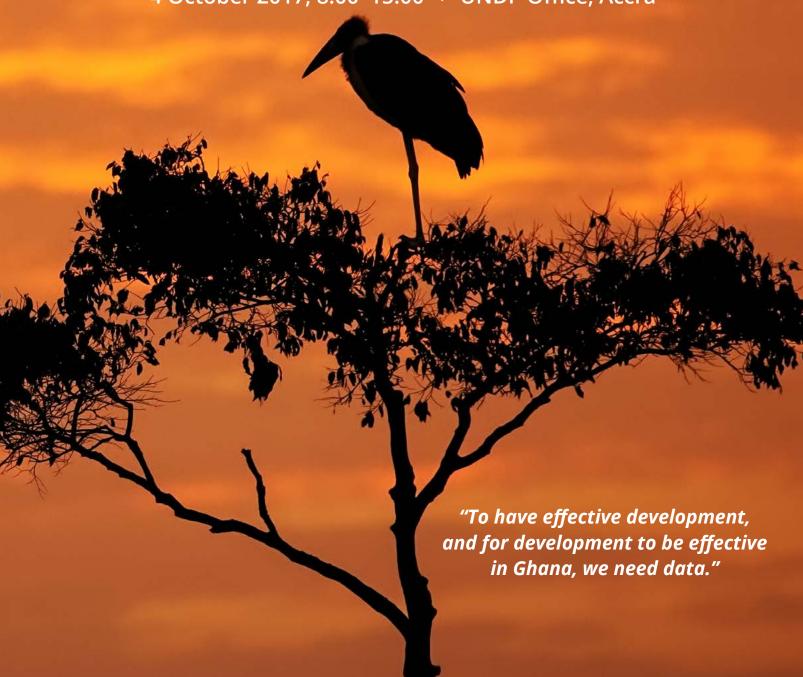# GHANA

Data Strategy and Capacity Building

Data Scoping Meeting
4 October 2017, 8:00–15:00 ◆ UNDP Office, Accra

"To have effective development, and for development to be effective in Ghana, we need data."

FOUNDATION CENTER
Knowledge to build on.

AFRICA PHILANTHROPY NETWORK
Voice and Action for African Philanthropy

SDG Philanthropy Platform

Overview

Awareness of the value of data in achieving important social and development goals has been increasing in Ghana in recent years. In 2011, Ghana signed the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a multilateral initiative with aims to secure commitments from governments to promote transparency, fight corruption and harness data and new technology to strengthen governance. The government also created the National Information and Technology Agency (NITA) in 2011 to develop and manage an open government data portal as part of a movement to make government data more available. Over the last few years, NITA has been working towards setting up repositories and portals of government data.[1]

Because existing data initiatives are largely driven by the government, they usually do not take into account data from or about civil society actors. In particular, Ghana lacks a dedicated platform and framework for collecting, sharing, and analyzing data on philanthropy. With this in mind and to address this lack, Foundation Center, in collaboration with SDG Philanthropy Platform and African Philanthropy Network, co-convened a data scoping meeting on October 4th 2017 in Accra.

The specific objectives of the data scoping meeting were to:

1 Understand the value and opportunities for advancing the philanthropy data agenda in Ghana.

2 Establish common principles for collaborative data and knowledge management.

3 Identify key data and knowledge challenges and needs.

4 Explore existing technologies for collecting and sharing data and knowledge.

5 Set local data and knowledge goals and priorities.

This report summarizes the outcomes of the data scoping meeting, including highlights from the discussions and key recommendations.

Setting the Scene

Ghana has a long and celebrated tradition of philanthropic giving, most of which takes place informally. It is very common in Ghana to help out a relative in need or for the community to come together to help out a fellow community member. In addition, Ghana has an established tradition of Zakat (also known as Zakah), an Islamic practice of philanthropic giving.[2] Over the last few decades, Ghana has also experienced a rise in institutional philanthropy. This includes grantmaking by foundations established by wealthy individuals, a rise in corporate giving, and an increase in the number of community and issue-based philanthropy organizations.

The philanthropic sector in Ghana, although contributing to national development outcomes, has no specific platform to ensure its voice is heard and is lacking data to highlight its actual role and potential impact to the development ecosystem in the country. Ghanaian philanthropic organizations recognize the need to participate in national development dialogues and collectively organize, and there is also a strong desire to collaborate around data so that there is a better understating of the sector and who is doing what and where. Moreover, philanthropic organizations stand to benefit themselves by having better data on the collective work of the field, allowing them to make more informed decisions about how and where to target their efforts.

Principles for Collaborative Data and Knowledge Management

In a facilitated plenary discussion, participants proposed principles to guide philanthropic data collection and management in Ghana. The principles provide a foundation for building trust and confidence among data sharing partners by prioritizing values such as respect, transparency, objectivity, and relevance with respect to data collection and sharing processes. They serve as a starting point for the development of a collective strategy that addresses the data challenges and needs experienced by philanthropic organizations in Ghana. Participants identified the following principles:

FINDINGS FROM PRE-MEETING SURVEY ON CURRENT DATA PRACTICES

A pre-meeting survey was conducted that sought views on the data-related experiences, challenges, and needs of participating organizations. Fourteen (14) respondents participated in the survey. Here are some key findings:

100%
said their organizations assess the impact of their programs.

93%
are open to sharing lessons learnt with their peers.

86%
use indicators to track the impact of their work.

79%
had a monitoring and evaluation strategy.

57%
said their organizations use comparative information from the work of other organizations.

In general, it is evident from the survey results that the participating organizations give high priority to data analysis, learning, and evaluation.

When asked about the most pressing data-related challenges facing their organizations, responses ranged across the spectrum, from issues of data access, capacity, application, sharing, and comparability, to concerns regarding technology, and finance.

Interestingly, a majority of the respondents (79%) said their organizations had access to the kinds of information they needed to achieve their goals. At the same time, when asked about whether it would be helpful to have a common portal for sharing data across civil society organizations, a majority (71%) said it would, while the others said they needed more information.

◆ **DATA QUALITY:** There has to be an agreed upon set of guidelines to ensure data credibility, accuracy, and verifiability. It was proposed that these guidelines would be further discussed at the next meeting.

◆ **DATA-RELATED GOALS MUST BE "S.M.A.R.T.,"** in other words, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

◆ **CONTEXT-SPECIFIC PROCESSES:** Data processes, including data collection and management, should reflect the local context and ensure local ownership.

◆ **RELEVANCE:** Data must be relevant and responsive to local needs. It is also important to understand that not all data are relevant, and that data cannot achieve everything on its own but will have limitations.

◆ **USER FRIENDLINESS:** Data must be analyzed and presented in ways that are easily understandable. Qualitative data should be collected and shared, along with quantitative data.

◆ **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Conditions for data sharing and access should be defined to establish a common understanding of what is confidential, what isn't, and how data will be used.

◆ **ACKNOWLEDGING DATA SOURCES:** Intellectual property rights/data ownership must be properly credited, especially when analyzing data that is not one's own.

◆ **RECIPROCITY:** Data providers should receive something in exchange from data users.

◆ **DATA ACCESS BY PEER ORGANIZATIONS OR RESEARCHERS:** Under what conditions can individual-level data be used for secondary data analyses and by whom? Data provided by an organization should not be used for purposes that could undermine that organization's own operational space/niche.

◆ **INTEROPERABILITY:** Newly collected and analyzed data should be compatible and interoperable with existing data. Guidelines must be developed to ensure that data from different sources are appropriately used outside of their original context.

Data Knowledge Challenges and Needs

In order to develop a data and capacity building strategy for Ghanaian philanthropy, the group first identified the challenges and needs currently experienced by the sector, to prevent the continuation of bottlenecks, build the right tools, and develop the right approaches to meet the needs.

CHALLENGES

Participants identified the following data challenges:

◆ **CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS:** Organizations experience a shortage of required capacity to collect, analyze and report data due to a lack of professional skills and financial resources.

◆ **TECHNOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS:** Organizations lack access to high-quality technological tools for data creation, collection, analysis, and visualization.

◆ **FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS:** Collecting, analyzing and reporting data need dedicated financial resources. Current levels of organizational investment in data-related activities and capacity building are insufficient.

◆ **LACK OF COLLABORATION:** The sector lacks a culture for working together to collect and share data. Organizations have reported difficulty in sharing with and receiving data from peer organizations. As a result, often there are duplications of efforts. It is also challenging to collaborate with the government on data issues as access to government sources can be difficult. In addition, different organizations in the sector with diverse objectives present a challenge in terms of having common data goals.

◆ **QUALITY CONSTRAINTS:** Available data is often unreliable and of poor quality due to the lack of standard methodological practices and response bias. The authenticity of existing data is often impossible to verify. In addition, when data-related information is translated from one language to another, often key insights and lessons get lost in the process.

NEEDS

Participants identified the following as key data needs to be addressed:

◆ **SHARED STANDARDS:** Common data standards are needed, including guidelines for collecting, sharing, reporting, and comparing data in order to harmonize data collection and management practices.

◆ **TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY:** Tools and technology are needed that will enable greater efficiencies in data collection and sharing. Also, there is a need for a national data platform where everyone can easily add, update data and knowledge under agreed upon rules and standards using user-friendly technologies.

◆ **EXISTING DATA AND KNOWLEDGE:** There is a need to synthesize existing data and knowledge of the field so that it can be easily grasped, shared and utilized.

"The government needs to play a key role in driving and facilitating data conversations in order to make data a key element in decision making process."

◆ **CAPACITY BUILDING:** Training and capacity building on data collection and management are needed to address data quality issues, proper use of data, and technological limitations.

◆ **ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT:** The government needs to be involved as a facilitator and a major player in collecting and sharing data.

◆ **CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS:** The data process must respect the local context by ensuring culturally sensitive data collection practices and reporting methods.

Leveraging Technologies for Collecting and Sharing Data

Ghana's work toward a collective data system for philanthropy can draw lessons and inspirations from existing data platforms and tools. Examples that were discussed during the Data Scoping Meeting Include:

◆ **EXAMPLE 1:** An online, interactive map created by the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) provides information on development projects by issue and geographic area. For more information visit kcdf.or.ke/grants-map.

◆ **EXAMPLE 2:** An online, interactive map created by Asociacion de Fundaciones Empresariales (AFE) in Colombia shows AFE's member foundations and their projects by geographic location. For more information visit mapa.afecolombia.org/#/app/maps.

◆ **EXAMPLE 3:** Southern Africa Trust, with help from Foundation Center, built an online, interactive map to show their regional grants and projects by geographic locations. For more information visit southernafricatrust.org/grants-disbursed/.

◆ **EXAMPLE 4:** SDGFunders.org is a data-driven "sister" website to the SDG Philanthropy Platform. It presents aggregate data on foundation funding to the Sustainable Development Goals. The portal illustrates the fact that, perhaps without realizing it, global philanthropy has already been working towards achieving the SDGs. It makes data on SDG-related philanthropic investments more accessible, including investments by goal, region, country and population group, and allows for comparison to Official Development Assistance. The site also functions as a knowledge center, providing information on partnerships, relevant events, stories and research related to philanthropy and the SDGs. For more information visit sdgfunders.org.

Linking Global and Local Knowledge Initiatives

A key component to advancing the philanthropy data agenda in Ghana is tying it to other existing data initiatives at the national, regional and global levels. These initiatives can serve as an opportunity for connecting different stakeholders on collective goals, and provide frameworks and tools to guide the data process at the national level as well as act as important forums to raise awareness about local philanthropy's contributions to global development. The group discussed the following key initiatives:

◆ The **GLOBAL PHILANTHROPY DATA CHARTER**, developed by the Worldwide Initiative for Grantmaker Support (WINGS), is a framework to guide organizations in the sector to help them to improve philanthropy data, while acknowledging the diversity of context, culture, and legal frameworks within which these organizations operate. In particular, it includes a set of operating principles for collecting, managing, and providing access to data. The Data Charter was developed collectively through a series of global consultations and is regularly refined and updated. For more information visit philanthropydata.wingsweb.org.

◆ The **GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DATA** works to build an enabling environment for harnessing the data revolution for sustainable development by supporting countries to develop data roadmaps, mobilizing collective global action on data and developing global data principles and protocols. For more information visit data4sdgs.org.

◆ The **SDG PHILANTHROPY PLATFORM** aims to foster partnerships among philanthropy, governments and multilateral organizations to facilitate a more enabling environment for the sector in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. For more information visit sdgfunders.org/about.

◆ **NATIONAL STATISTICAL BUREAUS**, such as Ghana Statistical Service, are the main keepers of data in the country. It is crucial for philanthropy to engage with statistical bureaus and make sure their contributions and activities are linked to national data frameworks to ensure a complete picture of development financing and programs in Ghana. For more information visit statsghana.gov.gh.

◆ One of the main recommendations in the report titled **"A WORLD THAT COUNTS"**, presented in November 2014 by the United Nations Secretary-General's Independent Expert and Advisory Group on Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, was that a UN World Data Forum on Sustainable Development Data (UN World Data Forum) would be the suitable platform for intensifying cooperation among various professional groups to promote increased availability and access to data. These groups would include information technology builders, geospatial information managers, data scientists, and other users, as well as civil society stakeholders. As an outcome of that recommendation, the first United Nations World Data Forum was hosted from 15 to 18 January 2017 by Statistics South Africa in Cape Town, South Africa. The second UN World Data Forum will be hosted by the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority of the United Arab Emirates from 22 to 24 October 2018 in Dubai.

◆ The **AFRICAN OPEN DATA CONFERENCE (AODC)** took place in Accra from July 17-21, 2017 in order to push the leadership role of the private sector in supplying, using, and demanding open data. The conference also aimed to bring together innovators and visionaries to grow their networks, hone their success, and connect with sources of support. AODC introduced investors and donors to an expanding sector that seeks and supplies open data to achieve development goals in Africa and around the globe.

Setting Local Data Goals and Priorities

To identify the next steps in developing a data strategy in Ghana, meeting participants identified goals and priorities for the sector. The priorities were developed through a process of discussing and ranking the needs and challenges that had been identified earlier. The following three priority areas received the most votes and were selected as the most urgent matters to focus on going forward:

1. **SUSTAINABLE FINANCING AND RESOURCES (15):** Participants stressed the need for dedicated funding for research, data collection, analysis, and management to ensure proper resourcing for building a longer-term sustainable data strategy and data management system. Currently, there are very limited resources available to carry out data-related work and budget constraints prevent organizations from investing in data-related work and capacity building.

2. **CAPACITY BUILDING AND TECHNOLOGY (10):** Participants also identified capacity building as an urgent need. This includes training in the areas of data collection and management, addressing key data quality issues, being able to define and categorize different types of philanthropic entities, and adopting and leveraging technology to gather and analyze data.

3. **ENGAGING WITH GOVERNMENT (9):** Participants expressed the need to be able to access government data, which is currently not open. Also, there is a need for the government's involvement and participation in data dialogues with the CSOs that play a central role in data movement in Ghana.

Closing Remarks and Next Steps

The Data Scoping Meeting provided an initial opportunity for Ghanaian philanthropic and other civil society organizations to come together and begin jointly developing a strategy for data sharing and management. It represents the start of a multi-phase Philanthropy Data Strategy and Capacity Building process that will help the sector to better document its contribution to Ghana's national development.

The principles, challenges, needs, and priorities identified during the Data Scoping Meeting will inform the next steps of the process, including a Philanthropy Data Strategy and Capacity Building Workshop that will take place on the 29th of November 2017 in Accra.

Endnotes

1 Ghana Open Data Portal: unleashing the power of Open Data. (2017, February 7). Retrieved from Ghana Open Data Portal: unleashing the power of Open Data.

2 Dogarawa, Ahmad B. *Islamic social welfare and the role of Zakah in the family system: a case for Muslim minorities in Ghana*. 2008.

RESOURCES

Advancing Human Rights
Human Rights Funders Network and
Foundation Center

Early Childhood Development in East Africa
Foundation Center and Bernard Van Leer Foundation

Equal Footing
Foundation Center and Bloomberg Philanthropies

Fondos A La Vista
Alternativas y Capacidades

Foundation Maps
Foundation Center

Global Philanthropy Data Charter
Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support
and Foundation Center

GPSDD
Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

KCDF Grants Map
Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF)

SDGfunders
Foundation Center and SDG Philanthropy Platfrom

Southern Africa Trust Grants Disbursed
Southern Africa Trust

**The AFE strategic platform of Foundations
and their projects**
Asociación de Fundaciones Empresariales AFE

Ghana Data Strategy and Capacity Building Data Scoping Meeting

Strengthening organizations to develop their own long term sustainable data strategy, capacity, and tools for more effective development outcomes and grantmaking

4 October 2017, 8:00–15:00

UNDP Office, House No. 27, Ring Road East, Accra

Time	Session	Speaker
08:00-8:30	Setting the Scene: Welcome, Introductions, Objectives and Survey Findings	Pearl Darko, UNDP Stigmata Tenga, APN Larry McGill, FC
08:30-09:15	Principles for Collaborative Data and Knowledge Management Facilitated Session	Larry McGill, FC
09:15-10:45	Data and Knowledge Challenges and Needs Facilitated Session	Larry McGill, FC
10:45-11:00	Coffee Break	
11:00-12:00	Leveraging Technologies for Collecting and Sharing Data and Knowledge Local & International Case Studies	Larry McGill, FC
12:00-13:00	Lunch	
13:00-13:15	Linking Global and Local Knowledge Initiatives Presentation	Arif Ekram, FC
13:15-14:45	Setting Local Data and Knowledge Goals Facilitated Session	Larry McGill, FC
14:45-15:00	Closing Remarks and Next Steps	Larry McGill, FC Issac Debrah, UNDP

APPENDIX B - PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Africa Philanthropy Network
Stigmata Tenga

Africa Youth Development and Training Center
Christian Ahodie

African Assistance Plan
Rose Meda Asare

Carora Consult
Nicholas Atampugre

Foundation Center
Larry McGill
Arif Ekram

Impact Hub Accra
William Senyo

National Philanthropy Forum
Dr. Ben Ocra

Pure Home Water
Lydia Senanu
Michael Anyekase

SIRDA
Hajia Alima Sagito-Saeed

The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF)
Abigail Burgesson
Nana Bamea Kyei-Boadu

Trend
Kofi Biscoff

TRMC
Karen Sai

UNDP
Pearl Darko
Isaac Debrah
Radhika Lal
Grace Dankwa

Water Health Ghana
Nana Fredua
S.K.M. Rao

West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)
Nana Afadzinu

WSUP
I. B. Musah

About SDG Philanthropy Platform

Launched by the United Nations Development Program, Foundation Center, and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors in 2014, SDG Philanthropy Platform's (SDGPP) partnerships illustrate the dedication of foundations and philanthropists from North and South America to Asia and from Europe to Africa. The SDG Philanthropy Platform informs and catalyzes collaboration through building awareness and connections between those working in the philanthropy sector and beyond. SDGPP shares a belief that the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an important and effective new roadmap to a better world for all. The platform has brought together hundreds of foundations and philanthropists across many countries to create new partnerships to increase funding and create programs that will have greater, and more sustainable, impact on people's lives.

For more information about SDGPP, please contact Pearl Darko, national coordinator of SDG Philanthropy Platform (Ghana), at pearl.darko@one.un.org.

About Africa Philanthropy Network

The Africa Philanthropy Network (APN) is a continent-wide network of African philanthropic organizations. The Network was launched in July 2009 at an inaugural convening led by: African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) and TrustAfrica (TA). The mission of the Africa Philanthropy Network (APN) is "to be the platform for the promotion of an African voice and agenda for philanthropy."

For more information about APN, please contact Stigmata Tenga, executive director of APN, at stenga@africaphilanthropy.org.

About Foundation Center

In order to strengthen the philanthropic sector to achieve more effective development and grantmaking outcomes, Foundation Center works with partners to understand the global philanthropic landscapeand the in-country contexts within which philanthropy operates. We work with partners to understand specific data and knowledge gaps and associated capacity issues, and facilitate the building of long term sustainable local data strategies and capacity to address these issues. We work to provide technical assistance to local philanthropic organizations and associations to develop their own data collection processes and infrastructure and organize information in ways that allow it to be accessed, aggregated, analyzed, compared, and researched. Important partners in this work may include the National Bureau of Statistics, international and local foundations and philanthropists, grantees, and existing data infrastructure networks and processes both global and local, such as the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support (WINGS), and others.

For more information about Foundation Center or this work, please contact Lauren Bradford, director of global partnerships, at lbr@foundationcenter.org.