an international operation targeting cyber attacks and cyber enabled scams in Africa. In Nigeria, about 130 people were arrested by INTERPOL for various crimes and corrupt practices. In South Africa about 40 people were arrested with sophisticated electronic devices linked to corrupt practices and other miscellaneous crimes. In Zambia, INTERPOL apprehended 14 people suspected to be members of a criminal syndicate that hacked into their victims' phones to carry out various crimes. In Rwanda, INTERPOL authorities apprehended 45 members of a criminal network for their involvement in social engineering scams and defrauding victims of over USD 305, 000 in 2024.¹⁴⁹

The successes recorded by INTERPOL in their various operations demonstrate the power of international cooperation in combating corruption and trans-border crimes without violating the principle of non-intervention. The effective exchange of criminal intelligence on key targets ahead of operations with insights into criminal modus operandi using data from partners such as Group-IB, Kaspersky and Trend Micro are other factors that contributed to

¹⁴⁸ Interpol Member Countries, 'Border Management', <<https://interpol.int/en/how-we-work/border-management>> accessed 5th June, 2025

¹⁴⁹ INTERPOL 'The Interpol-led Operation Targeted Banking, Investments and Messaging App Scams', <<https://interpol.int/en/news-and-events/news/2025/more-than-300-arrests-as-africa-countries-claim-down-on-cyber-threats>> accessed 5th June 2025

the success of INTERPOL in their operations in Africa. In Benin Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo and Zambia, the operations against trans-border corrupt practices were delivered through INTERPOL's African Joint Operation against Cybercrime (AFJOC).¹⁵⁰

In the midst of the successful operations of INTERPOL in combating trans-national crimes, there are some operational challenges experienced by the agency. Some of such challenges include cooperation and data sharing, mutual legal assistance among member countries due to diverse legal systems and administrative issues. There is need to strengthen the agency in order to enhance its effective operation in Africa and other parts of the world.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

CHAPTER FOUR

MEASURES FOR IMPROVING FINANCIAL HEALTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AFRICA

The current financial state in most West African countries as disclosed by the research done in the preceding chapter is characterized by resilience towards economic growth and development as well as challenges militating against such economic advancement. In order to promote economic trade, stabilize price, enhance economic integration and increase investments in the region that will improve the economic state in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) proposed the introduction of a common currency known as “Eco” to serve as a central legal tender in all West African Countries. According to Etienne Fakaba, an economist in the Republic of Mali, a single currency would lead to savings across the board when it comes to exchange rates and promote harmony in the region.¹⁵¹

This proposal for a common currency to strengthen the economic state in West Africa is regarded by many countries as a welcome development but the political will towards execution of the proposal has not been effectively demonstrated due to the existence of certain economic factors and disparities. Also, the economic disparities and diverse economic structures among West African countries, the different level of development and inflation rates are some of the factors that have further hindered the implementation of this single currency initiative.¹⁵² Beyond the adoption of a common currency, certain fundamental measures should be employed in order

¹⁵¹ K Gansler, ‘Common Currency Divides West African Nations’, DW’s Politics 06/30/2019
<<https://dw.com/common-currency-divides-west-african-nations/a-49422357>> accessed 13th June, 2025

¹⁵² B Reuben, ‘The Eco Currency: A Misstep for West African Economies?’, *BusinessDay*, February 5, 2025

to truly achieve an improved financial health and economic development in West African region. The measures shall be discussed comprehensively in the subsequent headings.

4.1. Strengthened Institutions

In order to improve the economic state of West African countries, the institutions that safe guard the economy and implement government economic policies must be strengthened and made independent in capacity, resources, management and leadership. In Nigeria, the Central Bank, the securities and stock exchange market, national oil corporations as well as various financial institutions that hold government treasuries play very key roles in economic management. Their policies and programs have direct impact on trade, investments, foreign exchange, inflation and economic development. The institutions that influence financial health and economic development in the West African region are as follows:

4.1.(a) The Central Bank(s)

Central Banks are financial institutions established by law to manage and regulate the financial system in any country. In Nigeria the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) was established in 1958 and it commenced operations in 1959. The principal object of the bank is to ensure monetary and price stability, issue legal tender currency in Nigeria, maintain external reserves to safe guard the international value of the legal tender currency, promote a sound financial system in Nigeria and act as banker to financial institutions and also provide economic and financial advice to the Federal Government.¹⁵³

The Central Bank has not effectively met its statutory objective of maintaining a sound banking system and economic stability in Nigeria due to the deregulation and the opening of financial

¹⁵³ S2 Central Bank of Nigeria Act, 2007

markets without adequate supervision and prudential regulations. The operations under the deregulated financial system have weakened effective monetary and financial management by the Central Bank. There is need to ensure an effective regulation and supervision in order for the objective of the Central Bank towards a strong financial system and sound banking system to be achieved. As an autonomous and apex financial institution, it should be allowed to exercise its statutory powers on financial health, economic policy and financial system regulation. The policies and directives on economic development should be effectively implemented by subordinate financial institutions.¹⁵⁴

There is also the challenge of maintaining price stability and inflation currently in Nigeria which is confronting the Central Bank. The apex bank has not been able to effectively formulate policies and tools to address the persistent price instability and inflation in Nigeria. In order to address this challenge, the leadership of the apex bank should be patterned towards actualizing the objectives of the institutions and not for political gains alone. Orthodox monetary policies that do not correspond with the statutory objects of the institution should be erased from its operations. Lastly, to address inflation, a combination of economic tools and fiscal policies is required. The key tools are adjustment in interest rates to reduce borrowing and curb spending. This tool will reduce demand-pull inflation.¹⁵⁵ In addition, a stable foreign exchange rate can reduce imported inflation and maintain the value of the local currency in Nigeria. Increase in

¹⁵⁴ CE Nemedi, 'Challenges Facing an Autonomous Central Bank in Nigeria', *Economic and Financial Review Vol. 37 (1999)*

¹⁵⁵ Page International Financial Services Limited, 'How Inflation Can be Controlled I Nigeria', *Practical Strategies for Individuals, Businesses and Policymakers* <<https://pagefinancials.com/blog/finance/how-inflation-can-be-controlled-in-Nigeria>> accessed 19th June, 2025

local manufacturing, improved agricultural output, an effective power supply and a good transportation system as viable tools that can curb inflation in Nigeria.¹⁵⁶

In the Republic of Ghana, the Bank of Ghana is the apex financial institution established in 1957. The primary object of the bank is to maintain stability in the general level of prices, support economic policy of the government and promote economic growth through effective and efficient operation of banking and credit systems in the country, independent of instructions from the Government or any other authority.¹⁵⁷ The independence in operation granted to the Bank of Ghana is a unique factor aimed at ensuring that the institution is focused towards improving the financial health of the country. The apex financial institution in Nigeria does not have such independence as expressly provided for in Ghana. The apex institution in Ghana is empowered by statute to formulate and implement monetary policy aimed at achieving the objects of the Bank and to also promote monetary measures that will stabilize the Ghanaian cedi.¹⁵⁸

Though the apex financial institution in Ghana operates independently, the economy in the country still experiences weak economic growth and inflation particularly in food prices due to the high demand rate which has worsened the standard of living and has increased poverty. Research done discloses that structural reforms aimed at promoting private sector development and increasing the attractiveness of foreign direct investment is necessary to raise the country's growth potential.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Ibid

¹⁵⁷ S3 Bank of Ghana Act, 2002

¹⁵⁸ S4 Bank of Ghana Act, 2002

¹⁵⁹ World Bank Group, 'The World Bank in Ghana', The World Bank Group aims to help Ghana towards creating a dynamic and diversified economy, greener job opportunities, for a more resilient and inclusive society April, 2025 <<https://worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview#>> accessed 19th June, 2025

Among the eight West African countries which share the West African CFA franc currency, the Central Bank of West African States is the apex financial institution that regulates the financial sector in those countries. The countries are Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger Republic, Senegal, Togo and Guinea-Bissau which are referred to as “West African Economic and Monetary Union or Union Economique et Monetaire Ouest-Africane”.¹⁶⁰

4.1.(b) Securities Commission

The Securities and Exchange Commission was established under the aegis of the Central Bank of Nigeria to examine applications from companies seeking to raise capital from the capital market and recommend the timing of such issues to prevent clustering which could overstretch the market’s capacity. To enhance the pursuit of the Commission’s objective, the National Assembly enacted the Investment and Securities Act to promote a more efficient and virile capital market aimed at meeting the nation’s economic and developmental aspirations.¹⁶¹

The Commission oversees the operations of securities and commodity exchanges as well as capital trade points, ensuring that they adhere to best practices and maintain market dignity. It is in-charge of registration of securities and market intermediaries to guarantee their fitness and suitability to operate in the capital market.¹⁶²

Despite its potential, Nigeria’s capital market faces several challenges which have weakened its operations in terms of economic growth enhancement. The first challenge is “market volatility”. Economic uncertainties, fluctuations in oil prices and political instability in Nigeria has led to

¹⁶⁰ RJ Bhatia, ‘The Central Bank of West African States’, *The West African Monetary Union An Analytical Review*, Washington DC

¹⁶¹ Securities and Exchange Commission Nigeria, <<https://sec.gov.ng/about>> accessed 14th July, 2025

¹⁶² Ibid

volatility in the stock market and the operations of the Securities and Exchange Commission. These facts have also affected the confidence of investors and operators in the capital market. The second challenge is “limited participation”. Retail participation in the capital market remains relatively low, partly due to a lack of awareness and education on investment opportunities. Transactions in the capital market are mostly carried out by institutions and not individuals and this has limited the depth of the capital market. The last challenge is that of “regulatory compliance”. Although the Commission has made significant strides, there are still concerns about the enforcement of regulations and dealing with fraudulent market activities. There is need to intensify effort to ensure protection for investors and transparency in market operations in order to attain the objectives of the Commission.¹⁶³

In other West African Countries such as Togo, and Ivory Coast, the Securities Commission that regulates their capital market is integrated with the West African Economic Monetary Union (WAEMU) which operates as a regional stock exchange to strengthen capital market operations. This integration has led to a considerable growth in investment, enhanced regulatory frameworks and a rise of digital platforms that facilitate fundraising, making capital more accessible for business and entrepreneurs.¹⁶⁴

4.1.(c) National Oil Corporations

National Oil Corporations are established by the government in oil producing countries to manage their petroleum resources and to regulate the exploration and utilization of petroleum resources for the purpose of national and economic development. In Nigeria, the Nigeria

¹⁶³ Capital Market Stakeholders Forum, ‘Challenges Facing Nigeria’s Capital Market’, <<https://hcmsf.com/challenges-facing-nigeria>> November 3, 2024 accessed 14th July, 2025

¹⁶⁴ M Alda, L Biagi & Ors, ‘Capital Raising –Togo’, *Statista Market Insights* (2024)

National Petroleum Company Ltd. (NNPCL) is the primary national oil corporation. It was founded to harness the possibilities of oil and gas, address energy demand and drive the national economy.¹⁶⁵

Despite its primary objective as a National Oil Corporation, the recent shakeup announced by the Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu dissolving the board of the NNPCL and appointing a new chief executive for the company in the person of Mr. Bayo Ojulari has affected its management, rules and policy implementation. The newly constituted board will have to formulate new policies for operations that may not be devoid of political influences.¹⁶⁶

Another major issue confronting the NNPCL is the non-functional refineries in Nigeria. There are four major refineries in Warri, Port Harcourt and Kaduna under the control of the NNPCL but none of these refineries has been productive for years. Nigeria has resorted to the exportation of crude oil and importation of refined petroleum products which has impacted negatively on the economy and financial health of the country.¹⁶⁷

There is also the challenge of lack of funds to execute major gas projects in Nigeria. The NNPCL has stated that it is struggling with insufficient funding to develop its domestic gas projects aimed at decarbonising operations across the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors. Inherent corrupt practices prevailing within the NNPCL have led to misappropriation of funds budgeted for capital gas projects that would have improved the economy.¹⁶⁸ In order to enhance the operations of the NNPCL, its management should be devoid of political manipulations and

¹⁶⁵ NNPC Ltd, 'Who We Are', <<https://nnpcgroup.com/who-we-are>> accessed 14th July, 2025

¹⁶⁶ L Onyekakeyah, 'NNPCL Shakeup and the Challenges Ahead', *TheGuardian Newspaper* 29th April 2025.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid

¹⁶⁸ D Aina, 'NNPC Highlights Funding Challenges for Gas Projects', *Punch Newspaper* 5th November 2024

influences. Budgetary allocations assigned for its operations should be applied solely for its purpose.

4.2. Effective Implementation of Anti-Corruption Policies and Legislations

Anti-corruption policies and legislations are measures, rules and strategies designed to prevent, detect and punish corrupt practices in public offices, ministries and agencies. These policies and legislations contain anti-bribery regulations, code of conduct for public officers, anti-money laundering principles and whistleblower protection.

Despite the existence of several anti-corruption legislations, corrupt practices still persist in Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Ivory Coast, Liberia and other West African Countries as a result of ineffective implementation. In Nigeria, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission are the primary anti-corruption agencies vested with the statutory powers to enforce anti-corruption laws and policies.¹⁶⁹ The extent to which these agencies have successfully implemented anti-corruption laws through the various corruption cases prosecuted in various courts has not demonstrated a high level of effective implementation. In 2023, Bello Matawalle, a former Governor of Zamfara State criticized the EFCC for prosecuting only ex-governors whereas there are federal government officials that are also corrupt and no effort was made to investigate such officials.¹⁷⁰

There are also reported incidence of ex-governors in Nigeria such as Abdulaziz Yari of Zamfara State, Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State, Samuel Ortom of Benue State, Rabiu Kwankwaso of Kano

¹⁶⁹ S1, 6 and 7 Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) 2004, S3, Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000

¹⁷⁰ A Daramola, 'At a Glance: 33 Prosecuted, Six Convicted.....EFCC's Corruption Cases against Ex-Governors', *TheCable Newspaper* May 4, 2024 accessed 11th August 2025

State, Theodore Orji of Abia State, Aliyu Wamakko of Sokoto State, Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno State and late Olusegun Agagu of Ondo State who were arrested and investigated by the EFCC but the outcome of the investigation was not publicized and there are no records of their prosecution at the time this research was done.¹⁷¹ The failure of the anti-graft agency to disclose the outcome of their investigation carried out on the allegations made against these ex-governors has raised serious concern on the commitment of the agency towards effective implementation of the anti-corruption legislations and policies.

In order to ensure an effective implementation of anti-corruption policies and legislations, anti-graft agencies must be strengthened in terms of operational capacity, budgetary allocations, effective leadership and they should be independent in their operations free from all forms of political influences and manipulations. At the Annual General Assembly of the Network of Anti-Corruption Institutions in West Africa, ECOWAS urged West African leaders to adequately fund their respective anti-graft agencies, strengthen them and desist from interfering with the official duties the anti-graft agencies. ECOWAS further emphasized the effective implementation of the “ECOWAS Protocol against Corruption” in order to strengthen institutions for regional unity.¹⁷²

The trial Courts presiding over anti-corruption cases also have a role to play in the effective implementation of anti-corruption legislations. The constitutional powers vested on the Courts as an arm of government enables presiding judicial officers to adjudicate on corruption cases and

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, ‘Tinubu Seeks Stronger Anti-Corruption Structures and Regimes in West Africa to Tackle Graft’, 20th August 2024 <https://efcc.gov.ng/news> accessed 11th August 2025

prescribe adequate sanctions in deserving cases as defined in the statute under which the anti-corruption charge is proffered.¹⁷³

The trial court in the Edo State Judiciary in Nigeria before which a civil servant was arraigned by the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission in charge number B/CD/ICPC/2C/2024 demonstrated commitment towards an effective implementation of anti-corruption laws in public service. The Defendant in the charge was accused of obtaining an employment in the local government council in Ikpoba Okha, Edo State as a press secretary while he maintained his previous employment with the University of Benin as a security officer II. The trial court convicted the Defendant and sentenced him to one year imprisonment with an option of fine and an order for restitution ordering the convict to refund the salaries fraudulently received from the Ikpoba Okha Local Government Council.¹⁷⁴

In another instance, the Federal High Court in Laffia effectively implemented the provisions of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000 in a criminal charge proffered by the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission in *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Olaniran Satiregun*.¹⁷⁵ The Defendant was accused of obtaining by false pretence and offering admission to students to study courses at the International College of Administration of Science and Technology that were not part of the accredited courses. Upon conviction, the Federal High Court sentenced the Defendant to seven years imprisonment without an option of fine.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ S6 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended.

¹⁷⁴ *FRN v Ewere Morgan Eseosa* Charge Number B/CD/ICPC/2C/2024

¹⁷⁵ FHC/LF/15C/2024

¹⁷⁶ Independent Corrupt Practices & Other Related Offences Commission, 'ICPC Case: College Rector Bags 7-Year Jail Term for Running Fake Degree Courses', <<https://icpc.gov.ng/icpc-case-college-rector-running-fake-degree-courses>> accessed 11th August 2025

It is pertinent to state that the provisions for plea bargain that allows a defendant charged with a corruption related offence to plead guilty to a lesser charge upon an agreement entered with the prosecution should not be a clog on the effective implementation of anti-corruption statutes. Though the prosecution may enter into plea bargain with the defendant, the consent of the victim who is the nominal complainant should be sought; the interest of the society and the need to deter corrupt practices should be taken into consideration.¹⁷⁷ In order to prevent an abuse of the provisions for plea bargain, a legal framework should be created to regulate how the provisions are being explored. Prosecutors assigned to prosecute anti-corruption cases should be well grounded on the elements of each offence contained in the anti-corruption charge. Such prosecutors must have a good understanding of the likely evidence to be adduced, a reasonable understanding of the law and the interest of the society. In addition, there should be checks on the manner in which prosecutors exercise their discretion when exploring the provisions on plea bargain especially in corruption related cases.¹⁷⁸

4.3. Strong Political Will to Combat Corruption

Political Will is the determination or commitment of policy makers and the government to address national issues and effectively implement laid down legislations and policies. Political will to combat corruption exists when a sufficient set of decision makers with a common understanding of the negative impact of corruption on the populace and the nation demonstrate commitment towards preventing and combating systemic and public corruption for the common good of the Nation. According to Lorin Ann and Amber Ralie, political will comprises of four component areas which include “sufficient set of decision makers”, “a common understanding of

¹⁷⁷ S 270(2) of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015

¹⁷⁸ P Odia, ‘The Abuse of Plea Bargain in Nigeria’, Sahara Reporters 2011 <<https://saharareporters.com>> accessed 11th August 2025

a particular problem on the formal agenda”, “committed support” and “a commonly perceived, potentially effective policy solution”.¹⁷⁹

In demonstrating political will to combat public corruption, the leadership of West African Countries is expected to show genuine commitment through legislative enactments and effective enforcement, establishment of independent public institutions and ensuring that accountability, transparency and sincerity are the bedrock of public service.¹⁸⁰

Also, citizens have a role to play in building and sustaining political will to combat public corruption. Continuous education, public enlightenment and awareness campaigns create opportunities for citizens to give their support to established institutions and policies on anti-corruption. Active and engaged citizens are vital elements in building and sustaining political will because anti-corruption interventions work best when they are locally owned and supported by local stakeholders.¹⁸¹

In further demonstration of political will to combat corruption, West African leaders are expected to focus on the root cause of corruption. Poverty, social and economic inequality, weak governance, greed and selfish ambitions of political leaders should effectively addressed. The public and civil service where corruption is highly dominant demand a total reform. Merit based hiring and a well deserved reward system is key component in addressing public corruption.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ L Ann & ANW Ralie, ‘Defining Political Will’, *Politics & Policy*, August 2010
<https://researchgate.net/publication/229903315_Defining_Political_Will/citations> accessed 12th August 2025

¹⁸⁰ LK Hoffman, ‘Taking Action against Corruption in Nigeria’, Chatham House African Program for Empowering Anti-Corruption Role Models and Coalition to Change Social Norms March 2025

¹⁸¹ RM Kukutschka, ‘Strategies for Building Political Will’, *Transparency International (2015)*
<<https://knowlegdehub.transparency.org>> accessed 12th August 2025

¹⁸² V Gasper, P Mauro & P Medas, ‘Tackling Corruption in Government’, IMF Blog (2019)

Open governance and accessibility to political data are crucial factors that sustain political will. A government determined to combat public corruption should operate an open system of governance where citizens have access public data and public offices without restraint or manipulations. Transparency and fairness in public procurement is a basic step in demonstrating openness in governance. Public servants and political office holders who transgress should be held accountable as stipulated by law without sentiments or ill will. Accountability should be taken as an obligation in public service and just a mere discretionary virtue.¹⁸³

Lastly, a robust system for managing public finances is a core step in demonstrating political will to combat corruption. Public funds should be utilized sincerely in accordance with budgetary purpose and not for personal gratification as commonly seen in most West African States where public leaders focus on self enrichment at the detriment of national development.¹⁸⁴

4.4. Effective Debt Management Performance Assessment System

According to the World Bank Group, Debt Management Performance Assessment (DeMPA) is a diagnostic tool used for evaluating a country's debt management process and institutions with the aid of a comprehensive set of indicators disclosing the full particulars of government debt management functions by identifying core strengths and weaknesses in government income and expenditure. The indicators are:

- a) Legal Framework
- b) Managerial Structure
- c) Debt Management Strategy

¹⁸³ NO Iweala, 'Strategies for Wining the Fight against Corruption', *Brookings-Africa in Focus (2019)*

¹⁸⁴ EH Ortiz, 'Tackling Systemic Corruption through Public Financial Management' <<https://dai.com>> accessed 12th August 2025

d) Audit¹⁸⁵

Debt management performance assessment (DeMPPA) helps to identify problem areas that need improvement. It helps the government to determine aspects of the economy that are not adequately funded as well as aspects that are over funded. It gives a guide in evaluating inflow of government funds and how the funds are distributed in various sectors. Lastly, it helps to determine areas that are funded from internally generated funds and areas that are funded from external sources like loans and grants. In terms of planning, debt management performance assessment helps government to develop financial plans in accordance with its budgetary allocations and national needs.¹⁸⁶

4.4.a Legal Framework on Debt Management

In Nigeria, debt management is regulated by the Debt Management Office established on the 4th day of October 2000 to centrally coordinate the management of Nigeria's debt with the aim of achieving the following:

- i) Good debt management practices that make positive impact on economic growth and national development specifically in reducing debt stock and cost of public debt servicing in a manner that saves resources for investment in poverty reduction programs;
- ii) Prudently raising finances to fund government deficits at affordable costs and manageable risks in the medium and long term;

¹⁸⁵ World Bank Group, 'Debt & Fiscal Risks Toolkit' <<https://worldbank.org/programs/debt-toolkit/dempa>> accessed 12th August 2025

¹⁸⁶ FasterCapital, 'What is Debt Evaluation?', <<https://fastercapital.com/what-is-debt-evaluation>> assessed 12th August 2025

- iii) Achieving positive impact on overall macroeconomic management including monetary and fiscal policies;
- iv) Consciously avoiding debt crisis and achieving orderly growth and development of the national economy;
- v) Improving the nation's borrowing capacity and its ability to manage debt efficiently in promoting economic growth and national development;
- vi) Projecting and promoting a good image of Nigeria as a disciplined and organized nation, capable of managing its assets and liabilities;
- vii) Providing opportunity for professionalism and good practice in nation building.¹⁸⁷

In Ghana, external debt is managed by the Debt Management Division (DMD) to achieve resource mobilization, pursue prudent debt management strategies and policies, and develop tools to maintain contemporary innovations in raising funds and design of appropriate debt management policies and strategies.¹⁸⁸

In order to achieve the objective of improving financial health and economic development, the debt management division in Ghana employs anti-corruption core values which include transparency, accountability, team work, integrity, efficiency, excellence and dedication in its operation. It also formulates and implements the country's debt management objectives, policies and strategies.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ Debt Management Office Nigeria, 'Organizational Change Initiative', <<https://dmo.gov.ng/about-dmo>> accessed 12th August 2025

¹⁸⁸ Republic of Ghana Ministry of Finance, 'Debt Management Objectives', Ministry of Finance Drive, Accra

¹⁸⁹ Ibid

4.4.b Challenges on Debt Management

Though the debt management office exists in Nigeria, Ghana and other West African Countries, the foreign debt profile of these countries keeps increasing significantly. In January 2025, Business Day reported that Nigeria's total foreign debt is about ₦187.8 trillion.¹⁹⁰

Between 2007 and 2025, Nigeria's government incurred foreign debt to fund major infrastructure projects in sectors like power, transportation and social infrastructural investments. In 2017, the federal government raised ₦100 billion seven-year debut sukuk bond for the financing of 25 road projects across the country's six geo-political zones. In 2024, the government of Nigeria also raised ₦1.1 trillion to finance 124 federal road projects covering over 5.820 kilometers across the six geopolitical zones. Also, in May 2025, the Debt Management Office issued ₦300 billion 7-year Ijarah Sukuk bond to fund critical road and bridge infrastructure across the various geopolitical zones in Nigeria.¹⁹¹

Similarly, in Ghana research disclosed that the public external debt has increased from 28, 300 USD Million to 28, 500 USD Million in the first quarter of 2025.¹⁹² Further research disclosed that the reasons for the persistent increase in the debt profile of the West African countries mentioned above are operational inefficiency and poor coordination.

With respect to operational inefficiency of the various debt management offices in West Africa, debt data recording system has been inefficiently documented. There is also poor flow of

¹⁹⁰ W Alli, 'Nigeria's Debt to Hit N187.8 trn in 2025 Amid Rising Borrowing Cost', Business Day January 5, 2025 <<https://businessday.ng/news/article>> accessed 12th August 2025

¹⁹¹ F Eghosa, 'Nigeria National Debt Profile Growth Trend (2005-2025): Analysis of Federal Government Debt Dynamics', *Finance in Africa 2025*

¹⁹² Trading Economics, 'Ghana Public External Debt' <<https://tradingeconomics.com/ghana/external-debt>> accessed 12th August 2025

information between key agencies that regulate the economy and financial sector in most West African countries. Also, most debt claims made by creditors are unverifiable which often lead to endless debt liquidation. There are also issues of inadequate manpower and poor incentive systems in most debt management offices within the region.¹⁹³

Among oil producing countries where crude oil is highly generated, “oil swap” is a common practice that often leads to accumulated foreign debts. Oil swap was meant to be an arrangement that allows crude oil to be swapped for refined petroleum products but recently, most oil producing countries have resorted to incurring huge national debts to fund domestic budgetary provisions while the crude oil generated in their territories are used as settlement for the debt for a period of time which span into long term.¹⁹⁴

4.4.c Measures for Effective Debt Management

In order to reduce the huge debt profiles of West African countries and to enhance the operations of the National Debt Offices towards the attainment of financial health and economic development, the following measures should be employed:

i) The government of the various countries within the region should set a limit to their borrowing. Policies that promote internally generated funds should be implemented while budget deficits that jeopardize the economy should be reduced.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Debt Management Office Nigeria, ‘Organizational Change Initiative’ <<https://dmo.gov.ng/about-dmo>> accessed 12th August 2025

¹⁹⁴ Business Day Newspaper, ‘Nigeria Amasses \$3billion Debt to Traders for Oil Swaps Reuters’ (2023) <[https://buisnessday.ng/news/article/nigeria-amasses-\\$3billion-debt-to-traders-for-oil-swaps-reuters/](https://buisnessday.ng/news/article/nigeria-amasses-$3billion-debt-to-traders-for-oil-swaps-reuters/)> accessed 12th August 2025

¹⁹⁵ A Kolawale, G Iweke, ‘What is the Way out of Nigeria’s Rising Debt?’, Ships & Ports (2021)

ii) In addition, effective debt management policies that will enhance proper monitoring of public borrowings with a view to ensuring that misappropriation is drastically reduced should be pursued.¹⁹⁶

iii) Debt managers, fiscal policy advisors and central bankers should share an understanding of the objectives of debt management, fiscal and monetary policies given the interdependencies between their policy instruments. Debt managers should convey to fiscal authorities their views on the costs and risks associated with government financing requirements and debt levels. Where permissible, there should be a separation of debt management and monetary policy objectives and accountabilities.¹⁹⁷

iv) Existing infrastructures should be improved upon, internally generated revenue should be well accounted for, transparency and necessity should be well reflected in the borrowing process whenever a nation seeks to incur any foreign debt.¹⁹⁸

4.5. Price Control System and Inflation Management

Price control are restrictions imposed by governing authorities on the prices of goods and services either by setting a maximum price (price ceiling) or a minimum price (price floor).¹⁹⁹

Similarly, inflation control measures are steps or actions taken by governments to check the rising prices with an aim of maintaining stability within the economy. Controlling inflation requires a combination monetary, fiscal and structural policies designed to stabilize process and

¹⁹⁶ ML Olasunkanmi, SA Ajibowo, 'Public Debt Management and Sustainable Growth in Nigeria', (2024)

¹⁹⁷ International Monetary Fund, 'Guidelines for Public Debt Management', (2021)
<<https://imf.org/external/np/mae/pdebt/2021>> accessed 13th August 2025

¹⁹⁸ C Harmon, 'How to Control Nigeria's Debt Crisis', *National Economy* 2023
<<https://nationaleconomy.com/how-to-control-nigeria's-debt-crisis>> accessed 13th August 2025

¹⁹⁹ J Olayinka, 'Price Control and its Significance on People's Livelihood in Nigeria', *Mondaq* 2025

maintain economic balance. Monetary policy adjustment is a common tool used by governing authorities particularly the central bank where interest rates are increased or reduced in order to check excess spending and reduce money supply.²⁰⁰

Price control and inflation management are vital tools for financial health and economic development as maximum prices are usually reserved for socially important goods such as food and renting. However, price control distorts the working of the market and lead to over supply or shortage. A minimum price leads to an increase in supply but it occasions a fall in demand. On the other hand, a maximum price leads to an increase in demand and a decrease in supply.²⁰¹

Research done shows that when a maximum price is fixed for a commodity like petrol which is an essential commodity, the demand by consumers rises as traders and marketers are expected to stick to the price fixed by regulatory agencies while supply by traders may decline due to the desire of suppliers to sell at higher prices for profit maximization. The economic effect of price control is also experienced in the form of the emergence of black markets where the shortage in supply occasioned by a fixed maximum price is abridged. In the black market, the commodities are supplied above the regulated maximum price while consumers pay more than the regulated fixed price in order to purchase such commodities in the unofficial market.²⁰²

4.5.a Effectiveness of Price Control System and Inflation Management

In most West African Countries whose financial health was critically studied in the course of this research, governments try to keep inflation within an optimal range that promotes growth

²⁰⁰ Y Yemi, 'Inflation: What it is and How to Control Inflation Rates', *Moneyrise 2025*

²⁰¹ T Pettinger, 'Price Controls-Advantages and Disadvantages', *Economics Help*, <<https://economicshelp.org>> accessed 12th August 2025

²⁰² T Pettinger, 'Price Controls-Advantages and Disadvantages', *Economics Help*, <<https://economicshelp.org>> accessed 12th August 2025

without reducing the purchasing power of their respective currencies through the price control measure.²⁰³

In Togo, the ministry of trade fixed a new ceiling on prices of necessities-VAT-exempt on local and imported goods. The move was occasioned by the new increase in the price of petroleum products due to a shift in oil and dollar rates as stated by the Togolese government. This measure by the Togolese government has significantly helped in addressing inflation and it has boosted the purchasing power of the West African CFA franc which is the official currency in Togo.²⁰⁴

In Equatorial Guinea, there is high reliance on export returns from oil and gas though inflation remains high and volatile in the country due to the country's heavy reliance on imported goods.²⁰⁵

The price control measure in Equatorial Guinea has mixed results and unintended consequences such as shortages and black market. The desired objectives of price control measures in Equatorial Guinea are stabilizing prices, protecting consumers and maintaining real incomes. However the authorities in Equatorial Guinea while implementing price control measures experienced shortages in supply of goods, black markets and reduced quality in goods produced in order to cut cost of production. The country also experienced inefficient allocation of

²⁰³ L Kramer, 'How do Governments Fight Inflation?', Investopedia October 2, 2024 <<https://investopedia.com/ask/answers/111314/what-methods-can-government-use-control-inflation.asp>> accessed 16th August 2025

²⁰⁴ AR Dossavi, 'Togo Amends, again the Cap on Prices of Local and Imported Goods', Togo First Economic Governance 12th May 2022 <<https://togofirst.com/en/economic-governance/1205-9949-togo-amends-again-the-cap-on-prices-of-local-and-imported-goods>> accessed 12th August 2025

²⁰⁵ BertlsmannStiftung Transformation Index, 'Equatorial Guinea Country Report 2024', <<https://bti.project.org/en/reports/country-report/GNQ>> accessed 12th August 2025

resources due to market distortion. Price control in the country also discouraged investment and it led to less efficient and productive economy.²⁰⁶

In Cameroon, there are some price controls for consumer goods, petroleum products, construction materials and foodstuffs. This control measure has been effective in checking the rate of inflation in the country.²⁰⁷

In Nigeria, price control is regulated by the Price Control Act 1977. It is a legislation that is enacted to regulate and stabilize prices across various sectors of the economy, ensure fair pricing practices and protect consumers from exploitation. The Act provides for a price control committee in each State of the Federation to enforce price control while also providing supplementary provisions regarding to the functioning of the price control board.²⁰⁸ Despite the operation of the Price Control Act, inflation still persists in Nigeria due to ineffective implementation of the provisions of the Act.²⁰⁹ The committees and board saddled with the responsibility for price control in Nigeria have not been effective in their operations and implementation of the Act.

In the course of this research, it was discovered that the ineffectiveness of the price control measure has led governments of various West African Countries to adopt other monetary policies to improve their financial health and economic development.

²⁰⁶ W Kenton, 'Price Controls: Types, Examples, Pros & Cons', *Investopedia* (2024)

²⁰⁷ International Trade Administration, 'Cameroon Country Commercial Guide' US Department of Commerce (2024) <<https://trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/cameroon-selling-factors-and-techniques>> accessed 12th August 2025

²⁰⁸ S 2 Price Control Act 1977

²⁰⁹ U Chioma, 'Price Control in Nigeria: Insights into the Price Control Act 1977 and its Implications for Businesses and Consumers', *The Nigeria Lawyer* June 2024

4.5.b. Lending Rate

Lending rate is the rate at which banks lend funds to individuals and corporate bodies. In order to check inflationary rate, the Central Banks in the various West African Countries increase the rate of lending by financial institutions in order to reduce excess cash flow in the economy. When the lending rate is high, borrowers are discouraged from obtaining loans and grants at such high interest rates.²¹⁰

4.5.c Open Market Operations

Open market operations refer to the buying and selling of treasury securities. They are tools used by the Federal Reserve to increase (by buying treasuries) or decrease (by selling treasuries) the money supply.²¹¹ Open market operations are done by an outright or permanent purchase or sale of securities to have a lasting impact on the money supply. Open market operations can also be done temporarily for adjustments in liquidity.²¹²

When open market operation is targeted at buying treasuries, it stimulates economic growth by increasing money supply and making credit readily available to businesses and individuals for promoting investments and consumption. However, when there is excess liquidity in circulation, the treasuries acquired should be traded to avert inflation.²¹³

²¹⁰ L Kramer, 'How do Governments Fight Inflation?', Investopedia October 2, 2024 <<https://investopedia.com/ask/answers/111314/what-methods-can-government-use-control-inflation.asp>> accessed 16th August 2025.

²¹¹ Board of the Governors of the Federal Reserve System, 'Open Market Operations', <<https://federalreserve.gov/moneatrypolicy/openmarket.htm>> accessed 16th August 2025

²¹² D Tiwari, 'Open Market Operation: An Introduction', *Vedantu Commerce* 2025

²¹³ EBC Financial Group, 'Role and Features of Open Market Operations' (2024) <<https://ebc.com/forex/role-and-features-of-open-market-operations>> accessed 16th August 2025

In order to achieve a sustained economic development, bank reserves with the various Central Banks in the West Africa countries should be used a tool regulate the lending ability of commercial banks and other financial institutions. An increased bank reserve will reduce the excess cash in circulation and also reduce inflation. Where inflation is well monitored, budgetary allocations will also be well accounted for and thereby putting corruption in check.²¹⁴

4.6. Transparency in Foreign Exchange and Trade Policies

Foreign exchange also known as forex is a trade on currencies by exchanging or converting money from one currency to another for various purposes. The currencies that are mostly in the foreign exchange market are the United States Dollar (USD), Euro (EUR), Japanese Yen (JPY), and the Swiss Franc (CHF).²¹⁵

Lack of transparency in foreign exchange has aided illicit financial flow within the African continent and most African leaders collaborate with international financial institutions to carry out corrupt practices that have persistently drained the economy of African countries. The properties, bank accounts and luxury goods of African leaders are spread abroad across 74 jurisdictions amounting to approximately 3.7 billion dollars are looted from the African continent and held abroad far from where the corruption originally occurred.²¹⁶

In Nigeria, the former military Head of States, General Sanni Abacha was reported on 7th October 2002 to have looted 12billion dollars through foreign financial institutions in Australia,

²¹⁴ L Kramer, 'How do Governments Fight Inflation?', Investopedia October 2, 2024
<<https://investopedia.com/ask/answers/111314/what-methods-can-government-use-control-inflation.asp>> accessed 16th August 2025

²¹⁵ Z Martinez, 'What is Foreign Exchange? A Guide to the Forex Market', *Paystand* June 11, 2024
<<https://paystand.com/blog/what-is-foreign-exchange>> accessed 16th August 2025

²¹⁶ Transparency International, 'Dirty Money's Spots: How Corruption Funds Disappear Overseas',
<<https://transparency.org/en/news/dirty-money-hidding-spots-how-corruption-funds-disappear-overseas-billions-africa-assets>> accessed 16th August, 2025

New Zealand Banking Group Frankfurt Branch; ANZ London; ANZ New York; Bank Len Zurich; Banking Trust Company Frankfurt and a host other foreign institutions due to lack of transparency in the foreign exchange practices.²¹⁷ Effort is still been made by successive regimes to recover the looted funds.

With the aid of foreign exchange and the lack of transparency in the money market, African leaders over the years have adopted the following mode in carrying out corrupt practices:

a. **Creation of Global Bank Account with Business Name:** Due to the nature of a registered business name, it does not have any form of corporate entity that can be sued or charged for corruption related offences. The identities of the proprietors of these business names are concealed while the particulars of the business are used to initiate financial transactions of foreign nature.²¹⁸

b. **Electronic Transactions and E-Wallets:** Foreign financial institutions initiate e-payment platforms powered by Automated Clearing House, Domestic Wire, the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, Clearing House Automated Payment System and the Single Euro Payment Area. These platforms can author any form of financial transfer from any part of the world without restrictions by internal banking policies. The applications designed to work on this banking platform are linked directly to designated foreign accounts where the funds are diverted.²¹⁹

²¹⁷ LA Aikins, 'Hiding Africa's Looted Funds: The Silence of Western Media', *TWN Third World Resurgence Archive (2016) 309 pp 21-23*

²¹⁸ S. Alley, 'Global Accounts for African Businesses and Individuals' <<https://ranest.com>> accessed 16th August, 2025

²¹⁹ Ibid

c. Multi-purpose Credit and Debit Cards Operations: In order to aid African leaders in the illicit movement of public funds, foreign financial centers introduced multi-purpose automated teller cards for financial transactions beyond domestic borders. The account linked to the teller card operations are funded locally within African Countries while the funds are withdrawn in dollars in designated international financial institutions.²²⁰

4.6.a. Measures to Ensure Transparency in Foreign Exchange

In order to ensure transparency in the foreign exchange market, the Central Bank of Nigeria introduced the Electronic Foreign Exchange Matching System (EFEMS) in 2024. The system is designed for use by authorized dealers in the Nigeria Foreign Exchange Market (NFEM) with an aim to create a more structured and accountable trading environment. Since its inception, the electronic foreign exchange matching system has restored investors' confidence and it has strengthened the naira against the dollar which is a significant milestone in the nation's economic reform.²²¹

In the Republic of Ghana, the country has legislative and policy measures in place to ensure transparency in foreign exchange. The Foreign Exchange Act 2006 is the primary legislation that regulates foreign exchange operations in the money market. There are also policies on advertising and receipt or payment for goods and services in foreign currency in Ghana that apply to foreign exchange market. New methodologies are been introduced by the Bank of Ghana to broaden data coverage and to reflect daily transactions in the money market.²²²

²²⁰ S. Alley, 'Global Accounts for African Businesses and Individuals' <<https://ranest.com>> accessed 16th August, 2025

²²¹ HM Ashike, 'How CBN Restored Transparency in FX Market', *Business Day*, January 19 2025

²²² WTS Global, 'Ghana: Exchange Control Insights', 04.04.2025 <<https://wts.com/global/publishing-article/20250404-ghana-exchange-control-insights-publishing-article>> accessed 24th August, 2025

In demonstration of commitment towards attaining transparency in the foreign exchange market, all payment in foreign currency in Ghana between resident and non-resident or between non-residents shall be made through a bank.²²³ In addition, the Bank of Ghana is empowered to make rules for persons and entities carrying out foreign exchange transactions. The rules prescribe the conditions for the grant of foreign exchange operational permit, the maintenance of foreign exchange account and settlement of all payment done in foreign currencies.²²⁴

The enforcement of the provisions of the Act on foreign exchange in Ghana is the responsibility of the Bank of Ghana. A bank or financial institution that desires to engage in foreign exchange in Ghana is expected to submit in writing, information relating to its assets, liabilities, incomes and expenditure. This will enable the Bank of Ghana determine the eligibility of such bank or financial institution in foreign exchange operations.²²⁵

Foreign exchange in the French speaking countries within West Africa is regulated by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). The countries under this organization are Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.²²⁶ In order to ensure transparency in the foreign exchange market, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) is collaborating with the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS) to introduce a common currency for the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ). The proponents of this common currency believe that it will ease foreign exchange

²²³ S 15 Foreign Exchange Act, 2006 Republic of Ghana

²²⁴ S 18 Foreign Exchange Act, 2006 Republic of Ghana

²²⁵ S 21 Foreign Exchange Act, 2006 Republic of Ghana

²²⁶ JC Kassi-Brou, 'The Organs that Ensure the Running of WAMU', Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) <<https://bceao.int/en>> accessed 24th August 2025

transactions in the region and also reduce inflation to a minimum level.²²⁷ Beyond the reduction of inflation, the economy of each West African country has to be examined in order to ensure that the proposed common currency will have a uniform value and purchasing power all through the region.

4.7. Good Reward System in Public Offices

Reward system refers to the monetary, non-monetary and psychological payment that the government provides for its civil and public servants in exchange for the work they done in various ministries, departments and agencies of the State. The reward system is expected to motivate public and civil servants with comply with regulations and ethics in the discharge of their public duties.²²⁸

A good reward system in public offices should be ‘performance based’ such that rewards are given based on better performance to motivate public and civil servants in achieving good results on their line of public duty. Also, public and civil servants should have a clear idea of the reward system and every public servant should be to predict the reward for every act of diligence, hardwork, discipline and commitment exhibited in the course of public duty. A good reward system should be unbiased and everyone should be given equal opportunity to benefit from such system where the laid down criteria are met.²²⁹

Research done in the course of this work disclosed that a good reward system in public service is a vital tool anti-corruption measure. Public and civil servants who are well paid with good

²²⁷ Ecofin Agency, ‘WAEMU Inflation Rate Falls to 1.5% in April 2025’, *Ecofin Agency News* 9th June 2025

²²⁸ B Bratton, ‘Reward Schemes for Employees and Management’, *Human Resources Management Theory and Practice*, 4th Edition Chapter 10

²²⁹ S Rajaguru, ‘Characteristics of an Effective Reward Scheme’, *Linkedin* November 3, 2023 <<https://linkedin.com>> accessed 25th August 2025

working conditions would not easily compromise such public office for financial gains, bribes, loots or kickbacks. Cash rewards for outstanding performance in public service, deserving promotion, empowerment seminars and workshops to enhance effective service delivery are components of a good reward system in public service that reduce the corrupt tendencies of public officers.²³⁰

For a reward system in public service to be effective, it should align with the goal(s) of the organization or agency where such reward is offered. In order to achieve this alignment between reward system and organizational goal, the strategy to be employed is a clearly defined organizational goal that outlines the mission, vision and objectives of a particular government agency or department. Where the goals are well defined, the reward system in such organization is also designed in accordance with such objectives.²³¹

The retirement scheme of public and civil servants is a very import aspect of the reward system that can either combat or promote corrupt practices in public services. In Togo, the retirement scheme for public and civil servants provide an end-of-career allowance benefits to employees who terminates their employment, retires or dies. The allowance covers medical benefits through health insurance plans, death benefits through a group life and death insurance plans.²³²

In Nigeria, the contributory pension scheme is the mode of computation of retirement benefits of civil and public servants. The scheme was introduced by the Pension Reform Act 2004 for every

²³⁰ R Mattina, '6 Types of Employee Rewards to Motivate Your Team', *Achievers* August 6, 2025

²³¹ FO Onavwie, GC Sokoh & OP Okereka, 'Designing an Effective Management System for Enhancing Performance in the Civil Service', *Journal of Public Administration and Social Welfare Research* Vol. 8 No. 2 2023

²³² J Lotin, 'Mandatory Employee Benefits', *Asinta Brilliant Connections in Global Benefits* 2025

employment in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.²³³ The objective of the contributory scheme is to ensure that every person who worked in the public service receives his retirement benefits as and when due.²³⁴ The major challenges with the contributory pension scheme in Nigeria are issues of computation of accrued rights, incessant exit agitations and pension liabilities. Upon the commencement of the contributory scheme, public and civil servants who have been in the public service before the commencement of the Pension Reform Act 2004, had challenges transferring their accrued benefits from the previous Defined Benefit Scheme (DBS) to the new Contributory Scheme. Benefits accrued under the Defined Benefit Scheme were not correctly computed in the new scheme. Among Police officers especially the rank and file, there were agitations to exit the contributory pension scheme on the ground that the scheme does not adequately compute retirement benefits of serving and retired personnel.²³⁵

In order to improve the pension and retirement benefits of public service workers which are core aspects of the reward system, the Nigerian Parliament has adopted legislative approach by amending the Pension Act between 2004 and 2014 significantly. Beyond legislative enactment, adequate implementation of the provisions of the amended Act is vital in ensuring that the objective of the Act which is to reward public servants is effectively achieved.²³⁶

In Mali, the retirement and pension scheme for public officers is referred to as the Mandatory Employee Benefits. It comprises of a health care benefit through the Assurance Maladie Obligatoire (AMO), disability and death benefits respectively. The segments in the pension

²³³ S 1 Pension Reform Act 2004

²³⁴ S 2 Pension Reform Act 2004

²³⁵ PS Clement, '20yrs After: Challenges, Gains of Pension Reforms in Nigeria', *Daily Trust* 2 January, 2025

²³⁶ RC Ibe, NA Nnonyelu, 'Pension Management in Nigeria: Challenges and Solutions in View', *International Journal of Management, Social Science, Peace and Conflict Studies (IJMSSPCS)*, Vol. 7 No. 2 June 2024

scheme in Mali are designed to help public and civil servants manage uncertainties that may occur during active service and after retirement.²³⁷

Beyond financial rewards, public and civil servants should be trained periodically and given opportunity for mentorship, professional certification to enhance their career advancement.²³⁸

4.8. Government's Commitment towards Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the practice of meeting today's needs without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. The pillars of sustainable development are economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.²³⁹

According to the United Nations, the sustainable development goals are poverty eradication, zero hunger, good health and well being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, peace, justice and strong institutions.²⁴⁰

The specific goals of sustainable development mentioned above are aimed at improving the quality of lives of citizens of various countries under the United Nations, protect the environment and ensure economic growth through industrialization, innovation and infrastructure. For these goals of sustainable development to be achieved, the governments in the various West African States must demonstrate a sincere commitment towards their actualization. The legislations,

²³⁷ J Lotin, 'Supplemental Employee Benefits in Mali', *Asinta Brilliant Connections in Global Benefits* 2024

²³⁸ J Fields, 'Designing an Effective Reward System for your Employees', *Assembly* November 15, 2024

²³⁹ Brundtland Report, 'Our Common Future', United Nations October 1987

²⁴⁰ UNICEF, 'UNICEF and Sustainable Development Goals', <<https://unicef.org/sustainable-development-goals>> accessed 28th August 2025

budgetary allocations, policies and programs should be geared towards achieving each of the goals of sustainable development.²⁴¹

In Nigeria, the Climate Change Act 2021 was enacted as part of commitment to climate action and environmental protection which are part of the sustainable development goals. The Act provided for the use of renewable energy, enhanced food security and inclusive economic growth.²⁴²

Since the adoption of sustainable development goals in September 2015, Nigeria has continued to demonstrate its commitment to achieving the global goals through leadership and ownership of the implementation process. With the support of the United Nations, technical support has been provided to the office of the Senior Special Advisor to the President on SDGs in order to ensure that planning and budgeting for development activities in the country are within the framework of the SDGs.²⁴³

The Government of President Mohamadu Buhari introduced the N-Power program on the 8th day of June 2016 to empower youths and the unemployed in Nigeria as part of Nigeria's commitment to sustainable development goals.²⁴⁴ The government of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has embarked on an expansion of the green energy sector aimed at generating employment opportunities and empowerment of local entrepreneurs particularly in rural communities. In further demonstration of commitment towards sustainable development goals, Nigeria has

²⁴¹ ASAZGUA, 'Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals-SDGs', <<https://guatecana.com>> accessed 28th August 2025

²⁴² A Oware, 'Nigeria's Bold Strides towards a Sustainable Future', *TheGuardian* 6 May, 2025

²⁴³ United Nations, 'How the UN is Supporting Development Goals in Nigeria', <<https://nigeria.un.org/en/sdgs>> accessed 29th August 2025

²⁴⁴ NPower is a scheme set up by the former President of Nigeria, Mohamadu Buhari since 8th June 2016 to address the issue of youth unemployment and help increase social development <<https://npower.ng>> accessed 29th August 2025

emerged as the first African country to successfully launch Sovereign Green Bonds specifically designed to finance environmentally sustainable projects across various sectors.²⁴⁵

In Ghana, the government has shown commitment towards the actualization of sustainable development goals. The policies of the government have set a target for the reduction of poverty and inequality. There is also a plan put in place by the government for renewable energy transition to reach net-zero emissions by 2060 as envisaged by the Paris Agreement.²⁴⁶

In Mali, the government is committed to sustainable development goals through the implementation of climate change adaptation strategies which is environmentally centered. With the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the government of Mali has officially launched the \$9 million project Climate Regions of Mali for the Consolidation of Peace in Bamako the capital of Mali.²⁴⁷

Research done in the course of this work discloses that the core aspect of the sustainable development goals which is poverty reduction, gender equality and a healthy environment has not been sufficiently improved upon in the countries examined in this research. In Nigeria, despite the effort made thus far in addressing poverty and unemployment through small and medium scale empowerment schemes, the World Bank has disclosed that the poverty rate among Nigeria's rural population has increased to about 75.5 percent in April 2025.²⁴⁸ This disclosure by the World Bank has shown that the sustainable development goals have not been truly

²⁴⁵ A Oware, 'Nigeria's Bold Strides towards a Sustainable Future', *TheGuardian* 6 May, 2025

²⁴⁶ NA Addo, 'Ghana Energy Transition and Investment Plan', Sustainable Energy for All <<https://seforall.org/our-work/initiatives-project/energy-transition-plans/ghana#>> accessed 29th August 2025

²⁴⁷ UNDP, 'Mali Launches Project aimed at Enhancing Climate Security and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources', June 12, 2023 <<https://adaptation-undp.org/mali-launched-project-aimed-at-enhancing-climate-security-and-sustainable-management-of-natural-resources>> accessed 29th August 2025

²⁴⁸ S Tunji, 'Poverty Rate Among Rural Nigerians Now 75%-W'Bank', *Punch E-Paper* 4th May, 2025

achieved. An unprecedented range of public and private actors will need to be consulted and participate in both policy formulation and implementation around the Sustainable Development Goals.²⁴⁹

For the SDGs to be truly achieved as proposed by the United Nations, the heads of government in West African countries must mobilize financial resources and also monitor the appropriation of these resources to ensure that the purpose of such appropriation is actualized. SDGs should be integrated in budgets and procurement systems for effective implementation. Also, political leaders and public office holders including the civil service should be equipped with the requisite skills and competence required to act on and implement the policies designed for the attainment of each sustainable goal.²⁵⁰

In furtherance of government's commitment to achieving sustainable development goals, Heads of States and Government in West Africa must be committed to implementation of the SDGs for the benefit of all, for today's generation and for future generations. Adequate planning should be done on how to strategically implement government's policies on each sustainable goal.²⁵¹

Also, there is need to harmonize existing government's policies on the economic, social and environmental aspects of the SDGs. Policy harmonization maximizes synergies and it also ensures that domestic policies align with internationally agreed goals.²⁵² The domestic policies of

²⁴⁹ S Fyson, C Lindberg & E Soria, 'Morales to the OECD Publications Governance as an SDG Accelerator: Country Experiences and Tools' (2019)

²⁵⁰ S Fyson, C Lindberg & E Soria, 'Governance for the SDGs-How Can We Accelerate Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals?', Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government

²⁵¹ Ibid

²⁵² OECD, 'Subnational Governments around the World-Structure and Finance', <<https://oecd.org/regional-policy/subnational-governments-around-the-world-%20part-i.pdf>>

governments in West Africa should aim at reducing regional discrepancies, improving employment and personal income which are core aspects of SDGs.²⁵³

Lastly, the government of West Africa countries that are truly desirous of improving economic development and financial health of their respective countries through the attainment of SDGs should strengthen their various social protection system, invest heavily in education, health, infrastructure and sincerely pursue economic diversification to create opportunities for operators in the private sector, investment platforms and create jobs for the citizens.²⁵⁴

4.9 HARNESSING ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY IN WEST AFRICA

Corruption hampers the provision of essential public services and it severely undermines development outcomes. Due to the ineffective monitoring of public/civil servants and the weak law enforcement capabilities, corrupt behaviors, bribery and favoritism are common practices often experienced at the point of service delivery in most West African States.²⁵⁵ The various anti-corruption measures discussed in the preceding chapters have been employed in different countries in order to check public corruption but despite these measures employed, corruption has persisted as a systemic challenge in various public sectors in West Africa. There is therefore the need to harness the divers anti-corruption measures in order to effectively combat public corruption locally and internationally.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ A Kaushik, 'The Role of Good Governance in Achieving Sustainable Development: A Study of India', *International Journal of Political Science and Governance* (2023)

²⁵⁴ Tunji, 'Poverty Rate Among Rural Nigerians Now 75%-W'Bank', *Punch E-Paper* 4th May, 2025

²⁵⁵ CB Camargo, 'Harnessing the Power of Communities against Corruption', *A Framework for Contextualizing Social Accountability*, Anti-Corruption Resource Centre U4 Brief 2018:4

²⁵⁶ D Aroyo, K Sirker, 'Stocktaking of Social Accountability Initiatives in the Asia and Pacific Region', <<https://gsdrc.org/document-library/stocktaking-of-social-accountability-initiatives-in-the-asia-and-pacific-region>> accessed 6th September 2025

4.10. COLLABORATION AMONG ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCIES

Anti-Corruption legislations currently in operation in most West African countries established specialized anti-corruption agencies to implement the provisions of such legislations. In Mali, the Law on the Prevention and Repression of Illicit Enrichment 2014 established the Central Office for the Fight against Corruption (Office Central de Lutte contre la Corruption). The office is currently known as the Central Office in the Fight against Illicit Enrichment (l'Office Central de Lutte Contre l'Enrichissement Illicit, OCLEI). The Central Office operates exclusively within Mali.²⁵⁷

In Nigeria, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act 2004 harmonized several anti-corruption principles drawn from the Money Laundering Act, the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act. The Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act, the Miscellaneous Offences Act, the Criminal Code, Terrorism Act and the Penal Code. The Act established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission which is the principal agency vested with powers to enforce the provisions of the Act on economic and financial crimes in Nigeria.²⁵⁸

In order to strengthen the fight against public corruption, there should be collaboration and effective communication among the several agencies in West Africa saddled with the responsibility of combating corruption. Access to information on corrupt practices and strategies employed by each country should be prioritized and specific restrictions and prohibitions which may prevent an agency from obtaining access to relevant information from counterparty agency

²⁵⁷ M Bak, 'Overview of Corruption and Anti-Corruption in Mali', *Transparency International Anti-Corruption Resource Centre U4 Helpdesk Answer* 2020

²⁵⁸ S 7 EFCC Act 2004

within the region should be addressed by way of legislative and policy interventions that encourage collaborative operations in the region.²⁵⁹

4.11. GLOBAL BEST ANTI-CORRUPTION PRACTICES AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Global best practices already operational in Western Countries and continents outside Africa may also serve as a guide to harnessing anti-corruption strategies. In the European Continent, the set of anti-corruption measures include new and strengthened rules criminalizing corruption offences and harmonizing penalties across the European Union such that any act of corruption committed within the EU carries the same sanction irrespective of the locus of such offence.²⁶⁰

The European Union also adopted a dedicated Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) sanctions regime to target serious acts of corruption worldwide. The EU further adopted a culture of integrity in which corruption and impunity are not tolerated. This measure serves as a preventive measure which places strong focus on integrity in public service.²⁶¹ Should this anti-corruption preventive measure of integrity in public service be adopted in West Africa, the legislations and policies already in place to combat corrupt practices would become self enforcing.

In the continent of Australia, the anti-corruption measure operative in the region is targeted at the avenues through which public officials loot government treasuries. Political party contribution is a major avenue through which public funds are looted especially in democratic societies where elections are held periodically. In Australia, contributions to political parties are allowed but

²⁵⁹ Collaboration with Tax Administration, 'Inter-Agency Collaboration to Detect Corruption', Key Instruments for Fighting Corruption

²⁶⁰ European Commission, 'Anti-Corruption Measures', <<https://commission.europa.eu>> accessed 9th September, 2025

²⁶¹ European Commission, 'State of the Nation', Democracy, EU Citizenship and Anti-Corruption published by the Directorate-General for Communication <<https://commission.europa.eu>> accessed 10th September, 2025

when such contribution exceeds AUD 13, 200, a public disclosure of such contribution must be made.²⁶² In Nigeria and other West African countries, there is no such obligation for political leaders to disclose contributions made to their respective political parties. The absence of such obligation may aid money laundry and looting.

As part of effort to harness global anti-corruption measures, Transparency International proposed five key ingredients that should be harnessed in collaboration among anti-corruption agencies for economic prosperity in West Africa. The key ingredients are as follow:

1. **End Impunity:** Effective law enforcement is essential to ensure that the corrupt are sanctioned in order to discourage further exhibition of such corrupt tendencies. Effective implementation of anti-corruption policies is supported by a strong legal framework and an independent court system where sanctions are pronounced as spelt out in the anti-corruption legislations. This ingredient is vital in curbing corrupt intensions and practices.²⁶³
2. **Reform Public Administration and Finance Management:** Transparency International proposed reforms focusing on improving financial management and strengthening the role of auditing agencies in the public sector. Budgets and appropriations should be disclosed in order to prevent waste and misappropriation of resources.²⁶⁴
3. **Promote Transparency and Access to Information:** A tradition of transparency in governance, freedom of the press and access to information increases the responsiveness of government bodies and agencies towards the populace and it creates a positive effect

²⁶² Part XX Commonwealth Electoral Act

²⁶³ Transparency International, 'How to Stop Corruption: 5 Key Ingredients', The Global Coalition against Corruption News <<https://transperency.org/en>> accessed 9th September 2025

²⁶⁴ Transparency International Sri Lanka, 'Public Participate to Prepare Ambalangaodo PS Budget', (2014) <<https://tisrilanka.org>> accessed 9th September 2025

on the level of public participation in governance.²⁶⁵ Transparency International advocates for the adoption of Freedom of Information Laws which creates unrestricted access to public information on governance and public administration.²⁶⁶

4. **Citizen Empowerment:** Strengthening citizens' demand for anti-corruption and empowering them to hold government accountable is a sustainable approach that helps to build mutual trust between citizens and government. This approach will aid in the exposure of misappropriation and embezzlement of public resources.
5. **Close International Loopholes:** Where access to international financial system is closely monitored and strictly regulated without compromise, corrupt public officials throughout the world would not be able to launder and conceal the proceeds of their laundering. Offshore banking system and digital currency platforms should be made to operate within strictly stipulated guidelines that are closely monitored to avoid abuse by corrupt public officials. In Norway, United Kingdom and Ukraine, the governments in a significant effort to close international loopholes have approved legislations that require companies to disclose information about their owners in order to hold them accountable for corrupt practices where such is detected.²⁶⁷

4.12. CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION IN ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS

The right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare is an instrumental drive for socio-economic development in every democratic setting. Citizen participation include reporting corrupt practices to lawful authorizes for investigation, supporting training programs and

²⁶⁵ Ibid

²⁶⁶ Transparency International, 'Campaign for Transparency in Maldives Pays Off', Access to Information, Asia Pacific, Civil Society, Politics and Government <<https://transparency.org>> accessed 9th September 2025

²⁶⁷ Transparency International, 'Strong Anti-Corruption and Transparency in Governance Reform: The Key to Lasting Change', <<https://transparency.org>> accessed 9th September 2025

sensitization campaigns that aim to create a culture of integrity and zero tolerance for corruption.²⁶⁸

As part of effort to encourage citizen participation in anti-corruption efforts, Transparency International launched an anti-corruption tool called the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) aimed at enhancing awareness of corruption and its negative consequences. The centre facilitates the reporting of corruption and provides victims and witnesses of corruption with practical assistance to pursue complaints and address their grievances.²⁶⁹

Informally, citizens in many parts of West African States have been making significant effort in anti-corruption campaign. The use of non-violent actions such as civil disobedience, petitions, marches and processions, demanding information, monitoring and auditing of authorities are some of the ways citizens have shown commitment in curbing corrupt practices.²⁷⁰

The Nigerian citizens demonstrated displeasure for the corrupt practices and impunity exhibited by officers of the Nigeria Police Force on the 8th day of October 2020 in the protest commonly referred to as “End SARS Protest” where the citizens demanded accountability from the Police Force and the Inspector General of Police due to the corrupt and inhumane practices carried out by police officers of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, ‘The Role of Citizens in Fighting Corruption’, University Module 10 Series: Citizen Participation in Anti-Corruption Efforts <<https://unodc.org>> accessed 9th September 2025

²⁶⁹ Ibid

²⁷⁰ US Office New Tactics in Human Rights, ‘Empowering Citizens to Fight Corruption’, <<https://newtactics.org>> accessed 9th September 2025

²⁷¹ ET Aniche, VC Iwuoha, ‘How the EndSARS Protest Turned Violent and What Can be Done to Prevent Recurrence’, February 7th 2024.

Similarly in Togo, youths led a protest on June 6th 2025 across the capital and towns in Togo against the corrupt practices and abuse of powers by the regime of President Faure Gnassingbe. The protest marked a shift in Togo's political landscape as it was entirely youth-led without political parties' involvement. As an anti-corruption measure, the youths explored the protest as an avenue to demand an end to political persecution, economic oppression and arbitrary detentions.²⁷² At the time of this research, the protest is still ongoing as the youths in Togo are yet to get reactions from President Faure Gnassingbe in respect of the demands made.

Beyond protests, there is need for citizens to be actively involved in decision making especially on issues that affect the general well being of the nation. The fundamental way citizens can participate actively in anti-corruption pursuit and integrity in public service is built on the process of constituting every government and administration. A government that is voted for by the citizens through a credible electoral process will earn the support of the citizens in the pursuit against corrupt practices.²⁷³

In addition, there should be a forum for public opinion and referendum on crucial issues before decisions are taken by government. A system that is determined to fight corruption must operate with transparency at all level and give free access to its citizens. Appropriation of public funds, taxes and revenue should be well accounted for in order to build trust and confidence. State powers should be exercised in an accountable manner that promotes democratic principles.²⁷⁴

²⁷² J Chukwu, 'Youth-Led Protests Erupt in Togo Against Government Corruption, Abuse of Power and Repression on President's Birthday', *West Africa Weekly* <<https://westafricaweekly.com>> accessed 10th September 2025

²⁷³ M Malcolm, 'The Role of Citizens in Local Government Decision-Making', *GovPilot* (2025) <<https://govpilot.com>> accessed 10th September 2025

²⁷⁴ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 'Open Government for Stronger Democracies' *Action Plan on Enhancing Representation and Openness in Public Life* (2022)

The final module on citizen's participation in anti-corruption effort is whistle blowing. In Nigeria, whistle blowing policy was launched in 2016 to combat corruption and encourage the citizens to report cases of corrupt practices and financial misconduct. Several government agencies in Nigeria adopted the policy which was aimed to provide a framework for employees, stakeholders and members of the public to report information about illegal or unethical activities including financial corruption, bribery, fraud and other violations of law and regulations.²⁷⁵

Irrespective of the benefits of whistle blowing as an anti-corruption tool, there are certain pertinent challenges that make the process ineffective. One of such challenge is the fear of retaliation. Potential whistle blowers may withhold vital information on corrupt practices in their environs in order to prevent any form of retaliation or attack from the corrupt public official who is been reported.²⁷⁶ Though confidentiality is core in whistle blowing, the principles of fair hearing in criminal proceedings require the disclosure of an accuser and the offence for which the accusation is made in order for the accused to adequately prepare for his trial.²⁷⁷

In order to manage the challenge arising from whistle blowing, utmost good faith should be exercised by a whistleblower in order to ensure that accusations are not made in bad faith and to prevent the instigation of investigative processes where such are unnecessary.

²⁷⁵ National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control, 'Whistleblowing Policy for NAFDAC' <<https://nafdac.gov.ng>> accessed 10th September 2025

²⁷⁶ C Maslen, 'Responses to Common Challenges Encountered when Establishing Internal Whistleblowing Mechanisms', CHR Michelsen Institute Norway

²⁷⁷ S 36(6)b 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended

4.13 ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL SANCTIONS ON CORRUPT PUBLIC OFFICIALS

According to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, each State can exercise its authority to punish corrupt practices through three forms of legal liability: criminal, civil and administrative. The most important difference between them is that punishments in criminal and civil legal actions are applied by the courts while sanctions in administrative procedures are applied by non-judicial bodies.²⁷⁸

When administrative and judicial sanctions are applied on erring public officers who are found liable for corrupt practices in public service, publication of such sanctions is a vital instrument in deterring corrupt tendencies. The fear of sanction instills a sense of accountability and responsibility in public officers especially where there is a good monitoring system.

In September 2025, President John Mahama dismissed the Chief Justice of Ghana, Gertrude Torkonoo with immediate effect for her misconduct and looting of public funds in Ghana. The decision for dismissal was reached by a five-member committee established under Article 146(10) of the Ghana's Constitution which recommended her removal from office.²⁷⁹

Similarly, the Nigerian Senate by a two-third majority votes invoked the provisions of section 157(1) of the 1999 Constitution as amended and sacked Yakubu Danladi Umar from the office of the Chairman, Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) on grounds of misconduct in public service. According to the Nigerian Senate, it became imperative to remove Yakubu Danladi Umar from

²⁷⁸ Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery, 'Use of Civil and Administrative Proceedings against Corruption including International Cooperation', *Vienna CAC/COSP/WG.2/2015/CRP.1*

²⁷⁹ Supreme Court of Ghana, 'Ghana's Chief Justice Sacked for Sponsoring Family Vacation with Public Funds', <<https://infotrusing.com>> accessed 10th September 2025.

such sensitive office because his actions were unbecoming of a holder of such an office. The publication of this sanction on Yakubu Danladi Umar instilled a sense of responsibility and discipline in other Judicial Officers who hold similar offices.²⁸⁰

On the application of judicial sanctions, a former Senator representing Uyo Senatorial District at National Assembly in Nigeria was arraigned by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission at the Federal High Court in Uyo for stealing public funds. Upon conviction, the law maker was sentenced to forty-two years in prison.²⁸¹ The conviction of the law maker was a milestone achievement for the anti-graft agency in Nigeria on the fight against public corruption though the convict explored legislative provisions on bail pending appeal which is provided for in the Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015.

In order to continuously create public awareness on the effect of corruption and the risk of facing sanctions upon convictions, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in Nigeria launched the EFCC radio station dedicated to promoting the fight against corruption. The EFCC radio 97.3 FM was commissioned by the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mr. Mohammed Manga to sensitize the public on the need to avoid corrupt practices and embrace honesty and integrity in public service.²⁸²

The courts where corruption cases are tried have also played a significant role in harnessing anti-corruption measures owing to the fact that anti-graft agencies may not achieve their goals in isolation. Upon convicting a public official for corruption related offence, the current practice of

²⁸⁰ H Umoru, 'Senate Sacks Danladi Umar as Chairman CCT', *Vanguard* November 20, 2024

²⁸¹ A Babalola, 'Court Sentences Senator Bassey Akpan to 42 Years for Stealing Public Funds', *Peoples Gazette* December 1, 2022

²⁸² EFCC Media & Publicity, 'Olukayode Gives One Year Scorecard, Restates Resolve against Corruption', <<https://efcc.gov.ng/efcc/news-and-information>> accessed 11th September 2025

the Courts is to make an order of forfeiture of the recovered funds, properties or assets traced to the convicted public official.²⁸³ In *Dame Patience Jonathan v FRN*²⁸⁴ the Court of Appeal upheld the provisions of the Advance Fee Fraud and other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006 on forfeiture of assets traceable to corrupt practices. The Court held that the provisions for forfeiture are consistent with constitutional provisions on the rights of an accused person.²⁸⁵

The continuous collaboration between the anti-corruption agencies and the courts in the recovery of assets and public funds which are proceeds of corrupt practices should be sustained. In addition, the proceeds of corruption forfeited should be well accounted for and where restitution to the direct victims of such corrupt act is not visible, the forfeited assets should be channeled for public and national development in an accountable manner.

4.14 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ASSET DECLARATION

Asset declaration is a mandatory process that requires public officials to periodically report their income, assets, liabilities and financial interests including those of their spouse to the Bureau in charge of asset declaration in order to prevent corruption, conflict of interest and unjust enrichment in public service.²⁸⁶

Asset declaration is an anti-corruption tool that increases public accountability and it should be given priority by successive administrations.²⁸⁷ The Code of Conduct Bureau saddled with the

²⁸³ S 319 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015

²⁸⁴ (2018) LPELR-43505 (CA)

²⁸⁵ CC Nwabuzor, 'The Case of Dame Patience Jonathan v Federal Republic of Nigeria (2018) and the Court of Appeal's Revalidation of the Propriety of Civil Forfeiture Proceedings in Nigeria', Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (2025)

²⁸⁶ Transparency International, 'Asset Declaration: An Effective Tool to Fight Corruption?', <<https://images.transparencycdn.org>> accessed 11th September 2025

²⁸⁷ N Opoku, 'Policy Expectations of the New Government: A Robust Asset and Liability Declaration Framework', CDD-Ghana January 8, 2025

responsibility of ensuring maintenance of high standard in the conduct of government business and enforcement of the code of conduct for public officers has a huge task in this regard. Public officers must be sensitized periodically on their obligation to declare assets and liabilities periodically.

In order to discipline erring public officials with regards to asset declaration and falsification, the Code of Conduct Tribunal was established to ensure probity in public service. Where the Tribunal finds a public officer guilty of contravening any of the provisions of the Code of Conduct Act, it has powers to impose any of the punishments ranging from vacation of office, disqualification from holding any public office, seizure and forfeiture to the State of any property acquired in abuse or corruption of office.²⁸⁸ The cases successfully concluded by the Tribunal are published on its website periodically to deter corrupt practices among public officials.

There are challenges with the asset declaration process which should be addressed in order to achieve the objective of the Code of Conduct in public service. One such challenge is the administration of the Bureau. Beyond filing asset declaration forms, the competence, honesty and accuracy of the members of the Bureau must be above board. Integrity and confidence should be part of the ethics for operation in the Bureau.²⁸⁹ The reported of Umar Danladi a former Chairman of the Code of Conduct Tribunal who was cited for misconduct speaks volume of the challenges faced by the Bureau due to the character and competence of its officials.²⁹⁰

Lack of resource for operations and inadequate manpower are other major challenges within the asset declaration system. There is need to effectively finance the Bureau for its effective

²⁸⁸ S 23 Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act

²⁸⁹ Transparency International, 'Asset Declaration: An Effective Tool to Fight Corruption?', <<https://images.transparencycdn.org>> accessed 11th September 2025

²⁹⁰ H Umoru, 'Senate Sacks Danladi Umar as Chairman CCT', *Vanguard* November 20, 2024

operations. Adequate manpower competent in knowledge and experience to carry out the operations of the Bureau should be engaged and trained regularly for an efficient operation.²⁹¹

Research done discloses that every credible asset declaration framework is grounded on the five key principles of extensive coverage, accessibility, verifiability, frequency of filing and sanctions. These five key principles are designed to ensure that the object of probity in public service and sincerity in the discharge of public duties are achieved.²⁹² It is therefore necessary to enshrine these key principles in asset declaration system currently operational in Nigeria and other West African States in order to uphold integrity, accountability and probity in public service.

Due to the significance of asset declaration, the political will to sustain the asset declaration system should be placed above personal gains and enrichments. A good asset declaration system will effectively ensure that public resources are channeled appropriately for economic development and prosperity of all sectors in the society. Full autonomy should be given to all asset declaration commissions and bureaus in West Africa to enable them operate independently without political influences and compromise.²⁹³

²⁹¹ Transparency International, 'Asset Declaration: An Effective Tool to Fight Corruption?', <<https://images.transparencycdn.org>> accessed 11th September 2025

²⁹² N Opoku, 'Policy Expectations of the New Government: A Robust Asset and Liability Declaration Framework', CDD-Ghana January 8, 2025

²⁹³ JC Ashukem, 'Assets Declaration as a Tool to Combat Corruption in Africa', ResearchGate December 2022

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the study and reiterates the research statement, that notwithstanding the avalanche of anti-corruption legislations in West African countries, corruption has systematically enured in the public offices, institutions and organizations.²⁹⁴ The research has disclosed the persistence of the various acts of corrupt practices notwithstanding the existence of anti-corruption legislations and the benefits enshrined therein. The research further disclosed that the prescribed measures in the various anti-corruption legislations in different West African Countries taken as case studies have not effectively met their objectives in combating public corruption and improving financial health in West African States. The research discussed the classifications of anti-corruption measures which range from preventive measures, administrative measures, institutional measures, legislative measures, judicial measures and socio-cultural measures. The research recommends anti-corruption education through formal and informal learning which serves as a preventive measure and key to building a culture of integrity. Anti-corruption education is proven to develop skills that empower individuals to resist social and cultural pressures when faced with corrupt practices.²⁹⁵ The research also recommends that preventing corruption is the most cost effective strategy for tackling corruption. If preventive measures are applied effectively, there would be minimal incidence of public corruption in

²⁹⁴ PD Ocheje, 'When Law Fails: A Theory of Self-Enforcing Anti-Corruption Legislation in Africa' *The Law and Development Review* Vol. 4; No. 3, Article 8 (2011)

²⁹⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Corruption and Economic Branch, 'National Anti-Corruption Strategies and Risk Management', <<https://unodc.org/corruption>> accessed 6th May, 2025

government offices and the society at large. The research concludes that the various anti-corruption measures are designed to serve a common purpose which is the combating of public corruption. In order to achieve this common purpose, all anti-corruption measures discussed should be harnessed with a strong political will on the part of public officials and political leaders through strengthened and independent institutions.²⁹⁶

5.1 Summary

Public corruption is a plague that has widely dominated countries in West Africa for ages. It has undermined democracy and democratic institutions, the rule of law and it has occasioned violations of human rights. Countries in the world under the United Nations concerned about the seriousness of the problems and threats posed by corruption to the stability and security of societies, undermining the institutions and values of democracy, ethical values, justice and jeopardizing sustainable development of people, adopted the United Nations Convention against Corruption as a universal instrument against Transnational Organized Crime.²⁹⁷ The Convention introduced preventive anti-corruption measures as the first step in its response to combating corrupt practices. Each State Party to the Convention is mandated to develop and implement coordinated anti-corruption policies that promote the participation of society and reflect the principle of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ LK Hoffman, 'Taking Action against Corruption in Nigeria', Chatham House African Program for Empowering Anti-Corruption Role Models and Coalition to Change Social Norms March 2025

²⁹⁷ Preamble to the United Nations Convention against Corruption made pursuant to the UN General Assembly Resolution 58/4 of 31st October 2003

²⁹⁸ Article 5 United Nations Convention against Corruption

For the purpose of effective implementation of the anti-corruption policies, the Convention made provision for the establishment or creation of preventive anti-corruption body or bodies that should be independent in accordance with the fundamental principles of the legal system of each State Party to the Convention.²⁹⁹ The research examined the extent to which established anti-corruption bodies have acted independently in various West African countries taken as case study.

Chapter one of this research analyzed reported cases prosecuted by the anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Ghana.³⁰⁰ The former Minister of Sanitation and Water Innovation Program in Ghana who was indicted for corrupt practices involving illicit financial dealings was examined. In addition, the chapter further examined the regional effort made by the African Union towards preventing and combating corruption in the region. The regional instrument which is the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption was examined particularly the relevant provisions on anti-corruption measures.³⁰¹ The regional instrument emphasized the adoption of legislative anti-corruption measures unlike the United Nations Convention that emphasized the adoption of preventive anti-corruption measures. The regional instrument extended its operation to the private sector and it mandated State Parties to adopt legislative and other measures to prevent and combat acts of corruption and related offences in the private sector.³⁰²

Chapter two of this research examined literatures and publications of learned authors on various anti-corruption measures. One of the learned authors suggested the adoption of the

²⁹⁹ Article 6(2) United Nations Convention against Corruption

³⁰⁰ FRN v Depreye Alameiseigha & 6 Ors FHC/L/328C/2005

³⁰¹ Article 5(1)-(8) African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption

³⁰² Article 11(1) – (3) African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption

non-penal anti-corruption measures aimed at preventing incidence of corruption.³⁰³ Another author suggested the adoption of the African Restorative Justice System enshrined in the African Traditional System as an anti-corruption measure.³⁰⁴ The chapter also discussed the transnational nature of corrupt practices and the need to extend anti-corruption measures beyond the borders of the Victim State where the alleged act occurred. The chapter further examined the role of the Association of Anti-Corruption Agencies in Common Wealth which comprises of seven different anti-corruption agencies in different West African States.³⁰⁵ The Association has made significant efforts in implementing anti-corruption policies across the borders of its member States.

The chapter further examined literatures and publications of learned authors on public procurement which is one of the avenues through which public funds are looted. The provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption that regulates procurement were critically examined.³⁰⁶ The research in chapter two disclosed that anti-corruption policies should shape public procurement through the introduction of integrity and transparency in public procurement process. Competition, integrity, transparency, efficiency, customer satisfaction, best value, wealth distribution, risk avoidance and uniformity are the core values described as desiderata for public procurement in West Africa.³⁰⁷ The chapter

³⁰³ JO Garuba, 'Implementing the United Nations Convention against Corruption in Nigeria through the Instrumentality of Education: Prospects and Challenges', *Jus Gentium Journal of the Department of Jurisprudence and International Law*, (2022) Vol. 1

³⁰⁴ P Genger, 'Combating Corruption with African Restorative Justice Tradition: Suggested Steps for Nigeria', *Arthur Muro Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Manitoba, Canada*

³⁰⁵ Association of Anti-Corruption Agencies in Common Wealth, 'Our Members-Western Africa', <<https://aaacoa.org/western-members>>

³⁰⁶ Articles 5 and 6 United Nations Convention against Corruption

³⁰⁷ CR, Yukins, 'Integrating Integrity and Procurement: The United Nations Convention against Corruption and the UNCITRAL Model Procurement Law', *Public Law Contract Journal by the American Bar Association Spring 2007, Vol. 36*

also discussed the role of the media and civil societies in criticizing corrupt practices of politicians and public office holders which led to the initiation of the Bill on hate speech seeking to criminalize criticisms made by individuals, the media and civil societies on the corrupt practices of political leaders in Nigeria. The Bill was criticized by Nigerians for being anti-democratic and an infringement on the citizens' right to freedom of speech.³⁰⁸ The case of *Ogwuche v Federal Republic of Nigeria*³⁰⁹ was referred to in the chapter where the regulation of the Nigerian Government requiring a 48-hour prior notice to be given to the government before a live program on issues that touché government's administration are aired.

The chapter disclosed that publications of learned authors on anti-corruption measures prior to this research have not thoroughly examined the economic impact of the various anti-corruption strategies and measures and how they improve the financial health of West African States. The gap in knowledge on economic impact of anti-corruption measures necessitated this research.

From this research, the identified economic benefits of anti-corruption measures are increase in the capital investment of West Africa States, economic growth and economic stability within the West African region, infrastructural development, accountability and transparency in governance and government procurement. The impact of corruption on the financial health of various countries in West Africa were examined and discussed in the chapter. Economic sabotage in the petroleum sector is one of the impacts of corruption in oil producing countries in West Africa particularly in Nigeria and Niger Republic. In the

³⁰⁸ S Bakare, 'Social Media is One of the Last Remaining Places where Nigeria Can Express their Opinions Freely', *Amnesty International Nigeria (2019)*

³⁰⁹ ECW/CCJ/APP/02/18 Judgment of the ECOWAS Court

defence and security sector, the impact of corruption has led to banditry in Northern Nigeria and agitations for self determination in Eastern Nigeria.³¹⁰ On infrastructure on development, the impact of corruption has manifested in the form of underdevelopment and lack of access to basic education and social amenities such as good roads, stable electricity and modern health care facilities.³¹¹

In chapter three, this research discussed the financial health in West African States. The decline in the gross domestic products of West African countries was an indicator of economic downturn occasioned by incidence of corrupt practices within the region. The research disclosed that there is heavy reliance on importation and foreign goods in order to savage the economic downturn occasioned by corruption but the reliance on importation has weakened the purchasing power of the currencies in most West African countries.³¹² The chapter identified huge foreign debts, infrastructural deficit, underdevelopment and economic recession as the impact of corruption on the financial health of West African States. The various mediums employed by African leaders in actualizing corrupt intents through the instrumentality of foreign financial institutions were also discussed in the chapter. Anonymous companies, real estate trust holding and foreign bank accounts are identified as the tactics employed by corrupt African leaders to loot public treasuries across the continent.³¹³

³¹⁰ DK Banini, 'Security Sector Corruption and Military Effectiveness: The Influence of Corruption on Countermeasures against Boko Haram in Nigeria', *Small Wars & Insurgencies Vol. 31 (2020)*

³¹¹ African Union, 'Stolen Futures: The Impact of Corruption on Children in Africa' (2025)

³¹² J Anoma, 'West Africa Economic Outlook 2023', Africa Development Bank Group Mobilizing Private Sector Financing for Climate and Green Growth

³¹³ LA Aikins, 'Hiding Africa's Looted Funds: The Silence of Western Media', *TWN Third World Resurgence Archive (2016) 309 pp 21-23*

The chapter also discussed legal and institutional framework on corruption and financial health in West Africa. The legal frameworks are classified as National framework work and International framework. The chapter further discussed the need to harness anti-corruption measures for economic benefits in West Africa through institutional reforms, capacity building, effective implementation, international collaboration and the use of emerging technology. The role of INTERPOL was also discussed as an anti-corruption and security agency. Though there are operational challenges, INTERPOL has significantly recorded success in anti-corruption operation. The chapter recommended the need to strengthen the INTERPOL in order enhance its operation in Africa and other parts of the world.

In chapter four, the research examined the measures for improving financial health and economic development in West Africa. The first measure discussed in the chapter is the need to strengthen public institutions. The Central of Bank of Nigeria, the Bank of Ghana and other apex financial institutions in West Africa play significant role in stabilizing the economy of their various countries through financial policies and regulations. The chapter further discussed the role of the Securities and Exchange Commission and National Oil Corporations in improving the financial health of West African countries.³¹⁴ The chapter discussed effective debt management assessment system as a tool to improving the financial health of countries in West Africa. Limited borrowing policy, effective debt management and continuous improvement on existing infrastructure are some of the ways identified for improving the financial health of countries in West Africa.

The chapter further discussed price control and inflation management as measures that are necessary to stabilize financial health. When government makes effort to regulate prices of

³¹⁴ D Aina, 'NNPC Highlights Funding Challenges for Gas Projects', *Punch Newspaper* 5th November 2024

goods and commodities, it preserves the purchasing value of their currencies.³¹⁵ The research confirmed the effectiveness of price control measure in Cameroon in checking inflation. In Nigeria, the research disclosed that price control has not been effective despite the existence of a Price Control Act 1977. Inflation has been on the rise in Nigeria because the committee and the board saddled with the responsibility for price control in Nigeria have not been effective in their operations. The chapter also discussed the need for collaboration among anti-corruption agencies in their operations towards combating corruption in the region. In addition, global best practices on anti-corruption should be adopted to complement existing measures prescribed in local legislations and instruments.

5.2 Findings

This research has found that:

- a) Public corruption is dominant in West Africa due to inadequate enforcement of existing anti-corruption legislation. Inadequate enforcement is occasioned by political interferences in the operations of anti-corruption agencies whose personnel and officers are appointees of the Executive and other influential political leaders. The politicizing of the appointment process of anti-graft personnel has deprived the agencies of the requisite ability to act independently in law enforcement.
- b) The existing anti-corruption legislations currently in operation in most West African countries are targeted at sanctioning the corrupt public official who is found culpable after investigation and trial. The economic impact of such corrupt practices and the

³¹⁵ L Kramer, 'How do Governments Fight Inflation?', Investopedia October 2, 2024 <<https://investopedia.com/ask/answers/111314/what-methods-can-government-use-control-inflation.asp>> accessed 16th August 2025

need to remedy the economic effect of such corrupt practices sanctioned by the courts are not within the purview of the extant anti-corruption laws currently operational in West Africa. Upon conviction of a corrupt public official, the economic impact of his/her act of corruption is still felt by the society without any remedy. In *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Mustapha Balogun*³¹⁶ was arraigned before the Federal High Court where he was accused of stealing ₦13billion using eight different companies. A substantial part of the funds were for police welfare and pension of police officers. The economic hardship brought upon the impoverished police officers and the resultant neglect in service by the police officers as a result of the corrupt practices of the Defendant/Accused in that case were not remedied by the EFCC Act under which the charge was brought.

- c) This research also found that in every act of corruption, there are economic effects and consequences beyond the criminal liability of the corrupt public official.
- d) The lack of political will on the part of African leaders to fully implement and explore the various anti-corruption measures in sanitizing their regions and public service has occasioned economic hardship, poverty, under development and infrastructural deficiency in most West African countries. Funds and national resources budgeted for economic development and national security are looted through money laundry and secret banking.
- e) Trans-border corrupt practices have enured due to compromise by anti-corruption officials who are subjects and implants of political leaders. Reports of arrest of

³¹⁶ Supra

corrupt public officials are publicized but the outcome of their investigation and prosecution are not made known to the public.

- f) The effort to combat public corruption has not yielded desired result as the penalties prescribed in anti-corruption legislations are not commensurate with the weight and effect of the corrupt act committed. The fines and imprisonment imposed by the Courts on corrupt public officials upon conviction are far meager when compared to the volume of public wealth and funds looted.
- g) The most effective anti-corruption measure is the preventive measure prescribed in Article 6 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Where anti-corruption culture is implanted in the citizens of any country, corruption becomes a collective enemy and as such, its chances of surfacing will be slim. Anti-corruption education embedded in school curriculums will play a role in building anti-corruption culture in the upcoming generation.
- h) Legislative provisions and lacunas exist in anti-corruption legislations which are often explored by corrupt political leaders to evade prosecution and conviction. With respect to legislative provisions, bail pending appeal is often explored by convicts to evade incarceration for their corrupt act. Frivolous applications and fictitious affidavits with unverifiable facts are placed before the court to seek an exercise of judicial discretion at the expense of the Nation's interest. Injunctions restraining anti-corruption agencies from prosecuting as explored by Peter Odili the former Governor of Rivers State is another legislative impediment to the detriment of the people of Rivers State who are the victims of the corrupt act of their past Governor.

- i) Harnessing anti-corruption measures and international collaboration between agencies, the citizens, the media and civil society organizations in fighting corrupt practices will be of best interest to nations in West Africa and other regions.

5.3. Recommendations

As different countries strive to combat corruption in various forms within their respective territories, there is need to focus on the root and causes of corruption. Where the roots are properly addressed, incidence of corruption will be minimal. Beyond the prescription of sanctions, the prevention of corruption remains the most effective measure in improving the financial health of any nation. Where corruption is prevented, incidence of looting will not surface. Public resources budgeted for infrastructural, economic and political development will be channeled adequately. This research hereby makes the following recommendations:

- i. Public institutions and agencies should be strengthened and made independent in order for them to be effective in their operation devoid of political manipulations and influences.
- ii. In order to prevent corruption, a good reward system must be put in place in public and civil service. The bureaucratic system of growth in public and civil service should be erased. A public servant who is well rewarded for his/her diligence and hardwork will not nurse corrupt tendencies.
- iii. Continuous public sensitization and enlightenment on the economic effect of corruption on nation and the need to desist from such act is vital tool that should be employed with the aid of the media and civil society organizations. This campaign

will create awareness and a sense of responsibility in the minds of citizens on the need to desist from corruption for national interest.

- iv. Transparency, accountability and integrity in public service are keys to maintaining financial health in any society. Where public officials are sincere and accountable in all their dealings and operations, cases of looting and money laundering would not arise.
- v. The political will to combat corrupt is vital. The powers of the State should be utilized by the State in ensuring that the interest and well being of the populace is protected. Government and political leaders should show sincere commitment towards combating corruption. Every public official should bear a sense of responsibility to uphold the national interest above all other consideration.
- vi. Anti-corruption legislations should be reviewed to be terms with modern realities and global best practices in anti-corruption operations. Where corruption cannot be completely prevented, it should be properly sanctioned.
- vii. The various agencies and institutions that regulate the financial sectors of West African Countries should intensify effort to implement financial regulations that preserve the economy and improve the economic state of their respective countries. Banking policies that allow financial leakages should be reviewed.
- viii. Public procurement should be regulated and done in a competitive and transparent manner devoid of political influence and corrupt tendencies.
- ix. Periodic supervision, audit and monitoring of the public and civil servants should be carried out in order to check the activities of such officials and ensure that their

operations are in accordance with the extant code of conduct and rules of engagement.

- x. Asset declaration should be carried out periodically and unaccounted wealth should be forfeited to the State.

5.4 Conclusion

The effort towards combating corruption is a continuous one and successive government should improve on the measures already in operations by current regimes. The interest of the nation and the West African people, their well being and economic advancement should be the utmost goal in all anti-corruption operations. The peculiar nature of corrupt practices prevalent in any State determines the appropriate measure that will be applied in combating such corrupt practice. I am of the view that a sincere demonstration of commitment towards combating corrupt practices in any nation is the utmost key in anti-corruption operation.

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