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# **GHANA CULTURE FORUM**

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## **REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2020-2021**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 PROFILE .....	2
1.1 About Us.....	2
1.2 Objectives.....	2
1.3 How We Started.....	3
1.4 Organogram .....	4
2.0 2020 KEY ENGAGEMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS.....	6
2.1 Partnership with Centres of National Culture (CNCs).....	6
2.2 Inauguration of the GCF Asante Regional Chapter .....	6
2.3 The 9th Ghana Culture Day Celebrations .....	7
2.4 Coronavirus Alleviation Programme .....	7
2.5 Covid-19 Online Conversations in the Creative Industry of Ghana .....	7
2.6 Dialogue with Political Parties on Manifesto Promises for the Culture and Creative Industries .....	9
2.7 Creative Industries Bill .....	9
2.8 Beyond the Return Dialogue.....	10
3.0 2021 KEY ENGAGEMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS.....	11
3.1 10th Ghana Culture Day Celebration.....	11
3.2 IFCD Workshop (UNESCO Funding).....	11
3.3 The Creative Industry Act Legislative Instrument (Li) Drafting Committee.....	16

# **GHANA CULTURE FORUM REPORT OF ACTIVITIES (2020 – 2021)**

## **1.0 PROFILE**

### **1.1 About Us**

The Ghana Culture Forum (GCF) is a membership-based civil society consultative forum. It is a network of cultural practitioners, activists and organisations united around a common vision of affirming the cultural foundations of development and enhancing the cultural sector. GCF serves as an umbrella body for its members and is bound by the principle of collective leadership and action which however does not exempt each of the members of their individual responsibility for specific functions or tasks.

GCF adheres to the principles of internal democratic practice and organisational discipline and respects the independence and rights of its members. It upholds the right of the freedom of expression and opinion on any matter related to the development of the network and in the pursuance of the aims and objectives of the organisation.

GCF serves as a platform for collective action and also provides the avenue and mechanism for mediation and conflict resolution among its members. Additionally, it periodically creates the platform for discourse on specific socio-cultural issues and questions related to the work of the network.

### **1.2 Objectives**

1. Ensure the recognition and mainstreaming of issues of culture in national development as enshrined in the Constitution in the Directive Principles of State Policy;
2. Monitor and intervene in developments in the cultural sector as envisaged in the Ghana Cultural Policy;
3. Coordinate and represent the views and voices ensuring that they are heard and ventilated;
4. Support cultural activists and their organisations to promote the best of Ghanaian creativity and heritage;

5. Promote Ghanaian identity through our cultural diversity;

### 1.3 How We Started

The Ghana Culture Forum was proposed and initiated at the Consultative Forum on the “Power of Culture in Development” organised by UNESCO and held at the African Royal Beach Hotel, Nungua, Accra on 28th April, 2011. It dawned very strongly on participants that if we had not had UNESCO bringing us together, we would actually have no platform on which to discuss the strategies for mainstreaming culture in national development.

It was clear that the time was long past when a Civil Society Advocacy Forum on Cultural Heritage should be formed to pursue and intervene on issues related to the domain and its place in overall national development policies. It was just time to amplify the voice of cultural actors and to get them to consider ways of improving their circumstances as well.

The initial name of GCF was therefore Ghana Heritage Forum. However, after due deliberation, the house changed the name to Ghana Culture Forum so as to give it a much broader focus.

Initial pioneers of the Ghana Culture Forum Interim Steering Committee include

1.	Kojo Gavua	Professor, Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies, University of Ghana, Legon
2.	Michael Neequaye	Consultant
3.	David Dontoh	ex-President, Concert Party Union
4.	Akofa Edjeani	Actress
5.	Amandzeba Brew	Musician
6.	Madam Akosua Ofori Mensah	Book Publisher, Sub-Saharan Publishers
7.	Nanabanyin Dadson	then the Editor, Graphic Showbiz, Accra
8.	PaJohn Bentsifi Dadson	Freelance Culture and Tourism Writer
9.	Nii Osei Agyei	GTV

10.	Kofi Akpabli	Writer and tourism personality
11.	Louise Akanlu	Documentary Film Maker / Theatre for Development Practitioner
12.	Jojo Richardson	Film Maker (Videography)
13.	Madam Modupe A. Nukunu	then of TV3 and now of Youth Bridge Foundation
14.	Daphne Akonor	Attorney General's Department
15.	Akunu Dake	Heritage Development
16.	Esi Sutherland-Addy	Professor, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon

#### 1.4 Organogram

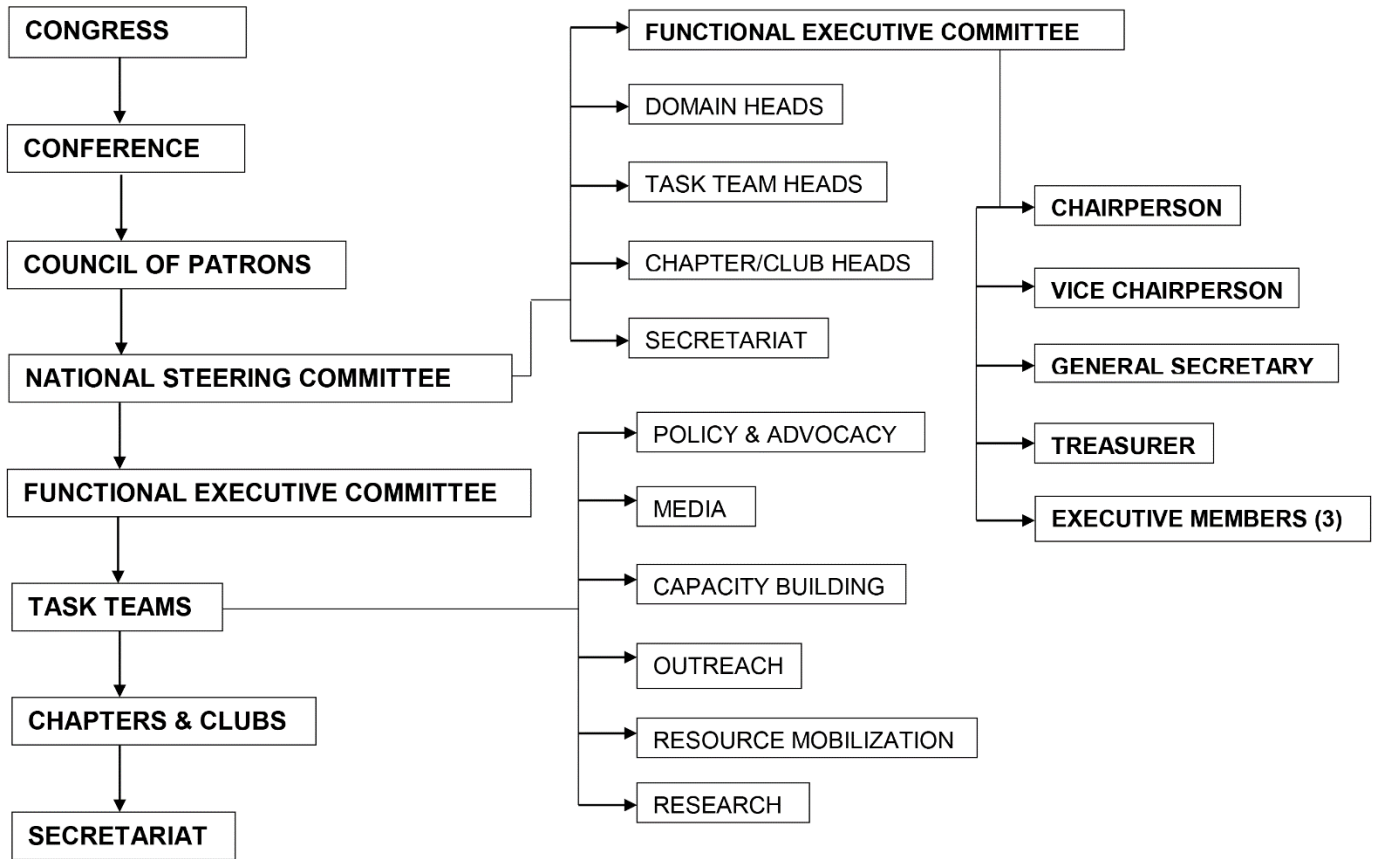
The Ghana Culture Forum in 2019 held its maiden elections on the Ghana Culture Day (14<sup>th</sup> March) to elect new officers of its executive body, the Functional Executive Committee. Prior to that the following officers held the forte from the inception of organisation in 2012:

- |    |                               |   |                   |
|----|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| a. | Professor Esi Sutherland-Addy | – | Chairperson       |
| b. | Akunu Dake                    | – | Vice Chairperson  |
| c. | Nana Otuo Owoahene Acheampong | – | General Secretary |
| d. | Madam Doris Adabas Kuwornu    | – | Treasurer         |

The 2019 election mandated the following officers to replace the old officers:

- |                                      |   |                          |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Asare Konadu Yamoah</b>           | – | <b>Chairperson</b>       |
| <b>Ahuma Bosco Ocansey</b>           | – | <b>Vice Chairperson</b>  |
| <b>Nana Otuo Owoahene Acheampong</b> | – | <b>General Secretary</b> |
| <b>Akofa Edjeani</b>                 | – | <b>Treasurer</b>         |
| <b>Adwoa Amoah</b>                   | – | <b>Executive Member</b>  |
| <b>Shirley Selasi Anku</b>           | – | <b>Executive Member</b>  |
| <b>George Bosompim</b>               | – | <b>Executive Member</b>  |

The table below illustrates the governance structure of the Ghana Culture Forum.



## **2.0 2020 KEY ENGAGEMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS**

The novel coronavirus pandemic resulted in a global economic shutdown in 2020. Movement restrictions imposed by governments in an attempt to slow the spread of the virus translated into a reduction in human interaction. For many CSOs like the Ghana Culture Forum (GCF) whose activities are heavily dependent on human interaction, the impact of movement restrictions and lockdowns affected the number of activities and projects done within the year.

By the second quarter of 2020, there was a paradigm shift from physical engagements to virtual engagements via the internet using video telecasting applications like Zoom, Skype and Google Meet etc. As the movement restrictions were eased, physical-virtual hybrid engagements became prevalent. Many of GCF's projects and activities in 2020 were either virtual or physical-virtual hybrid in nature. The following represent highlights of 2020.

### **2.1 Partnership with Centres of National Culture (CNCs)**

As part of the efforts towards a strategic partnership to advance the work of the Forum, GCF was represented by the Chairperson and General Secretary at the Conference of Directors and Accountants of Centres of National Culture held on January 17, 2020, at Sunyani. Aside from delivering a statement on behalf of the Forum, introductory letters were issued to all CNC Directors. The import of the letter was to prepare grounds for partnership which will be subsequently supported with Memoranda of Understanding.

### **2.2 Inauguration of the GCF Asante Regional Chapter**

On February 13, 2020, the Asante Regional Chapter of the Ghana Culture Forum was inaugurated at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi. At the ceremony, interim executives were appointed to steer affairs till substantive leaders are elected. Also, the inauguration was followed up with a maiden general meeting on October 22, 2020.

Refer to the link below for more information.

<https://www.nydjlive.com/ghana-culture-forum-ashanti-regional-chapter-inaugurated-interim-executives-unveiled/>

### **2.3 The 9th Ghana Culture Day Celebrations**

The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of GCF's Ghana Culture Day was held at the Ghana-India Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT in Accra. It was marked by a symposium on the reflections of the theme; Culture – Translating “Values” into Economic Opportunities. A keynote address was delivered by Nana Kobina Nketsia V, Omanhene of Essikado Traditional Area and a Patron of GCF. Panel discussions were led by two panellists - Dr Afua Asabea Asare, CEO, Ghana Export Promotion Authority and Prof. Kodzo Gavua, Professor at the University of Ghana, Legon and Patron of GCF. The event was telecast live on the Facebook account of GCF.

Refer to the link below for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/ghanacultureforum/videos/236826984023377>

### **2.4 Coronavirus Alleviation Programme**

When the Coronavirus Alleviation Programme was announced by President Nana Akufo-Addo, the Ghana Culture Forum sent a proposal to the National Board for Small Scale Industry (NBSSI) to allocate part of the fund for the cultural sector to be administered via a Culture and Creative Industry (CCI) Fund. In response, the NBSSI asked GCF, like all organised associations, to register with NBSSI and furnish it with the list of its members. GCF complied and in return encouraged its members who needed the fund to submit their application to NBSSI as that was the only channel of application.

### **2.5 Covid-19 Online Conversations in the Creative Industry of Ghana**

The Coronavirus pandemic curtailed the proper functioning of many sectors of the economy. The Culture and Creative Industry was not spared as the work of many practitioners came to a halt. The Ghana Culture Forum in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) held a series of webinar conversations to dialogue about the impact of Covid-19 and the way forward for cultural practitioners. Two sessions were held on 21<sup>st</sup> May and 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2020.



Some of the panellists included Mr Abdourahamane Diallo (Country Director, UNESCO Ghana), Prof. Kodzo Gavua (Associate Professor, University of Ghana), Ms Gyankroma Akufo-Addo (Director, Creative Arts Council, Ghana), Madam Janet Edna Nyame (Executive Director, National Commission on Culture), Cynthia Quarcoo (Founder and Managing Partner, CQ Legal and Consulting), Mrs Serwaa Nerquaye Tetteh (Head of Secretariat, Ghana National Commission for UNESCO), Joyce Ababio (Fashion Designer and President, Joyce Ababio College of Creative Design), Mr Kwabena Agyepong (CEO, Education Logistics (Gh) Ltd and Treasurer, Ghana Publishers Association), Okyeame Kwame (Musician, Songwriter, Creative Director and Entrepreneur), Mr Peter Sedufia (CEO, OldFilm Production), Mr Kwasi Ohene-Ayeh (Curator and Writer), Theresa Ayoade (CEO, Charterhouse) and Mr Kingsley Ntiamoah (Ag Director, Ghana Museum and Monuments Board).

Resolutions and key recommendations from the online conversations to improve the cultural sector are as follows:

- i. Research and Data Collection – Stakeholder mapping and Economic Contributions of the Creative Industry to Ghana’s Economy.
- ii. Capacity Building/ Training on the following areas:
  - Digital literacy workshop – online marketing
  - Cultural arts education
  - How to manage business successfully
  - Training on tapping alternative business approaches
- iii. Advocacy for the enactment and implementation of the Cultural Policy, Cultural Trust Fund and Creative Industries Bill
- iv. One-stop Shop /Information Centre /Ghanaian Online market for the Creative Industry
- v. Sectorial Empowerment – Strengthening existing institutions and associations to serve as a collective voice for each sector.

The Ghana Culture Forum is currently in communication with UNESCO about funding key projects geared at realising the resolutions stated.

Refer to the following link for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/ghanacultureforum/videos/307459443985564>

## **2.6 Dialogue with Political Parties on Manifesto Promises for the Culture and Creative Industries**

2020 was clouded by a lot of political activities as it was the year Ghana went to the polls to elect President for the next four years. That made 2020 a particularly important year to generate healthy discussions between major constituencies, personalities/parties seeking office towards the development of key sectors of society and the economy.

Standing on the above observation, GCF, together with the Institute of African Studies (IAS), National Commission on Culture and UNESCO set up a platform to enable political parties to share their policies and manifesto commitments to culture and the arts. These online discussions were held on 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2020. Major political parties that featured in the dialogue included NPP, NDC, CPP and GCPP etc.

Refer to the links below for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/ghanacultureforum/videos/368874067890803>

<https://www.facebook.com/ghanacultureforum/videos/354965975603434>

## **2.7 Creative Industries Bill**

In October 2020, it came to the notice of GCF that Parliament was considering a Creative Arts Industry Bill 2020, under a Certificate of Urgency. GCF found this problematic since neither the Forum nor any of its network organisations and members had seen the current version of the bill which was before Parliament. Being an active partner in the stakeholder engagements on the previous drafts of the bill, GCF on 30<sup>th</sup> October submitted a petition on the omission of stakeholder engagement on the current bill to Parliament through the Speaker of Parliament and the Select Committee on Youth, Sports and Culture. The content of the petition was shared with GCF members via the official GCF WhatsApp platform named “GCF National.”

Subsequent to the petition, a group of key stakeholders met the Parliamentary Select Committee on Youth, Sports and Culture. Fundamental adjustments made to the bill included:

- i. Change “Creative Arts Agency” to “Creative Industries Agency”
- ii. The Board Chair of the Creative Industries Agency should not be the sectorial Minister.

The proposed changes to the bill were presented by the committee to Parliament as the views of stakeholders.

## **2.8 Beyond the Return Dialogue**

Conversations about the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first documented arrival of enslaved Africans in the early British colony of Virginia began amongst Africans and Diasporans. In Ghana the conversation brought about the “Year of Return” and “Beyond the Return” projects championed by the Government of Ghana under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MoTAC). GCF together with its partners and with the sole funding of UNESCO organised a forum to enable cultural players, practitioners and stakeholders to make inputs to the agenda of the Beyond the Return Steering Committee. The event was held on Thursday 17th December, 2020 at the Ghana-India Kofi Annan Centre for Excellence in ICT, Accra.

Refer to the link below for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/ghanacultureforum/videos/223767919186882>

### **3.0 2021 KEY ENGAGEMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS**

#### **3.1 10th Ghana Culture Day Celebration**

The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of GCF's headline event was hosted in partnership with the Multimedia Group. It comprised a symposium that was telecast live on Zoom and on Facebook. The symposium was held on March 12, 2021; from 9.00am – 12.00pm. Keynote address on the theme "The Relevance of Culture in our ever-changing Digital Space" was delivered by Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Professor of African & Gender Studies at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon & President, African Studies Association of Africa.

The CEO of the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) also deliver a statement on "Using Digital Channels to Monetize Your Craft."

The main event was preceded by a social media challenge dubbed #ProudlyGhanaian. The general public was invited through the challenge to share the essence of what it means to be Ghanaian and what makes us proud as Ghanaians, portray our resilience in a time of crisis and our resolve to emerge as a better society, despite the challenges we face.

Refer to the link below for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/ghanacultureforum/videos/440657733656341>

#### **3.2 IFCD Workshop (UNESCO Funding)**

Having ratified in 2016, Ghana became a party to UNESCO's 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. This means that Ghana is eligible to access funding support from the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD). IFCD is the funding mechanism responsible for advancing the goals of the 2005 Convention. Over the years, the member states within the West Africa region have not been successful at sourcing funds from IFCD.

UNESCO's Abuja Regional Office in its quest to improve the quality of applications from its region to the fund organised a two-day workshop physical-virtual hybrid workshop for stakeholders

within the Ghanaian and Nigerian cultural fraternity on the 2005 Convention, IFCD and how to craft winning proposals. The workshop was led by Ojoma Ochai, UNESCO facilitator and Reiko Yoshida, UNESCO's Programme Specialist. The workshop took place on October 11-12, 2021. Ghana Culture Forum together with the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO and Ghana's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture helped to put together Ghana's 25-member team for the workshop.

Day one of the workshop started with opening statements from Dimitri Sanga (Director of UNESCO's Abuja Regional Office), Toussaint Tiendrebeogo (UNESCO's Head of Diversity of Cultural Expressions) and the Honourable Minister for the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture. Ghana's Deputy Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Honourable Mark Okraku Mantey, delivered a support statement at the closing session on day two.

Although technical hitches marred the proceeding of day 1 making the Ghanaian team lose out, Ojoma Ochai, the main facilitator made time on day 2 to re-run her presentation for day 1, for the benefit of the Ghanaian team. Together with Reiko Yoshida, the following represent the highlights of the workshop.

**a. The 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions**

**i. History of the Convention**

The 2005 Convention is a legally-binding international agreement. It reaffirms the right to adopt policies and measures to support the emergence of dynamic and strong cultural and creative industries. It ensures that artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of goods, services and activities, including their own. It reinforces organisational structures that have a direct impact on the different stages of the cultural value chain.

**ii. Goals of the Convention**

The 2005 Convention has 4 goals. Proposals that seek to advance the agenda of these goals are eligible to be considered by the IFCD. These goals include:

GOAL 1: Support sustainable systems for the governance of Culture

GOAL 2: Achieve a balanced flow of cultural goods and services and increase the mobility of artists and cultural professionals

GOAL 3: Integrate culture into sustainable development frameworks

GOAL 4: Promote human rights and fundamental freedoms

#### **b. The International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD)**

The IFCD is a unique multi-donor, voluntary fund established under the Convention that fosters the emergence of dynamic cultural sectors in developing countries that are Parties to the Convention. It became operational in 2010. It invests in projects that lead to structural change through:

- the introduction and/or development of policies
- the reinforcement of human and institutional capacities of public sector and civil society organisations

Three main classes of applicants are eligible to apply for IFCD funding. They are

- Public authorities and institutions from developing countries that are Parties to the 2005 Convention
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and professional associations from developing countries that are Parties to the 2005 Convention.
- International NGOs (INGOs)

#### **c. Key Questions and Responses:**

**Question:** Can an organisation submit more than one proposal in a funding cycle?

**Response:** In practical terms, applicants can submit only one application per funding cycle as the lead applicant.

**Question:** Why does the IFCD not fund SME projects given that SMEs are the majority contributors to achieving the 2005 Convention goals?

**Response:** The instruments of the Conventions are entrenched and can only be changed via an amendment process. The current operational guideline for the IFCD says that IFCD can only fund SME projects when IFCD receives voluntary contributions from the private sector. Currently, IFCD has not received any voluntary contributions from the private sector which makes it ineligible to sponsor SME projects within the current funding cycle. However, there are other supporting mechanisms to the 2005 Convention outside the IFCD. Also, a workable approach is for a government agency to partner with an SME where the government agency becomes the primary applicant with the SME as a supporting agency to the project.

**Question:** Is it necessary to state the qualifications/credentials of team members and how does that increase the chances of success?

**Response:** Yes, there are sections within the application that require applicants to provide the names and qualifications/credentials (resume) of their team members. One of the things evaluators of the applications look out for is the consistency of data/information provided in the application. For instance, in the financial management section of the form, some could state a number of team members including accountants, financial officers, external auditors, and yet these officers will not be mentioned in the project framework or they may be present in the team structure and absent in the forms. Such inconsistencies make an application lose scoreable points.

**Question:** How many assessment areas do evaluators have and which is the highest scoring area?

**Response:** There are between 5 – 6 evaluating areas. The foremost is the relevance and appropriateness of the project to the objectives and areas of intervention of the IFCD. Within that there are 4 sub-areas. The second is the feasibility as well as the relevance of its effectiveness of the modalities of execution. It also includes the organisational capacity to implement the work plan and manage the budget. The third is financial management and accountability. The fourth area is impact and expected results including the potential for structural change. The fifth area is sustainability and the sixth is the overall evaluation of the aggregate of the first 5 areas. Each area has a maximum score of 8.

**Question:** Are projects that are only executable by applicants without any other partners scored down?

**Response:** No, applications are not penalised for not involving partners. However, partnership projects may attract a higher score because of the participatory and transparency elements of goal 1 of the 2005 Convention.

**Question:** What are the complementary documents required for the applications from government agencies?

**Response:** The complementary documents are relatable to the application. For instance, if the application is done in partnership or collaboration with another agency, the complementary document required will include partnership agreements and MOUs, and the cost of equipment should include proforma invoices. There are a lot more information about complementary documents in the annotated guide.

**Question:** In accessing the IFCD funds, are there specific projects/activities defined for each of the 3 classes of applicants (i.e., government, NGOs and INGOs)?

**Response:** From UNESCO's experience, policy elaborations and measures led by CSOs which do not include the government authorities do not materialize concrete actions because public policy is a mandate of public institutions. This in practical terms will mean CSOs undertaking a policy project should collaborate with government agencies. CSOs and governmental agencies are interdependent and this union must be protected.

**Question:** Are there specific themes for the annual call for proposals?

**Response:** No, the purpose of the IFCD does not change. However, UNESCO can suggest to evaluators pay particular attention to proposals from certain regions. For instance, since Ghana and Nigeria have never won any funding yet, IFCD could sponsor applications from Ghana or Nigeria that scores say 34 as against a 35-score application from Zimbabwe which has received funding many times. The IFCD uses such discretionary powers from time to time to ensure equitable distribution of funds across regions and domains.

#### **d. Key Observations**

- i. The workshop was heavily disrupted by technical challenges which caused the Ghana team to miss out on most presentations delivered on day 1.



- ii. In spite of the technical challenges, the workshop was well received by the Ghana team. This was evident by the enthusiasm shown by the Ghanaian participants staying on until the end of day 1.

**e. Key Recommendations**

- i. The workshop should be repeated from time to time with participants from different organisations making it possible for as many CSOs and government agencies to benefit.
- ii. The issues of technical disruptions of live transmission could be addressed by flying in facilitators to the beneficiary country for physical presentations. Alternatively, facilitators could join live from different locations away from the country teams whilst ensuring that the facilitators have strong internet for smooth transmission. Also, facilitators could have their presentations pre-recorded and played during the workshop and be available to take questions during open discussion sessions.

Refer to the link below for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/page/384973491867868/search?q=IFCD%20workshop>

### **3.3 The Creative Industry Act Legislative Instrument (Li) Drafting Committee**

Gazette on 27th October 2020, the Creative Industrial Act was assented to by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo on December 29, 2020. Following the intervention by the Ghana Culture Forum on the Creative Industry Bill and the further passing of the bill into law, a committee was set up to look into the Legislative Instrument for the Act. On November 9, 2020, the LI Drafting Committee was inaugurated at the Conference Room of the Creative Arts Agency at the Bureau of Ghanaian Languages, Kawukudi – Accra. The Committee is Chaired by Hon. Mark Okraku Mantey, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture. Four members of GCF’s Functional Executive Committee are part of the LI Drafting Committee (see list below).

- i. Asare Konadu Yamoah – Chairperson
- ii. Ahuma Bosco Ocansey – Vice Chairperson
- iii. Nana Otuo Owoahene Acheampong – General Secretary
- iv. George Bosompim – Executive Member

Having been tasked to make LI proposals, the LI Committee embarked on a retreat between 18<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2021 at the City Escape Hotel, Prampram. The retreat culminated in a draft LI which was handed to the Attorney General for her perusal and advice. A second draft from the Attorney General's office is expected to be used as a document for stakeholder consultation. The LI Drafting Committee awaits the next action from the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture.