**Danida support to Civil Society**

**Basic Information**

**Support at-a-glance**

***Duration of support:***

1996 – 2022

***Total disbursement:***

DKK 152 million (approx.)

***Key CSOs supported***

Institute of Economic Affairs, Centre for Democratic Development, Institute for Democratic Governance, POS Foundation, Ghana Integrity Initiative, National Peace Council, ACET, and WANEP.

***Geographical coverage:***

All regions of Ghana at national, regional and local level.

***Key Outcomes:***

* Strengthened capacity of civil society to influence policy changes in areas such as mining royalties, domestic violence, persons with disability, anti-corruption, free secondary education, health insurance and free maternal health, etc.
* Institutional capacity and systems of research and advocacy organizations built.
* Increase in state agencies consulting with research and advocacy organizations during policy development.
* STAR 1 (2010-2015): At least 157 CSOs received support for advocacy efforts in several sectors and themes i.e. education, elections, health, oil & gas, governance, access to justice, media, gender equality and social inclusion, sustainability, anti-corruption, and local governance.
* Launch of the STAR Ghana Foundation (a fully Ghanaian owned and managed facility) in 2018.
* Civil society programme (2019-2022) DKK 10 million for anti-corruption, decentralisation, peace, and economic and political analyses.

Danida has supported the development and strengthening of civil society in Ghana in mainly three ways: support to research on policy issues, support to professionalization of the press, and support through different pool-funding mechanisms to capacitate civil society organisations (CSOs) in their advocacy and policy influencing roles.

Danida’s initial strategy during the period of 1996 to 2003 targeted support to a large number of very small initiatives widely spread across the country and designed to alleviate problems in the area of human rights and democratisation among others. Based on an evaluation of this support strategy it was recommended that an exclusive direct support to civil society be provided within the framework of a governance and human rights programme.

Thus, in the first phase of our Good Governance and Human Rights Programme (GGHRP I: 2003-2008), Danida together with DFID, CIDA and the Netherlands in a pooled funding mechanism supported civil society through the Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme (G-RAP). Main activities included capacity building of research and advocacy groups through the provision of core institutional support, support to engage in policy dialogue and to monitor the poverty reduction strategy. Danida also provided direct support to community based organizations through a component managed by IBIS, which dealt with issues of community development and participation; women’s rights and empowerment; and empowerment, awareness and advocacy for the poor.

Under the second phase of the Good Governance and Human Rights Programme (GGHRP II: 2009-2013), Danida funded a pilot project implemented by the Media Foundation for West Africa and the Ghana Journalist Association. Activities included undertaking studies on Ghanaian media and journalism; on-the-job and tailor-made theoretical training for journalists and the management team of ten local radio stations and six newspapers in investigative journalism, critical interviewing skills, Ghanaian legislation, public financial management, etc. Support to media and the press was later merged into a multi-donor pooled-funding mechanism – Strengthening Transparency Accountability and Responsiveness (STAR), Ghana – supported by Danida and other donors including DFID, EU and USAID. STAR Ghana was established to increase the influence of civil society and Parliament in the governance of public goods and service delivery. Main activities included advocacy efforts in several sectors/themes including education, elections, health, oil & gas, democratic governance, access to justice, media, gender equality and social inclusion, sustainability, strategic opportunities, anti-corruption and local governance. CSOs (grant partners) were contracted based on reviews of their submitted proposals. STAR provided technical assistance to the Parliamentary Committees and the Parliamentary Service to strengthen their capacities and increase the quality of their work.

Danida continued support to civil society under its Right to Services and Good Governance Programme (RSGGP: 2014-2018) and through the second phase of STAR Ghana (STAR 2: 2015-2020). STAR 2 continued with some activities from STAR 1 including setting up of effective strategic partnerships with policy level organisations and launching calls for proposals in elections, gender equality and social inclusion, anticorruption and local governance. The main objective of STAR 2 is to establish STAR Ghana as a self-sustaining, wholly Ghanaian, corporate entity, so as to ensure its continuation after development assistance.

A new programme to support civil society organisations and think tanks in the area of anti-corruption, peace, decentralisation and economic and political analyses was launched in 2019 and continues until 2022 (DKK 10 million).

**Results and Key Achievements**

The Joint Evaluation of the Ghana-Denmark Development Cooperation (1996-2000) noted that, to a large extent, Danida’s capacity building support helped to strengthen civil society. The Evaluation of the Ghana–Denmark Partnership (2007-2017) also noted that support to civil society was where Danida – in collaboration with other likeminded DPs – had left the most significant mark. Citizens are becoming more active and CSOs are also increasingly being consulted by policy-makers when important policy changes are being considered. CSOs’ campaigns and involvement in the policy making process and the development of new laws have produced good results in areas such as mining royalties, free secondary education, health insurance and free maternal health among others. CSOs were for example instrumental in the development of the Domestic Violence Act and the Persons with Disabilities Act, which were major achievements on controversial and difficult subjects. The Thematic Evaluation of Support by Danish NGOs to Civil Society (October 2009) undertaken by the Nordic Consulting Group noted that policy think tanks, human rights organisations, and women’s rights groups in Ghana were important public opinion makers who provided research to inform the public debate and decision makers.

**Lessons Learned**

The Evaluation of the Ghana–Denmark Partnership (2007-2017) noted that sustainability of support to civil society is seen as a serious concern as CSOs in Ghana are heavily dependent on external donor financing. Currently, the absence of core institutional support (as pertained under GRAP), has limited CSOs ability to produce research and to sustain more evidence-based campaigns for social and political change. Development partner funding under the newly created STAR Ghana Foundation – a fully Ghanaian owned and managed facility which replaced STAR 2 – will continue until 2020 when all DP support is envisaged to be phased out. In addition, gender-related targets and indicators need to be built into the design of any CSO support since CSOs competence at developing gender strategies and incorporating them into their work cannot be assumed.

**Links**

* Evaluation of the Ghana-Denmark Partnership 2007-2017 (2018): <http://danida-publikationer.dk/publikationer/publikationsdetaljer.aspx?PId=8c80db97-19aa-4f83-858a-ee1189f4033d>
* Joint Evaluation of the Ghana-Denmark Development Co-operation 1990-2006 (2017): <https://um.dk/en/danida-en/results/eval/Eval_reports/publicationdisplaypage/?publicationID=78EEFD4A-6547-4CB8-A628-C0C3981817E1>
* Documentation study ‘Pioneering Democracy’ (2018): <https://ghana.um.dk/en/News/newsdisplaypage/?newsID=24DECCDC-9A56-442B-B891-078D07EA63AD>
* Thematic Evaluation of Support by Danish NGO’s to Civil Society in Ghana and Ethiopia (2009): <http://um.dk/en/danida-en/results/eval/Eval_reports/publicationdisplaypage/?publicationID=72108D57-FE49-4A76-9683-654AF726B66D>