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Annual Report

**Consolidating gains from our
foundation**



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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATION

AEN - Africa Evidence Network

CABI - Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International

CARLIGH - Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana

DSA - Development Studies Association

EIPM - Evidence-informed Policy Making

EIDM - Evidence-informed Decision Making

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency

GLA - Ghana Library Association, Ghana

JRC - Joint Research Council of the European Union Commission

IDRIG - Inter-Departmental Research and Information Group

MoGCSP - Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection

OGP - Open Government Partnerships

RDA - Research Data Alliance

RGD - Registrar Generals Department

RTI - Right to information

SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals

SSNIT - Social Security and National Insurance Trust

TEEAL - The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library



FOREWORD

It has been a year already since we started operations in Ghana, laying foundations for a regional take-off. This year, we concentrated on the consolidation of foundational elements instituted in 2017. Many events continued to unfold in the global arena that have significant implications on our operations and governance for evidence use generally.

Whiles longstanding alliances for global governance have continued to experience the strongest challenges, threats on populations and the environment have equally expanded – most especially humanitarian crisis in war-torn countries, silence of alternate voices like murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, increasing variability in the climate, among others.

Whiles these present significant challenges to governments around the world, they equally present strong arguments for concerted effort towards globalisation. A coordinated approach to global action however goes with concern for local contexts for governance. An understanding of such nuances presents opportunities for amplifying voices that may have been ignored at the expense of socioeconomic wellbeing.

Evidence use, as we promote it, therefore considers as critical the provision of platforms for divergent voices to inform decisions made for the public good. This year, we have used our spaces to expand such platforms, including through our participation within the CSOs Platform on the SDGs, and the Right-to-Information Coalition in Ghana.

Kirchuffs Atengble
Executive Director

Company Profile

BACKGROUND, VISION & MISSION, OBJECTIVES



BACKGROUND

PACKS Africa was registered in Ghana to operate as a company limited by guarantee on 2nd March 2017 as the Centre for Knowledge Management and Research. To enable its registration as a not-for-profit nongovernmental organisation, it also acquired registration from the Social Welfare Department of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP).

The organisation operates as a youth-led think tank to improve public sector management through information systems research, knowledge management and advocacy for evidence-informed policy making (EIPM).

MISSION & VISION

As a pan-African organisation, our vision is a Pan-African development process that is fueled by evidence-informed policies. Our mission therefore is to influence the use of research and other forms of knowledge in the development of policies in Africa.

OBJECTIVES

We operate to achieve the following objectives:

- *Conduct research into information systems, with the view of optimising performance;*
- *Manage knowledge effectively for improved uptake in policymaking and development practice; and*
- *Advocate for Evidence-Informed Policy Making (EIPM) in its operational areas.*

Organisational Chart

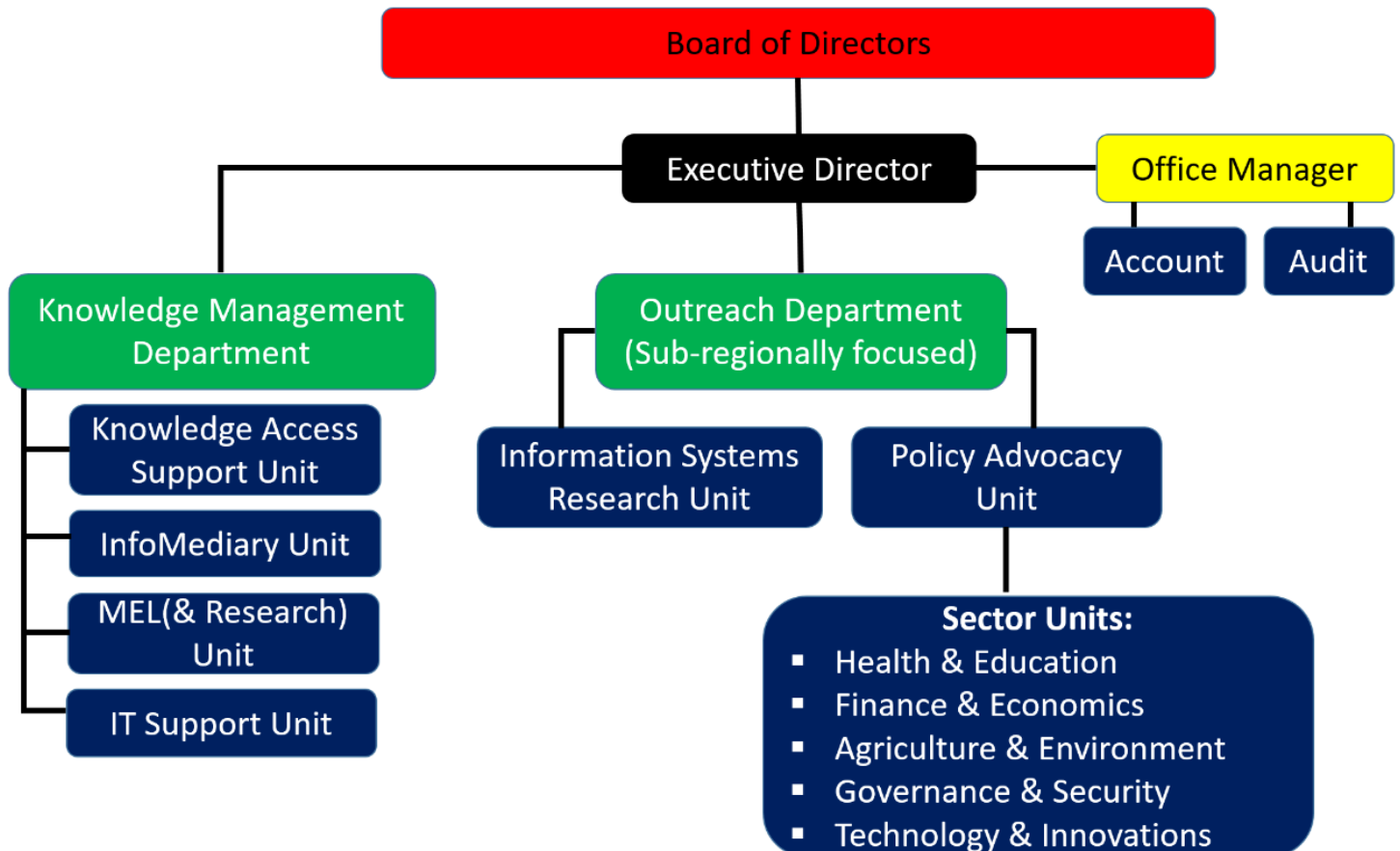


Figure 1: Organisational Chart

In our foundational years (2017-2022), we decided to operate based on the organisational chart depicted in Figure 1.

In this framework, we are to secure a functioning Administration (secretariat) under the leadership of the Executive Director, who also oversees operations within the three functional areas of the

organisation: information systems research, knowledge management and advocacy units.

The ensuing sections of this report outlines the extent to which these and many more were achieved in our second year of operation.

BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

This section emphasizes on the key activities that were embarked on as an organisation.

NON-INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES

Unlike in our first year, the organization engaged in activities that did not yield extra income for expanded operations. They however provided opportunity to expand our presence within the EIDM.

Advocacy and capacity building

Adhering to our quest to improve utilisation of knowledge resources, especially within public policymaking and practice organisations, we have been involved in some advocacy and capacity building efforts, without essentially considering financial gains to the organisation.

Some platforms for such advocacy and capacity building within the period under review are:

- Co-facilitating a priority setting workshop on infectious diseases in May 2018 for the health systems of Ghana and Kenya, in collaboration with the University of Southampton.
- Co-facilitating a training workshop in September 2018 on evidence-informed policymaking for the Ministry of Health in Ethiopia, in collaboration with the University of Southampton.
- Co-facilitating an Evidence-Informed Policy Making seminar in Pretoria (South Africa), under the auspices of the Joint Research Council (JRC) of the European Union Commission, in December 2018.
- Co-facilitating a diagnostic workshop to pilot organizational change based on the Context Matters framework to improve evidence use in environmental protection in Ghana.
- Joining the RTI Coalition in Ghana, working towards passage of the right to information (RTI) bill.

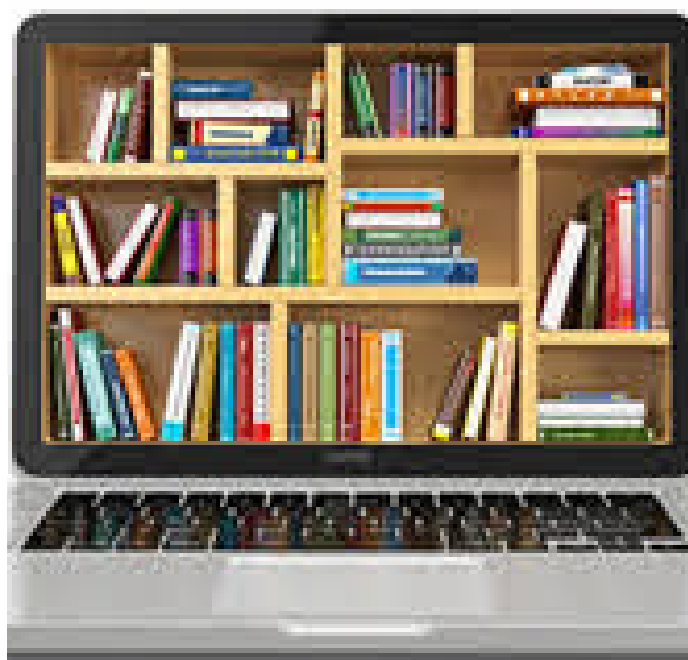
Negotiating subscription to electronic library resources

From September 2018, PACKS Africa got involved in negotiating access to electronic library resources from CABI[1] for member institutions of the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH).

To this effect, a familiarization workshop is scheduled to be held in the first quarter of 2019 for various library officers, postgraduate students and other similar users across research and academic institutions in Ghana.

This is to be followed by intermittent trial of resources from CABI made available to CARLIGH member institutions that is scheduled to last till end of the year.

We also made recommendations for participation to these resources from among former beneficiary organisations for free subscription to electronic resources, such as through TEEAL and the Research4Life programmes[2].



[1] CABI is an international academic content provider in the life sciences. Read more about them via their website: www.cabi.org

[2] Read more on TEEAL at www.teeal.org and for Research4Life, visit www.Research4Life.org

STAFF ISSUES

Staff and Associates



Table 1: Profile of Staff

Name	Designation	Status
Kirchuffs Atengble	Executive Director	Part-time
Dzesi Kwame Torku	Deputy Director	Part-time
Lucy Afatsiawu	Office Assistant	Voluntary

The organisation retained its staff; moving forward with the two registered directors of the organisation, and an administrative support staff. Table 1 provides their details:

In addition to the staff who played their respective roles, we maintained contributions and support from our 8 associates with expertise in research, policy processes and knowledge management.

Vacation of Directorship

In September 2018, letter was received from Dzesi Kwame Torku (one of the registered directors and also a former Director of Programmes), offering to relinquish his outstanding role as a registered director of the organisation.

Against all persuasions, he retained a laptop computer that was purchased to support his work as a staff of the organisation. This was in contravention to contract signed with him for the period ending August 2017. The subject was not pursued legally, and the executive decision was taken to write-off the device in our financial statement.

Processes were initiated to admit new Directors of the organisation.



BOARD MEETING

Due to limitations in operations during this period, there was no board meeting. Intermittent updates were however provided to Board members through its dedicated WhatsApp platform. One-on-one discussions were also held with individual Board Members on specific issues.

STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING

During the period under review the following capacity development opportunities (in Figure 2) were made available to staff of the organisation.

Figure 2: Internal staff capacity development



Open Data Management in Agriculture and Nutrition	
Training provider:	GODAN Partners
Date:	1st January – 5th February 2018
Venue:	Online
Beneficiary:	Kirchuffs Atengble
Africa Evidence Informed Policy Forum	
Forum Organizers:	The Think Tanks Initiative
Date:	5th-6th March
Venue:	Nairobi, Kenya
Beneficiary:	Kirchuffs Atengble

STAFF MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

Our staff were encouraged to join and maintain membership in communities of practice and professional associations for similar capacity building benefits. The under-listed groups retained individual membership from PACKS Africa within the period under review:



LOGISTICAL ISSUES



In July 2018, StratAfrique, a partner for-profit management consultancy firm offered to host PACKS Africa in their office facility at no direct fee. Their offer came with access to internet connectivity and other office infrastructure.

Official telephone communication was however provided through the mobile number of the Executive Director. This is expected to change, particularly with new staff joining and with improved financial resources.

In addition to this new arrangements, there was also a renewal of the organisation's website.

Certification

The organization received a number of certification which are mandatory for its operation as a not-for-profit centre for knowledge management and research. These include:

- Certificate of Recognition from the Department of Social Welfare.
- Jurisdictional Certificate of Registration as an NGO by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly.

These certificates are to be renewed annually per legislative provisions.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is vital to the operations of any organisation; and from 3 different perspectives, it is conceptualized as traditional (speaking, writing or listening & reading), interactive (both speaking and listening at the same time) or mediated (where a moderator facilitates turns among communicators).

PACKS Africa understood this value very well, and employed different media to achieve them within the period under review. Below are some communication media deployed in 2018:

- Social media communication:
- Twitter & Facebook
- Communication via international blogs



- Personal & face-to-face meetings
- Virtual meetings via Skype, Zoom, Blue Jeans, WhatsApp and webinars
- Communication at conferences and seminars

REACH & VISIBILITY

Following the organization's continuous activities in knowledge management and advocacy for evidence informed policy decision making, this has contributed to a number of acknowledgements in promoting our identity and reach.

PACKS Africa is a member of the following under-listed organisations:

- Ghana Civil Society (CSO) Platform on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Co-convener for Goal 17 Sub-platform and Member of Goal 9 & 16 Sub-platforms.
- Ghana Coalition on RTI: Member organization. This coalition is working to get the (almost 2 decades) RTI Bill in Ghana passed into law.



MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING

With the ultimate goal of being the preferred Pan-African think tank for managing knowledge and promoting evidence informed policy making, we enumerate some specific indicators to evaluate progress made in achieving our set targets. Our indicators include:

VALUE ADDED SERVICES

Information Systems Research

We worked together with partners (INASP & Politics and Ideas) to pilot their context matters framework. This was used to analyse factors that affect evidence use by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Ghana. Using a collaborative and participatory approach, the project delivered a series of 8 recommendations which are being incorporated into EPA's strategic plan for 2018-2022.

To promote use of evidence in policy processes, a training workshop was organised for the Ministry of Health in Ethiopia, in collaboration with the University of Southampton. The workshop was done to improve capacity on how to find and use the best available data and research evidence.

Knowledge Management and Brokerage

Deepened Collaborations

The workshop organised to pilot an organisational change in environmental issues was a collaborative event between the EPA, INASP and Politics & Ideas, which was co-facilitated by with our support.

Based on 2 workshops co-facilitated since 2017, there has been an entrenched relationship with the Southampton University.

Among others, PACKS Africa has good working relationship with the Ministry of Health in three countries – Ghana, Kenya and Ethiopia. It is our expectation that such relationships will be exploited to further our mutual interests in enhanced evidence use for decision making purposes.

Advocacy for Evidence Use in Policy Process

To promote use of evidence in policy processes, a training workshop was organised for the Ministry of Health in Ethiopia, in collaboration with the University of Southampton. The workshop was done to improve capacity on how to find and use the best available data and research evidence.

A seminar on Evidence Informed Policy Making was also organized in Pretoria, South Africa. This brought together participants from various organisations across the Water-Energy-Food-Health nexus in Africa.

We also played an active role in the creation of an evidence group for Francophone West African countries called the Bamafirnde team. The objective was to advance the course of evidence use in each of those countries.

Seeking to further our operational capacities to drive our work processes, the following were achieved in the course of 2018:

- Maintained compliance for our organisation within the statutes of Ghana through meeting statutory requirements.
- Enhanced competencies for staff performance in our thematic areas.
- Improved recognition within our thematic areas, both locally and internationally.

**Organisation
development**

PUBLICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING



Through our publications, the following were achieved in 2018:

- Increased availability of knowledge on our thematic issues based on our publications and other knowledge sharing initiatives.
- Enhanced understanding of evidence use concepts among beneficiaries of our initiatives through targeted sector interventions.

Table 2: Publication List

Publication type	Title	Availability
Blog Post	Context Matters Framework case study: Supporting organizational change to improve the use of evidence in environmental protection in Ghana	https://www.inasp.info/publications/context-matters-ghana
Blog Post	Setting the Agenda for EIPM in Ghana: Common Trends and Recommendations	https://results4allorgblog.wordpress.com/2018/09/04/setting-the-agenda-for-eipm-in-ghana/
Workshop Report	Prioritizing Health Research: Priorities for Infectious Disease Research in Ghana and Kenya	Available online: https://figshare.com/articles/Priorities for infectious disease research in Ghana and Kenya/7775945
Webinar	Contextual and Institutional factors affecting evidence use in public agencies	Online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9XS7Gozr4Q&feature=youtu.be



Reach and Visibility

Our operations in 2018 expanded our reach and visibility through the following:

- Enhanced visibility on platforms within our thematic areas, mostly through online media activities.
- Services delivered to beneficiary organisations across four African countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa.
- Initiated presence across francophone West African countries through our Bamafirnde team.

Our financial statements present a better appreciation of the operational difficulties faced due to the limited sources of funding. A report was produced for the period January-December 2018.

Find it available as a separate attachment to this annual report. You may request for a copy of the financial statement if not found enclosed.

FINANCIAL REPORTING



CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Our organisation has contributed immensely in the Ghanaian evidence ecosystem by rendering several not-for-profit services in the areas of information systems research, knowledge management and advocacy for evidence uptake and usage through workshops and other fora.

This has deepened our collaboration with ministries, departments and agencies in-country and among a few other African states. These achievements were possible due to the instrumentality of our dedicated

team and partners.

On the contrary, the organisation was unable to secure any significant funds as income which was one of the reasons for the inability to undertake major projects.

We encourage like-minded organisations and collaborators to partner with us to deliver more services to enhance general availability and uptake of evidence (knowledge resources) in policy and practice.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP



Full name	Position
Dr. Musah Adams	Chairperson
Mr. Kirchuffs Atengble	Secretary
Mrs. Dora Dei-Tumi	Member
Mr. Emmanuel G.K. Duncan	Member
Mrs. Sylvia Inkoom	Member
Mr. Cephas Egbefome	Member
Miss Monica Geraldo De Lima	Member

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