

The Informal Economy Is An Employer, A Nuisance, And A Goldmine: Multiple Representations Of And Responses To Informality In Accra, Ghana

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ABSTRACT: An analysis of multiple sources of evidence, including field interviews and non-participant observation, shows that the informal economy in Accra, Ghana has a complex relationship with the state, not only as a nuisance or employer, but also as an avenue to reward and punish political supporters and opponents. Although informal people are regularly being forcibly evicted, they are not merely “on the run.” Rather, they, in turn, are regularly engaging the state in multiple ways to maintain or reclaim urban space, a

struggle that is sometimes mediated by civil society organizations acting as a "third way." Being a drama that benefits aspects of the state, such as the government, it is unlikely to end soon without greater struggle against the state.

Introduction

On October 19, 2007, at about midnight, a team consisting of some members of the Ghana Police Striking Force and specially trained security guards from the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) arrived at Tema Station, a bus terminal in the Greater Accra Region, and carried out a "decongestion exercise" which is, razing down all "unauthorized" structures, including stalls and kiosks erected without first obtaining planning permits.¹ That incident is not isolated. It is typical both in Ghana (see, for example, Ofori 2007; Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah 2008; Owusu et al. 2008) and elsewhere in the world (see, for example, Hendriks 2011; Peters 2009; Potts 2008; Davis 2006; UN-HABITAT 2003; De Soto 2000), although the empirical literature tends to frame it in terms of hardships of informality rather than within a state-informal sector relationship (Grant 2009: 153-154).

The latter framing is typically influenced by three propositions about the exercise of state power that arise from neoclassical economics, Keynesian economics, and Marxist political economy. On the one hand, neoclassicists contend that for private business to thrive, it is prerequisite for the state to play a limited role in regulating the economy (Friedman and Friedman 1980). Keynesian economists, on the other hand, argue that the state should use its powers to intervene in the economy in order to create more jobs (Keynes 1973: 245-254), while Marxist political economists argue that, although Keynesians are right that the exercise of state power can expand the economy, any state intervention is designed normally to benefit private capital and it is the struggle of workers that may force the state to be pro-poor (Jessop 2001).

This article examines the nature of the relationship between the state and the informal economy in Ghana. It tries to unravel the many representations of the informal economy in Accra. The study moves the sociological and anthropological literature on informal economy in Ghana forward from its tendency to focus on the dynamics of households (Sanjek 1982) to the relationships and micropolitics of running the largest metropolis in a neoliberal era. Its strength lies not only in expanding the focus of research but also in its interdisciplinary method. That approach entails fieldwork in the form of semi-structured interviews with 25 petty traders, made up of 15 females and 10 males within the 24-47 age cohort. We conducted the interviews between January and September in 2010. We selected the sample randomly. That is, at the various trading sites, we interviewed every 10th trader whom we met. All the people we approached agreed to be interviewed. Additionally, since 2007, we have observed at close range forced evictions carried out by the AMA at Osu, High Street, Tudu, and Adabraka, Achimota, Tetteh Quarshie interchange, Madina and East Legon, which are all suburbs in Accra. Also, it draws on formal and informal conversations with local council members, residents, traders (i.e., so-called formal traders), and other workers in the Central Business District (CBD).

These multiple sources of information are complemented by newspaper reports, particularly for three reasons. First, the Ghanaian media does not directly side with the state or the actors in the informal economy. What it does is to give coverage to stories of evictions, which are not usually captured by either the executive arm of the state, the legislature, judiciary or civil society groups² (Obeng-Odoom 2011a). Of course, state manipulation of press freedom is possible as is the case in Ethiopia (Dirbaba 2010) and Nigeria (Nwabueze 2010). However, the situation in Ghana is rather different. One extensive study of newspaper content in Ghana (Amoakohene 2006) found that there is limited state manipulation of "news." Also,

in 2009, the media houses in Ghana were the highest ranked in Africa in terms of press freedom (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2010). The second reason for including media accounts is that the media have been part of the debate about urban governance from the beginning of the decentralization program in Ghana, their role being that of broadcasters of information about local governance (Haynes 1993). A third justification for considering media accounts is that there is some evidence (e.g., Temin and Smith 2002) that they play a key role in shaping the views of both formal and informal institutions in Ghana. For all these reasons, an intelligent use of media sources to supplement other knowledges is useful to capture the multiple dimensions of the informal economy. Nevertheless, it is important to be wary of information from media houses, such as Radio Gold, which according to Arthur (2010: 214) is pro-government, and THE CHRONICLE, which is critical of government. More extensive use can be made of the DAILY GRAPHIC, which normally quotes "official sources" as the basis of its news items (Amoa-kohene 2006: iii). In spite of using these "objective" sources, what follows is largely an emic account of the state-informal economy relationship which we, as authors, have witnessed, read about and heard while growing up, living, and studying in Ghana.

We argue that the state-informal economy relationship is more akin to the Marxist depiction (consistent with the earlier finding of Sanjek 1982), although distinct in several ways. Most important, the state has characterized the sector in multiple ways, ranging from a "nuisance," and an avenue to reward political supporters and punish opponents, to an employer of a substantial share of urban residents. Further, although the actors in the informal economy are the "underdogs" in the state-informal economy relationship, the people in the informal sector are not "helpless." Rather, they are involved in several activities to maintain and reclaim portions of urban

space in a process that is sometimes mediated by civil society organizations.

Following this introduction, the article is structured into three sections. The first section discusses how the city of Accra is governed within the framework of urban decentralization. The next looks at the state and political actors' response to informality in the urban space. The third section discusses the survival strategies of the actors in the informal economy. The conclusion knits together the lessons from the study and highlights the major findings.

Governing the City

Accra is governed by three states, namely: traditional, local and national. The traditional or Ga state is represented by families and clans, the chief (Ga Mantse) and chief priest (wolomo). Although the owner of a substantial amount of land in Accra and therefore politically powerful (see Quarcoopome 1992), the Ga traditional state (led by the Ga Mantse), as with other traditional states in Ghana, is debarred by the Constitution of Ghana (Article 276) and the Chieftaincy Act of 2008 from taking active part in the politics and administration of Accra. Studies conducted by researchers at the Institute of Local Government Studies, Ghana (e.g., Mahama 2009) have shown that there are a few isolated cases nationally where some chiefs may collaborate with the city authority in governing the city, but generally, there is no role for traditional authority in urban governance in Ghana.

Thus, it is the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), the local state, and the Government of Ghana, national state, which are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the city. The AMA began as a town council with powers from the Town Council Ordinance of 1894. Then, Accra was sometimes described as a settlement made up of scattered hamlets

(Quarcoopome 1993). The city experienced rapid urbanization, especially after 1877 when the British Colonial Office made it the political capital city of Ghana. By 1957, when Ghana gained independence, Accra had become the largest urban area in the new polity (Grant and Yankson 2003).

However, it was on June 28, 1961 that Accra was declared a city³ and, not long after, it became the home of the Accra City Council, the governing institution of the city. The AMA, on the other hand, was established much later by the PNDC Law, 207, which has since been replaced by the Local Government Act (Act 462), 1993. Administratively, the AMA is made up of the General Assembly and eleven sub-Metropolitan District Councils which are subordinate bodies of the Assembly (Ahwoi 2010). The Assembly is headed by a Metropolitan Chief Executive (or the Mayor). It is in connection with the office of the Mayor where the national state plays a direct and substantive role in the governance of Accra. The Local Government Act (Act 462, section 20) and the 1992 Constitution of Ghana (Article 243) give the President of Ghana the power to appoint the Mayor of Accra after the approval of at least two-thirds majority of members of the local assembly present and voting at the meeting.

Neither the Constitution nor the Local Government Act imposes any obligation on the President to consult local actors before making the decision to appoint. However, in practice, the President consults political party executives. In our interviews, one party executive acknowledged that:

The Mayor must always be a party man in the true sense, approachable and known to the generality of party members. Party members would approach the Mayor for assistance in getting a job and politicians would approach the Mayor to ask for favors. The Mayor is not elected but appointed with the blessing of party executives so he is obliged to promote the interest of the party and its members in Accra (Interview, 02, Accra, 16 June 2010).

Therefore, there is considerable pressure on the Mayor to please the government. Above all, there is pressure from party executives who are concerned with the impact of mayoral policies on voter decisions and from party members who want either favors when they bid for contracts; a project sited in their community or employment in the local council. According to one former Mayor “managing Accra is like fire fighting, everyday comes with its own crisis, it is difficult to plan ahead and even if you plan, it is difficult to implement [the plan]” (Daily Graphic 2007). One aspect of city management that usually puts the Mayor in the news and commands public attention relates to the informal economy, its actors, and general character (Obeng-Odoom 2011a). Thus, how Mayors or, more broadly, the state engages the informal economy warrants careful exploration.

The State and Multiple Representations of the Informal Economy

The informal economy in Accra is simultaneously represented as an employer, a backward space, and a goldmine. This section discusses these constructs in turn.

The Informal Economy As An Employer

The concept of “the informal sector,”⁴ the idea that economic activities take place without records, regulation, or protection, was coined by Keith Hart (1973) when he studied income generation activities in the slums of Nima, Accra. A decade later, Sanjek (1982) conducted a similar study in Adabraka, another poor urban settlement in Accra and observed that the sector was expanding in the 1960s and 1970s. The sector continued to expand in the 1980s when the Government of Ghana

implemented the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) which entailed the reduction of employment in the public sector in order to reduce the national budget deficit and make public administration more efficient (Ninsin 1991; Yeboah 2000). As of 2000, about 40% of the population in Accra was employed in the informal sector of the economy (Grant and Yankson 2003: 70).

Informal employment is made up of self-employment in informal enterprises (i.e., small and / or unregistered) and wage employment in informal jobs (i.e., without secure contracts, worker benefits, or social protection) (Overå 2007). It is fairly gendered. Women make up only 20% of formal sector employment but, they constitute 48% of the actors in the informal economy. The majority of the women who work in this sector earn incomes that are below the national poverty line (UN-HABITAT 2009: 7).

Workers in the informal economy may be sedentary or mobile. Earlier studies (Hart 1973; Sanjek 1982; Owusu et al. 2008) have shown that the streets of the CBD are lined by barbers, cobblers, and vendors of vegetables, fruit, meat, fish, foods, and nonperishable items, ranging from toiletries, locks, newspapers, and second-hand clothing. The informal economy is also populated by head porters (known locally as *kayayei*) and cart pullers who jostle to make their way down narrow pavements or through the maze of taxis and buses on congested city streets (for a more detailed analysis of congestion in Accra, see Armah et al., 2010). The street corners and pavements are also characterized by the presence of countless small kiosks or stalls where people sell goods of every conceivable kind. Clearly, the informal economy is diverse. The one thing that the different workers have in common is that they usually work without secure contracts, worker benefits, or social protection (see, for example, Debrah 2007).

The Informal Sector as a “Filthy” Space and a “Goldmine”

Employment generation is not the only way in which the informal economy is represented. An analysis of its relationship with the state reveals that it is represented also as a source of congestion, grime and crime. Hawkers at bus terminals attract buyers and, in turn, are believed to be responsible for increasing the density of human traffic and congestion in lorry parks. The clash of human and vehicular traffic, in turn, creates general congestion in the city. Similarly, increased traffic coupled with the inadequate provision of garbage bins tends to create the conditions necessary for indiscriminate littering on the streets and in informal markets (Ghana Institute of Planners 2010).

Such representations are evident in the urban programs initiated by the two leading political parties in Ghana, namely the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which is now the biggest opposition party, and the National Democratic Congress, which is the party that forms the present government. (For a general discussion of the history and activities of these parties, see Bob-Milliar and Bob-Milliar 2010; Bob-Milliar 2011.)

NPP’s Modernization of the Capital City

The NPP formed a government from 2001 to 2008. Its policies are typically informed by principles of what it calls “property owning democracy” at the center of which is the extension of private property rights. At the beginning of its term, the government appointed a Ghanaian who was based in the United States to be the Mayor of Accra (Ayee and Crook 2003:17). According to Ayee and Crook (2003), the appointment of a mayor with “American experience” was aimed at ensuring that Accra would be managed in ways that would make it bear some semblance of a typical American city. In 2003, the government expanded the functions of the Ministry

of Tourism to include the “modernization of the capital city.” Modernization included regenerating “blighted areas” of the capital. The President made it clear in his State of the Nation’s address to parliament that the government was taking steps to “transform” the city and discover other tourist potentials that would make the dream of making Ghana a gateway to Africa a reality (Government of Ghana 2003).

Those steps included evicting hordes of petty traders and hawkers trading in the CBD (Obeng-Odoom 2010a), particularly between February and April 2005. The city authority proclaimed the exercise a success, contending that motorists, including taxi and *trotro*⁵ drivers, were suddenly able to transport their passengers without any hindrance, and that apart from the petty traders and hawkers who had been removed from their trading grounds, every Ghanaian was pleased that Accra had regained its lost glory and dignity as the nation’s capital. In spite of that success, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development ordered the city authority to halt the decongestion exercise.

That order is open to several interpretations. It may be seen as an attempt by the government to show that it is in control of urban government. Alternatively, it may be interpreted as a populist gesture that was aimed at showing that the central government is responsive to popular needs. The official line, as conveyed by the Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, was that the government could not watch unconcerned while the victims were displaced. He added that, notwithstanding the fact that the decongestion exercises were meant to promote improved sanitation in the city, it was imperative that the livelihood of traders be protected (Daily Graphic, 2005).

However, a petition signed by one youth organizer of the NPP showed that the party was concerned with the political cost of the exercise. According to the petition:

(i) The decongestion exercise was eroding the support base of the party and therefore it should be stopped. (ii) The decongestion exercise should be suspended while pragmatic steps are taken to address the issue. (vii) The AMA and TMA Chief Executives are being misused by elements of the NDC to demoralize the NPP's support base, calculated at waning their supporters to stimulate voter apathy. (viii) The Asawase [electoral] defeat [of the NPP] was largely informed by a similar exercise by the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA) in Kumasi where the NPP supporters affected by the exercise refused to vote for the party. (ix) The AMA and TMA chiefs, without consultation with the sector Ministers, have resorted to draconian actions without actions which are eroding the support base of the NPP (Palaver 2005).

Thus, although it is possible that there were other reasons that underpinned the President's order to halt the exercise, such as a concern for the welfare of the people who work in the informal economy, the government as a whole was also looking at the political gains that it could make from the informal economy.

The NDC's Urban Renewal Program

Turning to the NDC, which claims to be a social democratic party, it is pertinent to note that it also began its term⁶ (in 2008) by appointing a Mayor who was based in the United States of America. Part of his duty was to help the government to achieve its promise of cleaning the capital city in its first 100 days in office, and implement its urban renewal project (Obeng-Odoom 2010a). The members of the Assembly approved a three-month action plan to guide the execution of a proposed decongestion exercise which was expected (in the NDC's own terms) to be more socially sensitive.

The new Mayor launched an awareness campaign dubbed "Education Campaign on Decongestion and Sanitation Exercise in Accra" in June 2009. To correct perceived mistakes of the

past, the AMA issued a two-week ultimatum ending on June 15, 2009 for all petty traders and hawkers who plied their trade in the informal economy to vacate road pavements, street corners and intersections. Traders were encouraged to relocate their trading activities to the hawkers' market and other traditional markets within the CBD. The Mayor stated that the AMA was simply enforcing its by-laws in order to:

Stem indiscipline, lawlessness and make the city governable and healthy to live in. What we are simply demanding from our petty traders and hawkers is to operate their business in areas approved by the city authorities to prevent inconveniencing pedestrians, road users and residents in the city.⁷

Accompanying the two-week ultimatum was a highly publicized educational campaign on the beneficial effects of good sanitation. The Information Services Department used information vans to disseminate the "message" in the official English language and five other local languages. Some informal traders' associations tried to negotiate an extension of the deadline and others attempted to convince more powerful politicians to stop the Mayor from carrying out his plan because it could be politically costly. As one petty trader explained to us:

We petty traders and hawkers are powerless and we know we could not stop the Mayor from clearing the pavements. But we wanted to play [sic] for time, so some of us approached party leaders telling them of our membership strength and reminding them of what happened to the NPP when they chased us off the pavement in 2007. Unlike the Mayor, the regional minister has a constituency and therefore knows the potential of women in his constituency. We wanted to drag the arrangement into 2011 or 2012 when we would have some bargaining power (Interview 20, Accra, 12 June 2010).

Those parliamentarians whose constituencies are in the affected areas are said to have lobbied the Greater Accra Regional

Minister who, in turn, directed the Mayor to put an end to the planned exercise. According to the minister:

It has come to the notice of the regional minister that you plan to carry out decongestion of the city of Accra sometime this week. It is also reported that you have earmarked an amount of GH¢250, 000 for the above purpose. I have been directed to request you put an immediate hold on your plans for the decongestion (Daily Graphic 2009).

Assigning reasons for the request to suspend the highly publicized decongestion exercise, the Minister claimed that he was not consulted about the exercise, and, more importantly, that the exercise had “financial, political, social and economic implications that needed thorough planning to ensure its sustainability” (Daily Graphic 2009).

The AMA disregarded the order and went ahead to evict petty traders and hawkers located in areas in the CBD, such as Tudu, High Street, Adabraka, and Kwame Nkrumah Circle. Since that eviction, there have been many others. In December 2009, for instance, the eviction of petty traders and hawkers and the demolition of their structures were carried out in the Central Business District and other areas, including Tetteh Quarshie, East Legon and Madina. As with previous cases, the decongestion exercise encountered “political interference” by the President who claimed that “when we are working to improve the economy, it will not be proper for us to treat our people in this manner” (see Daily Graphic 2009 and Ghanaian Times 2009). The media reports suggested that the President had given the order following concerns by some party leaders who felt that forced evictions could affect the electoral fortunes of the NDC, being the ruling party (see also Yeboah and Obeng-Odoom, 2010).

The President’s directives to stop evictions are selective. That is, they are given in some cases, but not in others. The story of Sukura and Sodom and Gomorrah (or Old Fadama),

two informal settlements in Accra, is a case in point. Most of the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah are supporters of the NDC, while residents of Sukura are more likely to vote for the NPP. A recent planned eviction in Sodom and Gomorrah was halted when the President, after the residents had threatened to defect to the NPP, ordered the city authority to stop the evictions. The same cannot be said for the announcement of planned evictions in Sukura where, in spite of protests, the President did not intervene. In turn, the evictions took place as planned (Yeboah and Obeng-Odoom 2010: 88-89). The process of forced evictions causes substantial losses to people who work in the informal economy who usually lose goods, property, and income and suffer varieties of inconvenience. Almost all traders interviewed claimed that they had lost "something"; however, when we asked them to quantify their losses, they could not do so, preferring rather to stress the qualitative aspect of the loss, such as inability to pay for their children's education. The dynamics of "political interference" of the decongestion exercise raise the related question of how people who work in the informal sector of the economy normally react to decongestion exercises.

Coping And Adaptation Strategies: "Voices From Below"

In the process of forced evictions, Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah (2008) have argued that informal traders are often "on the run." Although obviously some traders make a dash for their lives and property when they foresee an attack, this characterization hides the "voices from below" or the survival strategies adopted by the victims of decongestion.

Apart from taking the opportunities made available by multi-party politics, the victims of decongestion have used various ways to survive the recurrent attacks on their activities. One is disobedience. For instance, traders around the Novotel

Trading Park refused to move when the AMA security guards ordered them to do so. Their “civil disobedience” gained more credibility when the owners of the park challenged the locus on which the city authorities were purporting to evict the hawkers. Also, there was no agreement between the Greater Accra Regional Minister, on the one hand, and the Mayor, on the other hand, about whether to carry out the “Novotel eviction.” Some members of the Greater Accra Market Women’s Association even alleged that the Greater Accra Regional Minister had offered his support to a faction of the traders, suggesting that their activities had been legitimized (Interview 14, Accra, 20 May 2010). There is no independent way to verify such allegations. However, one presiding member threatened to sue the Regional Minister for undermining the work of the AMA,⁸ lending some credence to the claim that the Minister did not support the Mayor’s decision. Some market women even threatened to go on a nude demonstration. (For a more detailed analysis of the history and gendered nature of protests against urban authorities, see Yeboah 2010; Langdon 2009.)

Another coping and adaptation strategy is the manipulation of “official discourse.” The directive that the government gives usually causes problems in parts of the CBD between hawkers and city guards, as the former insist that the President’s directive permits them to trade on so-called unauthorized areas. The city guards, on the other hand, disagree and argue that the directive from the President is about demolition and not decongestion. However, the Ghana Institution of Planners (2009), the professional body of experts on city management, has explained that, in both principle and by planning law, decongestion does not mean dislocation. Rather, it means the relocation of nonconforming activities or the creation of new centers to ease congestion.

A third strategy is rather passive. It entails agreeing to partake in the activities of civil society groups that try to mediate the drama between the state and the informal economy. Some

of the main civil society groups are Amnesty International, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and People's Dialogue, Centre for Public Interest Law and Ghana Homeless People's Federation (also called Ghana Federation for the Urban Poor). These groups have four main approaches that collectively constitute another coping and adaptation strategy for the actors in the informal economy. First, they draw the attention of the officers of the state to the Government of Ghana's obligations under international law on the need to avoid displacing large numbers of people. Second, they conduct studies and prepare reports on the situation of informality for use as an advocacy tool both locally and globally. Third, they pressure the government to use "reasonable force" and follow "correct procedure" if it has to evict. And, fourth, they demand that the government pay compensation or resettle people who have been evicted (COHRE 2006; UN-HABITAT 2007: 34-36). However, most of their efforts are directed at slums and squatter settlements, such as Sodom and Gomorrah, not informal traders. Given the close interconnections between where "informal people" live and work (Obeng-Odoom 2011a), it may be argued that this unidimensional approach is unhelpful. It can also be said that looking at one dimension of informality invariably means considering the other. Nevertheless, considering the economic roots of informality necessitates that a more explicit strategy on tackling the problem of informal economy is needed.

For those few organizations that focus on streetism and informal economic activities (e.g., Compassion International Ghana and Catholic Action for Street Children), their work is mainly to provide food and some educational opportunities to those who work on streets (Obeng-Odoom 2011b). Thus, there is the basic problem of a lack of coordination between civil society organizations that focus on "home" and those that look at "work." At the root of the problem is a misunderstanding of local knowledge of the nature of informality, the problem of

scale, and a preference for approaches that have been “successful” in other countries (Porter 2003). Although by publicizing the negative effects of evictions, civil society groups have contributed to new state discourses about “solving” the problems of informality (COHRE 2006), civil society organizations hardly organize people in the informal economy for political conscientization and empowerment to rise up against formal institutions and to seek radical transformation in the material conditions of life of “informal people” (Townsend et al., 2004).

Conclusion

This study has shown that the informal economy in Accra, Ghana has at least three identities: first, an employer of a substantial share of the urban labor force, second a source of congestion and filth; and third a space to retain or lose political power. Thus, while it may be argued that governments have “failed” to decongest the sector, they have not failed in using informality as one avenue where politicians “pay their dues” to those people who support them and “discipline” those who do not.

However, it is not accurate to view those who are “disciplined” as powerless because they “fight back” when they are under attack. Besides, civil society groups usually try to “help” the actors in the informal economy. Thus, overall, the state-informal economy relationship is more akin to the Marxist depiction of the state as an arena of tensions and contradictions. This latter representation suggests, albeit modestly, that local people in Ghana are taking advantage of the opening up of new opportunities made possible by electoral politics to further their own interest. However, it is surprising that, in spite of the covert politicization of forced evictions, the issue is not overtly discussed in parliamentary debates. A possible reason is the legal status of local government issues as “nonpartisan.” As

parliamentary debates in Ghana are polarized along partisan lines, the issue of forced evictions tends to be ignored at the parliamentary level.

From this perspective, progress in the informal sector of the economy can only be made through greater struggle, particularly by the “informal people” themselves. The challenge is that formal channels of protests such as voting rights are not currently available (as mayors are appointed not elected), suggesting that the struggle of the people in the informal economy would need to be informal and unconventional.

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NOTES

- 1 The first author personally witnessed the demolition carried out by the AMA in the Tema Station.
- 2 As we shall see, civil society groups are part of the debate, but they focus more on evictions in slums, not the informal economy.
- 3 There is no official definition of “city” in the National Urban Policy of Ghana (Government of Ghana, 2010), although “urban” is defined as a settlement of at least 5,000 people. However, some two decades ago, the Ghana Statistical Service (1988: 23) defined a (large) city as one with a population of 100,000 and above; a large town as one with a population of between 50,000 and 100, 000, a medium town as comprising 10,000 to 49,999 people and a small town as one with 5,000 to 9, 999 people.
- 4 Following the International Labour Organization, which adopted the concept (see Trager 1987), we refer to the sector as “the informal economy.”
- 5 Commercial mini buses which constitute the dominate mode of urban transport within cities.
- 6 The NDC had earlier formed government between 1992 and 2000.

- 7 Field Notes, Mayor's speech at the launch of educational awareness, campaign Accra, 1 June, 2009.
- 8 Radio notes, Joy FM news, Accra, 14 May 2010. Presiding member of AMA alleged the Regional Minister was interfering in the activities of the Assembly.

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