



ANNEX 5: NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

Six-Month and Annual Reporting

Version 50622

General information	
<p>Name of the Organisation: ABANTU for Development</p> <p>Report Prepared by: Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin Signature: </p> <p>Report Approved by: Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin Signature: </p>	<p>Contract Ref. No.: No.:01/core/01/ABANTU Report Period: July-December 2005 Report Date: January 12, 2005 Contact Tel. No.: (021) 246495</p>
<p>Introductory note on the bi-annual narrative progress reporting</p> <p>We seek your information on progress in order to inform discussions between Grantee and PMT. We will also use the information for identifying useful capacity building activities for the RAO sector, as well as for reporting to the donors for accountability purposes.</p> <p>All boxes are self-expanding. The information could serve for G-RAP's public communications strategy, though we of course seek your consent for any public reference to your organization. Please note the ticking boxes at the right bottom side of each box!</p>	

1. What changes did you see in pro-poor government policies (in design, implementation or review)? How did such change come about and what is your interpretation of the changes?

Even though the government continues to define consultation and participation in a very narrow sense, it is obvious that the place and relevance of civil society in policy processes is steadily being recognised. More importantly, women's groups which used to be excluded as a constituency have been invited to participate in many policy discussions. This is as a result of the high level advocacy work that has been undertaken by women's organisations through their coalitions and networks. Following intense critique and advocacy around GPRS 1, ABANTU was for example invited to contribute to the preparation of the Growth Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 (GPRS 2).

We also noted that for the first time government invited all stakeholders in the country to contribute to the formulation of the 2006 National Budget. We interpret these developments as the start of a useful process of engagement between government and civil society in formulating major national policies. Even though the outcomes are not sufficiently gender-sensitive, the limited space creates opportunity for gender-based organisations to deepen their advocacy work on critical issues.

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2. Collaboration and networking

2.1 Indicate changes or progress in your working relations with the Parliament, Government Services, MDBS Partners, Donors, NDPC, District level Authorities or Services etc.

ABANTU through its coalitions and networks has strengthened its working relations with the above institutions. Its ability to secure information from Parliament has been assured through having a representative of the organisation accredited to Parliament. This has enabled the organisation to have easy access to all Parliamentarians, especially the 25 female Parliamentarians who actively participate in programmes. Bills to be passed in Parliament become accessible and comments on these bills are sent Parliament. They also become information utilized in our advocacy work. With other policy makers and institutions, especially district level authorities, a number of critical initiatives have strengthened relationships with MOWAC and the Ministry of Local Government. A strategy paper has been developed collaboratively with these institutions as well as with ILGS and NALAG to prepare the grounds for the 2006 elections. With the development partners, ABANTU is increasingly being seen as a focal point where discussions around critical issues of gender are raised and analysed. Such issues include gender and governance, gender and poverty.

2.2 How has collaboration been strengthened (i.e. joint campaigns, collaboration, networking) with other RAOs / CSOs / CBOs?

Collaboration with other RAOs has been strengthened due to the broadening of the space for meeting with each other and sharing ideas and concerns. Of critical relevance here is the initiative by CEPA to undertake research on the gendered implications of poverty and growth which ABANTU has been invited to provide the technical input relating to gender and poverty in rural communities in Ghana. Another collaborative effort that is being strengthened is the Coalition on the Women's Manifesto. As host organisation, ABANTU is able to easily call meetings with the membership and work on critical issues affecting women.

2.3 How has the credibility and legitimacy of RAOs changed in the eyes of GoG and the Ghana public? How did such change come about and what is your interpretation of the changes?

RAOs are increasingly enhancing their credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of the government. This is as a result of a long process of struggle and engagement and cannot be attributed to this current period alone. The credibility has arisen as a result of the critical analyses being made on issues such as social policy, poverty, governance and the role of the media. These changes have not also fundamentally changed the situation of ordinary people, especially women, as the indicators of their well-being remain unsatisfactory. However, the space that has opened up creates opportunities for enhancing women's voices as a means of continuing highlighting their concerns for redress. This remains a major challenge for women's organisations in the coming years.

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3.1 Output ranking on research and advocacy products and/or services delivered;				
Please rank the outputs in order of relative success, according to your own appreciation and evaluative judgment				
#	Outputs presented in submitted Workplan	Target groups that received or used the output delivered	Documents describing output delivery	Attached Copy yes/no
1	Organisation of a national conference towards 2006 elections	350 district assembly women, MOWAC, Institute of Local Government Studies, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) and the National Associations of Local Authorities in Ghana (NALAG)	Report of the national conference and strategy document	Yes
2	Research on Issues and Challenges for District Assembly Elections 2006	ABANTU, Coalition partners, research organisations, policy makers and students	(Findings to be ready by end of February)	No
3	Production and dissemination of research report women's participation on Election 2004	Women's groups, donor agencies, political parties, politicians, ABANTU, Coalition partners, research organisations, policy makers and students	Findings of Research on Women's Participation in Election 2004	Yes
4	Organise schools outreach programmes on key issues in the Women's Manifesto	About 2300 students of second-cycle schools in the Central and Volta regions	Reports of outreach programmes	Yes
5	Set up secretariat of the Women's Manifesto Coalition	The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto, other women's groups and the media	List of equipment acquired for the secretariat	Yes
6	Capacity-building workshop for groups at the Liberian Refugee Camp	Liberian refugee groups at the Budumburam Camp, media institutions and the general public	Reports of two (2) workshops	Yes
7	Production of one (1) edition of <i>ABANTU News</i>	Policy makers, RAOs, district assembly women, individuals, the media, the general public and the academia	Copies of the Newsletter	Yes
3.2 Please explain the basis of the ranking; what criteria were you using for the ranking?				
The major thrust of ABANTU's programme is to enhance the participation of women in governance. Programmes aimed at increasing women's participation in local governance, especially with the 2006 district level elections in sight, therefore rank high on our priority. We did not use any specific criteria for the ranking since all the programmes are seen as complementing each other.				
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4. Organisation: evidence of <u>significant</u> progress / change / results in the following areas please refer to the self-assessment formats for more detail
4.1 Strategy, planning, decision making, knowledge management
The Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) support provided by G-RAP has significantly enhanced ABANTU's ability to process, store and disseminate information and knowledge generated through our programmes and networking. Decision making in the organisation has become more participatory.
4.2 Funding base development and financial management
As a result of the work we have done on local governance, ABANTU is receiving funding from CIDA-DANIDA and ActionAid International Ghana to implement programmes to enhance women's participation in the 2006 district level elections. The Friedrich Elbert Foundation (FES) and Government Accountability Improves Trust (GAIT) II are also discussing collaboration with ABANTU on district elections.
4.3 Recruitment, development and retention of staff; HR planning; incentives
Programme staff had opportunity to undergo further training in good governance and anti-corruption. ABANTU was able to recruit additional staff to support programmes. All staff are at post due to a high sense of commitment and fulfilment.
4.3 Organisational structure, board, management team
No significant change occurred during the period because these structures are already effective and participatory.
4.4 Marketing, public relations, communication
ABANTU is on the cutting edge of effective media relations exemplified by the enhanced coverage of activities and positive image projected.
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5. Grant and report related issues
5.1 Details of any notable challenges or unexpected developments encountered during the reporting period. Indicate the reason for such change and what impact this could have on the execution of your original Annual Workplan as attached to the Grant contract.
The real challenge for this period has been the extent to which the work on gender equality is generating interest across different groups of people and at different levels. The high expectations among other NGOs, CBOs and policy makers for the programmes ABANTU organises have been overwhelming. In the coming years ABANTU will have to respond concretely to such interest as a way of strengthening its own capacity and effecting the needed changes in gender relations. As far as the original workplan is concerned, the delays caused by disbursement of G-RAP funds created a situation where some programmes had to be funded from other sources. Thus by the time G-RAP funds came, some changes in terms of the specific activities to be implemented had to be made.
5.2 Please indicate any issues you wish to raise relating to the Grant or to G-RAP management, monitoring or financial procedures.
One of the lessons from the G-RAP experience is that dialogue and participation are key principles for effective collaborative relationships. Clearly, the 'one size fits all' approach cannot work in an evolving context such as Ghana where many Research and Advocacy Organisations (RAOs) have to continually negotiate between what is desirable and what is needed.
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5.3 Please indicate any aspects of this report which are confidential and should not be communicated beyond G-RAP without prior consent.
None