

## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE REPORT (PHASE I)

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## 1. Introduction

Literacy Bridge Ghana (LBG) and Net Organisation for Youth Empowerment and Development (NOYED-Ghana) have been working on the UNICEF Communication for Development (C4D) Talking Book (TB) Programme in the Tolon and the Karaga Districts in the Northern region of Ghana. Two (2) months contract was signed in August between the two organisations (September – October), for the conduct of community dialogues in these two districts.

This report details out the dialogue sessions carried out in the communities for the first month of the contract. Even though there were challenges, significant successes were made. In total, NOYED-Ghana’s team carried out the dialogue sessions in 14 and 12 communities in Karaga and Tolon districts respectfully. In all, about One Thousand Fifty-Seven (1,057) community members made up of matured, adolescent and children of both sexes participated in the dialogues.

## 2. Demographic characteristics of participants

The Table below (Table1) shows the demographic characteristics of communities and their members who participated in the Community Dialogue Sessions in the two districts.

In all, one thousand and fifty-seven (1057) people participated in the community dialogues in 26 communities (14 and 12 respectfully for Karaga and Tolon). Of this number, majority of them are women (386), followed by men (347) and children (167). The adolescents constitute the least in terms of representation in the community dialogue process.

**Table 1. Demographic data of respondents**

S/N	DISTRICT	COMMUNITY	CHILDREN (0-9)	ADOLESCENT (10-19)		ELDERLY (20+)		TOTAL
				M	F	M	F	
1	TOLON	Vawagri	10	10	5	23	22	70
2	TOLON	Grugu	12	8	3	22	19	64
3	TOLON	Ngaba	10	5	3	3	18	39
4	TOLON	Walshei	8	5	3	8	12	36
5	TOLON	Kpalsogukura	18	4	12	14	18	66
6	TOLON	Gundu	0	4	0	7	9	20
7	TOLON	Munya	3	6	2	11	13	35
8	TOLON	Kaa	6	4	0	12	10	32
9	TOLON	Tampia	0	0	0	10	12	22
10	TOLON	Lingbunga	8	10	4	18	16	56
11	TOLON	Walmogli	6	8	6	12	12	44
12	TOLON	Walla	4	8	0	13	6	31

13	KARAGA	Tamalgu	2	7	1	13	8	31
14	KARAGA	Tignayili	7	0	0	11	25	43
15	KARAGA	Zankali	11	5	2	13	5	36
16	KARAGA	Malgunayili	6	10	1	7	14	38
17	KARAGA	Bagurugu	5	2	2	15	22	46
18	KARAGA	Nyong-Guma	2	0	0	29	8	39
19	KARAGA	Kunang	3	3	0	10	30	46
20	KARAGA	Tuyini	11	5	3	12	30	61
21	KARAGA	Sung	17	7	0	22	38	84
22	KARAGA	Kpataribogu	5	1	0	17	21	44
23	KARAGA	Gorgu	5	0	0	16	9	30
24	KARAGA	Kpalani	2	0	0	13	3	18
25	KARAGA	Didogi	4	0	0	16	6	26
26	KARAGA	Botingli***	0	0	0	0	0	0
		<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>1057</b>

\*\*\* Statistics could not be taken due to rain

### 3. Access to Talking Books (TB)

Majority of the participants indicated that they have access to the TBs. They indicated that the TBs are given to them by the agents and they stay in their households for a week before the agents come for them. They also added that the agents give them new batteries when they are handing over the TBs to them.

Since farming is the major occupation for the majority of the respondents, they indicated that they listen to the TBs mostly in the evening, after supper. Majority also indicated that they listen to the TBs with their families and household members. Responding to the question when they listen the TBs, the Chief of Vawagri, a community in the Tolon district said:

***“... We are farmers. As such, we are free during the evenings. I listen to the TB in the evening with my household members.”***

#### 4. Familiarity with the TB and Recording of Feedback:

Our discussions with the communities also sort find out the extent to which they are familiar with



**A lady demonstrating how to record feedback in the TB**

the TBs and their ability to register their feedback on the TBs. The community members indicated that they have become used to the TBs. A few persons were called up to demonstrate or navigate to various theme/topics/messages and recording and they did that very well. The picture attached, is a lady in Ngaba community in the Tolon district demonstrating how to move to recording on the TB.

Still on familiarity and recordings, some of the participants had the following to say:

***“The TB has become part of our daily source of information; it is more reliable and easier to access” -A participants in Lingbunga in the Tolon District.***

Another participant at Nyong-Guma in the Karaga District stated:

***“.. the TB gives us the opportunity to record our feedback and to register our disapproval on some of the issues being raised”.***

The participants indicated that they are able to record feedback into the TBs. However, some of the community members complained that their questions and concerns have not been addressed. For example, at Grugu in the Tolon District, a man remarked that

***“... I asked a question concerning the behavior changes we find difficult to adopt. In this community, the ground is hard. We find it difficult to dig deep. So, what can you do to help us stop open defecation?”.***

In our observations during the interactions, we are convinced that there is familiarity. They are also happy with the introductions to the messages in the TBs. For example, **“Kpataribogu!! Amarhaba”** Meaning, **“Kpataribogu!! Welcome or welcome to Kpataribogu”** Such a strategy is really strategic and should be continued.

## 5. Content Listened to and Practiced



***An Opinion Leader making a point on content listened to. Ngaba, Tolon district***

Most of the participants showed so much interest in the contents of the Talking Books. The most listened to content as revealed by the community dialogues so far is the **Handwashing**. Most of the participants indicated that the TBs have inculcated in them and their households the need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet, before and after eating, as well as before cooking. The Imam at Walshei in the Tolon District stated noted:

***“... before the introduction of the TBs, I used not to pay attention to the tip-tap, but now I can use it. I have it in front of my house now.”***

Further, the participants also indicated that they have listened to messages on open defecation. The people of Malgunayili in the Karaga District stated that the TBs complemented towards their community being declared as an Open Defecation Free (ODF) community. The community was part of the district assembly’s Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) initiative. They have been able to construct more latrines through the engagement or messages they heard from the TB.



***A woman using Tip-Tap after visiting the latrine.***

Additionally, the participants listened to the message on education (completion of Basic Education). They indicated that they have received the message well and taken note of the content. One of the participants in Grugu in the Tolon District indicated;

***“there is a song that tells us that we need to provide things like pencils, pens, books, and so on to our children to enable them complete their education successfully”.***

Other participants indicated they have listened to information on child protection and the need to sleep in Insecticide Mosquito Nets to avoid malaria.

## **6. Challenges with Some Behavior Changes**

Discussing with the communities on behaviors they found challenging adopting, it was revealed that participants find the use of latrines as opposed to open defecation a bit challenging to them. Their challenge is not the use as such, but being able to put up a latrine with ease that can stand the test of time. The people of Gorgu in the Tolon District complained that their topography is stony/rocky and therefore, they are unable to dig deep into the soil. The latrines constructed are therefore not able to serve their households for that long, forcing them to engage in open defecation. The people of Walshei and Vawagri, both in the Tolon District also complained that the latrines they constructed are being destroyed due to the heavy downpours since most of their structures are built with mud.

In Karaga, specifically in Didogi, a participant mentioned:

***“I have stopped digging the latrine in for my house. On two occasions, it collapsed because of the muddy nature of our land”.***

Others also mentioned that termites eat up the woods they use in constructing the latrines. Some people also complained that the tools they use to dig are not sharp and hard enough to dig deep.



**Director of NOYED-Ghana holding device meant for digging latrines**

In Vawagri, they also mentioned that the tools they use in digging are not strong and heavy enough to break through the rocks and stones. In this picture is the director of NOYED-Ghana, holding the tool they use in digging which they claim is not heavy enough.

The issue of early marriages also got mentioned during the community dialogue. Participants complained that these days, parents do not force to marry their girls out, but rather, the girls go after the guys and force their parents to marry them off. Failure to do so they say will result in shameful premarital pregnancy. They are so worried about this and keep thinking of how to address it.

Corporal punishment was also mentioned as a practice they cannot stop. They mentioned they will try as much as possible to reduce it but to stop completely is not possible. When asked why, the concerns that came included the fact the environment under which they nurture their children will allow them. Some mentioned that the children get too troublesome sometimes.

A Participant in Sung in the Karaga district noted:

***“If you say you child should go to school and he refuses, let’s go to farm, he says no, do this, he says no but just interested in playing about and following bad friends, you will have no option but to beat him up. I’m sure you yourself will not accept such a behavior”***

Early education was also raised and factors attributed their challenge is the fact that some of them do not have kindergarten classes in their communities, others do not female teachers who can take care of the kids.

## **7. Other Service Providers in the Community**

Claiming complete ownership of a success or a change through one’s intervention is becoming a thing of the past due to multiple inventions by other partners. It is however fair that one has a little understanding or knowledge on other partners who are making similar interventions within the same geographical settings so that attributions can be made in reporting. In view of this, a question was thrown to the participants to know if other partners operate in their communities



on similar subjects. These organisations were mentioned. In some cases, they partner with the district assemblies.

**Table 2: Organisations and Their Interventions**

No	Organisation	Intervention	District
1	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	supports some communities in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene. It has provided communities with bore holes and other water projects.	Karaga and Tolon
2	World Vision International (WVI)	supports communities in the area of Water, Sanitation and hygiene (WASH).	Karaga and Tolon
3	Resilience in Northern Ghana (RING)	supports farmers with livestock and tractor services to improve their livelihoods.	Karaga and Tolon
4	Plan International Ghana	invests in the area of education by supporting communities with some infrastructure.	Karaga and Tolon
5	NORSAAC	Support in health, education and governance	Karaga and Tolon

## 8. Persons identified for Success Stories' Development:

It was part of the mandate of NOYED-Ghana to collect success stories and share with LBG for on ward reporting to Unicef. Due to the limitation of time, coupled with the rains, the stories could not be collected. However, persons were identified who will be visited and the stories collected for sharing. Below are the details of such. This will be reported on in our next report to LBG.

**Table 3: Persons identified for Success Stories.**

S/N	NAME	SEX	STORY HEAD	COMMUNITY	DISTRICT
1	Oldman Adam Hamdia	Female	Visiting the hospital saved my baby	Tuyini	Karaga
2	Asana Tahidu	Female	A TBA now directs her clients to the hospital for delivery	Kpataribogu	Karaga
3	Afa Baba	Male	Improved Maternity Visits	Digogi	Karaga
4	Mma Hawabu	Female	After listening to TB, she sends her girl child to school	Walshei	Tolon
5	Mma Salamatu	Female	After listening to the TB and sleeping in bed nets, my children do not fall sick	Ngaba	Tolon
6	Mbe Seidu	Male	I rebuilt my laterine after listening to the TB.	Ngaba	Tolon
7	Afa Karim (Chief Imam of Walshei)	Male	I begun using the tip-tap after listening to the TB	Walshei	Tolon



## 9. Successes

The Communication for Development (C4D) project has chalked some successes. Some of these include:

- ✓ The participants showed so much awareness of the contents in the TBs and were able to explain some of the messages. They could also tell what behavior changes interests them, which they practice and the ones they find difficult to practice.
- ✓ The communities showed much determination to adopt and improve their behaviors. They recognize that the C4D programme is to help them become healthier and better. For example, a parent at Ngaba mentioned that his latrine fell and he ignored it but after listening to the message in the TB, he took it upon himself and rebuilt it.
- ✓ Some communities defied the rain to attend the dialogue sessions and, in some cases, sat under drizzling rains. This shows the value they place on the TB and the messages they carry.
- ✓ Women composed songs based on the messages they listened to in the TBs. This also confirms that they have really listened and internalized the messages the TBs carry.

## 10. Challenges

- ✓ The rains posed a bigger challenge in organizing the community dialogues. In some circumstances, the rain forced the cancellation and postponement of some of the community dialogues.
- ✓ Due to farming activities which was ongoing, low attendance were recorded. The meetings were also delayed since in some cases community members were called from their farms.
- ✓ Some of the community agents were not active in organizing the community dialogues.
- ✓ Some communities have no benches; therefore, the sitting arrangements were disorganized creating a semblance of carelessness and unconcern. This also affected the taking of quality participation and taking of good pictures.
- ✓ Due to large household sizes, the pair of batteries were not enough for some households due to repeated listenership.
- ✓ Dialogues cannot be carried out in the following communities in the:

**Table 4: Communities that were not Covered**

No.	District	Communities
1.	Karaga district	Tubilzee, Sadugu, Bilibilinduli, Muggonni/Nadukpalga, Gbutugu, Didogi Tamalgu.
2.	Tolon District	Gbanjogla, Jinla-yili, Chirifo-kuraa, Adaa-yili, Kuriti-kuraa, Yizegu




- ✓ NOYED-Ghana does not have access or pre-knowledge of the content of the messages in the TB. This made it challenging for facilitators to effectively perform their responsibilities.
- ✓ Some of the community agents complained that due to farm activities, there has been an upsurge in the number of households. They complained that the TBs are not enough.



### **11.Recommendations/Way forward**

- ✓ From our observation, some of the community agents are not educated. Going forward, it will be good we identify educated and youthful persons as agents.
- ✓ It would be good to put in place a motivational package for communities or households who will listen and give innovative feedbacks. Eg. Those who will come up with songs, drama and others that will promote further development of content or send good feedback to partners.
- ✓ We recommend that households with large sizes should be given more than 1 TB. This will facilitate listenership in goodtime.
- ✓ NOYED-Ghana will also appeal for at least one if not two of the TBs with content loaded available in our office for listening and marketing purposes.
- ✓ LBG should increase the number of TBs, especially during this farming season to ensure increased listenership.
- ✓ LBG and UNICEF should support communities by supplying them basic tools they can use to dig the latrines. The tools should be bought or fabricated to meet the specifications of the communities.
- ✓ It is also recommended that if LBG and UNICEF can support in procuring 4/5-liter gallons for distribution to household in communities, we can achieve significant results in handling behavior change particularly in hand washing.

## 12. Appendix

### Adjusted Guide for Community Dialogue

Date:		
Community Dialogue Start Time:		Community Dialogue End Time:
Name of Facilitator:		
Community Name:		
Name of Community Agent:		
Total Number of Community Members Present	Number of Men:	Number of Women:
	Number of Adolescents (10-19 years old):	Children (0-9 years old):
Questions and Talking Points		Record of Community Responses
NOTE:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please do introductions and accord all title holders in the community the due respect they deserve. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ask other preliminary questions eg. Who has ever seen this device? (show device to them). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How do you call it in this community? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Where are the devices coming from?		
<p>1. When and how do you listen to the messages on the Talking Book</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>This will help you know with whom and how often beneficiaries are engaging with the TB content.</i></li> <li>• <i>To what extent is the TB part of their day daily activities?</i></li> </ul>		
<p>2. When did the TB arrive at your home? Did you have any issues using the TB?</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Beneficiaries who say that they are able to use the TB to access messaging and record user feedback should be able to correctly demonstrate this during the meeting.</i></li> </ul>		
<p>3. What messages have you listened to from the TB?</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are participants able to mention the topics? If no why?</i></li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are participants articulate on the messages they heard?</i></li> <li>• <i>Facilitator should cross reference this with outlines of TB messages content they have.</i></li> </ul>	
<p>4. What content did you find; most engaging? most interesting? And Why? What information did you not engage with? To what extent were messages clear?</p> <p> Things to Remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A key role of the facilitator will be to ascertain what specific content was useful, relevant and engaging to TB users.</i></li> <li>• <i>Facilitator can also play specific messages uploaded on TB so that community members can more effectively articulate what aspects of the messages (content, format, voices etc.) made them useful and engaging. The same thing should be done for messages that people didn't particularly find engaging.</i></li> </ul>	
<p>5. Are listeners recording user feedback? Which messages or topics did community members record the most feedback about? Why?</p> <p> <i>It is important to ascertain to what extent users are recording or not recording user feedback.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The facilitator should verify that community members are able to correctly demonstrate how user feedback is recorded.</i></li> <li>• <i>Get a volunteer to demonstrate how feedback recording is done.</i></li> </ul>	

6. What behaviors have you been able to practice?
7. What are the successes.
8. What are the challenges and barriers in practicing these behaviors?




- *Probe very well on these questions*
- *Facilitator can use Role Play or Turn and Talk strategies to prompt participants to thoroughly articulate challenges and to collaboratively identify potential solutions.*
- *Are they able to demonstrate the practices very well?*
- *It is important that community members are reflecting on the resources needed and personal, social and cultural barriers to practicing recommended behaviors.*
- *Participants should collaborate engage in discussion about how to overcome challenges.*

9. Are there other service providers assisting the community around adopting behaviors mentioned in the UNICEF C4D messaging? Who are these service providers and what is the scope of their intervention?



- *It is important for LBG to know how TB messaging can more effectively supplement and enhance other face-to-face interventions to help communities improve outcomes*

<p><i>around Health, Nutrition, WASH, Child Protection, and Education.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>It also important to detect areas of divergence between UNICEF C4D messaging and messaging/interventions led by partner organizations or funders.</i></li> </ul>	
<p>10. Ask community members to think about one new behavior that they haven't tried before. Ask community members to reflect on the behaviour, why it's important, and what steps they could take to practice the behavior. Ask community members to share examples if they feel comfortable</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>In order to motivate participants, facilitator can ask individuals at the Community Dialogue who have successfully practiced a new behavior to self-identify and to describe the experience and how they overcame challenges to the rest of the group.</i></li> <li><i>Facilitator can then engage into asking other participants to what extent they believe they could adapt and modify strategy used by other participants to overcome barriers and practice recommended behavior.</i></li> <li><i>Facilitator can also engage participants in a Turn-and-Talk or small group discussions, after which, ideas can be shared out in plenary.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>KEY TAKE AWAYS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS &amp; ACTION PLANNING.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator should ask participants to reflect on Community Dialogue and summarize key take aways from discussion.</li> </ul>	

- Facilitators can ask for participants to reflect individually, in pairs, or in small groups.
- Facilitator should synthesis comments from participants, and when reporting, provide recommendations to Literacy Bridge around message content, clarity and relevance based on community feedback.