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PRESS RELEASE

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Phase 3 of CDD-Ghana's 'I Am Aware' project to focus on civic responsibility

The third phase of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development's (CDD-Ghana) 'I Am Aware' project has commenced with a focus on enhancing local government and citizen interactions through rigorous public education.

The 'I Am Aware' project; a non-partisan citizen empowerment campaign seeks to strengthen the demand for accountability and responsiveness in Ghana by improving citizen awareness and engagement with duty bearers about public service delivery issues in their communities.

With funding from the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, the social accountability project which started in 2014, has over the period contributed significantly to improving citizens-local government engagements, increasing transparency and accountability and improving development, at the local level. This is done through the provision of free, simple user-friendly data on the state of public service delivery in seven sectors – education, health, sanitation, water, security, roads, and agriculture across the all regions of Ghana.

Over the period, the project has used three main channels to share information with citizens in the districts – town hall meetings, local radio and the 'I Am Aware' SMS platform. The town hall meetings have been engaging civic group leaders, opinion and community leaders; while the local radio stations are used to share the information with wider citizens, including on-air dialogues with duty bearers and citizen call-in. With the SMS platform, citizens are able to request and receive information about the quality of service delivery in their respective districts on their mobile phones to hold duty bearers to account.

The phase three of the 'I Am Aware' project will be executed on four key pillars – accessible and reliable data; citizen mobilization, empowerment and social action; service delivery monitoring; and the creation of citizen-government dialogue forums.

Addressing participants at a three-day partners planning meeting in Prampram in the Greater Accra Region, Mr. Paul Osei Kuffour, CDD-Ghana's Northern Sector Team Leader and Coordinator encouraged the partners to strategically decentralize their district-level engagement to the lowest level of governance to increase citizen participation.

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“‘I Am Aware’ is trying to aggregate a lot of impact at scale and we want a lot of visibility, advocacy, social mobilization and engagement at the micro level. We must ensure that the results and impact we make during the phase three are sustained at the grassroots,” he said. “We need a very strong sense of civic duty and citizenship to be able to do these things at the local level. These are some of the additions which would be making going forward.”

On his part, Mr. Awal Mohammed, CDD-Ghana’s Social Accountability Projects Team Leader said, at the end of 2023, the project which would have run for 10 years should record significant micro-level impact at scale, and thus, urged the partners to be focused and strategic in their activities during the period.

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