

BYE-LAWS

FOR GRASSROOT PARTICIPATION

Our Voices, Our Rights, Our Future



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PREAMBLE

The name of the Organisation is Inclusion Ghana (IG) and the acronym shall be IG. IG is the peak network body working to improve the lives of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families in Ghana. The aim is to obtain inclusion and equalization of opportunities for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families in Ghana. This will be achieved by creating a common voice for all persons with intellectual disabilities and their families and organisations with interest in intellectual disabilities to lobby and advocate rights and needs of persons with intellectual disabilities

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE BYE-LAW

The purpose of the bye-laws is to assist IG in its effort to remodel Inclusion Ghana for nationwide grassroots participation and inclusion in the disability movement of Ghana.

THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE BYE-LAWS ARE:

- (a) to restructure IG to ensure effective grassroots participation of Self Advocates(SAs), Parent Self-Help Group (PSHG), Member Organisation (MOs) at all levels of decision making
- (b) to increase equal access to opportunities of all PSHGs, SAs, and MOs in all IG operational areas
- (c) to assist individuals with intellectual disability and their families to access supports which promote inclusion and enhance self-reliance and interdependence.
- (d) to promote public understanding of the problems and needs of persons with intellectual disability by directly involving PSHGs, SAs in all IG activities
- (e) to assist PSHGs, SAs and MOs raise funds and mobilise resources for the activities
- (f) to recognize, respect and support the voice of persons with intellectual disability in their inherent right to self-determination.
- (g) to help develop and sustain IG members throughout all the districts to serve as advocates and support to individuals and families in the pursuit of community inclusion

BYE-LAW NO.1 NAME

The name of the organisation shall be: Inclusion Ghana with the acronym IG.

Bye-LAW NO.2 SLOGAN

The Slogan/Motto of the organisation shall be: Our voice, Our rights, Our future

BYE-LAW NO.3 LOCATIONS

The National Secretariat of Inclusion Ghana shall be located in the capital city of Ghana. There shall also be regional and district offices across the country.

BYE-LAW NO.4 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **"IG"** shall mean Inclusion Ghana.
- 4.2 **"Affiliate member"** shall mean any group or organization which supports the Objectives Vision and Mission of IG.
- 4.3 **"National Council"** shall mean the governing body of IG at the National Level.
- 4.4 **"Gender and Inclusion Representative"** shall refer to a female/male representative who shall represent vulnerable or minority group/ interests such as children, the youth, women and sports
- 4.5 **"Persons with Intellectual Disabilities"** shall refer to those individuals experiencing a delay in intellectual functioning/mental abilities.
- 4.6 **"Voting Delegate"** shall refer to a Volunteer specifically selected as a voting delegate by his/her group/family/network to speak and vote on its behalf at a General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting of IG.
- 4.7 **"General Meeting"** shall refer to an IG meeting of the General Membership assembled at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Special General meeting.
- 4.8 **"Full member"** shall refer to persons that are directly or indirectly affected by intellectual disability
- 4.9 **"Parent"** shall refer to a biological parent, caregiver/guardian of a child with intellectual disability
- 4.10 **"Term of Office"** shall mean the term during/number of years within some position is held or the length of time a person serves in a particular elected office

BYE-LAW NO.5 LEGAL STATUS

PSHGs and SAs will rely on IG for legal reference: Groups will operate under the legal status of IG in dealing with donor agencies and the outside world. For example, in opening a bank account, the district shall correspond with the national office for IG business registration documents and introductory letter

BYE-LAW NO.6 COMMUNITY, DISTRICT, REGIONAL & NATIONAL STRUCTURES

6.1 Community Level Structure

IG at the community level shall be composed of the following members;

- a) Parent Self Help Groups (PSHGs)
- b) Self-Advocate groups (SAs)

6.2 District Level Structure

Membership composition at the district level shall comprise full members and affiliate members.

- a) Full members include PSHGs and SAs group: Full members include persons with intellectual disabilities, Parents, and Guardians of individuals with intellectually disability.
- b) Affiliate members include MOs: MOs are organisations and institutions that work with persons with intellectual disabilities or run PWID projects.

6.3 Regional Level Structure

The Regional Level Structure shall be made up of the following:

- a) Chairperson
- b) Vice Chairperson
- c) Secretary/Organiser
- d) Treasurer
- e) Gender and Inclusion Representative
- f) 1 self-Advocate

6.4 National Level Structure

- a) National Council: The National Council shall be responsible for providing leadership and prudent management of IG and shall administer the funds of IG in a proper manner and pursue the interest of IG at all times.
- b) National Secretariat: The Secretariat shall be headed by the National Coordinator and shall be responsible for coordinating IG activities.

6.5 Identity

Members shall be identified by the name IG in addition to the name of the community or district. For example, name at the District Level will read: IG – Asunafo North District; at the community level, it will be called IG – Kenyasi, Asunafo

North District and at the Regional Level, the name shall read: IG – Brong Ahafo Region.

Roles and Responsibilities of IG Members

The following shall be the roles and responsibilities of IG members:

6.5.1 Self- Advocates (SAs)

- a) Self- Advocates shall be involved in advocacy to raise awareness about ID
- b) Self-Advocates should be prepared to present themselves at every forum
- c) Self-Advocates shall represent IG at the community and district level

6.5.2 Parent Self Help Groups (PSHGs)

Parent Self Help Groups shall:

- a) Be involved in advocacy activities to educate and raise awareness in their communities
- b) Shall present themselves at every forum to contribute to discussions
- c) Shall represent IG at the community and district level and work towards achieving the objectives of IG
- d) Help formulate operational guidelines and administrative procedures for their groups.
- e) Organise meetings and report to the district IG
- f) Raise funds to sustain groups at the community level
- g) Contribute dues to IG
- h) Elect leaders for the PSHGs.

6.5.3 Member Organisations (MOs)

- a) MOs at the district level shall support the activities of elected district officers of IG.
- b) MOs shall provide technical support to elected officers (i.e. PSHGs and SAs) at the district level in the implementation of projects and activities.
- c) MOs shall support district and community level IG offices with programmes to raise funds to sustain them
- d) MOs shall provide technical and advisory support for PSHGs and SAs
- e) MOs shall help PSHGs and SAs organise advocacy activities at the community and district levels

BYE-LAW NO.7 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The following persons shall constitute the leadership structure and oversee the programmes and activities of IG groups at the Community, District, Regional and National level.

a.1 Community PSHG and SA

IG at the community level shall be composed of the following members

- a) Chairperson
- b) Secretary/Organiser
- c) Treasurer
- d) Gender and Inclusion Representative
- e) Co-opted member**

a.2 District Council

The district council shall be the highest decision-making body at the district level and shall be made up of the following:

- a) Chairperson
- b) Vice Chairperson
- c) Secretary/Organiser
- d) Treasurer
- e) Gender and Inclusion Representative
- f) A Self-Advocate

a.3 Regional Council

The regional council shall be the highest decision-making body at the regional level. It shall comprise the following persons:

- a) Chairperson
- b) Vice Chairperson
- c) Secretary/Organiser
- d) Treasurer
- e) Gender and Inclusion Representative
- f) A self-Advocate

**A professional can be co-opted to help the group with facilitation of meetings, documentation and other activities where necessary.

a.4 National Council

The affairs of Inclusion Ghana at the National level shall be administered by the National Council which shall be made up of members of Inclusion Ghana who show proven commitment to the purpose and objectives of Inclusion Ghana. It shall comprise the following persons:

- a) President who is a representative from a parents self-help group
- b) Vice President who is a representative from a parents self-help group
- c) The National Co-ordinator as the Secretary
- d) Treasurer representing a member organisation / a parents self-help group
- e) Gender and Inclusion Representative who is a representative from a parents self-help group
- f) 2 representative from member organisations
- g) 2 representatives from self-advocacy groups
- h) 3 external professionals/ experts
- i) A representative from the Old board

a.5 Method/Criteria of selection of leaders

a.5.1 Community Level

- a) Leaders shall be selected by election
- b) Members comprising of SA groups and PSHGs shall nominate themselves and be endorsed by at least two (2) persons before standing for elections at the community level
- c) IG national secretariat or its nominated MO representatives shall oversee the election at the community level

a.5.2 District Level

- a) Elected officers (namely PSHGs and SAs) at the community level shall nominate themselves to be endorsed by at least two members and voted for as district leaders
- b) A quorum made up of executives of PSHGs and SA shall be formed to vote to elect district leaders
- c) IG national secretariat shall oversee the election at the District level

a.6 Roles and Responsibilities of District Office holders

a.6.1 Chairperson

- a) The District Chairperson shall call meetings of the group when deemed necessary in consultation with other district office holders
- b) The District Chairperson shall be the chairing every district council meeting
- c) The District Chairperson shall exercise general supervision over all IG programmes and activities in the district
- d) The Chairperson in consultation with the district office shall nominate/appoint members of the subcommittees in the district
- e) The Chairperson shall represent or delegate a district office holder to represent IG at all public functions/fora/meetings at the district level.
- f) Shall lead the implementation of IG projects/activities in the district in collaboration with MO

a.6.2 Vice Chairperson

- a) The District Vice Chairperson shall act and assume the duties of the Chairperson in his temporary absence
- b) The District Vice Chairperson shall perform such duties as may be specified by the District Council or assigned to him/her by the Chairperson
- c) The District Vice Chairperson shall act as a go-between the chairperson and subcommittees
- d) The District Vice Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson in carrying out important tasks

a.6.3 Secretary/Organiser

- a) The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of groups and of all minutes of General and District Council meetings.
- b) The Secretary shall make sure all the necessary documents of the district are open and kept according to law.
- c) The secretary shall prepare agenda for meetings under the direction of the Chairperson.
- d) The secretary shall write and receive correspondence on behalf of the group and shall ensure that the administrative functions of IG are conducted in a proper and efficient manner
- e) The Secretary shall perform other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the chairperson or vice chairperson.

a.6.4 Treasurer

- a) The Treasurer shall exercise general supervision over the district financial administration under the direction of the District Executives
- b) The Treasurer shall receive and disburse funds under the direction of the District Council and ensure that proper vouchers and receipts are taken so as to render accurate accounts to the District Council/Chairperson
- c) The Treasurer shall make sure that full and accurate accounts of all receipt and payments of district activities and projects are kept in proper books of account and that all funds are deposited in a bank account with the account holder being the IG adopted district name.
- d) The Treasurer shall make available a complete and duly audited financial statement and report at a District Annual General Meeting
- e) The Treasurer may in the absence of the Chairperson and the Vice-chairperson, assume the role of a chairperson

a.6.5 Gender and Inclusion Representative

- a) The Gender and Inclusion Representative shall ensure gender equality thus making sure there is fair male and female representation in the group
- b) The Gender and Inclusion Representative shall advocate for the inclusion of the most vulnerable
- c) The Gender and Inclusion Representative shall look at useful gender mainstreaming in children, youth, sports etc

a.7 Roles and Responsibilities of Regional and District Council bodies

a.7.1 District Council

- Facilitate the identification and registration of PWIDs
- Organise programmes and activities to educate and raise awareness among the public about PWID issues
- Hold meetings with PSHGs and SAs to empower them to function effectively
- Identify projects and manage them
- Organise programmes and activities to raise funds
- Report progress of activities to regional council

- Manage conflict at the community level
- Network with MMDAs and other stakeholders
- Form and run committees

a.7.2 Regional Council

- Coordinate programmes and activities at the district to national level
- Advocacy
- Organise fundraising programmes and activities to solicit for funds for IG programmes
- Play an advisory role to the district council
- Serve as a link between the district and national level
- Represent IG at the regional level
- Report periodically to National IG secretariat
- Monitor programmes and activities of IG district council
- Facilitate access to mainstreaming services including education, health and partnership with the media

a.8 Term of Office

The term of office for elected officers shall be four (4) years and shall be eligible for re-election for one (1) additional term.

a.9 Voting Rights and Voting

All parents/caregivers of PWIDs and Self-Advocates leaders at the community level will be eligible to vote in the election of district leaders.

IG members shall send the following Voting Delegates, in person or by proxy, to all Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings to speak and vote on behalf of the Association

a.9.1 District Level

- a) 2 PSHG executives from community level
- b) 1 SA in any of the communities who has the capacity to speak and vote at the meetings

a.9.2 Regional Level

- a) 2 representatives from the district council
- b) 1 SA in the district who has the capacity to speak and vote at the meetings

a.9.3 National Level General and Special Meetings

- a) 2 representatives from each regional council
- b) A Self Advocate from each region who has the capacity to speak and vote at the meetings
- c) A representative from each MO
- d) All National Council Members

a.9.4 Percentage of women elected officials

At least 40% of all elected officials to various positions in groups, committees and councils should be women

a.10 Complains/Sanctions/Removals

- a) IG members who have complains about fellow members should first report to the vice chairperson or chairperson if there is no vice chairperson
- b) Complains about the vice chairperson should first be lodged to the chairperson.
- c) Where there is no vice chairperson complains should be lodged to the secretary
- d) In the case of complains regarding the chairperson, the matter should be referred to the disciplinary committee of the regional council

a.11 Sanction of Membership

- a) IG members who are found to misconduct themselves or bring the group into disrepute should first face a disciplinary committee who will look into the case and recommend appropriate sanctions
- b) Sanctions shall include payment of fine, suspension from group activities and dismissal
- c) IG members who fail to pay the recommended dues shall also be sanctioned
- d) Failure to attend meetings (i.e. missing meetings for 4 consecutive times) will attract sanctions

a.12 Removal of Officers

- a) Any officer found to have committed gross misconduct (such as embezzlement, misuse of group property etc) shall face the district disciplinary committee.
- b) The committee shall review the case and recommend punitive action if deemed appropriate

BYE-LAW NO.8 MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

8.1 Type of Meetings

- a) Community Parent Self Help Groups and Self Advocates Meetings: PSHGs and SAs at the community level shall meet at least once every month. PSHGs meeting shall be supervised by elected executives.
- b) District Council Meetings: District Council members shall meet at least once every quarter.
- c) Regional Council Meetings: Regional Council members shall meet at least once every quarter.
- d) Emergency/Special meetings:Emergency/Special meetings of IG members at the community, district or regional level may be called at any time by the Council/ executives and shall be called by the Chairperson or the Secretary

8.2 Time and Place of Meetings

- a) Meeting shall be organised on rotational bases to avoid it being centred at one place
- b) Time of meeting shall be determined and communicated to members by the executives

8.3 Reporting to Members:

- a) Quarterly reports; Executives/Leaders at the community, district or regional level shall produce quarterly reports of progress of activities and programmes
- b) Annual reports:Executives/Leaders at community, district or regional shall also produce annual reports to update members on progress of programmes

BYE-LAW NO.9 COMMITTEES

The following committees shall be formed by IG at both the district and regional level;

9.1 Advocacy Committee

The advocacy committee shall be made up of two executives, three persons from PSHGs and two SAs. Here language barrier should be taken into consideration thus members of this committee should be fluent in the local languages spoken within the specific environs. The committee shall be responsible for the following:

- a) Shall have key knowledge on the main purpose of the group
- b) Educate community members on ID issues (reducing stigma)
- c) Identify PWIDs in communities and presents data or findings to IG
- d) Shall educate and present the work of the group to community members

9.2 Fundraising Committee

The fundraising committee shall be constituted by the district treasurer, two treasurers from PSHGs and one SA. They will be responsible for the following;

- a) Developing key strategies for raising and mobilising funds for the group
- b) Organise activities to raise funds for the group

9.3 Disciplinary Committee

The disciplinary committee at community, district or regional levels shall be made up of the Chairman, Secretary, two parents and One SA. Their roles will include among other things;

- a. Responsible for taking complains
- b. Responsible for sanctions on members
- c. Responsible for removal of office holders

BYE-LAW NO.10 LINES OF REPORTING AND CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS

The lines of reporting and channels of communication for IG members shall be as follows;

10.1 Community Level

- a) The local chairperson/ PSHG executives at the community level shall report to the district chairperson/district level executives as well as the MO that formed the group.
- b) The local chairperson/ PSHG executives at the community level shall account on their stewardship to PSHG at the community level.

10.2 District Level

- a) District chairperson shall report to regional council and national secretariat by copying the Member Organisation (MO) in the district.
- b) District Council shall account on their stewardship to PSHG executives at both the community level and the regional council.

10.3 Regional Level

- a) Regional chairperson shall report to IG national secretariat by copying the Member Organisations (MOs) in the regions

- b) Regional Council shall account on their stewardship to IG National Secretariat and the District Councils

10.4 National Level

- a) IG secretariat shall communicate directly to Regional and District Council by copying MOs on details of communication.
- b) MOs shall also communicate directly to Regional and District Council by copying IG secretariat on details of communication.
- c) MOs shall have direct correspondence with District and Regional Councils as well as the National secretariat as it relates to project(s) and programme(s) implementation etc.

BYE-LAW NO.11 FINANCE /FUND RAISING

11.1 Payment of Dues

- a) Members of PSHGs/SAs shall pay monthly dues of GH¢ 2.00 of which GH¢1.00 shall be sent to IG National Secretariat as subscription fee.
- b) A fine of GH¢0.50 shall be paid by members who absent themselves from meeting for 4 consecutive times. This is to deter others from absenting themselves from meetings without permissions.
- c) MOs shall be required to pay an annual subscription fee of GH¢250.00 Subscription fee shall be paid in full and not by instalment

11.2 Sustainability Measures

- a) A portion of the dues retained by members can be used to organise general and special meetings
- b) IG Secretariat will support a part of the general or special meetings organised at district and regional levels.

11.3 Financial Reporting

The Treasurer in collaboration with community PSHG leaders/district /regional council members shall provide reports on all finances quarterly to its members/groups.

11.4 Financial Controls

Expert shall be involved to provide technical book keeping support to groups. This expert may be nominated by IG national secretariat and may come from the MOs in the district or region.

BYE-LAW NO.12 EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Relationship between district and sub-district structures and external bodies.

- a) District level IG elected officers shall represent IG at stakeholder meetings, fora, or workshop with duty bearers such as Social Welfare, District Assembly, Department of Health, Education etc.on issues of importance to PWIDS.
- b) IG elected officers/members at the district level shall actively participate in activities organised by these bodies
- c) IG elected officers at the district level shall maintain strong relationship with district level duty bearers and MOs to support their activities and access resources for their members.

BYE-LAW NO. 13 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- a) No elected/appointed leader of IG shall enter into any contract or any business transaction with IG where he/she has a personal /commercial interest
- b) No elected/appointed officer of IG shall use his special position with IG to promote private economic interests
- c) Non-disclosure of personal economic interest and conflicts of interest shall result in the removal of such person from his position and cancellation of such contract or transaction with IG at the option of the National Council.

13.1 Preventive Measures

The following measures shall be put in place to prevent conflict of interest from arising

- b) Accountability
- c) Transparency
- d) Checks and balances
- e) Collective decision making by leaders

13.2 Process

In the event of an allegation of a conflict of interest;

- a) A committee made up of at least three (3) people shall be constituted to investigate the allegation
- b) The committee will be constituted by the community, district or regional leaders as may apply.
- c) The community, district or regional committee will determine the appropriate measures/sanctions after reviewing the report

BYE-LAW NO.14 AMENDMENTS

The amendment or any changes to the bye-laws shall require the following:

- a) affirmative vote of a majority of the national council members who are present at any meeting of the National Council at which a quorum is present
- b) proposal for amendments shall be communicated not less than three (3) weeks to the General Assembly
- c) changes and approval to the bye-laws shall be effected by the General Assembly

BYE-LAWS



P. O. Box GP 20950
Accra-Ghana
Accra Rehabilitation Centre
Barnes Road, opp. National
Museum, Accra-Ghana



+233 (0) 302 243 291
+233 (0) 208 151 523



info@inclusion-ghana.org



www.inclusion-ghana.org



facebook.com/inclusionghana



twitter.com/inclusionghana



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