



CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL

A Case Study of WRCF's Experiences,
Progress and Lessons Learnt

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The Western Region Coastal Foundation (WRCF) is an innovative programme that encourages effective dialogue between oil, gas, and power (OGP) companies, local communities, and local government in the six coastal districts in the Western Region in Ghana. The WRCF also supports the design and scale-up of pilot development initiatives, and industry-led corporate social responsibility initiatives. WRCF aims to build trust between communities, government, and industry in the six project districts and to help government and industry develop well-informed interventions so that the community at large can benefit both economically and socially from the presence of the oil, gas, and power industry. This in turn will lead to increased stability and economic prospects in the Western Region.

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Table of Content

PART 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
PART 2: STRUCTURE OF CAC	2
PART 3: OPERATIONS OF THE CAC	4
PART 4: CAC’S EXPERIENCE IN THE MSDP PROCESS.....	5
4.1 Outcome Of CAC’s Actions.....	5
4.2 Impact of the CAC	6
4.3 Effectiveness and Efficiency of the CAC Process.....	9
PART 5: REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT ...	10
ANNEX 1: GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE CAC	12
ANNEX 2: LIST OF PERSONS MET	13

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAC	Citizens Advisory Council
COLANDEF	Community Land & Development Foundation
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DFID	Department for International Development
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FON	Friends of the Nation
GNPC	Ghana National Petroleum Company
LOGODEP	Local Governance and Decentralization Program
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MPs	Members of Parliament
MSDP	Multi-stakeholder dialogue platform
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
STMA	Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly
UCSOND	United Civil Society Organisation for National Development
UK	United Kingdom
WRCF	WRCF Western Region Coastal Foundation

PART 1:

Introduction

The discovery of oil in Ghana in 2007 has been a source of major opportunities to promote economic and developmental growth and has raised expectations especially among communities in the coastal districts in Ghana's Western Region. Oil companies expect government to redistribute oil revenues in roads, education and health services and other socio-economic infrastructure, especially in the affected communities. While the emergence of oil and gas and its effective use would be good to Ghana's economy, it has created tension in the Western region. The operations of oil and gas companies has affected fishing, farming and other livelihood sustaining opportunities. Communities also see the emergence of oil and gas as a panacea for job creation, economic growth and welfare development. They expect oil and gas companies to meet their socio-economic needs. This has therefore increased the tension within the region and if left unaddressed, even minor complaints may erupt into major disputes, conflicts and violence. This can also result in damage to reputation of oil and gas companies, a loss of operational time and money, and eventually put future investment opportunities at risk.

Effective channels by which local communities can voice their concerns, and get these concerns addressed, are particularly important. It is within this context that the Government and Ghana, UK Department for International Development (DFID), development partners, stakeholders in the oil and gas industry, traditional rulers and communities in the six coastal districts of the Western region partnered to setup the Western Region Coastal Foundation (WRCF) Programme in 2014. The WRCF was set-up to be the focal point to promote the long-term impact of improved stability and inclusive development prospects in the region through a two-pronged approach. One of these approaches is to improve relationships between oil and gas companies and coastal communities through a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue Platform (MSDP).

The MSDP brings together communities, government, and oil and gas industry in the coastal districts to help government and, oil and gas industry develop well-informed interventions so that communities can benefit both economically and socially from the presence of the oil, gas, and power industry. This will in turn, lead to increased stability and economic prospects in the Western Region. The platform creates and institutionalises conversations at different levels for identifying, prioritising, discussing and addressing growth and developmental needs of the districts. These concerns are communicated through an established Citizens Advisory Council (CAC). The CAC provides a platform for government and industry players to acknowledge and address the concerns presented by affected communities. The main objective of the CAC case study is to generate unique and compelling evidence of the CAC processes, success factors, achievements, challenges and best practices.

This case study investigates the structure, operationalisation of the CAC model, and effects/impact of its operations. This case study demonstrates whether having the Advisory Council stimulates an effective dialogue responding to the set objectives under the WRCF.

PART 2:

Structure of CAC

The CAC is the apex of the multi-stakeholder dialogue platform, which is quite different from what persists in other models, such as LOGODEP and COLANDEF. The CAC oversees the implementation of the dialogue and fosters dissemination of issues and support the design and application of agreed solutions. In relation to this, the Council provides a pressure release mechanism, nipping problems in the bud as they arise and before they can be manifested as antagonism between parties. It further provides early warning of hitherto unforeseen situations and opportunities for community-based monitoring of social and environmental impacts both of industrial development and CSI initiatives. The CAC is collectively responsible for the effectiveness of community conversations and other activities of the multi-stakeholder dialogue platform. To determine the effectiveness of CAC, the following elements are examined:

Council Composition

The CAC is composed of 23 members. It is an independent group which includes traditional rulers in the coastal districts (paramount chiefs and queen-mothers); representatives from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ghana Police Service, Ghana Gas Company Ltd, Western Regional Coordinating Council, Ghana Journalists Association, Tullow Oil, Seaweld Ltd, Ghana National Petroleum Commission, Fisheries Commission, United Civil Society Organisation for National Development, Members of Parliament in the focus districts and representatives from MMDAs. The composition of the CAC reflects the broad range of stakeholders needed to ensure redress of concerns of communities affected by oil and gas in the region.

One unique feature of the composition of the CAC is the democratic process it employs in selecting its leaders. Before engaging the members of CAC, the scope of work just like terms of reference is developed for the council, which details their roles and responsibilities. This is followed by a set of correspondence to agencies that matter to the six coastal districts in search of representations. During the maiden CAC meeting, the Council held an election to select a Chairperson and a vice. The Chairperson, works with the Dialogue Secretariat to facilitate all general meetings of the Council. The Council also developed a charter that outlines the principles to guide the operations of the council ([See Annex 1](#)). One of the interesting norms of the Council is the prescribed dress code; CAC members are required to dress in mufti and not ceremonial/official clothes in order not to get people feel intimidated during public meetings.

Aside the charter, the CAC also developed an opening and closing invocation when they meet as a body. The caption of the invocation underscores the way the Council members' understanding and belief in the operations of CAC.

A more diversified board or council leads to more diversified opinions, resulting in innovative and more refined solutions¹. Therefore, gender diversity boost quality of decision-making; improved governance structures; and better use of the talent pool. However, a look at the female Council representation reveals that women are underrepresented in the constitution of the CAC. Women account for 21 percent of the CAC's composition.

¹ Lieselotte Pellens (2015) The Relevance of Gender Diversity in the Composition of the Board of Directors, Governance Lab, Working Paper No.04/2015

Councils Size

Although the CAC is characterised by the presence of large members, their composition differs at each session depending on the priority issues and concerns that emerged during the dialogue process and the communities who are most affected and are prepared to come to the forum.

CAC's Independence

The CAC is a voluntarily consultative body without legal powers. The body invites actors to attend a public session to respond to issues raised by community members. These public sessions are attended by representatives of communities and provides an opportunity for oil, gas and power companies to respond to the concerns raised by community members. The CAC does not have the authority to compel an organisation to undertake an action in response to an issue nor the authority to sanction any stakeholder or organisation for not attending a meeting. Moreover, the CAC does not directly resolve issues, but they tend to exert extensive control because the members have moral authority. Through this process, they summon those who have concerns and those who have responsibility for resolving problems who appear at a public session to find joint solutions. The CAC serves like a adjudicator in an alternative dispute resolution platform, where the parties directly involved in an issue will be tasked with meeting each other privately to address the concerns and resolve the issue. The CAC, however, does not have the mandate to call for public meetings. All public meetings are coordinated by the Dialogue Secretariat.

Leadership Structure

The CAC oversees the implementation of the dialogue processes and its leadership fosters a culture of open discussion and deliberation, with a thoughtful evaluation of concerns or issues, to support sound decision-making. Working with all stakeholders, the CAC ensures there is an appropriate balance and absence of intimidation.

Council Meetings

All meetings of the CAC meetings are open to the public some of whom may be invited by the Council to share observations or as experts on a topic. In addition to being published on WRCF's website, all records of meetings of the Advisory Council are circulated to a small number of national level agencies that should be kept informed of the operations of the Council.

PART 3:

Operations of the CAC

The CAC is responsible for ensuring that community conversations in the six coastal districts in the Western Region are effectively conducted to meet WRCF's objectives. Community conversations is an ongoing dialogue tool that gives citizens in the Western Region a voice in the development process around the oil, gas and power industry developments. The Advisory Council as an apex body does not directly resolve issues; rather, after issues (community grievances and developmental needs) have been collected and prioritized, the Council invite actors or stakeholders from government agencies and oil, gas and power companies to attend public sessions. The companies and government agencies to whom issues at hand is concerned, brings personnel to directly respond to questions and address pressing issues. These public meetings are very crucial to the achievement of the ultimate goal of the Foundation which is to promote development in communities and ensure political and economic stability for the smooth operations of oil, gas and power companies.

The transparency nature of CAC's operations promotes learning for both Council members and citizens as stakeholders from oil, gas and power industry and government provide key information on issues arising. CAC public sessions are attended by a facilitator, conversation managers, community citizens, actors from oil, gas and power companies as well as government agencies. If for instance, water problem is one of the issues to be discussed, residents from communities which have water issues come to testify before the council and they speak in any language they are comfortable with. Invited government stakeholders and oil, gas and power companies who are related to issue also respond to the issues accordingly. The Council discusses a maximum of 3 broad issues at every sitting. The public sitting is held once every 6 months. Public forum usually starts at 9am to lunch time. Although these sessions are extremely helpful, it is rather surprising that only one day is set aside for the discussion of 3 broad issues. This observation was highlighted by the chairman of the CAC:

"...the duration for the public meetings is too short because citizens have to return to their communities. Usually, our public meetings last for about 4 to 5 hours (i.e. let's say 9am to 2pm). There are a lot of issues which we need a lot of time to discuss. It would have been better if public meetings are held for about 2 to 3 days so that we can deliberate on issues into more detail. Public meetings are held only twice a year, which is also inadequate²".

Once the issues have been deliberated upon, the parties directly involved are tasked to meet privately to ensure that the concerns are addressed and resolved. The Secretariat facilitates such meetings including liaising between the parties for convenient dates, venue and taking records of the negotiations. When a duty bearer refuses or does not honour an invitation to participate in the conversation, the Secretariat will make an appeal to the sector Minister, or a delegation from the Council will visit the duty bearer. A written feedback on the outcome of the negotiations is given to the Advisory Council within a month of concluding the negotiations. During the public session, traditional leaders and security persons on the council do not wear their ceremonial or official attire so as not to create any sense of intimidation.

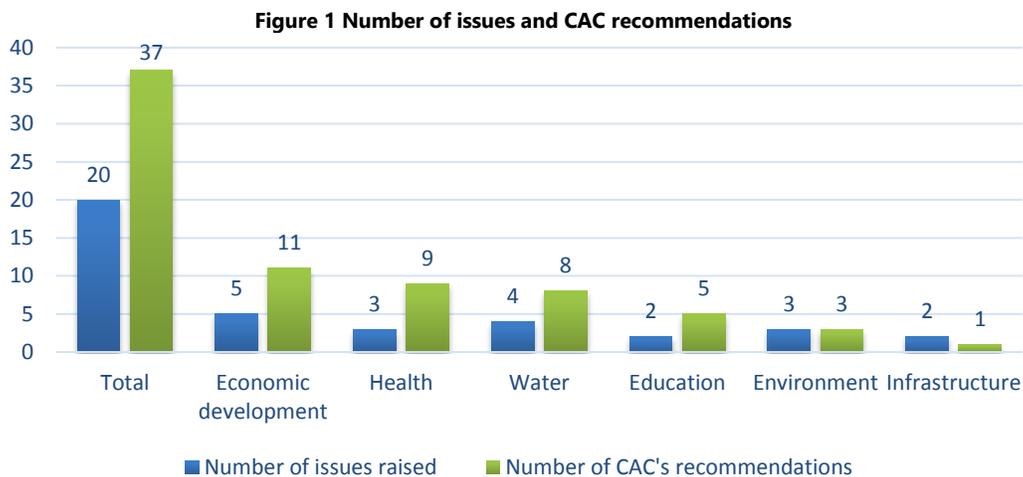
² Nana Kwesi Agyeman IX, CAC Chairman (Paramount Chief, Lower Dixcove Traditional Area)

PART 4:

CAC's Experience in the MSDP Process

4.1 OUTCOME OF CAC'S ACTIONS

Since the CAC was established under the MSDP, it has been a lever for connecting government agencies and oil, gas and power companies to respond to issues. The CAC has been presented with about 20 cases under thematic areas namely Economic Development, Health, Water, Education, Environment and Infrastructure. As shown in the figure below, the CAC has made 37 recommendations towards resolving issues confronting citizens (see figure 1). Oil, gas and power companies and government institutions have responded to these recommendations. Some of the responses include the Lands Valuation Division (LVD) explaining why there has been delays with payment of land compensation for Ghana Gas infrastructure; an in-situ visit by the CAC and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to Zeal Environmental Technological to assess grumbles by residents of Nyankrom (in the Shama District) that the company discharges oil waste into a water body resulting in dead fishes; GNPC/Hess Corporation extending its scholarship reach to all 6 coastal districts; Ghana Gas explaining their operations particularly gas flaring that it has no harmful effects on communities, among others.



The CAC has been influential in bringing important issues and concerns to the forefront of duty-bearers and creating avenues for addressing pressing developmental issues facing citizens which could trigger conflict in the communities. So far, the CAC has invited 22 stakeholders from government institutions, oil, gas and power companies to respond to issues that are related to their operations. Majority of these organisations have honoured such invitations by sending personnel from their organisations to listen to rising concerns and provide their responses accordingly. Although most stakeholders react positively by attending these meetings, some players nonetheless, within the extractive industry are wary of being brought before a public meeting to respond to a problem. A typical example is the case of Zeal Environmental Technologies who turned down an invitation from the Council and Dialogue Secretariat to respond to complaints from residents of Nyankrom in the Shama District. It was claimed that the company discharges oil waste into a water body in Nyankrom hence resulting in dead fishes. An insight on this case is shared by the dialogue lead, Bernice Sam:

"...when we (Council members and dialogue secretariat) heard the Nyankrom case and we invited Zeal. They wrote to us and said, 'no way they are not coming'. They claimed that they do good work so why should they come out there for people to interrogate them on what they do".

In ensuring that prioritised issues are addressed, the CAC and staff from the dialogue secretariat paid a visit to Zeal's operating site to look at their infrastructure and observe their operations. Further dialogue with Zeal ensured an amicable resolution to the issue.

Another is the case of Adamus, a mining company whose activities caused community residents' wall to crack in Anwia. Although they also turned down the invite to attend the public meeting, CAC's invited EPA to provide an expert opinion on the situation. Further engagements with Adamus resulted in the company's readiness to do whatever it takes to ensure that the issue is resolved. Through CAC's recommendations a needs assessment has been conducted for Adamus to perform developmental activities for the communities in which they operate.

4.2 IMPACT OF THE CAC

Example 1: Resolution of land compensation packages

Demand fair, adequate and prompt payment of compensations of farm lands destroyed to pave way for the construction of gas Western Corridor Gas Infrastructure Project constituted about 3% of documented community concerns during conversations initiated by multi stakeholder platform. Although small, (in percentage terms), it posed high risk to oil and gas investments if not properly resolved by duty bearers. Within the affected communities' specific concerns on compensation payments revolved around, (i) lack of clarity on who should be paid compensation if the affected land is a family land or if it belongs to the Chief; (ii) inadequate and late payment of compensation and payment of compensation based on outdated assessment (i.e. assessment done two years later). The CAC summoned Ghana Gas and Land Valuation Division at CAC's public hearing to respond to issues of delays in payment of land compensation, inadequate compensation and payment of compensation to land owners instead of tenants. After explanations from Ghana Gas and Land Valuation Division, the CAC made 6 recommendations by tasking MoFA and Land Valuation Division to provide information; Dialogue Secretariat to undertake research; and local government to address alternative livelihoods.

Through the CAC, the Land Valuation Division submitted useful and practical explanation of the processes deployed in estimating compensations, which signed off complainants' confusion over the difference in compensation paid by government and private sector companies. The Division also provided reasons for the bureaucratic and delay in compensation, which effectively resolved concerns over land compensation. Participants CAC public sessions felt that issues of compensations are much clearer to them as compared to periods prior to establishment of the dialogue platform. Participants felt that many local residents now understand the logic behind the delays in payment of compensations. Most community members have now dropped their unrealistic demands from Ghana Gas.

The CAC's achievement in land compensation demonstrate the importance of having an open and responsive overall approach to stakeholder engagement. The CAC commands respect and this resulted in the response and follow-ups to calls to appear the public session extended to Ghana Gas and Land Valuation Division. The CAC's approach benefits from the responsiveness of duty-bearers in resolution of the land compensation issues. The participation of Ghana Gas in community conversation meetings further contributed to clarifying issues further, bringing about increased understanding among community members.

The CAC experience in land compensation offers examples of effective approaches deploring dialogue to improve and broaden community understanding of how the compensation systems work when government acquires land for infrastructural development. In addition, feedback mechanism imbedded in the CAC

strategy ensures that concerns are not only communicated to affected community members but also to companies related to the extractive industry who are responsible for the problem/issues.

Example 2: Resolution of disruption of water supply

The construction of the Takoradi-Sekondi-Kojokrom rail line disrupted water supply to Kojokrom and its environs. Due to the construction, a lot of pipelines were destroyed and community members had to trek long distances to neighbouring communities just to get access to potable water. Some residents had wanted to attack the engineering company responsible for denying them water. The construction works also divided the town into two making it difficult for residents to move from one side of town to the other. This issue was discussed during a CAC public session where all relevant stakeholders including Teal Engineering, STMA, Ghana Water Company, Amandi Holdings, Ghana Railway Authority were present. The CAC directed the Dialogue Secretariat to invite all actors involved in the railway construction and water services at Kojokrom to present information on the issue. Through CAC recommendations, the Ghana Water Company proactively engaged Teal Engineering to resolve the water issues and supply was restored in the affected areas. Also, through the efforts of the CAC, a walkover path was created to help community members crossover to either side of town. The lack of company response to such requests would have led to tension and possible conflict. Through CAC process, the companies involved in the disruption of water supply and movement came forward to find joint solutions, implying a degree of trust has been achieved. Community members perceive the CAC as an important source of support and a legitimate way to get results regarding infrastructural development. The community members are impressed with the way that CAC session has served to reduce imminent tension.

Example 3: CAC's support to address community concerns on absence of health facility

Many communities in the six coastal Districts have inadequate health facilities and resources (health centers and CHPS compounds). This has contributed to increased pressure on existing facilities resulting in poor service delivery (e.g. long waiting hours, inadequate attention by health workers, deteriorated infrastructure etc.). Other communities have CHPS compounds but these are not functional because there is no furnishing. Example is the CHPS compound at Assuoko Essaman which was commissioned two years ago but is a white elephant. The CAC summoned Ghana Health Services and National Health Insurance Scheme at CAC's public hearing to respond to issues of inadequate health facilities and resources. After explanations from Ghana Health Services and National Health Insurance Scheme, the CAC provided recommendations to the leadership of communities and Western Region House of Chiefs.

Through the CAC public sessions, Tullow Oil heeded to the plea of Assuoko Essaman residents and provided logistical support to revamp the health facility for public access. Presently, the CHPS compound has been furnished with the needed medical supplies and human resource. According to the resident nurse, the CHPS compound can treat at least 10 maternity cases daily without difficulties. Apart from Assuoko Essaman community members, people from close-by communities visit the CHPS compound to access healthcare service. The CHPS compound is now providing general OPD, antenatal care, maternity care, postnatal care, child welfare clinic and family planning services.

The CAC is perceived as a useful actor in holding companies to account. There a progress on the issues that communities advocated for and where CAC helped drive solutions. Participants felt the CAC strategy of bringing all the stakeholders together has greatly helped in resolving issues. Moreover, the nature of the CAC makes its recommendation respected by private sector companies. The recommendation of CAC inspired retooling of Assuoko Essaman CHPS compound.

Example 4: CAC's resolution of quarry blasts

Community members in Anwia complained about cracks of their walls as a result of the operations of Adamus. This issue was profiled for discussion by the CAC in one of its public sittings. The CAC instructed the WRCF to invite Adamus to explain their work ethics, operations and relationship with their stakeholders.

However, Adamus initially refused to respond to the call of WRCF, but later co-operated and turned up to respond to the concerns. Environmental Protection Agency also provided further explanation on the cracks having identified the problem in the Adamus' impact assessment report. Although Adamus could not show but they are filling the gap left in their impact assessment. This demonstrates how the company has attempted to address the needs of the local communities through CAC's invitation and experts from Environmental Protection Agency to respond directly to the issues.

Community members during focus group report being pleased about the step being taken by Adamus to address their concerns. The participants in general agreed that the Adamus case became compelling when it went to the floor of the CAC leading to a wider discussion. There is no doubt that the CAC sessions has helped heighten the need for Adamus to address community concerns. An interview with the dialogue lead corroborates with the above assertion:

"Both Environmental Protection Agency and Adamus knew of the problem. So, the problems are not new. The only thing is that maybe communities have talked about it and nothing is being done. When you talk to community members, they see a lot of value in bringing Adamus before this body for them. They see a lot of value because this is not common to other platforms" Bernice Sam, the Dialogue Lead narrates.

Inclusion of the director of Environmental Protection Agency of the board of WRCF is unique because they are certainly useful and appear to constantly reassure the communities that they are working and they are extremely responsible responsive. Having a stakeholder, such as EPA giving the unique role they play in ensuring that the impact assessments are complied with by industries and spices up the work of the CAC.

Example 5: CAC's sessions present platform for learning

The CAC sittings has become a key source of learning for community members and members of the Council. The use of technical experts in provision of useful explanations to complaints helps to bring understanding and closure to some issues. For instance, when communities made submission of water supply issues, the Community Water and Sanitation Agency admirably presented useful information on the distribution of water supply according to population. The participants did not know about the fact that a population of 5,000 needs a small-town water facility while a population of 2,000 needs a borehole. The CAC session became a useful opportunity for participants to learn about the water supply and helped communities in need water gauge presented by Centre for Energy Policy Analyst. Some of the participants agreed that the CAC session has become a "home" for learning more about the issue and get in in-depth understanding of the issue. The community members interviewed admittedly agreed that CAC has input in the steps taken by companies and, information gathered and presented is openly accessible and useful as they cannot simply jump into conclusion without evidence supporting such claim.

Example 6: GNPC/HESS extending its scholarship reach to all six districts

While there were no major complaints about the scholarship schemes given out by the oil and gas companies, people felt that the companies had to change the style of distributing the scholarship and make it more open. The CAC tasked the Western Region House of Chiefs to review the role that traditional leaders play in the application process. The CAC also tasked WRCF to provide update of all people who have benefitted from the scholarships including the districts or communities they originate from the companies providing scholarships.

As a result of this multipronged effort, communities have seen results in terms of expansion of scholarship schemes to cover more beneficiaries in the six districts. The CAC's public sessions provided an opportunity to oil and gas companies to affect changes in their scholarship schemes. Some communities claim they do not have information on the beneficiaries of scholarship schemes and were not benefitting. The community members observed that the CAC's invitation to Tullow Oil, GNPC and Hess Corporation helped shed light on the scholarship schemes.

4.2 EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE CAC PROCESS

Participants of CAC assessments of the effectiveness of the CAC varied considerably. Several interviewees stated that the level of uptake of issues during CAC sessions has substantially led to the acceptance on the part of all stakeholders uphold the CAC decisions. The CAC has therefore become an important tool for companies to better engage with communities. From that perspective, residents view the CAC as the effective complaint mechanisms for providing remedy to their immediate needs. Some community members consider CAC as 'well designed' and 'well organised' forum help them resolve many concerns in their communities.

It has been a difficult journey to solve problems in some communities. However, the presence of CAC sessions provided easy point of access and face-to-face contact with duty-bearers to handle the issues. For example, in the case of a CHPS compounds Assuoko Essaman for two years, it took concerted effort of the CAC sessions to help resolve. Several local residents who were interviewed observed that the CAC public sessions facilitate faster implementation of infrastructural projects. *"Our CHPS compound problem got resolved within weeks after the CAC public sitting"* a CAC participant happily recounts.

Although there are many positive outcomes, the path for engagement has never been straightforward for the CAC. There were difficult issues, including CAC's role with Teal Engineers, which proved to be too much for collaborating to resolve the case brought against them. As a result, CAC devised strategic means in its pursuit with Teal Engineers case. Teal Engineers thought bringing them before this august body to respond to issues would undermine its credibility. Although Teal Engineers refuse to honour CAC's invitation to respond to Nyankrom case, but responded by writing a letter to flag up the invitation. Teal Engineers was less satisfied and felt the CAC does not have the right to bring them before the public. The CAC reportedly visited. A progressive aspect of CAC's visit was the learning part of Teal Engineers' operations, co-operation and commitment of management to resolve the case. They even dedicated two engineers to participate in CAC subsequent sessions for observation. Although the case was finally resolved, it thus illustrates one of the effective ways of resolving community complaints.

The CAC uses existing community structures as the key means by which communities can raise their concerns about project activities with the traditional leaders, a community-level decision-making council made up of the elders belonging to the locals in the oil and gas enclave.

The CAC sessions have made it easier and cheaper to address community problems. Several cases are handled in one day of public sitting. Moreover, the involvement of members of CAC is more on voluntary bases with some travelling on their own expenses. During meeting, only lunch is provided with meager T&T allowance and finally the strategy of localisation where most meetings are organised at the local/community level underscores the efficient means of CAC operations.

For many communities, employment is a major priority. However, the CAC still has not neared resolving the unemployment issues. Both the CAC and the credibility of the multi-stakeholder dialogue platform are still in question for some residents in the six coastal districts. Whether the CAC initiative has truly made a case for resident in terms of job creation is still in question.

PART 5: Reflections and Lessons Learnt

[CAC approach](#)

Due to the inclusive and participatory approach that the CAC adopts in its operations, stakeholders have a greater sense of ownership of decisions made. This will maintain the excitement and sense of urgency the MSDP process. Moreover, the ownership of process nature of the CAC processes creates a greater sense of ownership over its outcomes and consequently, strengthens its sustainability.

[CAC management style](#)

The success of MSDP hinges on the full participation and commitment of CAC. CAC's style of handling conversations has increased private sector enterprise and local government support of the MSDP initiative. Some organisations in the private sector initially had reservations on participating in the CAC's public meeting. However, as they learned more through the MSDP, they realized that responding to issues from communities was in their interest and have therefore grown to support the process. In a broad sense, the CAC helped to increase the credibility of the MSDP because different stakeholders felt that their voices were being heard during its development. The CAC enables stakeholders and interested groups to gain a better understanding of, and confidence in the process itself, resulting in greater acceptability of eventual findings and recommendations.

[Creating enabling environment](#)

One notable attribute of conversations was the effort CAC members put into addressing concerns and creating an environment in which issues are resolved amicably. The CAC has created an environment that is conducive for the participation of community members and other stakeholders in addressing socio-economic and developmental issues that are critical in ensuring that the extractive industry operates in a peaceful and stable environment. Before recommendations are tabled for redress of residents' concerns, they ensured they have buy-in from local government leaders.

[Continuous Communication among Actors](#)

Although CAC do not solely solve issues, they provide a framework for constructive discussions at all levels and reduce the chances of a breakdown in communication. The CAC has provided a platform for government and oil, gas and power industry players to acknowledge and address pressing concerns and the dialogue platform provides feedback to the communities on how the concerns have then been acknowledged and addressed. Overall, there is an incredible degree of devolved capacity building that occurred among community members as a result of the MSDP development process. The MSDP process gave an opportunity for stakeholder groups to meet, network and discuss issues beyond oil and gas, thereby contributing to the level of "social capital" in the focus districts. These meetings also helped to increase the interest of participants on issues related to oil and gas governance. Through CAC's activities, community members have come to realise that their voice is not just heard but also the outcomes of the MSDP benefits them and their communities at large and this will encourage increased participation in the dialogue process in the future.

[Eminent Persons on Council make a Difference](#)

Composition of the CAC includes eminent personalities such as traditional leaders, industry and government actors and WRCF staff. These individuals are respected and are perceived as important personalities. The respect residents and organisations accord them help in mediation of concerns. In most rural areas, there

are influential leaders who will be crucial to the success of the MSDP. Traditional leaders provide an avenue for arbitration, invaluable historical information on households in the area, and can often convince residents to abide by agreed solutions, which will forestall peace in the affected communities. The residents trust their judgements because they are of the opinion that they have vested interest the operations of companies in the communities.

Annex 1: GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE CAC

Area	Principle Number	Principle
Representative Capacity	#1	Members of the Citizens Advisory Council hold representative capacity, each has been nominated by a body on whose behalf the member shall act.
Responsibility	#2	The CAC will be collectively responsible for the effectiveness of the community conversations and other activities of the Dialogue Platform. It has responsibility in ensuring that the Foundation remains responsive to emerging needs and priorities as identified through the community conversations and other discussions.
Independence of Council Members	#3	The CAC will at all times include a blend of the listed categories of persons such that no individual or small group of individuals will dominate the Council's meetings or decision making.
Future Appointments to the Council	#4	Future appointments to the CAC shall be based on objective criteria. Members nominated by their various organisations should have enough time to dedicate to the Council.
Information Provision	#5	The Dialogue Secretariat will endeavour to supply the Advisory Council with information in a form and of a quality appropriate to enable it to discharge its duties.
Leadership	#6	The Chairperson has responsibility for the leadership of the CAC ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its work.
Performance Evaluation	#7	The CAC will undertake a rigorous annual assessment of its own performance. The assessment will show whether a member continues to contribute effectively and to demonstrate commitment to the role (including attendance at meetings, participation in discussions and compliance with the Charter).
Tenure and Rotating Out	#8	Tenure of the CAC shall be for three years. This may be renewed for another term of three years. The CAC shall adopt a rotating-out principle to ensure there is a blend of new and continuing members. The Council shall seek to rotate and refresh membership by replacing 25% of its membership every three years.
Conflict of Interest	#9	Members shall endeavour to avoid a conflict of interest situation. Where there is conflict of interest, the member/s who may be implicated shall disclose this in writing to the Chairperson. Such a member/s may be requested by the Chairperson to recuse himself/herself/themselves from the meeting that discusses that matter.
Remuneration	#10	Members serve in a voluntary capacity. Members of the CAC are not remunerated for their work. However, members shall be provided with appropriate allowable expenses for their participation in the Council's meetings or other meetings on behalf of the Council.
Sub-committees	#11	The CAC has the power to set up such Sub-committees and Ad-hoc Committees as it deems necessary to facilitate its work.

Annex 2: LIST OF PERSONS MET

No.	Name of Respondent	Position	Organisation
1.	Nana Kwesi Agyeman IX	CAC Chairman	Paramount Chief, Lower Discove Traditional Area
2.	Wisdom Quaicoo	CAC Vice Chairman	UNSOND/Hem Mpoano
3.	Nana Akosua Gyanfiaba II	CAC Member	Queen Mother, Shama Traditional Area
4.	Bernice Sam	Dialogue Lead	WRCF
5.	Wahi Barbara Joelle	Private Sector Development Officer	WRCF
6.	Mabel Ayisi	Dialogue Liaison Officer	WRCF
7.	George Owusu	Monitor and Evaluation Manager	WRCF
8.	Osei-Akoto Nyantakyi	Conversation Manager	COLANDEF
9.	Sussan	Project Officer	COLANDEF
10.	Michael Nyarku	Conversation Manager	UCSOND
11.	Solomon Kusi Ampofo	Conversation Manager	Friends of the Nation (FON)
12.	Yaw Konadu	Assistant Environment Health Officer	Ahanta West District Assembly
13.	Hon. Barnabas Annan	Assembly Member	Beahu Electoral Area, Ahanta West District
14.	Hon. Mark Arthur	Assembly Member	Shama Electoral Area
15.	Albert Bonney	Agric Officer	Ahanta West District Assembly
16.	Francis Tetteh	Environmental Health Officer	Shama District Assembly
17.	Felix Odioi Akwetteh	Deputy Engineer, Works Department	Nzema East District Assembly
18.	Emmanuel Nana Yartel	Budget Officer	Shama District Assembly
19.	James Atieku	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secretary of Ghana Blind Union, Western Region ▪ Secretary of Ghana Blind Union, Shama District ▪ Secretary GFD, Western Region ▪ Secretary GFD, Shama District 	<p>Ghana Blind Union</p> <p>Ghana Federation of the Disabled</p> <p>Ghana Education Service</p>
20.	Antoinette Aacht	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Head of Essaman CHPS Compound 	Ghana Health Service
21.	Hon. Mark Arthur	Assembly Member	Shama Electoral Area
22.	Augustine Takyi	Youth Group Leader, Assuoko Essaman	N/A
23.	Kofi Yeboah	Community Health Volunteer	Anapasu CHPS Compound
24.	Ivy Erskine	Senior Nurse (Officer in charge)	Anapasu CHPS Compound
25.	Nana Kofi Owu	Regent of Anapasu Community	N/A
26.	Nana Amoako Enuah (III)	Gyasehene of Lower Axim Traditional Area	N/A
27.	Philip Kaberakyi	Chief Linguist, Agyan (Nzema District)	N/A