

Abibinsroma Foundation and GCAP Ghana Report on People's Assembly to Mark Global Week of Action 2021

GCAP Ghana with its partners across Ghana organized 3 major campaign activities on the 17th and 27th September, 2021 in Greater Accra to mark Global Week of Action on the theme: **“Social Protection within the Context of The SDGs and COVID-19”**.

The events brought together the voices of women, youth, marginalized groups from the district, regional and national level and provided them with a unique opportunity for the participating groups to deliberate on issues of poverty, inequalities, climate change, human rights and COVID 19 and to know what is going on and make a passionate call to their leaders and local authorities on issues that affect them.

Some of the activities implemented during the global week of action include:

1. People Assemble/National Policy Dialogue/Townhall meeting
2. School campaign
3. Market Women Campaign

To kick start the commemoration of Global Week of Action, Abibinsroma Foundation and GCAP Ghana issued a press release on the 23rd September, 2021 with copies of the press release made available to all media houses present and as well published in the national newspapers, social media platforms and online portals.

The first activity took place in the conference of Tema metropolitan Assembly in Tema, the harbor city. In an opening statement, Mrs. Grace Naa Kortoi Amoah, on behalf of GCAP Ghana, observed that, “as the pandemic exacerbates multiple crises in developing countries, special delivery rights are a crucial option to help finance the COVID-19 response and hasten an equitable and inclusive economic recovery”.

According to Mrs. Amoah, in order for the G20 Finance Ministers, Central Bank Governors, and the International Monetary Funds, to have a successful and equitable recovery from the pandemic, there is the need for a transparent and participatory process, which should include representatives of civil society organizations in all countries.

She also urges world leaders to ensure that Special Drawing Right (SDR) channelling options align with a basic framework of principles that many academics, experts and civil society colleagues around the world echoed over recent months are fully pursued. She said it was essential that the recent allocation be followed by redirecting a significant portion of the SDRs of advanced economies to developing countries.

In a power point presentation, Mr. Kenneth Amoateng, West Africa Coordinator of GCAP and Abibinsroma Foundation highlighted the importance of a stronger network like GCAP with a united front to give voice to marginalized groups to get involved on issues that affect them demand accountability from their leaders.

According to Mr. Amoateng, in as much as Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT) were being considered as a favoured option for SDRs channelling, PRGT did not reflect the principles of being debt-free, conditionality free and accessible to all developing countries.

He therefore called for ways to improve PRGT option, including channelling resources through its emergency finance vehicle which was the Rapid Credit Facility.

In a statement by Mr. Benjamin Lartey, GCAP Ghana, called on developed countries to target vaccination of about 60 per cent of persons in the world, and break the shackles of intellectual property on vaccines and COVID-19 knowledge.

Mr. Lartey also suggested large investment of public money to manufacture more vaccine doses around the world, provide Covid-19 vaccines, treatments and tests free of charge, and scale up global financial support for upgrading and expanding public health systems.

In the Plenary, participants present at the People Assembly called upon Governments to give better opportunities to marginalised groups such as women and children by investing adequately in Education, Health and Economic activities of women.

The participants also noted that the need for equal access to COVID-19 Vaccines irrespective of class, religion or tribe. The event created awareness about GCAP activities and showcase the power of united voice and used the Global week of action as an opportunity for their voice to be heard both nationally and globally.

As part of GCAP Ghana activities to marked Global Week of Action, continued with Market Women hearing tour on the streets of Ashaiman Market with hundreds of market women in attendance. This was used as another platform to engaged greater section of the Ghana Population (Market women) who are mostly affected by national issues and often left behind. It provided the market women the opportunity to be empowered through the local language about issues on climate change, inequalities and human rights.

They showed so much interest in the programme and urged GCAP Ghana to continue with such engagements with them in the future in a simplified way using the language for easy understanding of the issues hence, makes it easier to contribute meaningfully towards the betterment of their lives and livelihood and also enable them to be abreast with national and global issues.

The Market women hearing tour ended with pledges from the women propagate the message of equality in all forms so that they can all live in dignified lived.

The Global Week of Action ended with an activity dubbed School campaigns on SDGs held in Mataheko D/A Basic School focused on the role young people have made since the operational implementation of the SDGs whiles talking about the achievements over the years, young people are also even demanding for more greater equality and participation in discussions of national and global issues.

The ultimate objective of the activity was to create a platform for school children to learn about the SDGs and aspire to play a significant role in the development agenda in their localities and become champions of SDGs in their schools and by extension their communities.

All the activities organized to mark Global Week of Action attracted 500 hundred civil society organizations, young people, local authorities and market women.

You can read more publication about the GCAP Ghana Global Week of Action activities via Developing countries need more resources to fight COVID-19 - GCAP <https://www.gna.org.gh/1.21204745>

How are you working to ensure that harder to reach or more marginalised people's experiences and voices are part of your national event/activity?

AbibiNsroma Foundation work closely in partnership with network members of GCAP Ghana and other civil society organizations, youth groups, community base organization and the media. GCAP Ghana/ AbibiNsroma Foundation undertake it activities at the rural and peri-urban areas through it members and this is used as a platform and an opportunity to engage and empowered grassroots movements and activist who leverage on the experiences and knowledge acquired during our community sensitization programs to serve as champions or goodwill ambassadors to speak up and bring the attention of pertinent issues affecting their communities to the attention of the GCAP Ghana/ AbibiNsroma Foundation. The concerns or issues affecting the marginalised groups in the communities or areas our members operate are discussed extensively and included in our campaign activities at the national level. Some of the medium we used to table their concerns to draw government attention or to demand accountability include:

- Press release
- Engagement with parliamentary select committee
- Local Government
- Petitions

Currently due to COVID-19 our activities have been limited hence, we relied on zoom platform as the medium for our engagements with marginalised groups through our network members to bring issues affecting them to the fore. GCAP Ghana/ AbibiNsroma Foundation used community radio as a platform to engage community members to call in and draw our attention to specific issues affecting them related to climate change, gender inequality, human rights and poverty.

How are you planning to see that the outcomes and lessons learned from your event/activity make it back to the local level?

GCAP Ghana/ AbibiNsroma Foundation is constantly in touch with the grassroots through our flagship program call Community tribunal and this platform is used as the medium to empower members of the community and as well provide feedback on outcomes of national activities. The flagship program makes it easier to disseminate information to the grassroots and also give them the opportunity to make inputs for our success, challenges and propose solutions. This gives them a sense of ownership and allow them to continue to do advocacy at the local level to demand accountability from their local authorities.

In what way were people involved in the design, planning and evaluation of your national event? / What were people's contribution to the design, planning and implementation of your event.

GCAP Ghana/ AbibiNsroma Foundation set up a Planning Committee with the responsibility to meet with the zonal focal persons to organized-person to allow broader consultation and increased participation of like-minded organizations. In summary, the organizing team hold the events in 2 separate venues because of distance to ensure all-inclusive in person participation across the country hence, ensuring no one is left behind. Each participating organization nominated 1 representative to participate in the event from their zone and proposed issue/topic that they wish to discussed during the national people Assembly bearing in mind that it should be in line with the objective of the Global Week of Action. Opportunity was also giving to representatives of organizations present to speak so that decision arrived at is binding on all. This ensured that all voices heard were duly documented. GCAP Ghana/ AbibiNsroma Foundation feedback from the grassroots was encouraging and very excited about their level of participation during the event.

How did you ensure that people are aware of and understand your event, its objectives, themes and envisioned outcomes?

GCAP Ghana/ AbibiNsroma Foundation created awareness through its zonal focal persons and also through the community radio, WhatsApp platform and the media. The publicity was communicated using the local languages especially with the use of the community radio. This made understanding of the issues easier and enable them to contribute meaningfully towards the outcomes of the event.

As part of sharing and enlightening the people, there was formal presentation of the objective of the people Assembly and expected outcome by the organizing team/moderator, people shared their expectations, there was open session/plenary and group discussions. A repertoire took notes to ensure all points were capture by the participating people and review of it after every session for corrections to be made and captured to ensure we come out with documented report or policy document that can be used for advocacy campaigns.

How have you considered the diversity and inclusion of people in the planning and execution of the activity?

Through organizations, pressure groups and grassroots. We ensure that actors present are representing minorities such as the local peoples. To ensure more inclusiveness, the following institutions/organization were involved in all the process:

1. Academic institutions
2. Students/youth groups
3. Media
4. local and national authorities
5. NGOs/CSOs
6. Disable people
7. Women groups