



GHANA COALITION OF NGOs

IN HEALTH

THE FORMATION AND BACKGROUND OF THE COALITION

Table of contents

- Introduction
- The Accra Conference
- Formation of the Coalition
- The Structure of the Coalition
- Vision
- Mission
- Objectives
- Membership
- What we do
- Regional Decentralization of the Coalition
- National / Regional Secretariat
- Policy Shift and Programmes Direction

Introduction

Acknowledging the important role NGOs play especially in reaching underserved communities, the vulnerable and marginalized in society, in February 1998, health partners met in Dakar, Senegal to discuss modalities that would lead to partnership among Governments, Non-governmental Organizations and World Health Organization (WHO) in the Africa Region. The meeting was entitled 'International Conference in partnership between Governments, Non-governmental Organization and the World Organizations'. The outcome was the development of a strategic framework that will guide tripartite co-operation between the three partners on one hand and other stakeholders in health delivery on the other hand.

The Accra Conference

On 4th – 5th October 1999, the health partners in Ghana made up of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Employment & Social Welfare, Non-governmental Organizations, Donor partners & World Health Organization held a conference in Accra to pursue the agenda set in Dakar. As in Dakar, the conference sought to explore the Non-government Organization terrain in the health sector and consider key areas for partnership in policy formulation and implementation. The goal was to develop a strategic framework for co-operation and collaboration. The objectives followed closely on the Dakar recommendation.

At the end of Accra conference, a declaration was issued with key areas for implementation agreed on. One of the tenets of the declaration was a recommendation for NGOs to organize themselves within an umbrella body with a view to making collaboration and co-operation more effective (Accra Declaration, October, 5 1999)

Formation of the Coalition

As a followed up on these recommendation, Ghana Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Health was established in March 2000. These were mainly in response to the call by the Ministry of Health and other partners to effectively co-ordinate the efforts of NGOs, and enhance their capacity to play a significant role in healthcare delivery in Ghana. Its members are made of local and international NGOs & Civil Society Organization involved in the provision of health services in Ghana.

The Structure of the Coalition

The Coalition is governed by a constitution and has the following in its organizational structure:

The General Assembly, which is made of representatives of the entire registered member NGOs, meets annually to vote upon proposals presented by the Board of Trustees. It is the highest decision making body and the authority that approves programmes, budget, constitutional changes and all matters of policy. It also provides a forum for exchanges of ideas and agreement upon the way forward. At the Annual General Meeting, the General Assembly empowers the

National Board of Trustees to oversee the implementations of all approved budgets, programmes and activities of the coalition.

Board of Trustees, which is made up of 10 Regional Chairpersons of the Coalition, and 5 elected Executives from regular member NGOs every 3 years at /National Annual General Meeting. This National Board of Trustees is mandated to govern and oversee the affairs of the Coalition on behalf of member Organizations.

The Management runs the day-to-day administrative and programmatic activities of the Coalition based on the approvals and supervision of the National Board of Trustees as mandated by the General Assembly. This is made up of a technical/programmatic Coordinator, who heads the secretariat staff, then a Finance/Administrative Manager, Administrative/Office Assistants.

Vision!

To build a strong and dynamic Civil Society Umbrella Organization that will contribute to building Ghana free of diseases and ill-health.

Mission!

To positively influence health policy as well as practice and empower our member organizations to ensure quality health for all people living in Ghana.

Objectives!

- To foster coalition building. Net working and information sharing among NGOs in health in Ghana and elsewhere.
- To lead NGOs in health to advocate and campaign for quality health care for all.
- To influence policy and decision on health of the society.
- To explore avenues to improve relationships with other partners.
- To strengthen capacity of NGOs in health, especially member organization.
- To promote research for health development.

Membership

Open to all NGOs and other CSOs in health both local and international, operating in Ghana.

What we do

NGOs in health engage in promoting and preventive health delivery. Specifically they engage in:

- Information, Education and Communication. I.E.C/BCC
- Reproductive health / family planning
- Tuberculosis intervention programme
- HIV/AIDS Advocacy, Awareness, Prevention and Support
- Malaria Sensitization and Prevention Programme
- Research, Lobby and Advocacy
- Capacity building of organization to deliver
- Anti-Tobacco and Drug Abuse Advocacy/Lung Cancer
- Mental Health Promotion/Advocacy
- Lifestyle Diseases (like Hypertension, Diabetes, Cholera etc)
- Support for the physically challenged
- Optical and Dental Health promotion
- Health insurance and population issues

Regional Decentralization of the Coalition

Recognizing the difficulty faced by member NGOs - big and small, who had to travel from all parts of the country to attend the Coalition's meetings and functions almost on a monthly basis, the General Assembly at the AGM 2005 decided to set up branches of the Coalition in all the 10 regions of Ghana with existing members from where interim leaders were nominated to organize each region and embark on a membership drive of recognized NGOs/CBOs in their regions. Thus, registration of NGOs into the Coalition membership was agreed to be from the regional levels, where information on new organizations would be passed to the National Secretariat.

National / Regional Secretariat

The National and Regional Secretariats support the National Board of Trustees in executing the activities and programmes of the Coalition.

Currently, the National Secretariat which is headed by the National Coordinator is made up of six (6) staff namely; the Finance/Administrative Manager, Administrative Assistant I, Administrative Assistant II, Office Assistant and a Driver.

At the Regional level, the secretariat is supervised and overseen by a five member Executive Committee headed by the regional chairperson. Other members of the Regional Executive Committees are; the Vice Chairpersons, the Regional Secretaries, Regional Treasurers, and Organizing Secretaries. While some of the regions have managed to secure Administrative Officers of average qualification to support the Regional Committees in running the day-to-day affairs of the Coalition at the regions, some have relied on recruiting Tertiary School leaving National Service Personnel. However, majority of the Regions depend on part-time support of one staff of a well established member NGO that offers the hosting of the secretariats.

Policy Shift and Programmes Direction

In accordance with the current mission of the coalition to achieve the big vision, the Coalition is embarking on policy analysis of the Ministry of Health, advocacy on this for better implementation and benefit of the every Ghanaian, especially the under-served, build capacity of member NGOs to work in complimenting the Health Service toward achieving access to health delivery in Ghana.