

“STRATEGIC YOUTH NETWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT” [SYND]

VISION: *“To be recognized nationally and internationally as a model youth network leader in Youth Development & Empowerment as our vehicle for securing the future of the youth”*



SAVE “ASHALADJA COMMUNITY” PROJECT

THEMATIC AREAS OF WORK:

- YOUTH AND EMPLOYMENT
- YOUTH AND HEALTH
- YOUTH IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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I. ABOUT ASHALADJA

Ashaladja Community is located at the Ga South District of the Greater Accra region in Ghana.

Ashaladja community is under the good leadership of Nii Adams Addy, Head of the Akwanor family and his Elders. It is about 1 hour 30 minutes drive from Accra, the capital city and is believed to have over 7,000 people with Ga been the predominant language. It is situated at a vantage section which connects or leads to the Central, Eastern and Western regions of Ghana thereby providing an opportunity for traders and

merchants to engage in various business or commercial activities across the regions which among others radiates communal efforts of hope for growth and development.

However, even though it has a serene environment with virtually no productive activity, Ashaladja visibly shows signs of poverty like other deprived communities.



II. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. To demonstrate SYND's commitment to and support for community development and empowerment
2. To foster strategic partnerships with the Chief, Elders and People (especially the youth) of Ashaladja community for good citizenship collaboration
3. To support government's efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by eradicating poverty, enhancing good health and ensuring environmental sustainability
4. To partner with all stakeholders for the provision of community facilities such as clinics, markets, public toilets, training and senior high schools as well as community centres.

III. STATE OF ASHALADJA COMMUNITY

Ashaladja community has been confronted with a host of challenges which is increasingly affecting the people of the community. Some of the very eminent challenges are as follows:

1. Water – The people of Ashaladja do not have access to pipe borne water. Indeed they depend on a river that flows through the community. They rely on the river for washing clothes, bathing and even cooking. Interestingly, there is no farming activity in the community despite this source of water. The main reason being that any time the Weija dam (a dam in the constituency) is opened to release excess water; it overflows the river banks including the walkways thereby destroying crops and/or trees in the process.



2. Schools

Primary School:

Educational facilities or infrastructure in Ashaladja are not very encouraging. Unfortunately, the only primary school in the whole community has been poorly built and has deteriorated. The classrooms have no tables and chairs. Pupils are compelled to sit on stones for academic work. This obviously is not a conducive environment for good education thus jeopardizing the future of these promising children. Until a drastic measure is taken, the achievement of Goal 2 of the MDGs, that is, enhancing universal primary education may be defeated.



This portion of the primary is an outcome of a demonstration staged by the people against the authorities. Why? It was in protest against the undue delay in completing a new primary school they claimed has been abandoned.



Below are pictures of the allegedly abandoned primary school facility that infuriated the community members



Junior High School:

Again, Ashaladja can boast of only one Junior High School which is the only completed educational facility in the whole community.



Pictures of the highest educational institution in the community

Senior High School:

Unfortunately, there is no senior high school in the community. Students who want to further their education after completing Junior High School are expected to travel some kilometers to other communities to access education. Parents who cannot afford transportation cost in addition to school fees are forced to end the education of their children regardless of how brilliant they may be. Moreover, there are no training schools such as technical and vocational institutions.

This means that if the youth of this community are not well educated, the rate of illiteracy is likely to catapult astronomically thereby threatening the future of the people in this ever growing competitive world.

NB: Pictures of the schools were taken when they were on vacation

3. Public Toilet – Another major issue is the lack of public toilet or place of convenience. Most people who do not have such facilities at home resort to the use of the bush as place of convenience. This attitude has an inevitable health consequence to the people of Ashaladja not to mention diseases such as Cholera and Diarrhea. However, the only place of convenience visibly seen is situated near the Junior High School which could mean that it is for the use of the students.



The only visible public toilet

4. Unemployment – Unemployment is a severe cankerworm in the community primarily due to lack of facilities that will empower the people with skills, knowledge and abilities. As long as education only ends at the Junior High School level, illiteracy is surely on the high side. It is common to see strong and healthy young men and women dissipating their time and energy on unproductive ventures. This arguably has led to rampant teenage pregnancy in the community. Most of the young men and women move to the city centres to engage in available job opportunities or search for jobs.

As indicated earlier, though there is a river available for agricultural practices, it has not been possible because occasionally the river overflows its boundaries thereby destroying plants and any other thing that stands its way.



All these areas get flooded including the path way when the Weija dam is opened

5. Clinic – Again, there is not even one health centre in the community posing a very critical life threat to the people. If one becomes very sick, then it requires an emergency rush to other communities with clinics or health facilities. Should there be any avoidable delay, death becomes extremely inevitable. Diseases like Malaria, Tuberculosis, Cholera, Measles, Typhoid Fever, HIV AIDS, etc which are preventable rather affect the people adversely. Therefore Maternal/Infant/Child Mortality rate may be high thus defeating the health targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

6. Market – Additionally, There are no markets in the community thus giving few traders the room to exploit the poor people by trading at exorbitant prices of goods and services.

7. Police Station – As long as lawlessness, social vices and deviant behaviors are inevitable in any human society, the need for a police station in a community to ensure law and order cannot be over emphasized. Indeed the Chief and his Elders have provided bags of cement and iron rods for this purpose but need financial assistance to build a police station.

8. Community centre – The community furthermore lacks a community centre where the people can commute to strengthen their solidarity and forge towards the welfare of their community. Forinstance, availability of library and sports facilities are necessary for the development and growth of people especially the youth.

9. Waste Management – Wastes are not well disposed in the community which can pose a serious threat to the health of the people should an epidemic break out.



IV. WAY FORWARD: PROCEDURES & METHODS

Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND) has adopted Ashaladja Community in the Ga South District as its project site in consultation with the Chief and His Elders.

SYND shall facilitate all development activities in the community by appealing to potential partners to come to the aid of the community. Potential partners include:

- Government Agencies/Institutions
- Development Agencies (World Bank Institute, UN Agencies, British Council etc)
- Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)
- Faith Based Organisations (FBOs)
- Community Based Organisations (CBOs)
- Private Sector
- Researchers
- Philanthropists
- Volunteers (both local, national and international)

SYND will appreciate the opportunity to welcome all partners to visit and tour the community with the Chief and His Elders so as to obtain first hand information on the state of the community.



Youth leaders of Ashaladja



From Left to Right (Ibrahim Coker, Project Coordinator of SYND; Nii Adams Addy, Chief of Ashaladja; Chibeze Ezekiel, Executive Coordinator of SYND and Elders of Ashaladja

V. ASHALADJA COMMUNITY'S COMMITMENT

With all this challenges confronting the Ashaladja community, the indigenes have made some thriving efforts to help ameliorate the already highlighted problems such as:

1. The people have made an attempt to construct a primary school beginning with the foundation



Foundation of the primary school built by the community

2. Efforts have been made to provide descent water to the people. A huge water reservoir has been constructed to help store water drown from a borehole though they claim it's unpleasant to drink.



The only water tank reservoir that serves the whole community

3. Ashaladja is a religious community embracing all forms of religion but predominantly been Christians and Moslems



The only uncompleted church building by Christ Apostolic Church (CAC)



The only mosque building

4. The Community has also made available cement blocks and iron rods for the construction of a police station.
5. The Chief has indicated the need to make lands available for the construction of the facilities that are required in the community such as public toilet, clinic, market, schools, and community centres.
6. Not only has the Chief and his Elders made accommodation facilities available for individuals, groups or researchers who may want to work in the community, there is a land available to build a homestead facility for such purpose.

VI. MONITORING & EVALUATION

SYND shall present detailed (narrative and financial) reports to all Partners/Donors on the progress of the community's development.

Moreover, personnel or representatives of Partners/Donors can participate in the development process to help ensure that the goals/objectives of particular activities are been met.

Detailed Monitoring & Evaluation systems will ultimately be implemented based on recommendations or format from Donors/Partners.

VII. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

All projects in the community will involved the active participation of the Ashaladja people. Schools, public toilets, markets etc shall be managed by the people and facilitated by SYND to ensure accountability and good governance.

Where technical or specific skills are required, some selected people of Ashaladja shall be trained to manage these facilities. Proceeds from such facilities shall be ploughed back into the development of Ashaladja

VIII. ORGANIZATION'S CORPORATE PROFILE

Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND) is a registered youth-based civil society organization in Ghana which focuses primarily on the development and empowerment of the youth through a strong network system.

Vision

To be recognized nationally and internationally as a model youth network leader in youth development & empowerment as a vehicle for securing the future of the youth

Objectives

- To actively involve youth in poverty reduction and wealth creation opportunities through diverse employment initiatives
- To advocate and ensure youth participation in enhancing environmental sustainability through pragmatic initiatives
- To promote good health through preventive measures
- To build and manage research activities focusing on youth
- To engage the youth immensely in activities leading to the achievement of the MDGs

Values

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Diversity
- Excellence
- Creativity

Our approach

We address the subject of youth development by taking into consideration two important aspects – extrinsic and intrinsic factors.

Intrinsic factors suggest that we deal directly with youth as individuals through various outreach programs or initiatives. We enable youth to discover and develop their talents through several stages which are based on key leadership principles.

Extrinsic factors deals with the environment in which the youth find themselves. We provide opportunity for the youth to contribute meaningfully in decision-making processes and government policies that directly or indirectly affect them. We conduct research in various aspects concerning youth for the attention of development partners, donors, civil society organizations and governments, which are critical for global development.

Management profile

SYND is governed by a Board of Governors made up of individuals with different knowledge, skills, and experiences helpful for youth development. The Board conducts strategic planning and work plan development for the organization. The Executive and Country Representatives of SYND prioritize and execute work plan activities within the available resources. They constitute individuals with specialized expertise to carry out organizational projects and activities. When necessary and appropriate, voluntary workers contribute to the organizations short and long-term initiatives.

Structure

SYND is run by a management team made up of Board of Governors and an Executive Council.

The Governing Board:

- Mr. Albert Rockson III (Administrative Director, ICGC) – Chairman
- Mr. Alan Okomeng-Mensah (Director, Ecobuild Consult Ltd)
- Mr. David Vanderpuye-Orgle (Director, Vanderpuye-Orgle Estates Ltd)
- Madam Laila Boafo-Foleson (International Affairs Head, Central University College)
- Justice Sophia Akuffo (Supreme Court, Ghana).

The Executive Council constitutes:

- Chibeze Sunday Ezekiel (Founder and Executive Coordinator)
 - Edna Afi Aflapkui (National Coordinator)
 - Vanessa Ruth Agbenyoh (Finance & Administrative Coordinator)
 - Gloria Obeng-Mensah (Public Relations Coordinator)
 - Ibrahim Coker (Programs/Projects Coordinator)
- Volunteers (regardless of their background, education, age, location, nationality etc) are involved in our activities.

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