For Immediate Release

The Centre for Development Research and Agro-Innovation (CEDRAI) has comprehensively analyzed the critical factors shaping Ghana's 2024 elections. Drawing on insights from a survey of 3,531 respondents across all 16 regions, this report provides a deep dive into the pressing issues that will influence voter decisions.

Presidential Race: NDC's 8.6% Lead Over NPP

The NDC's lead of 50.40% against the NPP of 41.80% reflects significant dissatisfaction among sampled registered voters with the current administration under the NPP. Voter discontent centers on:

- *Economic Challenges*: High inflation, rising cost of living, and limited job opportunities.
- *Infrastructure and Social Issues*: Delays in essential projects and inadequate public services, including healthcare and education.
- *Perceived Corruption*: Allegations of government inefficiency and corruption have eroded trust in the NPP.
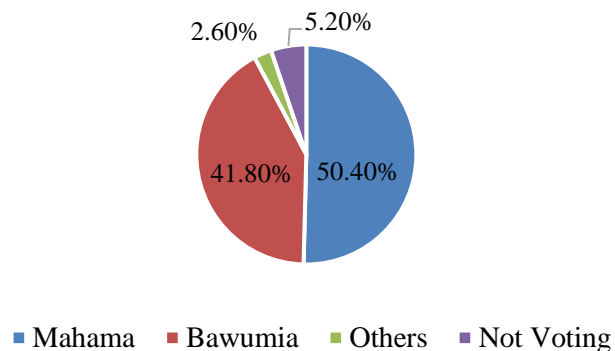

Figure 1: Voting preference for President

The NDC has gained traction by focusing on change and systemic reforms. Addressing voter concerns about improving poor economic performance, reassuring them of tackling corruption, and creating jobs have resonated with voters. However, this lead does not guarantee victory, as the party must maintain a cohesive and inclusive message to secure widespread appeal. For the NPP, recovering from this deficit requires addressing governance failures, presenting detailed economic recovery plans, and reinforcing achievements in infrastructure. Boldly admitting failure to address the galamsey menace and an actionable plan to implement strategies will attract voters' confidence.

Parliamentary Race: A Tight Contest

Based on sampled constituencies, the parliamentary contest is neck-and-neck, with the NDC at 49% and the NPP at 46%. Swing regions and undecided voters will be decisive. See Figure 9.
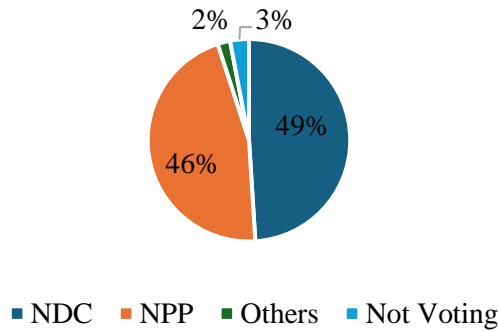
Figure 2: Voting preference for Member of Parliament

Survey results on key themes

Illegal Mining (Galamsey): With 99.2% of respondents aware of galamsey and 87.3% indicating its significance in their voting decisions, this issue emerges as an important decisive factor. However, **only 12.7%** believe the government is effectively addressing it, highlighting a gap that political parties should pay serious attention to tackling with actionable policies.

Planting for Food and Jobs 2.0 (PFJ 2.0): More than 80% of the surveyed voters are dissatisfied with the implementation of PFJ 2.0, with nearly 82% indicating that their dissatisfaction with its implementation would influence their voting choice on December 7.

One Village One Dam (1V1D): 79.5% of respondents recognized 1V1D as important, but it garners mixed satisfaction levels, particularly regarding implementation and regional equity. While the initiative has pockets of success, concerns about its execution underline the need for tailored interventions to build broader public trust.

*Political Party Manifestos***:** Given that many of the respondents are actors in the agribusiness value chain, agricultural policies become critical in their voting behavior, with 87.3% of respondents indicating that these will significantly influence their voting decisions. The NDC currently leads in public perception of agricultural plans, with 40.7% support compared to 38.6% for the NPP, emphasizing the importance of clear and actionable proposals for agricultural development.

Summary of Voting Preferences and Key Factors Influencing Voter Behavior

Ghana's 2024 elections highlight critical trends in voter preferences that will influence the outcome of the presidential and parliamentary races. Key themes include economic challenges, governance performance, and strategic voter mobilization.

Key Factors Influencing Voter Decisions

Beyond party affiliations, specific issues heavily shape voter behavior: respondents were asked multiple choice questions.

1. *Economy (95%)*
   o The economy dominates voter concerns, with inflation, exchange rates, and taxation being pivotal.
   o Political parties must present actionable plans for economic recovery, including reducing inflation, stabilizing the currency, and fostering job creation.

2. *Infrastructure Development (70%)*
   - o Improved access to roads, schools, and healthcare remains central to voter expectations.
   - o Highlighting initiatives to address gaps in underserved regions is crucial for voter trust.
3. *Employment Opportunities (70%)*
   - o High unemployment, especially among the youth, is a critical concern.
   - o Policies targeting agriculture, technology, and manufacturing are likely to attract support.
4. *Education (65%)*
   - o Mixed reactions to the Free SHS program underline the need for balancing access with quality reforms.
   - o Focused improvements in tertiary education and reducing overcrowding in schools are key voter priorities.
5. *Corruption (90%)*
   - o Governance integrity and anti-corruption measures remain significant.
   - o Parties must outline clear frameworks for accountability and transparency.
6. *Democracy, Peace, and Security (40%)*
   - o Stability is valued but ranks lower than economic and social issues in this election cycle.

Strategic Implications for Campaigns

1. *Voter Turnout*: High turnout is crucial. Campaigns should engage grassroots networks and leverage digital platforms to motivate their bases.
2. *Targeted Messaging*: Tailor strategies to resonate with regional and demographic priorities, such as youth-focused employment policies and region-specific development initiatives.
3. *Youth Engagement*: Young voters prioritize job creation, education, and technological advancements. Effective use of social media and youth-driven platforms can expand outreach.

Conclusion

The 2024 elections are shaped by public discontent with governance and pressing socio-economic issues. The economy, job creation, corruption, implementation of agricultural and environmental issues, and infrastructure dominate voter priorities, presenting opportunities for parties that align their campaigns with these concerns. The NDC's current advantage reflects its resonance with voter frustrations, but sustained efforts to connect with swing voters and undecided demographics are necessary for both major parties.

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Below is the full report

A POLL ON THE INFLUENCE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES ON VOTER DECISIONS IN GHANA'S 2024 ELECTIONS

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1.0 Executive Summary

This comprehensive analysis delves into the findings of polls conducted in anticipation of Ghana's 2024 elections. The report examines the influence of critical issues affecting Ghanaians, emphasizing actors in the agricultural value chain, media, and civil society organizations. Some of the factors being considered include illegal mining (galamsey), the *One Village One Dam* initiative (1V1D), the *Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) 2.0* program, and *political party manifestos.* This report also analyzed the perception of registered voters on other key including the *Economy, Infrastructure Development, Employment Opportunities, Education, Corruption, Democracy, Peace, and Security.* These issues, deeply intertwined with Ghana's socio-economic and environmental landscape, shape voter sentiments and present challenges and opportunities for political stakeholders. The data is collected through a structured survey of 3,531 respondents across the 16 regions of Ghana. Highlights of key findings:

Illegal Mining (Galamsey): With 99.2% of respondents aware of galamsey and 87.3% indicating its significance in their voting decisions, this issue emerges as an important decisive factor. However, only 12.7% believe the government is effectively addressing it, highlighting a gap that political parties should pay serious attention to tackling with actionable policies.

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Political Party Manifestos: Given that many of the respondents are actors in the agribusiness value chain, agricultural policies become critical in their voting behavior, with 87.3% of respondents indicating that these will significantly influence their voting decisions. The NDC currently leads in

public perception of agricultural plans, with 40.7% support compared to 38.6% for the NPP, emphasizing the importance of clear and actionable proposals for agricultural development.

The polls also highlight a competitive electoral landscape. The NDC holds an **8.6% lead in the presidential race**, while parliamentary contests remain tightly contested, with both the NDC and NPP vying for dominance.

Strategic recommendations:

To navigate these dynamics, political parties must address governance gaps by prioritizing commitment and tangible solutions for the galamsey menace, clearly indicating strategies to redeem the image of poor implementation of agricultural programs such as 1V1D and PFJ 2.0. Enhanced voter outreach and regular sentiment monitoring will be essential for shaping effective strategies. Importantly, most voters rank economic issues, followed by unemployment, bribery, and corruption, hinting at better campaign promises on how to stabilize the economy, create jobs, and proper strategies to bring confidence in the perception of bribery and corruption.

Introduction

Ghana's 2024 elections mark a critical juncture in the nation's democratic journey, offering citizens the chance to evaluate the government's performance on pressing socio-economic and environmental challenges. As the country grapples with issues that directly impact livelihoods, perceptions of key programs and policies are expected to heavily influence the upcoming elections. Among these are, failure to clearly outline strategies to address public outcry on impact of illegal mining (galamsey), the poor implementation of Planting for Food and Jobs 2.0 (PFJ 2.0) program, and the content of political party manifestos stand out as crucial factors shaping voter behavior.

Illegal mining, or galamsey, has become a critical concern for its devastating effects on the environment, public health, farmlands, vegetation and its impact on food production. This issue is particularly significant in regions heavily dependent on mining and agriculture, where its impacts are most acutely felt.

The *One Village One Dam* initiative, launched with the aim of enhancing water access for dry season agriculture in northern Ghana and the recent impact of drought spelled destroying thousands of hectares of farms, has raised concerns. While its conceptualization at the start received general acceptance from farmers, especially those in northern Ghana, challenges in its implementation and failure of government to adhere to overwhelming outcry of farmers have tempered public support. As a flagship initiative, its perceived success or failure may influence voter confidence, especially actors in the agribusiness landscape.

Similarly, the introduction of PFJ 2.0 to replace PFJ 1.0, which aims to provide farmers with access to all production factors (fertilizer seeds, agrochemicals, mechanization services, and guaranteed market) through input credit, has received wider acceptance. However, failure to implement the programme according to the conceptual framework jointly developed by sector stakeholders led to dissatisfaction.

Finally, political party manifestos play an essential role in shaping voter decisions, particularly among those in the agricultural sector, which form a significant demographic in Ghana. These actors often prioritize policies addressing food security, infrastructure, and employment, making agriculture-centric manifestos a critical determinant of electoral outcomes. The clarity, feasibility, and perceived sincerity of proposed policies will likely sway many undecided voters in the upcoming elections.

This report seeks to analyze these intertwined issues and their implications for voter preferences, particularly within agricultural communities. By identifying public perceptions and expectations, the analysis provides political stakeholders with actionable insights to craft strategies that align development priorities with the aspirations of Ghanaian citizens.

2. Methodology

A robust and systematic research approach was employed to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the findings. The methodology focused on capturing diverse opinions among actors in the agricultural value chain across the 16 regions of Ghana.

Sampling

The study utilized Yamane[1]'s formula to determine the sample size, applying a 98% confidence level and a 2% margin of error for precision. This formula, respected for its scientific rigor, serves as a reliable method for calculating sample sizes within finite populations. By using this approach, we aimed to ensure that our sample was both representative and statistically valid, laying a strong foundation for the findings that would arise from our study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where *n* is the sample size, **N** is the size of registered voters in Ghana, and **e** is the level of precision. When this formula is applied to the registered voting population size of 18,774,159, the results are as follows:

$$n = \frac{18774159}{1 + 18774159(0.02)^2} = 2499$$

The target population comprised Ghana's entire registered voter base of 18,774,159 individuals. Employing a 2% margin of error, the calculated sample size of 2,499 respondents represents a statistically significant representation of the national electoral landscape. However, we oversampled to account for regional dynamics (swing regions). The final sample size was **3,531**. Oversampling improves rigor while increasing confidence levels in the results.

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[1] Yamane, T. (1967). Statistics, An Introductory Analysis (Second). Harper and Row.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted using a Google Form, a reliable and efficient tool for gathering responses from a geographically dispersed population. The questionnaire was designed to comprehensively address four key thematic areas and seven other general areas, allowing for a detailed analysis of voter perceptions and preferences.

The thematic areas included:

Awareness and perceptions of illegal mining (galamsey), the One Village One Dam initiative (1V1D), and the Planting for Food and Jobs 2.0 (PFJ 2.0): These questions assessed the public's familiarity with and opinions on these critical issues. Evaluation of political manifestos on agriculture: Respondents were asked to rate the relevance, feasibility, and appeal of agricultural policies proposed by major political parties. Other critical issues influencing voting behavior: Beyond the headline issues, this section explored broader socio-economic concerns such as the state of the Ghanaian economy, employment, infrastructure, corruption, and education. Finally, the questionnaire captured respondents' voting intentions in presidential and parliamentary elections.

3. Key findings:

The key findings from the survey highlight pressing issues that are likely to shape voter behavior in the upcoming 2024 elections. Prominent among these are the challenges posed by illegal mining (galamsey), the mixed reactions to the One Village One Dam (1V1D) initiative, and the reception of the Planting for Food and Jobs 2.0 (PFJ 2.0) program. These findings underscore the electorate's focus on practical, effective solutions to the challenges facing the country, which are likely to influence voting decisions in the coming elections.

3.1 Illegal Mining (Galamsey)

Illegal mining, commonly referred to as galamsey, has emerged as one of Ghana's most pressing socio-economic and environmental challenges. Its widespread effects, including deforestation, water pollution, destruction of farmlands, and soil degradation, have had far-reaching consequences for agriculture, public health, and rural livelihoods. Unsurprisingly, the issue resonates deeply with the electorate, as reflected in the survey findings.

Awareness

The survey reveals an almost universal level of awareness about galamsey, with 99.2% of respondents familiar with the issue. This high level of awareness underscores the prominence of galamsey in national discourse and its visibility in everyday life, particularly in mining-prone regions. Media coverage, advocacy efforts, and direct impacts on communities have likely contributed to this heightened awareness, making it a critical factor in the 2024 elections.

Perceived Government Commitment

Despite the prominence of galamsey, the public's perception of the government's efforts to address the issue remains overwhelmingly negative. Only 12.7% of respondents, as shown in Figure 1, believe the government is genuinely committed to tackling galamsey. Conversely, a significant 69.1% perceive governmental efforts as *not committed*. This widespread dissatisfaction stems from a perceived lack of enforcement, the complexity of key persons in the government owning galamsey pits, allegations of complicity and corruption among officials, and the failure of the government to adhere to different groups calling on the government to show more commitment in addressing the issues.

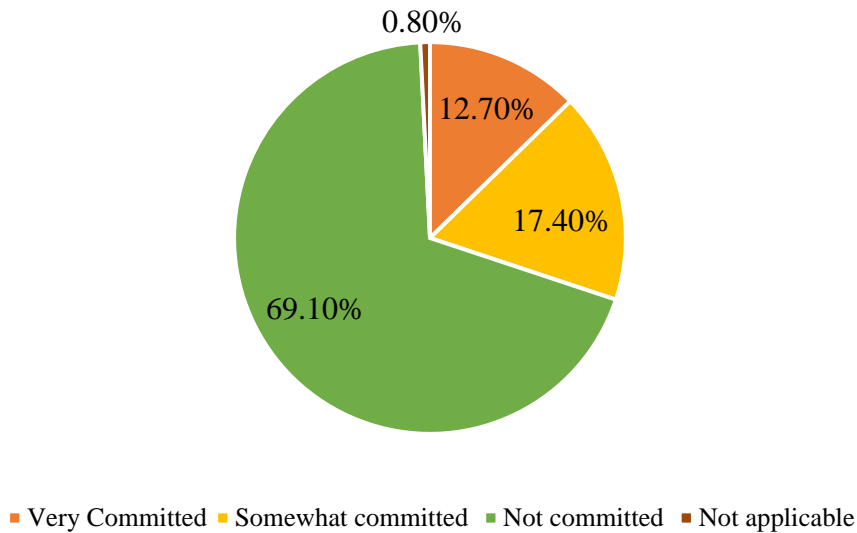■ Very Committed ■ Somewhat committed ■ Not committed ■ Not applicable

Figure 1: Government commitment to fight against galamsey

The low confidence in government action reflects a gap in public trust, creating an opportunity for political stakeholders to propose and implement solutions that resonate with voters. Providing committed, concrete, and actionable solutions to this issue credibly could become a key differentiator in the elections.

Impact of Illegal Mining on Voting Decisions

The survey findings emphasize the substantial influence of galamsey on voting behavior, with **87.2% of respondents** stating that the issue will impact their electoral choices. See Figure 2. This statistic highlights the urgency for political parties to prioritize galamsey in their campaign messaging. Voters are looking for clear, actionable, and measurable plans that promise tangible results in combating illegal mining.
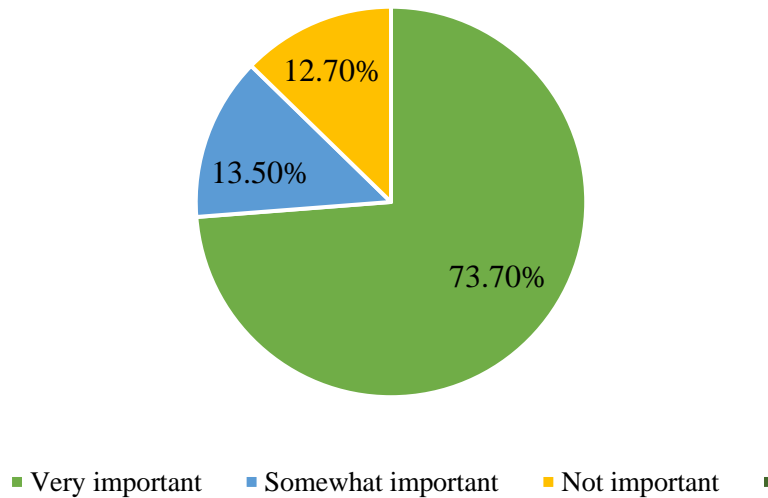

Figure 2: Impact of 1V1D on voting choice

Implications

Focus on Measurable Anti-Galamsey Strategies:

Political parties must go beyond rhetoric and present actionable strategies that include robust enforcement mechanisms, community engagement, and commitment to pulse all small-scale mining. Immediate expectation from voters is for government to declare state of emergency in mining and ensure more committed in addressing the menace.

Targeted Messaging in Mining-Prone Regions:

Regions such as Ashanti, Eastern, Central, Western North, and Western, which are disproportionately affected by galamsey, hold significant sway in the electoral outcome. Tailored messaging that addresses the specific concerns of these communities highlights successes in combating galamsey and outlines future plans can significantly influence voter behavior in these areas.

Building Public Trust:

Transparency and accountability must underpin any anti-galamsey initiative. Political parties that can effectively demonstrate commitment through verifiable actions and engage stakeholders, including local communities, media, and civil society organizations, are likely to gain voter trust and support.

In conclusion, *galamsey is not just an environmental issue; it is a litmus test for governance, accountability, and the ability of political leaders to address critical challenges.* The party that successfully communicates a credible plan to combat galamsey and delivers measurable outcomes stands to gain a substantial advantage in the 2024 elections

3.2 One Village One Dam Initiative (1V1D)

The One Village One Dam (1V1D) initiative, launched as a climate mitigation measure to provide year-round irrigation for agricultural communities in northern Ghana, parts of Bono East and Oti regions, represents one of the government's flagship agricultural development programs. Designed to address water scarcity and improve all year round agricultural productivity, the initiative holds significant importance for rural livelihoods. However, while its objectives are widely recognized and appreciated, its implementation has generated mixed reactions among the populace.

Importance of 1V1D

The survey highlights the perceived importance of the 1V1D initiative, with an overwhelming 91.1% being aware of IVID and its significance. Its significance in influencing voting choice, 79.5% rated it as *very important* or *somewhat important,* signaling strong public endorsement of the program's goals. See Figure 3. This reflects a broad understanding of the initiative's potential to enhance food security, mitigate seasonal farming challenges, and stimulate economic growth in the beneficiary districts.

Nevertheless, 19.70% of the respondents do not consider the initiative important, suggesting a segment of the population remains unconvinced of its relevance or impact. This group could include individuals from regions where the program's benefits are less visible or those who feel disconnected from its objectives.
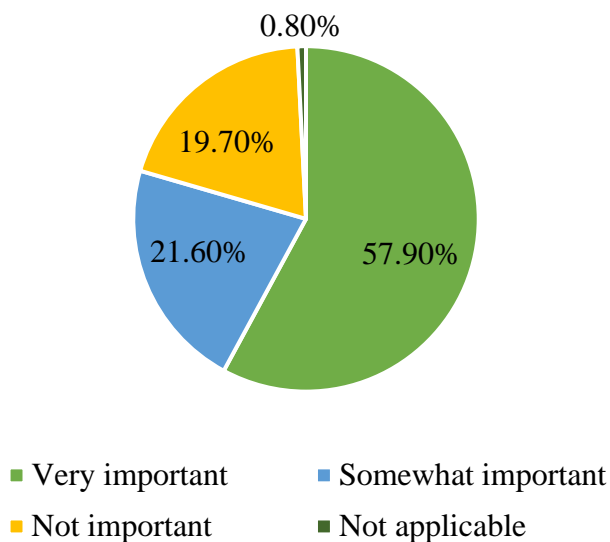
Figure 3: Importance of 1V1D to voting decision

Implications of 1V1D on campaigning

Political stakeholders must showcase areas where 1V1D has had a transformative impact. By highlighting success stories, such as communities experiencing increased agricultural yields and economic empowerment due to reliable irrigation, public confidence in the initiative can be restored. Documentation of tangible benefits, supported by testimonies from local beneficiaries, can create a compelling narrative for continued support.

Discussion

The 1V1D initiative is emblematic of the broader challenges faced by large-scale development programs balancing ambitious goals with practical execution. Its widespread importance underscores the electorate's desire for sustainable agricultural solutions, yet the mixed satisfaction levels reveal a need for greater inclusivity and accountability.

In the context of the 2024 elections, addressing the shortcomings of **1V1D** presents a unique opportunity for political parties to demonstrate responsiveness to voter concerns. The program's success or failure will likely serve as a barometer for the government's overall performance, especially in northern Ghana.

3.3 Planting for Food and Jobs 2.0 (PFJ 2.0)

The Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) 2.0 initiative, another flagship program aimed at transforming Ghana's agricultural sector, has emerged as a central topic in the 2024 elections for actors in the agribusiness value chain. Designed to modernize farming practices, enhance productivity, and improve food security, the program has garnered significant public attention and varied reactions. The survey results provide insights into the program's reception, its influence on voter decisions, and the steps needed to maximize its political and developmental impact.

Awareness of PFJ 2.0

The implementation of the initiative has faced significant disapproval, with an overwhelming majority of registered voters in the survey (80.7%) indicating dissatisfaction (see Figure 3). This lack of support highlights the perceived program's disconnect from the realities of Ghana's agricultural communities and its perceived ineffectiveness in meeting critical needs such as input subsidies, mechanization, and market linkages. The absence of success stories from farmers, especially regarding decreased of cost production, access to mechanisation service and availability of input credit.

1.50%

17.80%
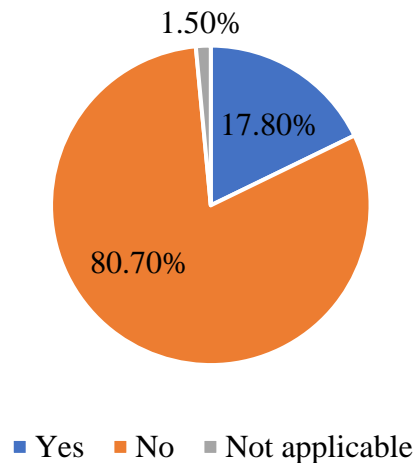
80.70%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not applicable

Figure 4: Satisfaction with the implementation of PFJ 2.0

Less than a fifth (17.8%) of registered voters surveyed approved of the implementation of PFJ 2.0.

Discussion

PFJ 2.0 is a high-stakes initiative that represents both an opportunity and a challenge for political stakeholders. Its widespread awareness and high dissatisfaction levels among key voter groups signal strong alignment with public expectations.

As the 2024 elections approach, PFJ 2.0 could serve as a barometer for voter confidence in agricultural policy and governance. Political parties address its shortcomings to solidify their appeal among Ghana's substantial agricultural electorate. In doing so, they can position PFJ 2.0 not only as an electoral advantage but also as a cornerstone for sustainable development in Ghana

3.4 Political Party Manifestos on Agriculture

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Ghana's economy, providing livelihoods for a significant portion of the population and contributing substantially to GDP. The 2024 election results will likely hinge on how well political parties address agricultural challenges and propose actionable solutions in their manifestos. The survey results offer a revealing snapshot of public sentiment regarding agricultural policy prioritization, the perceived credibility of party proposals, and the influence of these policies on voting behavior.

Prioritization of Agriculture in Manifestos

The data reveals that 57.5% of respondents believe agriculture is prioritized in the manifestos of political parties, indicating a general perception that the sector has received adequate attention in the electoral discourse. However, 40.20% of respondents disagree that agriculture is being prioritized in the 2024 manifestos, suggesting skepticism about the depth of commitment or the feasibility of proposed agricultural policies by various political parties. This group likely includes those who feel that political rhetoric around agriculture is not matched by actionable strategies or past performance. The relatively high level of dissent highlights a gap between expectations and the promises articulated in the manifestos. See Figure 5.
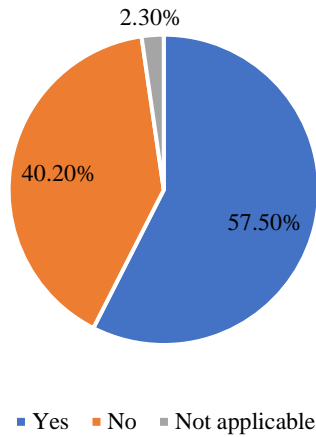
- Yes - No - Not applicable

Figure 5: Political parties have prioritized agricultural development in manifestos

Perception of the Best Agricultural Plan

Among registered voters, none of the two dominant parties is seen as having a superior agricultural development plan. Indeed, the survey reveals that there is just two percentage difference points between the two. See Figure 7. The NDC obtained 40.7% compared to the NPP's 38.6%. The remaining respondents either favor other parties or remain undecided, suggesting an opportunity for smaller parties or independents to differentiate themselves with innovative agricultural proposals.
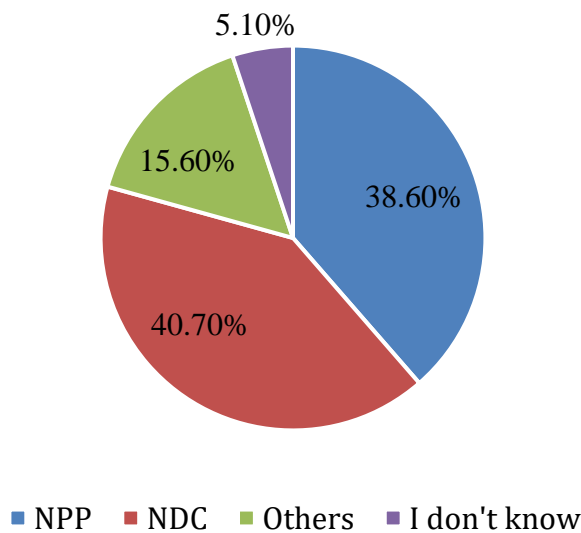

- NPP - NDC - Others - I don't know

Figure 6: Political party with the best agricultural development plan

Influence of Manifestos on Voting

A striking 87.3% of respondents indicated that they would vote based on agricultural policies, emphasizing the sector's critical role in shaping electoral outcomes. This high level of influence underscores agriculture's centrality to voters' livelihoods, particularly in rural areas where farming forms the backbone of local economies.

For many voters, manifestos serve as a blueprint for future governance. Agricultural policies that promise to address issues such as access to lower cost of production, credit, market linkages, irrigation, and mechanization are likely to sway this segment of the electorate.
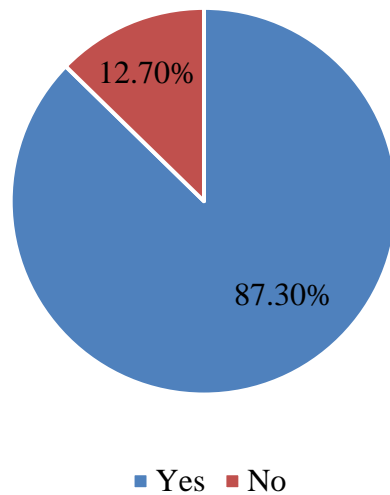

Figure 7: Political party with the best agricultural development plan

Summary of Voting Preferences and Key Factors Influencing Voter Behavior

Ghana's 2024 elections highlight critical trends in voter preferences that will influence the outcome of the presidential and parliamentary races. Key themes include economic challenges, governance performance, and strategic voter mobilization.

Key Factors Influencing Voter Decisions

Beyond party affiliations, specific issues heavily shape voter behavior: respondents were asked multiple choice questions.

1. *Economy (95%)*
   o The economy dominates voter concerns, with inflation, exchange rates, and taxation being pivotal.
   o Political parties must present actionable plans for economic recovery, including reducing inflation, stabilizing the currency, and fostering job creation.

2. *Infrastructure Development (70%)*
   o Improved access to roads, schools, and healthcare remains central to voter expectations.
   o Highlighting initiatives to address gaps in underserved regions is crucial for voter trust.

3. *Employment Opportunities (70%)*
   o High unemployment, especially among the youth, is a critical concern.
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4. *Education (65%)*
   o Mixed reactions to the Free SHS program underline the need for balancing access with quality reforms.
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5. *Corruption (90%)*
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Presidential Race: NDC's 8.6% Lead Over NPP

The NDC's lead of 50.40% against the NPP of 41.80% reflects significant dissatisfaction among sampled registered voters with the current administration under the NPP. Voter discontent centers on:

- *Economic Challenges*: High inflation, rising cost of living, and limited job opportunities.
- *Infrastructure and Social Issues*: Delays in essential projects and inadequate public services, including healthcare and education.
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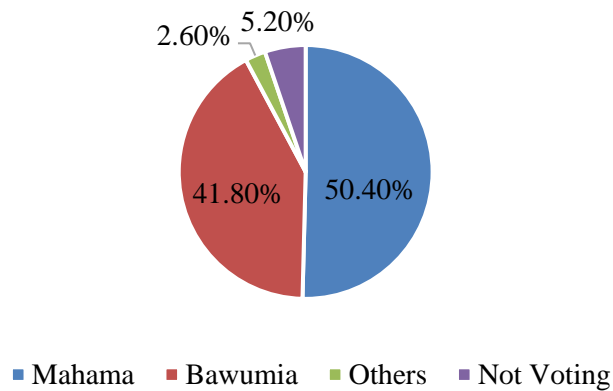

Figure 8: Voting preference for President

The NDC has gained traction by focusing on change and systemic reforms. Addressing voter concerns about improving poor economic performance, reassuring them of tackling corruption, and creating jobs have resonated with voters. However, this lead does not guarantee victory, as the party must maintain a cohesive and inclusive message to secure widespread appeal.

For the NPP, recovering from this deficit requires addressing governance failures, presenting detailed economic recovery plans, and reinforcing achievements in infrastructure and development. Bolding admitting failure to address the galamsey menace and an actionable plan to implement strategies will attract voters' confidence.

Parliamentary Race: A Tight Contest

Based on sampled constituencies, the parliamentary contest is neck-and-neck, with the NDC at 49% and the NPP at 46%. Swing regions and undecided voters will be decisive. See Figure 9.
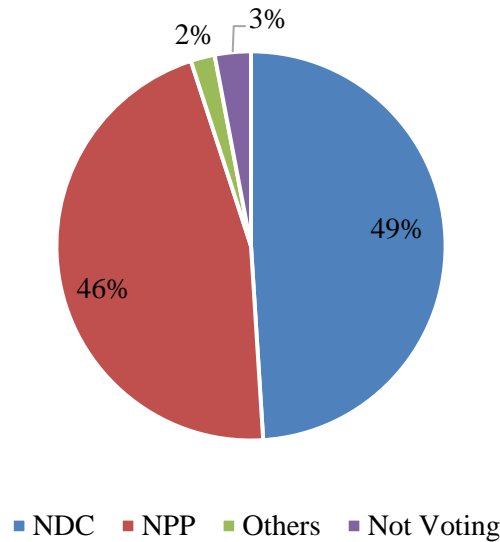
Figure 9: Voting preference for Member of Parliament

Strategic Implications for Campaigns

1. *Voter Turnout*: High turnout is crucial. Campaigns should engage grassroots networks and leverage digital platforms to motivate their bases.
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Conclusion

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