Situational Reports of Civil Society's response to COVID-19 in Ghana

COVID-19 SITREP

JUNE 2020
ABOUT THE GHANA COVID-19 RESPONSE PROJECT

The response to fight COVID-19 pandemic in Ghana has seen both the government and civil society working at addressing COVID-19, but in isolation of each other. As experienced from the Ebola epidemic cases in Sierra Leone, significant successes was shown in the role and efforts of the civil society sector, which include the faith-based organisations and traditional/community leaders, in fighting the pandemic, particularly where these efforts involve significant changes to social and religious practices and norms. STAR-Ghana Foundation since April 2020 steered a programme of actions to complement and deepen planned and ongoing efforts of the Civil Society Sector to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The ‘Ghana Covid-19 Response Project’ (CRP) supports coordinated civil society actions around Covid-19 prevention, management and mitigation. The program has supported eight Ghanaian Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) efforts to complement government efforts and ensure that responses are citizens centred.

This project is sponsored by STAR Ghana Foundation with funding from UKAid & EUROPEAN UNION:

ABOUT THE COVID-19 SITREP: CURRENT SITUATION

As COVID-19 continues to sink its teeth in Ghana, the number of recorded cases has been rising exponentially. The weekly record (10 July 2020) of COVID-19 cases increased to 23,463. Correspondingly, in June the recovered and discharged cases have seen significant improvement whereas the death rate also steadily increases. Amidst these happenings, the government of Ghana has reduced several restrictions that were imposed. Churches and final year students in the Tertiary and the High School education sector have resumed for the first time since March. These developments have increased the level of fear and panic among the general public. The increasing cases of COVID-19 recoveries in Ghana ignited the spread of fake news, mistrust and stigmatisation in Ghana. CSOs in Ghana remain a significant actor responding to citizens needs and monitoring government responsiveness on the COVID-19 pandemic. The Situational Report for June continued to harvest and document CSOs responses to the crises.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caritas Ghana</th>
<th>A uniform system for citizens to monitor public issues is very useful to achieve good results. Government officials at the District level are interested in CSOs engagement in public policy issues.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSOs and health workers collaboration is needed to address the challenges of COVID-19. Bringing together different experts will help CSOs to identify common interests that captures the needs of various actors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregivers of persons with disability are a great source of information on PWD in this COVID-19 era. Development of IEC materials for persons with disability should be tailored to different disability groups with different needs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOs broadcasting information on COVID-19 enhances education on the disease thereby reducing the spread of fake news and misinformation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for CSOs to give citizens opportunities to give feedback on services provided to improve performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective collaboration and communication between CSOs promote accurate and timely documentation of CSOs responses to COVID-19.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ghana Federation of Disability organisations (GFDO)</strong></td>
<td>GFDO create awareness for the inclusion of the disable in government COVID-19 packages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)</strong></td>
<td>MFWA has been working to counter fake news and misinformation about the corona virus disease in Ghana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The MFWA fact-check verified a report published by a Nigerian news portal that COVID-19 isolation centres in Greater Accra are inadequate. The Director General of the Ghana Health Service, Dr Patrick Kumah-Aboagye emphatically confirmed with MFWA that the claims are false.


### A viral post circulating on WhatsApp that a GH¢ 700 per citizen COVID-19 lockdown relief fund has been made available to Ghanaians is false according to MFWA fact checking process. The viral claims of the supposed GH¢ 700 given by the Federal Government of Ghana is false since Ghana does not run a federal government system.


### Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG)

**CHAG developed Information Education Communication (IEC) materials and participated in house to house engagement with citizens**

In May, CHAG established a seven-member working group for the development of IEC materials. The working group include members from CHAG, GHS and GSPO.

*Source: [Partner’s May report to STAR-Ghana](https://bit.ly/2CKW3MD)*

In June, CHAG fully developed 150,000 copies of IEC materials comprising of 50,000 posters and 100,000 leaflets on COVID-19. The materials contain information on the prevention and control of COVID, stigmatisation and discrimination, fear and panic, basic etiquettes and domestic violence and abuse.

*Source: [Interview with partner](https://bit.ly/2AdxmHM)*

CHAG in collaboration with GFDO, the Ghana Health service, Church Groups and other stakeholders have developed IEC messages on COVID-19 to tailor to the needs of people living with disability.

*Source: [Interview with partner](https://bit.ly/2AdxmHM)*

CHAG is undertaking a house to house engagement with households in rural communities to share factual messages on COVID-19. Through their engagement, CHAG provides medical services to households on maternal and child health, non-communicable diseases, and addressing issues on fear and panic in this season.

*Source: [Interview with partner](https://bit.ly/2AdxmHM)*

CHAG has disseminated and distributed IEC materials to vulnerable groups (people living in the rural areas, health workers and the disabled) in the society. CHAG has also facilitated organisations under the Ghana Federation of Persons with Disability which include the Mental Health Society of Ghana and Care Ghana to develop IEC materials.

*Source: [Interview with partner](https://bit.ly/2AdxmHM)*

### Objective 2: To support communities, NGOs and other citizens’ groups develop and implement initiatives at local and national levels for supporting vulnerable groups and the implementation of national and local response plans

**Caritas Ghana encourage the vulnerable to take advantage of the government social protection program**

Caritas Ghana and the FAITH in Ghana Alliance created COVID-19 Emergency Response Team (ERT) in 8 Regions of Ghana to support victims’ access to rapid emergency services at both Regional and District levels. The ERT was created to mobilise and empower citizens access to social protection services from both the central and local Governments.

*Source: [Partner’s May report to STAR-Ghana](https://bit.ly/2AdxmHM)*

Caritas Ghana organised a policy education campaign for vulnerable groups on the existence of government’s social protection programs that are available at the district level. The policy education campaign was to introduce and encourage the vulnerable to take advantage of the social protection program available in their respective district.

*Source: [Interview with partner](https://bit.ly/2AdxmHM)*

On 15 June 2020, the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in collaboration with Caritas Ghana donated $10,000 items to the Catholic Diocese of Techiman in Ghana to support Catholic Health facilities in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic in the Bono East Region of Ghana.

| Ghana Federation of Disability organisations (GFDO) | GFDO advocates for the inclusion of PWDs in the Covid-19 Response Support Package (RSP) | GFDO in May 2020 developed and advocated for the adoption of COVID-19 Response Support Package (RSP) for People Living with Disability. The GFDO recruited 143 volunteers to monitor and report government and CSO response programs for People Living with Disability in Accra and Kumasi.  
**Source:** Partner’s May report to STAR-Ghana |
|---|---|---|
| The Ghana SDG platform | The Ghana SDG platform coordinated and facilitated CSOs support to the vulnerable | At the end of May 2020, the CSO COVID-19 Response Fund had received GHS 119,712.62 as cash donations. This is coming from 78 CSOs and CS actors across the country. From the Fund, the SDG platform lead the donation of 230 bags of 25kg rice, 210 gallons of 5L oil, 230 bags of water and some vitamin C to the aged, street children, Person with Disabilities and mental health patients. The donation exercise benefited 1437 people.  
**Source:** Partner’s May report to STAR-Ghana |
| Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG) | CHAG train health workers on the prevention and control of COVID-19 | CHAG in June has trained 400 key health workers on infection prevention and control for a pandemic like COVID. Beneficiaries of the training includes five health managers, doctors, pharmacist, and biomedical scientist. Each beneficiary is expected to train additional 50 staff in their respective unit.  
**Source:** Interview with partner  
The CHAG donated Person Protective Equipment (PPE) to health facilities located in the rural districts. These PPEs includes 85 Veronica Bucket, 85 5liter hand sanitizers, 85 5liter liquid soap, detergents, 350 thermometers, 500 N95 nose masks and 330 surgical boxes of face masks.  
**Source:** Interview with partners |
| Objective 3: Increase the transparency, responsiveness and accountability of government and its relevant agencies to citizens around the development and implementation of Covid-19 response plans, including the utilisation of resource. | Penplusbytes developed an online platform to provide information and receive citizens feedbacks on governments responses to COVID-19 | Penplusbytes has developed an online platform [www.covid19infogh.org](http://www.covid19infogh.org) aimed at providing reliable access to information on COVID-19. The platform also seeks to give citizens the ability to provide feedback on government’s policies to respond directly to the needs of citizens.  
**Source:** Interview with Partner  
On 25 June 2020, Penplusbytes organised a media launched of the online platform developed with support from STAR-Ghana Foundation. The launch was to promote the platform and encourage citizens to use the platform.  
Penplusbytes collaborated with the CSOs platform on the SDG and CHAG to build a feedback mechanics form for citizens on the platform. The feedback form was for citizens to give response on how government is handling COVID 19. On the platform, citizens could send their feedback through an online survey or a WhatsApp message.  
**Source:** Interview with Partner |
| Penplusbytes | Penplusbytes collaborated with the CSOs platform on the SDG and CHAG to build a feedback mechanics form for citizens on the platform. The feedback form was for citizens to give response on how government is handling COVID 19. On the platform, citizens could send their feedback through an online survey or a WhatsApp message.  
**Source:** Interview with Partner  
Penplusbytes engaged with 18 stringers to provide primary stories across the country which were published on the platform as blogs whiles others were broadcast into local languages for community radio stations.  
**Source:** Interview with Partner |
| Caritas Ghana | Caritas Ghana monitored the implementation of the government social protection program on COVID-19 | Caritas Ghana through the FAITH in Ghana Alliance platform set up 8 Citizens Monitoring Team (CMT) on COVID-19 in Greater Accra, Ashanti, Central, Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Savannah and North-East. The CMT was set up to engage policy makers and implementers on social protection interventions on COVID-19.  
**Source:** Partner’s May report to STAR-Ghana  
Caritas Ghana finalised the development of the Participatory, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) framework with support from external consultant. The PME is a monitoring manual and tool design to be use for data collection and advocacy.  
**Source:** Interview with Partner |
In June, Caritas Ghana trained the CMT in 8 regions on how to use the PME framework for data collection. The CMT then engaged with 16 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) within the 8 regions to collect data for the monitoring of the government social protection programs on COVID-19 at the district level. **Source: Interview with Partner**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG)</th>
<th>CHAG have advocated and receive 18% of government COVID-19 commodities to the mission</th>
<th>CHAG advocated and received 18% of government COVID-19 commodities to all CHAG facilities across the regions. These will include PPEs and other general stuff required at various health facilities. CHAG health facilities constitute 35% of health facilities in Ghana located in 188 districts typically located in remote areas. <strong>Source: Interview with Partner</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ghana SDG platform</td>
<td>The Ghana SDG platform organised citizens feedback on government response to COVID-19</td>
<td>The SDG platform organised a virtual and physical regional/zonal consultation to collect citizens’ feedback on government response (policy and service) to COVID-19. The initial outcomes indicated a greater awareness of the policy initiatives implemented by the government of Ghana. <strong>Source: Partner’s May report to STAR-Ghana</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 4: To harvest, document and share learning around Covid-19 responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) is embarking on a research on the impact of COVID-19 on CSOs and their responsiveness. WACSI has disseminated a survey for CSOs in Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. <strong>Source: <a href="https://bit.ly/covidwagird">https://bit.ly/covidwagird</a></strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>On 19 June 2020, the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) had a social media engagement (video documentary) with the Project Officer at STAR-Ghana to speak about the project, its relevance and potential impact using 15 minutes in WACSI platform. <strong>Source: <a href="https://bit.ly/2C52Cc">https://bit.ly/2C52Cc</a></strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OTHER CSOs AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Vision Ghana</th>
<th>World Vision Ghana developed educative video on the wearing of face mask.</th>
<th>World Vision Ghana developed an educative video showcasing how to properly use a face mask. The video provides guidelines to assist citizens on the correct way to wear and dispose masks. <strong>Source: <a href="https://youtu.be/7Tw7eRW8wJl">https://youtu.be/7Tw7eRW8wJl</a></strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Action Aid Ghana as part of its response to COVID-19 designated GHC 2,190,000 for the distribution of relief items to over 15,000 households in selected 15 rural government hospitals in the northern, Upper East, Upper West, Bono and Ahafo districts. <strong>Source: <a href="https://bit.ly/2NMk5cE">https://bit.ly/2NMk5cE</a></strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Youth Advocates Ghana in collaboration with the Ghana Health Service and Ga West Municipal Health Directorate are co-creating activities to demystify all myth around the COVID-19 pandemic and help stop stigmatisation in Ghana.

Source: https://bit.ly/3gsRaXp

The Youth Advocates Ghana with support from Centre for Democratic Development (CDD) Ghana started ‘I Am Aware’ project to monitor public institutions response to COVID.

Source: https://bit.ly/38heNiA

### CASE STORIES: HIGHLIGHTS FROM WEST AFRICA

**Objective 2**: To support communities, NGOs and other citizens’ groups develop and implement initiatives at local and national levels for supporting vulnerable groups and the implementation of national and local response plans.

**Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa (GPFA) organised a Coronavirus Outreach & Awareness Initiative in Liberia.**

In June, the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa organised a Coronavirus Outreach & Awareness campaign in Liberia. The campaign initiative was to strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations by supporting their COVID-19 relief efforts. GPFA provided mini-grants, hygiene materials and food supplies to 30 local organisations in different parts of Liberia.

Source: https://bit.ly/38fR6av

**Objective 4**: To harvest, document and share learning around Covid-19 responses.

**Network Movement for Democracy and Human Rights (NMDHR) shares research findings on their research on the impact of COVID-19 on Frontline Healthcare Structures in Rural Communities in Sierra Leone.**

In April 2020, the Network Movement for Democracy and Human Rights (NMDHR) researched on the actions and impact of COVID-19 on Frontline Healthcare structures in rural communities. On 2 June 2020, NMDHR shared their research findings. According to the research, deliveries at Peripheral Health Units (PHUs) have a 60% decrease due to the impact of COVID-19 on frontline healthcare service in Luawa Chiefdom in Sierra Leone. There have also been 70% decreases in PHUs attendance by specific groups of FHCI beneficiaries including pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under 5. In response to this, NMDHR has assigned community paralegals who provide legal education and verifiable information about COVID-19 to reduce misconceptions, discourage fake news, and wrong perception about COVID-19 in rural communities.

Source: https://bit.ly/3ghGNoW

**Disclaimer:**
WACSI accepts no responsibility for suitability of any materials submitted by the contributors of this publication. WACSI assumes no responsibility or liability for errors or inaccuracies. Contributors accept all responsibility for opinions expressed.

**For more information, write to:** No.9 Bamboo Street, East Legon P.O. Box AT 1956, Achimota Accra, Ghana Email: research@wacsi.org Tel: +233 (0) 303 937 26
PHOTO GALLERY

Figure 1 GFD support to PWDs

Figure 2 GFD supports PWDs

Figure 3 CHAG Training Health Workers
COVID-19 SITREP
IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

This project is supported by
STAR Ghana Foundation
with thanks to
UKAid and European Union