

NDC Campaign Launch: Only One in Three Claims, Mostly True



President Dramani Mahama touched on several issues ranging from the economy to social amenities in his [address](#) during the recently held NDC Campaign launch. Some of the claims he made were fact-checked. Out of three of his claims that were fact-checked, only one was found to be mostly true. One claim was found to be true but misleading, and another, half true. The full report on these claims are presented below.

1. Claim: Agriculture grew at respected 2.4% last year compared to a -1.7% in the year 2007

Verdict: True but misleading

Explanation: The president made this statement to drive home the fact that the agriculture sector was growing under his administration as compared to that of the NPP in 2007. Our checks from the [Ministry of Food and Agriculture \(MOFA\)](#) and the [World Bank data](#) on Ghana confirmed that indeed the agricultural sector had grown at 2.4% in 2015, and that the sector had experienced a decline in growth of -1.7% in 2007. But the president's claim though true, had to be subjected to more scrutiny. For instance, what is the overall trend in agriculture growth? How has the agriculture sector fared in terms of its contribution to Ghana's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP)? Also, how does Ghana's 2.4% growth in 2015 compare to the average growth rate in the Sub Saharan African region? These additional questions were posed to ascertain a holistic assessment of the claim that the sector was indeed performing well.

According to MOFA, from a negative 1.7 percent in drought-hit 2007, agricultural growth recovered strongly to 7.4 percent in 2008, 7.2 percent in 2009 and then slowed to 5.3% in 2010. Growth again declined to 0.8 percent in 2011, and then stood at 1.3 percent in 2012. The annual budget reports also indicates that indeed 2015 saw a 2.4% growth.

Additionally, the agriculture sector's contribution to GDP in Ghana has been steadily declining from 39.41% in 2000 to 21.08% in 2015.

Also, according to World Bank estimates, Ghana's 2.4% growth in the agricultural sector is less than the average for the Sub Saharan African Region (3.6%) for the year 2015.

So, in conclusion, the president's claim that in 2015 the agricultural sector grew at 2.4% as compared to the -1.7% decline experienced in 2007 is true. However, the claim belies the fact that the sector's overall growth rate and contribution to national productivity has been steadily declining, even under his administration. Furthermore, Ghana's 2015 agricultural growth rate was also less than the average growth rate recorded in the Sub Saharan African region.

2. Claim: Ghana is second only to South Africa in respect of access to electricity. More than 80% of our people have access to electric power.

Verdict: Half True

Explanation: Access to electricity is crucial if sound and accelerated economic development is to be achieved. As a public good, electricity is also important in the provision of other social services and the maintenance of law and order in a society.

In light of this, President Mahama echoed Ghana's commitment to ensure universal electricity access by 2020 during the launch of his party's 2016 election campaign. In his speech, the president also claimed that Ghana was second only to South Africa in respect of access to electricity. Also, according to Pres. Mahama, more than 80% of people in Ghana have access to electric power.

Generally, data on electricity access is sparse. The International Energy Agency (IEA) publishes regular reports on electricity access in several countries including Ghana. According to the latest report released in 2015 but based on data collected in 2013, Ghana had 72% access, behind South Africa (85%), Gabon (89%), and Cape Verde (94%) in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most of the North African countries had 100% access to electricity or very close to it. It is plausible that Ghana's access rate would have increased since the release of the IEA report. However, the president's claim that Ghana was second

only to South Africa is incorrect as at least Cape Verde in Sub-Saharan Africa, reported a national electricity access of 95% in a [report submitted to the UNFCCC](#) in 2015.

3. Claim: In 2013, we were running a budget deficit of Close to 12 percent ...

Verdict: Mostly True

Explanation: According to the [2014 Mid-Year review](#) actual budget deficit as stated by the finance ministry in paragraph 51 is 10.1% and not 12%.

“Mr. Speaker, based on the revenue and expenditure outturns for 2013, the overall budget balance on cash basis registered a deficit of GH¢9,454.6 million, equivalent to 10.1 percent of GDP. This was against a deficit target of GH¢8,010.8 million, equivalent to 9.0 percent of GDP”.

Hence, the president’s estimate of the budget deficit in 2013 was slightly different from the official information presented earlier on.