

## State | Ghana

### Better monitoring of infrastructure projects could raise completion rates

#### In brief

- 1 Timely completion of public infrastructure projects is crucial for efficiency and growth of government investments.
- 2 In Ghana, information on local government infrastructure projects is scattered and difficult to comprehensively analyse.
- 3 This study digitised details of all 216 Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies from 2010–13.
- 4 The findings are informing the National Infrastructure Plan and Spatial Development Framework.

Infrastructure is crucial for economic development and public service provision but its construction remains a challenge. Administrative records from 14,000 local government projects in Ghana were collected, digitised, and analysed for all Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), from 2010–13. Capital investment analysis captured type, number, and efficiency of investment projects including completion rates.

Notably, one-third of all projects, representing one-fifth of infrastructure expenditures, remain uncompleted, even three years after starting. Meanwhile, completed projects are typically finished within 12 months. This suggests other explanations may account for poor service delivery, such as low bureaucratic capacity, technical complexity, political favouritism, or corruption.

Findings have motivated a long-term national development plan for Ghana, and informed Ghana's 40-year Development Plan, including an Infrastructure and Spatial Development Plan, currently being drafted. The 40-year Development Plan would become operational for 2018–57.

*“...all the money sitting in these semi-completed infrastructure projects could actually build the equivalent of 700 primary schools per year.\*”*

The Head of Civil Service reported that project findings were presented to Ghanaian President John Dramani Mahama who subsequently directed that benchmark costs should be established for standard infrastructure projects to guide project delivery across the country. The researcher also presented a comprehensive list of infrastructure projects to the Ghana Audit Service to improve audit project selection.

*\*Quote by Dr Nii Moi Thompson, Director-General, National Development Planning Commission*



Researcher – Martin J. Williams (LSE) Partner Organisations – Ghana Ministry of Local Government, Ghana Head of Civil Services, National Development Planning Commission

## Firms | Bangladesh

### Garment factories can bounce back from political strikes



Managing external shocks is a key challenge for entrepreneurs in low-income countries. In spite of often-volatile business environments, the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector in Bangladesh has grown significantly over the past decade, accounting for roughly one-eighth of the country's GDP.

However, growth slowed to an estimated 5% in 2015, coinciding with tragic industrial accidents in the sector (including the Tazreen fire and the Rana Plaza collapse) and a marked increase in political strife in recent years. Strikes and worker protests often aim to stop economic activity by preventing movement of people and goods, blocking roads, and sometimes destroying vehicles.

Researchers measured productivity, absenteeism, and quality defects on 809 production lines in 33 large Bangladeshi factories in 2012–14. Findings suggest strikes lasting one or two days had very little effect on productivity or worker

absenteeism. Strikes lasting five days or more had some negative effects on factories, mainly due to supply chain disruptions rather than absenteeism.

Contrary to the popular view that strikes significantly affect the economy, further analysis suggests that factories adjust production fully during a single isolated strike with no net change in output.

Worker protests had a more immediate negative effect, increasing absenteeism and quality defect rates, and decreasing output. A protest in the neighbourhood of a factory reduces both the total number of labour hours and output per hour, even during single-day protests.

The IGC held a discussion on this research in March 2016 with the President and the Joint Secretary of the influential RMG trade and industry body, the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association.

#### In brief

- 1 The Ready-Made Garment sector grew 14% annually from 1994–2014, but slowed to 5% in 2015.
- 2 This study examined the effects of political strikes and worker protests on sector productivity in 2012–14.
- 3 Strikes for 1–2 days had little effect on productivity or absenteeism.
- 4 Worker protests had a more direct negative effect – more absenteeism, higher defect rates, and less output.

Researchers – Rocco Macchiavello (University of Warwick), Chris Woodruff (University of Warwick)

# Our events

*The IGC held over 60 events in 2015–16, ranging from in-country research dissemination discussions and capacity building workshops, to research and policy conferences with a global reach. Here are some highlights.*

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EVENTS SINCE  
THE IGC FORMED



**ETHIOPIA**

Africa Growth Forum

29 June – 1 July 2015  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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The IGC’s third Africa Growth Forum brought together over 180 participants representing researchers and policymakers from over 20 different countries and 50 different institutions and ministries. The forum’s overarching message was the importance of identifying the mechanisms and policies that must be in place for Africa to rapidly industrialise and urbanise.



**UNITED KINGDOM**

IGC-BRAC Ultra-poor Conference

9 December 2015  
London, UK

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Close to 100 government officials, donors, academics, and practitioners from around the world discussed tackling extreme poverty through anti-poverty ‘graduation’ programmes. IGC released the results of one of the most extensive evaluations of these types programmes, finding that Bangladeshi households who benefit from the programme continue to climb out of poverty at a steady rate seven years later.



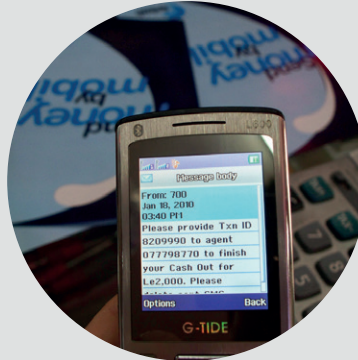
**UNITED KINGDOM**

Cities Conference 2016

28–29 January 2016  
London, UK

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Over 80 researchers and policymakers including city leaders from Cape Town and Kampala discussed challenges and the latest research on urbanisation. The conference set the agenda for future research to be developed under the cities theme and marked the signing of an MoU between the Kampala Capital City Authority and the IGC for future research projects.



**SIERRA LEONE**

Workshop on Mobile Money in West Africa

14–16 March 2016  
Freetown, Sierra Leone

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The workshop, co-hosted by the Bank of Sierra Leone, brought together government and private sector representatives from six countries to discuss how to better promote the use of mobile money in West Africa. Representatives from five central banks in Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone produced country roadmaps for policy reforms and identified future research areas.



**GHANA**

Workshop on Improving Civil Service Effectiveness

23 March 2016  
Accra, Ghana

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IGC researcher Martin Williams presented research results on management practices across Ghana’s civil service and their effect on the quantity and quality of public service delivery in the country. The IGC is working closely with the Head of Civil Service and other government departments to ensure that the results inform proposed civil service reforms.



**INDIA**

IGC-ADRI Silver Jubilee event

26–30 March 2016  
Patna, India

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The event, co-hosted with the Asian Development Research Institute, featured prominent Bihar government representatives including the Chief Minister, the Ministers of Education and Finance, and the Speaker of the Bihar Assembly. Discussions highlighted several steps necessary to support the efforts of the government for sustaining inclusive growth.