

Improving cooperation

Enhancing the cooperation between key actors of the decentralisation process

SfDR Focal Area 3

Situation

The government of Ghana promotes democratic development and the improvement of public services at the local level. Within this process, the national decentralisation policy framework forms one of the main pillars of the decentralisation reforms. The guiding principles of this framework are in the areas of political decentralisation and legal reforms, administrative decentralisation, decentralised planning, fiscal decentralisation and citizens' participation.

The GIZ-implemented Support for Decentralisation Reforms (SfDR) programme supports the implementation of the Ghanaian decentralisation reforms at local level and develops the necessary capacities of the partner institutions in 40 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). At the same time, the project follows a multi-level approach and supports the national partners in establishing coordinating mechanisms between local and regional levels and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) as well as the Ministry of Finance (MoF). The National Association of Local Authorities of Ghana (NALAG) holds a key position in communicating the goals of the MMDAs and in representing the members in the national decentralisation process.

Challenges

Despite the impressive development progress that has been made during the past programme activities at the national and regional level, there are still structural challenges of counteracting bodies at and between national, regional and district levels.

Project Name	Support for Decentralisation Reforms (SfDR)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Duration	April 2016 – March 2019
Budget	EUR 5,800,000 (BMZ) Additional co-financing agreements in preparation (USAID and GAC)
Lead Executing Agency	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD)
Partner Organisations:	Fiscal Decentralisation Unit (FDU) of the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Urban Development Unit (UDU) of the MLGRD, Local Government Service Secretariat (LGSS), Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS), National Association of Local Authorities of Ghana (NALAG), Center for Democratic Development (CDD)

On the one hand, there are challenges in the field of communication and in the cooperation structures between key actors of the decentralisation process. These deficiencies are manifested in a weak performance on the operational level, such as regarding the generation of feasible financial plans.

There is also lack of dialogue platforms to address recognised deficiencies and to develop synergies between local government stakeholders and central state actors.

On the other hand there is a lack of capacitating training support for local staff, especially in the area of increasing local revenue generation, as well as inadequate institutional capacities in dialoguing with the population.



Practice-oriented training, the definition of roles and functions and the establishment of coordination mechanisms are important measures to improve the cooperation between the key actors of the decentralisation process.

This includes the national, regional and district level (far left) as well as traditional authorities and the civil society (left).



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*Together we are strong!**SfDR aims at improving the cooperation between the key actors of the decentralisation process.*

Objective

In Focal Area 3, SfDR aims at strengthening the effectiveness of the countrywide decentralisation reform on a structural level.

Therefore, SfDR aims to improve the cooperation structures between the key actors of the decentralisation process. The programme activities support the key decentralisation reform actors in defining their roles and establishing effective coordinating mechanisms.

Hence the programme also focuses on the capacity building development of its partner institutions.

Achievements and expected results

SfDR supports the different actors in the field of decentralisation to develop a conducive working environment for the successful realisation of the decentralisation reforms. The implementing partners at the local level that have already begun to improve their development planning capacities will be further capacitated and structurally strengthened in providing their services to the population.

Among others, SfDR's support aims at achieving the following results:

- Regional Coordination Councils annually and systematically assess the training needs in planning and monitoring in their districts.
- A pilot training concept on local revenue generation and management is developed by relevant national stakeholders. The training has been implemented and is in line with the standard training programme for local government officers.
- Two measures to further develop the communal revenue generation and development planning have been discussed by representatives of the national, regional and district administrations and NALAG.
- Two practical examples of new participatory district planning methods from two urban partner districts, including one regarding gender-sensitive planning will be presented by the Urban Development Unit (UDU) of the MLGRD.

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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As at 06/2016

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.