

**INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
SANITATION STUDIES (IESS)**

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**COASTAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
TO CLIMATE AND DIARRHOEA (C2R-CD) PROJECT**



Summary Report on Community Entry Activities

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C2R-CD COMMUNITY ENTRY FIELD VISIT – OCTOBER 2020

1.0 Introduction

The C2R-CD Project Team undertook a four-day (6th – 9th October) community entry visit to the study communities and their respective Municipal/District Assemblies. The objective of the visit was to introduce the project to the officials of the Assemblies and the leaders of the various study communities and ask for their support in the course of the research activities. The community entry also forms a core part of stakeholder engagement activities in line with the transdisciplinary research approach of the project involving the need to engage and involve all relevant stakeholders throughout the research process so as to enhance the uptake of results.

In all, four Assemblies and five communities were visited across three regions (Volta, Greater Accra and Central). At each of the Assemblies, a PowerPoint presentation on the project was made to the participants who were mainly made up of Coordinating Directors, Planning (Development and Physical), District Health, Budget and National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) Officers among others. The presentations were followed by questions/clarifications and general discussions on the C2R-CD project and the role the Assemblies can play to support the project as well as the potential benefits to be derived from the research.

The opportunity was also used during this interaction to highlight the importance of transdisciplinary research, the role of research in providing evidence-based support for the developmental agenda of the Assemblies as well as its potential to bring to focus the issues within the jurisdictions of the Assemblies to public attention. The highlights of the community entry activities are presented below:

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2.0 Highlights of the Interactions at the District and Community Levels

2.1 Anloga District Assembly – Volta Region

At the Anloga District Assembly, the meeting was held at the office of the Coordinating Director. It was attended by seven (7) officials from the District Assembly including the District Coordinating Director (DCD), District Finance Officer (DFO), Planning Officer, the Director of Social Welfare, the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) Officer, District Director of Health Services (DDHS) and the District Health Officer.

Following an introduction of participants and the purpose of the meeting by Dr. Ted Annang and the DCD respectively, Dr. Dzidzo Yirenya-Tawiah, the Principal Investigator (PI) made a presentation on the C2R-CD Project;

- Dr Yirenya-Tawiah indicated that though diarrhoea has been with us for some time climate change poses additional threat, noting that publishers such as the Lancet has identified Africa as one of the continents at greater risk of climate change impacts. She noted the causes of diarrhoea, the associated research gap in terms of limited knowledge on how low lying coastal ecosystems influence its epidemiology.
- She indicated that the core objective of the C2R-CD project is to predict the evolution of diarrhoea and provide information for resilience and preparedness in mitigating the impacts of climate change and diarrhoea with the Assemblies and communities as strategic partners. She also noted the interlinkages of climate change issues and diarrhoea noting the transdisciplinary nature of the team and the approach to the C2R-CD project
- She concluded that the visit was to introduce the project to the Assembly and the communities and to seek their support in the research process

2.1.1 Key Issues/Questions

- There was a question about why Aflao was not included instead of Anloga and Keta which are in same vicinity. To this an explanation on the approaches and considerations for site selection was given in details to the participants, that Anloga District communities are mainly coastal whereas the community selected for the study in the Keta Municipality (Anyako) is one that is far from the coast, this is to help compare results between those communities close to the coast and those far off.
- Another issue raised regards the crafting of policies using the top-down approach such that proposed solutions do not reflect what is on the ground. However, the Assembly was given the assurance that the C2R-CD project has as part of its activities policy analyses, although the team agreed that there usually is a mismatch between policy and the real situations on the ground.

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- The implications of municipal waste management on diarrhoea incidence and management were also discussed briefly.
- In all, the Assembly was very welcoming of the Team and project and promised to give all the needed support.
- Regarding the community durbar, it was noted that Tuesdays (non-fishing day) is most suitable for community engagement activities.

Selected Photos: *Anloga District Assembly – Volta Region*



2.2 Keta Municipal Assembly (KeMA) –Volta Region

The meeting was held in the conference room of the Keta Municipal Assembly (KeMA) and was moderated by Mr. John Ntibrey, the Municipal Planning Officer (MPO) of the Assembly. It was well attended by a large number of officials from all the departments and units of the Assembly including the Municipal Coordinating Director (MCD), Social Welfare, the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO), the Environmental and Municipal Health

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Directorates, Engineering, Education, Human Resource, budget and the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI). A lively discussion followed the project overview presentations, see highlights below.

2.2.1 Key Issues/Questions

- *Why was Anyako selected but not any other coastal community?*
Increased flooding issues, poor livelihood issues and increased potential danger. Anyako is nearly submerged in water but no source of good drinking water. No community was chosen from Keta because the issues of flooding and erosion has improved following the construction of the Keta Sea Defense (KSD) wall.
- *What has the project got for communities in terms of policies (legacy)?*
The project would work with the Assemblies and the communities to inform policy making decisions on physical planning and its implications for diarrhoea resilience.
- *What would be the project's benefits to the communities (e.g. potable water)?*
Knowledge generated from the research would provide information to community members for advocacy. Benefits are information to feed stakeholders with potential interest in providing or putting in place investments into the provision of such amenities – the case of Old Fadama, now receiving much attention following years of research and advocacy was used as an example to drive home the important role research plays in community development

Selected Photos: Keta Municipal Assembly – Volta Region



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2.3 Anyanui Community – Anloga District

The meeting with the opinion leaders and representatives of identifiable groups in Anyanui was held at the E. P. Basic School compound (in the Assemblies of God Chapel). The groups represented at the meeting include the Youth, farmers, mangrove planters, fishermen, and fishmongers, traders and Traditional leadership and the Assemblyman for the Electoral area. They noted that Anyanui is a small community but has a very vibrant market that attracts traders from across the country. Produce and items found in the market include straw woven products (mats, baskets etc.), vegetables, fish, clams, oysters, salt etc.

2.3.1 Key Issues/Questions

- Following the presentations and appeal by Dr. Yirenyah for the community to understand the need for the research and be actively involved, the Assemblyman indicated that some of them are aware of the importance of research. He noted that years back, a research team from the University of Ghana had engaged them on the issue of mangrove restoration. He noted that through the research, they were educated on mangrove plantation and this has become central in the livelihoods (mangrove farming) of participants and the entire community at large.
- He also indicated that among the many challenges facing the community include the limited availability of land hence lack of space for needed facilities such as toilets, drinking water etc. He noted that there was the need for improved toilets that use limited space such as the biofil digester toilets. He was also of the view that it would be very helpful if the C2R-CD project can help provide information on suitable locations for sitting facilities such as toilets and boreholes in the community.
- Regarding the issue of whether an individual can come to the community to conduct a research, the response indicated that though the C2R-CD project works in teams (work packages) and as such would embark on field activities in teams, other researchers and students may come to the community as individuals to undertake their research activities.
- There was also a question regarding how the project is engaging with the health officials (nurses), environmental health officials etc. to help in the research activities. Dr. Yirenyah explained that the team would work with the responsible officials from the Assembly level to the community
- There was a question as to whether it is only the University of Ghana that is mandated to carry out this type of research activity. It was indicated that other Universities do carry out similar research activities.
- It was also noted that the increased presence of mosquitoes especially at dawn present a challenge (diseases) and there is the need to discuss with the nurses to provide more education about how this happens. It was explained that though this is not the main focus of the project, the team is would take note of such issues such as mosquitoes and bring these to the notice of other stakeholders for support
- Other challenges such as limited rainfall and worm infestation, resistance of pests and diseases to chemical control, declining fisheries, declining crop productivity were raised for discussion
- The suitable days for community engagement include Thursdays (10 or 11 am thereabout) and Tuesdays (more suitable to the people of Atiteti)

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Selected Photos: Anyanui, Anloga District – Volta Region



2.4 Atiteti Community – Anloga District

Similarly at the Atiteti Basic School, the C2R-CD Team met with the Chief and Queen Mother of the community together with representatives of the youth, fishermen, fishmongers, farmers and traders. Also present at the meeting included the Health Officer in charge of Community Health and the Assemblyman for the area.

2.4.1 Key Issues Questions

- Declining fisheries - trawlers in the continental shelf and trash fishing are major issues in addition to illegal fishing activities e.g. use of light
- Erosion on the increase due to the impacts of the sea defense constructions, especially the recent ones in Ada, an elder from the community explained that due to the eastward movement of the waves and hence its energy, it was advisable to have fully constructed the sea defense walls from east to west, along the entire stretch at a go. They fear that if care is not taken the impacts of the intensified wave action following the new defense constructions would lead to the destruction of existing defense such as that at Dzita area (eastwards).
- Currently, the major worry of the community has to do with the intensified erosion near the Volta estuary, close to the Fuveme community where there is a sand bar separating the other arms of the lower Volta from the sea. They explained that the sand bar is near breaching and already, the sea waves are able to overtop into the river end. They fear that if the sand bar should be breached (this can happen in a matter of days if nothing is done), the entire Fuveme, Anyanui and Dzita would be submerged as a result.

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- The women also called for support to restore their livelihoods that were disrupted following the Covid-19 pandemic
- The most suitable day for community durbar is Tuesday (no fishing day)

Selected Photos: *Atiteti, Anloga District – Volta Region*



2.5 Anyako Community – Keta Municipal

At Anyako, the meeting was held at Togbui Tenge Dzokoto Gligui's Palace was attended by the Queen Mother of the Community and Regents of two Chiefs, the Chief's Secretary, Linguist, Youth Leaders, Community Health Officers and the Assemblyman for the Electoral area.

2.5.1 Key Issues Questions

- Need to put together a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or a Code of Conduct to guide the research activities and also indicate the commitments of the community and the research team in conducting the research in a manner that does not bring disrepute to any of the parties
- Consider taking advantage of the churches to create awareness about the project ahead of the community durbar. Consider the use of flyers (in Ewe) and interpreters during the engagement
- Sundays, after church was suggested as suitable for community durbar but this should be any time after the end of October 2020

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Selected Photos: *Anyako, Keta Municipal – Volta Region*



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2.6 Gomoa West District Assembly – Central Region

The meeting was held in the office of the Coordinating Director and was attended by officers of the Assembly including the Coordinating Director (DCD), Planning Officer, District Health Officer, NADMO representative and Environmental Health officers.

2.6.1 Key Issues Questions

- The need to keep the Assembly involved so that even as the research progresses, some actions can be taken on some aspects of the problems – as 5 years is a long to wait for the project to end before taking action
- There was the suggestion to include the Fisheries department as stakeholders of interest – Department of Agric and the Coastal Development Authority as well should be considered as stakeholders
- Discussions on the need for health data was also raised

Selected Photos: *Gomoa West District Assembly – Central Region*



2.7 Mumford Community – Gomoa West District

The Mumford meeting was held at the Community Centre overlooking the lorry park and was attended by elders of the community, a former chief fisherman, a Queen Mother, representatives of the youth, fishermen, fishmongers, traders, a pastor (former Assemblyman), the current Assemblyman and the District Planning Officer and the Community Health Officer.

They noted that Mumford remains an important fishing community with 12 of the 36 National Best Fisherman Awards going to fishermen (indigenes) from Mumford. According to the Planning Officer, the community is also highly self-sufficient, they provided many of the infrastructure for the community by themselves.

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2.7.1 Key Issues Questions

- The criteria for selecting study communities was further explained
- One representative was of the view that it would have been more appropriate if the engagement with the opinion leaders of the community included some education on diarrhoea. This Dr. Nana Ama Brown responded by indicating that team would take note of this in planning for the subsequent engagement with the community (communal durbar) and that this current engagement was to inform the opinion leaders of the community about the project and seek their support.
- Suggestions to note for Community Durbar;
 - It should be done during the lean season
 - Notify the Assemblyman for a discussion on the exact or suitable date
 - Potential day for community durbar is Tuesday
 - Consider working through and with churches too

Selected Photos: *Mumford, Gomoa West District Assembly – Central Region*



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2.8 Ablekuma West District Assembly – Greater Accra Region

The meeting was held in the Conference Room of the Assembly and was attended by the Coordinating Director, District Planning and NADMO and representative and Environmental Health officers.

2.8.1 Key Issues Questions

- The need for Assemblies to collaborate on research activities such as the C2R-CD was reiterated as they serve as an avenue to provide evidence (data and information) for decision making and advocacy to attract external support for the Assembly to undertake developmental programmes within their jurisdiction in the face of limited government resources
- The Assembly appointed a focal person (Planning Officer) to support the research team in its activities and also pledged to provide the team with the necessary permission letters to enable them work in the Assembly

Selected Photos: Ablekuma West District Assembly – Greater Accra Region



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2.9 Opetekwei Community - Ablekuma West District

Here the meeting was attended by the Chief and Queen Mother of the Community, Assemblymen (former and current), representatives of the youth and a delegation from the District Assembly made up of the Planner and two NADMO officers. The meeting was held in the residence of the Assemblyman for the area.

2.9.1 Key Issues Questions

- The chief and queen mother present indicated that a meeting would be held and the most suitable day for the community durbar communicated to the project team at a later date.
- The representatives noted the absence of community centres as one of the challenges facing the community
- There were calls for the District Assemblies to revisit the Town Council/Sanitary Task Force to help improve sanitation in the communities.

Selected Photos: *Opetekwei, Ablekuma West District Assembly – Central Region*



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3.0 Recommendations

- Practicalise the transdisciplinary research process – for example consider drafting questionnaires with communities' participation/approval of language use etc.
- Find ways of involving qualified community members and District Assembly officials in research activities e.g. data collection etc. as a means of satisfying part of the 'immediate benefit' needs of communities and stakeholders.
- Anyako has several chiefs controlling segments of the community – all must be informed to participate in the community durbar by sending invitations to them individually or through the Traditional Council.
- In addressing the governance and policy analysis objectives of the project, consider adopting the Transformative Scenario Planning (TSP) approach of engagement with all stakeholders to find out what recommendations would work for policy and governance for diarrhoea resilience and management and what the roles of each stakeholder would be
- A pull-up banner should be produced for use during the project's subsequent engagement activities