ABOUT US
CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS KNWLEDGE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD) is a non-profit organization registered in Ghana under the Companies Code in 2003. Our purpose is to transform indigenous institutions and local groups into vibrant grassroots civil society organizations that would enhance participation of rural communities in their own development processes. CIKOD aims to facilitate dialogue on the role of indigenous knowledge and institutions in modern day community development and empowerment.

The work of CIKOD since 2012 has so far succeeded in strengthening chiefs and traditional women leaders in Ghana for the provision of leadership at the community level for community development initiatives. There is however little work at making visible the myriad of other indigenous institutions and strengthening them as vehicles for community participation.

DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

3.1 International

Moving from Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) engendered the re-alignment of development strategies. With an increase emphasis on climate change and a recognition for indigenous knowledge, resilience, and a people's culture has encouraged CIKOD to double her efforts at development interventions.

Principally, CIKOD has always worked in this domain. In-sink with CIKOD's attention for Family Farming and Eco-friendly Farming, CIKOD has found itself in the frontline as regards advocacies against Genetically Modified Organism (GMOs). CIKOD is a strong advocate of indigenous seed sovereignties and bio-cultural protocols. All these laudable ideas need to be in tandem with the SDGs in order to leverage CIKOD's voice and space for advocacy also at the international level.

National Relevance

In Ghana, in spite of a modern political organizational system, the majority of the people (in the rural areas) are still organized around their indigenous knowledge and their indigenous institutions for carrying out the activities that are important for their development and well being.

In fact, civil society in rural Ghana is embedded within these indigenous institutions and systems, and remain the key factors facilitating the organization of people at the rural level for their socio-economic development. Civil society at the rural level is visible in the form of indigenous organizations such as *Nnoboa* groups, *asafo* groups, *susu* groups, clan networks, hometown associations, etc that are the structures through which poor rural families organize their social, economic and political lives. The resilience of rural people in spite of the serious deprivation at the rural level may be largely attributed to these institutions and forms of organization. Yet these opportunities for sustainable community mobilization for self development have been undermined and ignored over the years by development practitioners.

At the policy level, the current advocacy against the Plant Breeders Bill has received extensive input for CIKOD. This is consequential to her position on GMOs.

Also in Ghana, CIKOD is one of the lead organisations that is reconstructing indigenous organizations as self-initiated/ self-help groups that are based on traditional norms of trust and reciprocity. In the bid to target at the poorest in the community, CIKOD is working with like-minded organisations in Ghana to contribute this niche for national plans, the currently on-going development of a 40-Year National Development Plan not being an exception. Giving space and place to traditional authorities is gradually impacting on national level plans that are beginning to recognise the developmental roles of especially the Queens/ Queen Mothers. Some specific significant occurrences include:

I. Agriculture: The policy direction for agricultural development still remains "modernization of agriculture" by which government policy is directed at intensification of agriculture through increased use of inputs and technology. Ghana was one of the first to sign the ARIPO (Africa Regional protocol although this is still not ratified by Parliament because of the sustained advocacy by CSOs. There is however a gradual response to the call for policy consideration for AE technologies. Government recently announced a subsidy for producing and distributing compost manure in addition to chemical fertilizers

II. Social protection: In the last few years, Ghana has launched a number of social protection programmes, such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), the school feeding programme, and now the Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) social grants programme. According a World Bank report, the LEAP programme has been most successful having met 50% of its target.

III. Governance: traditional authorities remain very relevant for community development. Women traditional leaders have now been formerly admitted into the national and regional houses of chiefs. There is however an emerging challenge of TWLs becoming increasingly divide up into splinter TWL associations and getting increasingly influenced by political party politics. There is also an increasing trend towards discrimination between the Paramount and divisional queens.

IV. Decentralization of governance is advanced in Ghana. However there is also a trend towards recentralization

V. Global strategy for mobilizing and addressing global development challenges has moved from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs focus on facilitating development from a 3-bottom line perspective – paying equal attention to addressing social, economic and environmental concerns.

VI. Funding partner are now more inclined towards funding social enterprise project rather the purely social development ones.

3.4 Local Relevance

At the Community Level CIKOD's work hinges on three pillars: Indigenous Knowledge (IK), Community Resilience (CR), and Endogenous Development (ED). All these are within the context of women empowerment and poverty alleviation. CIKOD's specific areas of relevance include:
- A lot of experience in how to engage TAs in development interventions
- A focus on Transparency & Accountability issues with TAs

- Supporting communities to have a collective voice to address issues and advocate for change with government institutions.
- Development of Methodologies for constructive community engagements in their self-development.
- Seed and natural resource development activities with communities.
- Action Researches conducting in-depth research into our specialized areas of IK.
- Revitalizing and reconstruct Resilient Communities (CR)

Where CIKOD is coming from (a trend discussion)

Started with Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA), then included integrated pest management and Indigenous knowledge. Now focusing more on facilitating endogenous development, nature conservation and sustainable development. Now engaging in policy influencing using community-led legal instruments such as community protocols and capacity building.

In moving forward

Choosing ED means going against the dominant paradigms. The focus therefor has been to develop tools for ED, test and modify them and build evidence of the added value of ED approaches. There is a growing trend towards promoting ED for WASH and for production and regeneration of vegetation for climate change. Trends towards water sovereignty for agroecological food production and women empowerment is a growing development in cikod. Doing advocacy work as part of a network (the Agroecology and food sovereignty platform) and not as stand alone effort is the trend now. Ckod is also increasingly advocating for the mainstreaming of ED approach in culture and development. For institutional sustainability cikod is increasingly embarking on aggressive financial sustainability and working out a fund management strategy (Fund Manager)

3.6 Strategic Directions from Previous Work

Form above the following Strategic Directions emerge for consideration:
- Engage in long term advocacy and policy influencing
- Place on the development radar indigenous knowledge and organisational development
- Mainstream (women) traditional authorities into formal development and politico-governance issues in Ghana.
- Provide alternatives to western style development interventions and external knowledges.
- Upscale endogenous development and community resilience as a key development approach.

CIKOD'S CORE VALUES, AND APPROACH

Core Values

The core valus of CIKOD remain:

- CIKOD are committed to promoting an Endogenous Development (ED) approach in our work in order to ensure that our work is community driven and that we are building the capacity of communities.
- CIKOD believe in a sustainable approach to community development and work with indigenous knowledge systems.
- As an organisation we believe that all staff need to be committed and have a passion for the work we do.

- We strive to build an organisation that promotes respect, toleration and in which people feel happy to work.
- CIKOD believe that it is important to build an organisation that is accountable and transparent in what we do.

CIKOD Approach

The Community Organizational Development (COD) approach and techniques, developed by CIKOD and its associates, aims to enable development facilitators to work with people's cultural resources – material, social and spiritual – in the context of their worldviews. The COD process supports communities to mobilize and utilize their cultural assets, use them more effectively and manage and direct their own affairs.

The COD approach initiated during the reporting period proved to be effective in delivering endogenous development.

The COD approach comprises a systematic set of tools:
- Community Institutions and Resources Mapping (CIRM)
- Community Visioning and Action Planning (CVAP)
- Community Organizational Self-Assessment (COSA)
- Community Institutional Strengthening (CIS)
- Learning, Sharing and Assessment (LeSA)
- Using festival and traditional forums for community dialogue with power bearers

The difference between these tools and their conventional counterparts is the fact that they are premised on working with and through the traditional authorities and indigenous institutions and their organizational practices and resources. This enhances ownership and inclusion of the whole community in the development process.

An additional tool that should be considered in next strategic phase is Bio-cultural Community Protocols for empowering communities to demand their rights to their heritage and natural resources

4.3 Thematic Areas and Key issues

CIKOD worked under 3 programme areas:
➢ Health , Food and Water Sovereignty
➢ Traditional Governance and Natural Resources Management
➢ Interfacing Traditional and Modern forms of Local Governance

CIKOD carried out its work through:
- Training in methodologies and skills for community organizational development for local development agents.
- Direct engagement with traditional authorities, indigenous institutions and local groups to strengthen their organizational capacities.
- Small Grants Fund management in partnership with local and international funding organizations to support community based advocacy.

Health, Food and Water Sovereignty
- Developing a strategy to set up a Heritage and Cultural Learning Centres to demonstrate and celebrate African traditional food and health traditions..
- Gather sufficient evidence highlighting the nutritional and medical usage and the resilience of traditional crops to climate change.
- Strengthen the capacity of traditional healers to provide effective and efficient health services to communities.
- Facilitate dialogue and engagement between Traditional health practitioners and the modern health system to support the development of a mutual referral system.
- Facilitating community access to water for food production, reforestation and WASH.
- Strengthening Traditional ecological agriculture

CIKOD will work with AFSA (Association of Food Sovereignty Africa) to promote and address issues of food production and consumption at community level building on the indigenous knowledge and practices within these communities in Ghana. CIKOD will work to strengthen strategies developed by the organisation in work areas of both health and food sovereignty.

Traditional Governance and Natural Resource Management
- Indigenous Mechanisms for Natural Resources Management
- Indigenous mechanism for accountability and transparency in Natural Resource Management.
- Bio-Cultural Protocol (BCP) Development as a tool for community ownership of natural resources e.g. Shea nut, sacred grooves, mining etc.

- Revitalising and supporting the conservation of sacred grooves as strategy for Bio-diversity Conservation

Specific activities under each theme will include action research, sensitization and awareness activities, community visioning and action planning and project design and implementation. CIKOD would facilitate these as joint activities with mainstream environmental organizations (Forest, Land, Mining etc). CIKOD will work with other African countries and organisations engaged in similar BCP developments so as to learn from, share experiences and bring about policy change at local, national and international levels.

Interfacing Traditional and Modern forms of Local Governance
- Annual training programmes for traditional authorities (men and women) on the theme: Governance, natural resource management and development".
- Annual training for local youth leaders, development practitioners and local government agents on the theme: "Working with traditional authorities for good governance and development".
- Facilitating dialogue and engagement between Traditional and Formal Local Government structures.
- Building the skills of traditional women leaders to be pro-active in community development issues.
- Sensitising communities on the relevance of for the benefit of the growth of their community.

This will be done in partnership with the University for Development Studies for traditional authorities in Northern Ghana and the Center for Development Studies of the University of Cape Cost for traditional authorities in southern Ghana. The aim is to improve the leadership and governance capacities of traditional authorities as well as strengthen their capacities to mobilize their communities and resources for the development of their traditional areas. The curricula for these training courses have already been development by CIKOD and the two universities. The dialogue and engagement between Traditional Authorities and District Assemblies will take the form of seminars, workshops, conferences and learning visits.

Previous Cross Cutting Programmes
- Support for Community Organizational Development (COD) approach to address relevant development issues.
- Gender and generational integration in all development initiatives.
- Documentation and Dissemination.

CIKOD's Core Business
The core business of CIKOD is to contribute towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through:

- Providing formal training to strengthen the capacities of Traditional Authorities, local government agents, grass roots civil society groups and development facilitators to play stronger roles in the development process at the local level.

- Providing Organizational development support to traditional authorities, indigenous institutions and local groups to play strong roles in Natural Resource Management, local governance and Policy Influencing.
- To transform indigenous institutions and local groups into vibrant grassroots civil society organizations that would enhance participation of rural communities in their own development processes.

Thematic Work Areas

A. Interfacing Traditional and Modern forms of Local Governance
For **Poverty Reduction and Transformational Development**

- Annual training programmes for traditional authorities (men and women) on the theme: Governance, natural resource management and development".
- Annual training for local youth leaders, development practitioners and local government agents on the theme: "Working with traditional authorities for good governance and development".
- Facilitating dialogue and engagement between Traditional and Formal Local Government structures.
- Building the skills of traditional women leaders to be pro-active in community development issues.

B. Community Organizational Development and Innovation Support for Food, Water, and Health Sovereignty within Sustainable Natural Resources Management

Thematic areas include:
- Develop Action Strategies in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) issues.
- Gather evidence highlighting the nutritional and medicinal value of traditional crops.
- Gather evidence on the resilience of traditional crops to climate change.
- Promote the production, storage and sharing of improved traditional seeds.
- Strengthen the capacity of traditional healers to provide effective and efficient health services to communities.
- Facilitate dialogue and engagement between Traditional health practitioners and the modern health system to support the development of a mutual referral system.
- Support the development of endogenous food enterprises development.
- Set up a Heritage and Cultural Learning Centre to demonstrate and celebrate African traditional food and health traditions..

C. Bio-cultural and Natural Resources Management within the context of Climate Change and Natural Resource Governance issues
- Indigenous Mechanisms for Natural Resources Management
- Indigenous mechanism for accountability and transparency in Natural Resource Management.

- Bio-Cultural Protocol (BCP) Development as a tool for community ownership of natural resources e.g. Sheanut, sacred grooves, mining etc.
- Revitalising and supporting the conservation of sacred grooves as strategy for Bio-diversity Conservation.
- Natural Resource Governance.
- Networking for Planet and Climate Change.

D. Cross Cutting Programmes and Institutional Development

- Support for Endogenous Development using the Community Organizational Development (COD) approach for organizations and institutions within and outside Ghana.
- Support for Community Organizational Development (COD) and Gender Equity
- Integrate Culture into all Development activities.
- Aggressive Documentation and Dissemination of experiences.
- Organisation and Institutional Strengthening and Development.
- Gender Mainstreaming and Knowledge Management.
- Action Research/ Advocacy and Policy Influencing.
- Business/Enterprise Development.
- Capacity Strengthening and Training.
- Prudent Financial Management and Accountability.

E. CIKOD will keep carrying out its work through:

- Training in methodologies and skills for community organizational development for local development agents.

- Direct engagement with traditional authorities, indigenous institutions and local groups to strengthen their organizational capacities.

- Small Grants Fund management in partnership with local and international funding organizations to support community based initiatives.