

**STRENGTHENING OUR POSITION AS A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR  
COMMUNITY MOBILISATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN GHANA  
IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19**

**GDCA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK  
2022 - 2025**



**DEVELOPMENT IN FRIENDSHIP**



# GDCA

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**September 2021**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 BRIEF HISTORY

Ghana Developing Communities Association (GDCA) was established in the early 80's as a counterpart to its Danish partners, Ghana Friends. The partnership has been based on friendship mooted by its pioneers led by Dr. Johannes Holm from the Danish side and the late Chairman of GDCA, Prof. Naa Abubakr Al-Hassan on the Ghana side. The partnership was to test direct cooperation between communities on the Danish side and their counterparts on the Ghanaian side. After four years of exchange visits, gifts, books, other educational materials, and other forms of value the partners decided to seek official funding. Consequently, a volunteer was sent from Denmark in 1984 to Ghana to explore the possibility of developing a project proposal. In that regard, the first DANIDA funding was established in 1986. Since then, the partnership has grown through several transformations. The organization has also grown by reaching out to other partners, expanding its scope and engagements.

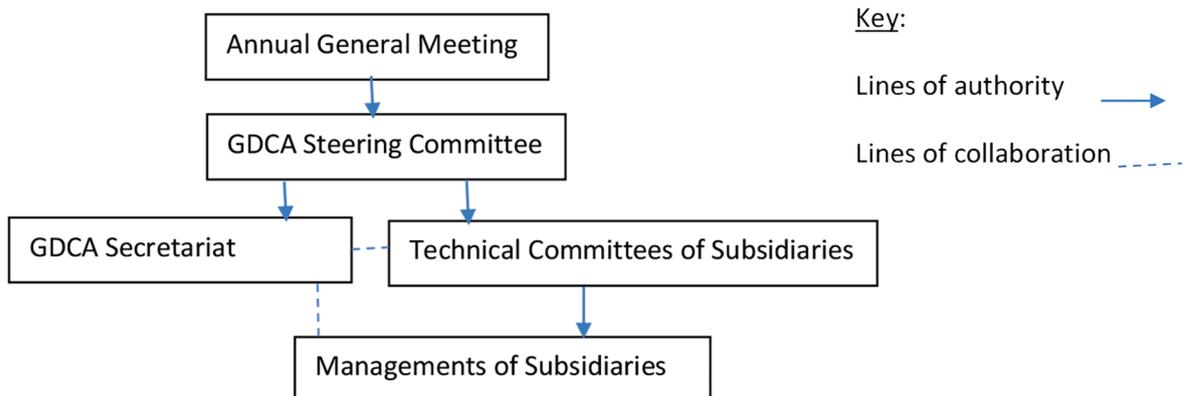
### 1.2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the highest decision-making organ of GDCA. The AGM comprises persons and entities who have

enrolled to be members of the organization and have voting rights. The AGM elect members of the Steering Committee, which is the overall governing board of the organisation. The AGM also elects the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the organisation who are also members of the Steering Committee.

GDCA is an umbrella organization, having facilitated the creation of subsidiary organizations to focus on specific thematic areas including School for Life for education, CLIP for food security, water and sanitation, Simli Radio for community radio, and Dalun Simli Centre for training and skills development, while GDCA itself focuses on community anchorage and crosscutting themes such as governance, gender, the environment, and internal coordination. As an umbrella organization, GDCA leads in the development of overall organizational policies as well as supporting subsidiary units in development and implementation of programmes and projects.

## ORGANOGRAM OF GDCA



### 1.3 MAJOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

GDCA's project portfolio has transformed over the period of development growing to a value of USD 1 million to 1.5 million per year. The key projects and programmes partner of GDCA has been Ghana Friends in Denmark with funding mainly from DANIDA with average annual turnover value of about USD 1million. Thus, over the last 36 years the GDCA has executed projects of approximately USD 45million. Key projects executed between the partners included the Ghana Danish Community Programme (GDGP), which went through six phases, the School for Life (SfL) programme, which went through three phases, and the Community Life Improvement Programme (CLIP), which went three phases. The CBO Network project and the CBO Empowerment project came to provide the basis for mobilizing local groups for development. The culmination these projects was the establishment of the Empowerment for Life programme (E4L), which has been running in its fourth phase currently. During these years more that 500 community infrastructure have been provided in the districts of operation. The SfL programme has delivered more than 300,000 out-of-school children to formal education through its Complementary Basic Education (CBE) programme. A network of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) has been formed from

the community level through District to the Regional level. More than 200,000 rural women have benefited from GDCA's micro-finance and other financial services including supporting more than 200 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) to mobilize more GH¢ 2 m over the ten-year period from 2010 to 2020. Community radio has had a great impact on the communities who are able to access the local radio station, Simli Radio. Communities are improving their lives through the education on the radio in areas of agriculture and climate change, politics, life skills, education, culture, and entertainment.

GDCA's work has also resulted in more than 20,000 young men and women acquiring skills and vocations in sewing, carpentry, masonry, mechanical craft, hair dressing, needlework and agriculture with the collaboration with GV, UNDP, UNIDO and other agencies. Current work community groups such as community development monitors, citizen journalists and others have resulted in the delivery of quality capital development projects provided by local authorities as well as improved service delivery by service providers such Ghana Education Service and Ghana Health Service through the citizens' monitoring of the delivery of these projects and services. These have been achieved through the support of Ghana's Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms project (GSAM) and the Empowerment for Life programme (E4L).



In recent times, GDCA has made inroads in the Agro-pastoralism sector through its partnership Acting for Life, French NGO. Under this partnership stakeholder awareness and understanding of the phenomenon of transhumance has been greatly enhanced. This has resulted in better relations between herders and communities, reducing conflicts as well as delivery of livestock infrastructure to local government areas, including water points, livestock markets, marked livestock mobility corridors, grazing reserves, and rest points for transhumants. The initiative is also being supported with the enhancement of quality meet production through the capacity building livestock farmers and fodder producers with an invention being supported by the ECOWAS Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF).

The work of GDCA with VSLAs has been enhanced with the support from Grameen Foundation of USA that aiming to increase financial services to VSLAs through Village Agents as well as helping women address gender-based violence (GBV) in the communities.

A recent entrant in GDCA's work is humanitarian volunteerism. GDCA's cooperation with ASPEm in Italy and ADICE in France has opened a new chapter in achieving development in the organization and the communities through the deployment of volunteers. The volunteers are helping in qualifying the work of GDCA while at the same time supporting specific projects that benefit communities. The programme is being funded by the European Union.



## 2. OUR BUSINESS CHALLENGE

### 2.1 VISION

The new vision statement of GDCA: **“An empowered and happy society”.**

### 2.2 MISSION STATEMENT

**Work to build resilient communities and work in partnerships with other CSOs, government and the private sector in Ghana and globally to influence inclusive development.**

GDCA will realize this dream by

- Holding duty bearers accountable
- Promoting equity in resource distribution
- Enhancing citizens' capacity to mobilize and take action
- Strategically positioning ourselves to deliver on our mandate

GDCA's role in realizing its dream

- Facilitating citizens' action
- Promoting stakeholder collaboration and dialogue
- Initiating action and rallying support around the action.

### 2.3 CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

GDCA will be guided in its work by the following core values:

- **Accountability**  
GDCA will seek to be accountable for all its actions. This will be demonstrated in all its relationships with its stakeholders including state agencies, donors, partners, other CSOs and especially its beneficiaries.
- **Transparency**  
GDCA will seek to show transparency in all its dealings. GDCA will seek to provide relevant information about its work and its conduct of business to its stakeholders including donors, partners, and especially its beneficiaries as far as the law, agreements and contracts will allow. We will continue to create platforms and other opportunities for stakeholders to have access to relevant information about GDCA.

## ■ EQUITY AND EGALITARIANISM

Social, economic and political equality is the ultimate goal of GDCA. The first step in achieving social and economic equality is to ensure equity for the disadvantaged and Society. In this regard the organization will seek to demonstrate its commitments to achieving social equality by providing level playing fields in all its engagements with those that it deals with.

## ■ HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

One of the core values of GDCA is honesty. In this regard, all staff members, board members and volunteers will demonstrate the highest form of honesty and integrity in their work and in dealing with outsiders.

## ■ NON-PARTISANSHIP

GDCA will stay politically neutral at all times. At the same time the organisation will seek to contain all shades of political diversity and in fact use that as a strength. Partisan conduct of its Board, staff members and volunteers will be denounced. However, GDCA will confront partisan policies and opinions that seek to discriminate against sections of society, especially the vulnerable.

Principles

## ■ NON-DISCRIMINATION AND FAIRNESS

GDCA will treat all persons and entities based on merit and not unduly favour them irrespective of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, colour or other characteristics.

## ■ GENDER SENSITIVITY

GDCA will be guided in its work by the socially constructed disparities in roles and responsibilities between men and women, and boys and girls that impact negatively against the other gender. GDCA will work towards ensuring that these disparities are reduced.

## ■ ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CORRUPTION

GDCA will have zero tolerance for corruption. The organization will seek to prevent, investigate, disclose, and take appropriate action to make corruption unattractive to its members, agents and collaborators.

## ■ VOLUNTEERISM

GDCA will seek to reinforce the spirit of volunteerism among staff, board members and collaborators where people freely choose to help, thereby generating well-being for communities and the society at large.



### 3. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 GHANA'S POLITICAL ECONOMY

Since 1984 Ghana's economy has grown steadily, at a rate widely considered to be among the most spectacular in Africa. The growth rate averaged 4.7 percent between 1983 and 2000, and 7.2 percent from 2000 until 2013, reaching an all-time high of 14.4 percent in 2011 with the onset of oil production. As a result of steady growth and the rebasing of the economy Ghana became a lower- middle income country as per capita GDP increased from US\$501.9 in 2005 to US\$1,604.9 in 2012. Over the past 25 years, the number of people in poverty has dropped significantly, from 52 percent in 1992 to 24 percent in 2013. There have also been notable improvements in education, health and other indicators.

Thirty years of steady growth, two decades of an open political culture, relatively peaceful multiparty electoral politics and administration transitions have burnished Ghana's status as an African model, often referred to in the rising Africa narrative. In spite of the positives in Ghana's democracy and economic performance the persisting problems of Ghana's political economy remain unresolved by 30 years of growth and also the new problems created by the strategy and policies responsible for the growth and the weaknesses in the political system.

Ghana's sustainable development is faced with the question of the growing inequalities and exclusion shaped by the dominant neoliberal economic policies and the quality of growth that has resulted as such.

#### 3.2 CORRUPTION

Much ink has been used on the subject of the canker of corruption (IMF 2016; World Bank 2015). Corruption is a big canker in Ghana. According to Transparency International Corruption exists in all branches of Ghanaian government (TI, 2018) and that there is widespread corruption. Sectors worst affected by corruption include natural resource management, the judiciary and police. It is estimated that Ghana loses USD 3bn annually to corruption (OCCDP, 2019).

#### 3.3 DECENTRALIZATION

Ghana has a long history of decentralization, which predates the country's independence. The current system of decentralization takes its roots from a military regime under which the PNDC Law 207 was promulgated in 1988. Since then, the country has undertaken several legislative and structural reforms. At the heart of Ghana's decentralization is the desire of giving "voice" to citizens in local governance.

Metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs), along with complementary sub-structures, are the major features of Ghana's decentralized local government system initiated in the early 1990s. The core functions of MMDAs, as set out in the 1993 Local Government Act (Act 462), include ensuring the overall development of the district by a) preparing district development plans and budgets, b) initiating programs for the development of basic infrastructure, and c) providing municipal works and services in their jurisdictions. The latest law Local Governance Act 2016 (Act 936) seeks to deepen citizens' participation in the decentralization process by specifically delineating structures that are expected to function to realize that objective. Ghana's local government system is aimed at bringing governance to the doorsteps of citizens. In pursuit of this, governments have tended to create new districts from time to time. With 261 MMDAs by the end of 2020, the debate is whether the creation of new districts is making the desired impact or are governments merely engaged in fragmentation of the country for political reasons. This debate is emanating from the fact that districts have not seen the desired developments, and at the same time there is a high tendency by the central government to re-centralize some MMDA functions. Many MMDAs remain deficient in basic infrastructure and human resources. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana sets the foundation for local governance legislation. The constitution and subsequent legislation direct the creation of the District Assemblies Common Fund which is at least 5% of Government's total tax revenue to be allocated and distributed to MMDAs to finance their development plans.

Various Governments have failed to fully implement this provision by spending sometimes up to 50% of the allocation at the national level on behalf of MMDAs (Auditor-General's Report 2017). At other times, MMDAs are forced to implement national programmes and projects of the central government. Typical examples are sanitation programmes, the Ghana School Feeding Programme and the Nation Builders' Corps.

Transparency International 2018:

<https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2018/index/gha> accessed 4 April 2022

Afrobarometer: <https://afrobarometer.org/publications/ad23-ghanas-decentralization-locally-centralized-decision-making-ill-serves-its-public> accessed 14 April 2021

### 3.4 COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The world was struck with the deadly pandemic early in the year 2020. Ghana is no exception to the Coronavirus pandemic. Several aspects of life were affected by the pandemic. Apart from the fact that people get sick with a virus there has been uncertainty and fear amongst the populations. People's lives have been affected not just by the disease, but also by the measures that have been imposed by the government to control the spread of the virus. Ghana experienced a second wave of the pandemic at the end of 2020 into the early part of 2021. This was attributed to a number of activities, notably political party activities that culminated in the general elections in December 2020. During these periods people ignored safety protocols whilst they engaged in vibrant political activities.

The impact of the pandemic has come in several forms including job losses as well as restrictions on mobility and personal interactions. The imposition of lockdowns meant that people whose businesses depended on personal interactions were constrained. The observance of the protocols comes with costs and this is posing a further burden on the POPULATION,

especially women and children in poor communities. The pandemic has brought in the opportunity to upscale the use of technology in business and work. However, a vast proportion of the population has access to only mobile telephony. Digital literacy is low especially among women. Consequently, many citizens could not take advantage of measures to enhance businesses such as the temporary removal charges on mobile money transfers and increase in limits of transactions on the platform.

The impact of the pandemic on education has been great and will take a long time to fully recover. Schools had been closed for more than eight months. Many children, especially those in poor and rural communities had stopped learning. They could not take advantage of online, on-air and televised learning platforms established in an attempt to bridge the gap. With the reopening schools, authorities have to deal with the numbers of students to ensure that preventive protocols such as physical distancing were realized, amidst the constraint of inadequate learning spaces. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the realization of CSOs, governments, donors and all stakeholders that everyone can be taken by surprise at any time at work and people's lives as a whole. Governments must support efforts by CSOs to engage in dealing with emergencies. CSOs should be included in the planning and execution of emergency activities. Unfortunately, many activities are politicized by the government, even including times of emergencies. The distribution of relief items, business support programmes, and contracting are some of the activities targeted at party faithful's. Accountability for resource allocation and utilization during the pandemic remains to be fully accomplished.



### 3.5 PRO-POOR POLICIES AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Despite the positive trends in economic growth of Ghana in the last three decades, the rate of inequality has increased with disparities both between and within regions, and between rural and urban areas. Nearly one person out of ten still lives in extreme poverty. The extremely poor are particularly vulnerable to sickness, unemployment, disability and loss of assets. This in turn increases the risk of falling even further into poverty and deprivation.

The poorest groups of the population are mainly small-scale farmers. While they produce enough cereals and tubers for household consumption, access to livestock and fish is limited and the food sources are primarily carbohydrates, resulting in limited variation in diet. According to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, there is evidence that the significant poverty reduction demonstrated in the south has not been replicated in the north of the country. Ghana Government has introduced a number of pro-poor policies and social protection programmes with the aim of alleviating poverty and addressing inequalities that persist in spite of progress made in development generally.

These include

#### ■ THE GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME (GSFP)

The Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) was launched in 2005 in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goal concerning the reduction of hunger. It is an initiative of the comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) pillar 3 assisted by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The costs of the GSFP are shared between the GoG and donors. Children in deprived public primary schools and kindergartens shall get one hot, nutritious meal a day. The meal should be prepared from locally grown foodstuffs.

#### ■ THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME (NHIS)

The Government of Ghana established the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) under Act 650 in 2003. The scheme was launched in order to provide basic healthcare services to persons resident in the country through mutual and private health insurance schemes". It was launched to replace the former cash and carry system which forced the people to pay money in cash when they needed to see a doctor or to go to a hospital.

#### ■ LIVELIHOOD EMPOWERMENT AGAINST POVERTY PROGRAMME (LEAP)

The Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) Social Grant Scheme is a Programme of Ghana's Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE), which is supposed to decrease the poverty level in Ghana and to provide a better life for the Ghanaian population. It started as a 5-year-pilot programme from 2008 to 2012 and it contains financial support of Orphan/ Vulnerable Children, people over 65 years and people with disabilities. Some 18.2% of Ghanaians are classified as "extremely poor" and form the target of LEAP. The cash transfers are funded from the GoG budget.

UNICEF, 2020. <https://www.unicef.org/ghana/social-policy-and-protection>

Ministry of Gender, 2015. GHANA NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICY

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, n.d. Social Protection in Ghana: A review of existing programmes and their challenges and prospects

#### ■ THE FREE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMME

The Free Senior High School (FSHS) Program requires that every Ghanaian child who is placed into a public Second Cycle Institution by the Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) during the school placement process is eligible for a free SHS education. The importance of teaching and learning materials as a tool for achieving quality learning outcomes cannot be over emphasized. Teaching and learning materials, together with a well-trained teacher and a willing student,

are key elements for achieving learning outcomes. The Free SHS program, therefore, provides students with core textbooks, supplementary readers' notebooks and exercise books and, where applicable, free drawing instruments at no cost to them.

The Free Senior High School program implemented in September 2017 provided hope to children who otherwise could not have furthered their education after junior high school mostly due to cost barriers. In the 2016/17 academic year, the number of children who qualified and had been placed in senior high school but could not enroll stood at 11,336 out of a total of 420,135 who were placed. However, in the 2017/18 academic year, following the introduction of the Free Senior High School program, this number dropped to 62,453 out of 424,224 who were placed in senior high schools. Clearly therefore, more children were accessing senior high school.

With the government's determination that no child should be left behind, the Double Track (DT) system was introduced after consultation with stakeholders. The DT aims to tackle the issue of increased student demand with limited infrastructure in many preferred Senior High Schools across the nation. It sought to achieve four major aims with existing infrastructure:

1. Create room to accommodate the increase in enrollment.
2. Reduce class sizes
3. Increase contact hours with teachers.
4. Increase the number of holidays (especially for teachers).

As stated in Article 251b of the 1992 Constitution, "Secondary education in its different forms including technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education."

Goal 4 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) states: "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free equitable and quality primary and secondary

education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes." It has therefore been a priority of the government and the Ministry of Education to ensure that education is made free from basic to secondary to afford more children in Ghana the opportunity to access quality education. In September 2017, the Ministry achieved a major milestone with the implementation of the Free Senior High School program. That year, there was an 11% increase in enrolment, breaking records from previous years. In the 2017/18 academic year, a new record was set with the highest enrolment ever seen in the country: over 470,000 students enrolled in senior high school.

#### ■ **PLANTING FOR FOOD AND JOBS (PFJ)**

The Planting for Food and Job is a policy that has been introduced by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) Government to help address the declining growth of Ghana's agricultural sector. It is a clarion call on every single Ghanaian to take farming as a full time or part time activity. It is a medium-term policy which is geared towards increasing food productivity and ensure food security for the country as well as reduce food import bills to the barest minimum. It is also an avenue to modernize agriculture and make it a source of employment for the teeming youths. The concept of the program reveals a policy that has been introduced by the Government of Ghana to address the declining growth of the country's agricultural sector. This programme is spearheaded by the Ministry for Food and Agriculture as a package to encourage Ghanaians to take farming more seriously than in the recent past. It aims to make farming a respectable and profitable venture that create jobs. It responds to an essential message of the President Nana Akufo Addo, issued in his inaugural address to Ghanaians of all walks of life to be mobilized to take part in Ghana's development agenda. It is a campaign with 5 Implementation Modules which the Minister constantly illustrates with the imagery of a woman pregnant with five children.

The policy is built on five major pillars:

1. Supply of Improved Seeds to farmers at subsidized prices (50% subsidy)
2. Supply of fertilizers to farmers at

3. Free extension services to farmers (1200 extension officers from the five main agricultural colleges already enrolled onto the program. Additional 4,000 extension assistants to be mobilized)
4. Marketing opportunities for produce after harvest, (arrangements have been made to offer ready markets for farmers who will be participating in the campaign)
5. E-Agriculture (a technological platform to monitor and track activities and progress of farmers through a database system)

The first Module promotes food security crops, namely: maize, rice, sorghum and soybean and vegetable crops (onion, tomato, pepper, etc.). This has since been expanded to include groundnut, cabbage, carrots, cucumber, lettuce, cassava, cowpea, plantain and orange. The Ministry is working closely with all MMDCEs to own the flagship programme and ensure it receives the necessary attention to speed up the economic development of the country.

#### ■ NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NDA)

The Northern Development Authority (NDA) was set up by an Act of Parliament, Act 963, 2017 to provide a framework for the accelerated economic and social development of the Northern Development Zone (NDZ) and for

related matters. The NDA also serves as the agency for the implementation of the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Programme (IPEP). It must be noted that section 35(1) for the NDA Act repealed SADA, which was established by an Act of Parliament under Act 805 of 2010.

The core objectives of the NDA are to:

- Accelerate the economic and social development in the Northern Development Zone through strategic direction in the planning and prioritization of development projects;
- Mobilize public resources including financial resources and private and public investments for the accelerated economic and social development of the Northern Development Zone;
- Co-ordinate development activities in the Northern Development Zone with the aim of ensuring that public resources are effectively utilized; and private sector investments achieve maximum development impacts to reduce poverty and deprivation in every part of the zone; and
- Formulate and implement initiatives that will achieve gender equality and empowerment of vulnerable groups in the Northern Development Zone



### 3.6 OTHER HUMANITARIAN SITUATIONS

The GDCA's operational areas are prone to other humanitarian situations apart from the COVID-19 pandemic. Many communities get flooded often during the rainy season, causing human settlements, farms, and grazing fields to go under flood waters for a long periods of time. Several communities are cut-off due to floods. In other years, severe droughts set in, causing crop losses and the spread of wildfires.

The area is also prone to various forms of conflicts arising from chieftaincy disputes, land ownership disputes, ethnic, and religious disputes.

The result of these occurrences is the loss of abode, food and livelihoods, leading to the displacement of victims, thereby raising the need for shelter, food, medicines and clothing.



### 4 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESS, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

The analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

#### **STRENGTHS**

- Experienced human resource
- Physical resources (equipment, vehicles, office space, etc)
- Multi-sectoral
- Credibility
- Good corporate image (reputation)
- Long time experience working at the grassroots (legitimacy)
- Strong governance system
- Networking and partnerships
- Good relationship with the traditional authority
- Good geographical spread
- Demonstrated sustainability
- Demonstrated non-partisanship
- Strong financial accounting system/ good financial management skills
- Recognition by MMDAs

#### **WEAKNESSES**

- Low visibility
- Inadequate research and policy analysis capacity
- Donor dependency
- Inadequate resources in relation to activities
- Inadequate internal resources
- Inadequate skills in emerging issues

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- CSOs availability for new partnerships
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Agro-pastoralism is a growing concern
- Favourable government policies and programmes

## **THREATS**

- Emerging pandemics and natural disasters
- Unstable donor landscape
- Unfavorable Government policies (e.g., Ghana Beyond Aid)
- Chieftaincy and land disputes
- Political interference

### Key issues/key focus areas

1. Organizational visibility
2. Financial sustainability (high donor dependency)
3. Knowledge management
4. Conflicts (land and chieftaincy disputes)
5. Unfavorable government policies
6. Partnerships and Networking
7. Programme development
8. Capacity building (CBOs and Staff)
9. Internal Coordination

## **5. KEY STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**

Stakeholder analysis is an important component of this strategy document. The major stakeholders identified have been categorized into local, regional, national and global/international stakeholders/partners. The local level stakeholders refer to the community and district level structures. Traditional authorities at the local level also form an important group. Some of the regional level stakeholders can also be found at the district level and the same holds for the national level stakeholders, who can also be found at the regional level in this analysis.

### **5.1 LOCAL LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS**

The work of GDCA over the years has helped to develop, institutionalize and nurture local community groups, traditional organizations and structured groups collectively referred to as community-based organizations (CBOs). The work of GDCA greatly depends on the activities of these groups at the community, area, district and regional levels. The CBOs work with various themes including local governance, education, food security, local economic development and livelihoods, which are key in the design and implementation of various strategies of the organization. The various community groups

seek to be included in the decision-making process of GDCA and GDCA continue to work towards this through various platforms, including the Annual General Meetings, Denmark Seminars and other local level platforms.

GDCA has worked with women group networks across its operational areas. In all its programmes and projects, GDCA ensures that both men and women have equal representation during interactions. The engagements that are organised include both men and women. In addition, GDCA ensures that at least 40% women are included in the groups that are selected for project activities, for example targeting the women leaders of the various groups.

At the community and district levels, many MMDAs, GDCA has a large constituency of CBOs, who have been networked into CBO Networks from the community, area and district through to the regional level. The CBO networks are used to mobilize the target groups of women, youth and socially excluded groups to participate in projects and programmes activities. GDCA collaborates with the district and local branches of Ghana Society of People with Disabilities (GSPD) to mobilize its groups and members for GDCA projects and programmes to enhance the participation of the socially excluded groups as well as reduce discrimination against these marginalized groups.

Over the years, GDCA has worked with traditional system including chiefs, opinion leaders, youth leaders, religious leaders and women leaders. The traditional authorities (Tas) have supported GDCA in various ways, including donating land for development as well as supporting programme implementation in their communities. The other community leaders have been instrumental in establishing and maintaining community structures that support the work and activities of GDCA.



## 5.2 REGIONAL LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

At the regional level, GDCA will seek collaboration with influential CSOs in the area at this level to support in the design of project interventions that are most suitable and meet the needs of the target groups at the local level.

GDCA will continue to foster collaboration with key state agencies and CSOs such as the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), SEND Ghana and the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana). The NCCE is key in information sharing with citizens' groups at both the District and Regional levels. CHRAJ is another important collaborator of GDCA in education and training of women, girls and traditional authorities on human rights issues such as domestic violence, early marriage and harmful cultural practices affecting women and young girls. GDCA will collaborate with Oxfam in Ghana, with whom GDCA has collaborated in working with MMDAs in the Savannah Region through a consortium. GDCA will further seek collaboration with CSOs with influence such as Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) and the Local Governance Network (LoGNet), who have experience in many areas. GDCA will collaborate with the Regional Command of the Ghana Police Service as well the Northern Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) to achieve the objectives of its project interventions.

GDCA has influence as a member of the Northern Network for Education Development (NNED) to establish partnership with more CSOs in Northern Ghana. GDCA has

collaborated with the Tamale Chapter of the Ghana Journalist Association (GJA) in the past with success and is willing to continue with this kind of collaboration. Other significant CSO partners of GDCA at the regional level include NORSAAC, Rural Media Network (RUMNET), YefL Ghana and the West Africa Network Program (WANEP-Ghana). Regional Radio stations include Justice FM, Zaa Radio, Might FM, Kesmi FM and North Star Radio

## 5.3 NATIONAL LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

At the National level, GDCA is able to relate well with CSOs of great influence and tenacity. These include ISODEC Ghana, the Local Governance Network (LoGNet) and STAR Ghana, who have experience in many areas. These organizations have expertise in carrying out research at the national and international levels, which can provide leverage for evidence-based advocacy and engagement. Similarly, ISODEC and SEND-Ghana have expertise in policy analysis and engagement at the national level, which can provide leverage for GDCA to engage at that level in various policy issues. Community Development Alliance (CDA), Community Development and Advocacy Centre (CODAC) and the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge for Development (CIKOD) are CSOs operating in the Upper-East and Upper-West regions of Ghana. These organizations can provide leverage for GDCA to reach out to these regions. NORSAAC, Rural Media Network (RUMNET) and ISODEC offer opportunities for collaboration on joint project proposals and implementation, since they have similar orientation as GDCA. approaches and interest areas.

Important networks in Ghana relevant to GDCA and its units include the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC), Local Governance Network (LOGNet) the Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS) and the CSO Platform on Oil and Gas. GNECC is significant in terms of engagement on educational policies at the national level. LOGNet is relevant in the area of people's participation in local governance. CSO Platform on Oil and Gas has history of mobilizing CSOs in the Northern, Upper-East and Upper-West Regions around governance issues, while CONIWAS is a national level coalition of CSOs working in the area of water and sanitation issues.

Relevant state agencies at the national level include the Northern Region Coordinating Councils (RCCs), Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Ghana Education Service (GES), Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and the Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC). Others are the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS), University for Development Studies (UDS), the Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) and the Northern Development Authority (NDA). GDCA has related cordially with national media in promoting its work. Both national Radio and Television as well as the Print media are mobilized and engaged periodically. Significant media partners include Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (for radio and television), Ghana News Agency, Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times.

## 5.4 GLOBAL LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

At the global level, our Danish partner; the Ghana Friends (GV) has been the most relevant international partner, which has contributed in terms of financial support to shape the nature and scope of GDCA. GDCA has engaged with GV for nearly 40 years of partnership, which has come to share in the vision and beliefs that have shaped the functioning and programming of the organization over the years. Through this partnership, GDCA derives its institutional learning, organization capacity and strategy development.

Acting for Life (AFL) has become another significant partner to GDCA. In the last six years the partnership has been growing with increase in the amount and number of the programme portfolio. The partnership with AFL has focused on transhumance involving other CSOs in the West Africa subregion. GDCA is seeking to nurture and grow the partnership and to explore other areas of intervention.

GDCA has worked with and continues to work with other global development partners and sponsors. Significant among these are the UK Department for International Development (DfID), the United States of America International Development Assistance (USAID), the European Union (EU), the DANIDA/Danish Embassy in Ghana, the United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), STAR-Ghana Foundation, and Tzedek. In the past, there was more direct contact with these Development Partners. However, the emphasis in recent times have been shifting towards working more in coalitions and partnerships.



## 6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### Strategic Objective 1: Build resilient and empowered society and work with other CSOs for inclusive development (CSO capacity)

The strategies and activities include:

- a. To build CSO capacity to mobilize and take action
  - i. Increase access to platforms for engagement with duty bearers
  - ii. Build capacity of citizens to organize and engage meaningfully with duty bearers
  - iii. Facilitate participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups
  - iv. Undertake election observation
  
- b. To strengthen peace and social harmony
  - i. Build citizens capacity in peacebuilding (prevention, management and resolution)
  - ii. Collaborate with stakeholders in peace building
  - iii. Facilitate re-activation of Peace and Drama Clubs
  - iv. Facilitate the use of forum theatre during election periods
  
- c. To establish partnerships and collaboration with other CSOs
  - i. Identify likeminded CSOs
  - ii. Identify areas of partnership and collaboration
  - iii. Sign partnership MoUs/Agreements with identified CSOs
  
- d. To build climate change resilient communities
  - i. Create community level climate change platforms
  - ii. Sensitize communities on climate change resilience
  - iii. Facilitate community engagements with climate change institutions



## **Strategic Objective 2: Enhance equity in resource distribution at local, national and global levels**

The strategies and activities under this strategic objective include:

- a. To facilitate policy advocacy through partnerships and networking at local, national and global levels
  - i. Evidenced-based advocacy
  - ii. Partner and collaborate with like-minded organizations
  - iii. Building partnerships, collaborations and networks
  - iv. Build movements around specific issue
  - v. Undertake policy analysis
  - vi. Engagement of MMDAs, MDAs, etc
  - vii. Policy briefs/statements/position papers
  - viii. Information dissemination on relevant policies
- b. To increase social, political and economic accountability
  - i. Facilitate social auditing
  - ii. Facilitate social accountability
  - iii. Create platforms for accountability
  - iv. Budget/resource tracking
  - v. Media engagements



### Strategic objective 3: Undertake humanitarian services and respond to emergencies

The purpose of GDCA's humanitarian interventions is to provide immediate relief to distressed communities and populations, support them to build resilience and eventually to become empowered to avoid or minimize the impact of such distresses.

The strategies and activities include:

- a. To respond to humanitarian situations
  - i. Create an inventory management system for quick access to essential supplies and services to respond to emergencies
  - ii. Facilitate emergency delivery of services to communities experiencing disasters
  - iii. Collaborate with other stakeholder in emergency response
  - iv. Organize voluntary programmes
- b. To build resilience of vulnerable communities
  - i. Build capacities of vulnerable groups to prepare and respond to recover from disaster situations
  - ii. Provide strategic service delivery
  - iii. Facilitate community self-help initiatives
- c. To promote Volunteerism
  - i. Develop a volunteer management system and strategies
  - ii. Host international and local volunteers to support humanitarian services
  - iii. Contribute to the development of volunteerism
- d. To develop policies on humanitarian services
  - i. Develop emergency response plan
- e. To develop internal capacity in humanitarian services
  - i. Facilitate capacity needs assessment
  - ii. Develop capacity development plan
  - iii. Develop training, coaching and monitoring modules



## **Strategic Objective 4: Strengthen our position as a Centre of Excellence in the practice of community engagement and mobilization**

The strategies and activities include:

- a. To strengthen institutional capacity of GDCA to advance the interest and rights of citizens to influence development in Ghana
  - i. Review resource mobilization sustainability strategy
  - ii. Communication strategy
  - iii. Develop staff capacity
  - iv. Strengthen Knowledge Management System (KMS)
  - v. Establish networking and partnership strategy
  - vi. Review branding and marketing strategy
- b. To share best practices that promote community development in Ghana
  - i. Research, documentation and communication
  - ii. Create or take advantage of platforms for sharing best practices
  - iii. Establish resilient/robust feedback mechanism
  - iv. Research. Documentation, communication and advocacy
  - v. Provide advisory/consultancy services in community development



## **7 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

### **7.1 Enabling Factors**

- Financial resources
- Programme relevance
- Human resources
- Programme planning
- Enabling environment
- Effective collaboration among/with key stakeholders
- Risk management plan
- Programme/project phase-out strategy
- Open communication
- Effective coordination

## 7.2 RESTRAINING FACTORS

Unfavorable political environment/interference  
Inadequate resources  
Natural disasters/conflicts/pandemics  
Changes in international aid/donor policies - donor fatigue  
Negative cultural practices  
Unfavorable government policies  
High rate of competition for resources  
Bureaucracy  
Frequent transfer of key staff in government institutions

## 7.3 ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

### Assumptions

1. Favorable/stable donor policies
2. Favorable government policies
3. Sustained peace in the operational areas
4. Favorable socio-political environment

### Risks

1. Natural disasters/climate change
2. Donor fatigue/limited donor funds
3. Conflicts/war
4. Political unrest/unstable political climate
5. Unfavorable/unstable monetary policies
6. Over politicization of development issues



## MANAGEMENT OF RISK AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risk description	Likelihood of occurrence	Likely impact (Low, Moderate or High)	Mitigating measures
Natural disasters/climate change	moderate	Moderate	Disaster risk planning and monitoring
Donor fatigue/limited donor funds	Moderate	High	Diversify funding sources
Conflicts/war	Low	Moderate	Train communities on early warning systems and reporting
Political unrest/unstable political climate	Low	Moderate	Stay politically neutral
Unfavorable/unstable monetary policies	Low	Moderate	Monitor developments in monetary policies
Over politicization of development issues	Moderate	Moderate	Stay politically neutral; enforce GDCA guidelines on partisan politics

## 8 EXCELLENCE IN EXECUTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Ensure alignment with stakeholders
  - Joint planning sessions
  - Consultations
  - Assign/share roles
  - Circulate strategic plan
  
2. Dissemination
  - Workshops
  - Publish on website and social media
  - Launch the strategic plan
  - Share with key stakeholders
  - Produce a summarized version in the form of brochures
  - Produce a documentary/visual
  - Conduct targeted/purposeful dissemination (conferences, exhibitions, etc)
  - Produce articles (T-Shirts, caps, wrist bands, calendars, diaries, newsletters, etc)

### 3. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Key Objective	Indicator(s)
<b>SO1: Build resilient and empowered society with other CSOs for inclusive development</b>	
<b>KO1.1: To build CSO capacity to mobilize and take action</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of CSOs taking actions on community issues</li> <li>2. Number of community issues addressed by CSOs</li> <li>3. Number of CSOs that have formalized their operations (e.g. Registration with MMDAs, DSW, etc.)</li> <li>4. % of CBOs with increased organizational capacity to mobilize and take actions</li> </ol>
<b>KO1.2: To strengthen peace and social harmony</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of communities taking action on peace promotion</li> <li>2. Number of peacebuilding actions undertaken in collaboration with relevant stakeholders</li> <li>3. Number of support structures created</li> </ol>
<b>KO1.3: To enhance diversity, inclusion and equity (vulnerability depends on where people live and what they do. Women and children are vulnerable people. Minority and marginality refer to people who are denied certain services)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number projects undertaken with financial inclusion for women groups</li> <li>2. % of women groups that have improved in their livelihoods as a result of financial inclusion</li> <li>3. Number of projects targeted at minority groups initiated</li> <li>4. Number of projects of women -access to productive resources</li> </ol>
<b>KO1.4: To establish partnerships and collaboration with other CSOs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of partnerships established</li> <li>2. Number on CSOs involved</li> </ol>
<b>KO1.5: To build climate change resilient communities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Number of communities reached</li> <li>4. Number of groups involved</li> <li>5. Number of citizens involved</li> </ol>
<b>SO2: Enhance equity in resource distribution at local, national and global levels</b>	
<b>KO2.1: To facilitate policy advocacy through partnership and networking at the local, national and global level</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of policy advocacy actions undertaken</li> <li>2. Number of partnerships/coalitions established and working</li> </ol>
<b>KO2.2: To increase socio-political and economic accountability</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of accountability platforms created for engagements</li> <li>2. Number of accountability platforms functional</li> <li>3. Number of accountability engagements undertaken</li> </ol>
<b>SO3: Undertake humanitarian services and response to emergencies</b>	
<b>KO3.1: To undertake humanitarian services</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of humanitarian situations attended to</li> <li>2. Number of emergency situations supported</li> <li>3. Number of victims reached and supported</li> </ol>
<b>KO3.2: To promote voluntary services</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of international volunteers hosted</li> <li>2. Number of local volunteers hosted</li> <li>3. A comprehensive volunteer strategy in place</li> <li>4. Number of volunteer services undertaken by GDCA</li> </ol>
<b>KO3.3: To develop policies on humanitarian services</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Policy on humanitarian services developed</li> <li>2. Number of policies implemented</li> </ol>

	3. % of response to humanitarian situations
<b>KO3.4: To develop internal capacity in humanitarian services</b>	1. Number of staff trained in humanitarian services 2. Number of staff engaged in humanitarian services 3. Number of actions taken in humanitarian services by staff
<b>SO4: Become a Centre of excellence in the practice of community engagement and mobilization</b>	
<b>KO4.1: To strengthen institutional capacity of GDCA to advance the interest and rights of citizens to influence development in Ghana</b>	1. Number of relevant strategies developed 2. Number of staff trained in relevant capacity areas 3. A functional knowledge management system 4. Number of Board meetings held per year 5. Number of AGMs organized 6. Number of coordination meetings held per year 7. Level of compliance with statutory requirements
<b>KO4.2: To share best practices that promote community development in Ghana</b>	1. Number of platforms created for sharing best practices 2. Number of platforms used for sharing best practices 3. Number of researches conducted and documented 4. Number of best practices shared 5. Number of best practices adapted and replicated

## 9. STRATEGIES TO REALIZE PRIORITIES AND OVERCOME CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Review communication strategy
2. Resource mobilization strategy
3. Sustainability strategy
4. Knowledge management strategy
5. Internal coordination policy
6. Programme phase-out strategy

### Engaging key stakeholders

- Identify key stakeholders
- Conduct stakeholder analysis
- Undertake strategic community entry
- Assign roles and responsibilities
- Maintain active contact with stakeholders
- Deal with them professionally

### Dealing with Gatekeepers

- Identify gatekeepers
- Build appropriate relationship with them
- Identify focal persons



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# **GHANA DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES ASSOCIATION (GDCA)**

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**WE WORK HERE**

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