

## **NORSAAC STATEMENT ON UK AID CUTS- MAY, 2021**

The TFSR-Norsaac initiated multi- component income diversification and economic empowerment project dubbed; Economic Empowerment for Women in Northern Ghana with the UKAID Application reference number: JLYR- PXCG- 3U, is a real-life changing intervention for vulnerable communities. The project when implemented would improve the lives of 1060 women and girls in the Gushegu and Zabzugu Districts of Northern Ghana for 3- years.

It is also anticipated that implementation would create the enabling environment for women to have greater earning capacity from farming and off farm income generating activities. Inclusive development is crucial hence there is the plan in the project to have about 520 men and boys in the project which will enable women to participate more actively in decision making in their homes and their communities. Lessons from the local context supported by evidence, the project design has been a participatory process following consultation for the project focused specifically on reducing child marriage as well.

In light of the above coupled with the development on UKAID's decision on funding of the project, this came at a shock to the team as we have waited for so long with positivity of a better outcome and commencement of project. Our team have taken this in good faith with the believe that, challenges/problems can always be reframed into opportunities with determination and perseverance. Many thanks to tools for self-reliance and by extension the UK Government for this learning experience in the funding space and capacity built in UKAID rounds of proposals including grant setting among others.

On the other hand, our team feels nostalgic about everything of the development due to the impact this posses to the process, potential beneficiaries and their communities. The impact is so great that our team is optimistic and appeal to the UK government for a review of its decision not to completely withdraw funding in order not to deny communities of the project's desired results and impact. For nothing at all, a reviewed project in terms of scope and or funding could be the best alternative. We do appreciate the challenging moments confronting the UK Government and other funding bodies and agencies. We will wish to highlight some of the impact of this decision as follows:

- Generally, it is clear that with the current state of the development in funding, all the above-mentioned benefits and all project desired outcomes would be stalled, leaving the two districts with the same problems identified at the project design stage or even worst one. Largely, the project was a perfectly designed solution to the problems in context.

- In the Gushegu and Zabzugu Districts, made up of small rural villages which are engaged in farming as their primary livelihood source. The project is seen as a hope to enhanced and sustained livelihood sources through the agronomic best practices support to be provided. With the withdrawal of the project, these services as currently happening will be inaccessible to citizens and thereby stucked with their traditional was of farming with less impact on crop yield.
- During consultation and review of the context, it was clear that some state institution like the department of Agriculture lack the requisite resources to render its mandated services. The project in its design acknowledged this problem and provided solution. The project when implemented will provide resource wise support to the department of Agriculture in order for them to provide extension services to these Women farmer groups. Both the Government officials and women expressed so much appreciation and welcomed this initiative. We believe and guess it is so clear, the impact of strengthening state institution to providing opportunities for its citizens would surely be lost if this project is withdrawn.