

## ANNEX 5: NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

### Six-Month and Annual Reporting

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General information	
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<b>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?</b>	
<p><b>The Budget and Macro Economic policies</b></p> <p>Ghana's Annual Budget Statement for the 2006 Financial Year was presented to Parliament during the month of November for approval. 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. It is hoped that disbursements will also start early and not wait till May, as has been the case in the past. The Budget also came with much more information than earlier budgets, although in appendices, but still leaves much to be desired. However, in content, there was no significant change in the economic policies of the government as outlined in the Budget Statement. Official figures continue to show improvement in the performance of the economy but general prices, especially with the increase in the prices of petroleum products, and poverty levels remain high. The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy update (GPRS II) has still not been officially presented to Parliament for debate and approval and/or officially launched. Meanwhile, it is supposed to take effect from January 1, 2006. Also, the announcement by the G8 of total debt cancellation for a number of countries, including Ghana, still remains a mere announcement.</p> <p><b>Fee Free Basic Education</b></p> <p>Article 38(2) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana guarantees "all persons...the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities". To achieve this right, the constitution provides that basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all. To fulfil this constitutional consent the Government of Ghana, in 1995, instituted the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme, which was to be attained by year 2005.</p> <p>The FCUBE among others, aimed at improving access to basic education and in particular address the gender disparity at this level. The reality as at now is that the goal of universal coverage and free basic education remain far-fetched because according to a report of the Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) for 2003 showed high drop-out rates at the basic level of education. The report indicated that 25% of children between ages 6-17 dropped out of school because of cost of education. This obviously had dire implications for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - one of which is to achieve universal primary education by the year 2015.</p> <p>We believe that, for all children to have access to, and to complete good quality primary education by 2015 and to achieve gender equity in school completion, the government needs to abolish all fees and charges in basic education and to back its commitment by allocating adequate resources to this level of education and ensure that these resources are utilized efficiently and effectively. In 2004 ISODEC launched a fee-free basic education campaign</p> <p>The government responded to civil society complains and outcry on the impacts of user fees, charges and levies on poor children and parents, but also in fulfilment to Article 38(2) announced a capitation grant of ₵30,000 for all pupils in public basic schools.</p> <p>Since then the discussions about financing basic education has shifted from effects of user fees and charges to the principles of the subsidy approach. By this approach children in public schools are given subsidies, which are paid directly to the school to plug the gaps left by the withdrawal of user fees. ISODEC welcomes the abolition of all forms of fees in basic education.</p>	

Our worry over the ‘capitation grant’ approach however is that it takes forward the principle that the principal responsibility for providing adequate resources for education lies elsewhere, and the role of the central government is to help plug the gaps. But also that the grant seem to focus only on dealing with the questions around access and have no clear proposal on what to do with quality related issues. The grant figure per child, which is in the region of about ₵30,000 per annum according to a joint ISODEC/GNECC/NNED research, however, falls far short of the actual user-fees payments in many districts. In the Dangbe East for instance, user-fees at the primary level are as high as ₵367,000 per annum and at the JSS level, ₵717,000 per annum. This means that at the current proposed level, the capitation grant will not cover all the fees, and therefore will not succeed in removing the cost barrier that many poor families are confronted with.

## **2. Collaboration and networking**

The CBA has continued to build new networks, especially in the West African sub-region while maintaining its existing relationships. Collaborative meetings and studies, particularly on transparency in the budget process, continue with the International Budget Project (IBP) of the CBPP in Washington. Also, the IBP invited the CBA to join other budget practitioners in its strategic planning meeting aimed at producing a programme of work for the next three years. These activities not only contributed to the capacity building of participants but also created a forum for networking and establishments of new relationships.

ISODEC currently chairs a 15-member National Executive Council of the The Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC). It is a coalition of about 25 NGOs and Civil Society groups who are concerned about the falling standard of Education in Ghana, especially the diminishing access of Ghanaian children to good quality and enjoyable basic education, particularly, disadvantaged groups such as rural and urban dwellers, the poor and the girl child. The main objective of GNECC is to campaign for the provision of quality and enjoyable basic education for Ghanaian children irrespective of gender, ethnicity, geographical location etc.

The campaign for Universal Access to free Antiretroviral Treatment is being embarked in accordance with ISODEC’s belief in essential human values and dignity through social justice and respect for human rights, which is promoted in our Rights Based Advocacy Programme. Access to ART falls within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 3 - the right to life for all people. It involves people living with AIDS/HIV and over 20 organisations.

### **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.**

#### **The CBA and policy Makers**

The CBA continued in its usual efforts to influence policy makers and governmental bodies and donor agencies through press conferences, budget analysis and public fora, thereby drawing government’s attention to inadequacies and deficiencies in resource allocation and utilization.

The centre made a submission to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning this year for possible incorporation into the 2006 Budget proposals and held its post-budget Press Conference a week after the 2006 Budget Statement was presented to Parliament.

The CBA has sent the DEEP model at its current stage to the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning and solicited a meeting to discuss it, the Ministry has since not responded and not much progress has been made in getting government fully on board. The DEEP Model has not been completed partly due to the fact that the consultant has now taken on a new job and is not readily available.

The Centre for Budget Advocacy (CBA) has also taken part in capacity building workshops that have been sponsored by the Canadian Parliamentary Support Centre and USAID where the CBA has made presentations on various budget issues. The CBA has also distributed its annual analysis of Ghana’s Annual Budget to all Parliamentarians for the past five years free of charge.

#### **Campaigns and Parliamentary engagement**

As part of its rights-based advocacy (RBA) programme, which was initiated in 2000, ISODEC commenced parliamentary work in 2001 with the objective of lobbying Parliament and influencing its decisions. In line with this, ISODEC has sent several documents and fact sheets to Parliament. In collaboration with other CSOs and NGOs such as the Trades Union Congress (TUC,) Third World Network, Ghana National Association of Teachers, Local Action Committees of various communities, ISODEC has met particularly with the Select Committee on Works and Housing during its campaign against privatization of water, the Select Committee on Finance and Economic Planning during its campaign against privatization of the Ghana Commercial Bank, the nation’s only viable commercial bank, which has branches nationwide and serves the rural folks. ISODEC has also recently been part of a coalition that met the Select Committee on Trade during the trade justice campaign.

Currently, ISODEC has joined the Global Inter Parliamentary Petition campaign and have:

- Secured sign-ons from forty-two Parliamentarians so far,
- Organized a one-day seminar for MPs who signed on to the topics “Democratic Governance of the IFIs” and “Democratic Governance and the Budget”
- Sent a Ghanaian MP to the IFIs’ meeting in Washington in October 2005.

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

### **Fee-free Campaign**

The fee -free basic education campaign launched in 2004 is being undertaken jointly by the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC), The Northern Network for Education Development (NNED), The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), Oxfam GB, Parents and Pupils

### **‘Publish What You Pay Campaign’**

Presently, the coalition on the Extractives Industries Transparency International (EITI) process in Ghana is made up of: the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), Friends of the Nation, Centre for Public Interest Law (CEPIL), Civic Response, National Union of Ghana Students, Forest Watch, League of Environmental Journalists, New Energy, and the Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM).

### **Water**

ISODEC is still involved and active in the National Campaign Against Water Privatisation (NCAP). The campaign is convened by the Ghana Trades Union Congress and includes organisations; TWN, ABANTU, Grassroots Africa, Christian Council, CPHD, Civic response etc.

### **Right to Anti Retroviral Therapy**

The Coalition for the Campaign for the Universal Access to free Antiretroviral Treatment (UCARRT) has been formed and it includes PLWHAs.

### **Alliance Reproductive Health Rights (ARHRs)**

The Alliance is made up of various groups, organisations and public agencies engaged in sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in Ghana. It seeks to push forward the gains made in SRH through various initiatives, incorporate lessons learned through previous efforts and deepen the rights-based dimension of members’ interventions. The membership of the Alliance includes the capacity-building non-governmental organizations (CBNGOs) made up of ISODEC, CEDEP and CENCOSAD and local, community-based partners who were involved in the FRHP as well as institutional collaborators from the public, private and civil society sectors.

## **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?**

The credibility and legitimacy of ISODEC in our view is high among the public and government. Our assessment is based on public reactions to our publications and responses to our advocacy positions. A public reaction to our comments on the 2006 budget statement is a clear indication of this perception. ‘ISODEC hails Budget says it’s the richest yet, Friday November 18, 2005 Daily Graphic) and the subsequent editorial by the same paper on Saturday November 19 2005.

Legitimacy and Credibility however is derived through

- action-experience
- knowledge
- participation and communication
- identification of affiliations

Therefore ISODEC consciously work to improve on the quality of research and field experiences and ensure that the research is action oriented. The involvement and participation of communities and people affected negatively by policy is key us. Meaning our work and capacity building activities the essence of our research is to provide the tools necessary for ordinarily people to engage policy makers and policy processes. Our emphasis is on networking and building coalitions with citizens groups at community, Regional and national levels.

<b>3.1 Output ranking on research and advocacy products and/or services delivered</b>				
<b>#</b>	<b>Outputs presented in submitted Workplan</b>	<b>Target groups that received or used the output delivered</b>	<b>Documents describing output delivery</b>	<b>Attached Copy yes/no</b>
1	Pro-poor budget analysis, tracking and research	Civil society Organisations, parliamentarians, donors, ministries, departments and agencies	2004 budget analysis	yes
2	Budget training workshop	Five-day workshop was held for District Assembly officials and some civil society representatives from the Eastern Region as a continuation of the CBA's efforts at enhancing the capacity of these to improve upon the Budget process and design and implement more people-centred budgets.	Workshop Report	yes
3	Completion of the DEEP economic model	Ministry of Finance, National development planning., Universities and research institutions and civil society organisations	The final model is still being reviewed	No
4	Research - Right to education	The groups who are consulted include but not limited to; The coalition of NGOs campaigning for the right to education, ministry of education and Ghana education service, parents and pupils, donor agencies.	Terms of Reference for the research. The work is still in progress	No
5	Networking and coalition building	ISODEC participated and facilitated 3 regional networking meetings over the period. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meeting with National Coalition on Extractives (NACE), Sierra Leone</li> <li>▪ Regional Education Advocacy meeting, Ouagadougou</li> <li>▪ Regional Civil Society strategy meeting on extractives, Cameroun</li> </ul>	Reports	The Cameroun report
6	Promoting transparency in the extractive industry	Members of Sierra Leone National Coalition on Extractives (NACE)	Final Draft Report of training on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Yes
7	Youth in governance	7 students of the Economics department of the University of Ghana are being trained for one year.	Staff list	No
8	Contribution to office rent	Direct beneficiaries are the staff of ISODEC	Payment voucher	No
9	Office equipment and furniture	Direct beneficiaries are the staff of ISODEC	Payment voucher	No
10	Communication, postages and internet service	Direct beneficiaries are the staff of ISODEC	Payment voucher	No

**3.2 Please explain the basis of the ranking; what criteria were you using for the ranking?**

Each output was scored over 10 based on the following criteria and scale of score:

Extent to which the output has or will contribute to policy or practice change that will benefit the poor and the vulnerable – **4 score**

Number of direct Beneficiaries – individuals or networks –**3 score** ; Number of indirect beneficiaries – **2 score** ; Direct benefit for ISODEC – **1 score**

<b>4. Organisation: evidence of significant progress / change / results in the following areas</b>
<b>4.1 Strategy, planning, decision making, knowledge management</b>
<p>The organisation has gone through a strategic planning session prior to developing a three year strategic plan starting 2007 – 2009.</p> <p>A room has been furnished to be used as a resource centre. In addition there is a signed agreement between ISODEC and SNV for the latter to assist the former to set up a knowledge management process</p>
<b>4.2 Funding base development and financial management</b>
<p>Having realised the need to develop the fund base to improve our programme implementation, the organisation has sought financial assistance from Christian Aid to set up a fundraising desk with the foremost task of developing a fund raising strategy.</p> <p>As part of improving on our financial management, the Financial Manager is currently pursuing an Executive Masters degree course in Finance.</p>
<b>4.3 Recruitment, development and retention of staff; HR planning; incentives</b>
<p>Four out of ten Economics students from the University of Ghana who served the organisation during their national service period were employed as Programme Officers for the Centre for Budget Advocacy in the areas of Macroeconomics; Gender; Trade and Livelihood. This is to boost the research capacity of the centre.</p> <p>Two staff have successfully completed their Masters Degree in Water and Environment; International Development at the University of Surrey and University of Bristol respectively. The Financial Manager is currently pursuing an Executive Masters Degree Course in Finance the University of Ghana.</p> <p>Our staff appraisal system has been restructured to provide all the relevant information on staff for HR planning purposes. In addition our staff development policy is being reviewed to meet staff development challenges of the organisation.</p> <p>The current incentive package for staff including staff salary on the average is good but need to be improved upon to be able to retain good staff at their positions for a longer period. The fact is our competitors are offering better incentive package to their employees.</p>
<b>4.3 Organisational structure, board, management team</b>
<p>There is no significant change of the organisational structure, board membership and the management team of the organisation for the period under review. However ISODEC being a membership organisation has launched a membership drive for individuals and corporate organisations. The reason is to increase our relevancy and rootedness.</p>
<b>4.4 Marketing, public relations, communication</b>
<p>Our website has been redesigned to give it a new look and make it more user friendly. All our regional offices have now access to internet and email services. This has enhanced email communication between the regional offices and the head office.</p> <p>There are no significant changes in our marketing and public relations approaches. We however hope these will change as a result of the fundraising strategy to be developed.</p>
<b>5. Grant and report related issues</b>
<b>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.</b>
<p>No notable challenges or unexpected development was encountered during the reporting period.</p>

**5.2 Please indicate any issues you wish to raise relating to the Grant or to G-RAP management, monitoring or financial procedures.**

The clause in the contract that obligate the RAO to submit quarterly financial status reports, reconciliation statements, copies of bank statements and as put in request for payment within TWO WEEKS is practically inadequate for ISODEC due to our wide geographical spread and our mode of operation through our regional offices down to our partner organisations at the districts. A four week period will be more practical.

Scaling up funding for the big RAOs should be given a thought in respect of their size of programme.

**5.3 Please indicate any aspects of this report which are confidential and should not be communicated beyond G-RAP without prior consent.**

There is no aspect of this report that is confidential