



**CARE FOR FREE
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"CARE" GHANA CALLS ON EC TO ACCOUNT FOR THE GHC98 MILLION OVER EXPENDITURE REPORTED IN THE 2021 AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

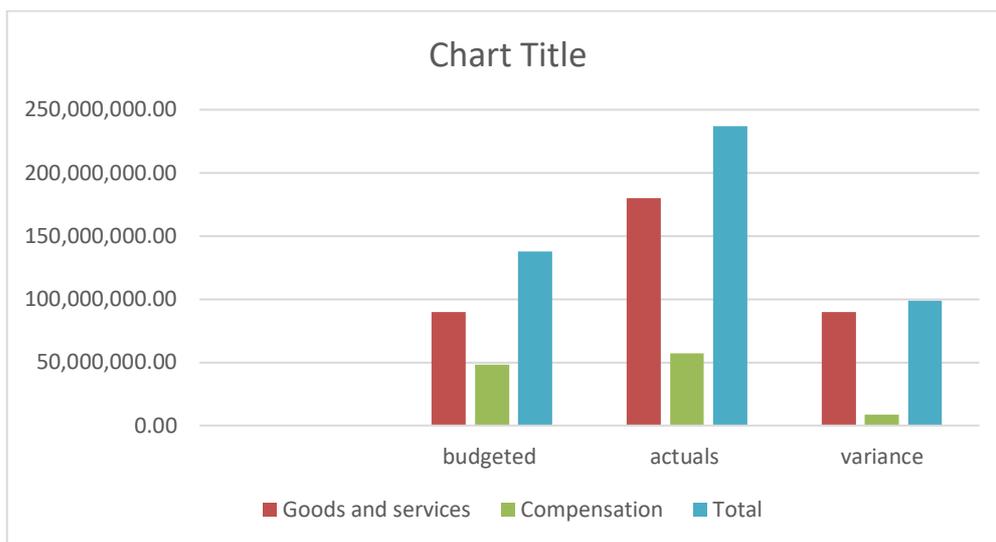
Care for Free and Fair Elections Ghana ("CARE" GHANA) calls on the Electoral Commission (EC) to account for the over Ghc98 million over expenditure reported in the 2021 Auditor General's report. The Auditor General reports that, Electoral Commission (EC) exceeded its appropriation budget for goods and services and compensation by Ghc98, 712, 679, contributing to the GHS10. 5 billion over expenditure reported by the Auditor General for the year 2021. However, the Commission is yet to explain to the public what accounted for its over expenditure at a time when government is unable to honor its financial obligations, government is considering reviewing the free SHS policy as a result of the lack of funding and government is considering cutting its expenditure by 30% owing to the serious financial crisis the country is experiencing.

Overspending at a time when the country requires efficient use of public resources to achieve value for money and ensure fiscal discipline is of much concern especially when reports on Ghana's economic outlook is uninspiring. According to Bloomberg, Ghana's debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is estimated at 84.6 per cent by the end of this year. This indicates that the nation's debt will have exceeded Ghc400 billion by far before the end of 2022. Ghana's annual inflation rate for instance, accelerated for 13th consecutive months to 29.8% in June 2022 and 14th straight months to 31.7% in July 2022. Consequently, government has indicated its open arms to both local and international assistance to resuscitate the country's economy.

The Electoral Commission after the 2020 general elections announced to the general public that, it saved the country \$90 million after conducting the 2020 parliamentary and presidential elections.

According to Jean Mensah the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, the Commission achieved this feat, in spite of high inflation rates, price hikes and the additional cost it incurred owing to the COVID-19 protocols it deployed throughout the election processes. Meanwhile, the Auditor General reports that, in 2021 when EC had no elections obligation, it over spent its appropriation for compensation by Ghc8, 754,518.00 and for goods and service by Ghc89, 958,161.00 totalling Ghc98, 712, 679.

Please consider the chart below



Over spending in such magnitude in the period the country is experiencing financial crisis clearly makes the EC a major contributor to Ghana’s economic woes. Excessive spending at a time when government is at the IMF seeking to strengthen investor confidence and debt sustainability. At a time when government is calling for a review in the free SHS policy as a result of the lack of funding. When real GDP growth has moved from an average of 6.9% in 2017 to 0.4% requires accountability. The principle of accountability requires that the public is provided with a comprehensive public information on the use of public funds. The overarching obligation of the EC is to be accountable and transparent in the exercise of its duties by ensuring prudent and efficient use of public funds in a way that meet public approval. This will increase public trust in the EC’s operations and protect it against unfounded allegations. We therefore call on the EC to explain to the public what necessitated the over expenditure of its appropriation budget on compensation and goods and services for the public to assess the probity of its handling of public funds.

Thank You

Signed

David Kumi Addo

Executive Director (“CARE” GHANA)

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