

CALID

Changing Lives

CENTRE FOR ACTIVE LEARNING AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT

NEWSLETTER

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YOUTH IN TAMALE DISAPPOINTED IN YOUTH CENTERED POLICIES

Demand for a youth consultative process in policy formulation

This came out from the Launch of a 26-page report on the effects of youth policies in Ghana with regards to successive governments' interventions especially in Northern Ghana where unemployment seems to be on the rise.

This report stems from a study that was carried out by the Centre for Active Learning and Integrated Development (CALID) among eleven (11) youth groups and other government authorities/agencies.

This was premised on the fact that matters of the youth are central to national development because they constitute 31% of the population. Furthermore, it comes at a time where issues of unemployment amongst the youth have become topical in the country. Many have argued that this could be a threat to national security because the unemployed youth are likely to indulge in social vices such as armed robbery, prostitution and could also fall victims of political violence.

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FUNDING PARTNERS:



DIRECTOR' WELCOME NOTE



Dear Partners, Donors and Friends,

I am pleased to share with you CALID's first ever newsletter in the year 2016. In this newsletter, you will find articles outlining our work and accomplishments over the past several months. CALID' mandate over past 15 years has been the improvement of the wellbeing of marginalized groups in Ghana. The burning development issues affecting the nation keep evolving over the years. As an organization we have worked hard to adapt to the needs of our stakeholders/beneficiaries as such they are involved in all aspects of project development and implementation.

Our main objective is to build the capacity of poor and vulnerable populations and to build community development platforms from which communities can advocate for their own rights and development. CALID runs projects that are focusing on the empowerment of Youth and adolescent girls. The newsletter concentrated on the various projects that are currently being implemented by CALID:

A 26-page report on a baseline released on the state of implementation of the youth policies and programmes had revealed gaps on the government commitment on youth interventions. Working with youth groups on election violence saw the commitment of the youth in seeking for peace in their communities. At the PeaCE Committees in the districts, dialogued with religious leaders, community members and election stakeholders on the need to maintain peaceful campaigns and voting.

It is our hope that all children are able to access their rights including quality basic education. To achieve this, we need a vibrant PTA Networks at the districts and regional levels. This will ensure collaboration and supervision in schools.

By sharing this newsletter we hope to extend our sincere gratitude to our donors and partners, communities for their hard work and commitments in making these projects possible.

Sincerely,

Sumani Bapio M. Awal

CALID in BRIEF

CALID is a non-governmental and non-partisan organization committed to the promotion of quality of life to the poor and marginalized in society particularly women and children by expanding their capabilities to claim their rights, maximize their potentials and provide for the wellbeing of its members.

With a vision of a *"society of equal opportunities, where every person is able to assert their rights, fulfills their responsibilities and enjoys a secure life with dignity"*, CALID works around three main programmatic areas; Governance, Education and Health with livelihood empowerment been a cross-cutting area.

CALID operates from a Tamale office and with professional presence in 11 districts of the Northern Region of Ghana; Tamale Metro, Yendi Municipal, Sagnerigu, Sawla-Tuna-Kalba, Bole, Gusheigu, Nanumba North, Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo, West and East Mamprusi, West Gonja Districts.

PROJECTS IN FOCUS

- Youth Empowerment through Accountable Governance (YETAG)
- Citizens Empowerment for Transparent and Accountable Quality Education (CETAGE).
- Citizens Led Assessment or Strengthening Citizens Action and Learning Empowerment (SCALE) Ghana. These projects are funded by IBIS in Ghana.
- Peace and Credible Elections (PeaCE) Project funded by STAR Ghana.
- Promoting quality, inclusive and children rights in education with funds from ActionAid.
- Ghana Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms Project (GSAM). Funded by Care International.

YOUTH IN TAMALE DISSAPPOINTED IN YOUTH POLICIES

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Considering 2016 is an election year and the youth are the ones susceptible to be influenced by political parties to instigate acts of lawlessness.

This then makes 2016 the most appropriate period for the youth to draw the attention of government and its agencies on the policy gaps in addressing youth challenges, while encouraging the youth to take advantage of the season to advocate for youth centered policies from politicians. The issue of youth participation in decision making is crucial.



A cross-section of youth at the launch

The study and launch which is part of CALID' efforts under its Youth Empowerment Through Accountable Governance (YETAG) project was supported by IBIS under its Democratic Consolidation and Accountable Governance Programme. The period was also for CALID to consolidate the gains of its youth interventions as CALID will no more be on the programme.

It was established in the study that many of the youth policies/programmes designed have not been in consultation with the youth even though they are the most important stakeholders. This may be one of the reasons why these interventions have failed.

The study targeted the national youth policies and programmes (YES, GYEEDA, NYA) of government. It found among others, the following;

- The National Youth Policy Implementation Plan 2014 -2017 may be a white elephant as there are no reliable

sources of funding and reliable institutions to implement it. It might not be able to implement the plan as it has only 2 functional offices in Northern Region.

- The youth groups and associations have received very little or no support in the form of cash, skills training, equipment, education, etc from NYA, GYEEDA, RCC, YES and MDAs.
- The youth do not know resources allocated to NYA, GYEEDA, RCC, YES and MDAs and as such, do not have information about where they can get opportunities.
- The majority of the youth groups and associations (82%) are dominated by men. About 82% of the youth groups were not registered. The youth have little or no engagement with NYA, GYEEDA, RCC, YES and MDAs.

It was also observed that these elaborate policies, programmes and interventions over the years were not able to deal with the challenges confronting the youth, especially youth unemployment. Not too clear if these programmes have received the necessary budgetary allocations.

The launch provided the opportunity for the youth to speak up on issues in the presence of most of the duty bearers; NYA, YEA, RCC, YES, and MMDAs and also officers from MASLOC, NBSSI and EDIAF to explain to the youth the processes involved in accessing support from them.

A leader of one of the youth groups took an opportunity of launch to put the blame of youth unemployment squarely on bad policies. According to him, most programmes designed for the youth do not get to them.

"Many of the youth are simply not employed through no fault of theirs. Yet when programmes are designed to deal with such shortfalls, these programmes find themselves in the wrong hands. We as youth are becoming fed up with who we call our leaders. From where I sit, if care is not taken, one day we the youth will take to the streets and begin harming policy makers. They have simply failed us". - 'Taller'

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"Now that I am informed of my role and responsibility in the monitoring of capital projects, anytime there is a project in my community I would personally lead my fellow women to monitor its implementation, so that we get value for money for our district".- Queen Mother of the Bunkpurugu Traditional Area

CITIZENS OF BUNKPURUGU –YUNYOO APPRECIATE DISSEMINATION OF AUDIT FINDINGS

Ghana Audit Service (GAS) audit findings were disseminated by CALID in 25 communities in the Bunkpurugu/Yunyoo District under the USAID funded Ghana' Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms Project. This was a public information campaign to inform citizens about the outcome of Performance audits conducted by GAS on the district Assembly. These communities were selected from the 7 zones in the District. In all 1,399 people were reached in the 25 selected communities. The above total of 1,399 people is made up of; 599 males, 800 females and 36 People Living with Disability (PWD).

Citizens were sensitized on the roles they ought to play as citizens especially in the monitoring of capital projects at the community level. The forum also brought about an opportunity to make them understand that they have the right to information, participation and to demand accountability from duty bearers. This means that they can seek for information from contractors, the DA or Assembly Persons and should participate in planning and decision making processes available to them.

The Community Development Officer of the BYDA also participated in the forum and responded to questions that were directed to the assembly.

Citizens appreciated the exercise and saw it as an eye opener in ensuring that real development is experienced in their communities and the district at large. Most of the community members did not know that they could actually question contractors if they are not doing the right thing.

CALID Monitor capital development projects in SA districts

Six monitoring visits have been carried out the third quarter of 2016 to four projects sites in two Social Accountability (SA) districts under the IBIS supported Ghana's Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms. These visits were done in four communities namely Nagboo, Gbintiri in the East Mampurusi district and Naminyala, Banawa in the West Mampurusi district. The project site for the Slaughter house project was changed from Sayoo to Banawa in the West Mampurusi district.

The three unit classroom block in Nagboo is completed and is in use. However during our monitoring visit to the completed project shows a crack on the middle classroom. Also the dam project at Gbintiri is near completion and work is still on going at the site.

HARMONIZE YOUTH CENTERED PROGRAMMES AND INTERVENTIONS IN GHANA

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The attention of government has been drawn to consider harmonising all youth centered programmes and interventions in Ghana. It was observed in the launch of the Report on the impact of youth policies by CALID that over the years, past governments have created a number of youth development initiatives being run differently by different bodies.

“We are suggesting that all youth programmes and interventions are run or coordinated by the National Youth Authority. This is because the NYA is the link between the youth and the central government.”- Mr. Sumani B. Mohammed Awal (Executive Director, CALID)

It was also observed that the implementation of the youth action plan is almost two years behind schedule for this reason the government was called upon to immediately release funds for its implementation.

In the West Mampurusi district the two projects selected for monitoring are the three unit classroom project at Naamiyela and the slaughter house project at Banawa. The Namiyala is at the plastering stage while the slaughter house project at Banawa is at the foundation stage. Progress of works has been uploaded on the E-platform.

CALID attended a site handing over ceremony of the slaughter house project in the West Mamprusi District. The project site was handed over to the contractor by the Planning Officer Alhaji shaibu Mohammed Yasaba on behalf of the DCE to the contractor. He told the contractor to execute the project per the agreement signed. According to him, the assembly expects good and quality work from the contractor. The contractor was also informed that there would be bi-weekly monitoring of the project by CALID.



Site handing ceremony of Slaughterhouse project at Banawa

ACTION FOR CHILDREN RIGHTS IN EDUCATION PROJECT

Action for Children's Right in Education was an ActionAid three year project implemented in 16 communities in two districts of the northern region of Ghana. The project was implemented in close collaboration with the Centre for Active Learning and Integrated Development (CALID) and Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC). The goal of the project was to ensure that children in the participating communities enjoy a good quality public education, where girls and boys are treated equally, and their rights respected.

At the commencement of the project, ActionAid conducted a baseline study in the project area to gauge the extent to which rights are being enforced in the schools. These findings are being used to advocate and effectively deal with the challenges that inhibit the fulfilment, promotion and protection of children's rights in schools. The study identified among others the following as the key issues:

Key Issues Identified:

- Attitudes towards disability deny children's rights. A total of 46% of parents said they would be reluctant to enroll a disabled child in school.
- Children with disabilities suffer emotional and verbal discrimination in playgrounds, on the way to and from school, and in classrooms. Perpetrators include both teachers and other children.
- 53% of respondents stated that teachers commonly administer corporal punishment in school.
- 96% of the schools are not disability and girl-child friendly leading to low enrolment and low retention rate (39%) of girls in school
- High teacher absenteeism as 67% of pupils indicated their teachers rarely came to school
- 15% of respondents indicated that incidences of sexual abuse against girls are common with almost 40% identifying boys as the main perpetrators.
- There is very little involvement of parents and wider community-members in children's education. Only 37% of parents interviewed said they regularly take part in meetings of the Parent Teacher Association or School Management Committee.
- There is little or no involvement or consultation with pupils when schools are developing their School Performance Improvement Plans. Children are not involved in school decision-making processes.

Progress to date

The project after three years of implementation, through sensitization and training programmes has met and even exceeded some of its set targets of 120 teachers, 4,000 parents, 4,800 pupils and 52 Assembly Persons. Evidence gathered from monitoring reports indicates that the target for teachers was exceeded by 100 as a result of teachers who had initial trainings also organizing similar trainings for their counterparts in their various schools. Similarly, due to the use of mass media such as the radio in particular enabled the project to directly reach out to over 20,000 parents through sensitization programmes.

CAMPAIGN FOR PEACE AND CREDIBLE ELECTIONS

CALID was committed to achieving the goal of its STAR Ghana funded Peace and Credible Elections (PeaCE) Project which is “a peaceful, democratic and credible elections through increased voting rights and youth confidence in the registration and voting process in Yendi Municipal, Gushiegu, Nanumba North and Bunkpurgu/Yunyoo Districts” which the EC has designated as flash points noted as politically motivated violence prone areas.

This second quarter of 2016 saw collaborations with the League of Youth Association and some elections stakeholders in carrying out activities. There has been Increased Dialogue between Youth groups, religious leaders, community members and election stakeholders on the need to maintain a peaceful campaign and electioneering led by 'PeaCE' Committees established in 4 districts each to advocate for peaceful elections amongst citizens.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES

- ✓ District level meetings with selected youth groups were held in collaboration with NYA were interventions around elections were planned and also PeaCE committees were formed
- ✓ Engagement meetings between PeaCE Committees and District Elections Security Taskforce (DEST).
- ✓ Four (4) Engagement meetings were held with traditional/religious leaders and celebrities discussing issues around using them as PeaCE ambassadors. Braimah Musah, a playwright put together a short story on the effects of violence and the need for ensuring peaceful elections.
- ✓ Peace talks are held by Religious and Traditional Leaders on the need for tolerance and acceptance of election results at every opportunity.
- ✓ Capacities of 100 selected youth groups from the project districts were built on elections process thus; the structure of the EC, Registration and Voting processes for step down training in communities.
- ✓ Educational fora were held by trained youth on the voting processes and biometric verification systems in collaboration with EC.
- ✓ Voter education was organized at market squares, witches camps, Senior High Schools, marginalized communities through drama to do away with stigmatization/prevention.

“various forms of the word peace are found 429 times in the Holy Bible”- Catholic Bishop of Yendi

..the word ISLAM is derived from “SALAAM”, meaning peace. It also relates to a person submitting himself to the will of the mightiest in order to seek eternal peace and tranquillity. The crux of this observation is that the very origins of Islam are inclined towards peace and harmony and this becomes very evident if one vows to read the Quran and apply it on personal basis.” - District Chief Imam of Gushegu



Vice president of the league of youth interacting with alleged witches

Key issues and concerns raised during Community Engagements with EC

A gentleman opined that the **GHC 5.00** fee designated to be paid for the replacement of lost ID cards was unacceptable. More so the distances involved in travelling to EC offices for the replacement and the process of paying the **GHC5.00** through the bank poses a huge challenge to rural communities. He complained that it would be too tedious for the poor aged men and women and the physically challenged in the rural communities to bear.

There were also complains with regards to lack of education or sensitization by the electoral commission before the start of the limited registration process. This was echoed by the Chief of Binde Pibranaa. He bemoaned that when the issue of two guarantors for new registrants came up, the people in his traditional area were not aware because they were not given voter education early enough so he placed the blame at the doorsteps of the NCCE and EC for their failure to carry out their responsibilities as state institutions. According to him, the issue of two guarantors for new registrants became a big problem in his community for that matter.

Another critical issue that runs through the various community registration centers was the issue of minors. The claim was that as a result of stunted growth and development of many children, there were children who are 18 years and above but physically they look very smallish. This brought about confusion in some of the communities.



A community member seeking for clarity on payment for replacement of lost ID Cards

The issue of registering of minors has often been the center of controversy which is the cause violence in most registration centers over the years. The EC came out with a better mechanism for addressing this challenge in the registration process which is the filling of the challenge form.

At Gbungbalga a participant admonished the EC officer to ensure that electoral materials get to the various polling stations on time. Also the EC should ensure that the right materials are taken to the right polling station or registration centre to avoid anxiety and heightening tensions during election. Additionally, they cautioned EC to engage the services of highly qualified and well trained personnel to prevent confusion and unnecessary mistakes at the registration centers or polling stations.

In the latter part of the quarter, CALID monitored the progress of the project to evaluate some of the activities that had taken place. Follow ups were done on action plans of the PeaCE Committees, Election Security Taskforce and the Religious and Traditional Leaders to ascertain what had been done, what is on-going and what is yet to be done. Challenges and the lessons learnt were also deliberated on and the way forward was agreed upon.

Promoting Quality Basic Education

CALID' activities were geared towards promoting rights in schools: These activities are in fulfillment of Action Aid' key result area of promoting quality public education for girls and boys which respects their rights in school and in communities. In the second and third quarters of the year, CALID worked on promoting of girls' education feeding into ActionAid's Regional Priority of having an "enhanced school governance system at both local and District levels while advocating for children's



Educational stakeholders engaged in a group session during SPAM Assessment forum

Positive Discipline Approach

The Positive Discipline Approach (PDA) is one of the key areas of promoting rights in schools framework which CALID has adopted in its education programme, there was a monitoring exercise to document the implementation of PDA in 20 schools in the Tamale metropolis and Sagnarigu district. The activity was a follow up in respect to the various sensitizations and trainings organized for teachers on PDA. The monitoring assessed how schools and communities are using the knowledge acquired on the PDA on children. The monitoring exercise looked at how teachers applied the knowledge and to what extent do parents also now discipline their children when they go wrong. There were interactions with teachers on how the PDA has helped them in improving student discipline, how it has changed the mode of discipline, Changes observed in implementing PDA, how PDA created awareness about rights violation, challenges encountered in implementing PDA and Interactions with Pupils on the Effectiveness of PDA.

General observations revealed that, punishment in the form of; caning, kneeling down, digging of pitches among others in schools have seen a reduction and teachers are adopting new ways of disciplining pupils.

School Performance Appraisal Meetings Assessment

A forum On School Performance Appraisal Meetings was held by CALID which engaged Directors of Education, Unit Managers, Teachers, Sagnarigu and Tamale Parent-Teacher Associations Network (STAMPATA), Circuit Supervisors and Community Partnership Coordinators and enabled stakeholders to assess the contribution of SPAM in the performance of education in the region. Stakeholders together looked at the achievements and challenges faced by education actors in organizing SPAM at schools and districts levels. After which action plans were drawn committing stakeholders to the process. The main objective of the engagement was to re-introduce and support the regularization of SPAM in schools.

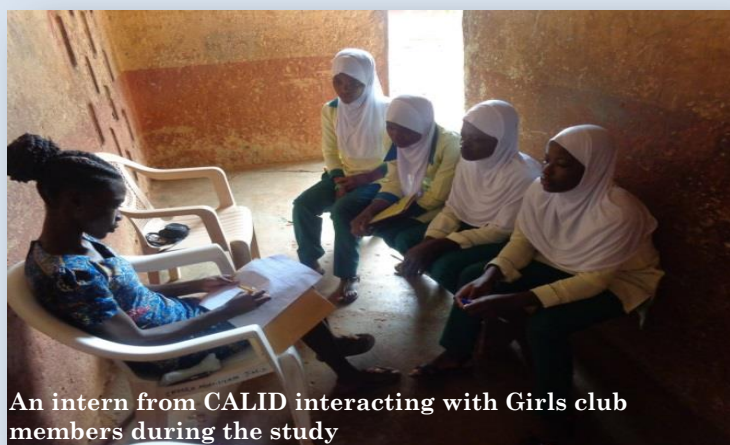


A pupil interacting with officer on PDA

Educational Resource Mapping

CALID conducted an educational resource mapping in schools for evidence based advocacy as a fulfilment of Action Aid' promoting rights in Schools framework. This is to ensure the realization of quality educational delivery. Among these include a well-resourced and congenial atmosphere for effective teaching and learning as well as supporting roles being played by communities in promoting school governance.

The resource mapping exercise is aimed at building a data base of the needs of schools within CALID' operational areas; the exercise focused on what resources are already available to schools vis á vis the number of children in the schools. The mapping looked at resources from 20 schools in terms of their availability.



An intern from CALID interacting with Girls club members during the study



An intern from CALID interacting with Girls club members during the study

Status of CALID' Girls Clubs

A study was conducted by CALID to ascertain the status of girls clubs and also to track the performance of CALID' girls' clubs. The essence of this is to assess the role of these clubs in improving the performance of its members and the rate at which they are helping in retaining girls in school. Findings showed that these clubs provide an avenue where the confidence levels of girls are boosted to ensure assertiveness through rigorous education in reproductive health during club meetings. The study had engagements with Patrons/Matrons and also had focus group discussions with the club members.

This study revealed that, about twelve (12) girls' clubs met once in a week whiles four (4) clubs met twice in a week. Most of the clubs meet at second break. Most patrons together with the members in all schools stated that they discussed many issues during their club meetings; personal hygiene, girl child abuse and human rights, career guidance, teenage pregnancy and early marriages among others. They also stated the various activities of their individual clubs as well as their advantages on members and achievements.

Some Achievements of Our Girls Clubs

1. Reduction in teenage pregnancy in most of our operational communities.
2. Girls can now take up leadership positions in school.
3. Improved reading abilities, confidence levels, and competences in girls in schools.
4. Girls can now talk freely to patrons about personal issues.
5. Rural-Urban drift resulting in "Kayaye" has massively reduced in operational communities/districts.

IMPROVING CHILDREN' PERFORMANCE

through assessment of numeracy and literacy competencies



A staff of CALID sharing findings of assessment to Parents and Teachers at Kasalgu community in Sagnarigu District.

The chief of Kasalgu responding to some issues.

CALID together with CHOICE Ghana are implementing a project known as Strengthening Citizens Action and Learning Empowerment (SCALE). It is an initiative of Choice Ghana with financial and technical support from IBIS in Ghana. The aim of the project is to measure the effectiveness of Ghana's education system in building the foundational skills of children in numeracy and literacy.

CALID is leading the implementation in two districts namely Sagnarigu and Sawla-Tuna-Kalba (STK) whiles Choice Ghana is leading the implementation in the Kpandai district. In 2016, SCALE Ghana is being piloted in these 3 districts mentioned above in the Northern Region of Ghana. SCALE Ghana is a Citizen'-Led Assessment (CLA) initiative that seeks to collect data on children' performance in basic numeracy and literacy. This assessment covers all children of school going age (3-16). This project is a citizen' driven initiative where volunteers are central in the data collection.

A Two day training exercise was conducted for 80 volunteers from the Sagnarigu and STK districts to undertake the data collection exercise. The training focused on how to collect data from three sources thus, the EA level, the school level and the household level. After the training a case study was given to the volunteers to practice. The volunteers after the training went to the field to collect the data from the various households within the 20 EAs.

So far, data has already been collected at the household and school levels. Children are been assessed with Basic 2 level numeracy and literacy materials to establish their competencies at household level. The rationale for conducting this at the household level is to offer parents an opportunity to know their children' competency levels with regards to numeracy and literacy. This is to strengthen their action towards children' learning. After which findings were disseminated in forums at the school level.

Dissemination of findings

The results of the CLA were disseminated in 20 communities in the STK and 17 communities in the Sagnarigu district. The dissemination took place at the public primary schools within the EA in the community. The meetings were between parent and teachers as well as PTA/SMC members in the community.



A teacher addressing issues raised by Parents

Key successes of the ACRE project

Increased engagement of stakeholders on children's right to education at local and national level

- Reduced teacher absenteeism through monitoring by PTAs as part of the School Improvement Plan which was derived out of issues identified from the baseline.
- 3 six-unit classroom blocks with separate toilet facilities for boys and girls built by the Assembly and Member of Parliament through engagement by the Advisory Committee
- Increased awareness and deepened understanding of parents on issues happening in schools as a result of their active involvement in collecting and analyzing baseline data
- 16 schools used their capitation grant to construct ramps to make them disability friendly through engagement by the PTA Network using District Citizens Report.
- Teachers and parents agree to the use of alternative forms of discipline

Increased transparency and accountability and child participation in school management

- Increased involvement of parents in developing the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) by head teachers
- School rules and sanctions developed Girls Clubs for all children and adapted by schools
- Issues of children considered during PTA/SMC meetings and feedback given to them

Increased capacity of children (girls and Children with Disabilities) in claiming their rights

- Reduction in harassment and violence against girls, through the use of the violence reporting boxes
- Increased attendance and retention rates of girls in schools from 39% to 67% as mothers became more supportive
- Reduction in workload of girls by mothers to free time for their studies
- 29 Girls contested for leadership positions over the period. 11 out of the 29 including 1 with physical disability contested for Senior School Prefect-ship. 3 out of the 11 won their elections. (1 in the first year, 0 in the second year, and 2 in the third year)

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