

ACTIVISTA GHANA: MOBILISING YOUTH IN GHANA

CONSTITUTION

BACKGROUND

This constitution aims at defining the framework and process for the establishment of Activista in Ghana, ActionAid's global youth network fighting poverty and inequalities at the local, national and global levels.

In 2010 the Activista Network was established as the coordinating body of ActionAid youth work and an international Activista Coordinator recruited. The international Strategy 'Peoples Action to End Poverty' from 2012 put increasing focus on youth and change promise 6 says that 'by 2017 we will have mobilised over five million youth to take sustained towards building a poverty-free planet'. Since then Activista has developed further in more than 25 ActionAid countries and involves thousands of youth and volunteers from more than 50 ActionAid partners and has been linked more to the international campaigns.

This constitution was developed through the joint effort of more than 50 youth across Ghana and beyond. It was initiated by the participants of the Global Change Campaign Course 2015 held at the Global Platform Ghana and finalized by representatives of youth groups from six regions of Ghana (Greater Accra, Northern Region, Upper East, Upper West, Brong Ahafo, Volta Region) who participated in the Activista Camp in 2016. The youth agreed to establish a national youth network called Activista Ghana which was officially launched August 12th 2016 in Tamale on the occasion of the international youth day.

The establishment of Activista Ghana is part of ActionAid Ghana's mission Objective 3 in the Country Strategy Paper V "To mobilise and support 22 000 youth to take purposeful and sustained action as leaders in their own right to shape a more democratic nation that protects, respects, and fulfills the rights of the people living in poverty".

In particular, it will contribute to the implementation of Key Action 1 to "mobilise youth networks to advocate for development priorities that affect them, and to advocate against rights violations of people living in poverty".

The establishment of Activista Ghana is expected to have two Key Outcomes, namely: Increased activism on issues that affect youth; and improved government and duty bearers responsiveness to the people living in poverty.

VISION

A world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity

MISSION

To work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty, injustice and inequality.

OBJECTIVES

To develop effective platforms for taking action, sharing knowledge, promoting stories of change, guidance and coordinating for empowerment, solidarity actions and effective campaigns.

AAG Mission objective 2. Advance political influence of women and girls, reduce women's unpaid care work and violence against women and girls.

AAG Mission objective 3. Promote access to quality public education for boys and girls which respects their rights and enhance capacity of the youth to drive development priorities

KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Human Rights Based Approach:**

Activista believes that poverty is a violation of human rights and a terrible injustice. Our HRBA centres on active agency: we take sides with people living in Poverty and support them to become conscious of their rights, analyse claim their rights and hold duty bearers to account. There are three pillars to this: empowerment, solidarity and campaigning.

- **Actionaid principles:**

1. We put rights holders first and ensure participation of rights holders ...Youth participation
2. We analyse and confront unequal power ...based on class, gender, ethnicity, disability, and age
3. We work in partnership ...with credible organisations, youth NGOs, networks, movements and donors
4. We are accountable and transparent ...to all stakeholders
5. We advance women's rights ...50% of the youth we work with are young women
6. We critically reflect and learn ...from lived experience and expertise, regardless of age
7. We ensure links across levels – local, national, regional, international ...policy developments, and activist social movements
8. We are innovative, solutions-oriented and promote credible alternatives.

- **A Culture of Volunteerism & Empowerment**

Indignation and hope coupled with knowledge and skills are the principle drivers of an Activista. Volunteers will be at the core of what we do. They should be listened to, have influence and be empowered by being Activista Ghana members.

- **Cost Effectiveness**

All Activista Ghana activities will be based on cost-effectiveness, keeping costs at a minimum whenever we are running activities, trainings, meetings and support when the need arises.

WHAT WILL ACTIVISTA DO?

Policy and Campaigns

Harmonizing the planning and engagement in campaigning with youth groups in the Regional Development Programs in collaboration with ActionAid Ghana. The campaigns will be guided by the *National Youth Policy* and advocate for youth participation in decision-making.

Participation in Governance

Involve youth in participation in governance and decision-making at local, district, regional and national levels. Through the Activista coordinating structure, some of the youth could be elected as representatives of the youth in ActionAid's Ghana General Assembly.

Capacity building

Activista Ghana will plan and implement capacity building activities for youth and develop their skills as change agents as well as organise meetings for experience sharing across Regional Development Programs.

Online youth mobilization

Activista Ghana will use social media (Facebook and Twitter) to engage in online youth mobilization to conduct campaigns, advocacy and informing youth across regions.

Feminist leadership

Activista Ghana coordination and leadership will follow feminist principles and be committed to bridge the gender gap between men and women. Activista Ghana will have a special focus on young women who will be empowered to take leadership and coordination positions. Selected Activista members will be involved in coaching and training other members who are joining the network on this principle.

International solidarity

Activista Ghana will promote international solidarity across the Activista network and open opportunities for Ghanian youth connect the local to the global level in campaigns and other actions to fighting poverty and inequalities.

STRUCTURE

Activista Ghana would be organised as network with a flat power structure with local, regional, and national Activista coordinators who will work in collaboration with ActionAid Ghana to mobilise, inform and take decisions with youth at local, regional, and national levels. Regional coordinators are part of the decision-making committee at the national level. Local coordinators and members work together to make decisions at local level. Activista Ghana will be coordinated by teams in each region, regional coordinators coordinator, who will be part of national team of coordinators.

MEMBERSHIP TO BE PART OF ACTIVISTA GHANA

The criteria to join Activista Ghana are the following:

- Being a youth between 15 years and 35 years.
- Subscribing to Activista Ghana's vision, mission and principles.
- Referral from existing Activista Ghana member or ActionAid Staff.
- Filling a registration form and motivation statement (offline or online). If needed with the support on activista member.
- ActionAid's RDP youth groups are potential members of Activista Ghana.
- Activista Ghana shall not be used to promote partisan politics and religious issues.
- Activista is not a space of bad governance or gender discrimination (class, gender, ethnic group, age, and disability).

PARTNERSHIP

Activista Ghana will be established and sustained through collaboration among the following partners:

ActionAid Ghana

- Provide the secretariat services for Activista Ghana and budget for activista.
- Supporting meeting and events for Activista Ghana youth
- Engaging youth volunteers in AAG work (e.g. local fundraising) and involving the youth to be part of the board.
- Strive to hire an Activista Coordinator a staff
- Broadcasting Activista activities through AAG communication channels

Regional Development Programmes

- Mobilising Regional Development Programmes youth
- Assessing needs of youth in Regional Development Programmes
- Support Activista groups in Regional Development Programmes
- Capacity building locally

Global Platform Ghana

- Capacity building of Activista Ghana youth from all Regional Development Programmes
- Organizing events with youth across Regional Development Programmes
- Mobilising Activista Ghana youth for campaigns
- Maintain the relationship between Activista Ghana and Activista International
- Broadcasting Activista Ghana activities and AAG youth work through the Global Platform Ghana Magazine
- Facilitate the harmonisation of youth groups across Regional Development Programmes

National Youth Authority

- Partnering with Activista Ghana on relevant programs and activities
- Supporting in mobilizing youth and youth groups to join Activista Ghana
- Supporting some of Activista Ghana activities

Social Movements

- Partnering on Activista Ghana campaigns and advocacy
- Sharing experiences and knowledge
- Mobilizing youth for campaigns and other actions