

CARE NET Ghana

Profile of CARE NET Ghana

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BACKGROUND

CARE NET GHANA (CNG) is local non profit organisation dedicated to delivering efficient and sustainable programs that promote rights and improve the living condition of marginalized groups especially women and children in Ghana. Founded in 1993, it was registered in 1996 with the Registrar Generals Department as company limited by guarantee and with the Department of Social Welfare as a voluntary and charitable organisation.

CARE NET GHANA has programs in primary health care, basic education for children, Child rights, and Environmental conservation. Other programs include Reproductive health and Rights for young people especially girls, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment based on the **SAVE** concept, and Research.

CARE NET GHANA has been at the forefront of designing and implementing innovative programs that combines basic education with health information for over 10 years. Providing people in particular women and children with information about how to remain healthy and encourage them to take actions to improve their own and their families' health. CARE NET mobilizes community support for improved reproductive and maternal and child health, including HIV/AIDS prevention as well threats to personal safety such as domestic violence, child abuse and trafficking.

MISSION STATEMENT

Contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of poor and marginalised people especially women and children through the implementation of sustainable programs within Ghanaian communities.

Target Beneficiaries

CARE NET specifically targets women and children as the beneficiaries of its programs, as they are often marginalized populations within Ghanaian communities.

Target Regions

CARE NET currently focuses its resources and activities in a limited number of underserved communities in five districts within the Volta Region - Akatsi, South Tongu, North Dayi, Adaklu Anyigbe and Hohoe Districts. This represents areas where development plans from the various districts have indicated the high level of need in these communities.

Our work is achieved through:

Partnership with target groups in a manner that emphasizes on their human and cultural dignity and again partnership with other organisations.

Participation in decision-making leading to greater and sustained commitment to achieving developmental objectives. We believe in a high level and quality of participation by the poor in decision-making about development initiatives taken in partnership with them.

Development as process and not a gift. We hold as a fundamental tenet that people living in poverty have, in varying degrees, personal capacities, local resources and external opportunities for their own self-development

PROGRAMS

CARE NET GHANA has extensive experience addressing numerous factors that marginalize women and children within Ghanaian communities. Over the next five years, CARE NET GHANA plans to pursue a focused geographic and issue-based strategy that builds on its existing relationships, resources and programs that will contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Thus, in building out programming to serve women and children, CARE NET GHANA will focus on four thematic areas namely:

1. **Education** (Access to quality basic education, literacy, and skills training)
2. **Health** (Maternal and child health, reproductive health and rights, preventive health)
3. **Child Rights** (Child Survival and protection, child development and participation and disability)
4. **Environmental Conservation** (Empowering people especially people to conserve the environment)

Additionally, CARE NET will principally focus this programming on a limited number of targeted communities in twenty (20) Districts in the Volta, Eastern, Greater Accra and Northern Regions. These communities will represent areas only where CARE NET has strong local knowledge and expertise, and where assessment surveys have determined a high need for CARE NET services. This focused strategy allows CARE NET to leverage its background in these four core areas, while serving our constituents in its targeted communities more deeply.

In addition, CARE NET plans to pursue other additional issues affecting women and children in its targeted communities. Such issues include: HIV/AIDS Prevention, Treatment and Care for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), women empowerment, water and sanitation, vocational training and life planning skills.

These additional issues overlap and reinforce the four problem areas that CARE NET will target with its programming. However, using partnerships to address some of these additional issues will allow CARE NET to focus its own resources and knowledge most effectively. In addition, by focusing its expertise on specific issues and locations, CARE NET will be better able to monitor and assess impact of our programs on a regular basis and also avoid duplication of activities.

MANAGEMENT OF CARE NET GHANA

As an organisation CARE NET GHANA is led by a seven member Board who formulates broad operational policies, approve projects and budgets for the organisation. The secretariat is headed by the Executive Director who is responsible for the day to day running of the organisation with the support of other staff and volunteers.

ACHIEVING THE MDGs

CARE NET has the under listed Millennium Development Goals as the driving forces behind each of our projects;

Goal 1: Achieve Universal Primary Education

Ensure that children everywhere will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling by providing safe and child friendly facilities, decent and safe classrooms thereby reducing school absenteeism.

- Rainwater harvesting improves school attendance and reduced water carrying burdens especially for girls
- Private toilets, hand wash facilities and water tanks in schools improves health for the children, especially sexually maturing girls in schools
- Safe classrooms and furniture provide a good atmosphere for learning and teaching
- Textbooks and other educational materials including recreational equipment help children stay in school
- Recreation facilities make children stay in school

Goal 2: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Ensure girls have the same access to schooling as boys by provision of sanitary towels and training on sexual health and rights to adolescent girls in primary schools. This provides privacy and safety to girls, promotes convenience, comfort and social dignity

- Reduced time and health burdens through rain water harvesting and springs protection leading to more balanced gender roles

Goal 3: Eradicate Extreme Hunger and Poverty

To halve the proportion of people earning less than US\$ 1 a day by initiating Income Generating Activities (IGAs)

- Initiating women and youth managed stores, public barbering shops and vegetable farming using compost that contributes to sustainable development.

Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality and Improve Maternal Health

To reduce under five and maternal mortality by training local and village health care providers to be able provide basic maternal health care and be able to identify complications and make prompt referrals

- Training practicing but untrained traditional birth attendants (TBAs) will increase access to anti-natal, delivery and post natal services in villages and rural areas
- Reduce maternal deaths through timely and appropriate care
- Facilitate community participation to ensure timely and appropriate utilization of health services
- Improve coverage of and access to emergency obstetric care
- Reducing maternal mortality as a result of Malaria, Anemia from hemorrhage and still births through medical outreach
- Access to appropriate reproductive health information will improve women's reproductive health

Goal 5: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

To halt the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources and reduce the proportion of people who are unable to access safe drinking water

- Youth managed modern carwash yards, reduce the pressure on treated water and pollution of rivers and generate income for the young people
- Community owned eco-tourism will serve as alternative source of income for communities
- Environmental conservation clubs in schools and communities will create awareness among young people and the larger community
- Anti bush fire campaign in communities will help reduce the destruction of natural and designated reserves
- Conservation education will give people the knowledge and power to work out what is in the best interest of their society and its natural environment

ACHIEVEMENTS

Promoting Youth Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Education and Counselling

CARE NET implements an innovative peer education program in over 30 Junior and Senior high schools in the Volta Region through Health and Life Planning Clubs. These clubs are coordinated by trained peer educators and teachers, and provide a forum for young people to acquire and share factual information on issues of youth health and development. The positive results of the peer education program are seen in the ever-increasing demand to establish similar clubs in other schools. CARE NET also runs a multi-purpose youth centre in Hohoe where young people have access to wide variety of services including counselling, library, audio-visuals, training, recreation and referrals.

CARE NET program on reproductive health and rights is aimed at providing culturally appropriate sexual and reproductive health information and services to young people so they can make informed choices about life. In doing this, CARE NET uses a multidimensional strategy that targets the different stages at which adolescent reproductive health can be effectively addressed.

- Advocating for action on adolescents' needs and access to care with policy makers, Health institutions, Educational sector, parents and community leaders.
- Increasing access to comprehensive sexuality education, peer education and counseling, to enable adolescents make healthy and responsible decisions about their sexuality.
- Promoting access to resources materials, including adolescents' health journals, books, training and video films.
- Providing reproductive healthcare and referrals services to adolescent-friendly institutions for further care.

CHILD RIGHTS

CARE NET is committed to the principles enshrined in the UN Convention on the rights of the child, the African Charter of the rights and welfare of the Child and the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana.

Our mission under this programme is to promote and protect the inherent dignity of every child and drawing attention to the fundamental needs of children and the need to provide support for their survival, protection, development and participation in their everyday life.

Our program activities on child rights include formation of child rights Clubs, Theatre/Drama Clubs, and Young and wise Clubs, News Paper (Young Voices) publications among others.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES

The operations of CARE NET are guided by the policies on eight key issues:

Programmes

Gender

Organizational Capacity

Management of Funds

Target Groups

Impact

Income

Growth

Programme

CARE NET responds to short, medium and long-term needs of our target groups. Our work therefore includes project development and implementation, development education and advocacy Programmes. In all our work we seek to empower the target groups.

Gender

Our aim is to promote equality in all CARE NET's work believing that woman's empowerment and equality between women and men are prerequisites to improved living condition.

Impact

CARE NET aims to use the resources available to us to achieve the maximum impact in improving the living condition and developing the capacity for sustainable development. A key means of achieving such impact is through the empowerment of the people and communities with which CARE NET works.

Organisational capacity

CARE NET values the support it receives from the public and donors. It seeks to maximize the impact of the resources, which the public and other donors contribute, through the judicious utilization of such support. CARE NET recognizes the Importance of its staff and its volunteers in effectively bringing services and benefits to our target groups. It is CARE NETs policy to ensure that optimum management, support and training is available to those engaged on its work in the communities.

Management of funds

It is the policy of CARE NET to manage its funds in adherence to professional accounting standards and practices that are legally required for a charity of its kind in each of the programmes we implement.

Income

We generate income through fund-raising, local and International donors to help us achieve our mission strengthen our ethos and maintain the integrity of our programmes.

Growth

Through planned growth, CARE NET seeks to increase the number of people and communities who benefit from its programmes. Our concept of growth also means improving the quality of our existing programmes.

Target Groups

CARE NET directs its resources towards specific target groups as prescribed in the project design.

STAFFING

CARE NET Ghana maintains six (6) permanent and three (3) part time staff and (3) Volunteers at the National Secretariat in Hohoe. CARE NET also hires the services of other skilled personnel as and when required to undertake specific activities.

In our project areas we maintain 2 permanent staff supported by part-time and volunteer staff.

MAIN ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

1. Improve the quality of life of young people through the acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge to enable them make informed decisions in reproductive and social matters.
2. Economic empowerment programmes through vocational skills development, food security and sustainable Agriculture for marginalised groups, youth, street children, poor families, etc.
3. Child Rights promotion through training of peer educators and formation of child rights clubs in schools in the Kpando and Hohoe Districts.

4. Basic social Services, non-formal education and micro-credit for the poor and marginalised especially women, youth and children, etc.
5. Integrated Community based primary healthcare – maternal and child health
6. Enhance women's ability to prove the quality of their lives through literacy programmes using REFLECT to ensure participatory decision-making, and access to and control of recourses, skills and benefits.
7. Capacity building through training and material development for grass-root groups and communities on preventive Health and Literacy.
8. Develop a strong network with other organisations to influence socio-economic Policy.
9. Safe Place project provides integrated support for abused children in Hohoe District

ANNUAL BUDGET

Up to 80% of CARE NETs operational budget is donor funded. The rest 20% is generated through fund-raising, Consultancy services and Community support.

Over the past three years CARE NET'S Annual budget has increased from \$109,000 to \$ 250,000.

SUPPORTERS AND DONORS

The following organisation have supported and/or funded some of our programmes in the past and presently;

- German Foundation for Population (DSW),
- TEAR FUND (NZ),
- Freedom from Hunger Council,
- JHU Center for Communication Programme (Ghana),
- World Education/USAID.
- World Day of Prayer-German Committee,
- Action Medeor-Germany,
- French Embassy in Ghana,

Affiliations

1. Volta Civil Society Network (VOCSNET)
2. NGO Coalition in Health (Volta Regional Chapter)
3. Ghana Education Coalition
4. Ghana NGO Coalition on the rights of the Child
5. Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP-USA)

Partners and Collaborators

1. Ghana Health Service
2. Ghana Education Service
3. Keta Akatsi Catholic Dioceses
4. Municipal and District Assemblies
5. Department of Social Welfare
6. REPROTEK
7. Together Ghana
8. PPAG
9. Philip Foundation Programme
10. CARD

FUTURE PLANS

CARE NET sees itself developing in 4 Directions;

- Strengthening the capacity of the organisation and expand our project coverage to reach more people (women and Children) and communities.
- Attracting more donor support whiles putting in place appropriate mechanism to ensure self-sustenance of the organisation AND its projects.
- Continually promoting gender equality and participation in all activities among beneficiaries and stakeholders and continually sharing experience and disseminating successful approaches and practices.
- Develop a plan to maintain a strong team of trainers, social scientist and other qualified personnel to support and manage our programmes.

Organisational Chart of CARE NET GHANA

