

ISSN: 088855-5117

# **OGUAA JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**VOLUME 9 ISSUE 1, JUNE 2020**

## DOES LABOUR MATTER IN REFORMS? INDICATIONS FROM GHANA'S ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION POLICY

Angela D. Akorsu,<sup>1</sup> Akua O. Britwum<sup>1</sup> and Owusu Boampong<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Labour and Human Resource Studies, School for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

<sup>2</sup>Department of Integrated Development Studies, School for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

### Abstract

Recent policy debates point to public service privatisation as a solution to the problems of state indebtedness, non-performance, and inefficiency of the public sector. This privatisation agenda has raised concerns about the implications for jobs and working conditions. In developing countries like Ghana, where markets are weak or exhibit signs of failure, state policy becomes a vital avenue for securing decent working conditions for workers. Using an appraisal of Ghana's Environmental Sanitation Policy and through the lens of institutional theory, the paper argues that the extent to which employment rights are framed, even at the policy stage, signals how labour rights

will be impacted within privatised employment spaces. The analysis shows that the environmental sanitation policy ignores the interests of labour. The paper, therefore, recommends the need for inputs of labour market institutions such as trade unions at the policy stage. This is because trade unions remain the most credible source of response to the unrestrained exploitative tendencies of capital at the expense of labour.

**Key Words:** Environment, Ghana, Labour, Private sector, Public policy, Sanitation

### Introduction

Contemporary nation-states are increasingly embracing neoliberalism which, according to Braunstein (2012), should include liberalisation, macroeconomic stability, and privatisation – the three fundamental principles. Privatisation is understood to mean the sale of state-owned enterprises, which is potentially expected to reduce the management burden on the state and increase private entrepreneurship and innovation through competition. The consensus is that the more removed the government, the better it is for markets to function in terms of being free from price controls and burdensome regulatory requirements. From a neoliberal perspective, state enterprises benefit from unfair competitive advantage through the government's rule-making authority. Typically, government investments financed through borrowing are part of the government's unfair competitive advantage vis-à-vis private companies in competition for funds in the capital market since governments are less risky borrowers (Braunstein, 2012).

The current wave of global capitalism impacts production systems and employment relations in several ways. First, exit policies such as privatisation have been used to increasingly push

workers out of the formal public sector, where there were at least some security of employment and where labour standards were adhered to. This trend has produced an expansion of simple operations, with workers who are 'white-collar' nor 'blue-collar' but whose scruffy clothes have no collars at all (Bhowmik, 2014; Breman & Das, 2000). Secondly, the trend has led to a fragmentation and a segmentation of workers; a phenomenon, which makes their mobilisation for trade union protection difficult (Britwum, 2010). In all, the shape and character of economic reforms, and labour market reforms, in particular, undermine even the traditional mediating role of the state as well as trade union influence, which uphold a social system that guarantees the entitlement to work as a fundamental human right. With the tides of neoliberal privatisation racing across the world, it seems that in many places and on many occasions, labour has been side-lined from the development discourse. Recent policy debates still point to public service privatisation as a solution to the state indebtedness and the rather pertinent issue of the public sector performance and efficiency (see Obeng-Odoom, 2014). This policy orientation has gained currency in Ghana as well, regardless of apprehensions about job security and the conditions under which labour

is engaged (see Mbah & Nzeadibe, 2017 and Obeng-Odoom, 2014). Mbah and Nzeadibe (2017) clearly show that this is not peculiar to Ghana. They have, for example, alluded to the exclusion of informal economy workers in solid waste management policy in Nigeria, a situation they insist ensues from the neoliberal regime.

Prominent among such concerns are work fragmentation and the associated informalisation of formal-sector-based employment forms. The result, as noted by earlier studies (see Munck, 2002; Webster, 2005; Akorsu, 2010; Britwum, 2010), are a reduction in conditions of employment such as social protection and decent wages. One sector which has experienced policy reforms to fit this privatisation agenda - the commodification and the expansion of capital into areas that were previously protected against profit maximisation - is the solid waste management sub-sector of environmental sanitation. The need to be attentive to the legitimate concerns of labour, even in this environmental sanitation policy space, cannot be overemphasised. Bhowmik (2014) for instance, refers to economic problems as acute, social problems as permanent and ecological problems as looming. These three, he refers to as the triple crises of the people of the world. He appears to suggest that we cannot address one crisis at the expense of the others. Thus, any solution to environmental management that overlooks socio-economic conditions of labour stands to face critical implementation challenges. Samson (2009) insists that when waste collection and disposal remain in private hands, the livelihoods and working conditions of waste workers suffer; and consequently the aspirations of the majority of the population.

In developing countries like Ghana, where markets are weak or exhibit signs of failure, state policy becomes a vital avenue for securing decent working conditions for workers; hence, the need to examine state policy. Often ignored in this discourse is the demand for policy integration. First conceived in the 1987 Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), policy integration in environmental and development policy discourses is often linked to the superficially discordant objectives of economic efficiency, social development, and environment concerns.

This paper, therefore, seeks to examine the existing National Environmental Sanitation Policy to ascertain the extent to which employment rights are framed at the policy stage. This objective stems from the assumption of how employment

rights, framed at the policy stage, signal the extent to which labour rights will be upheld within privatised employment spaces. It also reveals the state's attitude to its labour force and the extent conditions of work are seen as a developmental tool for raising standards of living. Consequently, this paper raises several questions such as; to what extent are employment rights conceived as necessary for inclusion at the policy stage? What issues of employment relations inform the design of Ghana's environmental sanitation policy?

The paper is organised into five sections including this introduction. In section two, an attempt is made to present a brief review of relevant literature, drawing from political-economy, institutional and decent work literature. Section three focuses on the methodology and analytical approach of the paper. The fourth section is sub-divided into macro, meso and micro perspectives to policy analysis. The fifth and last section constitutes the concluding remarks and some recommendations.

## Literature Review

Political economy focuses on the link between production and trade, and the legal or political regimes that underpin such economic systems (Ayee, Søreide, Shukla & Minh, 2011; Kannan, 1998; Streeten, 1995). Production establishes the relationship between labour, capital, and the state, and highlights the three agents as relevant parties in politico-economic discussions. The state or/and the political system is seen as the regulator of the relationship between the parties suggesting the important role that governmental policies play in political economy. This paper's interest in political economy is derived from the view that labour conditions or welfare interests are intricately linked to state policies. Bonoli (2010) equates a social democratic welfare regime with one that maintains active labour policies as a critical feature. According to Bonoli (2010), the connection between political economy and labour is often discussed from four perspectives, namely, incentive reinforcement, employment assistance, occupation and human capital investment. In the view of Rueda (2007), partisan ideological stands of governments drive state policies in different directions and in ways that affect labour differently in both developed and developing economies.

Several authors, including Cowan (1960), Jeffries (1978) and Panford (1994), acknowledge that, until 1950, labour conditions under the colonial authorities were undesirable. The labour unions that existed at the time were mostly unsuccessful

as collective bargaining agents (Nimoh, 2015). There existed several trade unions with limited memberships, and there was no recognised machinery for wage negotiation but was left to the discretion of employers in the Gold Coast era (Nimoh, 2015). The situation, however, was different after independence under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah and his Convention People's Party (CPP) government, which adopted policies with a socialist orientation after 1957. This resulted in Ghana's membership on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the ratification of 35 labour standards conventions that guaranteed right working conditions. With the hope of revamping the economy, Ghana adopted the neoliberal structural adjustment policies (SAP) in 1983 and ever since, the political ideology has been market-oriented. Regarding the effect of this market orientation on labour, Britwum (2010) reports that the reform policy of privatisation worked to challenge organised labour. She points to direct job cuts as well as indirect adoption of various flexible work forms like casualization. Apart from moving workers outside of union protection, casualization reduces labour cost, leaving the worker worse off economically and even psychologically due to the associated insecurity. The political-economic regime has also produced an expansion of the informal operations, with indecent working conditions, which requires interest representation (See Lindell, 2010).

Also, the philosophy driving privatisation is pushing for weakening the state's role in production and public provisioning. The country is fast losing out to the market, its power to provide for, and protect its citizens (Munck, 2002). The implication of this phenomenon has been disastrous for trade unions and therefore for workers, and other vulnerable groups in almost all countries around the world (Standing, 2008). There have therefore been calls for the participation of the civil society, businesses and academics in the governance system (Arts & van Tatenhove, 2005; Pierre, 2000; Przeworski & Limongi, 1993). Przeworski and Limongi (1993) insist that real democracy is the existence of institutions which allow different opinions and analysis of economic development, deliberations for consensus to be reached as regards socially sensitive public policies. It has long been recognised that, for systems to be credible and realistic, they must be shaped by institutions (Van Der Geest & Van Der Hoeven, 1999). The specific role of such institutions includes deliberating for the provision of possible trade-offs between different

categories of the citizens, those disadvantaged and those advantaged by economic policies.

Institutions, according to North (1990), are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interactions. Institutions then constitute the framework within which entire social interactions take place (North, 1992). The restrictions could be laws, conventions, recommendations, norms and even voluntary code of conduct. Embedded in North's definition is the notion of formal and informal institutions, both of which could engender confidence in social and economic interactions. (Majani, 2000). However, it is generally concluded that what makes an institution are not the rules or conventions per se, but formal and informal enforcement instruments and mechanisms that are effectively applied (Elster, 1989, Jentoft, 2003). Also, from the position of Hall and Thelen (2005), institutions can be conceived as a set of regularised practices within which the actors expect the methods to be observed, whether they are backed by law or not. A distinction between institutions and organisations is critical to further the conceptualisation of institutions. While North (1990) calls institutions the 'rules-of-the-game,' he describes organisations as the structures that drive how to play the game. A taxonomy of labour market institutions by Rodgers (1994) reveals that labour market institutions, as we know them, are a constellation of institutional arrangements (e.g., decent work framework, collectively bargaining, minimum wage fixing) and institutional forces or organisations (e.g., trade unions, tripartite committees, factory inspectorate divisions).

Traditionally, these labour market institutional arrangements thrive on tripartite consultations and are embodied in labour laws. These worked well as long as there were workplaces and not places of work as we have now; employer/employee relations as we had then; substantial public sector employment with its associated secured tenure of employment, and trade union operations. The current global political-economy has resulted in the dwindling of the formal public sector and the ever-increasing private informal economy with its associated vulnerabilities. The vulnerabilities of casual economy workers ensue from the difficulty to organise the rather heterogonous workforce for representation and institutional coverage (Munck, 2002; Webster, 2005; and see Akorsu & Odoi, 2017; Britwum & Akorsu, 2017; Boampong & Tachie, 2017). There have been calls for trade unions to build capacity to deal with this challenge (Webster,

2005) and there have also been calls for civil society and business involvement in the form of consumer boycotts and company voluntary labour standards enforcement initiatives respectively (Akorsu, 2010). The institutional perspective of integrated policy development, whether in the environment or any other sphere, stems from the structure of contemporary political governance systems, which are organised into sector ministries, departments and agencies and often functionally differentiated. Jordan and Lenschow (2000) and Lenschow (1999) identify horizontal multi-sectoral coordination as well as vertical multi-level coordination in policy development as necessary, particularly in agenda setting, problem identification, decision-making and implementation. According to Jordan and Lenschow (2010, p.153), 'policy coordination via institutional means resonates well with the current preoccupation with good governance'. Undoubtedly, this is because of varying actor or stakeholder interests that often need attention and which hardly come as a result of a proactive search by policymakers, but which are highlighted by the interested parties and made relevant through deliberation.

Unlike the neoliberal theorists, the institutionalists hold a non-market view concerning the operations and structure of labour markets. They posit that institutional forces such as trade unions and sociological forces such as class and gender are essential elements in the services of labour markets that cannot be taken for granted (Kaufman & Hotchkiss, 2000; Kaufman, 2004). Aron (1995) maintains that an essential feature of an institution -whether legal, financial or political - as a dominant influence factor of growth, is the social considerations which may impinge on the characters of these institutions. Thus, labour market institutions: trade unions, employers and the government, with their associated bargaining processes, which produce outcomes like the details of wage levels and the legalities of work contract are not just useful for labour market operations but necessary for democracy and economic growth (Bennett & Kaufman, 2007). These institutional interventions serve the purpose of protecting the weak, unprotected, unorganised and low skilled workers within the markets.

Another labour market institutional arrangement is the concept of decent work which was launched in 1999 by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) at the 87th Session of its labour conference at Geneva. The primary goal is to promote opportunities for women and men to

obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity. The four pillars of decent work enumerated by ILO are productive employment, workers' rights, social security and social dialogue (ILO, 1999). This covers all kinds of jobs; has both quantitative and qualitative dimensions; embraces safety at work and favourable working conditions (ILO, 2007; 2008). The second pillar of a decent job is social security. The ILO's Social Security Convention of 1952 establishes nine classes of benefit in respect of sickness, unemployment, old age, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity medical care and survivors (ILO, 2002). It also emphasises the percentage of workers protected against different contingencies, the level of benefits and the effectiveness of the social security system in a country (Gbadebo, Kehinde & Adedeji, 2012). The third pillar of decent work also borders on workers' fundamental rights. The basic rights dimension focuses on discrimination at work, freedom of association, forced labour and child labour (under 14 years) under abusive conditions. The social dialogue dimension, the fourth pillar of decent work is an essential attribute of a democratic society and a means of resolving inevitable conflicts of interest over economic and social policies in a cooperative framework. Indicators developed for the measurement of social dialogue should be based on laws, institutions, procedures, powers of national advisory or consultative bodies, their membership and actual functioning (Gbadebo et al., 2012).

The decent work framework resonates with the Sustainable Development Goal 8 which seeks to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. In terms of theoretical grounding, Standing (2008) indicated that decent work did not reflect any particular body of academic literature and was born out of a conceptual vacuum, but this is very much contested. Ernst, Krzysztof, Marcadent, and Oelz (2012), for example, posit that decent work is linked to the concept of fundamental human rights and should, therefore, be upheld by all countries. It is noted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) that "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment". This is a credible foundation for the decent work concept. Brendan, Kirsten, Nurjk, & Agnieszka (2013) also concluded that decent work was directly grounded in ILO's basic needs approach launched in 1976

which incorporated aspects of poverty, economic growth, social development, and the measurement of living standards.

Thus, any development policy, which inadvertently creates indecent work forms and not mindful of the potential effects on the conditions under which people work, falls short of a comprehensive approach to sustainable development. As an institutional response to the plight of workers, decent work indicators may be especially useful for informal economy workers, who constitute the majority of the workforce in Africa and 86.1 percent of the workforce in Ghana; and who are outside the ambit of the ILO's standard protection and therefore especially vulnerable.

#### Methodology and Analytical Approach

This paper adopts a qualitative content analysis based on a documentary review of the Ghana National Environmental Sanitation Policy of 2010. The choice of the National Environmental Sanitation Policy is inspired by an empirical study of the employment conditions of waste workers, undertaken in 2014 by a research team of the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, which pointed to the creation of new and precarious work forms following policy reforms. We adopt the policy analysis framework as our analytical tool to guide us in the analysis of the policy issues. This framework allows for macro, meso, and micro level analysis of a policy using what Bührs and Bartlett (1993) refer to as a meta-policy, policy process and 'anal-centric' approaches respectively. The meta-policy approach is a system and context analysis and is useful in explaining the ideological, political, economic and socio-cultural regimes within which the policy exist, while the policy process approach focuses on the involvement, role, and influence of institutions/stakeholders during the policy framing and implementation. The 'anal-centric' approach is used to focus on the specific outcomes of policy.

### Findings from the Review

#### The Policy Background

The Environmental Sanitation Policy was first produced in 1999. It was conceived by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government as part of Ghana's programme of economic and social development as outlined in "Vision 2020". The policy direction was towards full cost recovery by private operators either as companies or as service providers under contractual agreements with local governments. The policy received huge support, not only by the opposition New Patriotic Party

(NPP) government as seen in their implementation efforts afterward but also by the international donor community. According to Crook and Ayee (2006), the World Bank's IV Urban Environmental Sanitation Project (UESP); the DFID's Accra Waste Project and the GTZ's assistance of Waste Management Department are all indications of international support of the privatisation drive of the policy.

In 2010, The EPA revised Ghana's Environmental Sanitation Policy, following a series of consultations with the sector stakeholders. The revision was to address the limitations in the 1999 edition and also to respond to the changing national and international development priorities. The revised policy, underpinned by the 'polluter-pays' concept, sought to enhance the capacity of the environmental health staff as front-line actors; and labeled environmental sanitation as an essential service. Private participation in environmental sanitation is also strongly emphasized in the policy. Overall, the policy claims a two-fold goal of human development (improving health) and economic development (rising wealth).

The drive towards private participation in environmental sanitation, initiated in the first edition of the policy, is further entrenched in the 2010 edition. A section captioned 'sustainable financing and cost recovery' clearly indicates that cost recovery through the charging of a full commercial price (p.16) is to be applied to and based on a polluter-pays principle, as means of ensuring the sustainability of waste management. The policy emphatically states that:

The mechanism is to ensure that the cost of pollution increases progressively with the amount of pollution emitted and that the price of mitigating measures is lower than the cost of payment for the amount of pollution that is reduced (p. 17)

Thus, a gradual withdrawal of state funding is apparent, pointing to a more liberalised political-economy underpinning the policy. The new policy seeks to transfer waste management, previously conceived as a public good, to market rules. Waste management in Ghana under this policy becomes effectively monetised.

#### Politico-economic Context of the Policy

The meta-policy approach to policy analysis seeks to provide a contextual basis through the examination of the political and economic regimes within which the policy is framed. The following quotation from the National Environment and Sanitation Policy is instrumental in pointing to

the context.

The private sector shall provide the bulk of environmental sanitation services.... Where possible, environmental sanitation services shall be provided by the private sector on a full cost recovery basis, under franchise, concession agreements or through contracting (P.26).

The policy recommends active private participation in waste management, and this has its root from the broader neoliberal policy framework the country adopted since 1983. The implications of such systems that dwell on privatisation are not new (see Baah and Akorsu 2007; Akorsu 2010; and Britwum, 2010). Another ramification of neoliberal policies, what Breman and Das (2000) call the policies and politics of global capitalism, has been the origin and growth of the informal economy. These include retrenchment policies, flexibility arrangements and deregulation of labour markets, which more often than not, end in informality (Chen, 2007). Implicit in these trends are risks and uncertainties and a state of affairs which, according to Mbah and Nzeadibe (2017), has remained the major impediment to fully harnessing efforts to improve lives and livelihoods particularly in the robust waste management sector. Despite a brief period of rapid economic growth, inequality gaps have widened under the neoliberal policy regime. The general conclusions are that these policies have further aggravated income and spatial inequalities, reinforced dependency of the poor on the rich and eroded social wages such as utility, health and educational subsidies (Lindell, 2010). The overriding picture that emerges from the accounts of these authors as captured in Lindell (2010) is a gloomy situation of exclusion for large sections of the populace from the mainstream economy and its benefits, and the creation of vulnerability, irregularity, insecurity, and indignity. Britwum (2010) has written on how the reform policy of privatisation worked to challenge organised labour, pointing to direct job cuts as well as indirect adoption of various flexible work forms like casualization that moved a large proportion of formalised workers outside of union protection. Such policy ultimately worsens the plight of workers in economic and even psychological terms.

The present National Environmental Sanitation Policy fails to acknowledge the potential negative consequences of privatisation on employment security. We assert that such omission cannot be just an oversight; instead, it is part of the ideological underpinnings and the political and

economic regimes driving the policy reforms. The policy is driven by financial intentions, which seek to minimise cost and maximise profits, whereby workers' social wages and incomes become a drain on profit-making. With the emphasis on market forces, public servants experience job losses with no guarantee of secured employment by private firms which undertake the waste management services. Further, the new jobs created by the private entities tend to be temporal, time-based, without a contract and therefore without union protection. Undoubtedly, such conditions lead to further expansion of the informal economy with all the accompanying decent work deficits outlined in the ILO's decent work agenda. Such deficiencies include total lack of employment security, the right to organise, to collectively bargain, to social protection and living wages. Even worse, such effects are often glossed over in policies (Mbah & Nzeadibe, 2017).

The private sector shall operate within policies, regulations, supervisory and licensing arrangements set up by the public sector to promote efficiency and competitiveness. In all cases, the engagement of service providers shall be by the laws of Ghana and the Public Procurement Act (p. 26) The legal protection of service providers indicated above, though critical, remains a dream. The essence of the said regulation, according to the policy document, is to ensure efficiency and competitiveness, confirming the economic or market orientation of the policy. Though the policy claims to be interested in human development, indications are that the economic agenda is the most active. Thus, the responsibilities of employers to their employees as stipulated in Ghana's Labour Act, Act 651 is neglected altogether in this policy.

### **Institutional participation**

The policy process approach to policy analysis asserts that beyond the role of stakeholders, is their influence as well (Bührs and Bartlett (1993). Thus, the policy states that:

In adherence to the requirements of sustainable development objectives of the MDGs, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) principles have been applied with due consideration to the participatory engagement of stakeholders from all key sectors and ensuring the sustainability of policy interventions (p.6).

The extent to which the NESP can identify all relevant stakeholder institutions and the area they go to maintain a balance in power relations over

their interactions in the environmental sanitation management will qualify the policy as democratically worthwhile. The policy document lists as many as 22 stakeholder institutions, highlighting a somewhat deceptive attempt to involve a wide range of stakeholder institutions. Such an approach would have offered an extraordinary effort to enhance the integration of the diverse stakeholder interests that often need attention but which are often overlooked when institutional coordination is lacking or even minimal (Lenschow, 1999). Jordan and Lenschow (2010, p.153) are therefore right in concluding that “policy coordination via institutional means resonates well with the current preoccupation with good governance.”

This policy orientation, which rests on widening and varying institutional coordination and representation, is laudable. This notwithstanding, labour market institutions are hardly acknowledged as relevant in the policy document. An omission we insist is merely inadvertent as well as unfortunate, especially when the politico-economic underpinnings of the overall policy reform undermines the sovereign operation of the state, even as a labour market institution. The policy leaves little room for the protection of labour as a contributing partner to improving public service delivery, especially in environmental sanitation. As mentioned earlier, such liberal policies weaken the state’s ability to provide for and protect its citizens through legislative arrangements like labour market institutions. As Budd (2004) puts it, the need for institutional checks in the labour market has often been reduced to debates over their effects on labour costs and competitiveness. As a result, consumer and shareholder interests tend to triumph over the welfare of the workers who deliver services to maintain such benefits. Institutional theorists unanimously posit that labour market institutional forces are critical to the functioning of any market and are even in the interest of capital, (Kaufman & Hotchkiss, 2000; Kaufman, 2004; North, 1990; 1992; Rodgers, 1994). A fact environmental sanitation policymakers appear to have missed in this Ghanaian case. Labour market institutions: trade unions, employers and the government, with their associated bargaining processes which produce outcomes like minimum wage are not only useful for labour market operations but necessary for workplace democracy and economic growth (Bennett & Kaufman, 2007). Overlooking the involvement of labour market institutions in the policy undermines the quality of the system as it defeats one of its objectives -

ensuring social development. As maintained by Aron (1995), the quality of an institution, regardless of its focus, as a dominant factor of growth, is the social considerations which may impinge on it.

### **The Policy Effects**

The ‘analycentric’ approach to policy analysis, emphasises the need for policy to identify both the intended and unintended outcomes and their accompanying solutions. To this end, the National Environmental Sanitation policy falls short. While the paper sees specific activities as crucial, their effects on the people who perform such operations are overlooked by the authorities. The specific activities are cleansing of designated areas and facilities (streets, drains, markets, lorry parks, etc.) and maintenance of drains .... Management of cemeteries and crematoria (P. 26).

These specific activities outlined in the policy are labour intensive to a considerable extent. They also do have occupational health and safety (OHS) implications, which are omitted in the policy document. Such oversight reveals policy failures to measure up to the tenets of the decent work framework, an institutional arrangement with the primary goal of promoting opportunities for women and men to obtain fair and productive employment, in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity. These qualitative dimensions of work embrace safety at work and good working conditions (ILO, 2007). Other pillars of the decent work framework include social security, discrimination at work and freedom of association. The paper argues that, once the policy is silent on labour issues and labour market institutions, workplace concerns such as OHS, social security and freedom of association risk get compromised by the private employer.

Page nine of the policy document, mentions ‘adequate capacity to deal with emerging diseases such as HIV/AIDS and the threat of climate change and associated global warming’ as one of the policy focus. Thus, the policy focus does not resonate with the internationally accepted Decent Work framework of the ILO; an institutional response to the current situation of workers.

### **Concluding Remarks and Some recommendations**

Labour, the workforce of every country, constitutes the main engine of development as well as the primary beneficiaries of development. How the workforce of a country is protected is paramount to its growth. However, the protection of the labour force is determined by both the broader

political economy and its resultant policy space. This paper examines the politico-economic regime within which the National sanitation policy reforms were occurring. The general principles underlying the globalised production system, of which Ghana is a part, have meant that labour markets and their operations keep changing. The resultant paradigm change in the ways work and workers are conceived is evident in the National Environmental Sanitation Policy. Inherent in the policy is the shrinking role of formal public sector work, which is characterized by identifiable, organised and protected workers. Undoubtedly, the extent and manner in which employment rights are treated even at the policy stage signal the area at which labour rights will be protected even within privatised employment

spaces. This paper reveals how the environmental sanitation ignores the interests of labour, even at the policy stage. This is regardless of the increasing realisation that development policies that integrate the superficially discordant objectives of economic efficiency, social and environmental concerns, produce the best outcomes.

The paper thus proposes that the Environmental Sanitation Policy must recognise the importance of labour as well as labour market institutions such as trade unions. As collective organisations of working people, trade unions are well placed to respond to labour market challenges and thus prevent the possible exploitative tendencies of capital at the expense of labour.

## References

- Akorsu, A.D. (2010). Labour standards application in the informal economy of Ghana: The patterns and pressures. *Economic Annals*, 196(8), 157-175
- Akorsu, A.D. (2010). *Labour Standards Application in Ghana: Influences, Patterns and Solutions*. (Unpublished PhD Thesis). Manchester: University of Manchester,
- Akorsu, A.D. & Odoi, A. (2017). Collective Agency and Organising among Domestic Workers in Ghana. In E. Webster, S. Bhowmik, A. O. Britwum, (eds.), *Crossing the divide: Precarious work and the future of labour*.
- Aron, J. (1995). The institutional foundations of growth. In S. Ellis (Ed.). *Africa now: Peoples, institutions, development*. London: James Currey
- Arts, B., & Tatenhove, V. (2005). Policy and Power: A conceptual framework between the 'old' and 'new' policy idioms. *Policy Sciences*, 34(37), 339-356.
- Ayee, J., Søreide, T., Shukla G. P. Minh T. (2011). *Political Economy of the Mining Sector in Ghan*. Washington D.C, World Bank. Retrieved from [https://www.google.com/gh/?gfe\\_rd=cr&ei=0RhRWKHOBW-8gfhs56oBw&gws\\_rd=ssl#q=political+economy+of+the+mining+sector+in+ghana+by+Joseph+Ayee](https://www.google.com/gh/?gfe_rd=cr&ei=0RhRWKHOBW-8gfhs56oBw&gws_rd=ssl#q=political+economy+of+the+mining+sector+in+ghana+by+Joseph+Ayee)
- Baah, A. Y. & Akorsu, A. D. (2007). Economic Growth, Labour Standards and Social Equity: The Case of Ghana during Half a Century of Independence. *Global Labour University Conference*. Johannesburg.
- Bennet, J. T. & Kaufman, B. E. (2007). *What Do Unions Do? A Twenty-Year Perspective* (eds.), New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Bhowmik, S.K. (2014). *The State of Labour: The global financial crisis and its impacts*. Routledge: New Delhi.
- Boampong, O. & Tachie, B. Y. (2017). Implications of Private Participation in Solid Waste Management for working conditions and collective organization in Accra. In E. Webster, S. Bhowmik, A. O. Britwum, (eds.), *Crossing the divide: Precarious work and the*

- future of labour.*
- Bonoli, G. (2010). The political economy of active labour market policy. Retrieved from [http://www.socialpolicy.ed.ac.uk/recwoweputdiac/working\\_papers/](http://www.socialpolicy.ed.ac.uk/recwoweputdiac/working_papers/)
- Braunstein, E. (2012). Neoliberal Development Macroeconomics: A consideration of its gendered employment effects. *Gender and development.*
- Breman, J., & Das, A. N. (2000). *Down and Out: Labouring Under Global Capitalism.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Brendan, B., Kirsten, S., Nurjk, A., & Agnieszka, P. (2013). Human development and decent Work. Santiago: Centre for New Development Thinking
- Britwum, A. O., & Akorsu, A.D. (2017). Organising Casual Workers on an Oil Palm Plantation in Ghana. In E. Webster, S. Bhowmik, A. O. Britwum, (eds.), *Crossing the divide: Precarious work and the future of labour.*
- Britwum, A. O. (2010). Union democracy and the challenge of globalization to organized labour in Ghana. PhD thesis.
- Budd, J.W. (2004). *Employment with a Human Face: Balancing Efficiency, Equity and Voice,* Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press
- Bührs, T., & Bartlett, R. V. (1993). *Environmental Policy in New Zealand: The politics of clean and green.* Oxford University Press: Oxford
- Chen, M. A. (2007). Rethinking the Informal Economy: Linkages with the Formal Economy and the Formal Regulatory Environment. *DESA Working Paper, 46.* Economic and Social Affairs.
- Cowan, E.A. (1960). *Evolution of trade unionism in Ghana.* Accra, Trade Union Congress.
- Crook, R., & Ayee, J. (2006). Urban service partnerships, 'street-level bureaucrats' and environmental sanitation in Kumasi and Accra, Ghana: Coping with organisational change in public bureaucracy. *Development Policy Review, 1(24),* 51-73
- Elster, J. (1989). *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ernst, E., Krzysztof, H., Marcadent, P., & Oelz, M. (2012). Decent work and empowerment for pro-poor growth. Geneva: ILO.
- Gbadebo, A.M., Kehinde, I.A., & Adedeji, O.H. (2012). Participatory roles of women in quarrying activities in Abeokuta metropolis. *Global Journal of Human Social Science, (64).*
- Hall, P.A., & Thelen, K. (2005). Institutional change in varieties of capitalism. International Sociology Association Annual Conference. Chicago: Illinois.
- ILO (2002). *International Labour Conference: Decent work and the informal economy, 90<sup>th</sup>. Session, Report VI.* Geneva: ILO
- ILO (2007). *The Decent Work Agenda in Africa, 2007–2015.* Switzerland: International Labour Office.
- ILO (2008). *Can low income countries afford social protection? (Policy Briefings No.3).* Social Security Department, Geneva: ILO
- ILO (1999). *Decent Work. Report of the Director General.* Geneva: International Labour Organization.
- Jeffries, R. (1978). *Class, power and ideology in Ghana: The railwaymen of Sekondi.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jentoft, S. (2003). Institutions in Fisheries: What they are, What they do, and How they Change. *Department of Planning and Community Studies.* Tromsø: Univer-

- sity of Tromsø.
- Jordan, A. & Lenschow, A. (2010). Policy paper environmental policy integration: A state of the art review. *Environmental policy and governance*, 20, 147-158.
- Kannan K. P. (1998). Political economy of labour and development in Kerala: Some reflections on the dilemmas of a socially transforming labour force in a slow [https://www.google.com.gh/?gfe\\_rd=cr&ei=K6xPWOviFe-bR8gePw71I#q](https://www.google.com.gh/?gfe_rd=cr&ei=K6xPWOviFe-bR8gePw71I#q)
- Kaufman, B. E. (2004). *The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations: Events, Ideas and IIRA*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.
- Kaufman, B. E., & Hotchkiss, J. L. (2000). *The Economics of Labour Markets*, Orlando. Harcourt Inc.
- Lenschow, A. (1999). The greening of the EU: The common agricultural policy and the structural funds. *Environment and planning*, 17, 91-108
- Lindell, I. (2010). Introduction: the Changing politics of Informality-Collective Organizing, Alliances and Scales of Engagement. In I. Lindel, *Africa's Informal Workers: Collective Agency, Alliances and Trans-National Organizing in Urban Africa* (pp. 1-30). London: Zed Books.
- Majani, B. B. K. (2000). Institutionalizing Environmental Planning and Management: The Institutional Economics of Social Waste Management in Tanzania. *SPRING Centre, Faculty of Spatial Planning*. Dortmund: University of Dortmund.
- Mbah, P. O. & Nzeadibe, T. C. (2017). Inclusive municipal solid waste management policy in Nigeria: engaging the informal economy in post-2015 development agenda. *Local Environment*, 22(2), 203-224
- Munck, R. (2002). *Globalization and Labour: The New 'Great Transformation'*. London: Zed Books Limited.
- Nimoh, M. (2015). A Study of Labour Unrest in Ghana (1900 to 2008). Unpublished Doctoral thesis submitted to the Department of History and Political Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.
- North, D. C. (1992). Institutions, ideology and Economic performance. *CATO Journal*, 3(11), 477-489.
- North, D. C. (1990). *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Obeng-Odoom, F. (2014). Green neoliberalism: Recycling and sustainable urban development in Sekondi-Takoradi. *Habitat International* 41 (2014) 129 - 134
- Panford, K. (1994). *African labour relations and workers' rights: Assessing the role of the International Labour Organisation*. Westport London, Greenwood Press.
- Pierre, P. (2000). *Debating governance*. (Ed.). Oxford University Press: London
- Przeworski, A., & Limongi, F. (1993). Political regimes and economic growth. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 3(7).
- Rodgers, G. (1994). Workers, Institutions and Economic Growth in Asia (Ed.). Geneva: International Institute of Labour Studies.
- Rueda, D. (2007). Social democracy inside out. Partnership and labour market policy in industrialised democracies. Oxford, Oxford University Press
- Samson, M. (2009). Confronting and Engaging Privatization. In Samson, M. (ed.), *Refusing to Be Cast Aside: Waste Pickers Organising around the World*. Cam-

- bridge, M.A. : WIEGO
- Standing, G. (2008). The ILO: An Agency for Globalization? *Development and Change*. 39(3).
- Streeten, P. (1995). The Political Economy of Fighting Poverty. Geneva, International Labour Organization
- Van Der Geest, W., & Van Der Hoeven, R. (1999). Adjustment Employment and Missing Institutions in Africa: The Experience of Eastern and Southern Africa. Geneva: International Labour Organization.
- Webster, E. (2005). New forms of work and the representational gap: A Durban case study. In E. Webster & K. Von Holdt (eds.), *Beyond the Apartheid workplace: Studies in transition*. University of KwaZulu. Nata Press, 387-405.
- World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford University Press: Oxford