

## **Transparency is essential to proper land administration – GGA West Africa**

Transparency is a critical component of a functioning land administration system, particularly in view of the scarcity of clear and credible information on land availability and transactions, and the poor dissemination of public information on land rights and policies. The spectra of corruption and inequalities are very real in land allocation and management. It is at this background that Good Governance Africa-West Africa organised a two day workshop for selected land administrators and traditional rulers (who are deemed as the primary custodians of land) from the Western & Central Regions of Ghana to sensitize and introduce them to current processes and procedures in land administration. Topics treated include but not limited to accessing land information, organizational restructuring, and professional ethics, land registration procedures and processes etc....

The lead facilitator, Prof. S.O Asiama, a lecturer and land administration consultant opined that, ‘ poor land governance system gives birth to difficult access to land, ignorance of land policies and legal frameworks, lack of information on land transactions and prices, misallocation of land rights, incapacitation of women and vulnerable groups to participate in the land market’.

On the other hand, should professional land administrator work diligently devoid of corruption, transparency can encourage civic engagement and stakeholders’ accountability by rendering the public decision making arena more accessible. This in turn strengthens confidence in government and public agencies, and has a positive economic impact.

In an interview, the Executive Director of GGA-West Africa, Mrs. Tina Asante-Apeatu stressed the need for Ghana to institutionalize a professionally, tailor-made and home-designed land administrator system which makes it easy to access credible land information. She further stated that, good governance in land administration, pillared on transparency will protect the property rights of individuals and enterprises as well as of the state by introducing principles as efficiency, effectiveness, civic engagement, fairness and impartiality, rule of law, etc.....in the land related public sector management.

High cost, inefficient land officers and prolonged procedures related to corrupt land registration practices have discouraged people from registering their land and properties. This further leads to under collection of land tax revenue.

GGA-West Africa is an independent and non-partisan research and advocacy organization that works to improve government performance on the continent by strengthening institutions and building consensus through research, capacity building, sensitization programmes and orientation of the citizenry on best governance practices.