



# NEWSLETTER



KAS Hauptabteilung  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit

## Welcome to the KAS Ghana Newsletter

**Special Edition focussed on women leaders in Upper West Region**

EDITION 7-07/11  
July 2011  
Special Edition

### Contents

▪ **Page 1 - 4**

*Traditional Women leaders in Northern Ghana – A success story of cooperation*

▪ **Page 4**

*New intern with KAS Ghana*

READ ABOUT PAST AND PRESENT ACTIVITIES OF THE KAS GHANA COUNTRY OFFICE

**In close cooperation with the Centre of Indigos Knowledge and Organisation Development (CIKOD) KAS achieved major successes in assisting the empowerment of the traditional women leaders in the Upper West Region in Northern Ghana. After five years of close collaboration, the women leaders obtained their first objective with the foundation of the Hala-Kuro/Pogname Association.**



The last Workshop for Traditional Leaders took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011 in Wa, the regional capital of Upper West. Functioning as a sponsor, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and the partner organization CIKOD welcomed about 40 traditional leaders from the Upper West Region who actively engaged themselves in the topic of "Women and Community Development."

Women are of particular importance for the local community development, one of the principal aims of the interworking between KAS and the local participants has been the empowerment of the traditional leaders ability to act. Especially the empowerment of female traditional leaders (depending on the region they are locally called Hala-Kuro or Pognaa) has been of particular interest to all actors since the beginning of the collaboration. Traditional women leaders are playing an important role in the local communit-

ies. Being the representatives of the women in the rural areas and in most cases their first points of contacts, the female traditional leaders acquired a sustainable political power as well as a great importance for the community development.

The traditional female leaders are not only playing an important role on the local level. In particular with the recent foundation of the *Hala-Kuro/Pogname Association of Upper West Region* the women gained importance on the trans-national level. Hence, the founding of the Association in July is an important step towards gender equality and the integration of women in political processes in Northern Ghana.

At the centre of discussion in the process of the last workshop were the recent authored conditions which include the position, the scope of influence and the familiar background of the Hala-Kuros and the Pognaas. Contrary to the view of the Chiefs, the women succeeded in prevailing with several ideas and interests. The council called for an harmonization of the constitution till the end of this month.



**Naa Sohiminye Danah Gore II, the president of the Upper West Regional**

## NEWSLETTER

## INTERNATIONAL

## ZUSAMMENARBEIT

EDITION 7 | JULY 2011

[www.kas.de/ghana](http://www.kas.de/ghana)[www.kas.de/ghana](http://www.kas.de/ghana)

**House of Chiefs**, spoke about the importance of the traditional leaderships in the local areas in northern Ghana. He emphasized the insufficient establishment of the cooperation between the government and the traditional heads. One reason for this is the politicians fear of the growing power on the part of the traditional chieftaincy. The president criticized that the work of the Regional House of Chiefs is refrained by a lack of financial resources. The payment of the regional chiefs as well as the payment of the female leaders provides less opportunities for the traditional leaderships to develop and implement projects in their communities. Therefore the general meetings of all members of the Regional House of Chiefs is narrowed down to only two or three meetings a year. Nevertheless the president welcomed the newly founded Hala-Kuro/Pogname Association to office and expressed his delight at being able to continue to benefit from the citizen-orientated administration at the local level.

'The most disadvantaged in the traditional communities are women. The women are disproportionately affected by poverty though they are playing an important role for the development of the communities, in particular on the strength of their economic importance. Mostly they are responsible for the work on the farms. Besides, as they are responsible for the housework and the family, the women are affected by an extra work load. Therefore the female leaders are of great importance as they are supporting and encouraging the women in the communities. Now we are accepting and appreciating their work.'

**The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung is pleased to be associated with the empowerment of women leaders in Upper West Region**, because the objective of the foundation in Ghana is to promote the development of good governance and democratic development. Good governance involves participation of all citizenry in the management of national resources and opportunities. Consequently giving opportunities to women who are vulnerable to engage in leadership position is a good platform for the Foundation in respect of its a core objectives. Our reinforcement of empowerment at the community level is attestation to the fact that the community development is at the centre of our work to compliment the work of national institutions. We therefore started to advocacy work for women leaders in Upper West Region in 2006. We have consistently push through various state and non-state institutions for women leaders to be recognised and today, we are proud to be part of this success story.



**Bernard Y. Guri, the Executive Director of CIKOD** made a statement after the workshop in WA:

'Together we have already achieved a great deal. In the beginning we faced main challenges in convincing the people of the importance of the traditional women leaders. Special emphasis was put on the reliability and the long-term stability of the traditional leadership in general. The reconstruction of the local leadership hierarchy was of importance not least because of the special relation between the chiefs and their female counterpart, the queen mothers. The work of the female leaders was ignored or minimised as something to be forgotten by the majority of people. In the beginning of our cooperation we instructed an extensive research which aimed to find out the importance of women leadership in the traditional areas. The results proved that traditional female leaders are still important for over 90% of the women in the local communities. The next challenge was the implementation of the gender problem in the local hierarchy. In particular convincing the chiefs of the importance of women empowerment and, as a consequence thereof, a transfer of power from the male to the female sphere of influence, became a long process. We started our cooperation with the traditional chieftaincy in 2006. Now we have achieved specific success, especially with the foundation of the Hala-Kuro/Pogname Association. In the first instance women were very important to the local community, but they were unrepresented. Today people no more see the traditional women leadership as trivial, they rather assign different values to the women's agency. These changes can only be made gradually. In the beginning we started with bringing the female and male leaders together. Furthermore we made progresses towards gender equality, the women are now allowed to enter the house of chiefs. As the recent workshop has shown, all parties concerned still have to work on the improvement of their cooperation, even though the women already made

**NEWSLETTER  
INTERNATIONAL  
ZUSAMMENARBEIT**

EDITION 7 | JULY 2011  
[www.kas.de/ghana](http://www.kas.de/ghana)

[www.kas.de/ghana](http://www.kas.de/ghana)

considerable progresses and achieved a lot.' This is what Mr. Guri notified so far.

Both sides seemed to be happy with the outcomes of the past workshops. The women expressed their satisfaction with the main progresses. In particular the foundation of the Hala-Kuro/Pognamine Association, which expands their influence on the level of leadership, is seen as the main objective they achieved so far.



**Madame Pognaa Agnes Azaah is the President of the Hala-Kuro/Pognamine Association of Upper West.** She organizes different meetings with women in her communities within the Kaleo Traditional Area:

'The regular meetings are very important to me, especially in terms of problem solving and self organisation. Very often it is very difficult to bring the women together. Due to their responsibility in their households and their work on the farms or in the markets it might not be possible for them to attend the meetings. Since we were able to elaborate our cooperation with the chiefs the questions and the discussion brought up in the meetings helped to discover new options and to widen our scope of action. I am now trying to build up the connections with other high authorities. Unfortunately we are facing a money problem. I have to finance the work within the community mainly in using my own financial means. But much has changed here, and very much for the better. I am confident with regard to a further positive development in future.'



**The vice president of the Hala-Kuro/Pognamine Association** is a 38 years young lady, traditionally called Hala-Kuro Hagora Limann I. After the workshop she spoke about the main challenges and objectives of the female leaders:

'Lately we faced a lot of difficulties and obstacles, particularly in finding a position as a women in a male dominated area. With the foundation of the Hala-Kuro/Pognamine Association we finally achieved one of our main goals so far. The Association allows us to operate within an official framework of decision-making and responsibility. Our common goal is to bring the women in the communities together. We want to change something and to do something for them. Especially women and children are the most vulnerable groups in the rural areas. Generally speaking, women are more affected by poverty than men. Due to a lack of education, they receive the lowest salaries, they have the least job security, and they are at great risk of overexploitation of labour. Mainly they are responsible for the farms as well as for the feeding of the family. Together with the household chores they are especially burdened. The women in the rural areas are facing different problems than the women in the southern Ghana who have more developing opportunities. Our responsibility as female leaders in the Upper West Region is the improvement of the role and the living conditions of the women in the communities. Though we achieved our main objective with the foundation of the Association, we are still facing difficulties in becoming generally accepted by the men. We can not talk of a real achievement of our objectives until these hurdles are cleared and we have equal rights.' Hala-Kuro Hagora Limann I. expressed her statement in an upbeat mood although she emphasised the vulnerable position of most women in her community

**NEWSLETTER**

**INTERNATIONAL**

**ZUSAMMENARBEIT**

EDITION 7 | JULY 2011

[www.kas.de/ghana](http://www.kas.de/ghana)

[www.kas.de/ghana](http://www.kas.de/ghana)

The other members of the Hala-Kuro/Pognamine Association were content with the outcomes of the workshop.



**The leader of the Jiriapa Traditional Area Pognaa Rebecca Dombo** aims to improve the welfare of women in her district:

'My work as a traditional leader is very important to me. My objective is the improvement of the women's welfare in my community. I am organising a weekly meeting of women in my community, every Tuesday I am leading the Women Group in Jirapa, as well as the Widows Association in Ullo, which takes part every Sunday. One of our main problems as females in the rural areas is the insufficient financial independence. Therefore, with the objective of financial independence, we have to find ways to organize money for ourselves. I already started to establish a local fund which provides loans for the women to start business. Within the communities we are working together with the chiefs. Therefore the maintenance of our good relationship is very important. It is a great pity that the chiefs do not see the importance of the work of the Pognaas so far. They are still trying to prohibit the equality of female and male leaders. But especially in the past time, I have seen a lot of progresses in the cooperation. Before the men did not want to work with us at all. My main objective for the future is that the Pognaas will be recognized, there should not be any problem. If the chiefs accept us our aims will be achieved.'

After the programme the women came together to discuss further conceptions of their cooperation. Further meetings and workshops with the traditional leaders in Upper West are already planned.

**New Intern in the KAS country office**



The young German lady Ms. Isabel Rutter will support the work and activities of KAS in Ghana from July till August. The 26 years old student of 'International Development' at the University of Vienna has already gained work experience through previous internships in Ghana. Her particular interest is focused on political, socio-economic and gender specific topics. Previous work experience as well as coursework focussed on women and children being the most vulnerable group in the societies, strengthened her interest in working in the field of women empowerment and international development cooperation. During the semester break she took the opportunity to get an insight into the fields of activity of KAS Ghana by means of a voluntary internship. During her time with KAS she benefits from obtaining an insight into the practice of professional work, especially in learning more about the planning and implementation of programmes to strengthen and empower women within the civil society.

Thank you for reading! [www.kas.de/ghana](http://www.kas.de/ghana)



**Impressum**

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.  
Hauptabteilung  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Ghana  
Country Office  
103, Osu Badu Street  
Airport West  
Tel. 0302 768 629  
Fax 0302 768 630

For suggestions or to unsubscribe contact [secretary.ghana@kas.de](mailto:secretary.ghana@kas.de)

We are on facebook now!!!

Be up to date with all KAS activities and discuss with us on political and economical topics.

Make sure you add us as a friend. Our account name is **Kas Ghana**