

ANNEX 5: NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

Six-Month and Annual Reporting

version 50622

General information	
Name of the Organisation: ISSER	Contract Ref. No.:
Report Prepared by: Signature:	Report Period: July-Dec 2005
Report Approved by: Professor Ernest Aryeetey Signature:	Report Date:
	Contact Tel. No.:

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?

A final draft of the second phase of Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the country's key development framework was produced in September, 2005. The document, known as the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS-II), sets out the country's major policies and strategies for reducing poverty over the next four years (2006-2009). Emphasis in the GPRS-II document is placed on "measures to change the structure of the Ghanaian economy by developing industrial and service sector activities, diversifying the export base and increasing agriculture productivity, processing and rural incomes."

The idea in GPRS-II is that there will be more coordinated and focused attention in trying to achieve the stated objective. It is expected the achievement of macroeconomic success and stability will make it possible to achieve the goals under GPRS-II.

In terms of the design of the strategy, there has been some controversy over the ownership of the document. Some civil society groups have complained of not being adequately consulted. Some Ministries, Department and Agencies, (MDAs) also complained about the document being drawn up without their input.

From our point of view, the narrowing of the emphasis in GPRS-II, compared with GPRS-I, was based on the mixed results of the GPRS-1: good macro-economic performance boosted by increases in both quantity and prices of the country's main export, cocoa, alongside unimpressive indicators in the areas of employment and industry. The result has also probably taught the government that a stable macro-economic environment alone is not enough and does not translate automatically into significant poverty reduction.

A major pro-poor programme announced last year was the Capitation Grant which takes care of all levies for primary school children in public schools. The measure was announced as being part of the government's commitment to the constitutional provision for fee-free compulsory education at the primary level and in line with current Education Act. It is also part of the GPRS' objective of increasing school enrolment at the primary level.

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.

ISSER carried out a number of research projects in response to specific requests from government agencies, development partners and other research institutions. There are 18 research projects currently. Among the projects was one on 'Renewable Resource Management in Ghana.' This is a study aimed at providing an Economic Assessment to support the Government of Ghana and development partners in making informed choices in the development of policies based upon rational exploitation of renewable natural resources with the aim of delivering long term growth that is both sustainable and poverty reducing. The project was undertaken in partnership with the World Bank and the British aid agency, DfID with support from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.

Another project is the Energy Resource Centre. This is an initiative from the University of Houston, which is working in collaboration with the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission, (PURC) for a Centre where information on energy could be obtained. The project, which is in its second phase, is currently working on the National Gas Pipeline Project.

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

The APRM study, commissioned by the APRM-Ghana Governing Council provided immense opportunities to work with a number of RAOs, including CEPA, CDD and PEF as well as District Assemblies in the establishment of the socio-economic development processes and outcomes for the peer review exercise.

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 several RAOs has improved in the eyes of government and the public as the analytic content of their output has improved.

3.1 Output ranking on research and advocacy products and/or services delivered				
#	Outputs presented in submitted Workplan	Target groups that received or used the output delivered	Documents describing output delivery	Attached Copy yes/no
1	Staff salaries (including sessional workers)	All Staff	See Annual Report 2005	Yes
2	Other (Ph.D Training	Principal Research Assistants (PRAs), the Institute.	See Annual Report 2005	Yes
3	Advertising, publicity and recruitment and training materials	Seminar and conference participants	See Annual Report 2005	Yes
4	Printing, design and photocopying	General public	5 new publications under production; See annual report 2005	Yes
5	Equipment	Equipment now ordered to enhance internet access	None	No
6	Development costs (Library)	Library material now ordered	None	No
7	Catering, venue hire accommodation etc	General Public will benefit from planned workshops	Facility will be used during launch of State of Economy Report	No
3.2 Please explain the basis of the ranking; what criteria were you using for the ranking?				
The ranking is based on the fact that activities already undertaken are yielding considerable benefits. Those yet to be completed for the year have received a lower ranking.				

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
We now focus on issues of equity and poverty reduction. Staff development and expansion of research facilities, as well as improvements in the way we communicate our research reports to our various publics have been the major planks of current planning. Decisions are made in a demonstrably transparent and democratic manner through the committee system. Knowledge developed or acquired by the institute is progressively processed, stored and systematised to ensure fast and reliable access by researchers, interested parties and the general public.
4.2 Funding base development and financial management
Our ability to attract funding from additional sources has improved. There has been some training for finance staff.
4.3 Recruitment, development and retention of staff; HR planning; incentives
4 Research Fellows and a Publications Officer have been recruited since July 2005. The institute's staff development programme is progressing steadily. Three of the Principal Research Assistants gained admission into Ph.D programmes. One is receiving financial support from the G-RAP grant while two others have received fellowships, with additional support from G-RAP grant. Three new PRAs have been appointed to replace those who left for further studies. The bridging fund for staff is a useful incentive, and there has been no separation of staff from the Institute.
4.4 Organisational structure, board, management team
The organizational structure has not changed. The ISSER Management Committee has seen two new members appointed by the Faculty of Social Studies and the University of Ghana.
4.5 Marketing, public relations, communication
These centered on our research dissemination activities and interaction with other RAOs, MDAs, the academic community, private sector institutions and development partners. We launched a number of publications including "The State of Ghanaian Economy Report 2004" and the "Ghana Human Development Report 2004". The international conference on "Shared Growth in Africa" was very well marketed, as did budget review symposium. ISSER has created the "Economy of Ghana Network" as a platform for sharing and disseminating research findings and their policy relevance. The Institute's website is regularly updated.
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.
We did not experience any notable challenges or unexpected development during the period.
5.2 Please indicate any issues you wish to raise relating to the Grant or to G-RAP management, monitoring or financial procedures.
None at the moment
5.3 Please indicate any aspects of this report which are confidential and should not be communicated beyond G-RAP without prior consent.
None