



GHANA COALITION OF NGOs

IN HEALTH

SUMMARY OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) FORUM 2009

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Introduction

The Fourth Annual General Meeting was held on the 25th and 26th of August 2009. The meeting was held at the Teacher's Hall, Takoradi in the Western Region. In attendance were one hundred and seventy two members of the Coalition with representation from all the ten regions. The Chairman for the occasion was Nana Ango III Paramount chief of Fijai traditional area. Among the invited dignitaries was Mr. Theophilus Ayugane, a representative of the First Secretary (Gender and Health) of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Mr. David Yaro of Sekondi-Takoradi Co-ordinating Council who represented the Regional Minister and Mr. Peter Mensah from the Regional Health Directorate who represented the Regional Director of Health Service, Dr. Linda Van Otoo.

Keynote Address

The **Keynote address** was read by Mr. David Yaro. He stressed the watchdog role of the Coalition and also said the collaboration between government and Civil Society Organizations for health delivery is perpetual. He advised members to:

- Work hand in hand with District Health Management Team
- Ensure periodic submission of reports
- Take keen interest in attending regional and district health review meetings and contribute effectively.
- Finally he advised that the Coalition should advocate for the participation of its members in health care delivery services in every part of the country and also be accountable to their beneficiaries and donors.

Goodwill Messages

Goodwill message were from the Director of Health Services and the Royal Netherlands Embassy. representing the Netherlands Embassy, Mr. Ayugane said that the AGM offers a platform to hear from members of Civil Society. He stressed on the inadequacy of human resource in Civil Society, and said focus on health policy implementation is critical for the achievement of MDGs. He also mentioned that innovative change is mostly generated by civil society through advocacy, and advised members to pay more attention to their internal accountability and transparency.

Mr. Peter Mensah of the Health Services expressed satisfaction with the support received from NGOs currently, and stressed on the need for the provision of infrastructure in the region. According to him, a survey conducted recently in the region revealed that health structures were deteriorating and he called on all partners in health to continue with the assistance they are giving to communities.

Speech

Mrs. Victoria Dennis the Western Regional chairman gave the welcome address, followed by a **speech** by the Coalition's Chairman Dr. Cecilia Bentsi. In her speech, she expressed her gratitude to the Western Regional Coalition for hosting the program while acknowledging the frankness of the Northern Region in admitting that they could not host the program even though they had agreed to host it at the last AGM. She enumerated the various roles that NGOs should play, and pledged the commitment of the Coalition in filling the gaps in the health sector to ensure quality health services delivery. She mentioned how the Coalition's ten regional offices could extend to the district level in order to make collaboration with the public health authorities more effective. Finally she expressed her appreciation for assistance from the Ministry of Health, UNAIDS, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, GAVI,WHO and all donor partners of the Coalition.

At the end of the two day meeting, the house agreed on the following:

- To increase its annual dues from GH2 to GH3
- That the auditor for the Coalition should be retained for the next year.

Additionally the issue of sustainability of the Coalition was referred to Board members to choose from the various suggestions made by the house, namely:

1. Forming a fundraising committee,
2. Organizing fundraising dinners,
3. Getting a consultant to be in charge of proposal writing etc.