



The Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND)

Assessing the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The Case of Ghana

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Background:

As part of its effort to demonstrate commitment towards the achievement of the SDGs, the government of Ghana in August 2017 inaugurated a technical committee for the execution of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Africa Agenda 2063. The formation of the committee was the first move in the localization of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. It is therefore expected that the competent authorities' activities towards localization the SDGs will be reflected in the various Annual Progress Reports (APRs) of the Districts Medium Term Development Plans (DMTDPs) in all the 216 district assemblies.

This exercise is led by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) established under Articles 86 and 87 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana as part of the Executive arm of government. In accordance with the provision under Article 87 of the Constitution, the core mandate of the NDPC is to "advise the President on development planning policy and strategy" and, "at the request of the President or Parliament, or on its own initiative," do the following:

1. Study and make strategic analyses of macro-economic and structural reform options;
2. Make proposals for the development of multi-year rolling plans taking into consideration the resource potential and comparative advantage of the different districts of Ghana;
3. Make proposals for the protection of the natural and physical environment;
4. Make proposals for ensuring the even development of the districts of Ghana by the effective utilisation of available resources; and
5. Monitor, evaluate and coordinate development policies, programmes and projects.

The NDPC publishes annually, a National Progress Report on the national medium term development agenda that is, the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II (GSGDA 2014-2017). Since the current development agenda expired in 2017, government has developed a new development agenda that is, **the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024) – "An Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All"** which draws inspiration from the SDGs (2015 – 2030).

From the foregoing, the Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND) is tasked to review the APRs of the various districts. This report is the analysis of the 2016 Annual Progress Reports (APRs) of 4 district assemblies out of the 216 districts, in order to ascertain the level of youth inclusion in the planning and implementation of their respective local level programmes. Additionally, the exercise sought to analyse the reporting approach of local level interventions specifically on climate change, biodiversity, forestry, energy access and gender in line with SYND's thematic areas. This is also consistent with NDPC's mandate notably making proposals for the protection of the natural and physical environment as well as monitoring, evaluating and coordinating development policies, programmes and projects. The Four (4) District APRs analysed were the following:

- **Accra Metropolitan Assembly,**
- **Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly,**
- **Ho Municipal Assembly and**
- **Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly**

Purpose of this report:

The purpose of this exercise is to draw attention to the gaps identified in the current reporting approach by district assemblies in their attempt to produce accurate and relevant data and/or information; as well as making relevant recommendations to the NDPC for consideration.

Methodology:

The main methodology adopted was a desk review of the 4 Districts' APRs relevant to SYND's thematic areas of work. Only 4 Districts selected across the Southern, Middle and Northern zones of Ghana were selected due to limited financial resources.

I. ACCRA METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY:

Brief background:

The Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) is one of the Two Hundred and Sixteen (216) Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana and among the sixteen (16) MMDAs in the Greater Accra Region. The AMA now consists of Ten (10) Sub Metropolitan District Councils. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, AMA has a population of 1,665,086. The City Authority however believes that, Accra has a Population of 4 about Million and a daily influx of about 1 Million.

Issues as captured in the report:

Climate Change:

1. A climate change meeting at Chorkor was organized which targeted 70 males and 150 females. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) similarly organised a forum on climate change in the same community as part of providing extension services.
2. Home Visits - The staff of the Community Development Unit Ablekuma Central, Ashiedu Keteke and Ablekuma South Sub-Metros collaborated with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other development partners to embark on a weeklong public awareness programme on Climate Change and the Green Economy which was climaxed with a durbar at Chorkor. At the forum, the former Black Star of Ghana football team captain Stephen Appiah was appointed as the climate change ambassador. In his acceptance speech, he stressed the need to keep our vegetation green at all times and to plant more trees to help keep the weather cool.

Youth:

1. Relying on youth groups with various committees is a challenge because the youth groups have their own work schedules

Our observations:

1. The Assembly was able to bring together NUMBER of men and NUMBER of women during the climate change educational activities of (DATES). SNYD recognizes the significant number of female participation. The appointment of a Climate Change Ambassador is also highly commendable. We however note with concern that the focus of such important activity was on only one community (Chorkor). Additionally, it was unclear what the role of the ambassador will be.
2. While we acknowledge that relying on youth groups within various committees has been of a major concern, we are of the view that this could be as a result of ineffective consultations or planning of the assembly with the youth groups. There was limited information on the number of young people engaged.
3. The data on INFRASTRUCTURE, ENERGY AND HUMAN SETTLEMENT was not disaggregated. The report states that One Hundred and Fifty Five (155) projects were captured in the plan and Ninety Seven (97) representing (64%) projects were completed, Twenty Nine (29) representing (19%) projects are on-going and Twenty Six (26) representing (17%) are yet to

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commence. Unfortunately, the data is difficult to understand or interpret. For example, we are unable to measure the specific progress (if any) on Energy.

4. There was no clear intervention on Forestry, Energy Access and Biodiversity.

II. SAGNARIGU DISTRICT ASSEMBLY:

Brief background:

The District was inaugurated as a functional entity on the 24th of June, 2012 with a mission to mobilize physical and financial resources to provide quality socio-economic services in a safe and lawful environment to enhance the quality of life of residents of the Sagnarigu District. It shares boundaries to the North with Savelugu-Nanton Municipality, to the South and East with Tamale Metropolis, to the West with Tolon District, and to North-West with Kumbungu District.

Generally, the district is located about 180 meters above sea level with a few isolated hills. Population size as at 2015 was 172,067 (Male, 87,005 and Female, 85,062).

Issues as captured in the report:

Climate Change (Agriculture):

1. Overall, only 40% of each target set under Agricultural produce was achieved primarily due to poor weather conditions. The Assembly mainly depended on the rainfall for farming activities hence the poor performance.

Youth:

1. Through the NYEP, about 990 young people were trained and equipped with the relevant skills for engagement in some modules of the program as seen in the table below.

16.2 Recruitments of beneficiaries in 2016

In all, about 990 beneficiaries were engaged to work in 8 modules across the district during the year under review. Each beneficiary was issued an engagement letter on a 2-year contract basis.

A breakdown of the 2016 recruitments is as follows;

| MODULE | NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES RECRUITED | START DATE |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Community Policing Assistants (CPA) | 25 | 03 May, 2016 |
| Youth in Prison Service (YIPS) | 18 | 04 Jul, 2016 |
| Youth in Fire Service (YIFS) | 31 | 15 July, 2016 |
| Community Health Workers (CHWs) | 147 | 01 Aug, 2016 |
| E-Health Assistants | 7 | 01 Aug, 2016 |
| Environmental Protection Officers (EPOs) | 28 | 14 Oct, 2016 |
| Community Education Teaching Assistants (CETA) | 377 | 14 Oct, 2016 |
| Youth in Arabic Education (YIAE) | 357 | 01 Nov, 2016 |
| TOTAL | | 990 |

***Chart 1

Forest

1. Promote and enhance afforestation and reforestation

Gender

1. The Business Advisory Center in the Assembly sensitized ten (10) groups of which 2% of them are male and 98% female.
2. A total of 425 women benefited from half acre each in soybean production, 261 benefited from Orange-fleshed sweet-potato (OFSP) production while 75 were to benefit from dry season leafy vegetable production early 2017. The Assembly trained 250 female farmers on financial literacy and Business management
3. The assembly persons are 35 in number (30 males and 5 females).

Our observation:

1. We observe that the youth employment data was not disaggregated in terms of percentage of males and females employed under each module. the employment opportunity is a 2-year contract which raises another concern. What happens after 2 years? Are there measures in place to absorb these young people in other employment areas? If youth jobs or employments are not sustainable, then it casts doubts on achieving the "Leave No One Behind" mantra.
2. While the assembly intends to make progress in agricultural crop production, the report shows no data on key indicators such as number of woodlots established, acreage of individual woodlots, and number of communities involved. We are of the opinion that such gap or omissions will make achieving afforestation programme very difficult if not impossible.
3. The composition of the assembly members show gender imbalance which must be addressed.
4. The assembly noted that the nature of the sun is good for solar energy production and yet no specific intervention was proposed towards maximizing this renewable energy source.

III. KUMASI METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY:

Brief background:

The Kumasi Metropolis is centrally located in the Ashanti Region of Ghana with an annual growth rate of about 5.4%. The Metropolis is about 254 kilometers; its physical structure is basically circular with a central located commercial area. It is estimated that 48%, 46% and 60% of the Metropolis are urban, peri-urban and rural respectively, confirming the fast rate of urbanization.

The population of Kumasi Metropolis is 1,730,249 represents 36.2 percent of the total population of Ashanti Region, from the 2010 Population and Housing Census. The Metropolis has a sex ratio of 91.4. The population of the Metropolis depicts a broad base population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons (60 years and older). The age dependency ratio for the Metropolis is 58; the age dependency ratio is 59.9 for males and 56.3 for females. (2010 Population and Housing Census)

Issues as captured in the report:

| INTERVENTION AREA | BASELINE | TARGET 2016 | INDICATOR LEVEL | REMARKS |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Adult education | Low levels of Urban reforestation | To educate: 20% of residents within the metropolis on tree planting | A total number of 739 were educated while 523 were engaged during the tree planting exercise. | Operation 'educate and plant' is highly recommended. |

***Chart 2

Table 2.4.1: Level of Implementation of the M&E Plan as at 31st December, 2016

| THEMATIC AREA | LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION (2016) |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Enhancing Competitiveness in The Private Sector | 38% |
| Accelerated Agricultural Modernisation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management | 52% |
| Infrastructure, Energy And Human Settlement | 69% |
| Human Development, Productivity and Employment | 88% |
| Transparent and Accountable Governance | 73% |

Source: MPCU, Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly January, 2017.

***Chart 3

Forestry:

1. Tree planting - Planting along roads and on school compounds: In all a total of 2,738 seedlings were planted, 469 along major roads and 2,269 distributed to selected Basic schools in the Metropolis.

Gender Mainstreaming:

1. Sensitization and empowerment of women groups in local governance skills (8 women groups).

Our observation:

1. Even though the assembly projected 30,000 trees seedlings to be planted only 2,738 were planted in total (which included 469 seedlings planted along the major roads and 2,269 distributed to some selected basic schools in the metropolis). There was no narrative to explain why the target was not met. Therefore, the plan to plant and manage one million trees along the major driveways, water bodies, parks, school compound and communities in the Kumasi metropolis by 2018 is arguably not feasible.
2. The report concedes that significant reduction in the quality and the quantity of the Kumasi urban forest as well as the reduction in the variety of the plants species puts streams and other water bodies at risk in the metropolis yet no major intervention was recommended to dealing with it.

3. We note that the assembly has made efforts to empower women groups in local governance skills. This is likely to translate into significant increase in the number of women elected and/or appointed as Assembly members. The report however failed to provide details of the 8 women groups empowered for the purposes of tracking their progress and providing some additional support or mentorship if need be.
4. The report was silent on specific interventions for men and youth (boys and girls), aside women which defeats the agenda for gender equality or gender empowerment.
5. We note with concern that the data on level of implementation (as seen in the Chart 3) falls short of details. This we contend is not helpful for effective tracking or Monitoring and Evaluation purposes.
6. While educating people on tree planting (as seen in Chart 2) is very essential, it fails to provide key outputs or impact chalked.
7. There was no clear intervention on climate change, youth inclusion, energy access and biodiversity.

IV. HO MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY:

Brief background:

The Ho Municipal Assembly, one of the 5 Municipalities in the Volta Region, was established in 2012. The total population of the Municipality is projected at 204,353 comprising of 100,337 males and 104,016 females (Source: Volta Regional Statistical Office). The urban population stands at 127,181 while the rural population is 77,172. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Ho Municipality's economy. It employs about 70 percent of the economically active labour force. Nearly every household in the Municipality is engaged in farming or an agricultural related activity.

Issues as captured in the report:

Gender

1. Out of the total membership of 45 at the municipality, 12 members are females and 33 are males.
2. The Community Development Unit trained the Godokpe women's group in Batik tie and dye making.
3. Department of Social Welfare and Community Development rolled out a program to empower the vulnerable, people with disabilities and women in the district

Youth

1. 290 youth were recruited to undergo apprenticeship under the youth in trade and vocational module.
2. 39 youth recruited under the Health Extension Workers Module

Forestry

1. Youth in Agriculture and Youth in Afforestation programme pursued as a way of addressing post-harvest loss
2. Farmer's day Awards organised - The over-all best farmer and the 1st runner up received tricycle each.
3. Farming made more attractive through the youth in Block Farming model
4. Mitigating youth unemployment by pursuing Youth in Afforestation programme

Energy Access:

1. Solar Panels installed at Ho Municipal Assembly
2. Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 20 No. Large Crystalline Solar Panels with minimum requirement of ICE at Sokode Abattoir (completed) Sokode

Our observations:

1. We note that the Assembly's effort in creating employment opportunities for the young people however the data presented were not disaggregated.
2. The assembly's resolve in engaging in Youth in Afforestation programme as a mitigating mechanism to dealing with youth unemployment is highly commendable. Similarly, making farming more attractive to the youth under the Block Farming model is also positive.
3. We also note that the assembly's plays a positive role in recognizing and rewarding the work of farmers during Farmer's day awards celebration. We therefore do encourage the assembly to sustain it in order to motivate farmers and attract more potential farmers.
4. The assembly's effort in promoting renewable energy by installing solar panels at the assembly as well as at Sokode Abattoir is remarkable. The assembly however needs to demonstrate how these are contributing to Ghana's Renewable Energy targets.
5. There were no specific intervention on climate change and biodiversity.

Conclusion:

Based on our analysis of the implementation of the GSGDA II of 4 District Assemblies, we observe that there was no evidence of active youth participation in decision making processes at the local level which is inconsistent with the principles of social inclusion and equality. Also, the interventions captured by the assemblies do not demonstrate how they are contributing directly to the achievement of the medium term development agenda. For example, AMA's progress information on INFRASTRUCTURE, ENERGY AND HUMAN SETTLEMENT was vague. The interventions are immeasurable as they do not show evidence of progress made year by year. While interventions on promoting gender equality are appreciated, a lot more needs to be done especially with respect to disaggregation of data or information provided.

SYND firmly holds the view that if the reporting culture of the District Assemblies remain 'business as usual' as seen in the case of the GSGDA II reports, achieving the localization of the SDGs will be extremely difficult if not impossible. It is therefore important to state that all the "*our observations*" in the report were directly captured from the various APRs which among others shows how some issues lack clarity and details of some actions taken.

Recommendations:

The NDPC is encouraged to develop a user-friendly but comprehensive reporting format based on the various SDGs targets and indicators to ensuring consistency in the assemblies' reportage. To ensure effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs localization efforts, government through the NDPC is encouraged to:

1. Develop a standard reporting format or template for all district assemblies based on the targets and indicators of each of the SDGs.
2. Ensure that for tracking purposes, APRs must have baseline or basis to justify progress made annually.
3. Ensure that all data or information on gender (including young people) are disaggregated
4. Through the influx of Chinese investment in Ghana, promote environmentally friendly projects such as renewable energy and climate-smart investments among others

SYND Review Team Members:

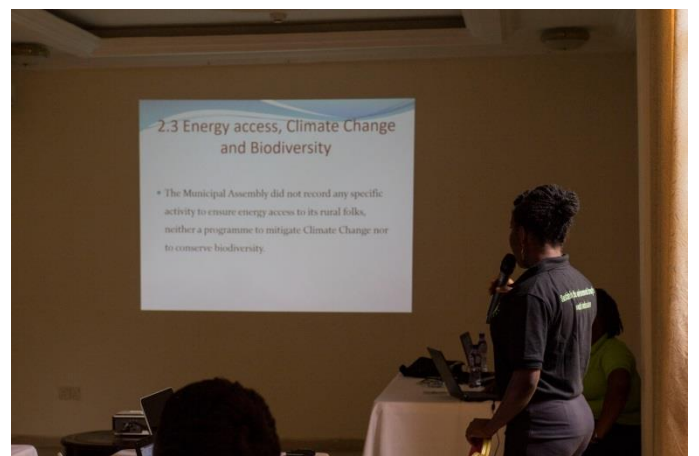
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About the Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND)

SYND is a youth-oriented NGO which focuses primarily on contributing to ensuring good governance in the natural resources and environment sector through active youth inclusion or partnership with relevant stakeholders such as government, private sector, civil society and media.

Assessing the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The Case of Ghana Picture Gallery:



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