

**DEVELOPMENT FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

**A GUIDE FOR**

**Community Organizational Development**



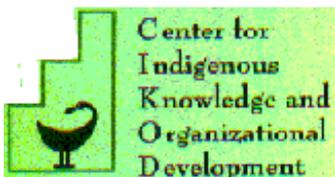
Chief and Elders of Bongni in Northern Ghana Engaged in CIRM Process  
**DEVELOPED BY THE CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

P. O. Box CT 4131, Accra

[Cikod2000@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Cikod2000@yahoo.co.uk)

[www.cikodgh.org](http://www.cikodgh.org)

**By Bernard Guri and Wilberforce Laate**



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## PREAMBLE

### USERS OF THE GUIDE

The guide is targeted at field development facilitators, aid agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and formal local government institutions with an interest in development work at the local level. The guide is a response to development practitioners' need for skills to be able to work with indigenous institutions and their resources (material and spiritual) to enhance citizen-driven development. It is a documentation of the Community Organizational Development (COD) approach developed by CIKOD and its associates for enabling development facilitators to work with people's cultural resources – material, social and spiritual – in the context of their worldviews as well as external resources to attain endogenous development. **COD is about enabling communities to mobilize and utilize their cultural assets (social, material and spiritual) to manage and direct their own affairs and use them more effectively and interact meaningfully with the outside world for resources for their development initiatives.** The COD approach comprises a systematic set of tools:

- Community Institutions and Resources Mapping (CIRM)
- Community Visioning and Action Planning (CVAP)
- Community Organizational Self Assessment (COSA)
- Community Institutional Strengthening (CIS)
- Learning, Sharing and Assessment (LeSA)
- Using festival and traditional forums for community dialogue with power bearers

The difference between these tools and their conventional counterparts is the fact that they are premised on working with and through the traditional authorities and indigenous institutions and their organizational practices and resources. This enhances ownership and inclusion of the whole community in the development process.

In CIKOD's view, ED can be realised only by adopting the appropriate personal attitude that allows for the inclusion of the worldviews/culture and local resources of local communities. Part One therefore provides a detailed guide on how field staff can develop and use the appropriate attitude to enhance ED. Part Two outlines the six different tools that CIKOD uses to realise Community Organizational Development. Part Three explains the value of working through traditional authorities for ED as well as the possible risks in working with them. Included is an annex that gives a story of how CIKOD applied the CIRM process in Tanchara and the results so far.

## **PART ONE:**

### **ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT AND THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF COD**

#### **THE GENESIS OF ED AS A DEVELOPMENT APPROACH FOR CIKOD**

I started my working life as a facilitator of agriculture extension in 1985. I started as a strong proponent of modernization of agriculture as a way of improving rural life with a serious interest in intermediate technology development. After five years I became disillusioned because the adoption rate was too low, it had serious adverse effects on rural people's health and did not seem to fit into rural lifestyles. Together with some colleagues we embarked on promoting the concept of Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA) with inspiration from ILEIA.

In 1993, together with some colleagues, I founded the Ecumenical Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (ECASARD) to facilitate the spread of LEISA in Ghana. I saw Participatory Technology Development (PTD) as the way forward and vigorously participated in the development of the process. Farmers were enthusiastic about PTD but the technologies they developed did not stand the test of time. My disappointment led me to reflect on development from the perspective of the communities I worked in. Then I realized that *in the worldviews of Ghanaians, spirituality and social status are considered equally as important for well being as economic or material gain*. It was then I realized that their technologies and development strategies have survived the test of time because they are intrinsically linked to their local environment, their worldviews and cosmovision. The proposition of ED by COMPAS as a development approach that starts from the internal resources as well as the worldviews and cosmovision of the community became appealing to me.

#### **THE EVOLUTION OF COD AS A TOOL FOR ED**

After strenuous efforts to get members of my sustainable agriculture and rural development network to accept the fact that indigenous knowledge (IK) and farmers' worldviews are the cornerstone for any progress in sustainable development, I founded CIKOD to focus more on ED with a view to promoting development that builds on people's internal resources – material, social institutions and organizations, and their worldviews. COMPAS defines ED as 'development from within, based mainly, though not exclusively, on locally available resources, values, institutions and knowledge'. From the CIKOD perspective, ED is seen as a framework for using people's indigenous institutions, knowledge, resources and spirituality for community development. It is an inside-out approach that takes the community resource base/assets as a starting point for development interventions – this means the community's institutions, local knowledge, local

organizational practices and local resources (material, social/cultural, spiritual). It is an approach in which people's worldviews and cosmovision are taken into consideration in the design of any interventions. ED from the CIKOD perspective is also seen as "Using what we have to get what we want" – i.e. ED is not a hybrid of indigenous and modern as is perceived by some people, but rather a means by which people use *their* internal strengths (i.e. natural, social and spiritual) to gain from or influence the external to meet *their* development needs.

In order for CIKOD to operationalize its concept of ED, it became necessary to develop tools that would enable communities to be able to identify their internal resources based on the 'three world' perspective of ED - that is the natural, the social and the spiritual as the starting point for the development of any interventions or initiatives. To do this CIKOD, together with its associates in Ghana and the Universities for Development Studies in Tamale and the Center for Development Studies of the University of Cape Coast, undertook action research to identify indigenous institutions and knowledge systems in Ghana and how they contribute to natural resources management, local governance and livelihoods development. Based on the practical experiences gained through further participatory action research and development with the communities over the years, the five different processes evolved. This endeavour sprang from a desire to let development projects unfold within the worldview of the community instead of that of the development agent. COD is premised on the fact that, to create development within the worldview of the community strengthens the local ownership and relevance of the project and thereby creates sustainability and widespread development.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COD**

These provide the underpinning ...

### **Preparation of the self**

Some mental and socio-cultural preparation might be necessary prior to your community entry. This reduces the risk of acting out of sync with the worldviews of the community and therefore increases the chances of incorporating their values, norms and spirituality as envisaged in endogenous development.

The preparation of the self includes the following:

- **Attitudes and behaviour:** Appropriate behaviour is essential to a successful COD process – but this can't be taught in a manual! The most important thing is to be humble and respectful at

all times. Show your gratitude and remember that you are the visitor and keep in mind that ‘when in Rome, do as the Romans’.

- **Research:** Intuition and common sense will take you far but knowledge on the community’s norms is required therefore do some research on the community’s norms, protocols and traditions. Find out as much as possible about the local situation, however, be aware that on arrival you might find that the collected information isn’t accurate. So prepare to adjust your perception to the actual situation.
- **Open mindedness:** Prepare to accept and work within the community’s way of doing things – spiritually as well as traditionally. Don’t let prejudice or your educational training dominate your perception of the traditions and values of the community and always show respect for community norms. Prepare to set your educational and professional background aside so as to recognize the traditional authorities and indigenous institutions as the ones who know their situation best.
- **Flexibility:** Prepare to change and adjust your schedule. Unexpected incidents can easily occur so you must be flexible in your planning. Expect unexpected incidents such as funerals, child naming or the like which could happen after a planned activity.
- **Patience:** Community work can be a very fruitful exercise – if you take your time! Always go at the pace of the community. Rushing to meet targets and deadlines will not create the participatory process that is at the core of the CIRM methodology. Be patient and the results will come.

### **Preparation of the community**

For a successful COD process, the community itself needs some prior preparation before the commencement of the process. The practical preparation includes:

- **Initial community visit:** It is always necessary to make an initial visit to the community to introduce yourself and your agenda.
- **Community entry:** Always obtain permission before entering a community. Find out about customs on community entry from a reliable source and stick to these rules, e.g. when formally greeting a Ghanaian chief, protocol demands that you offer him a bottle of schnapps (gin). If possible identify a respected person from the community to lead you. If you return to the community with a new agenda you should make a new community entry – and bring a new bottle of schnapps.

- **Time and place:** Sort out all practicalities for the initial meeting beforehand: When is the best time/season to visit? Who to meet on arrival? Where is the most suitable place for a meeting? What should you bring? Be sensitive to the schedules of the participants. As much as possible schedule meetings to coincide with their usual meeting times – for example taboo days when people normally stay at home. If that is not possible negotiate tactfully for alternative meeting times.
- **Interpretation:** If you don't speak the local language make sure to find an interpreter that fully understands your agenda, so that no misunderstandings will corrupt your work. Make sure that you (or an interpreter) can explain the COD process and the terminology in the local language. In the case of multiple language groups, use the simultaneous multiple self translation process<sup>1</sup>
- **Contact person:** It can be very helpful to identify a credible contact person of high social standing in the community (e.g. a village teacher, an opinion leader) to introduce you to the chiefs and elders. The contact person can also be helpful in introducing you to the community norms and beliefs, as well as planning of meetings and other practicalities.

### **Overall guiding principles for using COD**

Every community is a unique entity with their own way of doing things, which means that every COD-facilitation process should be moulded to suit the individual community. However, some overall guiding principles apply to most situations. These are outlined below and it will be helpful to stick to these when facilitating the COD methodology.

- **Inclusion:** Work with the whole community. Harness collective action and elicit the support of key players in the community.
- **Individuality:** Each community or social group is an individual entity. Therefore the COD methodology cannot be applied blindly but might need some contextual adjustments. Keep in mind that the community is not a homogenous entity. It is made up of different social groups and it is therefore important to identify these different groups and address/empower them individually.
- **Open forums:** If possible use open collective forums, which are inclusive in nature e.g. traditional festivals, taboo days etc. In all cases use a person from outside the community (most likely you will be the outsider yourself) to facilitate open forums - there is an Ashanti proverb saying that 'it is the stranger who brings new knowledge'.

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<sup>1</sup> People are made to sit in language groups and one of them acts as a simultaneous translator for the group.

- **Communication:** Rely on oral communication and culturally sensitive approaches such as songs, stories, proverbs, drama, images, etc. to ensure that illiteracy will not exclude people from participation.
- **Participation:** Let participants exercise influence on the course of the workshop, i.e. formation of groups for group work, time for breaks, etc. so that they feel ownership of the workshop.
- **Local language:** Encourage participants to perform group work in their local language as this will bring out the true issues at stake in the community.
- **Religion:** Be sensitive to religious aspects – start and end with a prayer (traditional or formal as the community wishes), ideally performed by a participant.
- **Sensitivity:** Be culturally sensitive at all times. In anything you do you should always bear the culture and values of the people you work with in mind and let this be your guide.
- **The facilitator:** Take on the role of a facilitator – not a teacher. By doing this you encourage the community to participate actively, which will empower them to take charge of their own development. As a facilitator you should regard yourself as a midwife: you are assisting a process of birth and creation. Your task is to help the community come up with answers and solutions themselves - you should only provide the support.
- **Transparency:** Be transparent and honest about your development agenda for the community to take an informed decision to participate in it or not. Be part of the community's agenda – not the other way around.
- **Time:** Try to start at the agreed time and stick to your schedule – participants might have a long way home and you could end up not finishing your programme.

**And finally:** Always go at the pace of the community!

## **PART TWO**

### **THE COD TOOLS**

#### **I Community Institutions and Resource Mapping (CIRM)**

##### **The Purpose of CIRM**

The purpose is for communities to map out the existing institutions, both indigenous and formal, as well as the natural, socio-cultural and spiritual resources in the community and their potentials as starting points for community development. CIRM is a participatory approach for community entry and diagnosis as it guides the community through a self-examination process and exposes what structures and resources, human as well as natural that are already at hand in the community. CIRM can be further facilitated, to motivate community visioning on possible self-reliant community initiatives and action plans to achieve the vision with support from external resources.

##### **Steps in CIRM**

###### **1. Community orientation**

The first step of the CIRM process is a community orientation meeting where the idea of the CIRM is introduced to the community members. A cross-section of the community, at an open forum facilitated by a development facilitator, brainstorms and lists the traditional institutions and resources that exist in the community. The resources should include the social, natural and spiritual resources that are of significance to the development of the community. The community jointly come out with a vernacular terminology and checklist of questions to work with and conduct a historical analysis of their institutions and resources to identify their relevance and existence in the past, present and for the future.

###### **2. Formation and preparation of CIRM Team**

The community puts together a team (this should be five to seven people; at least two of whom should be women and at least one should be literate enough to take notes). The team is trained by the development facilitator (usually an external person from a partner development organization) on basic PRA tools for information gathering. Then the team is made to dramatise/role play how they are going to conduct their work. This gives the community members a chance to make comments and agree with the process before the team gets to work.

### **3. Field data collection by CIRM Team**

The team goes out into the community to collect information from elders, women, youth and spiritual leaders (tendana, soothsayers, okomfo, pastors, etc.) on the formal and informal institutions and resources and their potentials, challenges, location, availability and social significance with respect to social, natural, and spiritual resources. This would include a physical map of the locations of these resources. The team brings all this information back to a plenary meeting presided by the Chief and elders, where the information on the various institutions and resources are presented and validated by the community.

### **4. Systematization**

Where necessary, based on the clarity of the outcome of the CIRM, it may be necessary to carry out a formal follow-up study to confirm or fill information gaps that were left from the CIRM and to help to articulate and document the results in writing. This may be done by the field facilitator or a hired consultant.

### **5. Community Visioning and Action Planning**

When the final maps are arrived at after the validation they are clustered according to natural/ social/ and spiritual. Then the community goes into a visioning process, **which is described in more detail in the next step.** By structured questioning from the facilitator, the community comes out with their dreams of what they want their community to be in the next ten years in terms of developing their community using the resources in their community. From here they develop concrete programmes/action plans/schedules/ contracts for each cluster and working strategies to arrive at the visions per cluster.

### **6. Implementation**

From here the development facilitator facilitates a process for the community to discuss external inputs to support the implementation of their plans and how they will go about getting these. The chief and elders of the community then agree to invite government officials or development agencies operating in the area to their durbars or festivals at which requests are presented for support. The development facilitator then sets up exchange visits to other communities to share and learn from them about their development initiatives.

### **Time frame for the CIRM**

The timing of the CIRM process is flexible and depends on the purpose for the CIRM and the size of the community. Where the CIRM is for identifying all resources in the community for general community development planning, it will normally take up to one month. Where it is to collect

information for the development of a specific development domain, eg. seed development, or traditional health development, it will take about one week.

### **Outputs of CIRM**

The outcome of the CIRM is a written report and physical maps that show:

- The existing indigenous institutions (e.g. Traditional councils of elders, asafo companies, hunters groups, clan groups, leadership institutions, traditional mutual support groups, etc.) but also contemporary institutions (e.g. faith-based groups, youth associations, peer groups, women groups, local government institutions like the unit committees, area councils, etc.) and their relevance, potentials and challenges.
- Spiritual institutions and knowledge on the spiritual resources (shrines, sacred sites, sacred trees and water points, churches, mosques, etc.) and their relevance and challenges for the development of the community.
- Physical map of the resources available in the community, their relative quantities, availability and development potential.

## **COMMUNITY VISIONING AND PROGRAMMING – CVAP**

### **Introduction to CVAP**

CVAP is another component of the COD framework and a natural next step after the CIRM, as it helps the community decide how best to make use of its resources. In short the CVAP is an identification of the development direction it wants to go and how to get there in the context of the institutions and resources available in the community.

It consists of two parts. First there is a visioning-process where the community brings up visions and dreams relating to the resources at its hands. At the core of the visioning process is to have the community reflect on where it wants to go as a community - what future it sees for itself.

After the visioning process follows the programming where the community prioritizes its development needs, develops concrete action plans and agrees on how best to make use of the resources identified through the CIRM.

#### **The purpose of CVAP is:**

- To have the community make a vision about the future based on its available resources and develop an action programme to help it make the vision come true.

CVAP is a way to help the community become aware of its dreams and visions regarding its own development and more importantly sensitize it on the way to obtain its goal. If the community can formulate a concrete development programme or action plan and fit it in to the political agenda of the local government much can be obtained.

### **Steps in CVAP**

The CVAP falls in two parts, visioning and programming.

#### **CVAP- workshop:**

If a CIRM has been conducted the workshop begins with a prioritization of the development needs/domains in the validated CIRM report.

1. **Visioning:** A facilitated discussion is arranged among community members and traditional authorities. Participants should be encouraged to express their dreams and visions for the community relating to the resources at its hands. (Don't dream of an oil-plant if it's gold you have found in your community). At the core of the visioning process is to have the community reflect on where it wants to go as a community. Questions to be considered could include:
  - Where was our community 10 years ago?
  - Where is our community now?
  - Where do we want our community to be in 10 years?
2. **Programming:** This is a process which guides the community to prioritize its development needs, develops concrete action plans and agrees on how best to make use of the resources identified through the CIRM to achieve the vision of the community.

The Decisions should center around questions such as:

- How do we use the resources we have identified to make this dream come true?
- What practical activities must we carry out to achieve this dream?
- When do we want to implement these activities?
- Who will do what and how do we ensure that we all carry out our responsibilities (community contract)?

A concrete action programme should be formulated and written down, reflecting the discussion and providing a time frame to reach the goal. Make sure that all participants agree on the programme to

ensure broad based consensus. Remember that your role as the facilitator is to support the community in how best they can plan and carry out their own development:

### **Outputs**

- **Vision statement/ community dream**
- **Detailed action plan**
- **Community contract/MOU**

**In Mampong, Eastern Region the CVAP has resulted in the queen mothers setting up virgin clubs in order to minimize pregnancies among teenage girls.**

## **COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONAL SELF ASSESSMENT (COSA)**

### **Introduction to COSA**

The COSA is a methodology that enables communities to perform a self-examination process. COSA is based on the underlying assumption that communities already have some organisational capacities which they have been and still are using to manage their own development processes. During the COSA the community will become aware of its current capacities and what capacities it lacks in order to make the vision identified in the CVAP come true. COSA can be carried out with the whole community or individual groups that have been specifically tasked with implementing the action plan.

#### **The purpose of COSA is:**

- To guide the community group through a self-examination process in order to identify its organisational capacity potentials and/or gaps.

A thorough awareness of the organisational potentials and gaps will help the community group identify and address the organizational challenges of the community. It should be noted that the focus of COSA is to assess the human resources and various skills that exist but that physical resources and infrastructure also deserves attention and should not be left out. COSA can be carried out as part of a CVAP process or as a separate activity.

## **Steps in COSA**

The COSA starts with a facilitated workshop for the community to reflect on their development plans. The reflection may be guided by the following questions:

- How have you carried out previous development projects in the community?
- What problems did you face in the implementation?
- What did you implement properly and what could you not implement and why?
- What problems do you foresee in the implementation of the new development programme?
- What will you be able to do properly and for what will you need some support.
- What type of support do you need?
- Where can you get this support from?

The discussions may be done through focus group discussions where different categories eg. women, men, the youth, etc will work in separate groups to ensure participation by all. Based on reports and the observations of the facilitator, the whole group can together analyze and assess the capacity needs of the group. Through this process, the community or group should now become aware of their own capacities as well as the gaps.

## **Outputs of COSA**

The expected outputs of the COSA process are: a stronger motivation of the community to use the organisational capacity potentials already at its disposal; a self-selected list of the organisational capacities and capacity gaps/needs of the community; ideas on how to fill the capacity gaps and where to get support for that.

**After identifying and strengthening its organisational capacity needs the community of Forikrom in the Brong Ahafo Region successfully engaged the District Assembly and has now obtained sufficient electric poles to provide the whole of Forikrom community with electrify.**

## **COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING - CIS**

Through the CIRM a wide range of local institutions might be identified, however some of these may not be strong enough to carry out their functions or take on new responsibilities as dictated by the developmental needs of the community. Therefore the CIS has been developed to address the institutional capacity gaps to enable communities implement their development initiatives.

**The purpose of CIS is:**

To address the organisational gaps of community groups in order to enhance their capacity to take on new responsibilities related to the development of the community.

CIS takes the form of facilitating the strengthening of existing groups in to well-organised, strong and visible civil society organisations to provide services and voice to its members and the community in general. The CIS includes training and exposure visits as well as revitalisation of dying institutions through organisational development support. OD may be facilitated around the following question:

- What was your group/community like 10 years ago and what activities was it engaged in?
- What is it like today and what activities is it engaged in?
- What other roles can it perform today in relation to the development of the community?
- What capacity support does it need to be able to perform these new roles?

It could also include logistical and financial support for livelihood development.

The core principle of CIS is to strengthen the current capacities of the community in relation to what the community wishes to achieve. In other words: to enhance the organisational capacity of the community. It can take the form of training workshops to provide technical skills, inspirational lectures by invited resource persons e.g. politicians, university lecturers, etc. CIS has also been facilitated through storytelling, where a story (fictional or real) can form the basis of a group discussion.

**Outputs of CIS**

The outputs of CIS include well motivated communities, empowered to address their own development initiatives. This is usually evidenced by the emergence of revitalised local institutions in the community giving voice to the community to engage in community mobilization as well as engaging external development agents like the DAs, NGOs etc. for resources to implement their action plans.

**After having gone through a CIS process the ten sections of Tanchara, the Upper West Region are now reorganised and revitalised under their sectional heads and hold bi-annual community fora at which governmental development agencies and NGOs are invited for dialogue on the development needs of the village.**

## LEARNING, SHARING AND ASSESSING (LESA)

### **Introduction to LeSA**

LeSA is a community peer review mechanism that enables communities with similar development agendas to exchange developmental experiences and knowledge. The LeSA methodology has been developed in order to guide communities to learn from each other and share experiences amongst themselves – Learning, Sharing and Assessing (LeSA). The background of LeSA is the fact that most evaluations of development projects leave little or no opportunity for the community itself to actually learn from the knowledge derived.

#### **The purpose of LeSA is:**

- To facilitate a community peer review process to enhance natural assessment for the purpose of learning and sharing among communities engaged in similar activities.

LeSA rests on three legs. At the core of the LeSA framework is the **assessment** of the work of other communities. Participants are also expected to **learn** about how other communities identify and address their problems and thirdly they are to **share** their experience and knowledge with others on how they addressed similar problems.

LeSA takes the form of exchange visits between communities or facilitated meetings involving a number of communities to share experiences around issues of common interest. It is different from ordinary community visits in that it is a facilitated process structured to enhance maximum learning, assessing and sharing between the community groups.

The LeSA process is normally made up of two exchange visits however it should be noted that it is important to find a form that suits the needs and capacities of the communities involved. Specifically the steps in LeSA include:

1. Initially the community should decide on the persons who are to go on the LeSA visit. Traditional authorities, leaders of indigenous institutions and other community representatives are the obvious choices. Make the community consider if other groups or individuals could benefit from attending the meeting or wish to contribute in one way or the other to the exercise.
2. The visiting team should, for economic reasons, consist of a maximum of four people. This is also a way to ensure that the number of participants from the two exchange communities is the same.

3. Representation should moreover be gender (men and women) and generational (youth and elders) balanced in order to represent the whole community.
4. The timeframe of each LeSA visit is one to two days. This does not include travelling time.
5. In order to create ownership and responsibility of the process among the communities involved some degree of cost sharing is advisable, e.g. you as a facilitating institution can pay for transportation, while the host community provides accommodation and food.
6. The communities can carry out the LeSA visits without any supervision – however as a facilitator you might have an interest in supervising or following up on the visits in order to document their contents.
7. During the LeSA visit the visiting community reports on the host community’s activities, achievements, challenges and how they addressed the challenges and vice versa.
8. By the end of the LeSA visit the two communities should evaluate their development experiences and hold the process up against the action plan. Have they obtained their goal? If yes – how? If no - why not?
9. If possible involve the community radio so that the outcome of the visits can be shared with the whole community.

### **Improving the LeSA methodology**

If you work in several communities that have all participated in a LeSA programme arranging an experience sharing workshop after the LeSA visits have been conducted might be helpful in order for you as a facilitator to obtain knowledge on the methodology and improve it. Here participants can narrate and discuss their experience with the LeSA visits.

It is important to notice that the LeSA is carried out during the implementation of the action plans of the communities, where the goal of the intervention has not necessarily been obtained.

(LeSA can be used as a tool for CIS.)

### **Outputs of LeSA**

The major outputs are experience and knowledge sharing on possible solutions to the problems communities face. The outputs are usually documented by photos of the meetings and activities. Audio recordings and participatory video clips have also been used. Written reports are sometimes produced but seldom used by communities themselves.

Audio recordings can be played back to the communities through community radio.

## **FESTIVALS AS SPACE FOR DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE**

### **Introduction to Festivals as space for development dialogue**

In Ghana as in many other developing countries every community has traditional festivals e.g. harvest festivals. These festivals are events that bring together all community members, even those living outside the community itself. Because of their all-inclusive nature such traditional festivals can provide an embracing platform for a development dialogue to unfold where all categories of people (chiefs, elders, women, children etc.) can voice out their development concerns and needs. Festivals provide an opportune possibility to facilitate a community dialogue on development engaging the whole community and external actors. As such it can be used as an advocacy platform. Facilitating festivals as space for development dialogue comprise four basic steps.

- Preparing communities to be proactive and able to articulate their developmental priorities.
- Softening the ground to cultivate the interest of development agents to be willing to and interested in participating.
- Organising a one-day forum during the festival and facilitating a win-win dialogue between the community and development agents.
- Supporting the communities to develop follow-up activities to make the development agents responsive to the demands presented.

Using Festivals as space for community dialogue will usually take place after the implementation of other COD methodologies however it can also be organized as a stand alone development intervention.

## ANNEX ONE

### **The Role of Traditional Authorities in CIRM**

Traditional authorities in Ghana comprise all the traditional leadership institutions in the community. When implementing the CIRM, the traditional authorities play an important role. It is therefore crucial to have a good understanding why you should work with these institutions.

### **The Rationale for Working with Traditional Authorities**

In general, there are two schools of thought with regard to discussion on whether or not chiefs and other traditional authorities should play a role in development work, namely: **the ornamental** and **the functional**.

The former sees traditional authorities as a leftover from the past, an undemocratic and old-fashioned institution that should not be included in development work. The latter however sees the traditional authorities as a functional and still vibrant power holder that cannot be excluded if one wants to promote sustainable, efficient development. In Ghana as in many other African countries, in spite of a modern political system at the national level, the majority of the population living in the rural areas are still organized around the traditional authority systems and the indigenous institutions.

A study carried out in 2008 in Ghana by CIKOD and the Centre for Development Studies at the University of Cape Coast, showed that 96% of 400 respondents see the traditional authorities as relevant for development.

Chiefs still play a vital role in the everyday lives of the rural population and if one wants to promote sustainable and long lasting development, inclusion of the chief and other traditional authorities is essential.

The chief and his female counterpart - the queen mother, can be described as the embodiment of the customs and values of the people. The chief holds a range of legislative, executive, judicial and spiritual functions under the traditional system. Chiefs see to the day-to-day running of the rural communities and unlike government authorities, they have the comparative advantage of closeness to the people and therefore they can quickly react if trouble erupts. Chiefs are the first to know when there is water pollution, bush fires, environmental degradation from the use of chemicals or

conflicts erupting. Therefore chiefs can also be the first to stop such abuses – that is if they are formally empowered to do so.

### **RISKS AND CHALLENGES IN WORKING WITH INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONS**

No doubt indigenous institutions and traditional authorities hold the potential of acting as strong and efficient development actors in collaboration with NGOs and other civil society organisations. However when engaging with traditional authorities one must be aware of the risks and challenges that is part of this relationship. Some of these are listed below but bear in mind that unforeseen challenges can come up at all times when working at the local level.

- **Don't romanticize:** When working at the local level you should take care not to romanticize the indigenous knowledge and institutions. Traditional authorities might have high local legitimacy, but that doesn't mean they shouldn't live up to certain standards e.g. transparency and accountability.
- **Don't underestimate:** Neither should you underestimate the indigenous institutions. They might differ from other development partners you've worked with, but they normally carry great potentials for creating change in the community.
- **Asses your work:** Always consider the actual outcome of your work. Engaging with traditional authorities is an exciting and challenging exercise, however there is risk that the outcome may not correspond to the energy and resources you put into it. Make sure you outline your expected outputs before engaging with the community and by the end of the day you take an objective look at the actual outcome. The 'hot air trap' is easy to fall into.
- **Have confidence in traditional institutions:** You should rely on the traditional institutions and help them develop their organisational capacities. This is at the core of the COD framework. However it can be tempting to set up new institutions specially designed for the specific development purpose at stake. But such new institutions are most likely to die a natural death after you have left – and are most unlikely to resurrect!
- **Be realistic:** COD is a catalyst for locally-led change. The community explores its problems collectively, share ideas and begin to believe in its own ability to make change. However, you should be cautious not to build up the expectations of the community. Always make sure that the expectations of the community correspond with the expected outputs of the COD process so that the community's self esteem in the developmental field will be boosted – not lowered.

## **Literature**

Millar et al.: *Endogenous Development in Africa*, COMPAS 2008.

B. Guri: *Framework for Community Organizational Development* Draft paper, CIKOD August 2005.

## ANNEX TWO

### CIRM draft checklist

Use the following as a guide to develop the checklist with community for the data collection:

#### 1. Background information

- Name of community
- Number of households (migrants, indigenes)
- Population (men, women, children, migrants)
- Major economic activities (men/women/children)
- Tribal composition
- Religious composition
- Paramountcy of allegiance

#### 2. State of Institutions and local Groups

- Names of indigenous institutions, their current status, functions in the community, current activities, achievements, challenges (Categorise institutions into: Governance, Social, economic, religious)
- Names of formal institutions, their current status, functions in the community, current activities, achievements, challenges (Categorise institutions into: Governance, Social, economic, religious)

#### 3. Linkages between Institutions

- Relationship between indigenous and formal
- Support from formal institutions

#### 4. Natural resources and cultural assets

- List of existing natural resources and cultural assets in the community
- Location of the natural resources and the cultural assets
- State of the assets (quantities, access, potential uses,)
- Management

#### 5. Physical Map

## ANNEX THREE

### SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF CIRM

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND

Since 2003, CIKOD has championed the application of CIRM as a tool for promoting ED. CIKOD has organized training for development agents in the use of CIRM. We have worked in partnership with other development partners – both local and international in the use of CIRM as part of their interventions that ensure the inclusion and use of indigenous institutions and their resources. More important, we have worked directly with communities using the CIRM process to design and implement their development initiatives. In order to give practical clarity to the CIRM process described in parts one and two, we shall here present a complete story of how CIRM was used in the Tanchara Community in the Upper West region of Ghana and what the results has been so far.

#### **DEVELOPMENT FROM THE INSIDE OUT – THE CASE OF THE TANCHARA PROJECT**

**Description of the project:** In the northern part of Ghana, not far from the Black Volta River a village called Tanchara is found. The name Tanchara means “in between mountains” in Dagaare, the local language spoken there. The village is made up of ten small communities scattered around in the dry savannah landscape. Possibilities of employment are limited, illiteracy is widespread and as the weather is hot and dry and the rainfall unreliable, farming, which is the common income-generating activity, can at times be a complicated affair. The traditional system of governance in Tanchara is centred around the chief, the Tanchara Naa, who is supported by 10 sub-chiefs.

**Purpose of the project:** In 2003 the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organisational Development (CIKOD), a Ghanaian non-governmental organisation started working in Tanchara in collaboration with the Tanchara Youth and Development Association (TYDA). The purpose was to support the village to revitalise and use their indigenous institutions and knowledge base to better manage their natural resources and use them for their livelihood development.

**Project Strategy and Activities:** To achieve the purpose, CIKOD developed and used an innovative process called the Community Institutional and Resources Mapping (CIRM) Process that enables communities to marshal both indigenous and external resources using their traditional

leadership and organizational systems for their own development initiatives. CIRM is a process that was developed from the principles of **endogenous development** – ie, promoting development that involves creatively using all the indigenous potentials of a community (including their spirituality) for their development but not excluding appropriate external resources. The following is a narration by a field facilitator of CIKOD on how he facilitated the CIRM in Tanchara.

### **Preparation of the self**

This started with a retreat for me and all the field staff in the CIKOD office. It was the most important step in the CIRM as it enabled me to adopt the right attitude necessary for promoting ED. I and my colleagues reflected on the CIRM guide with particular emphasis on the "preparation of the self" for working with the community. Each of us reflected on the steps and what will be required to ensure that we are able to work within the worldviews of the community. Each of us identified possible challenges we could face and through discussions, we prepared ourselves to be able to address those challenges. We identified our knowledge gaps through peer reviewing each other and filled the gaps through open discussions.

### **Preparation of the community**

I made an initial reconnaissance visit to Tanchara to meet the chief to inform him about the programme. I first made a telephone call to the Chairman of the Tanchara-Youth and Development Association who made the appointment and led me to meet the Chief. After introducing me to the chief and his elders, the chief asked for my mission. I presented CIKOD and its work explaining the concept of endogenous development as a new approach that centers around respecting and including the cultural values and assets of the community as the starting point for their development initiatives. Discussions floated around previous development interventions which apparently only led to disunity in the village. The Chief agreed that it will be a good idea to work with CIKOD to experiment on the ED approach to development. They agreed on a day to meet with the rest of the community to discuss the issue further.

### **Community Orientation**

On the agreed date, I returned to the community, first reporting to the contact person who took me to the Chief to announce my presence in the village. The Chief had already sent a message around to all his ten sub-chiefs to inform their people to gather at his Palace for this meeting. At the meeting, I presented the ED concept and the interest of CIKOD to pilot it in Tanchara. This generated a discussion around the institutions present in the community and their continued

relevance for development. Some people lamented on previous attempts by some NGOs in the village which left the village worse off. I presented the CIRM approach and my role as a facilitator and those expected of community members. When everybody was clear on this, they invited me to come again on another day to set up a team to carry out the CIRM in the community. A date was fixed for another community meeting and commitments made by all to be at the meeting on time.

### **Formation and Preparation of the CIRM Team (How long?)**

On the agreed date, I returned to Tanchara to meet an already organized community forum at the chief's palace. I did a recap with the community on what was discussed at the last meeting. I further explained the CIRM process and what it will take to carry out a CIRM in Tanchara. Through a consensus process, the community selected a team of five persons – two women and three men as the Tanchara CIRM team. These were selected because of commitments they have demonstrated in community activities. One of them was a teacher who was given the responsibility to record the work of the team. I facilitated a discussion around the institutions, resources, the kind of information they would want to collect about these institutions, and the following issues:

- a. The existing Indigenous Institutions (IIs), Traditional Authorities (TAs), as well as the formal institutions including non-governmental organizations that provide services for or facilitate the development of livelihood activities.
- b. All assets in the community:
  - Biological assets (threatened tree species, crop and animal species, medicinal herbs),
  - Natural assets (clay deposits, natural water sources, raw materials for local crafts, natural sites for water collection, etc),
  - Cultural assets (traditional architecture, local crafts, traditional artifacts, indigenous technologies, traditional medicine in the community (bio-cultural resource map)
  - Social assets (festivals, health centers, educational facilities, social centers, markets,
  - Spiritual assets (shrines, sacred groves, forests, tree, water points)
- c. The livelihood activities being undertaken by the youth and women that depends on community assets and has relevance for preserving these assets. Prioritize them.

Based on the discussions, they came up with a list of questions (checklist) that would guide the team to collect the information. The list was prepared in the vernacular language to be sure all understood the issues and process. I took the team through different ways (PRA tools like FGDs, individual interviews, field observations, transect walks, resource mapping, etc) to enable the team collect the information in the community. The team presented the way they would carry out their assignment using the PRA tools through a role play. This was a very lively session with lots of discussions and suggestions on what the team should be doing in the field. At the end of this, the CIRM team led the discussion to agree on a time table for visits to various sections of the community to collect the information. They also agreed on when the team would report back their findings to the community.

### **Implementation of the CIRM (5 days)**

Following the agreed plan, the team agreed to work as one team. The Tanchara community was divided into ten sections and the group visited the ten communities as a group. In each community they visited households and discussed the questions in the checklist. They also met the tindana (the spiritual leader) of each section as well as the paramount tindana. The teacher in the team recorded the results of the meetings. In the process of collecting the information, I visited the team two times – on the first day the team went out into the community and on the last day. On the first visit, I assisted in clarifying the assignment and addressed organizational problems they were facing. On the fifth day when the data collection phase was done, I collected all the information from the teacher and together with an expert from the University for Development Studies, put together a coherent report. In writing up the report, we asked more questions to fill in gaps that we noticed in the data collected by the team. In addition, I took along a video camera and recorded video clips of some the resources they had identified.

### **Community Visioning and Design of Action Plans**

At a date agreed by the Chief and community leaders, a community meeting was organized where the CIRM team and me as the facilitator, presented the report of the CIRM exercise to the whole community. This took the form of listing the social institutions, the natural resources and the spiritual resources that were found. I also played back the video clip to them. Community members commented on the reports, disagreed with some information, added new information and modified some information. At the end of the day, the report was accepted and adopted as a document for the community. Then I drew an outline of the village on a flip sheet and people were challenged to locate the various resources on the map. After a lot of lively debates, a community map of their

resources was agreed on. I led a discussion to come up with a community vision based on the resources identified. I asked the following simple questions to direct the discussion:

- Where was our community 10 years ago?
- Where is our community now?
- Where do we want our community to be in 10 years?

I captured the responses and presented them in the form of a vision statement. I again led a discussion to facilitate the development of programmes and action plans to be able to reach their vision. I asked the following simple questions:

- How do we use the resources we have identified to make this dream come true?
- What practical activities must we carry out to achieve this dream?
- When do we want to implement these activities?
- Who will do what and how do we ensure that we all carry out our responsibilities (community contract)?

I used the responses to formulate development issues the community would want to address. These were prioritized following further discussions and developed into clear development activities with a time frame for implementation. A community contract was also agreed on with regard to rules that guide the implementation of the planned programmes.

### **Implementation of the Action plans**

For implementing the development plans, the chief proposed that community members would provide all the labour requirements. They should also use the local resources they have identified where relevant. This was discussed and agreed on. I informed the community that if they would organize themselves very well they would be able to demand resources from the District Assembly and other development agents for the implementation of those activities that needed external support. The chief decided that he would organize durbars during Easter and Christmas and would invite government officials and development organizations to present their demands and dialogue with them for support. This was accepted by all, adding that this would also be an opportunity for the sons and daughters working outside the village to come home and make contributions towards the development of the village. This has since been institutionalized and during Easter and Christmas, community forums are organized for a review of the village activities as well as presenting the projects to external agencies.

### **The Impact so far**

The achievements so far are best described by oral testimonies given by different categories of persons in Tanchara as captured in an evaluation in 2008:

- “Before the intervention of CIKOD, my sub-chiefs used not to have that much regard for me as the village chief. But now they have developed some respect for me and now anytime I call them for any meeting or gathering they see that it’s very necessary to attend. The sub-chiefs now realise that if there should be change in the village, it is not only me as the Tanchara Naa but they as the sub-chiefs also have a role to play.” **(Niber Yaayin, Tanchara Naa)**
- “Initially there used to be disputes over land boundaries in Tanchara but with the intervention of CIKOD we now use trees to plant along our boundary to indicate that this is our portion to avoid misunderstandings. This is something CIKOD taught us and it is very significant to me.” **(Niber Yaayin, Tanchara Naa)**
- “The most significant change over the past years compared to today is that the disunity that used to prevail in the entire village has changed. Everybody is now focused on what he or she can do towards making Tanchara what it should be for the generation yet unborn.” **(George Pireh, retired educationist and chairman of the Tanchara Youth and Development Committee)**
- “Now there is some kind of unity among the men and women. Now we don’t have any general gatherings where we think that it should be for the men alone. If it is a general gathering concerning the whole of the community the women should be part of it and the men should also form part of it. For me this is something that deserves recommendation.” **(Mary Kunga, mother of 5, brews pito and trades in kerosene and petrol)**
- “When CIKOD came in, they didn’t come to give us money to build this or build that. But they assisted us to source development from outside by giving us small grants to organize meetings and invite certain personalities and stakeholders who would come and talk to the people. They’ll come and say “okay these are your needs, this is what I’m able to do for you.” Like the Junior Secondary School block. It was through the initiative of CIKOD that we brought in the District Chief Executive here and were able to put down our problems to him. And he saw the need to build the JSS block for us.” **(Gordon Zobazie, Assembly Man in the Lawra District Assembly elected in Tanchara electoral area)**
- “We had a mapping out programme where we looked at the strategic resources in the village. We had a forum where people brought all the types of hidden crops that were not known by the people in the village. We also decided to map out, where we have the traditional medicine, the sacred grooves and water points, clay deposits, as well as the traditional healers and all those things that were almost forgotten of. That was one of the most tremendous impacts CIKOD

made and we decided to go further with CIKOD.” **B.B. Saseri, opinion leader, who’s got himself involved in so many activities in Tanchara)**

- “I’m very happy that with CIKOD men have been sensitized. We know traditionally men have always been in a position to think that women are inferior but for now they know very well that what men do, women can also do the same thing. CIKOD has educated us this and I’m very happy for it.” **(Dibb Kundesea, woman leader and former pito-brewer. Now she sells salt.)**

“ As a result of CIKOD, we have now realised the value of the twenty-five sacred grooves and four water sources in the village has an opportunity to conserve indigenous fruits and plants that are no more seen outside these grooves as a result of bushfires. We have decided to plant fruit trees around them to ensure their protection and contribute to food security”. **(Daniel Banuoko, Co-ordinator of the Tanchara Project)**

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