

ANNUAL REPORT

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WHAT IS STAR-GHANA FOUNDATION

"We promote active citizenship for change by supporting civil society to engage with government and drive forward a development agenda that leaves nobody behind."

OUR MISSION

"It is to increase the effectiveness of citizens and civil society to achieve an equitable, inclusive society."

OUR VISION

"To ensure a well-informed and active Ghanaian citizenry able to contribute to the transformational change that advances democracy, accountability and social inclusion."

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MESSAGE FROM CHAIRPERSON OF GOVERNING COUNCIL

It is with great pride and gratitude that I present to you the Annual Report of STAR-Ghana Foundation for 2024. This report captures our work, achievements,, and contributions towards strengthening civil society and contributing to good governance and sustainable development in Ghana.

During the year under review, we had a successful transition in the leadership of the Governing Council (GC), the first in the journey of the Foundation. Mrs Adelaide Addo-Fening and I took over as vice-chairperson and chairperson respectively from Dr Esther Ofei-Aboagye and Mr Charles Abugre in November 2024. In addition, the six new members of the GC elected by the AGM in 2024 took office, replacing the six whose tenure had ended. The smooth transition in the leadership and membership of the Governing Council augurs well for the governance of the Foundation and its resilience.

We are grateful to Dr Esther Ofei-Aboagye and Mr Charles Abugre, for their stewardship of the organisation through the transition from programme to Foundation. The successes we are chalking now are due largely to the foundation they laid.

While we are rightfully proud of the achievements of our diverse projects, it is the gains that we have made around our strategic focus areas of civil society strengthening, promoting active citizenship for good governance and inclusive development and promoting local philanthropy that give us a lot of satisfaction.

Guided by our strategic roles of Convenor, Catalyst and Coordinator of civic actions, we convened over 14 dialogues across the country, including citizens' dialogues on key priorities for party manifestos, youth engagements with city authorities on making cities inclusive,

conversations among civil society actors on key issues such as sustainability, accountability and legitimacy, and dialogues between state and non-state actors on peace and security in northern Ghana. More than 8,000 people participated in these convenings.

We provided over GHS 38m in grants to over 130 CSOs across the country to undertake actions aimed at improving inclusive access to quality public goods and services, increased voices of women, young people and persons with disability in political, social and economic governance and enhancing the sustainability of civil society organisations. The results of these actions are indicated in the Annual Report.

The Foundation has also played a leading role in key national platforms such as the Ghana Philanthropy Forum, the Ghana Civil Society Forum, and the Northern Ghana CSOs Platform. These platforms, involving over 1,000 organizations, serve as vital avenues for knowledge sharing, advocacy, and collective action in strengthening civil society in Ghana.

In promoting sustainable peace in the northern regions of Ghana, the Northern Ghana Security Coordinating Forum has continued to provide a platform for engagement between state and non-state actors. With STAR-Ghana playing an instrumental role in its establishment and ongoing coordination, the Forum remains a crucial mechanism for collaboration and dialogue.

One of our most significant initiatives of the year was the launch of the Northern Ghana Flood Disaster Relief Fund. Spearheaded by the five Regional Ministers of Northern Ghana in collaboration with the World Food Programme and STAR-Ghana Foundation, this initiative is the first of its kind in Ghana. It represents a major step towards enhancing local philanthropy and developing sustainable solutions for disaster management.

An important milestone in our journey towards resilience was the acquisition and relocation to our own office premises, made possible through the generosity of an anonymous donor and prudent financial management. This achievement strengthens our institutional sustainability and further positions the Foundation to fulfill its mission effectively.

As we reflect on the past year, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to our partners, donors, and stakeholders for their unwavering support. To the dedicated team at STAR-Ghana Foundation, your commitment and passion continue to drive our impact. Together, we remain steadfast in our mission to build a stronger civil society and contribute to a more just, inclusive, and democratic Ghana.

Thank you.



Hamdiya Ismaila

Chairperson, STAR-Ghana Foundation



OUR STORY IN FIGURES



137 CSO partners
engaged, working on **135**
projects in **340**
communities



146 state actors
engaged, including
Metropolitan, Municipal
and District Assemblies.



85,404 community members
(**46,370 female; 35,000**
youth; 1800 persons
with disability) direct
'beneficiaries' of our
initiatives



1.2m citizens engaged
overall through our
projects across the
country



14 convenings at
national and local levels,
engaging **8000**
participants directly.



Approximately
GHS38m disbursed as
grants for projects and
other initiatives



45,000 engagements
with our social media
platforms

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW

- The first transition in the leadership of the Foundation as mandated by its constitution was successfully implemented. A new chairperson and vice chairperson were elected, and half of the Governing Council was replaced with new members.
- Civil society organizations in Ghana were supported with technical assistance and flexible grants. This helped 36 small, medium and big organisations develop and implement strategies for their growth and sustainability. This approach represents a significant shift in how CSOs in Ghana are supported, focusing on their effectiveness in achieving their mandates.
- Through its leadership of the Ghana Philanthropy Conference, the Ghana Civil Society Forum, and the Northern Ghana CSOs Platform, the Foundation is fulfilling its mandate as a centre for civil society strengthening in Ghana. These platforms involve over 1,000 organisations.
- The Northern Ghana Security Coordinating Forum continues to provide a space for constructive dialogue among stakeholders. This half-yearly meeting brings together relevant state and non-state actors to enhance collaboration and coordination in promoting sustainable peace in the five northern regions. STAR- Ghana was instrumental in the development of the Forum and supports the Regional Coordinating Councils in hosting and managing it.
- A Northern Ghana Flood Disaster Relief Fund, the first of its kind in Ghana, was launched by the five Regional Ministers of Northern Ghana as a collaboration between the RCCs, the World Food Programme and STAR-Ghana Foundation. The fund was conceptualised under STAR-Ghana Foundation's Local Philanthropy work and informed by the Roadmap for Sustainable Management of Floods in Northern Ghana which was jointly developed by the Foundation and the National Disaster Management Organization.
- As its contribution to peaceful, credible, and inclusive elections, the Foundation supported 3,800 young people in developing the Youth Manifesto. It then supported them in using this manifesto to engage with political parties. Over 2,535,551 citizens across the country were also supported in directly engaging on influencing the manifestos of the main political parties through town hall meetings, radio and television programs, and direct engagement with the presidential candidate of the National Democratic Congress (NDC).
- Through the generosity of an anonymous donor and its prudent financial management, the Foundation acquired and moved into its own office premises during the year. This is a very significant step in STAR-Ghana's journey to increased resilience.

INTRODUCTION

This is STAR-Ghana's 5th annual report since its registration as an independent legal entity in 2018. This report covers the period from January 2024 to December 2024.

It presents the highlights of the Foundation's work during this period, including work undertaken, key results achieved, and progress towards the Foundation's Mission. Lessons learned and priorities for 2025 and beyond are also included.

OUR MISSION AND VALUES

STAR Ghana Foundation is a not-for-profit civil society organization (CSO) operating nationally. Its owners (subscribers) comprise individuals of integrity from across the country, representing diverse demography, profession and experiences. They are united by a common goal: to see the Foundation promote good governance and inclusive/sustainable development through mobilized and strengthened citizen action.

STAR-Ghana's distinctiveness lies in its methods and ways of working. Rather than pursuing solutions alone, it targets collective action and promotes citizen involvement through the 3CL approach: *convening inclusive dialogues, catalysing stakeholder actions, facilitating*

coordinated stakeholder actions, and supporting a continuous *learning and knowledge-sharing* approach. Its value proposition is fostering an enabling environment for citizen participation and civil society collaboration to tackle governance challenges.



STAR-Ghana's vision and mission stem from the belief that an engaged, knowledgeable citizenry is critical for democratic development. It believes that sustainable change comes from strengthening local voices and mobilizing communities around shared goals. The Foundation works towards developing a vibrant, well-informed, and assertive civil society that can contribute to

transformational national development and inclusive access to high-quality, accountable public services for all citizens.

Further details on the Foundation's Vision, Mission, and values are available on its website: www.star-ghana.org

PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING OUR MISSION

STAR-Ghana's mission is to mobilise, catalyse, and support an informed, active, engaged, and giving citizenry as the bedrock for fostering good governance, inclusive and green development.

The mission is operationalized through three pillars of work:

- Promoting **active citizenship** for good governance and inclusive development.
- Promoting **local philanthropy** for a resilient civil society.
- Supporting the **strengthening of the civil society sector** and its organisations to enhance the effectiveness of citizens' actions.

Across all three pillars, significant results were achieved, which are detailed out below.

Coordinated civil society actions for resilience and effectiveness

One of the key lessons learned from the STAR-Ghana Programme and from numerous studies (reports) on the civil society sector in Ghana has been the fragmentation of voice, the weak capacities for collective actions on salient issues and consequent effects on the sustainability and effectiveness of organisations operating in the sector. Small and less formally organised CSOs have been the most impacted by this state of affairs.

*STAR-Ghana led, and hosted, the consultations that culminated in the formation of the **Ghana Civil Society Forum (GCSF)** as an inclusive loosely organised space for CS mobilisation and collective actions on key issues that affect the sector and its organisation.*

*In its second year of existence, the GCSF, hosted by STAR-Ghana as Convenor, works through four Working Groups (**Enabling Environment, CS Sustainability, CS Accountability, and Sustaining the Forum**) each of which is hosted and convened by members of the forum.*

Through the Working Groups, the GCSF is enabling a more coordinated approach by CSOs in Ghana towards addressing key challenges and issues affecting them, including enhancing the quality of their accountability to their constituencies in particular and Ghanaians in general.

Active Citizenship

STAR-Ghana's Active Citizenship strategy focuses on three complementary areas of work, namely *promoting volunteerism, strengthening civic awareness and engagements* and promoting and strengthening *social movements*. The highlights of results achieved are presented below and detailed under the section of this report on our *Programmes and Results*.



Promoting Volunteerism:

The Foundation adopted a three-pronged approach to promote and strengthen volunteerism and a volunteerism culture in Ghana. This approach focuses on supporting CSOs to develop and test models of volunteerism to address salient community issues; directly implementing STAR-Ghana-focused volunteerism schemes; and advocacy actions to promote and strengthen a volunteerism culture in Ghana.

- 446 volunteers have been working in 91 communities across 30 districts, supporting community development efforts to improve access to health services and information, teaching in deprived communities, and working as project facilitators. The Foundation is working with 18 CSOs on this initiative.
- 700 young people worked as volunteer voter educators and peace ambassadors in three flashpoint communities in northern Ghana and seven communities in the New Juabeng Municipal Assembly. The initiative strengthened a culture of civic engagement among the youth and contributed to peaceful elections in these constituencies.



- STAR-Ghana recruited 20 development experts as volunteers to support the organizational and technical capacity strengthening of 18 community-based organizations across the country. The CBOs highlighted that the volunteers' hands-on support and accompaniment were critical to the initiative's success, as the

volunteers acted as critical friends embedded in the organizations rather than as consultants.

- The second **Ghana Philanthropy Conference**, convened by STAR-Ghana and its partners, focused on volunteerism as a tool for inclusive national development. The conference was attended by over 400 CSOs and practitioners and adopted a communique advocating for an enabling environment for volunteerism in Ghana.
- Through the 'Just Turned 18' initiative, 3,200 young first-time voters in the New Juabeng Municipality engaged with election management bodies. This initiative explored how voter education can be better tailored to first-time voters, to enable them to become better informed to make the right decisions about their votes. Additionally, the Koforidua Youth Manifesto, developed with the participation of 3,400 youth, served as an influencing tool for young people as they engaged with political parties and candidates on their expectations for youth development in the municipality.

Local Philanthropy: GfC partners' results

- The Yensomubi indigenous giving platform, developed by our partner Penplusbytes, saw a 144% increase in new users, a 500% increase in views, and a significant rise in campaign creation and donation attempts compared to the previous year. This resulted in financial donations of over 1,000 units and non-financial donations worth 8,000 units for the first quarter.
- STAR-Ghana's partner, the Presbyterian Community Rehabilitation Centre, reached 3,500 community donors in the Garu district of the Upper East region, raising 19,520 units to support persons with disabilities. The organization also enrolled 113 volunteers as community fundraising champions to promote local resource mobilization.
- STAR-Ghana mobilised 36 CSOs to present recommendations to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) on enabling philanthropy in Ghana during the completion of their party manifesto for the 2024 elections. Policy recommendations included enacting a National Philanthropy Policy and

operationalising tax incentives for philanthropic actors. The NDC has committed to initiating a process towards considering a national philanthropy policy. With the NDC coming into government, this presents a significant opportunity to advance collaboration in these areas.



Ghana Philanthropy Conferences

- The second Ghana Philanthropy Conference, which brought together over 400 CSOs across the country, was held. As an exchange platform, it shared different models of volunteerism practised by CSOs and private sector organizations, inspiring other CSOs to adopt volunteerism as a strategy for their social interventions. There was also policy engagement, with particular interest and a call on the government to initiate a National Volunteerism Policy to leverage the scaling up of volunteering in Ghana.

Work on an enabling environment for CSOs: A CSOs working group on Enabling Environment, which emerged from the Ghana Civil Society Forum,

has initiated advocacy on the Not-for-Profit bill. This bill has been at the drafting stage by the government for over five years. While regulation of CSOs is important, such regulations should be incentive-based and not restrictive. This Working Group is seeking to influence an NPO bill that adequately supports CSOs to do their work effectively and will draw on mobilising diverse CSOs to ensure this happens.



Civil Society Strengthening

- The Ghana Civil Society Forum is in its second year and is already impacting the civil society landscape in Ghana. The second national convening of the Forum in 2024 attracted over 400 CSOs, including community-based organisations (CBOs) and less formally organized CSOs. The Forum's development as an inclusive space for collective action on issues confronting the CS sector is a significant milestone. Additionally, the Forum established four Working Groups (WGs) to focus on critical areas for stakeholder action. The setup and operationalisation of these WGs represent further progress in strengthening the civic sector in Ghana and its organisations.

STAR-Ghana was the lead facilitator of the Forum and now hosts the secretariat as Convenor.



Group photo of civil society leaders, some members of the diplomatic community, Governing Council members, subscribers and Executive management of The Foundation at the 2024 CSOs Forum

- Through the Civil Society Strengthening Programme (CSSP), jointly funded by Comic Relief and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the UK, STAR-Ghana supports over 36 CSOs, ranging from small CBOs to national-level Think Tanks, with flexible non-project grants to strengthen their organisations. The key instruments of support include a Catalyst Fund (which targets institutional strengthening for small organisations), a Match Fund (which incentivises CSOs to diversify their income sources for sustainability), and a Civil Society Strengthening Fund (which supports diverse organizations through core funding, so they can pursue their mission and foster their sustainability).

OUR PROGRAMMES AND RESULTS ACHIEVED





1. Action for Voice, Influence and Inclusive Development (AVID) Project

AVID aims to improve access to social services and economic resources for underserved groups, including Fulbes, rural women, persons with disabilities, young people, and informal sector workers (including peasant farmers). Its primary strategies involve providing technical assistance for capacity-strengthening and grants to enable organizations led by or working in solidarity with underserved groups to strengthen constituency building for effective influencing at national and sub-national levels. AVID is in its second phase of implementation, which ends in 2026, and is funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.



Key Project Results

- Evidence of the increased capacity of organisations representing underserved social groups to claim and exercise their rights to public services and participation in governance. For example, the citizen's advocacy platform in the Bono region—comprising representatives of the traditional council, market women, farmer-based, and youth groups—has influenced the adoption of a community bylaw in the Banda Traditional Area. This bylaw enables women to access and own land, addressing a major constraint to women's sustainable livelihoods.
- In the Ashanti region, the United Traders Forum, an association of traders and market women, has successfully engaged the municipal assembly to allocate resources that improve the market environment. These resources include 1,000 plastic waste containers and eight waste collection trucks to improve sanitation; 6,500 electricity meters to mitigate unfair billing; and the establishment of a satellite station of the Ghana Revenue Service to improve accessibility to tax collection points.



- Increased access to public services for underserved groups. 189 women in five Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) in the West Mamprusi district have secured a loan of GHS 398,900 from the Naara Rural Bank to invest in their farming and other economic activities, contributing to improved economic well-being for themselves and their families. Additionally, 200 women from the United Petty Traders Association are now enrolled in pension schemes, a practice not common in the informal sector and a major step towards improved social protection for the women.



2. Action for Youth Development (AFYD) Project

The AFYD project, also known as the Kofkro project, contributes to promoting an enabling environment for youth inclusion and influence in governance and access to quality public goods and services within Koforidua City. Focusing on youth as the primary target, it strengthens the capacities of youth-led organizations to mobilize, represent, and engage constructively with duty-bearers to sustainably address their needs and priorities in decisions and resource distribution. Kofkro also strengthens the municipality's capacity and capability to engage with youth in its planning and service delivery and facilitate accountability to them. The project is funded by Fondation Botnar.



Key Project Results

- A Youth Manifesto was developed, launched, and mainstreamed in youth engagements as part of youth engagement with the 2024 general elections. The manifesto development process engaged and reached approximately 3,400 youth across the 8 zonal councils of the New Juabeng South Municipal Assembly. The document also serves as a point of engagement between the youth and the Municipal Assembly on priority setting for youth development in the city.
- Youth in the New Juabeng Municipal General Assembly: Out of the 34 local representatives, 11 are young people, both elected and nominated. Additionally, at least two young people serve on six of the eight sub-committees of the Assembly. Having young people involved in decision-making means many things. First, they directly represent their issues, leading to decisions that positively impact them. Second, this can also encourage other young people to become active citizens, thus reducing apathy among them





3. Inclusive Elections and Accountable Governance (IEAG) Project

The IEAG project, funded by FCDO, seeks to promote an enabling environment for inclusive elections at national and local levels and responsive and accountable governance in Ghana. The scope (under the Gender rights and empowerment project which has ended) also includes facilitating inclusive access to health, basic education, and social protection, particularly for girls, women, and persons with disabilities.



Key Project Results

In collaboration with Parliament's Select Committee on Education, the project contributed to:

- A significant increase in budgetary allocation of GH¢800 million for the basic education sector in the 2024 budget. This represents 20% of the total GETFund formula for 2024 and a 12% increase from the 2023 allocation. These funds were disbursed to improve access and quality.



- Payment of arrears of feeding grants to special schools by the government.
- The supply of 60% of textbooks for the four core subjects to schools, four years after introducing the standardised-based new curriculum.
- 179 out-of-school girls re-enrolled in school. This number includes 30 Fulbe girls who enrolled in school for the first time in the Sisala West and West East and Wa West districts of the Upper West region. Additionally, 41 girls transitioned from the Complementary Basic Education (CBE) program to formal schools.
- Six communities—Bankpama, Chogsia, Ga, Buoti, Nankpanabule, and Duu West—in the Sisala East and West districts of the Upper West region introduced a documented community bylaw against the elopement and betrothal of schoolgirls.
- The release of GHC 6.9 million by the government for the procurement of basic school desks. These funds, allocated in 2023 by the GETFund, were released due to a year-long intensive advocacy effort by STAR-Ghana’s partner, Africa Education Watch.

Other results achieved include:



- Our Zonal Political Party Manifestos consultations , of which three were organised across the north, middle and coastal belts of the country, directly engaged over 1,000 citizens to discuss and provide recommendations for the manifestos of the political parties. Three position parties developed out of these consultations, on health, education and social protection, were presented to the parties at national engagements.
- Recommendations from the citizen consultations were reflected in the manifestos of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC).
 - For the NDC, these commitments included enhancing early childhood education, restructuring TVET, increasing resources for the National Health Insurance Scheme, and establishing shelters for survivors of gender-based violence.
 - For the NPP, commitments included investing in social services delivery infrastructure, introducing incentives for health workers in rural areas, and enacting a social protection act.

- **Presidential Encounter:** The project facilitated an engagement between the National Democratic Congress presidential candidate and citizens, particularly marginalised groups (PWDs and women), to promote inclusive policy and influence manifesto plans. This initiative directly engaged representatives of organised groups, CSOs, academia, and trade associations.





4. Mobilising For Girls' Education (M4G) Initiative

The M4G initiative adopts a systems approach to promote girls' education by addressing poor retention, completion, and transition rates among girls at the basic and secondary levels, and the problem of out-of-school girls (girls of school-going age) in the poorest regions of Ghana. The project design is unique, as it offers a nine-month period of iteration with stakeholders, with whom the full project will be implemented. It is funded by Co-Impact. A design proposal has been submitted to Co-Impact for review following the iteration phase.



5. The Civil Society Strengthening Programme / #Shifting The Power (CSSP / #StP)

The Civil Society Strengthening Programme / #Shifting the Power (CSSP/#StP) provides long-term support to civil society in Ghana. It contributes to Civil Society Actors (CSAs) becoming more resilient, responsive, and effective in delivering on the priorities of their constituents. It is an eight-year program implemented by STAR-Ghana Foundation (SGF) and the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), with funding from Comic Relief and the Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO).

The CSSP/#StP consists of three grant components:

- **The Catalyst Fund** supports the institutional and capacity strengthening of small organizations, networks, and associations.
- **The Civil Society Strengthening Fund (CSSF)** supports CSAs in implementing their strategic plans, including institutional strengthening elements.
- **The Community Matching Fund** explores innovative funding for CSAs that want to explore local resource mobilization and diversify their funding sources.



Key Project Results

- 12 out of the 20 Catalyst Fund organizations have transitioned to the Civil Society Strengthening Fund. This adds to 26 other organizations that are accessing core funding for the first time to invest in strengthening their institutions. The Catalyst Fund has enabled grant partners to clarify their vision and mobilize their constituents around it, while also enhancing the reach of their work.
- All 19 organizations under the CF strengthened areas of their institutions, making them more attractive and positioning them for partnerships with new funders, including private sector organizations. 30% of Catalyst Fund organizations have shown significant progress towards broadening their funding base.



6. Giving for Change (GfC) The Giving for Change (GfC) project contributes to consolidating the civic space. It promotes local philanthropy to increase local ownership and promotes citizens' agency to claim entitlements from different actors, especially governments. The key strategy for implementation is promoting CSO learning and influencing the enabling environment for civil society and local giving. GfC is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Key Project Results

- Through the mobilization of community and private sector resources, over 1,500 Junior High students and 115 teachers in underserved schools in the Greater Accra region have been supported with learning tools, including books, to improve their learning.
- The awareness creation campaigns on local philanthropy are yielding tangible results. The Yensomubi indigenous giving platform, developed by STAR-Ghana's partner Penplusbytes, saw a 144% increase in new users, a 500% increase in views, and an approximately 50% rise in campaign creation and donation attempts compared to the previous year. This resulted in over 1,000 units in financial donations and 8,000 units in non-financial donations for the first quarter.
- Additionally, STAR-Ghana's partner, the Presbyterian Community Rehabilitation Centre, reached 3,500 community donors in the Garu district of the Upper East region, raising 19,520 units to support persons with disabilities. The organization also successfully enrolled 113 volunteers as community fundraising champions to promote local resource mobilization.
- Following engagements between a coalition of more than 36 CSOs led by the Foundation and the NDC on its Manifesto for the 2024 elections, the NDC committed to initiating a process towards considering a national philanthropy policy. This provides a basis for further advocacy with the NDC coming into office following the elections.
- In collaboration with the West African Civil Society Institute (WACSI), STAR-Ghana carried out an environmental mapping of local philanthropic practices in Africa. Findings highlighted opportunities for civil society organizations to advance local philanthropy in their countries, emphasizing strong traditions of mutual aid, indigenous giving, and the rise of technology to facilitate local giving.



7. Security in Northern Ghana (SING) Project The Security in Northern Ghana (SING) project builds on the Foundation's peace and security work started in 2020 under the Conflict Security and Stability Fund (CSSF) project in Northern Ghana. Funded by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the UK, the project works to strengthen local and national capacities for achieving sustainable peace, security, and stability in Ghana.



It supports stakeholders at various levels of governance to take action and build capacities to address the key drivers of conflict and insecurity, with a specific focus on Northern Ghana. SING adopts a mix of grants and technical support, working with local partners, state agencies, and strategic security interventions towards achieving the project's goal.

Key Project Results

- The Northern Ghana Security Dialogue and Coordinating platform, established in 2023 as a forum for dialogue and enhanced coordination between relevant state and non-state actors, has improved coordination and collaboration between relevant stakeholders. This enhanced collaboration aims to address, mitigate, and respond to conflicts and insecurity in northern Ghana. Convened by the RCCs, the platform has led to initiatives such as:
 - Piloting District Peace Committees
 - The participation of Regional and District Peace Councils in the deliberations of relevant security committees
 - Consensus to set up a fund to address perennial flooding in northern Ghana



- The Foundation has developed a Fulbe Integration Manual, in consultation with key stakeholders. The manual aims to support CSOs, relevant state agencies, and other stakeholders in their actions to address the exclusion of Fulbes in the socio-economic lives of their communities. Fulbe exclusion has been identified as one of the drivers of radicalisation and farmer-herder conflicts.
- The livelihoods of over 1,996 women and young people in six communities across the Upper East, West, and Savannah regions of northern Ghana have been enhanced. This was achieved through skills training, the provision of equipment, and grants. This action aligns with the project's strategy to strengthen the resilience of community members and reduce their vulnerability to exploitation by violent extremist groups.
- In collaboration with the five Regional Peace Councils in northern Ghana, the Foundation facilitated the establishment of ten inter-party dialogue platforms. These platforms were created in selected constituencies across northern Ghana to promote dialogue and foster cohesion among youth belonging to various political parties. Additionally, approximately 300 youth peace ambassadors were mobilised across three hotspots—Tamale, Walewale, and Binduri, to conduct peace education initiatives prior to the elections. This contributed to a reduction in violent clashes within these constituencies.



8. Community Livelihood Enhancement Project The Community Livelihood Enhancement Project aimed to address the socio-economic drivers and vulnerabilities to violent extremism and radicalization in border towns. It did so by providing small-scale livelihood enhancement projects to selected border communities. The project took a human security approach to prevent radicalization and susceptibility to extremist recruitment. Funded by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), it concluded in 2024.



Key Project Results

- The project significantly improved relationships and information sharing between community members and border security officials. An official at the Pulmakom border post attributed the improved cooperation to the willingness of citizens and dialogue platform members to share information in support of security operations.
- The dialogue platforms increased the participation of women as peace brokers. This was evident in a comment made by the Chief of Namoo during the community welfare project handover ceremony: “The project has empowered us to see that women’s views are also important in peacebuilding and fighting violent extremism. They see a lot of things in the community that we men don’t see sometimes. We now encourage them to also talk when we are having community programmes.”
- The project continued to build on the National Security campaign of “See Something, Say Something” to foster collaboration between communities, security agencies, and other relevant stakeholders. This enhanced the ability of community members to proactively identify and respond to security threats. The community dialogue platform served as spaces to enhance vigilance and resilience, while improving coordination among stakeholders.



9. Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) Project



BRAVE aims to build resilience among targeted populations in selected northern Ghanaian border communities. The influx of refugees and displaced persons from neighboring countries has heightened the vulnerability of these communities to radicalisation and violent extremism.

BRAVE enhances community livelihoods and promotes digital literacy to combat violent extremism. The project's emergency phase (January-December 2024) was implemented across three communities in the Upper East and Upper West regions. The extended phase (December 2024-December 2027) is being implemented across 10 communities in the same regions.



Key Project Results

- 202 women across the three border communities of Fielmou, Sapeliga, and Garu have acquired livelihood skills and are now engaged in income-generating businesses, enhancing their livelihoods' resilience.
- More than 600 youth have acquired knowledge and skills in identifying extremist propaganda strategies used to misinform and disinform youth and incite violence. Equipping these young people with these skills has reduced their vulnerability to misinformation, disinformation, and radicalisation.





10. Volunteerism Support Project The Volunteerism Support Project (VSP) is a one-year pilot project funded under the AVID project. VSP supports CSOs in developing and testing volunteerism models to address key community issues. It is implemented in partnership with 18 partner organisations working in 91 communities across 30 districts and 10 regions.



Key Project Results

- Project partners have mobilised 446 volunteers, 218 of whom are women, to support various community development initiatives. These initiatives range from teaching in deprived community schools to supporting community health and sanitation campaigns and undertaking civic education. They have also supported the construction of health and sanitation infrastructure.
- The 18 CSO partners have gained invaluable knowledge, skills, and lessons in promoting volunteerism for community development. These organisations will apply these skills and lessons in their future work.
- The 446 volunteers report increased civic awareness and a better understanding of the complexities of community development. They are now willing and able to engage with community development processes as active participants.
- The Foundation's understanding of the complexities of volunteerism for development has deepened. These lessons will be shared with the wider development community and will inform STAR-Ghana's future initiatives in this area.

The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly angled photograph of several Kenyan 50 Shilling banknotes. The notes are yellow and green, featuring portraits of Kenyan leaders and the word 'Kenya' in Swahili. The number '50' is prominently displayed in large, stylized digits. The text 'OUR FINANCES' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters with a thin blue outline. The word 'OUR' is positioned in the upper left, and 'FINANCES' spans the lower half of the image.

OUR FINANCES



INCOME

GHS 44M



EXPENDITURE

GHS 37M



SURPLUS

GHS 7M

EXPENDITURE BY %

2023 v 2024

Grants 70%

Convenings 10%

Programme support 5%

**Administration and overheads
15%**

Item	2023 (GHS)	2024 (GHS)
Income	15.5M	44.0M
Expenditure	13.2M	37.0M
Surplus	2.5M	6.8M
Grants (% of expenditure)	65%	70%
Convenings (% of expenditure)	10%	10%
Administration (% of expenditure)	19%	15%
Other program costs	6%	5%

Details of the finances are provided in the Auditor's Report for the financial year, attached as an annex to this report.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The year under review marked a significant step in the Foundation's journey to strengthen and consolidate its governance system.

The first transition in leadership of the Governing Council (GC) occurred during this period. Dr. Esther Ofei-Aboagye, the inaugural Chairperson, and her deputy, Mr. Charles Akelyira Abugre, stepped down following the end of their tenure. Hajia Hamdiya Ismail and Mrs. Adelaide Addo-Fening were elected as the new chairperson and deputy chairperson, respectively.

In addition to the leadership transition, six GC members whose tenure had ended were replaced by new members elected by Subscribers at the 2024 AGM. Furthermore, 14 new subscribers were added, bringing the total number to 34.

The GC also established a new Institutional Strengthening Committee, chaired by the GC Vice-Chairperson. The committee provides strategic support to the secretariat in developing and implementing the Foundation's second Five-Year Strategic Plan and the Institutional Strengthening Plan approved in 2023.

These changes highlight the robustness of the Foundation's governance system and its commitment to embodying its values of inclusion and accountability.

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL



Hamdiya Ismaila- Chair



Adelaide Addo-Fening- Vice Chair



Kobina Y Okyere-Member



Charlse Abugre- Member



Suzanne Yemidi-Member



Prof Gyimah Boadi-Member



Gertude Fofame- Member



Victor Mensah- Member



Ethel Coffie- Member



Bernard Avle- Member



Eunice Comnasha- Member

SUBSCRIBERS OF STAR-GHANA FOUNDATION

1. Adelaide Addo-Fening
2. Akilagpa Sawyerr Aki
3. Ellen Hagan
4. Esi Sutherland-Addy
5. Esther Ofei- Aboagye
6. Kwame Karikari
7. Steve Manteaw
8. Takyiwaah Manuh
9. Franklin Cudjoe
10. Rose Mensah-Kutin
11. Mohammed Awal
12. Deodat Adenutsi
13. Nana Asantewa Afadzinu
14. Audrey Gadzekpo
15. Ethel Delali Coffie
16. Peter Yaro Bismark
17. Francis Asong
18. Gyimah Boadi
19. Sulemana Abdulai
20. Hajara Mohammed
21. Margaret Jackson
22. Prof Ellen Bortei-Doku
23. Mr. Roland Akosah
24. Mr. Elijah Danso
25. Yawa Hanson Quao
26. Alhaji Osman Abdel Rahman
27. Thomas Bernakuu
28. Naa Fofo Djanie
29. Mr. Martin Kpebu
30. Mrs Dinah Adiko
31. Teiko Sabah
32. Victor Paa Kwesi Mensah
33. Bashiratu Kamal-Muslim
34. Mr. Charles Aheto-Tsegah

COMMUNICATIONS



REACH

10.6M



WEBSITE VISITS

55K



IMPRESSIONS

180K



ENGAGEMENTS

45K



REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS

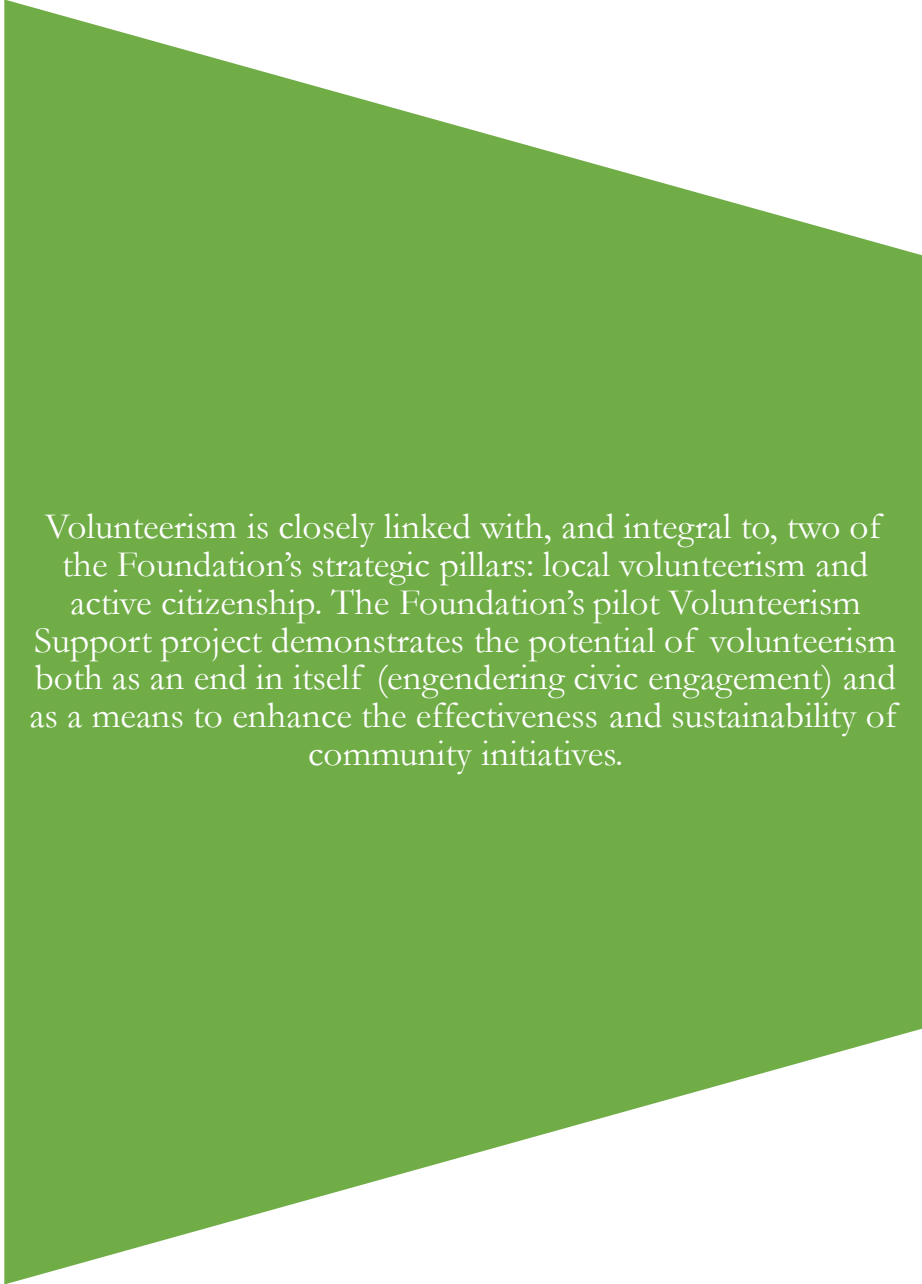
Implementing a Shift the Power requires both inward-facing (organizational transformation) and outward-facing (partnerships transformation) strategies. This ensures that the Foundation models internally what it seeks to promote externally.

Local philanthropy is critical to strengthening the resilience of the local civil society sector, particularly for small, community-based, constituency-based, and less formally organized CSOs. Strengthening the use of philanthropy as a tool for building organizational resilience goes beyond project funding. It requires a more intentional approach that includes strengthening an enabling legal and regulatory framework and the capacities of CSOs. It also requires expanding the understanding of local philanthropy beyond fundraising to include promoting volunteerism as a strategy for strengthening constituencies and organisational rootedness.

Sustainability of CSOs has been discussed mainly in terms of diversification of funding sources, access to core funding, and increased access to funding. While these are critical for survival, CSOs must also reexamine their organizational models. Many sustainability and organizational strengthening approaches replicate traditional NGO models, which often require high overheads.

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The quality of governance is central to addressing poverty, exclusion, and insecurity. Facilitating a more inclusive approach to the governance of public goods and services, natural resources, and other development areas is critical to achieving effectiveness and sustainability.

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Volunteerism is closely linked with, and integral to, two of the Foundation's strategic pillars: local volunteerism and active citizenship. The Foundation's pilot Volunteerism Support project demonstrates the potential of volunteerism both as an end in itself (engendering civic engagement) and as a means to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of community initiatives.

Our Priorities For 2025

The Foundation's priorities in the upcoming reporting period and beyond will be shaped by the new Strategic Plan II, commitments to funding partners, and unfinished business from 2024. The key priorities are:

Strategic Priority 1:

Implementation of Strategic Plan II:

This will involve launching the Foundation's Strategic Plan II and developing strategies for its operationalization, including a financing plan. Systems, strategies, and policies will be aligned with the new direction, and internal capacities will be strengthened for effective implementation.

Strategic Priority 2:

Enhancing Resource Mobilization and Diversification:

The focus will be on operationalising the Business Development Unit (BDU) to coordinate and lead the implementation of resource mobilisation strategies and activities. In the area of local philanthropy, the Foundation will shift its focus to pilot testing models of local philanthropy to support its initiatives. This includes the Northern Ghana Flood Disaster Relief fund, which is being developed in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), the five Regional Coordinating Councils in northern Ghana, and the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO).

Other resource mobilisation initiatives include operationalising a STAR-Ghana Endowment fund based on the technical guidelines approved by the GC. The Foundation will also identify and engage donors who provide unrestricted funding to mobilise resources and support key long-term initiatives, such as promoting active citizenship and convening civil society actions around emerging national issues.

Strategic Priority 3:

Thought Leadership:

The GC-approved Thought Leadership (TL) strategy will be fully operationalised in 2025. In 2024, the Foundation organized two international webinars on managing risks in partnerships within the context of Shifting Power and measuring value in social development initiatives. Building on these experiences, the Foundation will deepen its role as a thought leader around key issues.

These include active citizenship, local philanthropy, and civil society strengthening for inclusive, accountable, and responsive governance. Key activities under this priority include recruiting the first cohort of STAR-Ghana Fellows, strengthening strategic communications, and establishing a research and knowledge management unit as part of the Results and Learning workstream.

Strategic Priority 4:

Organisational Strengthening:

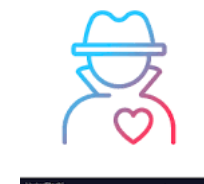
Based on an independent institutional assessment, the Foundation developed an Institutional Strengthening Plan (ISP) in 2024. Implementation of the ISP will continue in 2025. Key actions include strengthening the capacities of GC committees; completing independent reviews of key organizational strategies and systems to inform revisions; completing the ISO certification process; and establishing the research and knowledge management unit.

Strategic Priority 5:

Program Effectiveness:

The Foundation will strengthen capacities at the GC and secretariat levels. This will allow the Foundation to deliver on grant commitments, enhance project and initiative effectiveness, and improve the quality of partnerships.

OUR FUNDING PARTNERS



Our Staff



• Ibrahim-Tanko Amidu	Executive Director
• Eunice Agbenyadzi	Head of Programmes
• Mary Sabbah	Head of Finance and Operations
• Joan Vivian Koomson	Head of Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation
• Frank K. Amoateng	Head of Results and Knowledge Management
• Marian Kyei	Governance Advisor
• Raymond Danso	Portfolio Manager
• Sarah Adjei	Project Manager,
• Fred Y. Nuuri-Teg	Projects Manager
• Emmanuel Dedoo	Senior Grants Officer
• Anita Awuku	Senior Programme Officer
• Feruza Sualisu	Senior Programme Officer
• Ama Achiaa	Senior Communications Officer
• Jacob Tetteh	Senior Finance Officer
• Ragadahu Abdul-Wahab	Project Officer
• Josephine Adjei	Admin and Programmes Support Officer
• Khadija Abdul-Samed	Project Officer
• Amina Abdulai	Project Officer
• Owusuwaa Owusu-Brempong	Project Officer
• Papisdaff Ali	Communications Officer
• Godfred Mensah	Finance Officer
• Richmond Duku	Finance Officer
• Juliana Baidoo	Finance Assistant
• Emmanuel Mensah	M&E Officer
• Joel Abbew	Driver
• Mohammed Abdallah	Driver
• Abdallah Mohammed	Driver
• Yasmeen Dubuire	Intern











