

ASSESSING THE PERFORMANCE OF
THE GHANA RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY
PROGRAMME

- A summary analysis of expectations and achievements from July 2005 to June 2007
- A response to the Mid-term Review recommendations
- A proposal for a revised Logical Framework

Produced for G-rap by Dr Rick Davies,
Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist,
www.mande.co.uk

January 2008

Contents

1. The Purpose of This Report.....	3
2. Assessing Expectations and Achievements	4
Super-goal: Changes in the lives of poor people in Ghana	4
Goal level: Changes in Government of Ghana policy and practice.....	4
Purpose level: Changes in the behaviour of RAOs	8
The performance of individual RAOs.....	9
Changes in RAOs' relationships.....	13
Credibility and autonomy	15
Output level: Services provided by the Project Management Team	17
Grant making.....	17
Capacity building.....	17
Communications	18
Reflections on outputs and their achievements	19
3. Responding to the October 2006 Mid-Term Review.....	20
4. Revising Expectations: Proposal for a Revised Logical Framework.....	24
Background.....	24
The overall structure of the LogFrame.....	24
Super-goal.....	24
Goal	25
Purpose	25
Outputs.....	26
Activities and Inputs.....	26
Assumptions	26

1. The Purpose of This Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide:

- A one-year-later update of the July 2006 assessment of G-rap performance, specifically in relationship to the G-rap Logical Framework (April 2005 version).
- A response to sections of the 2006 Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the G-rap which commented on how G-rap assesses its performance.
- Proposals for revisions to the G-rap Logical Framework, which are informed by the recommendations of the MTR, and by the experience of the Project Management Team (PMT).

2. This report has been written for:

- The existing Programme Management Team (PMT) and the incoming programme managers of G-rap, who will begin their work in late March 2008.
- The new Programme Board, Selection Committee and Funders' Committee, who will begin their work in a revised governance setting from February 2008 onwards.
- The public at large, in Ghana and beyond, to whom the project can also be accountable to by making project documents, such as this, publicly available on the G-rap website, at www.g-rap.org.

3. **The history:** The current Logical Framework was developed in April 2005, as a revision of an earlier Logical Framework developed as part of the original project design, which was produced in January 2004¹. The current Logical Framework can be found on the G-rap website².

Changes made in the April 2006 revision of the G-rap Logical Framework³

The most important change was the introduction of a rule of thumb to distinguish what changes needed to be referred to at each level of the Logical Framework.

Both the Activities and Outputs level refer to what the PMT is doing, but the Outputs refer only to those PMT activities that other stakeholders can use. E.g. access to core funding, provision of capacity building, etc.

Purpose level changes relate to the behaviour of RAOs and any other actors making direct use of G-RAP Outputs.

The Goal level refers to change in GoG policy and practice, resulting from RAO behaviour. The Super-Goal (not included) would refer to changes in poor people's lives, arising from changes in GoG policy and practice.

The second most important change was probably the wholesale revision of the associated indicators at each of the levels of the Logical Framework.

¹ "GHANA RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMME. Joint Programme Memorandum. Draft for Discussion". January 2004. Available on the G-rap website, at www.g-rap.org/news/Joint%20Programme%20Memoramdum.pdf

² at <http://www.g-rap.org/news/LogFrame%2050609%20revision.pdf>

³ See *Aide Memoire: Developing the M&E Framework for G-RAP*, Rick Davies, Friday, 22 April 2005. Available at the G-rap website, at <http://www.g-rap.org/docs/consultant%20reports/RDAidMemoireApril2005.pdf>

2. Assessing Expectations and Achievements

Super-goal: Changes in the lives of poor people in Ghana

4. The Super-Goal proposed for G-rap in 2005 was “*Poverty in Ghana is reduced*”. The proposed indicators were “*as listed in the GPRS*”, and the proposed Means of Verification were the “GPRS Annual Progress Reports”. On reflection, this proposal was too much like a gesture, with no practical relevance to how G-rap works.

5. Although neither G-rap, nor the assisted RAOs, expects to be accountable for delivering changes at this level, both parties can be expected to be doing some *monitoring* of changes in the lives of poor communities, because it is outcomes at this level that should be their ultimate concern. For example:

- Some RAOs may be *monitoring the impact of specific government policies* that they have engaged with. For example, SEND Foundation has produced a report this year on the impact of the HIPC initiative on the availability of basic health, education, water and sanitation services in 42 resource-poor districts during the period 2002 - 2005⁴.
- G-rap (both the PMT and the Committees) could be *monitoring changes in the availability of data on the nature of poverty in Ghana*. This information should be relevant to the RAOs and should also help inform the PMT’s assessment of their work⁵ (e.g. do the RAOs know about it, are they using it?). For example, the publication of the results of the latest Ghana living Standards Survey (GLSS V), which was announced by the Government in April 2007. However, as of late November 2007, the official website for this important survey was not functioning⁶. A second example is the PMT’s exploratory work, in association with sister funding agency BUSAC, on the possibility of mapping the geographical distribution of grantees (and their local partners) using a publicly accessible GIS database, developed by CERGIS. If pursued by the incoming managers of G-rap this has potential to be linked up with geographic data on poverty, which has also been mapped by CERGIS⁷.

Goal level: Changes in Government of Ghana policy and practice

6. In the Logical Framework the G-rap Goal is “*Pro-poor policy adopted and implemented effectively by GoG*”. The main source of information on policy change is the synthesis of the six-monthly narrative reports produced by the RAO grantees, commissioned by G-rap. The January to June 2007 synthesis report mentions a number of government policies that have been changed, at least partly due to civil society pressure. These policies are listed below, along with the RAOs who reported on them in their narrative reports:

- The Domestic Violence Bill (ABANTU, ARK, FIDA, WILDAF)
- National Youth Employment Program (ARK, ISSER, TUC)
- School Feeding Programme (IEA, IDEG, NGND)
- The Millennium Challenge Account (ISSER, IDEG)

⁴ See <http://allafrica.com/stories/200711231206.html> . There have also been some pilot efforts to monitor capitation grants (boosting school participation by the poor) by CSPS.

⁵ As captured in G-rap’s six-monthly synthesis of RAO narrative reports

⁶ The GSS website at www.gssghana.org had hosted the report, but the website is now inactive, because of failure to renew the domain name licence

⁷ See http://www.ndpc.gov.gh/poverty_site/intro.htm

- The Rent Act (ARK, FIDA)
- Ratification of the AU Protocol on Women's Rights (WILDAF)
- Decentralisation review process (ABANTU, ILGS, IDEG)
- The Social Investment Fund (IEA)
- National Health Insurance Scheme (IEA)
- Minimum wage legislation (TUC)
- The Capitation Grant (IDEG, NGND)
- National Board for Small Scale Industries
- Micro-Finance and Loan Centre

7. One policy change does not seem to have been mentioned in the RAO narrative reports, but which could have dramatic and negative consequences for RAOs to affect pro-poor policy changes. This is the government's proposal, under development since 2006 to include the regulations of NGOs (very widely defined) within an amended version of the current legislation on trusts. This legislation was however the focus of the 2007 RAO convention held in late November 2007, indicating that it had become a focus of attention by then.

8. Goal level achievements (like changes in government policy and practice) are normally expected to take time, so it is not realistic to expect them to be assessed solely on the basis of monitoring reports, such as the RAO's narrative reports, or the G-rap Annual Progress Reports, which are largely built out of the RAO reports. If G-rap's donors and other stakeholders are seriously expecting RAOs to positively influence government policies and practice, in favour of the poor, then additional G-rap resources need to be invested in longer term impact assessment activities. It would therefore be appropriate to consider contracting an externally managed impact assessment towards the end of Phase 1 of G-rap, in 2009.

9. A two stage process could be used. The first would be to gather data on *aggregate* outcomes, as perceived by all the funded RAOs. This could be done by asking: (a) which policies have attracted more versus less civil society attention over the last x years; and (b) which of these policies have been most versus less extensively influenced by civil society. These questions could be asked via online surveys like the 2007 online survey of RAO membership of issue coalitions⁸. In terms of results, it might be expected that there would be some correlation between the breadth of RAO engagement and the scale of policy change that took place. But it is also likely that there would be some outlier cases, which would present very interesting learning opportunities. That is, there may be some policies which were only attended to by a few RAOs but where there was a substantial positive change in the policy; and there may be others which were attended to by many RAOs but where there was very little positive change in the policy. These could be the focus of intensive case studies, along with examples of the two extreme cases that were expected:

- Wide RAO engagement & extensive policy change
- Narrow RAO engagement & modest policy change

10. In the 2005 Logical Framework three means of monitoring the achievement of the G-rap Goal ("*Pro-poor policy adopted and implemented effectively by GoG*") have been listed:

- GPRS Indicators, as prioritised by the Funders' Committee

⁸ See [http://www.mande.co.uk/ghana/Online survey of coalitions.doc](http://www.mande.co.uk/ghana/Online%20survey%20of%20coalitions.doc)

- Indicators of policy changes which are of shared concern to RAOs
- Monitoring of “Most Significant Changes” in government policy by RAOs

11. As of November 2007 a list of GPRS2 indicators has not been developed, in the same manner as with the GPRS1. Given that this is the second year of the GPRS2 period it is probably unlikely that such a list will be developed. It is also now questionable whether the donors to G-rap would want to be as directive as implied by this G-rap Logical Framework indicator. At the most, there does seem to be a clear desire that funded RAOs do address issues covered by the GPRS.

12. William Ahadzie’s mid-2007 analysis of RAO narrative reports over the 2005-6 period produced a tabulation of RAOs x GPRS policy areas, and of RAOs x MBDS policy areas⁹. These indicate that most RAOs are engaged with the GPRS and MBDS, and that most sections of the GPRS have been engaged with by at least one RAO. However, his final report notes that RAOs are much less engaged with the MBDS process, than they are in the GPRS process. Donors would like to see more engagement, but recognise that this is dependent on the Government taking a more positive view of RAO involvement with MBDS.

RAO engagement with the GPRS2 and MBDS in 2005-6
<p>Which GPRS pillars are the RAOs addressing the most, versus least?</p> <p>§ All 17 RAOs are engaged with both the Good Governance and Human Resources issues, whereas only 56% of RAOs (9) are engaged with Private Sector issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This smaller group are: WILDAF, LRC, AWLA, ILGS, GII, ARK FOUNDATION • Almost all the component issues under each GPRS pillar are being addressed by at least one RAO. • Except Population Management, under Human Resources, which is addressed by none. • The Good Governance pillar is most intensively covered, with 86% of the maximum possible coverage¹⁰, then Private Sector at 50% and Human Resources at 39% <p>Are RAOs paying more attention to GPRS pillars than MBDS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 17 RAOs are engaged with the MBDS issues • All MBDS issues are being engaged with by one or more RAOs (same as GPRS) • Coverage of MBDS issues is slightly less than Good Governance, at 71%, but higher than Private Sector and Human Resources issues coverage

13. Data collected from donors by the World Bank in 2005¹¹ indicated that G-rap donors’ interests spread across all three pillars, but with most emphasis on the “human resource development” pillar.

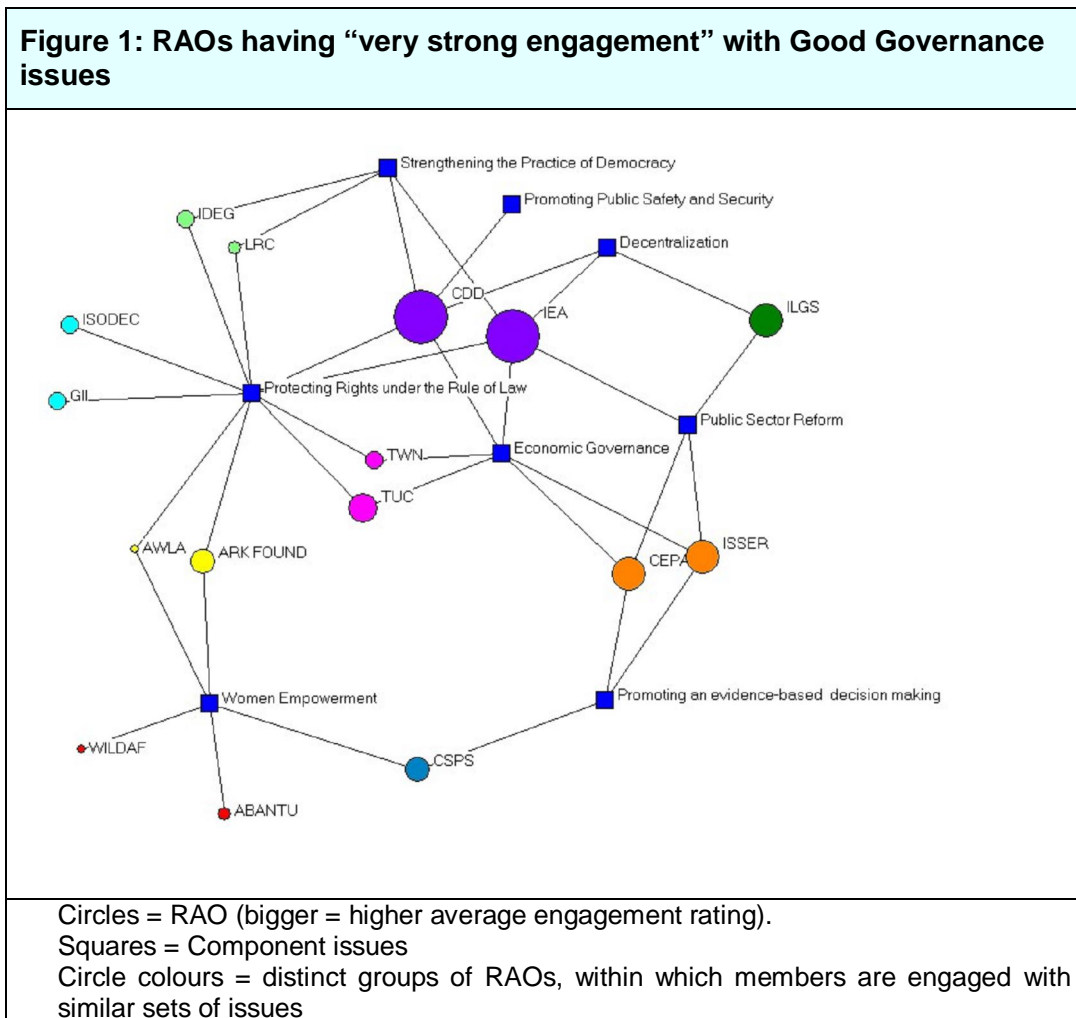
14. The second indicator “*of policy changes which are of shared concern to RAOs*” is challenging to measure. A network analysis of William Adahzie’s data shows that there are few areas within the GPRS that every RAO is addressing. Instead, the areas of interest of the various RAOs overlap to varying degrees. This is especially the case in the area of Good Governance, which most RAOs are addressing (See Figure 1, next page).

⁹ See the annex in http://www.mande.co.uk/ghana/Online_survey_of_coalitions.doc

¹⁰ Maximum coverage = # component issues x # RAOs. Coverage here is the same as “network density”, in social network analysis terms.

¹¹ See page 8 of “Implementation of an M&E Framework for the Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme: Summary Update”, July 2006

15. Because of G-rap's intention to respect the autonomy of RAOs it is not feasible for the PMT to organise RAOs in order to identify indicators of policy changes that are of share concern. However, RAOs have already organised themselves around various policy issues, in the form of numerous coalitions (/ forums, alliances and networks). These coalitions have their respective objectives, some more clearly stated than others. At least 12 of these coalitions have their own websites, where is possible to identify their objectives and in some cases, information on their activities to date. It is beyond G-rap's current capacity to survey these coalitions to identify their assessment of progress to date. But it would be possible to publicise the coalition websites on the G-rap website, to make the information that is available there more publicly visible.



16. The third proposed approach to assessing change in government policy and practice involved using a more open-ended “monitoring-without indicators” approach, known as the “Most Significant Change” (MSC) technique¹². Training in this method was given to 23 representatives from 13 RAOs in a workshop in September 2005, and then used in two workshops held with 14 RAOs in January and July 2006¹³. These workshops used participatory processes to identify which of the changes reported in recent RAO narrative reports were seen as most significant, by the participating RAOs. It was intended that the selected stories of change would be publicised on the G-rap website and that a repeat workshop would be held in early

¹² See <http://www.mande.co.uk/MSC.htm>

¹³ See page 11-13 of “Implementation of an M&E Framework for the Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme: Summary Update”, July 2006

2007, to review the changes reported in the RAOs July to December 2006 narrative reports. This did not happen because the late 2006 Mid-Term Review recommendations were seen by the PMT as discouraging further involvement in RAO capacity building, including these type of monitoring and evaluation activities.

17. Since then the selection of the most significant changes, in government policy and practice, has been left to the PMT. The six monthly syntheses of RAO narrative reports have not attempted any selection, simply the reporting of what each RAO said, without any comparison or ranking of these views. In the G-rap Annual Progress Report for 2006 the emphasis was on changes in ways in which RAOs and government were working with each other. These include changes in the process used by the government to prepare the 2006 budget, by inviting public submissions. The G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report has subsequently noted "*Over the past two years , G-rap grantees have reported marked changes in government pro-poor policy making. Changes in the policy making processes include an increase in stakeholder participation in policy making, with government viewed as more accommodative to suggestions by stakeholders, especially CSOs.*"

18. RAO conventions, held in 2005, 6 and 7 are another means by which RAO views on the most important policy issues are "summarised by selection". The agenda of all three conventions has been decided by the RAOs (via an organising committee). Of special interest would be any issues that have been included in more than one convention¹⁴.

The most significant changes identified by participants in the July 2006 workshop, which referred to Goal level events (changes in government policy and practice)

Two selected RAO reports referred to the completion of the new GPRS2. In these reports the main significance of this event was that the GPRS2 " has become the main economic and social policy framework for Ghana for the period 2005 to 2009"

Two selected RAO reports referred to the Annual Budget Statement for 2006, presented to Parliament in November 2005. This was seen as "an innovation in national budgeting (usually budgets are presented to Parliament in February of the budget year). For the first time ever, attempts were made to invite the general public to submit inputs for the preparation of the Budget" [Reported by TUC]. "Parliament, as usual, took barely a month to debate and approve the Budget. The government also solicited and received suggestions for incorporation into the 2006 Budget. However, it is not clear what proposals were submitted and which of them were adopted. All the same, these changes in the budget process mark a new phase in Ghana's economic management and budget process. In spite of the short period that Parliament used to debate and approve the Budget, it is still viewed by a large number of Ghanaians as an improvement in the budget process. [reported by ISODEC]

Purpose level: Changes in the behaviour of RAOs

19. There are nine Purpose level outcomes in the G-rap Logical Framework, all relating to changes in the behaviour of RAOs. They fall into two main groups: (a) those relating to the performance of individual RAOs (P1-4), (b) those concerning changes in relationships between RAOs, and with others (P5-9), and (c) those concerning credibility and autonomy of RAOs. Each of these is discussed in turn below.

¹⁴ Hans Determeyer has noted two recurring themes: "The aspect of positioning the RAO community vis-à-vis GoG is a similarity in all 3 conventions, as well as the attention for the gender aspect."

The performance of individual RAOs

P1: RAOs that have been given access to G-rap capacity building grants are able to gain better access to funding

20. There are three indicators for this Purpose, proposed in 2005

- Number of RAOs gaining access to core funding increase
- Number of RAOs gaining access to funding from new sources increases
- Number of RAOs gaining access to increased funding from their existing sources increases

21. Progress on the first indicator is clear. A total of 19 RAOs have been received funding from G-rap, 9 of which have received three year core funding and 6 which have received one year core funding. Another 4 RAOs have received technical assistance or project grants. When more donor funding becomes available next year the one year grantees will be eligible to apply for additional funding, along with the three year grantees. One existing one-year grantee will not given further funding. A further seven additional grantees may be funded, subject to responses to the next funding call.

22. On the third indicator, 7 of 15 RAOs have increased their annual incomes in the 2003-2006 period (CDD, CEPA, FOSDA, IDEG, IEA, NGND, WILDAF). For the three of these where data is available, some of this increased funding has come from additional donors, as well as their pre-existing donors. Three RAOs have been asked by G-rap to diversify their funding sources in 2007-8

23. The audited accounts of the grantees show considerable year-to-year variations in their budgets; with 8 of 15 RAOs showing both increases and decreases in their annual budgets in the four years from 2003 and 2006. During this same period the G-rap grant represented an average of 32% of the RAOs' annual budget. The availability of this funding have provided an important source of stability and predictability to these RAOs. Nine of the 15 received 3-year grants.

24. As noted in G-rap's Annual Progress Report for 2006, RAOs have been pursuing different approaches to securing sustainable incomes, including: endowment funds (ISSER, CEPA), hiring of full time fund raisers, selling consulting services (NGND and others), and seeking core funding from organisations other than G-rap (Ford Foundation, OSIWA, ACBF, CORDAID).

P2: RAOs are more able to attract, retain, motivate and develop capable staff

25. There are six indicators for this Purpose, proposed in 2005:

- Progressive improvements of professional competence of researchers hired by RAOs
- Improved performance of existing staff
- Mean duration of vacancies declines over time
- Sick leave rates decline
- Mean length of staff contracts grows
- Gender balance of staff improves

26. The original G-rap application-for-funding form requested information on staff numbers and gender, but not on the other indicators. Four of the RAOs on annual grants have since had to complete new applications. These applications include a section that describes "Steps to be taken to attract, retain, motivate and develop capable staff." The examples I have seen are aspirational, without many specific commitments. In future it would be desirable (especially for three-year grants) that these statements are supported by indicators of the expected changes. These could be proposed by the RAO concerned, but subject to agreement by G-rap.

27. The same re-application forms do not appear to request numbers (or gender) of staff, as requested in the original application. This may not be a problem. In late 2007 a gender checklist was developed for use with RAOs (and the PMT and Committees) by a contracted gender specialist. It is possible that this checklist will be used in a series of meetings that will be held with RAOs during the lifetime of their G-rap grants. This is a positive development. A checklist approach will be more valid and reliable measure of change than reliance on a single indicator (such as proportions of staff who are women). The present draft gives all items on the checklists equal weight. A weighted checklist would be even better¹⁵.

28. G-rap's twice yearly synthesis of RAOs' narrative reports provides some qualitative information on "Organisation related issues: evidence of significant progress of change. In the January – June 2007 report the following changes were noted in six of the RAOs:

- Changes to the composition of the board (WiLDAF, WANEP)
- Development of a board operating manual, to guide board members; orientation of new board members (FIDA, WiLDAF)
- Organisational re-structuring (WANEP, CEPA)
- Development of an organisational chart / department profile and job descriptions that fit with the strategic plan for the next three years (FIDA)
- A human resource policy manual has been developed as well as a career development plan (FIDA)
- Retention of "newly qualified and seasoned researchers recruited the previous year (IEA)
- Recruitment of people for new and existing positions (IEA)
- Plans developed to review human resources and gender strategy (NGND)
- The need to develop a succession plan was recognised (ABANTU)

P3: RAOs generate high quality evidence-based research based on robust primary sources

29. This is one of the most important changes in RAO capacity, but also one of the most difficult to monitor. Three indicators were proposed in 2005:

- [RAO] Peer Review assessments improvement over time
- RAO references (a) cited in government and parliament policy documents, (b) donors and civil society in their dialogue with government
- RAO publications are gender sensitive

30. The G-rap 2007 Mid-year Progress Report reports on various research activities, but does not make any assessment of the quality of the products. The Fund Narrative Report Compilation, which synthesises RAO narrative reports provides a tabulation of RAO "research and advocacy activities and / or services", but does not make any assessment of their quality.

31. Peer review processes have not yet been introduced, and could only be introduced with RAOs' consent, and their perception that there was a real need to address research quality. In theory a peer review process should be acceptable in that peer review of academic / research publications is a very common practice, in

¹⁵ The present draft gives all items on the checklists equal weight. A weighted checklist would be even better. Convergence between the judgements of the assessor and assessed on what are the appropriate weights for the different checklist items could itself be a measure of progress, along with improvements in the actual checklist scores. On this see "Checklists as mini theories-of-change" at <http://mandenews.blogspot.com/2007/09/checklists-as-mini-theories-of-change.html>

many fields, and many countries. But the RAO community in Ghana may be too small to enable RAOs to feel confidence in a peer review process producing independent, fair and useful results. A more structured and externally facilitated version of this type of process may be needed. "Horizontal Evaluation" as used with development research activities in Latin America, may be more appropriate¹⁶. And before any methods are discussed, the actual need for quality improvement would need to be discussed and recognised by the RAOs. This could happen via the Strategic Issues meeting proposed by the MTR.

32. An alternative is to take the same approach as suggested above for monitoring improvements in staff management. That would be to ask RAOs who are applying or re-applying for G-rap funding how they want to improve the quality of their research, and then encouraging them to identify some appropriate indicators of improvement that fit their description. The onus could then be on the RAO to report progress on those indicators in their narrative reports.

33. The second indicator proposed in 2005 (citations by others) is relevant, as a measure of relevance but not necessarily of quality. And it is not easy to collect

34. The third indicator that "RAO publications are gender sensitive" requires some means of assessing this dimension of RAO publications. The gender responsiveness checklists, referred to above, do not pay specific attention to RAO publications. But it should be possible to develop a short checklist that did so. Or preferably to incorporate this dimension into the existing RAO gender sensitivity checklist.

P4: RAOs package evidence based research and use it in targeted advocacy activities

35. This Purpose is about how RAOs use their research products, once produced. Four indicators were proposed in 2005:

- Different messages are sent to different audiences. Not broadcast to all.
- Diversity of info products increases over time
- Timeliness improves
- Targeting differentiates by gender

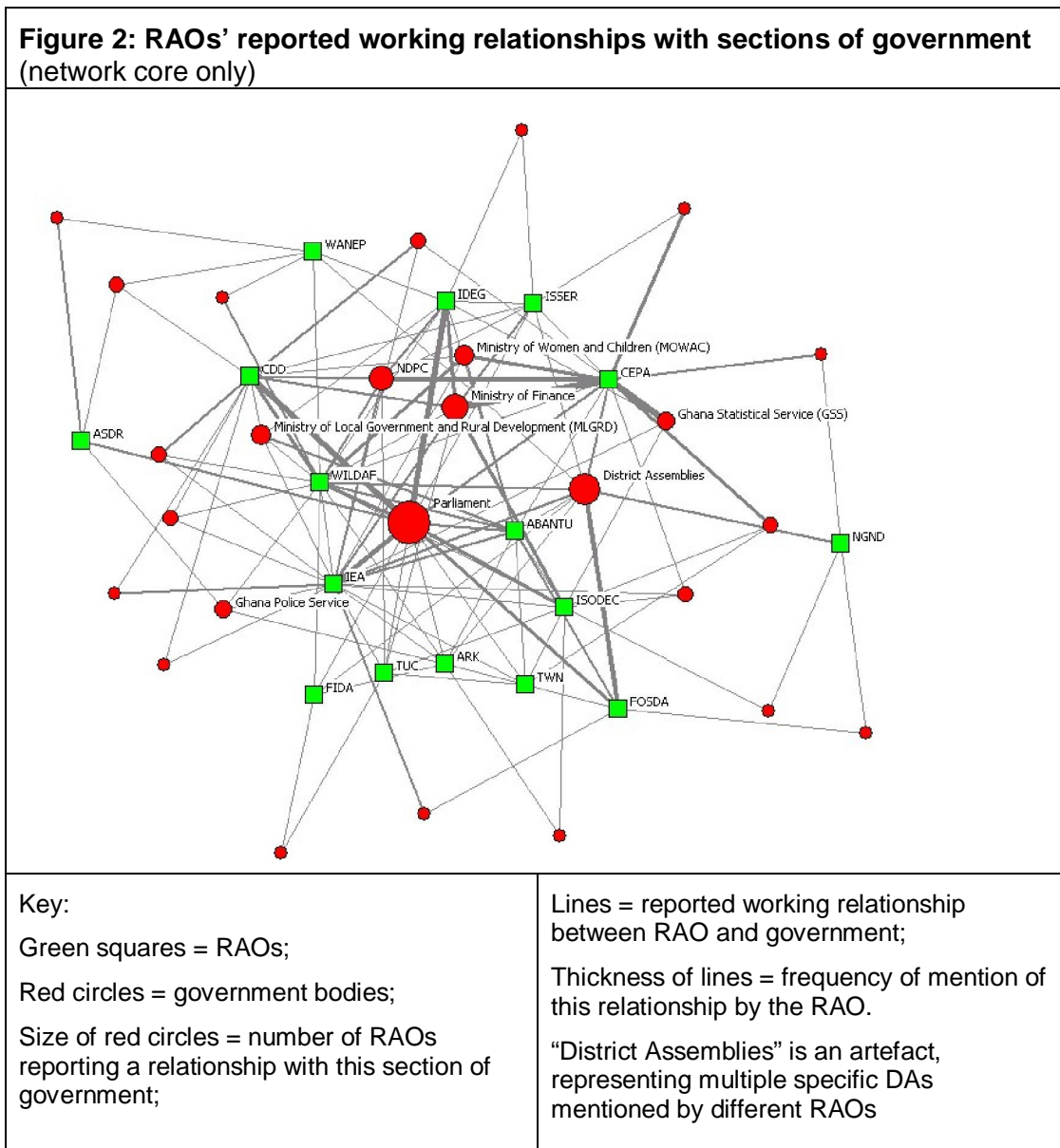
36. This Purpose is about communications, both the product and the audience for that product. The 2006 version of this report noted "The RAO Funding Application Form does have one question that asks "What communication strategies do you have to ensure that your research has impact?" The answers provide some baseline data, but it is very variable in its focus. For example, ABANTU listed the media they use, ARK provided a one-sentence general statement, and AWLA referred to their planning process. While sometimes interesting, this data cannot easily be used as a baseline."

37. The G-rap Annual Progress Report for 2006 pays some attention to the targets of RAO activities, especially those of gender advocacy groups. The G-rap 2007 Mid-year Progress Report mentions RAO products and events, but not who they were targeted to. The Fund Narrative Report Compilation for January to June 2007 (by Ahadzie) provides a more balanced and much more detailed picture: five pages of tables showing which RAOs were working on which issues (5) with which categories of organisations (5). However, it is difficult to know how to form any evaluative judgement about this work.

38. The basis of each of these reports is the individual narrative reports of the RAOs, produced every six months. In those reports there are more detailed references to which organisations they are working with, in what way. In mid-2007 a content

¹⁶ See http://www.cgiar-ilac.org/downloads/Briefs/ILAC_Brief13.pdf

analysis was done of these reports, coding each RAO report over an 18 month period¹⁷, in terms of who said they were working with whom. Social network analysis software¹⁸ was then used to visually represent all those relationships as a whole. Figure 2 below shows one view of those relationships, the core of the network, including those sections of government that two or more RAOs reported working with. Aggregating the results of the narrative reports highlights two points of note: Firstly, that many of the government bodies were the subject of two or more RAOs attentions (40%). So it is quite likely that the impacts of RAOs' advocacy activities will be mixed together in many cases. Secondly, there is a core group of government bodies that were the focus of attention a large number of RAOs. The MOWAC, NDPC, MLGRD, MoF, and Parliament were the focus of attention by five or more RAOs. It is here that the effectiveness of RAOs communications would be worthwhile examining in some depth.



¹⁷ June 2005 to December 2006

¹⁸ UCINET

Changes in RAOs' relationships

P5: Improved cooperation between RAOs

39. The following five indicators were proposed in 2005:

- More RAOs share a widening range of information with each other
- Number of joint funding proposals increases
- Number of jointly managed advocacy campaigns increases
- Number of non-G-rap funded RAOs included in above trends also increases
- RAOs more engaged with gender focused RAOs and networks

40. Gathering data on the first indicator is a challenge. The RAOs' Narrative Progress Reports format requires reporting on "How has collaboration been strengthened?", but it does not refer specifically to RAOs. The question includes "joint campaigns, collaboration, networking, with other RAOs / CSOs / CBOs". All RAOs have provided some form of information in this section but it is broadly descriptive rather than quantitative (e.g. using the above indicators). This may be more appropriate, since it is not the numbers of collaborative acts taking place that is important, but the qualitative details of who is working with whom, on what issues, and how this compares to past patterns of relationships.

41. A proxy indicator of improved information sharing might be changes over time in the number of other RAOs (and other NGOs) each RAO has a working relationship with during the year, assuming that different types of relationships would involve different kinds of information flows. Data is available on reported working relationships from two sources. The first is the 2005 baseline survey. The second is a content analysis of RAOs narrative progress reports from mid-2005 to the end of 2006, carried out in mid-2007. A comparison of the two sets of data shows a substantial increase in the density of reported working relationships in the RAO network, from 13% of all possible inter-relationships in 2005, to 21% of all possible inter-relationships by the end of 2006¹⁹. Because there were 21 RAOs in the content analysis versus 14 in the baseline survey, this increase in network density is especially noteworthy. On the other hand, this increase may be in part because of the different source of information that was used in the content analysis (three consecutive narrative progress reports per RAO).

42. No information has been systematically collected on the incidence of RAOs participating with other RAOs in joint funding proposals. However, from 2008 onwards G-rap will itself be providing funding for joint proposals by RAOs.

43. The "number of jointly managed advocacy campaigns increases" has not been tracked. However, information has been collected on RAO involvement in joint advocacy campaigns via the 2005-6 content analysis and a more recent online survey of RAO involvement in issue collations, undertaken in late 2007. Both show almost all RAOs involved in one or more issue coalitions (with the possible exception of CEPA. (They also show that many of the issue coalitions are linked to each other by having one or more RAOs as members in common. The density of these interconnections is higher in the more recent online survey than that found in the analysis or earlier progress reports (for 2005-6)²⁰

44. The "Number of non-G-rap funded RAOs included in above trends also increases" can be tracked by monitoring the names of other organisations listed as members of the campaigns that are of interest to G-rap. Initial efforts to identify members of issue collations via their websites have not been very successful. Very

¹⁹ Network density is the number of relationships between actors in the network as a proportion of the total possible number of relationships in that network

²⁰ Network density was 14% in the online survey, versus 6% in the analysis of narrative reports. That is, 14% of all possible linkages between the surveyed RAOs and the listed issue coalitions.

few provide lists of their membership, though doing so might be expected to enhance their credibility.

45. “RAOs more engaged with gender focused RAOs and networks” can be monitored, but more progress may be a challenge to achieve, since it appears that gender related networks are already the most common type linking the existing set of RAOs together. In the network diagram shown above three of the 20 coalitions are gender related and they quite central, already linking six of the fourteen RAOs (and possibly others not reported).

46. In future it may be most useful to focus on documenting RAO involvement with named networks/coalitions/forums. This will require some continuing effort by G-rap to extract information from the RAOs’ Narrative Progress Reports, and from the organisers of these named networks/coalitions/forums (see section 6).

P6: RAOs build up a strategic set of relationships with CBOs.

47. The following six indicators were proposed in 2005:

- Number of partnerships between RAOs and CBOs increases – overall.
- New relationships are planned (not just happening)
- Strategically irrelevant relationships with CBOs are ended.
- Existing relationships are prioritised. and this informs allocation of RAO resources
- RAO agendas encompass local and regional issues. Not just national level issues
- Grassroots CSOs draw on RAO analysis for advocacy work

48. The reason for the focus on RAO-CBO relationships is that in the past, at least, the PMT considered RAO’s linkages with CBOs as a critical factor in their effectiveness. The 2005 baseline survey specifically asked about RAOs relationships with CBOs, and this information was subsequently collated into a network matrix (and associated network diagram). There were two striking features: (a) with the exception of ISODEC most RAOs had only a small number of relationships with CBOs in 2005, (b) Very few CBOs that were mentioned by RAOs had working relationships with more than one RAO.

49. It is possible the RAOs are linked to many more CBOs through their membership of issue coalitions. At least thirty such coalitions were identified via the content analysis of RAO narrative reports. The challenge, as noted above, is to identify the membership of these coalitions.

50. The RAOs’ Narrative Progress Reports format has one section that inquires about relationships with CBOs, but along with relationships with other RAOs and CSOs. Information on these relationships has not been systematically analysed by the PMT.

51. The second, third and fourth indicators proposed in 2005 were, in retrospect, too detailed and too ambitious to monitor. The narrative progress report formats did not seek this information, nor has there been any attempt by the PMT to identify and analyse trends in this area. Information has been available in RAO progress reports on the fifth and sixth indicators, but on a sporadic basis. This has not been the focus of any systematic analysis by the PMT.

52. The question now remains as to whether any form of monitoring RAO engagement with CBOs is appropriate. The simplest response may be to ensure that the case studies proposed as part of an end of phase 1 impact assessment, proposed in section x above, include attention to the presence of RAO/CBO relationships and how they have affected RAO’s effectiveness. More intensive monitoring does not seem to be justified.

P7: RAOs build up a strategic set of relationships with government, parliament and MDBS donors

53. The following three indicators were proposed in 2005:

- Number of partnerships between RAOs and government, parliament and MDBS donors increases – overall
- New relationships are planned (not just happening)
- Existing relationships are prioritised, and this informs allocation of RAO resources

54. As with Purpose 6, the second and third indicators were over-ambitious, were not reported on systematically, not analysed systematically. Information has been collected on the first indicator (RAO relationships with government, parliament and donors) at two points in time:

- 2005, via a baseline survey
- 2006-7, via a content analysis of RAO's narrative progress reports

55. The number of government bodies that RAOs have engaged with has increased during this period from 57 to 64. More importantly, the RAO-Government network has also become much denser²¹. In 2005 RAOs had an average of 4 links with government, but in 2005/6 the average was 8.

56. During both periods Parliament, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Local Government were central to the RAO network of relationships with government. However in 2005 the NDPC was more central. This may have been because of the central role the NDPC was playing that year in the development of the current GRPS.

57. In the content analysis of RAO progress reports it was not possible to systematically analyse RAOs relationships with regional and district government because reporting of these relationships was very variable in details, with some RAOs simply mentioning "district assemblies", while others named the specific district assemblies they have worked with. However, in 2005/6 three RAOs did not report any direct relationships with district and regional government bodies (IEA, ARK and IDEG).

Credibility and autonomy

P8: The credibility and legitimacy of RAOs is improved, in the eyes of GoG and Ghana public

58. The following three indicators were proposed in 2005:

- More RAO documents are referred to in GoG publications
- GoG and parliament contract RAOs for their services
- RAOs are increasingly invited to debate policy issues on radio and TV

59. Achievements in this area are not easy to assess. No information has been collected by RAOs or the PMT on GoG references to RAO publications, and it was probably overly-ambitious to expect such monitoring. The same applies for the second indicator. Re the third indicator, many RAOs do keep records of media references to their work, and the issues they are addressing. They probably also keep records of any media events they have been invited to take part in. The PMT could request this information, but it is not clear if there is any demand for it amongst the Donors Committee or Advisory Board

60. On the more anecdotal side, the G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report did report that "in general, RAOs report that GoG is more open for non-state actors inputs in pro-poor governance and policy processes"

²¹ Density = % of all possible links that could exist, which do exist

61. In future a more useful alternative to tracking RAO credibility would be periodic contract public opinion surveys of the work of RAOs, which included samples of government officials and media representatives. This could provide useful feedback to both RAOs and donors, and identify areas of weakness that need to be addressed

P9: RAO autonomy is not undermined through participation in G-rap

62. The following three indicators were proposed in 2005:

- RAOs are able to criticise G-rap, and its funding partners
- Diversity is maintained in RAO research & advocacy agendas
- Diversity in funding sources is maintained (See Purpose 1)

63. As noted in the 2006 version of this report, on an anecdotal basis, RAOs ability to criticise G-rap seems to be without doubt, but some ongoing documentation of the most significant incidents would be worthwhile.

64. Diversity in RAO research and advocacy agendas seem to be present, but is not easy to measure. One approach could be to survey RAOs interests in each others research products, and to analyse the results in terms of an issue network. An increasingly dense network of overlapping interests might suggest some loss of diversity. Another approach is to identify the incidence of specialists versus generalists as seen in the GPRS2 issues network, as shown for example in Figure 1 above. Specialists are found on the periphery of such networks, whereas generalists are found in the centre. A decrease in the number of specialists would suggest a loss of diversity. But, it should be noted that there is no prescribed view on the ideal mix of generalists and specialists in any kind of network.

65. Information on the third indicator is available from the 2005 baseline survey and RAO's financial reports. An analysis of the financial annexes to the RAO contracts with G-rap shows an average of 4, but with one large RAO not reporting on its other donors. According to the baseline survey the median number of donors per RAO was eight. In 2007 the median number of donors per RAO was 4. During this year three RAOs have been asked to pay extra attention to the diversification of their funding sources in 2007-8

66. The relative contribution of each donor to a given RAO would also be an important factor affecting RAOs' autonomy. If G-raps funding to a RAO leads it to becoming the biggest donor then there is in theory some risk of loss of autonomy (depending of G-raps behaviour as a donor). As of early 2006 G-rap was the largest donor in only one of seven RAOs for which there was data. The same was the case at the end of 2007.

67. The presence of Purpose 9 should raise questions about what sort of development strategy G-rap can have, if any, if it is not to infringe on RAO's autonomy. In discussions with IDEG in July 2006 a distinction was made between navigating and mapping. Meaning that G-Rap should not be navigating, but it could be mapping, and thus help RAOs do their own navigating. Mapping can take the form of collating data collected from individual RAOs, and re-presenting in the form of a bigger picture, that RAOs could then use to help them navigate the direction they want to go in (individually or collectively). G-rap's strategy could then take the form of decisions about what areas to invest in mapping in detail, versus less detail or not at all. RAOs relationships with coalitions and with CBOs seem to be high priorities at present (See section 6 below).

Output level: Services provided by the Project Management Team

Grant making

O1: G-RAP provides RAO donors with an attractive multi-donor funding mechanism which improves aid delivery

68. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists three indicators for this output

- Existing donors fulfil initial commitments
- Number of participating donors increases over time
- G-RAP % management overheads are less than (a) direct funding by donors, (b) comparable multi-donor funding mechanisms

69. The G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report stated that all initial commitments made in 2004 have been fulfilled. The World Bank has sought to participate, by providing funding for G-rap to provide technical assistance (rather than core funding), but this offer has not proceeded because the conditions associated with receipt of the funding were seen as too onerous. The Donor Group has decided not to invite new donors into the pool until the MTR findings and recommendations are implemented.

70. No information has been provided in G-rap progress reports on trends in management costs and how they relate to comparable funding bodies. This gap is important, because one of the expected attractions of pooled funding mechanisms is their greater efficiency. Conclusion: This output has been only **partly achieved**

O2: G-RAP provides Core Funding to RAOs for three to five year periods

71. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists two indicators for this output

- G-RAP provide at least \$75,000 per year per RAO, to at least 5 RAOs per year, for at least 3 years
- These target will be revised, as donor funding increases

72. The G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report reports that the first target has been achieved and the second is now under discussion. Conclusion: This output has been **largely achieved**

O3: G-RAP provides Once-Off grants to RAOs to enable them to become eligible for core funding

73. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists two indicators for this output

- G-RAP provide between 10% -15% of total grant value to emerging RAOs each year.
- This target will be revised, as donor funding increases

74. The G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report reports that this target has been met, and that the target has been revised. Conclusion: This output has been **achieved**

Capacity building

O4: G-RAP provides Capacity Building Grants to RAOs

75. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists two indicators for this output

- G-RAP provides 5% to 15% of the total annual grants budget for Capacity Building Grants for RAOs
- This target will be revised, as donor funding increases

76. The G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report reports that this target has been met, and that the target has been revised. Conclusion: This output has been **achieved**

O5: G-RAP provides on-demand technical assistance to RAOs

77. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists one indicator for this output

- G-RAP provides a maximum of 10% of PMT technical staff time to RAOs on demand

78. The G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report does not provide percentage information but implies that the amount of time spent has declined since the inception phase of the project. It is not clear how much of this support is on demand versus initiated by G-rap PMT, since it could be argued that the PMT needs adequate financial reporting as much as, if not more than the RAO grantees. Most of the coaching assistance provided has been on financial and administrative matters. Conclusion: This output has been **partly achieved**

O6: G-RAP provides capacity building to RAOs through third parties

79. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists four indicators for this output

- Minimum of 10 days and maximum of 25 days per RAO, per 12 months grant
- Completion of OD plan by participating RAOs
- The above to be provided to at least 12 for Year1 RAOs
- This target will be revised, as donor funding increases

80. The G-rap 2007 Mid-Year Progress Report does not provide information on progress with the first three indicators because "all projectised support has been phased out as per July 2007". The target revision has taken place, no further capacity building assistance will be provided through third parties, in accordance with the recommendations of the MTR. Conclusion: This output may have been **partly achieved**

Communications

O7: G-RAP promotes and facilitates relationships between RAOs and other stakeholders

81. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists two indicators for this output

- Feedback of survey findings to RAOs (& number of participants in survey)
- Number and scale of collective events aided by G-RAP

82. Feedback of survey findings to RAOs has been limited to some workshops, some face to face meetings with individual RAOs and hosting of some results on websites. Wider publicising of the survey results has been limited because of concerns about RAO sensitivities to the survey findings, including some apparent gaps and inaccuracies in the findings. The one remaining online survey report will go onto the G-rap website in early 2008

83. The main events organised and / or funded by G-rap have been ad hoc training workshops, and the annual RAO convention. The former have now been discontinued, on the recommendation of the MTR. RAO conventions have been held

each year, and well attended. It is likely they will continue to be held. Conclusion: This output has been **partly achieved**

O8: G-RAP publicly communicates G-RAP’s objectives, achievements, information resources, issues, participating stakeholders, etc

84. The June 2005 Logical Framework lists five indicators for this output
- # of Ghanaian and international members of emailing list continues to grow
 - # of copies of Newsletter distributed to RAOs, INGOs, donors, parliamentarians and others.
 - # of visitors to G-RAP Website continues to grow
 - At least 1 RAO convention held per year
 - Increase in requests for information made to G-RAP office

85. There is no opt-in email list as such. However, eight issues of the newsletter have been produced and the number of recipients has increased from 70 to 150. The number of visitors to the website has grown over time, with some plateaus (in early 2007) and some growth spurts (towards the end of 2007). The number of information requests has not been reported on by G-rap. Conclusion: This output has been **largely achieved**

Reflections on outputs and their achievements

86. This table summarises the judgements made above on the achievement of the Outputs. It implicitly assumes all outputs are of equal importance, which is not likely to be the case. In future it would be useful if importance weightings were given to all Output level statements (and their associated indicators), so that performance judgements across an array of areas could be summed up into an aggregate score that could be tracked over time.

Status	Not achieved	Partly achieved	Largely achieved	Achieved
# of outputs	0	4	2	2

3. Responding to the October 2006 Mid-Term Review

87. The 2006 MTR consultants made an unusual decision to ignore the 2005 revision of the G-rap LogFrame, despite the fact that the H-rap PMT had been reporting progress to donors using that structure. They also appeared to have ignored the June 2006 summary of G-rap's progress, based on this revised LogFrame²². Instead the PMT was held responsible for performance objectives as outlined in the 2004 Project Memorandum. This was a very conservative and inflexible response, out of sympathy with the aim of the project itself.

88. The MTR also failed, in my view, to address a number of key issues to do with the design of the G-rap project. The text box below summarises the three main problems

Issue No. 1: The treatment of key assumptions

The first issue is core funding of NGOs (national and local). At the centre of the original project design was the belief that that provision of core funding will make an important difference to how NGOs work. The review team recognised this idea. But they did not then question or explore in any detail how the provision of core funding will lead to better development outcomes. Yet this was undoubtedly the potential killer assumption in the centre of the project design. In fact there are two linked assumptions here, that both needed examination, even if only at a desk level.

The first assumption is that core funding will increase the freedom and autonomy of NGOs. This assumption could have been explored by looking at the different NGOs that had been funded by the project, and then making some comparisons.

Firstly, by comparing NGOs where project provided core funding was a big versus small proportion of the NGO's overall budget. In the review there was no table showing such figures, though they were readily available, and though there were significant differences between NGOs in this respect. Is there any evidence of autonomy being greater where core funding was a bigger proportion of an NGO's income? Or are other factors more important in determining autonomy? An even bet, I suspect.

Secondly, by comparing the extent of the constraints imposed on NGOs by core funding mechanism, versus the constraints the NGOs experienced when using other sources of funding. Did the review team ask NGOs to compare the project (as core funder) to their other donors in terms of the constraints they imposed, and what did they find out about the differences? Complaints about funding procedures need a comparator.

The second assumption is that increased freedom and autonomy of NGOs will lead to better development outcomes.

Here it would be useful to compare the core funded NGOs' performance against that of other NGOs who are more constrained by their donors (e.g. as a result of their project specific funding), but working on the same type of development outcomes. For example, where both NGOs work on education sector issues. At the

²² "Implementation of an M&E Framework for the Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme: Summary Update", July 2006

very least it would have been possible to identify some of these cases through interviews with NGOs, and maybe even interview some of them, to at least get to the stage of developing some indicative hypotheses.

The reason for making such a comparison is that there are some good counter arguments in favour of constraint as necessary component of creativity, versus privileging freedom and autonomy. Biological evolution is the most creative process we know of, and that process works through the imposition of a very severe constraint: the need to be able to adapt to the current environment, or die. Architecture is another field where it is recognised that the presence of constraints can drive creative solutions. There have also been extensive research on the role of constraints in the fields of art and literature.

Issue No. 2: The use of evidence

The second issue was about the use of evidence. Although there had been an annual review earlier in the year, important lessons have not yet been learned from the experience. In that review there was extensive and selective use of unattributed comments by NGOs, with no information presented on how representative each of these views were. Understandably that caused major problems for the acceptance of that review. The first and second draft of the mid-term review seemed to continue that questionable tradition, albeit with a little more balance.

The alternative approach, which had been proposed before the most recent review, was that by default, all comments made by NGOs should be from identifiable sources. Exceptions could then be made where there were explainable reasons why identities had to be withheld. The assumptions behind this proposal were that:

* NGOs are mature organisations led by mature people who have a working relationship with the funder, which can withstand open expression of criticisms. Not the reverse.

* NGOs need to be confident and assertive, if they are to be effective advocates. If they cannot openly express their critical views to their own donor, how can they ever be effective advocates of critical views to less sympathetic audiences?

In contrast, the review made a brief and sympathetic reference to the earlier reviews use of evidence from NGOs, and then focused on the issue of whether results of the review interviews should be quantified or not. This was not the primary issue, and does not even need to be seen as an either/or choice. The primary issue with the both review methodologies was how transparent and trustworthy the process of data collection and analysis is. The continued selective use of unattributed comments weakened the value of both reviews.

Given there are only a small number of NGOs that had been funded it would have been quite easy to tabulate, using text not numbers, all the answers given to a number of key questions, using one table per question, and to use these in the respective relevant sections of the report.

Issue No. 3: Multi-stakeholder involvement

The third issue was multi-stakeholder involvement. The problematic nature of multi-stakeholder involvement in strategy design and evaluation was barely recognised. The project design required a common goal and convergent activities working

towards that goal. Yet it involved working with NGOs who are autonomous, diverse and sometimes conflicting in their views of the world. The project's ability to find a common goal, or to mobilise people around a common goal, was in practice very limited. Similar challenges face the whole issue of appropriate NGO representation on the project's governing body.

Nevertheless, in this context the review proposed "Widening the dialogue on problem definition and strategy development, bringing together NGOs, government, donors and others, and using competitive funding to NGO consortia to channel demand and support the identified priorities". And at the same time "Limit the role of the [management team] to administering grants and allied activities, avoiding other activities of a more interventionist type that might undermine the central aim".

The review proposed that project's strategy be defined via the proposed steering committee, and supported via "strategic issues" meetings involving a wider group of stakeholders. Although proposals were made re the inclusion of different categories of people, based largely on expertise categories, how they are chosen, and subsequently re-appointed and replaced was the more challenging question that was answered.

There is a counter argument that an independent review team could have given some attention to. That is, project's strategy should be developed by a limited group of identifiable stakeholders with visible interests. And that NGOs using project funding should also be encouraged to seek funding from alternative sources. Overall, the project (or its donors) should be encouraging the development of plurality of funding sources, representing a diversity of strategies. Rather than trying to merge many conflicting interests within the strategy of one funding mechanism, in a non-transparent fudge that satisfies no one.

89. The rest of this section responds to a number of comments made about monitoring and evaluation in the Executive Summary of the MTR .Other MTR team comments made in the main text of the MTR and its annex, are available in Annex A of this report, along with my more detailed responses.

90. Caveat: Responding consistently to the MTR recommendations has been a challenge because they contain two contrary types of recommendations:

- Avoid being interventionist; avoid "social engineering, leave RAOs alone to do their own thing.
- Become more engaged with RAOs, take more responsibility for Purpose and Goal level outcomes

91. The Recommendations as expressed in the Executive Summary were as follows:

- *9. M & E: Interesting work has been done in this area, with the help of an external consultant. However, the MTR would recommend a move away from delivery of externally-generated M & E packages and methodologies, towards an approach that is more attuned to the core funding concept, which gives much greater responsibility to the RAOs to monitor their own progress towards their policy aims. The Logframe should also be reviewed, with a view to bringing G-RAP and the PMT into the delivery of all levels of objectives.*

92. Re "...move away from delivery of externally-generated M & E packages and methodologies"

- This recommendation has been accepted by the PMT: There will be no more M&E training for RAOs, even though participation by RAOs in the workshops was always voluntary, and most RAOs chose to attend.

93. Re “...towards an approach that is more attuned to the core funding concept, which gives much greater responsibility to the RAOs to monitor their own progress towards their policy aims.”

- Proposal: The following options need to be discussed with RAO representatives on the Programme Board:
 - Option 1: In future there would be no single set of indicators to monitor all RAO achievements at the Purpose level. Instead RAOs would be asked to identify their own indicators, and report accordingly.
 - The question is whether they will agree to this, and whether the indicators chosen by them will be adequate (will they be measurable/observable, will data be available). And whether the PMT should have a right to vet the proposed indicators.
 - Option 2: A common set of indicators could be developed for use by all RAOs, but individual RAOs could weight the relative importance of these indicators according to the specific nature of their work .
 - Both options would need to be linked to a re-casting of the Purpose level objectives, as discussed in section 4 below

94. Re “The Logframe should also be reviewed, with a view to bringing G-RAP and the PMT into the delivery of all levels of objectives. “ [i.e. pro-intervention]

- Disagree: This recommendation seems to be based on two misunderstandings of what a LogFrame is all about:
 - A LogFrame is a story of change taking place over time, from Activities > Outputs > Purpose > Goal... It is not simply a stack of objectives of varying degrees of specificity / generality.
 - The current Purpose and Goal was refined by the PMT and then accepted by the Funders Committee. The PMT has been involved in proposing what might happen at all these levels. But they are not, and should not be, responsible for the changes achieved at all these levels. They are responsible for the achievement of Outputs. This is the conventional view of how a LogFrame should work. Purpose level achievements are the responsibility of the RAOs, and they need to define the details of what they think they can achieve at this level.
 - Nevertheless, the PMT could be involved in monitoring activities at each level of the Logical Framework, including at the Purpose and Goal level, in ways as will be described in section 4.

4. Revising Expectations: Proposal for a Revised Logical Framework

Background

95. The original LogFrame was proposed in the 2004 Project Memorandum. A revision was developed in mid-2005, with assistance from the M&E consultant. The Mid-Term Review in 2006 chose to ignore that revision, possibly because it had not been formally approved by G-rap's donors. Given that G-rap is now in a period of transition, with CARE taking over from LTS as the management agents, it would seem appropriate to revisit the LogFrame and consider some changes based on the project experience to date.

The overall structure of the LogFrame

96. It is recommended that the actor-oriented distinctions present in the current Logical Framework should be kept as at present. They are as follows

- Super-goal statement: Concerns changes in the lives of **poor people in Ghana**
- Goal statement: Concerns changes in the policy and practice of the **Government of Ghana**
- Purpose statements: Concern changes in the behaviour of **RAOs, and other organisations** making direct use of G-rap services (i.e. outputs)
- Outputs: Describe services provided by **G-rap PMT**
- Activities: Describe activities undertaken by the **PMT, Programme Board, Selection Committee and Funders' Committee**, that enables the delivery of Outputs.

97. This structure provides an easy-to-read and easy-to-communicate description of the expected *impact pathway*. The finer details of the pathway(s) will vary from grantee to grantee.

Super-goal

98. The revised Logical Framework should take the Super-Goal seriously, and not simply include it ritualistically or even ignore it altogether. It should be assumed that some RAO will do assessments of the social impact of specific policies on poor communities. RAOs should therefore be asked, in their narrative progress reports, to report on any primary data they or their partners have collected on poverty in Ghana, in the last reporting period. This information would be of interest to the wider RAO community and should be publicised on the G-rap website. This request does not imply that collecting such information is a condition of G-rap funding, but it does imply that *sharing* information of this kind should be.

99. As proposed earlier in this report, in parallel to any reporting by the RAOs, the G-rap PMT should also be monitoring changes in the *availability* of poverty data in Ghana from any other sources and it should be communicating this information to all RAOs, via newsletter and its website. This will need to be done within the existing staffing constraints of the PMT, and could be based largely on grantee progress reports along with information provided by members of the Funders Committee, Programme Board and Selection Committee.

Goal

100. As up to now, at the Goal level the focus should be on changes in Government policies, which are likely to impact on poverty. Three M&E activities are proposed:

- Clear reporting by RAOs on what government policies they are working on, in each progress report. This information should then be collated by G-rap and publicised on its website, so that RAOs and others can self-organise the coordination of their activities in relation to specific policies that are of interest to them. The website should also list all known issue coalitions that RAOs are involved in, for the same purposes.
- “Most Significant Change” reporting by RAO’s of what they think have been the most significant change in government policy, in each reporting period. As above, this information should then be collated by G-rap and publicised on its website.
- An independent end-of-phase-1 impact assessment study should be commissioned to assess the impact of the collective efforts of G-rap funded RAOs between 2006 and 2009, via four purposely selected cases studies, as described above in paras 8 and 9 of the November 2007 Visit Report. Of particular interest should be those issues and sections of government that many RAOs have engaged with, and therefore where more impact should be evident.

Purpose

101. As up to now, the focus of the Purpose level should remain on the activities of the RAOs. However, as suggested by the Mid Term Review, the number of Purpose statements should be substantially reduced. Three Purposes have been proposed, two of which are about external relationships and one about internal relationships. They are as follows:

- RAOs are more effective *in their relationships with government*
- RAOs are more effective *in using their relationship with other actors* to affect changes in government policies. (including CBOs, private sector, and donors)and
- RAOs make continued improvements *to their own management*

102. Three methods are proposed for monitoring performance in this area:

- RAOs identify, and then report on their own performance measures, in each of these three areas, subject to vetting of those proposed measures by the PMT at the beginning of their original and renewed funding agreements with G-rap²³. These reports could be supplemented by MSC type reporting of unexpected changes
- RAOs reports of progress on these measures are made publicly available, via the G-rap website. Along with a “visitor comment” facility on those reports in the same section of the website, similar to that found in blogs
- Annual opinion surveys are independently commissioned by G-rap to identify government officials and others views of the work of RAOs. As above, the results of these surveys should be made publicly available via the G-rap

²³ Ideally RAOs would use of set of indicators / milestones for each of the three Purpose objectives, and within each area the indicators would be weighted according to their relative importance, as seen by the RAO concerned. If RAOs’ achievements were then self-scored using a common four point scale, performance judgements could aggregated and compared both across objectives within each RAO and across RAOs.

website. The surveys could ask about name recognition, credibility, and usefulness.

103. Facilitated peer review processes, such as Horizontal Evaluation²⁴, could possibly be used on an annual basis, to strengthen the self-assessments of each RAO. Willingness to take part would need to be clarified during funding negotiations between grantees and G-rap.

Outputs

104. The number of Outputs has been reduced to focus on what should be the core services provided by the PMT;

- Provision of core funding to individual RAOs
- Fund strategic initiatives (involving two or more grantees)
- Facilitate peer review processes
- Make information about RAO plans, activities and achievements publicly available

105. Indicators for each of these Outputs have been proposed in the LogFrame revision in Annex A.

Activities and Inputs

106. Activities in this context means activities undertaken by PMT staff, in order to deliver the Outputs listed above. They would however be useful to monitor. Especially in terms of the time taken to complete each activity, such as processing grant applications. Six activities and associated sets of indicators have been proposed in Annex A.

107. Inputs in this context mean activities undertaken by the members of the Programme Board (and sub-committee) and Funders Committee that enable the PMT to deliver their expected Outputs. It is assumed that these committees are not themselves delivering any outputs that will be directly used by RAOs. Three Inputs and associated sets of indicators have been proposed in Annex A. It is assumed that the performance of these committees should be monitored, along with the PMT and the RAOs. As with the RAOs, information on the performance of the PMT and the committees, should also be publicly available on the G-rap website

Assumptions

108. There are two important assumptions about how the project

- Core funding of RAOs will increased their autonomy (This assumption connects the expected Output to Purpose)
- Increased autonomy of RAOs will lead to increased effectiveness of RAOs (This assumption connects the expected Purpose level changes to Goal level changes)
- The provision of greater public transparency of RAO activities and self-assessments will adequately compensate for the lack of more intensive and prescriptive forms of monitoring by the PMT

109. There are two major risks that may limit the success of the project

- The GoG introduces a (NGO) Trust bill that gives it extensive control over NGO activities, and this inhibits the advocacy work of RAOs in particular

²⁴ aje.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/28/4/493

- RAOs do not accept independent checking of their self-identified indicators, and / or peer review of their performance against these indicators. They become unaccountable for their performance, and this negatively affects their work.

110. The impact assessment proposed for 2009 should examine whether these assumptions were correct or not, and what the consequences were.
