

**Bonn Symposium 2013:
Citizens' Participation-Managing
Opportunities and Risks**

**Best Practices (Ghana): The Civil
Society Support Programme (CSSP)**



1.0 About CDD–Ghana

- *An independent, non-governmental and non-profit research and policy advocacy institute dedicated to the promotion of democracy, good governance and economic openness in Ghana and throughout Africa.*



2.0 What CDD–Ghana Does?

- Support and to promote the development of a free, peaceful and well-governed society based on the rule of law, justice, integrity in public administration and equal opportunity for all.

At the Local Level:

- Support Local Governance, Citizens Participation, and Social Accountability (e.g Civil Society Support Program)



3.0 The Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP)

- Launched in 2010 in Northern Ghana to expand the voice and space for citizens' participation in local governance.
- A collaborative project between CDD-Ghana and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ).

3.0 The Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP)

Objective:

- To improve civic engagement between civil society and local authorities at different levels of governance;
- ▶ To promote responsive, accountable and transparent local level institutions ;
- ▶ To improve capacity of CSOs in Northern Ghana for addressing development issues in the north;

3.0 The CSSP: How it works?


- CSSP provides three broad categories of support to CSO/CBOs:
 - training and capacity building;
 - technical support; and
 - small grants to community based organizations (CBOs) to carry out short-term projects aimed at raising awareness of citizens on policy issues as well as monitoring the political process

3.0. CSSP Target Groups

The main target groups include:

- Young people/Youth;
- Women;
- People with Disabilities;
- Children;
- Communities/opinion leaders; and
- Local Authorities .

3.0. CSSP in Action

- ▶ In 2011, five projects were selected out of a total of 160 proposals
 - ▶ In 2012 a total of 120 proposals received, seven proposals were selected
 - ▶ In 2013, funded 6 projects out of 160 applications
- 

3.0 CSSP In Action

Initiatives supported under the CSSP between 2011-2013:

- strengthening transparency in the use of local government funds;
- promoting dialogue/debates among key stakeholders including state and non-state actors in enhancing citizens inputs into district assembly planning and budgeting;
- Mobilizing support and building capacity of sub-district structures and vulnerable groups such as women and Persons with Disability;

3.0 CSSP In Action

- Imparting knowledge and creating awareness thorough a citizens' education programs and media advocacy at the local level; and
- Promoting citizens participation in the management of public schools and health, climate change, and promoting violent free elections.

3.0 CSSP In Action

Two Video Clips.

1. **CAMBED** – <http://youtu.be/g85ACVwBNys>
2. **RISE** – : http://youtu.be/ZzP_GZYINIY
- 3.

4.0 Inclusive Participation: What does it Require?

- An enabling legal and Political Environment;
- But what is fundamental is how the legal regime empowers citizens;
- How informed citizenry are to enable them demand and participate (e.g. CDD-Ghana project on 'I AM AWARE'-
<http://www.iamawareghana.com/>)

5.0 Obstacles to Building Inclusive Local Governance

- Weak/Poor political will to empower citizens through effective decentralization and access to information (e.g uneven distribution of power relations)
- Inclusive participation requires both demand and supply factors;
- Opportunities to demand accountability, especially in between elections remain very weak.
- Often the issues concerning the vulnerable/marginalized do not attract attention

6.0 CDD–Ghana’s Most Important Results toward inclusive participation

- ❑ Promoting the rights and enhancing the inclusion in national life of PWDs and other marginalized groups through research and advocacy programs
- ❑ Reduction of stigmatization of the PWDs and persons living with HIV/AIDS in the work place

7.0 Lessons Learned

- Coalition building at grassroots and national level critical: enhances voice and space as well as recognition for citizens participation.
- Spirit of cooperation and trust between the agency and the public enhances citizens participation programs
- Citizens participation should offer rewards (responsiveness) to citizens in order to sustain it



8.0 Lessons Learned

- ▶ ***Information is critical*** - Without information, citizen participation is virtually unattainable.
- ▶ *What Kind?*
 - a) Downward Dissemination*
 - b) Upward Dissemination*
- ▶ ***Media Attention***

9.0 Sustaining Participation ?

- ❑ Always a challenge?
- ❑ Working with stakeholders at the state and non-state levels to build consensus on interventions.
- ❑ Inclusion and commitment of key stakeholders in project delivery are critical

THANK YOU

