

# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP FOR INCLUSIVE &  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA



# ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

# TABLE OF CONTENT

1

SUMMARY

4

INTRODUCTION

6

MEANING OF ACTIVE CITIZEN/ GHANAIAN

8

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

11

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

13

SOME EXEMPLARY ACTIVE CITIZENS TO PROFILE

14

TYPOLOGIES OF ACTIVE CITIZEN

16

PLATFORMS AND TOOLS

17

RECOMMENDATIONS

25

WAY FORWARD

29

RISK ANALYSIS & MITIGATION

32

INFORMANTS

33

QUOTES

34

CONCLUSION

## SUMMARY

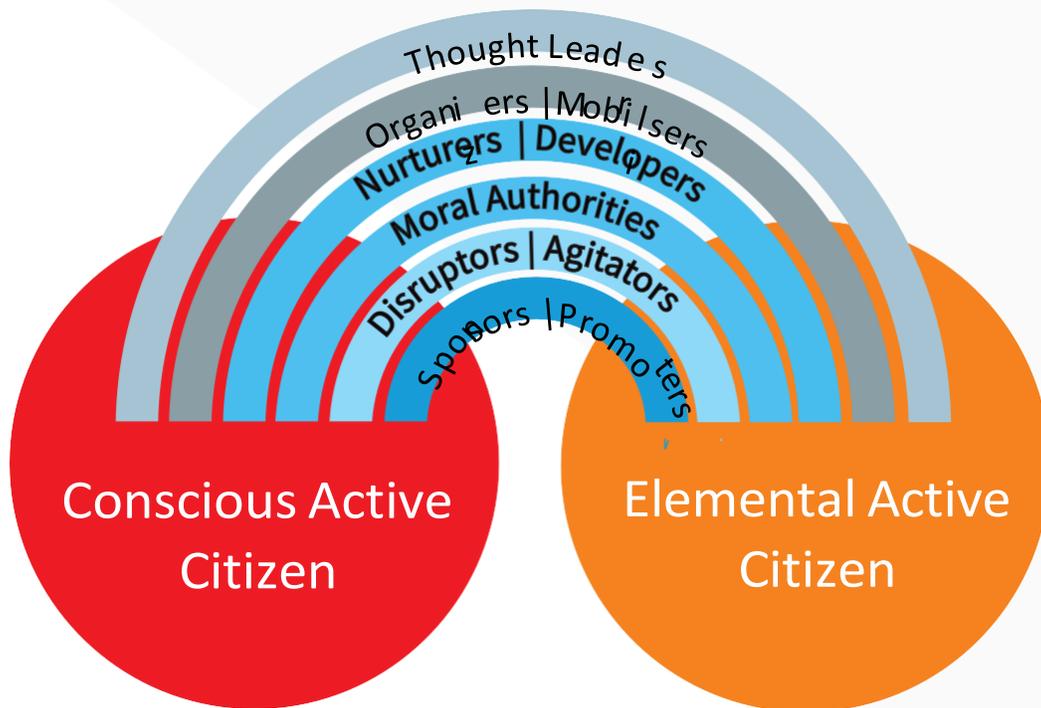
Active citizens, engaged responsible citizens, are not only crucial, but a prerequisite for the attainment of an inclusive and developed Ghana- that makes the promise of Freedom and Justice, our motto, a lived reality for all Ghanaians. STAR-Ghana Foundation continues to explore and invest in proactive efforts to foster informed, vibrant, and engaged citizenry who effectively demand and contribute to an equitable, inclusive and just society.

This strategy attempts to capture a broad view of the state of active citizenship in Ghana today, and the plethora of civic activities in the space. It identifies, assesses, and categorizes the various manifestations of active citizenship and offers an opportunity for a holistic landscape to foster inclusion and collaboration between the various actors. The report further identifies and highlights exemplary active citizenship efforts for potential amplification for greater impact, as well as creative practical ways to support active citizens to be more effective. It concludes with concrete recommendations to help foster an enabling environment for active citizenship and volunteering that promotes inclusive and sustainable development for Ghana. Some exemplary active citizens, who played exceptional roles in the context and important citizenry movements assessed during this process, are recommended to be profiled to both document their approaches, actions and impact, and to inspire a new generation of vibrant citizenship.

The report affirms the widely held perception that active citizenship has been in decline in Ghana in recent times. It identifies some underlying conditions that may be responsible for the decline. These include the failure of institutions that are supposed to maintain integrity and confidence in the state, as many of the important democratic institutions such as the media, political parties, and civil society groups have betrayed their promise and mandate to serve as vanguards of freedoms, accountability, and the rule of law, and have become instead, tools used by the wielders of power to undermine citizenship and rights. Harsh economic conditions may also contribute to the decline, as it forces citizens into perpetual survival mode, crippling their ability or interest in civic matters. Other contributing factors include fear, a result of the use of state power and political hacks to target, repress and persecute active citizens, and close to total control of the media space by political and business interests.

The adoption of our current neoliberal system as our de facto development framework, has not only inevitably produced inequalities and limitations that encourage individualistic practices- but has successfully supplanted the neo-liberal narratives such as “the market works best” in our public imagination, effectively hampering movements against the privatization of common goods and social services, and illicit financial flows, among others.

The strategy recognizes the varied and differentiated approaches and manifestations of active citizenship, that require complementarity and differentiated approach for overall effectiveness. While individual or specific forms are important, it often requires the convergence or complementarity of the other forms to produce sustainable results. It is therefore critical to be aware of the different types of active citizenship at play at any given time or space, and how they do or can interact, complement, or contradict each other. For the purposes of this project, the report, through a typology developed specifically for this, proposes six broad categories of active citizenship. These six types are:



Active Citizens fall into two broad groups. Conscious Active citizens, and Elemental Active Citizens. Conscious active citizens are those driven by clear ideological, political and intellectual consciousness and values. Elemental active citizens on the other hand, are mostly driven by conditions around them and causes that matter to them, whose activism may not necessarily be guided by or informed by any ideological grounding. There is a third group, that may give the semblance of active citizenship, but are in reality engaged in sectarian activism.

There is a wide variety of active citizenship needs and efforts- at all levels, and on various issues. STAR-Ghana Foundation must strategically assess its role, and build its capacity and





reputation to be relevant and effective when and where it matters. And in doing so, SGF needs to be bold, not politically correct. SG must position itself as a vehicle for a limited but relevant mix of expressions of active citizenship. The report proposes four key areas for STAR-Ghana's focus- with specific concrete and practical recommended programs.

- ★ **Funding and Resources:** to provide reliable, timely, adequate and “no-strings-attached” funding to active citizenship efforts when and where needed. And set-up specific strategic funds such as Public Litigation Fund and Solidarity Fund as may be needed.
- ★ **Knowledge Brokering:** serve as thought leaders, foster research and new ideas on active citizenship.
- ★ **Convening & Partnerships:** Leverage its convening power to bring people/ actors together and link efforts. This will include fostering partnerships that ensure effective coordination and solidarity.
- ★ **Capacity:** provide capacity development support for active citizens, organisations and movements.

The strategy further recommends an extensive list of activities for individual and collective efforts that can be initiated, adapted, amplified or supported by other stakeholders- citizenry groups, associations and movements. These include: Community mobilization, education campaigns, volunteerism, and strengthening cultural institutions. Others include rejuvenation of student activism and labor mobilization, solidarity movements/actions, and coordinated policy advocacy and lobbying.

There is no predetermined or ordained development or political outcome/destination for Ghana. Our development outcomes, and political destination, depend, and will depend on our actions and inactions. Choosing to be active citizens, or to promote active citizenship, in the words of Charles Abugre, “is costly in time, logistics, intellectual and financial resources to research, educate, mobilize, engage - but of course not as expensive as the opportunity cost – when society's values disintegrate and community and collective action becomes monetized.”<sup>a</sup>

# INTRODUCTION

Active citizenship is at the heart of STAR-Ghana Foundation's mission and work- responsible, effective, and empowered citizens who participate and contribute to the governance and development of our nation. STAR-Ghana Foundation, in furtherance of this mission, continues to explore ways to inspire and support citizens to act on issues that are important to improving lives and communities, ultimately, for a better, more inclusive and just Ghana for all.

Being a Ghanaian puts an obligation on citizens to play their part to help build a just and prosperous Ghana. There have always been Ghanaians who recognize and respond to this call- committing themselves to making a positive difference. And there are many others who would do the same if prompted, empowered, or supported to take action on issues that are important to them and their communities.

“The Preamble of our constitution leaves no doubt that the purpose of our nation-state project is to consolidate our freedoms, expand liberties and fundamental rights, opportunities and prosperity for all; and that the system of government on whose shoulders the task of achieving these goals rest derive their authority from the will of “we the people”.” - Charles Abugre<sup>b</sup>

This report explores ideas and recommendations from selected thought leaders and active citizens on how to more practically support Ghanaians, no matter where they are or what issues they face, with relevant skills, tools and resources to take effective action. It shares some thoughts on how practical meaning can be brought to what it means to be a Ghanaian- through daily practices of citizenship. It further proposes some concrete strategies and approaches to equip citizens to mobilize themselves to step up, whenever they see a need in their community; or fill gaps, where they exist.

The adopted criteria to guide this process ensured the inclusion of diverse thought leaders, active citizens and leaders from a broad stratum of the Ghanaian society and across generations. These ranged from senior activists and experienced thought leaders to emerging young women leaders and youth civic educators. This therefore included individuals from some relevant stage agencies, civil society, religious bodies, academia among others, as well as those engaging at national level and at community levels.

The process was designed to identify and highlight exemplary active citizenship efforts that could be amplified for greater impact; to explore

creative and new practical ways to support active citizens to be more effective; identify effective active citizenship models from our history, and to recommend strategies for creating the enabling environment for active citizenship and volunteering to promote inclusion and development in Ghana. It also sought to identify and recommend exemplary active citizens to be profiled to help document their approaches, actions and impact. The process mostly involved direct interviews with contributors to share their experiences and ideas. A few, who could not be interviewed directly, responded through a set of questionnaires. The interviews and questionnaires largely adopted the 5W1H approach-Who? What? Why? Where? When? How? of the active citizenship engagement and experiences of the contributors, and that of the Ghanaians in general. The thought leaders and active citizens who contributed their ideas and experiences to this report, to whom we are grateful, are listed under “Informants”.

These were combined with some literature reviews<sup>c</sup>- including previous work, lectures and reports by STAR-Ghana Foundation. This report, and its recommendations are produced from the analysis of information gathered through these processes as the next step toward the active citizenship pilot project.

“Active citizenship is learnt in and expressed through action. There are always multiple concurrent battles. And there are always emerging battles.”- Mawuli Dake



# MEANING OF ACTIVE CITIZEN

## - What Does It Mean To Be A Ghanaian

Active Citizenship requires the awareness and operationalization of your place as a citizen in society. To be aware and act on your awareness as a participant and contributor to public good on one hand, and of your entitlements as a beneficiary of public good. It demands getting involved in the management of the affairs and resources of the country to ensure that the country is constantly striving to meet the values adopted in the Constitution- liberty, equality of opportunity, prosperity, accountability, freedom and justice.

Active citizenship must be guided by politics that believes in thoroughly understanding the problems of the day and developing solutions that address root causes. And being an active Ghanaian means thinking transnationally.

In defining an active citizen, it is important to be mindful of the diversities and complexities of citizenship and the various forms it can be expressed or manifested. It is important to avoid a blanket labeling or definition of citizenship, and acknowledge people respond differently based on their understanding of and positioning in developments.

Broadly, we have what we can call “Conscious Active Citizens” and “Active Citizens in Practice.” Conscious Active Citizens are driven by conscious intellectual, ideological or political awareness to take intentional actions. Active Citizens in Practice, are elementally active but driven by conditions around them to assert their rights, address concerns, or take actions without necessarily a full reflection of what they are doing or how it is done. And there are different types of active citizens operating in these paradigms.

For active citizenship to be effective, there must be a meeting of the various manifestations. While the individual forms and approaches may be great, they are often only effective, impactful and sustainable together.

It takes leadership to direct, sustain and connect individual active citizenship efforts into effective collective impact.

### **SOME DEFINITIONS OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP:**

*“Put simply, active citizenship is about each of us, as individuals and as groups, making a difference in one's community, whether that community is local, national or global. It is about acting individually and collectively to fulfil rights, of self, neighbor and the environment, balanced with one's responsibilities. It is about recognising that change for the good does not happen, or at least will not endure, when we sit by and observe, “minding our own business.”- Charles Abugre- Inaugural Lecture “Active Citizenship in a changing Ghana.”*

*“Active citizenship refers to citizens actively voicing their needs, demanding increased accountability among government stakeholders, and participating in the development of their*

*own communities*". This can occur through collective organising and hosting platforms to engage citizens and facilitate dialogue between citizens and government. Notably, this goes beyond simply promoting movements: active citizenship 'surges' are often made up of 'grains' (organisations) acting as channels of information, providing mutual support and stating their collective power. Active citizenship, then, is about a recognition that 'change for good' requires action, and individuals and groups as active citizens making a difference in their communities at a local, national or global level, drawing on individual and collective action to "fulfil rights, of self, neighbour and the environment, balanced with one's responsibilities"; while recognising, confronting and exercising power with imagination and character." - STAR-Ghana "Promoting Movement Building and Active Citizenship in Ghana"<sup>d</sup>. STAR-Ghana Report, 2020.

"Active citizenship means people getting involved in their communities and democracy at all levels from local to national and global. An active citizen promotes the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political process developing a combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to work to make a difference in the society." - European University College Association ([www.euca.eu](http://www.euca.eu))



# CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Ghana is at a consolidation stage of her democracy, presenting citizens with greater opportunities and a more conducive environment for active citizenship compared to our past. These opportunities range from greater and more media space/ access, to institutionalization of various governance and justice agencies to ensure rule of law and check abuse of power. Paradoxically, there is a perception that active citizenship has been in a decline in recent years. There are different conditions that encourage or discourage active citizenship, and the decline in active citizenship could be attributed to the following:

- ★ The most important democratic institutions that emerged from our democratic growth, such as free media, political parties, and free associations, with the promise and mandate to promote and protect the freedoms, hold power to account and maintain rule of law, have themselves become tools in the hands of the wielders of power to undermine citizenship and rights.
- ★ Absence of a popular political organization/ movements with organic links to traditional movements like labour, student unions etc in Ghana today. Consequently, resulting in declining civic movements and broad-based campaigns, which are increasingly replaced by single issue, often unconnected, and narrowly technocratic policy organizations.
- ★ The organizations of working people have felt compromised and betrayed, in many ways, by their leadership- creating a perpetual vacuum within the civic space. Close to total surrender and monopolization of public (discourse) space by organized political parties and partisanship.
- ★ Absence of leadership in the civic space- active citizenship is not just about spontaneous activities but requires leadership to provide direction and sustenance. Too many undirected and uncoordinated activities.
- ★ Hard economic conditions force people into perpetual struggle for survival, disabling them from other things- leading to decline in civic activism.
- ★ Some people are giving up because they feel their voices are not heard- even if they speak out. Our leaders increasingly ignore views, demands, and outcries from the people.
- ★ People are afraid of victimization or being tagged. So, they stay out or lament in private. Instead of engaging or acting. According to a 2020 report by STAR-Ghana Foundation, “There are many factors impacting on movement building efforts in Ghana including a narrowing civic space and a hesitance to 'rock the boat' by organizations working to strike a balance between progressing their agendas and not alienating government, which could potentially close the space for civil society.”<sup>e</sup>
- ★ It has become easier to just join the party than to preach against wrongdoing.
- ★ Citizens do not value those who are active. Sometimes they attack them in defense of wrongdoers.
- ★ Weakened student activism today which used to instill the spirit of citizenship and served as a training ground for civic activism.

- ★ Control of media by governments and business interests using party foot-soldiers and misogynists as cyber bullies- to target female activists for example.
- ★ Increasingly toxic political context- political activism has become highly divisive, vitriolic, intolerant and uncivil. It has assumed an enemy, “us vs. them” approach- where those who differ in opinion, oppose or don't fully agree with a party, are seen and treated as enemies.

Our acceptance of the current neoliberal framework as our de facto development approach, inevitably, produces inequalities and limitations that encourage individualistic practices- forcing citizens to compete against each other, instead of working collectively to address collective problems. The relative success of neoliberalism in supplanting a narrative of the market works best in the public imagination has hampered movements such as the National Coalition Against the Privatisation of Water (NCAP) that fought successfully against the privatization of water; the global trade justice movement that galvanized civil society worldwide to moderate trade liberalisation; the tax justice movement that continues heroically the fight against aggressive tax avoidance and illicit financial flows etc

Conditions of Economic hardship, combined with the current situation where the edges appear to be falling apart in other unconnected connected way, can trigger spontaneous resistance or explosion as we have seen at the various stages of Ghana's history. Our history shows that when such conditions exist and the masses can no longer take it or no longer believe, any attempt to close openings for dissent could result in conditions of mass uprising, spontaneous explosion or even military

It is encouraging to see the shift in composition of the most recent movements- from a more urban middle-class nature of Occupy Ghana to a broader and more diverse #FixTheCountry movement. Another shift is the emergence of unorganized organizations like #FixTheCountry.

The table below, provides the most comprehensive & documented context of the civic lives of Ghanaians.

*I agree that active citizens have been in the decline in recent times. I attribute this trend to the personal sacrifices some made in the past only to realize that those who were clamoring for change were no different from those they intended to change*

*Dr. Kwame Sarpong Asiedu- Interview with SGF*

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT HABITS OF GHANAIS

The table below captures the data from Afrobarometer reports from 1999 to 2019, showing the self-reported civic habits of Ghanaians. A critically relevant context for SGF's efforts to promote civic engagement.

Self-reported civic habits of Ghanaians <sup>f</sup>

	1999	2002	2005	2008	2012	2014	2017	2019
They voted in most recent election	89%	-	87%	81%	75%	78%	81%	76%
They are interested in politics	25%	38%	43%	43%	28%	35%	35%	-
They discuss politics	23%	13%	30%	26%	19%	28%	17%	23%
They joined others to raise an issue often	17%	9%	12%	10%	6%	8%	10%	13%
% of Ghanaians who contacted elected or non-elected public officials often over a 12month period								
MP	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Local government councilor	7%	3%	3%	11%	8%	10%	8%	8%
Official of a government agency	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	3%	2%	-
Political party official	-	4%	7%	-	3%	4%	4%	5%
Traditional leader	7%	10%	14%	9%	-	9%	10%	11%

# EXAMPLES OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

There are great examples of effective active citizenship models, from which we can learn tremendous lessons that can be amplified for greater impact. Some of such exemplary current or historical efforts are identified and highlighted here. The wide scope and scale of examples range from the military era where Students movements,, Ghana Bar Association, Labour, Christian Council and others team up to resist oppression and to demand a return to civilian regime, to today's Songhor Lagoon mobilization by residents of Ada to defend their environment

RECENT	FROM HISTORY
#FixTheCountry	Student Movement of the 70s
Group of Intellectuals	The peoples Movement for Freedom & Justice (80s-92)
Economic Fighters League (Fighters)	The No Campaign
The Songor Lagoon Mobilization	Kume Preko
Pressure to push Ghana Legal Council to reform legal education in Ghana	Nkrumah's examples of mobilization and leadership
Occupy Ghana	Mobilization Against Unigov
CJA (Committee for Joint Action)	Operation Feed Yourself
Voluntary Work-camps Association of Ghana (VOLU)	Anti-colonial struggle strategies brought together workers, market traders and others.
#SaveKeta citizens drive to mobilize emergency assistance for victims of the tidal waves.	
National Sanitation Day	
Joint CSO actions on AKER oil deal, Agyapa	
MTN Heroes of Change	
Vodafone HealthLine	
Sisters Keepers	
Faith-based groups engaged in social development.	



### OTHER EXAMPLES

Beyond the Ghanaian experience, we should also seek to learn from the creativity, courage and resilience of other countries. It's useful to look at recent social movement histories: Such examples include: the Chilean students' uprising- (<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2019/11/29/chile-protests-the-students-woke-us-up>); the Colombian national strike (<https://peoplesdispatch.org/2021/06/30/national-strike-in-colombia-completes-two-months/>), of Latin America; the global Black Lives Matter Movement, and The EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters) organization of South Africa.



# SOME EXEMPLARY ACTIVE CITIZENS TO PROFILE

Within some of these exemplary citizenry movements and struggles were individuals who identified their role and effectively played their unique roles. It is important to highlight such examples to inspire young citizens. One way would be to profile and publish the stories of these individuals, organize interaction between younger Ghanaians and these individuals, or documentaries that highlight their work. These are just a few examples, and we shall go beyond the national and also profile other individuals doing amazing work at the community levels across the various regions

- ★ **Akoto Ampaw** - as a social justice activist and human rights defender.
- ★ **Bashiratu Kamal-Muslim** - as a feminist/ labor organizer.
- ★ **Dr. Yao Graham** - as political and economic justice activist.
- ★ **Franklin Cudjoe** - as a public policy advocate.
- ★ **Adu Amankwah** - as a labor activist.
- ★ **Prof. Takyiwa Manuh** - as a gender activist and scholar activist.
- ★ **Kwesi Pratt** - as a press freedom fighter
- ★ **H Kwasi Prempeh** - as good governance and public policy advocate
- ★ **Kofi Bentil** - as a public policy advocate.
- ★ **Kwaku Baako** - as a press freedom fighter.
- ★ **Ace Ankomah** - as public interest litigator
- ★ **Prof. Kwame Karikari** - as a leader in media development in Ghana
- ★ **Hannah Owusu-Kwarteng** - as a citizens mobilizer.
- ★ **Tsatsu Tsikata** - as a political and social justice advocate.
- ★ **Constance Swaniker** - as an entrepreneur empowering young people economically.
- ★ **Dr. Rose Mensah Kutin** - as a convener and movement builder.
- ★ **Cecilia Fiaka** - as a community organizer.
- ★ **Oliver Barker-Vormawor** - for his activism with #FixTheCountry movement.
- ★ **Senyo Hosi** - as a philanthropist mobilizing of private sector resources for social causes.
- ★ **Kwame Sefa-Kayi** - as a celebrity who uses his platform to mobilize support for hospitals.
- ★ **Charles Abugre** - as founder and leader of important CSOs (ISODEC, CEPIL, Public Agenda, TWN etc.)
- ★ **Abeku Adams** - for his local philanthropic mobilizations.
- ★ **Dr. Charles Wereko-Brobby** - as a champion of free speech and pioneer in private radio.



# TYOLOGIES OF ACTIVE CITIZEN

It is critical to be aware of the different types of active citizenship at play in any given struggle or matter, and at any given time. And equally important, to be mindful of how they do or can interact, how they can complement or undermine one another, their strengths and needs, as well as about their, sometimes, inevitable contradictions.

For the purposes of this project, the report proposes six broad categories of active citizenship based on a typology specifically developed through and for this process. It is important to note that, while some active citizens may span the various categories, the categories represent distinct characteristics, focus and contributions. For examples, the intersectionality of a citizen's civic activism, may mean he is an organizer on one cause, and disrupter on another.

On one hand, the invitation for collaboration among the various categories should not be misconstrued as a call to false solidarity. On the other hand, it is important to resist the temptation for purist alliances. There may be active citizenship causes or actors that are fundamentally incompatible and would breed dysfunction in trying to work together. At the same time, active citizens must not seek to collaborate only with those who agree with them on everything.



# TYPOLOGIES OF ACTIVE CITIZEN

## M O R A L A U T H O R I T I E S

Highly respected citizens who are able to stamp some moral or ethical authority on critical national issues- for example on contentious, controversial and complex matters. They may not necessarily get into the trenches, but their opinion matters to those in the frontlines. They may derive such moral standing from years of activism, their religious, traditional or intellectual status in society, among others.

## D I S R U P T O R S / A G I T A T O R S

Citizens who challenge, disrupt and dismantle the status quo and power. They trigger public debate or action, by bringing attention to issues that others are too comfortable or fear to touch. They force society to look or re-look at itself- forcing us to change our traditional way of doing things. And often take the risk the ordinary citizens are unwilling or incapable of taking.

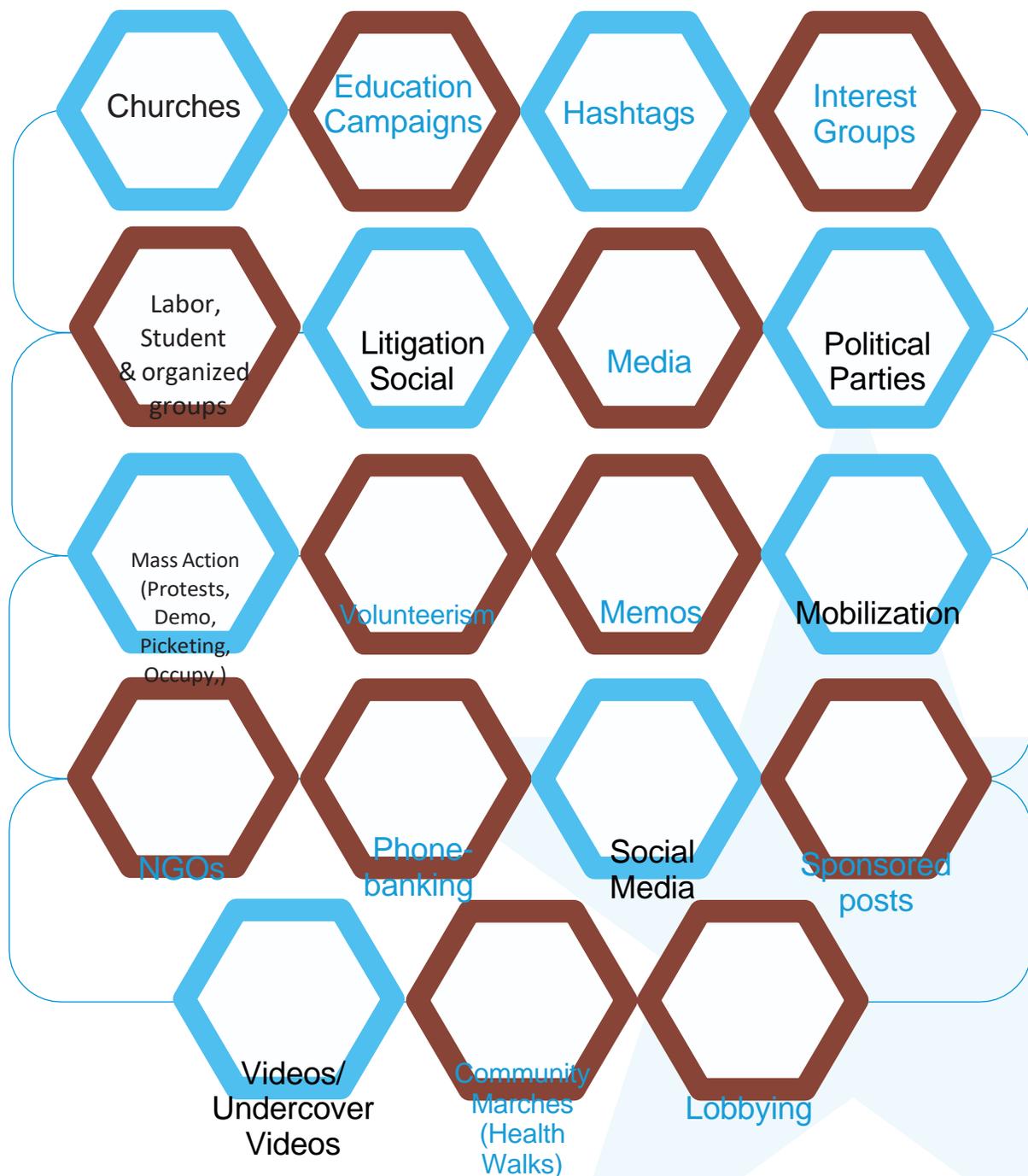
## S P O N S O R S / P R O M O T E R S

Citizens who invest their financial and other resources in promoting the common good and supporting citizenry activities and movements. They do so through philanthropy, sponsorship of community infrastructure and project like schools and hospitals, and through direct support to NGOs, journalists etc.



# PLATFORMS AND TOOLS

The variety in forms and approaches to active citizenship, naturally means they often require different tools and platforms to be effective. Experiences over the years, and technological advances offer a quiver of tools and platforms to today's active citizen. While some of these are readily available, others can be costly, inaccessible to many citizens—depending on their location, class, gender, ability among others. Sometimes, significant investments must be made to develop, or democratize some of these tools and platform for various groups of citizens





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAR-GHANA FOUNDATION

Expressions of active citizenship are constantly happening in different forms, every day, in offices, communities, schools and district assemblies among others across society. And, there are, and will be battles. SGF's relevance will not be felt or matter unless and until it finds an effective way of intervening in some of these real-life struggles with groups, communities etc. SGF must strategically build its reputation and capacity to support within selective spaces of struggle. In doing so, SGF must not be seen as merely stoking trouble, but as a credible, consistent and reliable player.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are some concrete recommendations for SGF:

5= Highly	4=Significantly	3= Moderately	2= A Little Bit	1= Not At All
-----------	-----------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------

## 1. FUNDING & RESOURCES

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
Funding Resources: Offering timely, adequate and “no-strings-attached” funding to active citizenship efforts when and where needed	5	5	3
Set-up and manage Active Citizenship Support Fund- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- public interest litigation</li> <li>- solidarity fund.</li> <li>- Build a crowd-funding page/platform that citizens can use to support active citizens or priority causes.</li> </ul>	5	5	4
Ongoing identification of promising community initiatives for support and amplification.	3	4	5

## 2. KNOWLEDGE BROKERING

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
Provide thought leadership on citizenship in Ghana- generating new knowledge and critical contribution to policies and discourse in active citizenship.	5	5	5
Supporting political education- by facilitating access to books, articles, films etc.	3	4	3
SGF must (intentionally) regularly identify and even anticipate critical emerging issues, quickly assess and identify the key players, understand the socio-political context, assess potential needs of key players- both linkage and financial, and prepare to provide such timely support	4	5	5

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
Holding fora to encourage media attention and spotlighting of active citizenship initiatives.	4	4	3
STAKEHOLDER MAPPING: to ensure inclusion. (PRE-QUALIFIED FRAMEWORK/DATABASE	5	5	4
Documentation and Publication of active citizenship experience.	4	4	4

### 3. CONVENING & PARTNERSHIPS

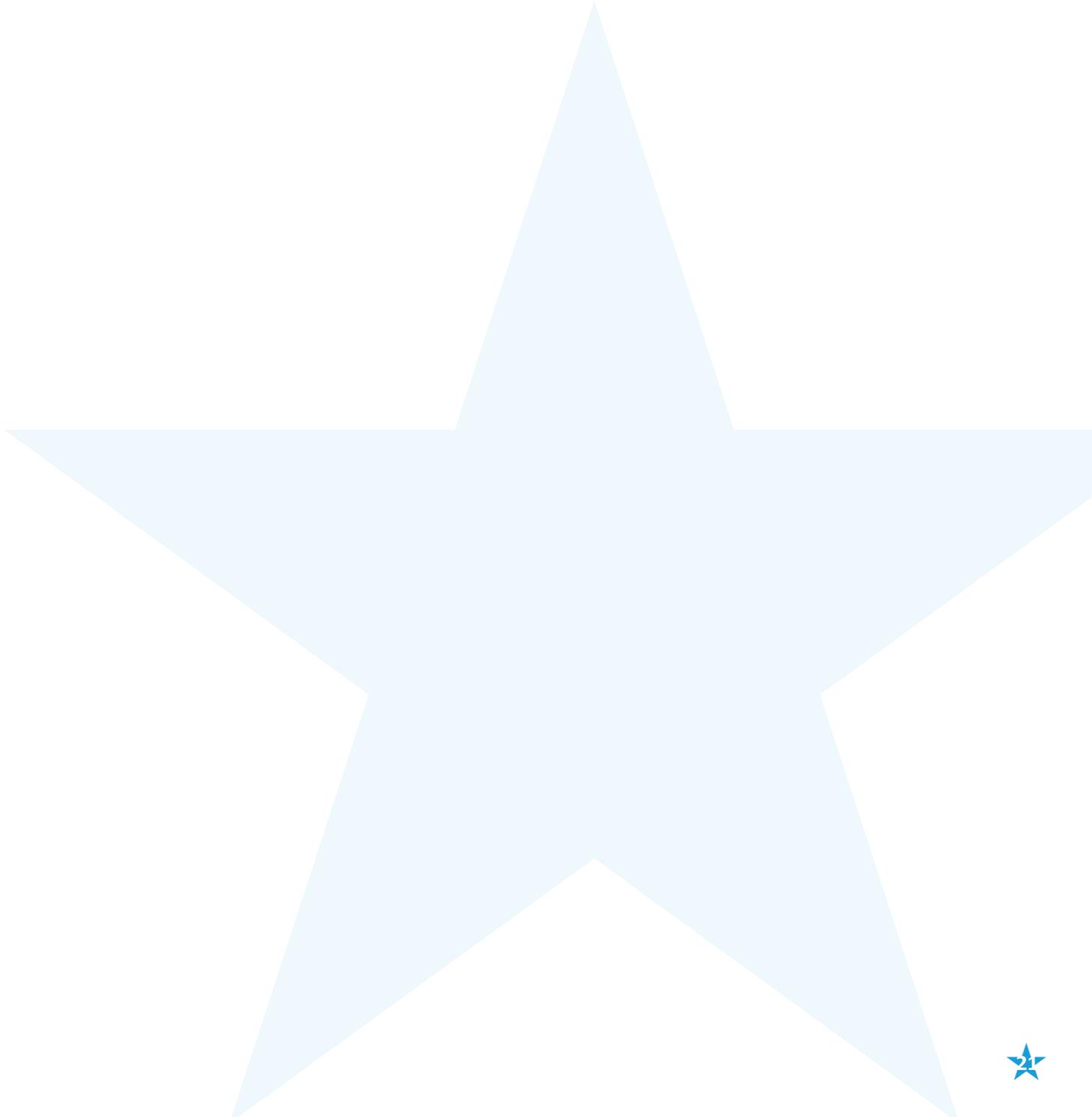
RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
Assume it's Convening Power- on citizenship. Build its capacity to bring people together and link efforts as its key strength.	5	5	5
CONVENING SPACE: providing meeting spaces, platforming that are easily accessible for groups to use. Could be either SGF's own space or support through other partners to make such spaces available. Regionally or locally.	3	4	3
SGF must (intentionally) regularly identify and even anticipate critical emerging issues, quickly assess and identify the key players, understand the socio-political context, assess potential needs of key players- both linkage and financial, and prepare to provide such timely support	4	5	5
Encouraging burgeoning social movements- through early support.	5	5	5
Recognition: Use its platform to recognize and bring public recognition/attention to especially non-covered struggles. Also showcase young and emerging active citizens. For example, profile one per month and/ or provide a platform for her to speak.	4	4	5
Collaborate with State agencies like National Service Scheme and National Commission on Civic Education to engage their wide constituents.	3	2	3

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
Research to identify and document the many forms of citizenship efforts outside of the mainstream, urban and high level forms we are familiar with.	3	3	3
Create avenues for partnership and collaboration and intentionally create community around shared ideals and causes.	5	5	4
Providing platforms to build synergies; and knowledge sharing in active citizenship activities.	5	5	3
STIMULATE CONVERSATIONS: both at high levels internationally e.g. Mo Ibrahim convenings, but equally important, at decentralized forums with various entry level partners. Both formal conversations, and informal/ drop-in forums. Also, free-flowing conversations to harvest ideas that can be adopted and taken over by various groups or individuals for further structured/ deeper conversation and action.	4	4	4

#### 4. CAPACITY

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
Crowdfunding and resource generating training: to help groups and individuals with the knowledge and tools to mobilize their own resources to support their work.	5	5	4
Invest in and support Leadership of movements: Leadership is everything to the success or otherwise of mobilization and movements. SGF must intentionally seek and build leaders of these movements. available. Regionally or locally.	5	5	5
Facilitating meetings and support opportunities for active citizenship initiatives.	5	5	4
Training on how to recruit, train and utilize volunteers	4	4	4
Capacity training for investigative journalism, social media advocacy etc.	4	5	4

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
Support in Students' leadership and governance from secondary schools through University.	4	5	4
National Award Scheme to Promote Spirit of Volunteerism	3	3	3
Develop innovative volunteering initiatives that harness the talents of retirees and young people.	4	5	4



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

5= Highly	4=Significantly	3= Moderately	2= A Little Bit	1= Not At All
RECOMMENDATION		URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
<p><b>Community Mobilization:</b> actively mobilize and support communities to organize themselves around issues of importance to them and the nation. To take interest in, to be. Aware, to demand action and accountability on their concerns, and most importantly, initiate self-help solutions to problems they can solve for themselves.</p>		5	5	5
<p><b>Campaigns:</b> spearhead campaigns to educate, conscientize and empower citizens on pertinent issues of national importance. Some suggested examples include</p> <p>* <b>“I Have a Role! We have a Role”</b> Campaign to engage citizens to recognize and take responsibility for their role as citizens. This is highlighting their role as citizens and members of community, encourage them.</p> <p>* <b>“If You See a Need, Step UP”</b> Campaign or “If You See a Gap, Fill It” Campaigns</p>		4	3	5
<p><b>Make bad-behavior costly:</b> A media campaign highlights the cost of anti-social behavior such as corruption, archaic practices, poor governance</p>		5	3	3
<p><b>Education</b> and conscientization of citizens on various issues through seminars, workshops- to provide ongoing education for citizens, leaders and various stakeholders.</p>		3	3	4
<p><b>Communal Volunteer Day/Week:</b> different communities, schools or associations to initiate their own volunteer days/ weeks to promote volunteerism at their own levels. To promote the culture of volunteerism and offer communities the opportunity to implement local and self-help solutions that address specific problems</p>		4	5	5

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
<p><b>Volunteering Professionals Expertise:</b> Professional association to actively encourage and support their members to volunteer their high-level professional skills, talents, expertise and experiences in technology, engineering, law, education, technology to other fields – to help solve practically, problems faced by communities and the less privileged in our society. Including to help people or communities that would naturally not have access or the capability to afford their services.</p>	3	4	4
<p><b>Development of Cultural institutions:</b> from education to the music industry. Bring attention to our histories, language, and culture in such a way that it helps us understand our present condition which can become the foundation to conceptualize our possible futures. On a practical level, educate citizens on various belief systems, languages and cultural practices. Imagination is central to causing change –believing that change is possible and imagining what those possibilities could be. So much of our self-doubt is rooted in our distorted/erased/limited cultural histories.</p>	3	4	4
<p><b>Student Activism:</b> support students and student association to rejuvenate student activism. These may range from study groups, supporting civic clubs and association on campus, supporting outreach programmes by student groups, training for student leaders, seminars and workshops on campuses to engage students on national issues such as the budget.</p>	5	5	5
<p><b>Policy advocacy and campaigns:</b> develop or support CSOs to develop policy advocacy tools and platforms that citizens can easily adapt to push policy campaigns and engagement. For instance, easy information or access to signature mobilization campaigns, toolkits and checklist, tools for measuring public opinion.</p>	5	3	4

RECOMMENDATION	URGENCY	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
<b>Activism/ Organizing Fellowship:</b> Host or sponsor activist fellowship for training and organizing. For example, host or sponsor an organization to host activists for 3, 4, 6 months to develop an advocacy or mobilization plan on an issue.	5	4	3
<b>Establish and provide Support System</b> for activists at risk or who are politically targeted.	5	3	4
Recognize and highlight the different forms of community and citizen solutions at all levels- particular at rural community levels that are outside our usual views of citizenship.	3	3	4
<b>Community Solutions Hubs-</b> that can generate ideas and solutions on community issues.	3	4	3
<b>Social Movements:</b> Build/ support/ join/ vigorous social movements.	5	5	4
<b>Solidarity Actions &amp; Alerts:</b> promote the culture of solidarity, and develop systems for solidarity actions and alerts. Including developing and providing tools and platforms that can help people to swiftly mobilize, appeal for, or support solidarity actions. For instance, having a “Solidarity Corner” on the website of partner organizations where they can list solidarity needs or efforts that others could support.	4	3	4
<b>Party/ Partisans Engagement:</b> stakeholders to be intentional about building the capacity of, and engaging party/ partisan activists- so they can engage more constructively and more responsibly in both their intra-party and national affairs. This will not only help them see themselves first and foremost as Ghanaians, but also reverse the growing canker of extreme partisanship and its	5	3	3

# WAY FORWARD

SGF proposes the following strategic priorities to guide its immediate interventions under the Active Citizenship Strategic Framework. These immediate interventions are carefully selected based on their urgency, scalability, and potential for impact as catalyst for the foundation's broader vision of “well-informed and active Ghanaian citizenry able to contribute to transformational change that advances democracy, accountability and social inclusion”.

In recognizing that these are priorities among other priorities, SGF shall retain the flexibility to adjust and re-align its activities, alliances, and approach through this piloting phase.

## IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

NO.	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY INTERVENTIONS
1	Leadership Development targeting youth leaders	To nurture a new crop of civic leaders at all levels of governance. Through a range of interventions targeting youth leaders in four strategic spheres: Community, Faith-based spaces, political parties, students and CBOs. Interventions shall include training and experiential learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Develop and implement national youth leadership programmes.</li> <li>* Partner / support existing leadership development programs.</li> <li>* Facilitate mentorship.</li> </ul> Undertake specific intervention to pilot and test new ideas.
2	Building/ Strengthening of Social/citizen movements around key areas of SGF's work	To mobilise a significant mass of civic actors around specific issues, e.g. education quality, gender rights, etc to achieve results. These movements will also provide opportunities for 'decentralising' civic actions around the key issues of access to rights and services. We'll need to strike a balance of how much SGF should be involved in the development of these movements, else they risk becoming appendages of donor projects and wither off when project funding ends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Develop and provide readily accessible spaces/ platforms conducive to inclusive citizen engagement, movement-building, and networking.</li> <li>* Identify and collaborate with existing coalitions and networks. And provide support for building of new coalitions and alliances where we have the biggest gaps today.</li> <li>* Convene regular dialogues in collaboration with partners at district, regional, zonal and national levels on salient and emerging issues in CS space</li> <li>* Identify critical emerging issues requiring citizen-led</li> </ul>

NO.	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY INTERVENTIONS
			<p>social action and support coalitions around it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Stakeholders Mapping- to capture major actors in each category of AC into a pre-qualified database.</li> </ul>
3	Knowledge brokering	To enhance the effectiveness of AC and Volunteerism actions through improved access to resources, particularly information and relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Serve as Centre for documentation of AC and local philanthropy in Ghana.</li> <li>* Annual lectures on AC.</li> <li>* Host an online portal for collation of information.</li> <li>* Organise periodic webinars.</li> <li>* Host a Blog on SGF websites that publishes thought provoking pieces on AC.</li> </ul>
4	Funding and Resources	To promote the culture of giving and mobilize (local philanthropy) as an expression of AC- to reliably provide timely, adequate and “no-strings- attached” support to active. And set-up specific strategic funds such as Public Litigation Fund and Solidarity Fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Set-up and manage Active Citizenship Support Fund- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- public interest litigation</li> <li>- solidarity fund.</li> <li>- Build a crowd-funding page/platform that citizens can use to support active citizens or priority causes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Identify and select, for piloting, high impact and scalable AC initiatives, through grants and technical support. This is to allow us to test new and bold ideas.</p>

## PARTNERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

NO.	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY INTERVENTIONS
5	Building Eco-System for social/citizen movements around key issues.	To support various stakeholders in the civic and social development space to work together to create and strengthen an enabling-environment system for active citizenship- to inspire, promote and protect active citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Research into the “State of Volunteerism and Active Citizenship in Ghana” and wide dissemination.</li> <li>* Facilitate establishment of Volunteers/ Civic Clubs in Tertiary and Secondary schools.</li> <li>* Advocacy, based on research, for enabling legislation and policies for promotion of AV and Volunteerism in Ghana</li> <li>* Facilitating of setting up Network/Coalition/Alliance for Volunteerism and AC in Ghana.</li> <li>* National Volunteer Month: to promote the culture of volunteerism and offer communities the opportunity to implement local and self-help solutions that address specific problems.</li> <li>* “If You See a Need, Step Up” Campaign or “If You See a Gap, Fill It Campaign” to encourage self or community initiatives that address problems under their control.</li> <li>* Activism/ Organizing Fellowship: Host or sponsor activist fellowship for training and organizing. For example, host or sponsor an organization to host activists for 3, 4, 6 months to develop an advocacy or mobilization plan on an issue.</li> <li>* Develop innovative volunteering initiatives that harness the talents of retirees and young people- with a sign-up system/platform for easy sign-up.</li> </ul>



NO.	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY INTERVENTIONS
6	Resourcing AC Organizations	To encourage and support community organizations and active citizens to explore local resource mobilization both as an expression and driver of active citizenship for change.	Undertake direct local resource mobilization to support civic efforts. (Giving-for-Change events?)
7	Lobbying & Advocacy	To mobilize and utilize the collective voice of communities to push for solutions and leadership action on matters of concern to the community and to hold both local and national government authorities accountable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Campaigns</li> <li>* Inclusion Audits: Conduct annual audits to assess the inclusiveness of local governments- gender and youth among others.</li> <li>* Institute regular townhall-style engagement between local government authorities and local citizens on relevant matters of interest to the community. For instance, annual forum to discuss the financial account or audit report of the local government.</li> <li>* Community Mobilization: actively mobilize and support communities to organize themselves around issues of importance to them and the nation.</li> <li>* Strategic partnership with the media for active citizenship.</li> </ul>

# RISK ANALYSIS & MITIGATION

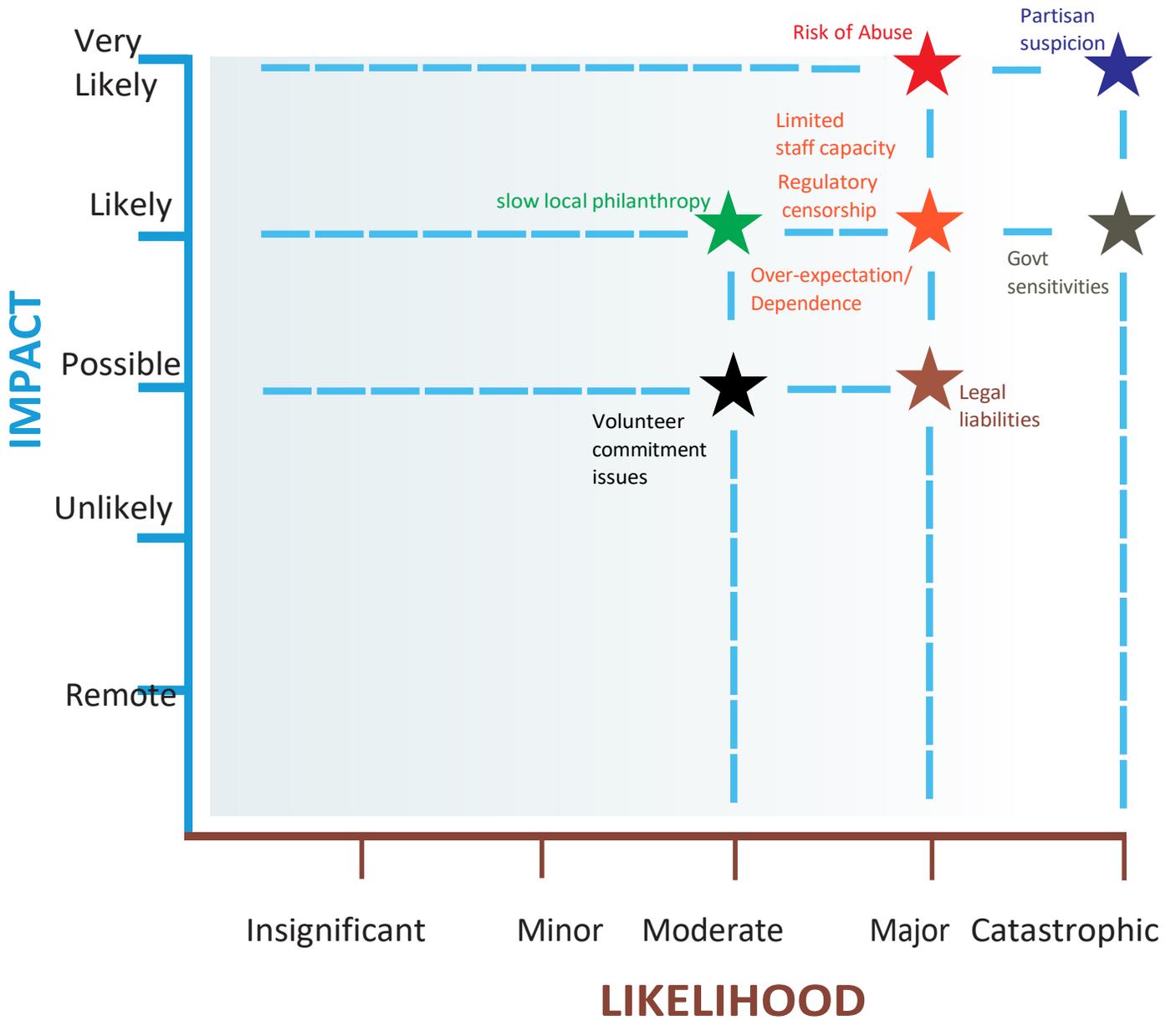
In line with STAR Ghana Foundation's approach to risk analysis and mitigation, the process identified the following potential risks, and proposes the accompanying steps and tools to help assess, monitor and mitigate such risks. While SGF recognizes the need, and is strongly encouraged to be bold and creative in its implementation this Active Citizenship strategy, it must be thoughtful and intentional taking risks that may undermine or harm its overall mission and reputation. Table 3(a) shows the risk mapping that captures the likelihood of each risks occurring and the potential impact on the project/ foundation.

## IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RISK	MITIGATION RECOMENDATIONS	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
Over-expectation from, and over-dependency of active citizens and other stakeholders on SGF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* SGF must thoughtfully manage expectations, promises and commitments- especially with partners and allies.</li> <li>* Encourage empowerment approach- where actors are encouraged and supported to be independent and not over-rely on SGF.</li> <li>* Facilitate avenues for AC actors to explore and access other sources of support.</li> </ul>	Likely	Major
Working with political party youth leaders, could be interpreted as engaging in partisan politics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* SGF must clearly articulate its engagement with party youth leaders and spell out the modalities for such engagement.</li> <li>* Ensure equal or proportional multi-party inclusion of young leaders from the various recognized political parties.</li> <li>* Open and transparent in engagement with party youth.</li> </ul>	Highly likely	Catastrophic
Some industry actors fear that civic space is increasingly shrinking and there may be reactionary state interventions, laws and regulations to censor the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Coordinate with and support collective advocacy by CSOs for protecting and enhancing enabling regulatory environment for AC.</li> <li>* Foster and push for peer accountability and high standards among civic actors to maintain public confidence.</li> </ul>	Likely	Major

RISK	MITIGATION RECOMENDATIONS	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
Interest in local giving may at best focus mostly on sensational/practical issues compared to transformational agendas, and the culture of giving for other causes may take a long time to materialize.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Continuously encourage and promote local giving.</li> <li>* Facilitate tools and platforms that make it easy for citizens to give.</li> <li>* Support systems for transparency, accountability and showcasing of dividends from donations by citizens.</li> <li>* Encourage and support communities, active citizens, and other actors to effectively undertake their own local fundraising.</li> <li>* Givers like to give to specific causes. We must identify specific causes to drive mobilization.</li> </ul>	Likely	Moderate
Volunteers may not bring the same level of professional commitment to their roles.	Build mechanisms to ensure and measure accountability of volunteers such as SOPs.	Possible	Moderate
SFG's limited staff capacity may limit its capacity implement some of its identified interventions in a timely manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Constantly explore partnerships with other actors to donate their experts, resources, and volunteers.</li> <li>* Intentionally develop and manage volunteers' programs that allow the foundation to access high level expertise through volunteers.</li> </ul>	Likely	Major
Legal implications/liabilities for both direct and third-party stakeholders.	* Seek legal advice on controversial or complicated issues and activities- both for SGF engagement, and for the partners leading some of these efforts.	Possible	Major
Effective and sensitive AC activities that may potentially illicit crackdown/negative reaction from government.	* Solidarity and Support systems to support those who may be targeted by the state or its agents.	Likely	Catastrophic
Risk of abuse of volunteers.	Institute clear safeguard measures against abuse.	Possible	Major

IMPACT	Remote =1	Unlikely = 2	Possible = 3	likely = 4	Very likely = 5
LIVELIHOOD	Insignificant = 1	Minor = 2	Moderate = 3	Major = 4	Catastrophic = 5





# INFORMANTS

- ★ Adelaide Addo-Fennin
- ★ Akoto Ampaw
- ★ Alfred Godwin Adjabeng
- ★ Prof. Akilagpa Sawyer
- ★ Bashiratu Kamal-Muslim
- ★ Dr. Esther Offei-Aboagye
- ★ Gifty Oware- Aboagye
- ★ Katheleen Addy
- ★ Dr. Nii Kotei
- ★ Oliver Barker Vormawor
- ★ Rev. Albert Ocran
- ★ Vera Addo
- ★ Vincent Kuagbenu
- ★ Dr. Kwame Sarpong Asiedu
- ★ Dr. Charles Abugre
- ★ Dr. John Osae-Kwapong

# QUOTES



“People participate in things that they find relevant or that deliver results. So why are Ghanaian activism in faith increasing, and civic activism in a decline. Are they losing faith in the State and its ability to deliver solutions to their problems’? - **Dr. Esther Offei-Aboagye**

“STAR-Ghana Foundation needs to be bold. Not politically correct” - **Prof. Akilagpa Sawyer**

“Tough economic conditions also disable people from doing more than just struggling to survive” - **Prof. Akilagpa Sawyer**

“Kinna Likimani, Director of Special Program at Odekro, always reminds us of the words on our coat of arms: “Freedom and Justice.” I think these are important values to uphold. Freedom encourages us to understand that the path to liberation is a “constant struggle.” And a love for justice requires a commitment to building a fair and equal society in which people are free from poverty and can live in dignity.” - **Dr. Nii Kotei**

“We The people of Ghana In Exercise of our natural and inalienable right to establish a framework of government which shall secure for ourselves and posterity the blessings of liberty, equality of opportunity, and prosperity.....And in solemn declaration and affirmation of our commitment to Freedom, Justice, Probity, and Accountability.” - **Preamble, 1992 Ghana Constitution.**

“What does it mean to live as an active citizen? It means “you see a gap you fill it, you fill it with voice, spirit and mobilization, protest or voluntary action; policy or legislative reforms all grounded in the imagination of a better society. It means living as if “we are perpetually and irresistibly creating a new world” .- **Dr. Charles Abugre**

“Active citizens can give practical meaning to what it means to be a Ghanaian by abhorring negative practices of our society and living by example. Practical examples include the avoidance of indiscriminate littering, bribery etc. To me active citizenship must be a way of life.” - **Kwame Sarpong Asiedu**

“Bring a Ghanaian must mean the ability to engage on issues and in our democracy freely, without any form of harassment by cyber bullies, by political party foot soldiers and by misogynists” - **Bashiratu Kamal-Muslim**

# CONCLUSION

To be effective active Ghanaians, we must fully ground our minds and actions in the reality, and inevitable limitations of our socio-economic and constitutional frameworks, but must also boldly imagine possibilities beyond the status quo.” Active citizens who seek real transformation must exercise their power and rights to dream, perceive and imagine new possibilities to guide their pursuit of a better, truly inclusive and just Ghana.

The actions and practices of citizens in general, and active Ghanaians in particular, must be anchored by enduring values that build nations. It is alarming that the dominant values in Ghana today include patronage, corruption, dishonesty, which are highly rewarded. Efforts to promote active citizenship must thus, intentionally, help cultivate ethical values and norms that will help build a Ghana that is civil, peaceful, equitable and fair. In other words, the character of Ghanaians will ultimately determine the type of nation we become, how we approach development and how we treat the least among us.

Individual efforts are important and can produce some results, but sustainable development and transformational change require collective action. Active citizens and groups must seek to build alliances beyond their narrow or single-issue interests and build formidable movements for real citizenry power.

The individuals we see as examples of successful active citizens, were active participants within a context/ struggle that often involved other elements. We must highlight them in the context of that broader struggle, how they situated themselves, identified and committed to their roles within those movements/ struggles, and not portray them as individual heroes.

The enormity of our challenges and the better Ghana we aspire to, naturally means that, the needs and tasks are beyond the capacity of one organization. SGF must strategically build its capacity and reputation to invest in selected efforts and ideas that can help achieve its vision- and move Ghana closer to closer to the inclusive, prosperous and just place for all. SGF must constantly contemplate and be guided by how they can be credible and relevant at all times, without being seen as only fomenting trouble.; How they can be bold and imaginative in their approach, without losing ground in our reality or being seen as jack of all trades; And how it can help the gaps in active citizen movements with the urgency it requires, as many of the laudable efforts stated in this report will require leadership direction to be successful and sustainable

- 
- a. "Inaugural Lecture- Active Citizenship in a changing Ghana: Context, Challenges and Opportunities"- Charles Bugre, 2018
- b. "Inaugural Lecture- Active Citizenship in a changing Ghana: Context, Challenges and Opportunities"- Charles Bugre, 2018
- c. Active citizenship in INCA countries: definitions policies, practices and outcomes- 2006
- Afrobarometer reports- (1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2019).
  - "Civil Society, Philanthropy and the Promotion of Active Citizenship in Ghana: A Political Economy Analysis"- STAR-Ghana Foundation, (2020).
  - Active Citizenship Can Change Your Country For the Better- Open Society Foundation, (2013)
  - <https://peoplesdispatch.org/2021/06/30/national-strike-in-colombia-completes-two-months/>;
  - "How Change Happens."- Oxford Scholarship Online, (October 2016).
  - "Promoting active citizenship in a changing Ghana: Context, challenges and opportunities"- Lecture, Prof. Amin Alhassan, (2018).
  - <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2019/11/29/chile-protests-the-students-woke-us-up>
  - "The Role of Women's Movements in the Implementation of Gender-Based Violence Laws", - Akua Anyidoho, N., Crawford, G. and P. A. Medie (2020)
  - "Historicising The Women's Manifesto for Ghana: A culmination of women's activism in Ghana"- Amoah-Boampong, C. (2018)
  - "Youth in Revolt: Five Powerful Movements Fueled by Young Activists", National Geographic, (March 2018)
  - "People Power Under Attack 2019: A report based on data from the CIVICUS Monitor"- CIVICUS, 2019.
  - "Pathways to power: Is activism within philanthropy possible?"- Alliance – For philanthropy and social investment worldwide, 2019,
  - "Moving with the movement: Collaboratively building a participatory action research study of social movement learning in Ada, Ghana", SAGE Journals (August 2015)
  - "The Media in West Africa: A Civic Space Emergency", WACSeries- Samari, R. B. (2020)
  - "Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Anti-Corruption Guidance Note" STAR-Ghana (2017).
- d. STAR-Ghana "Promoting Movement Building and Active Citizenship in Ghana"; Report, 2020
- e. Promoting Movement Building and Active Citizenship in Ghana"- STAR-Ghana, 2020
- f. Afrobarometer Ghana Reports: 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2019



**STAR GHANA  
FOUNDATION**

---

#### VISION

- ★ A well-informed and active Ghanaian citizenry able to contribute to transformational change that advances democracy, accountability, and social change.

#### MISSION

- ★ To increase the effectiveness of citizens and civil society to achieve an equitable and inclusive society.
-