

NATIONAL CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE



TRANSFORMING RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES AND EXPERIENCES FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: A REPORT ON THE ROLE OF AN INTERFAITH PLATFORM IN THE 2016 ELECTIONS IN GHANA



SUPPORTED BY:



**STAR
Ghana**

Strengthening Transparency,
Accountability and Responsiveness

Edited By: Samuel Zan **AKOLOGO**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

- ADR** – ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION
- FAITH** – FORUM FOR ACTIONS ON INCLUSION, TRANSPARENCY AND HARMONY
- EC** – ELECTORAL COMMISSION
- NCCE** – NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CIVIC EDUCATION
- FBO** – FAITH BASED ORGANIZATION
- EWSR** – EARLY WARNING SIGNAL REPORT
- CECOTAPS** – CENTRE FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE STUDIES
- MCRC** – MARIAN CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTRE
- GCBC** – GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
- ONCI** – OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL CHIEF IMAM
- AMM** – AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MISSION, GHANA
- CCG** – CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA
- GPCC** – GHANA PENTECOSTAL AND CHARISMATIC COUNCIL
- FOMWAG** – FEDERATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS IN GHANA
- CMA** – CHRISTIAN MOTHERS' ASSOCIATION
- IGIs** – INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS
- MAREDES** – MARSHALLAN RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
- IFYC** – INTERFAITH YOUTH CORE
- PSC** – PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE
- TOR** – TERMS OF REFERENCE
- NCS** – NATIONAL CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT
- NGO** – NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
- IGP** – INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE
- EU** – EUROPEAN UNION
- STAR-GHANA**: STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS
- IFC** – INTERFAITH COOPERATION
- RLs** – RELIGIOUS LEADERS
- UNDP** – UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
- CSD Reform** – CENTER FOR SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT REFORM
- GCRP** – GHANA CONFERENCE OF RELIGIONS FOR PEACE
- JPCs** – JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSIONS
- NDPC** – NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMISSION

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This report is a documentation drawn from an interfaith cooperation project implemented by the National Catholic Secretariat of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference from April 2016 to June 2017. The project is titled “**Forum for Actions on Inclusion, Transparency and Harmony (FAITH) in Ghana's 2016 Elections** and was fully funded by STAR-Ghana.

STAR-Ghana is a pooled donor funding mechanism working to increase the influence of Civil Society and Parliament in Ghana. STAR-Ghana's programme is funded by UK Aid, DANIDA and the European Union (EU). The National Catholic Secretariat, on behalf of the interfaith cooperation, wishes to express gratitude to STAR – Ghana for supporting our initiative with funding and capacity enhancement.

This project involved a number of stakeholders and actors whose participation contributed significantly to the overall project outcome. We wish to thank the following faith institutions whose participation and contribution to the interfaith cooperation made this outcome a reality; The Office of the National Chief Imam (ONCI), The Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC), Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Ghana (AMM), the Marshallan Relief and Development Services (MAREDES), Christian Mothers Association (CMA) and the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Ghana (FOMWAG).

We wish to also thank the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of Ghana; Mrs. Charlotte Osei and her Deputies for supporting this project concept from the level of project development through a formal letter. The participation of the Electoral Commissioners in our dialogue meetings was a huge value addition to our project. We also wish to thank the outgoing Minister of Interior; Mr. Prosper Douglas Bani, then Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr. John Kudalor and all Service Commanders who took part in our Review and Action Planning meetings on the Early Warning Signal Reports with Faith Leaders.

We also acknowledge the technical contribution from the Centre for Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies (CECOTAPS) based in Damongo and led by Rev. Fr. Dr. Clement Aapengnuo for carrying out the surveillance studies and submitting early warning signal reports to faith leaders. Worthy of mention is the Marian Conflict Resolution Centre (MCRC) at the Catholic University College of Ghana (CUCG) in Fiapre for facilitating the Alternative Dispute Resolution Training for selected representatives of faith groups across the country. We also wish to thank CSD Reform; a non-governmental organization (NGO) located in

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Catholic Secretariat of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference facilitated the implementation of the FAITH in Ghana's 2016 Elections project with the aim of ensuring that all Political Parties that participated in the 2016 elections accepted the outcome declared by the Electoral Commission of Ghana and also to propose a framework for the formalization of the interfaith cooperation platform for public policy advocacy in Ghana.

Historically, religious leaders have contributed to nurturing Ghana's democratic growth since 1992. Faith leaders contributed to Ghana's Electoral process through election monitoring and dialogue. The previous engagement of faith leaders was however ad hoc and not anticipatory resulting in “firefighting” approaches to electoral disagreements.

The strategic involvement of faith leaders in the 2016 elections under the FAITH in Ghana's 2016 Elections project adopted a different approach through anticipatory and reconciliatory strategies which resulted in the holding of high level dialogue meetings, strategic meetings with eminent Statesmen, the use of surveillance reports as basis for dialogue, information dissemination using community radio and the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution to mediate election related disagreements. This project was implemented to also help chart a framework for the formalization of interfaith cooperation for election and public policy engagements in Ghana. This fifteen (15)-month interfaith cooperation has shown great prospects and has put forward key recommendations on how multi-faith groups can work together to promote a common purpose. The report acknowledges that the formalization of interfaith cooperation will not be an event; it will be a process that will require nurturing, accompaniment and sustainable support to make it functional.

The potential of interfaith cooperation as manifested in this report are enormous and could be used to engage other Public Policy issues that confront the Country and sub-region. Given that the West Africa sub-region remains volatile with pockets of religious extremism and conflicts, the interfaith cooperation can be a model for the promotion of sub-regional peace and security.

This report demonstrate that Faith Groups contributed to deepening democracy especially by participating and giving credibility to the electoral processes. However, the experience is pointing to something much higher than Religious Leaders' role in occasional processes like elections. The ability of Faith Groups to influence the social environment, behavioral change, build mass social movements and have access to high-level policy actors is quite

critical for global and regional transformative agenda in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We posit that Ghana would not miss the opportunity if attention is paid to leveraging the potential of Faith Groups in Ghana. It seems to us that, what has been recounted in this report is a promising seed that has been sown for social transformation.

The report opens with a chapter on relevant literature about civic participation in Ghana's electoral process. It has an overview of how both statutory bodies and other entities have facilitated this and gaps identified. The second chapter describes the background, methodology and approach of the interfaith platform – the Forum for Actions on Inclusion, Transparency and Harmony (FAITH) in Ghana's 2016 General Elections. Chapter three discusses key achievements and results of the interfaith intervention in the 2016 Elections from a perspective of contribution instead of attribution. Some lessons learned from the project experiences are recorded in chapter four with some recommendations. The final chapter has concluding notes with excerpts of statements and messages from the 2016 Communique of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference at the threshold of the elections. The appendices to the report contain useful information on the faith groups involved in the project intervention, bibliography and other references.

1.0. OVERVIEW OF CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN GHANA'S ELECTORAL PROCESS

Ghana practices a 4-year cycle of elections to elect Parliamentarians and a President to administer the affairs of the country. This calls on the exercise of the civic rights and responsibility of the citizenry in the electoral process which involves participation, competition and legitimacy. The effective management of these three variables ensure peaceful elections (Lindberg, 2004). As observed by (Uwagboe, 2009), elections are how people choose and exercise some degree of control over a democratic process. Civic participation in the electoral process therefore includes activities or behaviors intended to select leaders and candidates to administer the affairs of a country. Gyimah-Boadi (1997) and Attafuah (1998) underscores the role of civil society in dislodging authoritarianism in Africa which marked the beginning of formal democracy in the early 1990s. Civil society participation in Ghana's elections, especially focusing on the role of CODEO has also been documented.¹ This review is focused on how civic participation in the electoral process has been fostered by statutory and civil society organizations in Ghana since 1992.

1.1. ACTIVITIES BY ORGANISATIONS.

The electoral process imposes several rules, normative and attitudinal imperatives that require compliance by the electorates. These rules and imperatives include tolerance of opposing views, free exchange and circulation of ideas and mutual respect among contending leaders/candidates and their followers (Ninsin, 2006). It is within this context that opportunities are given to the electorate by statutory Institutions and Civil Society Organizations including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), and Political Parties to participate in the electoral process.

1.1.1. Statutory Institutions

- **Electoral Commission (EC)**

The Electoral Commission is an autonomous statutory organization established by law, to supervise the election process in Ghana. Since its establishment, the Commission has been very instrumental in deepening the electoral process in Ghana. The EC since 1992 has organized 6 elections and in 2004 assisted disabled persons to vote in the general election. The EC also convened the Inter Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) which has played an

¹Papa Kwaku Maisee's unpublished Thesis MPhil Political Science (June, 2012). *Civil Society Participation in Ghana's Elections: The case of CODEO in Ghana's 2000 and 2008 General Elections.*

important role in resolving potential disputes over the conduct of the elections and in proposing reforms in the electoral process. In 1996, the EC and IPAC developed and adopted a code of conduct for political parties, with procedures for investigating complaints. Even though the code of conduct has been effective in checking abuse of the electoral processes it lacks legal backing. As part of improvement in the electoral process, the EC in 2012, implemented a biometric system of registration for the electoral register and introduced photo identification cards and the usage of fingerprint verification technology during elections. A Short Message Service (SMS) system for verifying voter registration details through telephoning was also introduced. The EC integrated voter education in the electoral process as means of informing, educating and guiding citizens on these procedures. All of this was to enhance civic participation in the electoral process.

- **National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE)**

The Commission was established under Article 231 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. The NCCE in collaboration with other stakeholders like the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), National Peace Council etc provide presidential candidates equal platforms to communicate their policies based on their manifestos to the electorates. The NCCE organizes education programmes to enlighten people on governance, the duties of the citizen and legal rights and responsibilities, constitutional guarantee of basic freedoms among others. The Commission engages parties in inter party dialogue, collaborative peace and conflict issues in flash point areas.

1.1.2. Other Bodies

- **The Media**

The media provide constant stream of election analysis and chatter and helps the electorate to develop interest in elections (Gyimah-Boadi, 1999, Agyeman-Duah, 2005). They also stream voter education programmes and broadcast voting results in the print and electronic media. The National Media Commission, a constitutionally established body helps in regulating the programmes of the mass media.

- **Political Parties**

Political Parties as the main political actors since 1992, have cooperated with State and Civil Society Organizations to ensure civil society participation in the electoral process. They organized voter education including compliance of electoral rules and regulations. Major activities since 1992 included involvement with IPAC to reach consensus on the rules of the electoral process, resorting to legal means to resolve electoral disputes, introduction of Platform of General Secretaries and the Chairmen's Caucus, formulation of Political Parties' Code of Conduct to regulate the conduct of political parties during and after elections.

- **Civil Society Organizations**

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) since 1992 have contributed a lot to civic participation in the electoral process. They have organized voter education, election observation/monitoring and other strategies like submitting proposals for electoral reforms for peaceful elections. From 1996, Human Rights and Policy Think Tanks have collaborated with Trade Unions, Professional Associations, Parliament, the Judiciary, the EC, NCCE, CHRAJ to facilitate democratic development and reduced election related violence (Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). The Civic Forum Initiative (CFI) was instrumental in ensuring the cleaning up of the 2008 voter register. CFI together with the National Peace Council and Religious organizations played a mediating role to avert violence and street protest following disputes over election results. The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) used the Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) methodology to independently verify the accuracy of the results of the presidential polls. Again in 2012 CODEO deployed over 650 trained pre-election observers to monitor the Biometric Voter Registration exercise in the country. During elections, the organization trained observers and monitors to ensure peaceful voting process and after elections they organize post-election review exercise to identify lessons learnt.

- **Faith Based Organizations**

The Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference and the National Catholic Secretariat (NCS) have been involved with national elections since 1992. The NCS has been working both as members and in collaboration with CODEO and CFI. The national Justice and Peace Commissions have been the main agents of the NCS for elections observation and monitoring. In 2012, the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference facilitated the NCS to campaign actively for the adoption of the Biometric Voter Registration system. In 2016, the NCS adopted an interfaith network approach – the Forum for Actions on Inclusion, Transparency and Harmony (FAITH) in Ghana's 2016 Elections. Much of this report is about documenting the experience of the FAITH in Ghana Platform as a model of civic participation and how this influenced the 2016 General Elections.

1.2. GAPS IDENTIFIED IN CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The review revealed that statutory bodies; the Electoral Commission and National Commission for Civic Education, in particular, have played various roles that facilitated civic participation in Ghana's electoral processes. Civil Society Organizations have progressively expanded their engagements with the electoral processes since 1992. It has been the same situation with the media and political parties. Historically, religious leaders have contributed to nurturing Ghana's democratic growth since 1992. Faith leaders contributed to Ghana's Electoral process through election monitoring and dialogue. The previous engagement of

faith leaders was however ad hoc and not anticipatory resulting in “firefighting” approaches to electoral disagreements. The review has revealed the following as gaps in civic participation in Ghana's electoral processes:

- Both Statutory and Civil Society Organizations have not organized a comprehensive and continuous civic education that will lead to change in behavior and formation of desirable attitude towards elections. They only engage mainly in awareness creation in the form of “Dos and Don'ts” of general elections in the country and constitutional responsibilities related to elections and election observation and monitoring. Such sporadic educational activities have little or no effect on behavior change which is needed in peaceful elections.
- It does seem that all the organizations are engaged in observation and monitoring of elections on election day all over the country. Some of these organizations are NGOs who may show a lineage towards a political party or ideology. Even though, observations and monitoring of the voting process may be necessary they are not sufficient conditions to ensure peaceful elections.
- The organizations have not put in place a comprehensive system to ensure that the electorates understand their civic responsibility to adopt positive postures towards voting without much monitoring and observation. Electorates need to understand the election process, own it, be aware of the consequences of their inaction to ensure peaceful election, develop commitment to lawful election process, and develop psychosocial skills like, interpersonal relation and problem solving skills.
- The relaxation of media censorship, even though has been helpful in the electoral process; it has created some problems. Most of the media are perceived to lean towards specific political parties and thus sympathetic to their cause. Consequently, some people use them as channels to communicate certain information, represent certain views and make remarks which have the potential to create tension.
- The electoral process imposes several normative and attitudinal imperatives that require compliance, tolerance of opposing views, free exchange and circulation of ideas and mutual respect among contending leaders and candidates and their followers (Ninsin, 2006). It is not immediately clear from this review whether political parties in Ghana have the adequate human resource to carry out the needed normative and attitudinal imperatives.

2.0. FORUM FOR ACTIONS ON INCLUSION, TRANSPARENCY AND HARMONY – FAITH

2.1. General Background and Project Framework

The very basis of identification and differentiation in religion is faith. It is the unwavering belief in a religion based on spiritual conviction.² Difference and division among Faith Groups are quite strong in some circumstances; even among those of the common 'Abrahamic Faiths'.³

The **Forum for Actions on Inclusion, Transparency and Harmony (FAITH)** was conceived as an interfaith platform and network. Its acronym 'FAITH' resonated with its members as the very basis of their identification. However, its orientation was to radically challenge divisions and promote unity, joint effort and a common sense of purpose that seek to promote the good of society. The lessons learned and best practices of this model of interfaith cooperation and collaboration have been documented in a separate but complementary report⁴ of the Elections project.

The original concept of the Forum for Actions on Inclusion, Transparency and Harmony (FAITH) was conceived in July, 2015 to harness the energies and experiences of Faith Groups to promote social cohesion, justice and good governance in Ghana. A similar earlier effort under the banner of the Ghana Conference of Religions for Peace (GCRP) in the 1990s had been dissipated. There still exist a Standing Committee of cooperation between only the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference. Other forms of cooperation among diverse faiths in Ghana remain ad-hoc and sporadic. With this background, it was thus expected that there would be challenges to gain traction easily and quickly with the new interfaith platform.

STAR-Ghana's⁵ elections call which came later in December, 2015 served as both catalyst and frame to fit our interfaith platform structure and objective. Series of contacts and meetings with the secretariats of the respective faith groups by the National Catholic Secretariat of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference ensued. In no time, expressed commitments⁶ were made by the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, Ahmadiyya

²Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 11th Edition, Revised (2009). Eds. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson.

³Maimonides Foundation (2013). *Interfaith Explorers*. Available at www.interfaithexplorers.com (accessed on 23rd May, 2017)

⁴*Transforming Religious Differences and Experiences for Social Cohesion and Democratic Governance: A Report on Lessons Learnt and Best Practices from an interfaith Cooperation for the 2016 Elections Engagements in Ghana.* (June, 2017).

⁵STAR-Ghana is Strengthening Transparency and Responsiveness in Ghana and is a pooled funding mechanism for civil society with contributions from European Union, UKAid and DANIDA.

⁶Written letters of commitments were provided by the Faith Groups which were tendered as part of documentation for the project application.

Muslim Mission, Ghana and Office of the National Chief Imam to join the FAITH Platform for the purpose of responding to the STAR-Ghana's Elections' funding Call. Later, other Faith-Based Organizations like the Marshallan Relief and Development Services (MAREDES), Christian Mothers' Association (CMA), Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Ghana (FOMWAG), Marian Conflict Resolution Center (MCRC), Alternative Dispute Resolution Center in Ho Diocese and the Center for Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies (CECOTAPS) also signed up to the Platform as members or to provide specialized and technical services.

The FAITH in Ghana's 2016 General Elections project set out an overall goal to ensure that all participating political parties accepted the outcome of the 2016 Elections results. Two expected results were outlined as follows:

- i. Enhanced cooperation and actions among Religious Leaders and relevant state actors on early warning signals of electoral related disputes in Ghana.
- ii. Reduced incidents of voter irregular behaviours, electoral fraud, tensions and conflicts in Ghana's 2016 elections.

This report focuses on the second result area. Therefore, the broad areas of engagement with the electoral processes in 2016 were:

- Early warning conflict surveillance
- Dialogue and engagement for peace
- Deployment of Alternative Dispute Resolution processes and Actors.
- Peace messaging and exhortation

The following milestones served as key benchmarks and guided the project intervention efforts:

- Formation and training of FBOs' peace teams on ADR
- Carry out voter literacy and education in all dioceses and parishes
- Dissemination of peace messages by Religious Leaders
- Activate FBOs' peace teams to provide ADR services to disputing parties at regional and national levels
- Documentation of ADR experience for knowledge management and learning
- Dissemination of ADR experiences across the country.

2.2. Early Warning Conflict Surveillance

The FAITH Platform partnered with CECOTAPS⁷ to provide Technical services in this area. The terms of reference for this assignment was set out as follows:

- Undertake election-related Conflict Surveillance periodically (but not more than one every quarter)
- Write report on Conflict Surveillance to be titled Early Warning Signal Report
- Draft report should be agreed with Project Manager (Executive Secretary) before finalizing
- Each report for the earmarked period should not be later than 3 weeks to the end of the project quarter
- Be available to present report and explanation to meetings of Religious Leaders as determined by the regularity of the report.
- Each Early Warning Signal Report should contain suggested key messages to be delivered by the Religious Leaders in Pursuance of peace.
- Each report should identify key hotspots on election-related violence.
- Support other activities as relevant to the project
- Cooperate with the National Catholic Secretariat and other project partners in resource mobilization to further the project outcomes.

During the period, CECOTAPS produced two Early Warning Signals Reports but provided updates and briefing to the Project Steering Committee on quarterly basis. CECOTAPS worked in collaboration with their partners like WANEP⁸ and Regional Peace Councils and drew information from other key informants from flashpoint communities which was facilitated by their Satellite Peace Centers.⁹ The Early Warning Signals Reports were the basis for follow up action planning by Religious Leaders and subsequent dialogue with the Independent Governmental Institutions (IGIs) and high-level policy actors. The Director of CECOTAPS presented the reports in writing and in person to the forum of Religious Leaders.

2.3. Dialogue and Engagement for Peace by Religious Leaders

For ease of convening and to ensure consistency and continuity of actions and follow up, all the participating Faith Groups nominated key figures from their leadership who will receive

⁷CECOTAPS is the Centre for Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies, based in Damongo and for the Northern Ecclesiastical Province of the Catholic Church. See www.cecotaps.org

⁸West Africa Network for Peace Building

⁹CECOTAPS has satellite peace centers based in the following flash-point communities: Tamale, Yendi, Bimbilla, Wa, Bolgatanga and Bawku.

and discuss the Early Warning Signals Reports as an interfaith platform. The first stage of the dialogue meetings of the Faith Leaders was always among themselves. Once they convinced themselves about the signals of conflict issues that were emerging from the reports, the next stage was action planning. On the basis of the nature of the issues, they agreed which IGI would be appropriate target to meet. Thus, during the project period, Religious Leaders held dialogue meetings with the former President - His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, the in-coming President – His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, the former Minister of Interior – Mr. Prosper Bani, the Electoral Commission Chair – Mrs. Charlotte Osei and other Commissioners, the former Inspector General of Police – Dr. John Kudalor and Police Service Commanders, and Chairpersons of Regional Peace Councils from the three Northern Regions.

Dialogue meetings were also held with leaders of other stakeholders like Political Parties, Traditional Authorities and Youth Associations on separate occasions. Such meetings were normally held without media presence but they were briefed later. This helped to manage the sensitive nature of some of the issues that arose from the Early Warning Conflict Surveillance reports but also was a way of ensuring open and frank discussions on the issues.

2.4. Deployment of Alternative Dispute Resolution Animators of FBOs

The Marian Conflict Resolution Center (MCRC)¹⁰ of the Catholic University College of Ghana (Fiapre) was the technical partner to the project for the provision of ADR services. The terms of reference set out their tasks as:

- i. Develop a training proposal outlining content, methodology, literature references etc to be submitted to the Project Manager.
- ii. Profile of not more than three competent Facilitators who have been envisaged to undertake the training to be submitted together with the training proposal.
- iii. Time table of topics and learning exercises to be treated during the period of the training to be submitted to the Project Manager.
- iv. Propose training fees and related costs as part of the training proposal for negotiations with the Project Manager.

¹⁰MCRC was established by the Catholic University College of Ghana (CUCG)- Fiapre, the Catholic Diocese of Sunyani and the Giving to Ghana Foundation in New York in 2011 as an ADR training service provide. See www.mariancrc.org

- v. Propose three alternative venues for possible hosting of the training for consideration of the Project Steering Committee.
- vi. Negotiate and agree training proposal and related issues with the Project Manager.
- vii. Contract, based on negotiated training proposal duly signed between the Marian Conflict Resolution Training Centre and the National Catholic Secretariat.

The MCRC trained a total of 32 Animators representing the Faith Groups who participated in the project implementation. They also developed a manual¹¹ to guide the work of the ADR Animators. The Animators were deployed in or near flashpoint communities. With the successful and peaceful transition to the point of swearing in of the new President on 7th January, 2017, we did not anticipate the scale of incidences of seizures, occupations and lock-outs of public facilities. The numbers of our ADR Animators proved grossly inadequate to the scale of the post-election disturbances. However, the ADR Animators were available handy to advise and support their respective Religious Leaders to take actions that helped mitigate the effects. What is even more interesting is that the ADR approach provides sustainability to the project interventions for peace and security as Religious Leaders have reported about their usefulness in resolving other forms of conflicts beyond those relating to elections.¹² The Chief Justice, Her Ladyship Theodora Wood was also reported recently to have encouraged Religious Bodies to play active roles in ADR services.¹³ It is our plan to continue to nurture ADR approaches as a cutting edge of the FAITH Platform and are accordingly exploring partnerships towards this endeavor.

2.5. Peace Messaging and Exhortations by Religious Leaders

Local FM and Community radio stations were prioritized for broader outreach with peace messages from Religious Leaders. The 20 Catholic Dioceses across the entire country were charged to facilitate and coordinate this. Religious Leaders from diverse faiths took turns in groups not exceeding three at a time, to speak on selected radio stations. There was time during the sessions to receive feedback and reports from callers (phone-in to the programme). Besides recording the discussions, we also developed a template to collect feedback on messages delivered, track and follow-up on issues needing attention. We

¹¹The comprehensive Manual is available in hard copy at the Project's Secretariat. Excerpts is in the Appendix of this report.

¹²Detail report/outline of ADR deployment is at the Appendix

¹³See page 55 of Daily Graphic of Ghana, Tuesday, March 14, 2017.

estimate that Religious Leaders may have reached about 12 million citizens with messages of peace and exhortation. Other important channels that were used by Religious Leaders for messages of peace and exhortations were mosques, churches, religious conventions, prayer and preaching (sermon) sessions. This experience has amply confirmed the outreach potential of Faith Groups for educational campaigns, public sensitization and other promotional purposes. We think that these are useful for the promotion of public policies that inure to public good and require the active participation of citizens. The FAITH in Ghana Platform is considering how to use this approach for the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and also lend support to the on-going anti-galamsey (anti-illegal mining) campaign in Ghana.

3.0. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND RESULTS

3.1. Introduction

We begin our discussion in this section with some preliminary comments. The first is about attribution and contribution. There are many processes in the entire elections value chain management and many actors are also at play at different stages; albeit in complementary fashion. Even among the grant partners of STAR-Ghana, there were diverse interventions at different stages and locations. It was thus commendable that STAR-Ghana facilitated common electronic and physical platforms and spaces for networking, information-sharing and collaboration among the grant partners and key stakeholders on the 2016 elections. Therefore, while we outline our achievements, we do not lay claim to direct attribution for the positive outcomes but are instead emphasizing our contributory role and acknowledging the roles of the other actors.

It is also important to underscore the relevance of other processes that were followed to be able to engage effectively with the 2016 elections. These processes, though prior and ancillary to the project implementation, were important foundation blocks for any attributable achievements. We note in particular, that the Electoral Commission of Ghana which is the official and mandatory body for the management of the elections, gave endorsement¹⁴ to our plans and made a commitment to cooperate, collaborate and support our efforts where necessary and desirable. Operating as a civil society process to influence a major public policy of an electoral process, we feel a sense of achievement that our endeavor had value-addition and was endorsed as such.

Moreover, civil societies' collective and coordinated action is a measure of potential for both voice and influence. We achieved this by a well-organized platform¹⁵ of diverse faith groups working together for policy influence.

3.2. Achievements and Results

The following are more direct achievements and results relating to the actual electoral processes in 2016:

¹⁴See letter of Electoral Commission Reference C/EC.04/SF.3/V.15/18 and signed by the Chairperson and dated 15th January, 2016.

¹⁵The experience of our model has also been documented separately as: *Transforming Religious Differences and Experiences for Social Cohesion and Democratic Governance: A Report on Lessons Learnt and Best Practices from an interfaith Cooperation for the 2016 Election Engagement in Ghana!*. (June, 2017).

- **Credible Early Warning Conflict Surveillance**

Credible Early Warning Conflict surveillance and signals reports contributed to nipping potential conflictual situations in the bud. The partner institution and the methods employed for this purpose were quite reliable and also had the capacity to propose follow-up measures that were effective for peace and security for the elections. We have already noted how these reports served as basis for dialogue and action planning by very influential Religious Leaders who represent large segments of society. The reports were useful, timely and confidential information to key Independent Governmental Institutions like the Ghana Police Service, Electoral Commission and the Ministry of Interior at meetings with the Religious Leaders. Religious Leaders also used the credible signals picked up to give preventative cautions to Political Parties, Traditional and other Opinion Leaders in the would-be affected areas. In most of the instances, the leaders were able to call¹⁶ either individuals or groups to order before they could set their plans into operation that would have disturbed the peace.



Religious Leaders' after a Review and Action Planning Meeting on the Early Warning Signal Report

- **Effective Deployment of Alternative Dispute Resolution**

We successfully trained and deployed 32 ADR Animators, representing diverse Faith Leaders, in 21 hotspot areas across the entire country during and after the elections. Though the numbers proved to be grossly inadequate in the face of unexpected post-

¹⁶We are constrained by the sensitive nature of the cases involved to disclose them in this report.

election incidences, they served a useful purpose. For instance, in some of the cases of proactive and preventative actions from the Early Warning Signals reports, some Religious Leaders used their ADR Animators as follow up interveners to mediate the differences and grievances that were fueling diabolical and reprisal actions. Besides, we see the achievement of the ADR deployment beyond the project lifespan, thus providing sustainability of Faith Groups' advocacy for peace and social cohesion.

- **Wide Outreach and Influence**

We estimate to have reached about 12 million citizens with peace messages and appeals by respectable Religious Leaders delivered on 20 FM and Community radio stations across the entire country. It is very difficult to measure the real impact of these messages beyond the estimated numerical reach of citizens. However, we do also know that the potential of Religious Leaders to influence the behavior patterns of their following is undisputed and has been acknowledged. The numerical reach of these peace messages and exhortations could even be much higher if you add other spaces like Mosques, Churches and Religious Conventions at which Religious Leaders exhorted worshippers for decorous and civil behaviors during the elections. These spaces also provided civic and electoral education for peaceful and credible elections. So, without doubt, it was a significant contribution to the widely-held view of peaceful elections in 2016. The Electoral Commission, for instance, also reported¹⁸ a reduction of spoilt and rejected ballot papers in the Presidential elections from 251,720 in 2012 to 166,248 in 2016 which represents 33.96 per cent.

- **Convening Power and Access to Policy Arenas**

The ability of the FAITH in Ghana Platform to either convene or get direct access to high-level policy actors, top leadership of Political Parties and other important stakeholders of the 2016 elections was in itself a great achievement. Our own engagement processes and those of other civil society actors in the elections generated critical pieces of information that needed to reach these important stakeholders timely. In this context, our Platform became a voice for many of the civil society partners for the 2016 elections at levels not easily reached by all. For instance, we facilitated Religious Leaders' direct meetings with eminent personalities like the former President John Dramani Mahama, the incumbent President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, the EC Chair and Commissioners, the Minister of Interior Mr. Prosper Bani, the IGP and Police Service Commanders, Chairs of Regional Peace Councils, Paramount Chiefs of hotspots like Yendi and Leadership of Political Parties, on separate occasions, all for the purposes of ensuring credible and peaceful elections leading to a smooth political transfer of power.

¹⁷UNDP (2014). *Guidelines on Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations and Religious Leaders*.

¹⁸See EC website: www.ec.gov.gh



A group photo of FBO Leaders' dialogue meeting with the Electoral Commission. (October, 2016)



Meeting of FBO Leaders' with President Elect Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo (December, 2016)



Meeting of FBO Leaders' with the out-going President John Dramani Mahama (December, 2016)



Faith-Based Leaders dialogue meeting with the Regent of Dagbon, Kampakuya Naa Abdulai Andani at the Gbewaa Palace at Yendi (October, 2016)

4.0. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Introduction

The election management value-chain has many processes and notches for stakeholders' engagement. However, since Ghana's return to democratic governance in 1992, civil society participation has increased gradually but limited in some ways. For instance, civil society participation in the 1992 and 1996 elections was almost non-existent due to constraints by state actors.¹⁹ Starting with the 2000 general elections, civil society engagement or participation was almost entirely limited to independent elections observation and monitoring.

Most FBOs, like the National Catholic Secretariat through the national Justice and Peace Commissions (JPCs), either did this directly on their own or joined other coalitions like the Civic Forum Initiative and CODEO to do so. Over time, key civil society groups have ventured into other more technical and sophisticated areas of the electoral processes. Examples of these include parallel votes tabulation, setting up of election situation rooms, electoral reforms and litigation through the law courts of processes deemed to be not fair or lacking in credibility. One calls to mind the legal challenge on the use of the National Health Insurance card to register voters in 2016. In 2012, the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference and the National Catholic Secretariat campaigned vigorously for the introduction of Biometric Verification System in Ghana's elections when major Political Parties were quite apprehensive about the new system.

4.2. Lessons Learned

- We have learned from our engagement with the 2016 and throughout the six previous elections from 1992 to 2012 that there is great value addition if civil society engagement is diverse in scope, approach and content. The underpinning factors should be about how to maximize areas of competence and influence in the election value-chain. For instance, FBOs have proven to wield significant convening power that can be maximized for national consensus building and social cohesion especially before, during and after national elections. While elections observation, monitoring and education are important for the electoral process, there are many civil society organizations who can be counted to do this.

¹⁹See CODEO (2001). *Final Report on the December 2000 Elections in Ghana*. Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana) and CODEO.

- We have learned that even though coalitions and networks of CSOs' engagement in elections may be desirable, they tend to limit the potential and preferred approaches of FBOs. What the FAITH in Ghana Platform has been able to achieve is largely due to the leverage of an exclusive interfaith platform. The Platform was capable of facilitating processes that had the confidence of Religious Leaders and their willingness to make use of information arising thereof.

- We have learned that representatives of Independent Governmental Institutions and high-level policy actors at presidential and cabinet levels are more disposed and willing to engage with Religious Leaders. This was normally done in the spirit of trust and mutual respect which is devoid of media hype, to find genuine solutions to national problems. What is needed to enhance this on the side of the Faith Groups are logistical and technical support that facilitates independent research, coordination and establishing synergies with other civil society actors.

- Working to influence the electoral process may be a regular cycle in an entrenched democratic dispensation but still remain periodic and occasional according to the time table for elections. However, working towards social and behavioral change needs time and consistency of effort. It would be more useful that FBOs and CSOs who focus on an agenda for social change have the means to do so on a more sustained basis. For instance, the advocacy for peace and mediation efforts in the flashpoint areas should not be sporadic, only resuming and closing according to the electoral time-table. Similarly, untoward behaviors that have become characteristic of Ghana's elections, post-elections and political transitions, like formation of Political Parties' 'Vigilante Groups', the use of so-called 'Matchomen', seizures, lock-outs and occupations of public facilities; all require sustained actions on attitudes and habits.

- We have also learned that the earmarked funding provided by STAR-Ghana has greatly enhanced stakeholders' engagement in the 2016 elections. This should be nurtured for the entire governance of Ghana. We think that multi-stakeholders' engagement in policy-making processes has great potential of deepening good governance. However, there are limited inbuilt structures and means to facilitate stakeholders' participation in Ghana. Therefore, other means for civil society funding like STAR-Ghana remains indispensable for the time being.

4.3. Recommendations

- It is recommended that Faith Groups pay attention to other important processes before and after the elections which are very critical but demands higher clout to address.

- It is recommended that Religious Leaders should take bold steps to formalize the FAITH in Ghana Platform. This would be a great leverage for broader policy advocacy engagement and the promotion of social cohesion and good governance in Ghana.
- We recommend that STAR-Ghana and other Development Partners of Ghana should explore options for more sustained funding for CSOs and FBOs. This would greatly contribute to ensuring more sustained efforts beyond the electoral cycle to develop desirable behavioral and attitudinal change in society.
- It is recommended that, in the long term, civil society funding from national resources, must receive some attention. Models exist in other jurisdictions that can provide guidance on how to do this without compromising the independence and open-mindedness of civil society organizations and Faith Groups. This is very important in the context of the global 2030 Agenda of the SDGs, Africa Union's Agenda 2063 and Ghana's own long-term national development planning process. It would be useful for the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) to integrate CSOs' engagement and participation as means of building dynamic institutions for development and public policy decision making in Ghana.

5.0 CONCLUDING NOTES AND APPENDICES

5.1. Conclusions

This report demonstrates that Faith Groups can contribute to deepening democracy especially by participating and giving credibility to electoral processes. However, the experience is pointing to something much higher than Religious Leaders' role in occasional processes like elections. The ability of Faith Groups to influence the social environment, behavioral change, build mass social movements and have access to high-level policy actors is quite critical for global and regional transformative agenda in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We posit that Ghana would not miss the opportunity if attention is paid to leveraging the potential of Faith Groups in Ghana. It seems to us that, what has been recounted in this report is a promising seed that has been sown for social transformation.

We conclude this report with excerpts from the 2016 communique²⁰ of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference at their meeting in Tamale in October at the threshold of the 2016 General Elections. The statements and messages of these Men-of-God are prophetic and would stand the test of time beyond the 2016 General Elections. The target messages, in particular, are a moral and ethical charter for the key actors of this and future elections. These statements and messages are greatly informed by the experiences that were facilitated by the FAITH in Ghana's 2016 Elections project interventions of the interfaith platform.

On dialogue for peace:

'Unlike other parts of the world where religion is sometimes used to promote and sustain conflict, it is heartwarming to learn that, here in Tamale and elsewhere in Ghana, Muslims interact peacefully with Christians in schools, hospitals and various places of work.

We sincerely commend the successive governments and various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) for their efforts of promoting peace in the Northern Region, a region perceived as most vulnerable to diverse conflicts. We hereby state that government's efforts should be aimed at a more holistic and sustained approach in addressing the very factors that fuel these conflicts. Since peace is the new name for development (cf. Pope Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio*), in seeking the development of the Northern Region, the need for sustainable peace cannot and should not be overlooked, especially in this season of elections'

²⁰The full text of the Communique is available on www.cbgha.org and also www.caritas-ghana.org

Concerns on the 2016 General Elections:

'We have observed that in some parts of Africa and elsewhere in the world, political elections have left behind unhealed scars of violence and disrespect for the rule of law. The consequence of these acts has not only unleashed irrecoverable cost on those nations but also miserable plagues of instability and insecurity.

Since Ghana will go to the polls on December 7, 2016, let us implore God to look mercifully upon our country Ghana and help choose, through a diligent and sincere exercise of our franchise, leaders after His own heart. Our prayer in the National Anthem, *“God bless our homeland Ghana, and make our nation great and strong”* will win divine blessings for us only when we acknowledge God for who He is and make amends with Him daily. A country cannot develop without the fear of God'.

Admonition:

'A decision on who should lead us is a decision for the development for our nation. Therefore, our political campaigns and platforms should not trade insults and attack political figures. We are one people as Ghanaians and we cannot accept that elections should divide us. Let us therefore safeguard our unity, growth, development and destiny as one people'.

Target Messages:

Electoral Commission:

- “The integrity and success of the forthcoming elections depend primarily on the Electoral Commission. It is the institution constitutionally mandated, among other duties, to compile the register of voters and revise it periodically, to demarcate the electoral boundaries for both national and local government elections, to conduct and supervise all public elections and to educate the people on the electoral process and its purpose. We commend the Electoral Commission for all the measures it has put in place to ensure peaceful, free, fair, transparent and credible elections. We strongly urge that the Commission should be provided with all the logistics necessary for the elections. We call on Ghanaians to repose trust and confidence in the work of the Electoral Commission throughout the period of elections”.

Political Parties:

- “We appeal once again to politicians, members and supporters of the various political parties, during their campaigning, to avoid the temptation of making promises that

they know they cannot fulfil, because this amounts to deceiving the people of Ghana. We urge them to avoid hate-filled statements and expressions that threaten revenge and vendetta. We also call on party leaders, parliamentary and presidential candidates to conduct themselves honourably and to respect their opponents, both in their utterances and actions. Politicians should realize that their political opponents are not their enemies but neighbours who share different views. Since it is only the Electoral Commission that is empowered to announce the results of the elections, we ask all political parties, radio stations, the social media, and indeed everyone, to refrain from announcing any results before they are declared by the Electoral Commission. Further, we are very concerned about the phenomenon of vote buying by politicians. Such practice is an insult to the intelligence and dignity of the unsuspecting voters. We encourage politicians to stop such acts and entreat the electorate from yielding to such needless enticements”.

Security Agencies:

- “We commend the Security Agencies for working towards security and peace in Ghana. We urge them to discharge their duty with dispatch and without fear or favour. We encourage them to demonstrate a high sense of professionalism by respecting the rights and dignity of all Ghanaian citizens. The culture of impunity which has been manifested in sections of the Ghanaian society by some individuals and groups contributes to high levels of lawlessness in the country. We condemn, in no uncertain terms, the sycophancy and the operations of unauthorized vigilante groups. Consequently, we state that the prevalence of so-called “machomen” who prowl around intimidating and brutalizing innocent Ghanaians should be dealt with”.

Electorate:

- “While an election, in and by itself, cannot guarantee good governance, it can facilitate or hinder development depending on how it is managed. Participation in the political life, in the light of fundamental moral principles, is therefore an essential duty of every Christian and of all people of good will. We therefore encourage all registered voters to be vigilant as they exercise their franchise. To decide not to vote is to neglect your duty and run the risk of leaving others to decide your future for you. In the name of peace, parents and guardians are reminded that they have a God-given responsibility to discourage their under-aged children and wards from voting. In the same vein, we appeal to non-Ghanaians who registered, for one reason or the other, to refrain from voting. Let us all remember that we can have peaceful elections only if we ensure justice before, during and after the elections”.

Media

- “We call upon the media to uphold the highest journalistic values and ethics in their reportage of the electoral process. We recommend that news about the elections should not be based on hearsay or prejudice. Information must be verified and the truth professionally ascertained. News and stories should not be targeted at causing disgrace or embarrassment to personalities, especially where it is clear that such reportage may trigger disaffection or incite violence”.

Politicians and Traditional Leadership:

- “Presidential and parliamentary aspirants share similar constituencies with various kings and chiefs of our traditional communities. We appeal to presidential and parliamentary candidates not to take for granted or interfere with the authority and functions of these traditional leaders and the institutional structures upon which they rest. We entreat our kings and chiefs to protect the integrity of their stools and skins by refraining from meddling in partisan politics to the displeasure of their subjects as if to say that the party they associate with or endorse is representative of their subjects' choice as well. Politicians and traditional leaders must work to foster peace and seek the integral development of Ghanaians rather than to divide them. Further, we strongly urge Religious leaders to be circumspect in their pronouncements and predictions on the outcome of the elections”.

5.2. Appendices

5.2.1. Excerpts from ADR Manual

A SUPPLEMENTARY MANUAL FOR TRAINED MEDIATORS: A MEDIATOR'S QUICK GUIDE WHO IS A MEDIATOR?

- A mediator is the third party neutral who assist the parties in a conflict to determine a resolution.
- A mediator is a necessary participant to the mediation process
- There can be one mediator or a panel of mediators
- A mediator must have an in depth or background knowledge of the issues and type of dispute under mediation
- Some mediators are highly trained and experienced, not all are professionals, and they come from many different walks of life.

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF A MEDIATOR?

The following are useful criteria for selecting a mediator:

- Personal attributes—patience, empathy, intelligence, optimism and flexibility
- Qualifications—knowledge of the theory and practice of conflict, negotiation and mediation, mediations skills, an average of a certificate in ADR is necessary
- Experience— mediation experience, experience in the substantive area of dispute and personal life experience

WHAT ARE THE BASIC ROLES OF A MEDIATOR?

- The mediator's primary role is to act as a neutral third party who facilitates discussions between the parties.
- A mediator's role includes but not limited to:
- Facilitating the mediation process for the parties
- Opening communication between the parties
- Probe facts, position and interest of the parties
- Promoting understanding
- Focusing on the parties reasonable interests
- Keeping the negotiation process moving forward
- Assisting the parties in creating and refining settlement options.
- Helping parties understand ramifications if they do not reach a settlement
- Bringing closure to sessions.
- Facilitating or monitoring enforcement or execution of settlement agreement on occasion
- Making sure that parties stay on real issues of the dispute and stay away from

- personal attacks
- Restricting pressure, aggression and intimidation,
- Demonstrating how to communicate through employing good speaking and listening skills
- Paying attention to non-verbal messages and other signals emanating from the context of the mediation
- Contributing his or her expertise and experience
- Creating a more productive discussion than the parties could have had by themselves
- Helping the parties determine the facts
- Showing empathy and impartiality with the parties
- Helping the parties generate new ideas
- Exercising political skill and use persuasion to get people to soften hard-liner positions.
- Avoiding judgment on who is right or wrong or issue a decision rather helping parties work out their own solutions to problems.

WHAT ARE THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF MEDIATION?

The purpose of ethical standards of practice for ADR practitioners is to:

- Provide model standard of conduct
- Promote excellence in practice
- Provide ethical, competent, appropriate and effective means of dispute resolution
- Promote public confidence in ADR

Non-Allegiance

A mediator shall be free from bias and shall proceed diligently and efficiently to assist the parties to reach a just and effective resolution of their dispute.

Acceptance of Appointment

A mediator shall not accept appointment as a neutral if he/she is not competent in the particular ADR process and /or cannot devote the time and professionalism required.

Impartiality

Impartiality means freedom from favoritism, sex, religion, ethnicity, or bias either by appearance, word, conduct, action, and a commitment to help parties in resolving a dispute.

A mediator must not:

- I. accept gifts or offers before, during or after an ADR process,
- ii. request for favors or items or service of value from any of the parties.

- Partiality arises if a mediator:
 - i. has an undisclosed pecuniary or other interest in the dispute or in any of the parties,
 - ii. puts undue pressure on a party to settle a dispute.
 - iii. has a relationship with:
 - a. a party
 - b. a relative of a party
 - c. a close associate of a party
 - d. a person who is known to be a potentially important witness.

- A mediator shall decline an appointment if the impartiality of the neutral is likely to be an issue unless the parties agree in writing that the mediator may proceed with the ADR process.

- Continuing and substantial social or professional relationships between a prospective mediator and a party or with a person who is known to be a potentially important witness in an ADR process is a good ground for justifiable doubt as to the impartiality and independence of a prospective neutral.

Independence

A mediator shall carry out his/her duty free from any external influence which is likely to affect the outcome of the dispute.

Avoiding the Abuse of ADR Process

A mediator finds in the course of an ADR proceedings that:

- a. a party is abusing the ADR process,
- b. a party is unwilling to resolve the dispute
- c. the power imbalance between the parties is so substantial that the ADR process may result in an unfair and unjust outcome to a party: - the neutral shall terminate the ADR process and report to the ADR officer.

Avoiding Conflict of Interest-

A mediator shall not accept an appointment where a mediator:

- i. has prior knowledge of the subject matter of the dispute from any of the parties or the representatives or associates of the parties,
- ii. has previously represented either of the parties in any capacity,
- iii. has or had a relationship with one of the parties,
- iv. is in any other circumstance that may raise a question of the neutral's impartiality.

Confidentiality

- i. A mediator shall not disclose information the neutral obtains during an ADR process to

another person without the consent of the parties.

ii. Despite the requirement of confidentiality, a mediator shall disclose information obtained during an ADR process if the mediator is required by law to disclose the information in a matter related to:

- a. the abuse of children,
- b. commission of a crime,
- c. danger of serious physical harm to a party, another person or damage to property.

Requirement for best Practice of Mediation

A mediator:

- i. shall return any case that is outside a mediator's area of competence or expertise to the court through the ADR Officer for reassignment to a more competent mediator;
- ii. shall report to the ADR Officer the need for professional assistance in respect of any specialized area of the case before a mediator.
- iii. may with the agreement of the parties invite a professional to assist a mediator in the mediation process;
- iv. has a duty to report any misconduct by a co-neutral or other neutral.

Court-Connected ADR Procedure

Medium of Expression

All ADR shall be conducted in a language determined by the disputants. Where the court interpreter cannot satisfy the needs of the parties, the parties shall engage the service of an interpreter at their own cost.

Termination of Proceedings

A mediator may terminate proceedings within 30 days if parties are unable to reach settlement. A mediator shall request for extension of 30 days if settlement is not reached within the specified period.

Settlement Agreements:

- i. the parties shall draw their own Terms of Settlement
- ii. a mediator may draw the agreement at the request of the parties and state on the agreement that a mediator drew up the settlement agreement at the request of the parties, and the agreement shall:
 - a. be in simple language
 - b. be certain and not vague
 - c. clearly specify obligations of each party and the dates or periods by which obligations

- are to be carried out,
- d. the parties shall sign or thumbprint the Terms of Settlement with the necessary jurat where a party is illiterate or blind.

- **Failure of Settlement**

Where parties fail to reach a settlement:

- a. A mediator shall terminate the proceedings and notify the ADR officer in writing.
- b. The ADR Officer shall inform the parties to appear in court at the next sitting day

Protection for Children

ADR processes should be conducted in the best interest of children where the matter in dispute affects children. Children should be shielded from witnessing hostilities between the parties by consulting the parties in private.

- **Destruction of Records**

At the close of the ADR session, a mediator shall destroy all written information gathered at the ADR session in the presence of the parties and return tape recordings, video clips, pictures, receipts, maps and other information in permanent form to their owners.

- **Post Settlement Procedure**

Where the parties reach a settlement:

- a. the parties or the mediator shall send the terms of settlement to the ADR officer for filing.
- b. If the court is in session, the ADR officer shall immediately send the terms of settlement to the court and request the parties to appear before the court that same day or the next sitting day, and
- c. The court shall enter the terms of settlement without modification as consent judgement.

5.2.2. ADR Deployment Review Report

Introduction

Ahead of the December 2016 General Elections in Ghana, the Forum for Actions on Inclusion, Transparency and Harmony (FAITH) Project with funding support from Star Ghana, trained over thirty (30) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Animators who were deployed at conflict flashpoints across Ghana to facilitate timely response to potential election related violence before, during and after the general elections. With a very successful and almost violence-free election over, the FAITH in Ghana Project as part of its review process invited a selected number of these trained ADR Animators, together with representatives of their respective faith groups and members of the Project's Steering Committee in Accra to:

1. Review ADR Training, its impact on the skills of trained ADR Animators and how those skills were deployed before, during and after the elections.
2. To get feedback on the nature and types of conflicts that were experienced and the role played by the ADR Animators to stem them and possible challenges encountered.
3. To Plan for the future of ADR, especially within the context of the faith community in Ghana.

Importance of ADR and uses of Skills acquired

The participants, during the general overview of the training programme and its impact on their work as ADR Animators listed the following as key benefits of the training:

I. As women animators, we used the skills to galvanize women to support peaceful elections'. (FOMWAG Animators from Bolgatanga and Bawku in the Upper East Region).

II. As a Youth Leader, I was able to apply skills to resolve conflicts among youth groups of political parties before and during the elections to avert potential violence' (Ahmadiyya Animator from Techiman in the Brong Ahafo Region).

III. I have also applied it at the work place to resolve interpersonal conflicts. Beyond the elections, my ADR skills were also used to mediate in domestic and family disputes, with very positive and peaceful outcomes'. (Office of the National Chief Imam Animator from Takoradi in the Western Region)

IV. Skills were also applied in Gender-drama clubs in rural areas to resolve community and family conflicts on girl-child education and persons with disabilities and special needs. This was shared by our Catholic Animator working in West Mamprusi and Mamprugu-Moagduri.

V. Skills opened my eyes to anticipate potential conflict flash points and to engage with parties'. (MAREDES Animator from Walewale in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region).

VI. Skills afforded the opportunity to engage the youths, chiefs and religious leaders and the need for peaceful elections. (Animators from Sekondi in the Western Region).

VII. At the person level, I became recognized as a focal person for mediation – skills enabled me deal with potential conflicts in a more professional way than before'. (Catholic

Group Animator from Kumasi in Ashanti Region).

VIII. Most Animators said that the training has become a motivation for some of them to engage in mediation in their communities.

IX. Training has also motivated some of us to seek further training to become professional and certified Mediators and ADR practitioners. This has made us automatic members of the Ghana Association of Mediators – (GPCC Animator from Accra).

X. The training equipped us with certain specific skills such as communication in mediation and the role of the mediator in conflict mediation – It equipped us to use procedures and laid-down processes to achieve positive outcomes.

XI. Training instilled confidence in us as mediators to conflicting parties to believe in the process.

XII. Skills have had personal effect in participants' daily interactions with others.

Types of Conflicts Before and During Elections

Participants broke into group sessions of three to list and discuss types of conflicts that occurred in their respective regions before and during the 2016 general elections and how trained ADR Animators and Religious Leaders intervened through mediation. At plenary, participants listed the following as types of conflicts that occurred, including intervention

List of Types of Conflicts that Occurred Before and During the 2016 Elections	
Before Elections	During Elections
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supreme Court ruling to cancel voters registered with National Health Insurance ID cards. • Disagreement over bloated Voter Register-National issues • Disqualification of some Presidential Candidates by the Electoral commission based on irregularities in registration forms-National issue. • A Woman refused to sell water to political 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disagreements over allowing a nursing mother to jump the voting queue almost degenerating into violence, but for the timely intervention of one of our trained ADR Animators-Ashaley Botwey in the Adentan Constituency. • Wearing of political party t-shirt on election day by a minor contrary to the electoral regulations at Kpalsi in the Sagnarigu Constituency had the potential

opponent leading to tension-**Japan Motors Estates at the Adentan Constituency.**

- Political Party campaigns near opponents' premises.
- Radio panel discussions that inflamed passions. -**Techiman**
- Use of intemperate language on campaign platform.
- So-called Health-Walks by members of Political Parties led to clashes in Techiman, Accra and Bolgatanga.
- Intra and Inter political party rivalry groups over sharing of resources - **Techiman.**
- Casting of insinuations between political opponents-**Bolgatanga Zongo.**
- Conflict over buying of voter ID cards - **Sekondi.** - Chief Imam brings Zongo chiefs together for dialogue.
- Under-aged voters- ADR animator supported by the chief Imam to do community dialogue in the mosque- **Sekondi-Zongo.**
- Physical assaults over paying of bribes - **Ho Central.**
- Intra-party conflicts over selection of polling Agents (Political Parties) - **Ablekuma North**
- Verbal attacks on FM Stations at **Ho Central.**

of triggering political violence but for the timely intervention of one of our trained ADR Animators, who engaged the parents of the minor to change the dress.

- Disruption of polling queues due to multiple polling stations within same compound-**Techiman Zongo.**
 - Delays in searching and finding names in voters register created tensions. Better education could have resolved issues - **Techiman.**
 - During counting of votes arose disputes over spoilt/rejected ballots with associated misunderstanding to resolve a potential conflict - **Tanoso, Techiman.**
 - Conflicts over cross - Constituency voting in **Sekondi Zongo.**
 - Conflict over missing names in voter register - **Ablekuma North.**
 - Positioning of election ballot boxes at **Ablekuma North.**
 - Apart from meetings with the security agencies before the election, the National Chief Imam personally Intervened during the tense moments of waiting period after the elections by issuing a press statement calling on Ghanaians to stay calm and allow the Electoral Commission time to do its work without undue pressure.
- The Amir of Ahmadiyah Mission in Ghana used the early warning report to intervene at the highest political level on issues of potential conflict situation before and during the 2016 elections.

Post-Elections Conflicts and Actions taken

After going through a second group work session, participants were able to identify and list a number of post-election related conflict situations in their respective regions as well as national level. Animators felt that they could have done better if some of the post-election incidences had been properly anticipated. Participants shared views on how ADR Animators and Religious leaders could have intervened and suggestions of possible future actions:

Post-Election Conflicts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over jubilation/celebration of winners over losers.• Settling of personal scores/retaliation by winning party supporters.• Seizure of public facilities by party foot-soldiers.• Intra-party fighting over hoarding of goodies.• Delays in declaration of results of general elections by the Electoral Commission-Nationwide.• Seizures, occupations and lock-outs of public facilities by supporters of political parties eg. Toll booth seizers in Sunyani, Ashaiman, passport office etc.• Transitional related issues – missing state vehicles, Former President Residence issues, job losses by political appointees etc.

Actions to be taken and suggested plans.

Suggested Future Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring all ADR animators together for further training and formation of a network of inter-faith ADRs.• FAITH-Animators should link up with the new Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs Ministry for possible collaboration to deal with Chieftaincy and religious conflicts in Ghana.• FAITH-Animators should link up with community leaders (Chiefs, Pastors, Imams).• FAITH-Animators should embark on extensive education in Radio, communities, churches, mosques etc.• Religious leadership should use their convening power to push politicians to enforce laws at all levels.• Strengthening of local level ADR capacity to deal with local level conflicts.• Strengthen collaboration between religious leadership, public authorities and security agencies to enhance dialogue for a peaceful coexistence.

- A complete ban of all political party vigilante groups as a means to curbing future extremist activities.
- Issues of winner-take-all must be addressed to ensure inclusiveness and participation in the democratic space.
- Encourage post-election engagement with all stakeholders to address issues of conflict.
- ADR animators be properly identified to avoid issues of impersonation
- Dialogue with Parliamentarians as law makers to look at the issues of ADR within the context of the win-win dispute settlement.
- Dialogue to address issues of Small-Scale Mining (Galamsey) activities to avoid future natural resource related conflicts in Ghana.
- Branding of FAITH-ADR Animators to facilitate easy identification during public events.

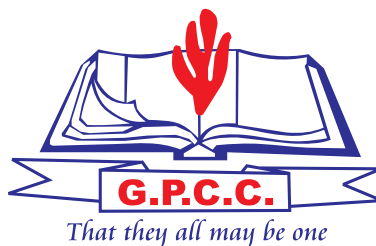
Way Forward:

- The FAITH Platform should be sustained to serve as a common platform for inter-religious advocacy engagement on national issues.
- Faith Based Organizations should begin to popularize the use of ADR to engage in marriage disputes
- Faith Based Organizations should begin to popularize the use of ADR to engage in Land disputes.
- Faith Based Organizations should begin to popularize the use of ADR to engage in Labour disputes
- Looking into the future, there is need for more trained ADRs within the religious communities to play that critical role in dispute resolution. We must therefore ensure that those we trained are supported to be certified so that they can be deployed to resolve and complement the work of the judiciary. This should be done within the context of our existing inter-faith dialogue and should be facilitated and supported by each faith organization for such trainings.

The Inter-Faith platform should use the social capital of these trained ADR Animators to broaden and entrench the process of ADR in our respective organizations and Ghana at large.

5.2.3 APPENDICES: BRIEF BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPATING FAITH GROUPS

Appendix I: GHANA PENTECOSTAL AND CHARISMATIC COUNCIL



The Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC) is a Faith Based Organisation and an umbrella body of over 200 Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian church denominations and para-church organisations in Ghana, established since 1969 but registered and recognised as a legal entity in 1971 to unite the body of Christ to propagate the gospel and to meet the spiritual and socio-economic needs of its members and Ghanaian in general. Representing over 28% of the Christian Community in Ghana (2010 census) with over 15,000 local church branches spread in almost every part of Ghana and well-equipped offices in each of the ten regional cities, we are well placed and resourced technically, human resource wise, financially and logistically to undertake a number of development initiatives in Ghana, with a unique advantage in Community Mobilisation for social action and development.

Over the years, the GPCC has collaborated with the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference to provide a Prophetic voice to the nation on many occasions. Joint consultations have been planned to provide the Church's viewpoint on some important national issues. In our interfaith dialogue and collaborations, the Council in 2012 partnered with the Office of the National Chief Imam (ONCI) in the implementation of the PLUS Ghana peaceful elections Project with funding support from STAR Ghana.

The GPCC over the last few decades has mobilised, facilitated and coordinated the implementation of a number of national and community based development interventions in the specific areas of Education, Health, Water and Sanitation, HIV/AIDS Awareness Anti-stigma and discrimination campaigns and Community based counselling and support services, Community based Human Rights Advocacy, Community based Participation and Representation in Governance, Peacebuilding and Election Monitoring among the few. We have two major ongoing projects in Ghana, namely The Ghana Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Project and The Collaborative E-Waste Project, both of which involve community based mobilisation and communication. It has in the past received funding support from notable development partners such as USAID, the European Union, STAR Ghana, and Ghana AIDS Commission among the few.

The Council in its peace and governance advocacy also works in partnership with other non-faith based civil society organisations, such as the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), the Civic Forum Initiative (CFI) and the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA).

Appendix II: FEDERATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS IN GHANA



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF FOMWAG

A handful of privileged Ghanaian Muslim women educationists, some decades back thought that there would be the need to organize and mobilize themselves to assist the majority of Muslim women who never had the opportunity and access to formal education and adversely affecting their marital lives, reproductive health, economic and social development. The high level of illiteracy and disunity among Muslim women in Ghana and the negative impact that is trickling down to affecting the education of the Muslim Girl-Child became issues of concern. High poverty rate in many Muslim communities has pushed many women to the periphery of the society. Many Muslim girls do not go to school as their parents cannot afford to cater for their educational needs and as a result give these girls out in marriages at their early ages, leaving many of them without any vocation, entrepreneurial skills, academic qualification or certification to enhance their future development.

One main objective among the lot is to campaign against illiteracy and poverty and to create a national platform for Muslim women to share and discuss issues militating against their welfare and development and finding solutions to them, by speaking with one voice. By the will of Allah (SWT), FEDERATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS IN GHANA (FOMWAG) as an umbrella Muslim women's organization nationally was established and inaugurated in December, 1997 which was unprecedented in the history of Ghana. FOMWAG is currently the nationally recognized Muslim women's organization, championing the welfare of the ordinary Ghanaian Muslim woman and the education of the Muslim Girl-Child. FOMWAG has branches in all ten regions of Ghana with each Region having its Regional coordinator who oversees the actively functioning activities in over two hundred districts with over 6,000 active members all over Ghana.

VISION

Establishing structural framework of transforming Ghanaian Muslim women for entrepreneurial skills and sustainable development through holistic education and empowerment in an enabling environment by utilizing scarce resources effectively and efficiently.

MISSION

Creating opportunities and support for the Muslim Girl-Child and women to realise and harness academic and economic potentials towards improvement of their living conditions to benefit the family and the society through secular education and good Islamic moral teachings.

OBJECTIVES

- To give holistic education to the needy Muslim Girl-Child through scholarship for promising future
- To be the mouth-piece of all Muslim women in Ghana
- To educate and speak against all forms of domestic and gender-based violence
- To build an ultra-modern educational boarding complex Senior High School facility for Muslim girls in Ghana
- To collaborate with well-meaning NGOs and institutions that share our vision and have similar aspirations to share ideas on national issues
- To educate Muslim women on reproductive and general health care and quality life for empowerment and sustainable development
- Team up with our male counterparts in training and proper moral upbringing of our children to produce quality future leaders from among Muslims

FOMWAG has been engaging in a lot of Social and religious activities in Ghana with a lot of collaborative projects with other organizations; the recent collaboration has been with the National Catholic Secretariat and other Religious bodies which together formed the Forum for Actions on Inclusion, Transparency and Harmony (FAITH). The purpose of FAITH is to ensure nationwide peaceful 2016 Elections before, during and after the elections. Based on that, it offered the opportunity for some selected FOMWAG members across the country to participate in training workshop on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR.) The essence of the training is to enable trainees to be alert and observe various flash points of election violence in their communities for interventions. The training has broadened our horizon and deepened the understanding of political tolerance and peaceful co-existence which has added up to and expanded our scope of operation beyond our environment. FOMWAG for the first time has been part of election observers because the beneficiaries of the workshop were at various election centres to monitor and observe the voting process and admonished those who had wanted to create chaotic scenes.

Appendix III: CHRISTIAN MOTHERS' ASSOCIATION



The Christian Mothers' Association (CMA) Ghana, a national women Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) established by some Nuns and highly spirited women in the Catholic Church in the early 40s of the last century, has the vision to offer a holistic ministry to the women, thereby making them well-organised, self-reliant, self-sustaining, able to support the family up-keep, and more importantly to know their civic rights and responsibilities and being part of decision making at all levels.

The Christian Mothers' Association (CMA) is a faith-based women Association in the Catholic Church in Ghana. With a total membership of 24,189 dues paying members on our roll and operates in 17 out of the 20 Dioceses in Ghana, we have over the past years been working in the area of creating a voice for all women including the marginalised.

As a broad-based democratic organisation, CMA operates within the confines of its constitution, where we use the bottom-top approach in decision making. The core activities include the provision of civic, health, formal and non formal education and teaching of social and moral values, and also supporting the income generating activities of women. For the last decade, CMA has undertaken many development projects in the areas of poverty reduction, entrepreneurship, micro-finance and spearheading environmental and societal issues, and also raising leaders to take part in Ghana's decentralization process.

Appendix IV: OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL CHIEF IMAM (ONCI)



Chief Imam of Ghana is a de facto title for the highest Muslim religious authority in Ghana. Not necessarily leader of any Islamic sect, holder of the office represents the Ghanaian Muslim community in national affairs, build bridges between the country's many faiths and "support development programmes that sensitize people to their social responsibilities. The Office of the National Chief Imam is involved in the establishment of institutions and organizations for providing services that address the humanitarian needs and empowerment of the Muslim youth in and outside Ghana. The Office of the National Chief Imam has sponsored hundreds of needy Muslim children mostly from the disadvantaged and vulnerable Muslim communities in Ghana. The Office of the National Chief Imam is the representative of the Muslim face in national affairs and continues to support development programmes that sensitize people to their social responsibilities and build bridges between Islam and other religions. The result is that we are a member of the National Peace Council. The Office of the National Chief Imam has also played key roles around national elections and dialogue.

The SONSETFund

The Office of the National Chief Imam (ONCI) also operates the SONSETFund. The SONSETFund is a Ghanaian registered NGO committed to supporting education in deprived communities in Ghana. SONSETFund provides support for individuals at different levels as well as supporting the youth in literacy and skills training to attain higher education. We:

1. Support primary schools
2. Support secondary schools
3. Support for higher education
4. Provide capacity building for organizations and community groups.
5. Undertake research (programmes geared towards solving indigenous problems or providing solutions)
6. Support students.

Human beings have the choice over everything except two things, they cannot choose. The choice of parents and the geographical location they were born. Some People have been born to very poor, illiterate parents in very deprived communities of Ghana. The child born

into ignorance, illiteracy and poverty gives that innocent child a negative perception and mental attitude in life. The child grows as an offspring and a by product of his negative environment.

SONSETfund therefore seeks to provide opportunities for these deprived communities and individuals a sense of hope. We therefore say that a mind is a terrible thing to waste.

The ONCI has promoted inter-religious dialogue on issues that affect the well-being of Ghanaians. Over the years, we have worked with both the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Christian Council of Ghana on common issues of education and livelihoods of the poor. We have been involved with broader civil society networks to promote peaceful elections in Ghana since 1996.

Appendix V: AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MISSION, GHANA



The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a sect in Islam that stands strongly by the Islamic fundamental teachings of peace; peace with our Creator, the Almighty, peace with His creation and peace with ourselves

It is a Missionary oriented sect that embarks on a number of outreach programs. In line with the Islamic teachings of ensuring that the propagation of this message of Islam is carried out with wisdom and goodly exhortation and not confrontation and aggression.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community as an international religious organization does not only believe in peaceful coexistence but also makes it a duty to work towards establishing and maintaining peace everywhere in the world on the basis of the teachings of the Holy Quran.

Here in Ghana, apart from using its pulpit to preach peace and educate its adherents to live in peace with themselves and with their neighbors, the Mission also works in collaboration with faith based organization and other stake holders to ensure that we protect the relative peace we enjoy in this country.

Since 1992, when the nation was ushered into the forth Republic, party political activities have been characterized by conflicts and tensions which have the potential of plunging the nation into chaos and wars. As a stakeholder, and as a community that believes that people should be free to choose their leaders, the leadership of the Mission have tirelessly worked in the open and behind the scenes to ensure that the right and peaceful atmosphere is created for Ghanaians to freely exercise their franchise and that power is transferred (when necessary) peacefully and without rancor. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community worked with others like the National Catholic Secretariat, Christian Council of Ghana, the Office of the National Chief Imam and other peace loving organizations in this regard.

It was for this purpose that during the 2016 general elections, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community accepted to work with Catholic Secretariat and other faith based organizations to ensure that peace prevails before, during and after the elections. This was a project executed under the sponsorship of STAR – GHANA. The programs and activities organized under this project included the training of persons in Alternative Disputes Resolution (A D R). It is important

to state that the mission has benefited immensely from the training of these persons. Apart from engaging them in mediation during the political campaigning, they have become great assets to the community helping in resolving internal conflicts.

Under the STAR – GHANA project the mission organized conferences at various levels making peace the subject of the themes. The Mission also used its wing organizations (i.e. the youth Association, The Women's Organization and the Elder's Association) to organize peace talks and peace matches before the 2016 elections.

Appendix VI: CARITAS GHANA



CARITAS GHANA

BRIEF HISTORY

Caritas Ghana is a Charity Organization of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference (GCBC) and member of the global Caritas Confederation. It operates under the National Catholic Secretariat.

Caritas Ghana works in four thematic areas namely; Social Development, Livelihood promotion, Social services, Promotion of Social and Environmental Justice, Public Policy Advocacy, Promotion of Pro-poor policies and Action Research.

Work on public policy advocacy on behalf of the poor and the promotion of the common good is central to Caritas Ghana. One example is its effort to include the 'Right to Health' in the National Constitution Review. Other high level advocacy initiatives of Caritas Ghana include the launch of a campaign on the 'Right to Food' as part of the Caritas Internationalis global campaign.

Presently, Caritas Ghana is registered in Ghana as a Non-governmental Organization with the Registrar of Companies under the Registrar Generals Department of Ghana with a certificate of incorporation and a certificate to commence business.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES,

- To promote effective institutional structures and functioning of the Church's service of charity at National, Diocesan and Parish levels
- To promote the Catholic Church's Socio-pastoral work as a means of expressing the gospel message and the social doctrine of the church.
- To contribute to the enhancement of the dignity of the human person; especially the poor and the marginalized through their direct empowerment and their representation where they are excluded.
- To undertake social action research as a means to improving social-service delivery.

MISSION STATEMENT

Caritas Ghana is to implement the decision and policies of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference through its relevant sectors and units for the spiritual and human development of the people of God. We are inspired by 1 Timothy 6:18 hence our motto: “Good works, Generosity and Sharing”.

VISION STATEMENT

To work for and support the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference to help the people of Ghana to live in Freedom, Peace and Dignity and achieve their developmental potentials through socio-political empowerment based on the Teachings of Christ.

OUR VALUES

We are guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, Caritas Confederacy Management Standards and Code of Ethics. Our identity is intrinsically Church-based but act altruistically without any discrimination based on gender, religion, ethnicity and race or social circumstances. The following are some key value considerations:

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Sanctity of life and work
- Empathy
- Respect
- Promote Sustainability
- Build Families and Communities
- Stewardship
- Partnership
- Witnessing
- Justice and Peace
- Ethics.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND STRENGTHS

- Wide out-reach and community presence
- Fulfill both statutory and ecclesial authority regulations
- Adherence to high ethical and value standards
- Effective, open and transparent decision-making and governance
- Long standing experience in the delivery of social services especially for rural and deprived people
- Maintained and sustained trust of ordinary people and Development Partners – both State and Non-state.

Appendix VI: Marshallan Relief & Development Services (MAREDES)



HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Knights and Ladies of Marshall is a Catholic Friendly Society with the Supreme /Grand headquarters in Sekondi / Kumasi, Ghana respectively. The Marshallan Relief and Development Services (MAREDES) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and the development wing of the Knights and Ladies of Marshall committed to the needs of society. MAREDES provides relief and development services in line with the fundamental principles and tenets underpinning Catholic Social Teaching. The idea behind MAREDES is to provide a framework to harness the legal, organizational and technical competencies of the Noble Order of the Knights and Ladies of Marshall spanning over 90 years to undertake and render services more effectively and efficiently to society.

The Noble Order of Knights and Ladies of Marshall was started by some 13 lay men in Sekondi, Ghana in 1926 and in 1965 brought the women on board as a national Society of Catholic men and women. It has over the years established branches in Togo, Benin, Liberia and the United Kingdom.

The governing body of the Noble Order is “The Supreme Council” with its headquarters in Sekondi, Ghana, West Africa. The Ladies of Marshall, the ladies wing has also grown rapidly over the years and has its own governing body called “The Grand Court” with its headquarters in Kumasi, Ghana, West Africa.

The Noble Order of the Knights and Ladies of Marshall has over 10,000 members in units referred to as Councils (Men) and Courts (Women) spread throughout Ghana, Liberia, Togo, Benin and the United Kingdom.

The Noble Order of the Knights and Ladies of Marshall has endeavored to pursue its twin-mandate of “bringing together Catholic lay persons for effective lay apostolate” and to provide a “friendly social forum” for its members. The Noble Order engages in CHARITY, a virtue which the Catholic Church defines as “To love God Almighty above all things for his own sake and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God”. Through MAREDES, the Society will deliver more effectively on its mandate of practicing Charity and contributing to the 'Common Good' of society.

VISION

MAREDES is inspired by the Marshallan mission to “take Christ to the World' as one of its fundamental pillars of CHARITY. In this light, MAREDES' vision is to help create 'a community where the poor, the distressed and needy find friendship, love and practical support as a human being in God's own likeness”

MISSION

The mission of MAREDES is to harness available charitable human, financial and material resources to empower and strengthen the life coping capacity of vulnerable individuals and communities”

VALUES

- i. Our operations are guided by the social teachings of the Catholic Church
- ii. Uphold the values and ethics of the Catholic Church
- III. Support for the poor, the marginalized and the disadvantaged.
- IV. Spirit of patriotism and civic responsibility
- v. Generosity and spirit of philanthropy
- vi. Practice of Sympathy and Empathy

OUR ORGANIZATION'S GOAL

To provide complementary development and social services to communities and the marginalized in Ghana

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- I. To provide physical, spiritual, economic and social relief to persons and groups affected by poverty, conflict, disaster and political circumstances.
- II. To promote education and awareness on migration in Ghana
- iii. To undertake relevant research necessary to influence policy change and practice in Ghana especially in areas of interest to the organization, the Catholic Church and the Noble Order of the Knights of Marshall.
- IV. To undertake training and other capacity building initiatives with the aim of empowering poor people and communities.
- v. To raise funds both locally and externally from Individuals and corporate entities to support the objectives of the organization
- VI. To network with relevant agencies of civil society organizations, public sector, private enterprises and other international institutions in areas of common and mutual interest and benefit.

MAREDES has over the years partnered with the Department of Human Development of the National Catholic Secretariat on several common advocacy issues including migration, right to health, land rights and the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ghana. The elections project was yet another opportunity for partnership to advocate for peace.

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