

HATOF Foundation



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REPORT OF INCEPTION AND TRAINING WORKSHOP ON MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS IN ACCRA DATE: APRIL, 27, 2017 UNDP CONFERENCE ROOM, ACCRA



Introduction

The inception and training workshop is the beginning of a one year capacity building activity undertaken by HATOF Foundation under the project “*Capacity Development and Knowledge Management for Civil Society Organizations towards the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and national and sub-national policy, planning and legal frameworks*” and with sponsorship from the GEFSGP Ghana.

Starting at 10:30am with a prayer from Sandra Aku from the Small Grants Programme, the workshop saw about 42 of the participants from across the Greater Accra, Western, Northern and Brong-Ahafo Regions of Ghana who adopted the following agenda.

- Opening prayer
- Self-introduction
- Opening Remarks by SGP Coordinator
- Presentations & Discussions
- Capacity Needs Assessment
- Closing Remarks

After the adoption of the agenda, the facilitator, Mary Jane Enchill welcomed participants to the workshop and had participants introduce themselves and shared their expectations for the workshop.

Opening Remarks

In his opening remarks, the National Coordinator of Small Grants Programme, Dr. George Ortsin acknowledged and appreciated the presence of the participants and commended them for the positive response and importance attached to the workshop. He mentioned that in view of the challenges and opportunities associated with sustainable development and in keeping with its international obligations and international diplomacy, Ghana has ratified a number of Multilateral Environmental Agreements which jointly seek to bridge the gap between economic development and environmental conservation. However a review of the implementations of the various conventions and the national policies identified gaps, issues and of which the civil society are kept in darkness.

Dr. Ortsin also mentioned fragmentation of environmental civil society organizations in Ghana and limited capacity and knowledge to access funds as some of the reason the CSOs fraternity do not constitute any force that is able to dialogue with government and development partners in multilateral environmental agreements and to ensuring the effective implementation of national policies and plans. Therefore in order to respond to these challenges and to support MESTI in coordinating and harmonizing the various initiatives and strategies operating under the different conventions, the SGP providing technical and financial support to HATOF Foundation to connect technical expertise from the government institutions with environment CSOs to address some of the environmental challenges. He therefore urged participants to brass themselves for the tasked ahead and to support the implementation of the project by making themselves available to be trained to effectively engage at the national and continental level.

Presentations

The project coordinator, Samuel Dotse in his introduction to the presentation added that SGP funded this project to mobilise the CSOs to ensure better coordination and

management of Ghana's environment and the natural resources because the fund shares in the fact that through CSOs especially the GEFCSO network, there are opportunities to promote community involvement in the implementation of the conventions. Hence the purpose of the workshop was to;

1. Raise awareness of project among GEFCSO Network Members and SGP Grantees to spark interest and get them ready for the implementation of the project, to revive the GEFCSO network and support non-GEFCSO members to register under GEF-CSO Network
2. Identify capacity needs of CSOs in the national policy planning, and MEAs space
3. Share information on membership criteria into GEFCSO Network and
4. Conduct training in advocacy skills and tools for CSOs and citizens' groups to build their capacity for advocacy and policy dialogue with MMDAs.

Samuel Dotse in his first presentation, walked participants through activities approved under the project indicating their role and what is expected of them to make the implementation a success. This was to as indicated above to raise awareness of project among GEFCSO Network Members and SGP Grantees and other CSOs to get them ready for the implementation of the project.



The second presentation was on Global Environment Facility. At this point, Samuel provided detailed information about the operations of the fund and shared information on membership criteria into GEFCSO network to support SGP grantees interested to register with the network to understand the application procedure and the accompanying materials to secure their membership.

The third presentation was on advocacy skills and tools for CSOs and citizens' groups to build their capacity for advocacy and policy dialogue with MMDAs. Participants received training on rights-based advocacy and skills and tools for policy dialogue so they can confidently engage the policy makers, represent the views and opinions of their communities, effectively influence policy making and advocate for the rights of communities. This presentation also aimed to engender solution-focused conversations around MEA awareness creation and advocacy efforts among CSOs. The training briefly touched on:

- How to develop a strong coherent and targeted CSO advocacy campaign to demand action on MEAs
- Identification of bottlenecks that exist in the implementation of MEAs
- Tools to conduct research survey on policy issues
- Information on communities' rights to environment and natural resource services
- Understanding the role of civil society in local policy making
- Policy making processes and cycles

- Range of rights-based advocacy skills and policy dialogue tools and how to use them to engage with policy makers Public Opinion Polling, People Centred Advocacy, Public Dialogue (e.g. Public Hearings and Poverty Hearings), Participatory Policy-making, Public Revenue Reporting and Monitoring, Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation.



- Advocating and negotiating effectively in a policy making process
- Designing a policy advocacy action

Techniques in developing a strong coherent and targeted CSO advocacy campaign to demand action on MEAs were identified as follows;

- Aim to know the relevant MEAs inside out
- Start with a plan
- Develop your messages
- Form (or strengthen) your networks
- Lobby the decision makers
- Build support from the public
- Engage with the media
- Ensure local voices are heard
- Make sure promises are kept

Bottle necks in the implementation of MEAs identified include; Lack of adequate understanding and poor integration of MEAs in especially district level plans and programmes as well as weak/non enforcement of rules, regulations and laws appear to be overarching challenge to MEA implementation. WHY?

- Limited resources (administrative and financial capacities and technological means to implement MEAs remain major issue for the Africa countries);
- Weak national level environmental governance system (e.g. Has ESIA being effective, How about Ghana's Natural Resource Environmental Governance (NREG) structures)
- Ineffective coordination and collaboration between institutions (EPA and District Environmental Committee,
- Country socio-economic situation/characteristics that undermine the implementation process (poverty and natural resource-dependent dominated population)
- Capacity challenged-non-state actors including CSOs (How are CSOs addressing their capacity challenges?)

Participants received brief information on the following relevant tools to conduct research survey on policy issues;

- Stakeholder Consultation and Analysis
- Focus Group Discussions
- Triangle Analysis
- POCC/SWOT Analysis
- Influence Mapping

This training is expected to continue throughout the entire project period (2018) to have majority of CSOs abreast of the tools for their advocacy work.

Capacity Needs Assessment

In order to ensure that Network members and other CSOs have access to relevant information, training, events and funding opportunities, and to providing meaningful and relevant support to individual NGO's for their climate change activities, a capacity needs assessment was undertaken to identify the needs and gaps as well as opportunities for capacity building of NGOs. The needs assessment report identified seven areas that need capacity building regarding to Multilateral Environmental Agreement and national policy planning and legal framework. These were: information sharing; accessing funds from donors, government and private sector; training to increase MEAs knowledge; training in comprehensive project design; onsite experience of project activities; comprehensive policy advice and increased research and analysis capacity. The assessment identified the skills, knowledge, and tools that members require in order to effectively engage in MEAs and national policy planning dialogue as well as develop and implement successful adaptation and mitigation projects and contribute effectively to the broader debate and response to climate change in Ghana.

Closing Remarks

MaryJane Enchill closed the workshop by thanking participants for joining in creating a successful inception workshop and informed that findings of the capacity needs assessment will be made available to them and be taken into consideration by the project team in developing or formulating a comprehensive and targeted training programme to address the needs identified. Participants were urged to look forward to subsequent trainings up until December 2018.

