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PRESS RELEASE

SEKONDI-TAKORADI JOINS CoST, ENHANCING OPEN GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS AND FURTHERING INFRASTRUCTURE TRANSPARENCY

Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA) announces its membership to [CoST - the Infrastructure Transparency Initiative](#) (CoST). The Assembly is the first sub-national government under the Open Government Partnership (OGP) to be admitted by CoST and this demonstrates the Assembly's seriousness to the Open Government Partnership (OGP) agenda. The Assembly's admission into the membership of CoST will officially be announced during the celebration of 2019 Global Open Government Week where many advocates around the world will showcase their Open Government commitments.

STMA made its application to CoST at the last quarter of 2018 in line with its plans to implement a commitment in the [Second OGP Local Action Plan](#), which focusses on the development of an Information Platform for Public Infrastructure (IPPI) portal. The platform will help to disclose data on public infrastructure projects in the metropolis. As the programme officially begins this year, plans are far advanced to develop this key technological innovation.

CoST is the leading global initiative promoting transparency and accountability within public infrastructure. Its approach focusses on encouraging data disclosure on infrastructure projects, turning this data into compelling information, and putting issues of concern in the public domain. Empowered with information on how money is being spent on public infrastructure, citizens can demand more from decision-makers. More broadly, sector reforms can ensue, and trust is built.

Speaking for CoST, Vice Chair, George Ofori said: "We are delighted to welcome STMA as our latest member to the initiative, joining others around the world who have seen the huge benefits CoST can bring for citizens, the private sector and government.

Regardless of their different contexts, our members have enabled action to be taken on poorly planned infrastructure projects. Some examples of this include enabling a US\$3.5 million saving on upgrading a major road in Ethiopia which now provides a lifeline to hospitals, schools and the local economy or helping to cancel a project on the Belize Bridge, Guatemala which saved the potential miss-appropriation of US\$5 million.”

CoST experience has demonstrated the importance of online platforms to enhance data disclosure, its centralization and improve accessibility to information by citizens. It is likely to have contributed to the spike in data disclosed in CoST countries over the past three years. Since 2017 alone, more than 17,000 projects have disclosed data via CoST platforms worldwide.

CoST current predictions are that \$(US)94 trillion is needed in global infrastructure investment by 2040. Despite its growing necessity, a fifth of global investment is likely to be unfunded if current trends continue. Current estimates put losses due to corruption, mismanagement and inefficiency in the sector are between 10 – 30%. Initiatives like CoST can help, its approach addresses these key issues, benefits multiple stakeholders and creates an effective and robust infrastructure sector.

CoST works globally with members spanning four continents. In each CoST country, the CoST approach is adapted to the relevant context, so it is appropriately applied to different political, economic and social systems.

STMA applied to join CoST as part of its efforts to implement Transparency and Accountability in Public Infrastructure commitment in the Second OGP Local Action Plan. STMA is one of four African local governments under OGP’s sub-national programme. As a sub-national member, it has developed two local OGP action plans. Its second action plan was developed by STMA and its civil society partners and includes several high impact open government commitments. The plan is to be implemented from 2018 to 2020 and was prepared through a rigorous participatory process involving all relevant stakeholders from across government, traditional authority, civil society, media and private sector. This involved 1,200 citizens, including the marginalized groups, who were directly engaged during the four-month co-creation process.

Notes to editors

For further information, you may please contact the CoST Vice Chair, Mr. George Ofori or the Sekondi-Takoradi OGP and CoST Point of Contact, Isaac Aidoo (+233207196531 or e-mail: aidoo.isaac@yahoo.com).

For more information on the CoST, please visit: www.infrastructuretransparency.org

SIGNED

**ISAAC AIDOO
SEKONDI-TAKORADI OGP AND COST POINT OF CONTACT**