

NOYED-GHANA' STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 – 2027



NOYED-GHANA DECEMBER 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NOYED is a registered non-profit organization seeking to improve the quality of life for children, youth and women in society. Over the years, NOYED has transformed the lives of 43,089 primary actors mostly girls and women. NOYED has increased access and enhanced quality of formal education for girls and children with disabilities (CWDs) in Northern Ghana. Public sensitization on the importance and severity of HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and awareness on fistula, pre-natal and ante-natal practices have also resulted in improved maternal and child health. Local communities' access to quality sexual reproductive health also improved while many young people have improved their skills that guarantee them secure livelihoods.

In spite of the achievements, access to quality transformative education particularly at the early grade level remains low. Maternal and sexual reproductive health services also remain limited and of poor quality for most communities while youth unemployment continues to deepen with corresponding low uptake of livelihoods particularly in the more technical and vocational sectors. This strategic plan serves as a frame for NOYED's operations going forward. The goal over the next five years is to impact the lives of 264,431 primary actors and at least 793,294 others indirectly. The beneficiaries include 54,432 children in early grades. Majority would be girls and learners with disability from 15 underserved communities and their schools located in 15 administrative districts in Northern Ghana. Under the strategy, young women who are in operational communities would also remain healthy and taking advantage of opportunities that improve their skills and guarantee sustainable sources of livelihoods. The desired results would be attained within a sound, peaceful and cohesive environment.

Advocacy for inclusive and transformative education, behavioral change driven health initiatives within school and community subsystems. Mass awareness raising, support for young people's uptake of livelihood skills and the promotion of peace are among the key strategies that would result in the desired changes. Beyond the changes in the lives of poor people, NOYED Ghana would experience increased visibility, more credibility and legitimacy to represent poor people. Learning and sharing at all levels would be deepened and become an organizational culture. Systems, structures and procedures would also increasingly respond to changing needs of beneficiaries while the number, quality and output of staff are expected to witness marked growth.

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1.0 BACKGROUND

The Net Organization for Youth Empowerment and Development (NOYED) is a registered non-profit organization that has operated in Ghana for close to 20 years.

Vision

An improved quality of life for children, youth and women in society

Mission

To foster networking as forces for cost effective intervention through the implementation of sustainable programmes

Organizational values

- Equity
- Respect
- Integrity
- Voluntarism
- Humanity First
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Unity and team work

Target groups

The Youth, Women, Girls, Children and Persons With Disability

Key achievements

- Increased access and enhanced quality education for all children, especially for girls and children with disabilities (CWDs) in Northern Ghana. An estimated 36,713 poor people were able to enroll and stay in school and or claim their right to active participation in education decision making.
- Holding central government and other duty bearers at both local (community/district) and regional levels to account for education resources and outcomes have been the dominant strategies that resulted in the education gains.
- Increased accountability in basic schools due to sustained monitoring and dialogue. Enhanced skills and improved teacher delivery particularly in many underserved communities in Northern Ghana.
- 3,950 people have experienced transformation in their health, mainly through sustained public sensitization on the importance and severity of HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).
- Improved maternal health notably in fistula, pre-natal and ante-natal practices.
- Access to quality Sexual and Reproductive Health has also improved with marked evidence of more responsible sexual life choices among both adolescents and couples.

- 2,426 young people have increased skills in livelihoods, actively participating in income generating activities and decision making. Youth Center for Entrepreneurial Empowerment (Y-CEE) programme has been equipping excluded youth with employable skills and secure livelihood while transforming gender norms.

2.0 CONTEXT

Ghana is touted as a country with impressive growth and fortunes; rich in history and culture, peaceful, political stability for over three decades and respect for the rule of law (Ghana-Sweden Chamber of Commerce, 2020). Ghana is now a Lower Middle-Income country whose economic growth compares more appreciably among other countries in the sub region. Averagely, per capita income increased from \$3,270 in 2011 to \$4,800 in 2016, declined to about \$2,223 in 2020 and has since been rising (World Bank, 2020). Poverty declined from 52 percent at the beginning of the 1990s to about 11.3 percent by the close of 2020 (World Bank, 2020).

In spite of these gains, the country faces major challenges in terms of consolidating the gains made in the economic and social sectors. Emerging from the Covid19 pandemic, threat to peace and security in the West African sub region and concerns about responsive governance imply Ghana may be on a trajectory of having the enviable gains eroded. At the macro level, low capacity within government structures to deliver and snail-paced realization of inclusive governance all reflect as gaps that require solution in order to consolidate gains made.

The growth rate of the country's economy continues to witness marked fluctuations. Positively, the provisional real GDP growth for 2021 showed a positive outturn of 5.4 percent, exceeding the 4.4 percent projected over the period. The fiscal deficit of 2021 also reduced from 11.7 percent to 11.4 percent (Ministry of Finance, 2022). Ghana's public debt stock expressed as percentage of GDP however edged beyond 76.6 percent of GDP at the end of 2021 raising concerns about sustainability.

In the social front, concerns about high youth unemployment, corruption and mismanagement of public resources are many. In spite of increased investment in education, literacy levels among young people and women are quite low and thereby limiting their ability to assert their right to sustainable livelihood life. The five northern regions of the country (Northern, Savannah, North East, Upper East and Upper West region) continue to be most poverty endemic and also suffer from low access and poor quality of education, rising unemployment and insecurity. The Northern, North-East and Savannah regions for instance continue to record the highest rate of multidimensional poverty at 80.8%) with the Upper East and Upper West Regions at 68.1% and 65.5% respectively (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020¹). The general belief that targeting particularly through social protection guarantees inclusion of the most vulnerable during times of national struggle, contrasts with the level Ghana's attention and investment in social protection programmes. Key targeted interventions over the last decade include the following;

- Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP)
- Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) program
- Labor-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) program
- Capitation Grant, and the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS)

¹ Ghana Statistical Service. (2020). Multidimensional Poverty-Ghana. See Chapter 4 on page 25

However, investment in these targeted initiatives has remained below the average expenditure of 1.6 percent of Lower to Middle-Income Countries (LMICs)².

On education, the 1992 Republican Constitution guarantees the right to formal education for all. Ghana has subscribed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and bound by Goals 4 and 5 which are on quality education and gender equality. Operationally, the Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2018-2030) remains the most recent strategy for realizing this right to education at all levels.

Major development over the last five years includes the following;

- A shift in government's focus from basic to secondary education
- Concerns about resource deprivation of basic education due to government's emphasis on secondary level. Early Childhood Education (ECE), a sub-priority for NOYED which is under basic education receives least attention in recent times
- Widened access at TVET level. Increased access to TVET, from 59,110 in 2016/17 to 86,479 in the 2019/20 academic year³
- A persistent negative perception of TVET which often leads to low uptake.
- Concerns that putting TVET under Non-Formal Education and with a combined TVET and inclusive education budget below 3% in the sector implies low government priority for technical and vocational skills for the youth.
- Low access and declining quality of education for learners with disabilities.
- The worse learning outcomes in the five regions of the northern part of Ghana. Many schools still score 0% in all subjects during their WASSCE⁴.
- Ineffective curriculum reflecting in a mis-match between the education system and the economic needs of the country is real⁵.

In the health sector, Ghana's goal is to promote, restore and maintain good health for all living in Ghana. Strategies for attaining the goal extend from direct government interventions to collaborative efforts of partners such as NGOs, CSOs and the private sector. Notable developments in the health sector include the following;

- National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) that has replaced an earlier cash and carry system thus widening access to care.
- Enrolment of pregnant women in a free medical delivery programme, access to obstetric emergencies
- Mother-2-Mother (M2M) programme

²World Bank. (2020). Ghana Poverty Assessment. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34804> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO

³ SDG Report 2020

⁴ ESP 2018-2030

⁵ Obeng, G. (2019). Ghanaian Educational System: A Deviation from Cultural and Socioeconomic Structure; A Bane for Unemployment. Management and Economics Research Journal. 5. 1

- Increase in number of health workers as a result of an increased training institutions and integration of Early Childhood Development with Reproductive, Maternal, New-Born and Child Health (RMNCH) Models.
- Declining maternal mortality, from 151 per 100,000 live births in 2016 to 106.6 in 2020.
- Decline in rate of new HIV infections, from 0.71 in 2016 to 0.57 per 1,000 uninfected populations in 2020⁶.
- Complementary role of development partners and CSOs notably USAID⁷'s support to malaria control, maternal, neonatal and child health, nutrition, Family Planning and Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS, and Health Systems Strengthening. JICA also supports the area of maternal health by the building of health facilities, sensitization of communities and building of capacities of health professionals.

Notwithstanding the gains, Ghana's effort at attaining and sustaining a universal quality healthcare is confronted by many challenges. They include the following;

- Inadequate health facilities.
- Lack the requisite human resources, essential equipment, drugs, and other logistics. Neglect and under resourcing of subsectors such as maternal and newborn care often resulting in mortality and morbidity as well obstructive labour and eventually obstetric fistula.
- COVID 19 pandemic further weakened the already fragile health system in Ghana
- As high as 45% of abortion among young women are unsafe in Ghana
- Rising cases of teenage pregnancies and associated school drop outs
- Obstetric fistula and effect on maternal health
- Negative cultural and religious practices that promote early marriage and female genital mutilation are still practiced in the northern part of Ghana.
- Retention and participation of adolescent girls in both school and social life due to burden of menstrual health management
- Socio-cultural norms around menstruation eroding the confidence and productivity of girls and women
- Psychological concerns, severe pain and inability to afford sanitary pads during menstruation imply absence from school or other social functions.

In livelihoods, the key interventions over the last decade include the following;

- Increased government attention and investment in TVET
- Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) continues to supplement the efforts at improving livelihoods.
- Nations Builders Corps which targets youth employment
- Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Programme (IPEP) which is a major livelihood investment effort

⁶ National Development Planning Commission. (2020). Ghana's 2020 Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and African Union Agenda 2063.

⁷ USAID's priorities on health in the near future also includes support to mental health which provides a great opportunity as mental health has remained a critical but neglect sector for a very long time.

- Planting for Food and Jobs and Rearing for Food and Jobs, both government flagship interventions creating livelihood opportunities for those in farming communities
- One District One Factory (1D1F) initiative
- One Village One Dam Initiative
- Microfinance and Small Loans scheme

These efforts notwithstanding, the major gaps in the area of livelihood and governance include the following;

- Marked skill gaps and/or mis-match among young men and women who graduate from tertiary institutions.
- Negative perception about TVET as a sector for people who are academically weak affecting TVET uptake by most youth
- Citizens' representation has also improved remarkably but that is more in the case of men with only 15% of women representation in Ghana's parliament.

Climate change vulnerability in the last half decade is noted to be greatest for those who depend wholly on natural resources and have the lowest capacity to cope with these changes. Coincidentally, the geographic, demographic, socio-economic and cultural dynamics of five northern regions of Ghana are in sync with these triggers of vulnerability. These regions continue to suffer seasonal flooding and increasing drought. In 2020, 2021 and more recently 2022, parts of the country experienced and continue to experience the worst floods since 2015.

Systemically, the poor access and quality of education and health, high youth unemployment, limited participation in real governance in the midst of poverty and climate change do in no doubt have significant impact on peace and security. Growing terrorism and political instability from neighboring countries reinforce threats of radicalization and recruitment for violent extremism in the country. Within the first quarter of 2022, there have been 160 cases of reported terror acts in West Africa out of 346 cases in Africa⁸. Northern Ghana is also increasingly at risk of conflicts induced by chieftaincy disputes, land, religious, inter-ethnic, inter-political party and cross-border insecurity⁹.

3.0 RATIONALE FOR STRATEGIC PLAN

3.1 Objective of the strategic plan

This strategic plan provides the frame for drawing lessons from past experiences in order to address organizational relevance in terms of mandate, interventions, collaborations, financial fluidity and sustainability.

⁸ BBC News (Pidgin) 23 May 2022 Terror attacks: Ghana dey intensifies security for threat. <https://www.bbc.com/pidgin/world-61551332> Retrieved on 20/5/2022

⁹ Bukari, K.K; Osei-Kufuor, P. & Bukari, S. (2021) Chieftaincy Conflicts in Northern Ghana: A Constellation of Actors and Politics, *African Security*, 14:2, 156-185, DOI: 10.1080/19392206.2021.1932244

The plan contains five (5) pillars that blend to justify the need for and relevance of vision, mission and interventions, re-shaping and rebranding, taking advantage of opportunities to programme better. These pillars are the background, contextual developments, and rationale for a new SP including NOYED’s niche, best practices that strengthen the relevance of her vision, mission and interventions. Others are a theory of change, thematic areas each of which contains a goal, strategic outcomes and their corresponding strategies. Embedded within each thematic areas are innovations that position the organization to add more value to ways sustainable change happen in education, health, livelihood.

3.2 Strategic Plan Development Process

This Strategic Plan has been developed through a rigorous process that involved a review of existing documents and scoping of the operational context. Central to the process was a SWOT analysis with staff, board members, peer organizations and primary actors. The SWOT revealed the known strengths and gaps in NOYED both as a living organization with a structure and practice. Opportunities available, possible threat, key lessons and grey areas that could be explored also emerged from the SWOT analysis. The following are highlights of the strengths, need areas and opportunities that could be considered as well as potential threats that must be overcome in order to achieve the desired results under this strategy.

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased credibility from Department of Social welfare and Registrar General’s Department. • Administrative structures and systems are in place and fairly liked • The minimum checks and balances are in place guaranteeing accountability. • Good relationships with local and INGOs • Teamwork • Serene working environment • The organization has a track record in Health, Education and Livelihood & Governance. • Publicity: Active website and Facebook page. • Practical experience in proposal development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer than expected employees due to low funding. • Low staff capacity • Non availability of core funding/partners hampering the growth. • Inability to meet some funding thresholds for call for applications. • Inability to successfully role out a social enterprise project that could help in generating revenue to support core/institutional expenses. • Inadequate utilization of the organizational website.

<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of University for Development Studies (UDS) and Tamale Technical University, both higher institutions with rich human resource and niche in development research which NOYED can tap into in order to deepen evidence generation and strengthen advocacy. • More grey areas or areas with limited concentration by other NGOs e.g., Early Childhood Education, TVET. • Increased government interest in TVET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intense competition for grants even including the micro from both local and international NGOs. • Conflicting roles of many statutory institutions and demands from these who have responsibility for licensing renewal and oversight for NGOs e.g., Department of Social Welfare, Registrar General Department, Non-Profit Organization Secretariat • New status of Ghana as a Lower Middle-Income Country and Ghana Beyond Aid mantra by government resulting in donor withdrawals • Covid-19 pandemic • Ghana beyond aid mantra as sounded by government.

3.3 Application of lessons learned and outcomes of SWOT analysis

NOYED's uniqueness as a youth-focused organization is reflected in the following;

- The ability and persistence in grassroots advocacy, empowerment and innovation
- Functioning in most of the hard-to-reach locations of Northern Ghana with limited state institution or CSO interventions
- Emphasis on the inclusion of groups considered socially excluded in Ghana and these include women, children and the youth, and persons with disabilities.
- A renewed national interest in TVET with a strategy to employ her vast experiences gained under Y-CEE program in meeting the skills and jobs needs of the youth going forward.

The following lessons have been learned;

- Change is possible when acting alone but sustainability is possible when acting in concert
- Strategic partnerships and join up work where networking amplifies one's voice, increases visibility while ensuring that no one is left behind is key for sustaining one's efforts
- Sustaining the effectiveness of existing partnerships implies reaching out and collaborating with others whose goals align with NOYED's objectives and thematic areas

- Cognizance of the many CSOs operating within the development space of Ghana also implies varying one's approaches particularly to doing advocacy and enabling citizens claim their rights to essential services
- An active media engagement particularly using social media is one effective tool for sharing and acquiring knowledge and building relationships

Going forward, NOYED's would leverage on her strengths using social media to increase her visibility, build a constituency mostly the youth to act, disseminate information and for demanding duty bearers' response to the needs of the poor.

Increasing government's attention and priority for TVET provides a strategic opportunity for making lasting impact in the lives of the youth and so NOYED would be more proactive in engaging with TVET institutions, both public and private.

Early Childhood Development holds a key to Ghana's youth development but has hugely been neglected with few actors. NOYED would register a presence and influence ECD provision in target communities. Practical experiences gained from years of intervention in formal basic education would be employed in the Early Childhood Development sector in order to make it more transformative and for building a strong foundation for the youth.

Social and Behavioral Change (SBC) is important for sustaining gains in areas that NOYED has contributed to in the past. Maternal health, and Y-CEE initiatives (technical education) are examples of specific areas where a culture of integrating social and behavioral change would strengthen.

Institutions that desire to and are indeed promoting sustainable change need to remain resilient in structure, systems and resources. Therefore, mobilizing human and material resources from diversified sources and operating within a clear organizational structure with systems function harmoniously are critical for realizing NOYED's vision.

NOYED's interventions depend largely on the extent to which it contributes to the peace effort in Northern Ghana. The introduction of conflict transformation and prevention of violent extremism in particular create spaces for interventions, possibly striving for peacebuilding as a crosscutting theme.

4.0 PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

4.1 Theory of change

The desire is that all children in Ghana, particularly those in early grades, girls and children with disability from underserved communities of the country would enjoy a quality, inclusive and transformative education. Transformative education would reflect right age enrolment and retention of learners beyond early grades. Quality teaching and learning would be fun-based and learners would experience improved performance in test scores. The youth, particularly young women would remain healthy, motivated and are able to take advantage of opportunities that improve their skills and guarantee sustainable sources of livelihoods. The

youth would become active citizens contributing positively to decision making and development of their society.

Underlying the desired changes is the conviction that when children in their early years are enrolled in school and have opportunities and support from responsive education leaders and safe school systems, they are able to acquire a good foundation and are able to persist through the various stages of learning, acquiring the needed skills and competencies for later life. Systemically, opportunities for skills uptake are provided to young people they can have a secure livelihood and are also able to influence decision making in community life.

The key pathways for attaining the desired results include advocacy for inclusive and transformative education, support to behavior change health initiatives at the school and community subsystems, awareness raising, provision of the youth with livelihood skills and promotion of peace and non-violent approaches.

4.2 Modifications

The focus and the means for achieving the desired results are informed by national relevance, NOYED's mission and past experiences. They are also informed by to the organization's desire to consolidate previous gains, contextual developments and outcomes of a SWOT analysis. Previously, NOYED's education theme was 'Quality basic education for all'. Theme has now been adjusted to reflect the power of quality of education in transforming people and leaving no one behind. The transformative dimension caters for emerging challenges globally where education is believed to prepare learners adequately to face emerging challenges. Additionally, the education theme would now emphasize Early Child Development with a lens on school health and environmental and sanitation.

A Social and Behavioral Change approach to communicating desired change across target groups would also be emphasized in order to guarantee sustainability of results particularly under education, health and livelihood empowerment and governance. Other significant modifications under this strategy include the inclusion of a thematic area on conflict, peace and climate change. Conflict transformation and peacebuilding mechanisms would be pursued under the strategies in livelihood ad governance. Similarly, environmental conservation and climate governance would be prioritized and pursued as cross cutting issues under quality transformative education and livelihoods.

4.3 Scope

Geographically, NOYED would continue to intervene in the five northern regions of Ghana. Direct implementation of interventions that require defined geography would however be in three regions namely Northern, North East and Savannah Regions. In the 3 intervention regions, the focus would be 15 administrative districts with a deepened first step in her current intervention districts and a systemic expansion into additional districts.

The target is to reach at least 150 communities, their schools and health services from the 15 administrative districts. Seventy percent of intervention the districts and communities would

be rural per government classification. The rest would be peri-urban and urban districts. The latter would however be for purposes of comparisons, promotion of best practices particularly livelihood initiatives that may have both local community and urban dimensions and for learning.

A sectorwide approach involving the North East Region, Northern Region, Savannah Region as well as the Upper West and Upper East Regions would be adopted. The need for a sectorwide approach is to build momentum across Northern Ghana and employ that as a leverage for national level advocacy. Sectorwide advocacy efforts would include using evidence that may be beyond specific communities, districts or a region to engage in spaces and stakeholders in the national capital and or strategic locations with a national character. With time, NOYED would explore linkages with external institutions and spaces within the West African Sub region. The objective of the reach beyond Ghana is to increase visibility, promote linkages for higher level advocacy and for purposes of resource mobilization.

The estimated number of direct beneficiaries would be 264,431, with at least 40% girls from lower grades. Others would include teachers from target schools; young men and women including those out of school but within the intervention communities. It is also estimated that about 2,644 of these beneficiaries would be persons with disability. Indirectly, at least 793,294¹⁰ people would also benefit over the period. Details on estimation of beneficiaries are contained in appendix 2.

4.4 Inclusive transformative education

In the last decade, NOYED has directly supported poor and needy children with educational materials, awareness and system-wide advocacy for policy change. These have been achieved through six specific projects that extended from monitoring of school budgets to the promotion of inclusive education. The key strategies employed under past efforts included advocacy at the school and district levels, community teacher volunteers, community engagement and capacity building for education managers. In the next five years, NOYED would seek to deepen the gains made under quality education. By adopting more refined and strategic approaches that consider education as a right. NOYED will focus on basic and Early Child Development (ECD) by emphasizing inclusive and transformative approaches and applying the evidence from local level to inform improvements across the rest of the education system.

The education goal for the next five years would be Children, particularly those in early years, girls and disabled from underserved communities in Northern Ghana have increased access to quality education. In total, 90,668, about 27,200 of them females would benefit directly from education interventions. This target is up from 36,713 demonstrating NOYED's ambition for the next five years. The strategic outcomes would include the following;

¹⁰ It is estimated that for every one ultimate beneficiary there is be a trickledown effect on 5 others

1. Improved access to early grades' education
2. Improved teaching and learning in early grades
3. Increased availability and accountability for basic education resources

4.4.1 Strategies

- Support children's enrolment and participation in early grades
- Support teacher training and their delivery
- Monitor education policies and resources

4.5 Health

In the area of universal access to quality healthcare and services, NOYED has contributed to improved maternal and child health specifically awareness campaigns on fistula and immunization. In the next five years, the goal would be improved quality of health for young mothers, children and the youth. About 100,593 people would directly benefit. At least 70,415 of these are females. The strategic outcomes include the following;

1. Improved health for expectant mothers and their newborns.
2. Increased access to sexual reproductive health services and rights for young people.
3. Enhanced physical, mental and social health for learners and their teachers.

To attain these desired outcomes, NOYED would consolidate previous gains; drive a renewed effort on maternal and child health which would involve addressing the key drivers of fistula in Northern Ghanaian communities. Notable drivers that would be under the lens include unsupervised delivery, overreliance on Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), child marriage and delayed and or poor access to antenatal and postnatal care and services. Quality Sexual Reproductive Health Rights would continue to be a priority with emphasis on menstrual hygiene given its negative impact on productivity of women in the workplace and the girls' access and participation in schooling.

Access to contraceptives and awareness on unwanted pregnancies, abortion care and STIs particularly HIV/AIDs will be deepened. Support to reduce stigma and promotion of counselling and voluntary testing and early access to anti-retroviral drugs would be priorities under the health theme. NOYED drive an aggressive agenda on school health adopting behavioral change and community led approaches to cleanliness, water and sanitation. The following are the key outcomes

4.5.1 Strategies

- Provide support to mothers and their children during and after delivery.
- Promote Behaviour Change Communication on Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) initiatives in schools

4.6 Livelihood empowerment and governance

Under previous strategy, NOYED improved the income generating abilities of women and the entrepreneurial skills of youth which translated in some improvements in their economic and social lives. Key interventions in this regard included the Youth Center for Entrepreneurial Empowerment (Y-CEE). As the flagship initiative the Y-CEE Project is ongoing, responds to gender and reinforces Ghana's TVET objectives by empowering the youth with employable skills. Dialogue on gender norms such as stereotypes and more attention to gender equality has been pursued. Cumulatively, these have leveraged more space and voice for women's social and economic lives. Women's ability to operate and earn a livelihood from tricycles is improving household incomes, changing gender norms and generating evidence that confirm women can thrive in hitherto male dominated trades.

Beyond their livelihood empowerment, some opportunities (albeit limited) have also been created in the past resulting in appreciable presence and influence of women and youth participation in development decisions. Going forward, NOYED would build the skills of young women capacitating their ability to earn a livelihood while influencing decision making in community life.

The inclusion of climate change response mechanisms in all livelihood plans and strategies would also be undertaken in order secure sound environment for their livelihoods to thrive. The key strategies would therefore include mass awareness creation on the implications of changing climatic conditions on beneficiaries' livelihood and how to attain resilience. Cumulatively, 69,900 primary actors (55,920 women) would directly experience improvement in their lives. The provision of information, youth entrepreneurial skills and the promotion of the participation of young people in decision making would be other strategies. The following would be the strategic outcomes;

1. Increased entrepreneurial skills of young women and men
2. Increased awareness among the youth and their participation in TVET as sources of livelihoods
3. Increased share and influence of young women in community and school level decision making

4.6.1 Strategies

- Support entrepreneurial skills of young women and men
- Expand livelihood opportunities for young people
- Pursue Social and Behaviour Change effort in support of TVET
- Actions on climate change

4.7 Environment and Climate Change

Ghana has moved from a Low Income to a Lower Middle-Income country (as defined by the World Bank) and is both high-growth and energy-hungry. It has been recognized, however, that climate change and the cost of the climate change response is a serious threat to this progress. There is already evidence of the impact of climate change on the national economy, with clear signs that the coastal zone, agriculture and water resources are all affected, as are health and livelihoods, especially for women, resulting in increasing levels of poverty . This is more pronounced in the northern part of Ghana as it is the most fragile ecological zone of the country.

NOYED-Ghana has not been rigorously involved in the effort towards addressing environmental and climate change issues over the years in a manner that reflect the gravity of the problem. Various stakeholders led by government of Ghana are waging endless wars to mitigate the threat of climate change. The Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA), now Northern Development Authority (NDA has the vision of “creating a forested and green North by 2030, doubling the incomes of Northern Ghanaians and reducing the incidence of poverty in the Northern Savannah Ecological Belt to less than 20% within 20 years”.

Prioritizing Environment and Climate Change as the fourth pillar in the organizational thematic areas, NOYED is adopting the three broad area objectives in the national policy of Ghana - Effective Adaptation, Social Development and Mitigation and focusing on them in supporting more rigorously to succeed in the battle the world is engaged in respect of environment and climate change. NOYED’s goal for this thematic unit is to see a world where the present generation enjoys the privileges of the environment in a manner that does not compromise the privileges of the future generations.

NOYED’ strategic outcomes are:

1. Youth, women, and persons with disabilities are resourced with the requisite knowledge and are coping with the impact of climate change.
2. Social and economic growth interventions are created for the vulnerable groups in the Northern Savannah ecological zone of Ghana.
3. Environmentally friendly technologies that are low in carbon are promoted, especially among low income communities in the Northern Savannah ecological zone of Ghana.
4. Research-based evidence presented in support of policy formulation with relevant governmental and international organisations.

4.7.1 Strategies

- Use Community Based Adaptation (CBA) and Ecosystem Based Adaptation (EBA) strategies.
- Use community volunteering and build the capacities of the volunteers as climatic agents of change.
- Promote the use of eco-friendly and climate-smart technologies.
- Build and strengthen alliances to deepen and sustain positive actions in protecting the environment.

5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The extent to which goals under the new strategy are attained depends significantly on how resilient NOYED remains as a living organization functioning within a complex and fast changing development environment. The following constitute the key domains within which NOYED's growth and resilience may manifest.

- i. Focus, scope and quality of interventions
- ii. Human, financial and material base
- iii. Visibility, credibility, accountability and legitimacy to represent groups NOYED Ghana exists to serve

Past achievements under organizational development have been mixed; more positive in some instances while in others the outcomes have remained largely below expectation. These are highlighted in the ensuing sections.

5.1 Focus, scope and quality of interventions

A focus on youth and programming around transformative education, health, livelihoods and governance and functioning in the most underserved regions of Ghana strengthens the relevance of NOYED to the country's development as these are topical development concerns of the country. Indeed, rising youth unemployment, declining quality of education and growing insecurity remain major concerns of National Government. In addition to the relevance in thematic areas, NOYED rates high by peers and government in terms of quality of programme interventions, visibility in local (District) and regional level spaces and participatory engagements with target groups. NOYED would deepen the quality of interventions and strive to remain more relevant by pursuing the following;

5.1. Increase attention to MEL

An existing MEL system would be expanded into a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL). This would also include the creation and resourcing of a MEAL department that would continue to effectively monitor interventions and ensure lessons generated reinforce ongoing efforts while promoting learning and sharing at all levels. In operationalizing the expanded MEAL, NOYED would build strong partnership with and act in concert with the University for Development Studies (UDS) and Tamale Technical University, both higher institutions with a niche for development research.

5.2 Human, financial and material base

The number, qualifications and competencies of employees, funding, capital and other facilities constitute the key human, financial and material base of the organization.

Comparatively, NOYED human resource base remains small in terms of number of employees, averaging five (5). However, employees often possess the minimum

qualifications, competencies, attitudes and ambition driving her mission this far. Other strength from the human resource is retention which guarantees institutional memory and teamwork.

Inadequate number and absence of employees for some critical areas, gender and inclusion as there are very few women and hardly any employee with disability. Fewer numbers of employees also imply key designations notably the Executive Director and Finance continue to play a visioning, strategic, oversight as well as operational roles which may affect quality of organizational outcomes. Programme employees possess limited skills and competencies in conflict and peacebuilding. Other resources include a functioning secretariat that contains the minimum material resources to promote administrative work. A 4x4 vehicle, motorbikes, computers and accessories are the key material resources.

Financial resource mobilization record is mixed. Bottlenecks over the years included the ability to mobilize the needed resources to meet targets. Inadequate funding particularly core continues to limited the number and diversity of employees. Systemically, while NOYED may have a track record of accountability, the inadequate financials mobilized limits her ability to compete for other large grants.

While the organization has strength in proposal development and relies hugely on external calls, the lack of diversification of funding continues to impact negatively on quantum of financial resources. The absence of a resource mobilization strategy and the inability to pursue a social enterprise approach to resource generation particularly for core/institutional support are other bottlenecks. Ghana's new status as a Lower Middle-Income Country with corresponding donor withdrawals is a threat to resource sustainability. Intense competition for grants even including the micro from both local and international NGOs is also real. Statutory and structural bottlenecks notably government requirements on acquisition of tax clearance and renewal of business permits threatens sustainability.

To strengthen staff numbers, capabilities and other resource base, the following would be pursued;

- 5.2.1 Review Human Resource Policy to respond to the human development needs, reflect the changes in a revised organogram and also in a comprehensive human resource strategy. Among the more immediate actions is the creation of new but strategic roles within the structure of the organization. A Head of Programmes for instance is critical in order to leverage space for the Executive Director to focus more on strategic instead of programmatic matters. Similarly, a more senior position for Business Development would drive NOYED's efforts at attaining resource sustainability.
- 5.2.2 The review would also respond to gender and inclusion with an emphasis on the recruitment and development of more young women, young persons with disability.
- 5.2.3 Review existing organogram highlighting clear linkages between management and governance and also to include critical designations/roles necessary for NOYED mission. Attached to this strategy is a revised organogram.

- 5.2.4 Build staff capacity through formal training, mentoring and coaching to be led by reputable institutions such as the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC)
- 5.2.5 Implement a Resource Mobilization Strategy with an emphasis on diversification of funding beyond traditional sources. A draft strategy named *REMOST* has been developed as part of the strategy development process and is attached as Appendix 5.

5.3 Organizational structure, systems and procedures

There exists a clear Organogram with an appreciable clarity regarding the composition and responsibilities structures-governance, management, administrative and programmes. The governance domains are anchored on a constitution that spells our vision and mission, the objectives, strategies as well as key governance and management structures and committees. Human Resource Management Policy and Financial Management & Procedures Policy, Gender Policy, Child Protection and Data Protection Policy are important policy documents already available. Majority of these policies were however developed several years ago and require review in order to respond to new developments. The following would therefore be pursued as part of efforts to grow NOYED as a living organization;

5.3.1 Review existing constitution to provide further clarity and meaning to the following;

5.3.1.1 The nature of NOYED, that is, a systematic shift from an indigenous local Ghanaian NGO with an initial focus on service delivery to a more profound rights-based organization with presence at subnational, national level and beyond.

5.3.1.3 Expand the mandate and specificity of duties of the Board members. Proposals for an extended mandate were also developed as part of the strategy development process and attached as appendix 7

5.3.1.4 Clarify the distinct roles of the board and management team.

5.3.1.5 Review existing Gender Policy and expand it beyond the narrow emphasis on women to include contemporary developments in the scope of gender

5.3.2 Develop new policy documents and expand other existing ones as are indispensable in an organization desirous of persisting within complex development contexts. The following would be pursued;

5.3.3 Expand Child Protection Policy into a Safeguarding policy in order to guarantee adequate protection for other at-risk groups that NOYED would be serving e.g., women, persons with disability and minorities from extremely underserved communities

5.3.4 Expand ICT Policy into a Data Protection Framework

5.3.5 Develop a Risk Management Policy and Health and Safety Policy

- 5.3.6 Reposition the organization to become a torch bearer playing more leadership role in grey areas especially those yet to experience a concentration of NGOs. Girls in early childhood development, and community driven best practices in conflict management and women in non-traditional trades e.g., tricycle, tiling, POP and electricals would be under the lens for the next five years.

5.4 Visibility, credibility, accountability and legitimacy

NOYED has an appreciable level of visibility within the development community in Ghana. A policy and practice on branding, extended reach in interventions, active website, IEC materials, strategic use of the media and a conscious effort to reach out and collaborate with others continue to increase her visibility. Statutory and regulatory agencies and departments also recognize the organization. In particular, the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, Non-Profit Organization Secretariat, Registrar General's Department and the National Youth Authority.

In addition to the credibility, NOYED is viewed as an NGO with a legitimacy to represent the constituents. Accounts are regularly audited and outcomes shared with partners. Annual narrative and financial reports are consistently prepared and disseminated. In spite of the achievements, the overreliance on traditional media, limited national and global presence and slow pace in making subgroups within her constituents, remain gaps that require attention. In order to increase visibility, deepen credibility and legitimacy, the following would be pursued;

- 5.4.1 Increase the use of social media in bringing about change, ensure that staff, both existing and new ones as well as governance and other structures buy into new media and drive its application in NOYED business.
- 5.4.2 Consolidate her presence and lead role in thematic coalitions, networks and alliances in Northern Ghana and extend this to national and global levels. To sustain her brand however, such alliances would be with others with shared vision and mission.

Appendix 1: Estimated Beneficiaries

Thematic area	Gender	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Inclusive Transformative education	All	51,225	52,470	73,764	88,517	90,668
	Females	15,368	15,741	22,129	26,555	27,200
	Males	35,858	36,729	51,635	61,962	63,468
Health	All	29,372	7,429	24,812	100,593	100,593
	Females	20,560	5,200	17,368	70,415	70,415
	Males	8,812	2,229	7,444	30,178	30,178
Livelihood & governance	All	58,250	69,900	69,900	69,900	69,900
	Females	46,600	55,920	55,920	55,920	55,920
	Males	11,650	13,980	13,980	13,980	13,980
Environment and Climate Change	All	2,820	2,934	3,226	2,996	3,270
	Females	1,410	1,467	1,613	1,498	1,635
	Males	1,410	1,467	1,613	1,498	1,635
Total direct beneficiaries	All	141,667	132,733	171,701	262,006	264,431
	Females	83,938	78,328	97,030	154,388	155,171
	Males	57,729	54,405	74,671	107,618	109,261
	PWDs	1,417	1,327	1,717	2,620	2,644
Indirect beneficiaries		425,001	398,199	515,104	786,017	793,294

NOYED THEORY OF CHANGE 2023-2027

