



## ANNEX 5: NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

### Six-Month and Annual Reporting

Version 50622

General information	
Name of the Organisation: ABANTU for Development	Contract Ref. No.: No.:01/core/01/ABANTU
Report Prepared by: Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin Signature: 	Report Period: January-July 2006
Report Approved by: Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin Signature: 	Report Date: July 19, 2006
	Contact Tel. No.: (021) 246495

**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?**

There is increasing debate on policy issues by civil society groups. So there is an interest on the part of government to have civil society groups participate in the formulation of policies. However, the government continues to define consultation and participation in a very narrow sense. The visibility of women's organisations is increasing as their ability to work together is being enhanced and as mainstream think tanks and advocacy organisations begin to recognise the valuable contributions from women's groups. There is a marked improvement in raising and discussion gender issues in GPRS II even though there are few indications in the document that these issues will be addressed in any significant way. These points to the need to intensify advocacy work on gender and policy issues.

**We authorise G-RAP to post this information on its website**

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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.**

Similar to the previous six months, ABANTU through its membership of coalitions and networks continues to strengthen its ability to engage with the above institutions on gender and policy issues. We have utilised the space we have created in parliament (through having a representative of the organisation accredited to Parliament) by securing relevant documents to deepen advocacy on issues of Parliament. Of significant interest at this period has been our ability to deepen our advocacy on women's representation and participation in decision-making particularly in connection with the upcoming district assembly elections. We have developed databases on women's participation in committees in Parliament. ABANTU has managed through these engagement processes to contribute to policy change, such as the set up of an independent fund to support women in local governance. ABANTU serves on the board of this fund. This is the result of a number of critical initiatives reported earlier on about ABANTU's strategic relationships with the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC). ABANTU has enhanced its relationship with donors especially CIDA and DANIDA who are currently providing funding support to ABANTU to carry out a year's programme to promote women's active participation in the upcoming district assembly elections.

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

During the period, collaboration with other RAOs continues to be strengthened and yield dividends. Initiatives include contributing to platforms organised by RAOs such as IDEG, IEA and TWN. ABANTU is also utilising its position as a member of the GRAP-Board to influence RAOs relationships through regular meetings to share information and strengthen the capacity of RAOs to be effective in policy issues. Other arenas for collaboration are in ABANTU's capacity as host of the Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana (CWMG) and the current convener of NETRIGHT. With specific reference to the upcoming District Level Elections (September, 2006) ABANTU is acting as lead institution for the coordination of activities to prepare both the electorate and women aspirants for effective participation. At least ten (10) RAOs/CBOs/CSOs are actively working with ABANTU in this area.

**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?**

Even though there is a marked sense of enhanced credibility and legitimacy of RAOs, it cannot be said that the negative and suspicious attitude of government to civil society groups has changed in any significant way. The long process of struggle and engagement with the state has enabled government recognise the relevance of civil society in policy processes but there are still several attempts at stifling the work of civil society through regulatory mechanisms such as the Trust Bill. Thus even though no civil society group is being officially persecuted, there is some discomfort on the part of government about the different and alternative positions often taken by civil society groups on policy issues. Thus as reported previously, there is a marked change in state-civil society relationships; but there are no clear indications of having attained a consensus on critical issues of policy and governance processes. In this connection real commitment to the promotion of gender equality seems to remain at the level of lip service as budgetary allocations even to the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) remains low.

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<b>3.1 Output ranking on research and advocacy products and/or services delivered;</b> Please <b>rank the outputs</b> in order of relative success, according to your own appreciation and evaluative judgment				
<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	Organisation of workshops to prepare the electorate and women aspirants for the district assembly elections in September 2006	District assembly women in all ten regions of the country, MOWAC, Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS), the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) and the National Associations of Local Authorities in Ghana (NALAG)	Concept papers, Workshop reports, and resource materials	No
2	Public Policy Forum On Critical Issues of Concern to Women In District Assemblies	Members of The Coalition on The Women's Manifesto, Coalition partners, media, district assembly women, policy makers	Forum Report	Yes
3	Forums to highlight the need for 50/50 representation in local government	Women's groups, district assemblywomen, ABANTU, Coalition partners, ILGS.	Reports on the forums	No
4	Organise schools outreach programmes on key issues in the Women's Manifesto	Students of second-cycle schools in the Western and Ashanti regions	Reports of outreach programmes	Yes
5	Capacity Building of coalition and network members on issues of gender and local governance utilising research data commissioned by ABANTU	ABANTU, Coalition members, ILGS, interns,	Research Report and Report of the Capacity Building workshop	Yes
6	Production of one (1) edition of <i>ABANTU News</i>	District assemblywomen, RAOs, policy makers, individuals, the media, the general public, students and academics, libraries.	Copies of the Newsletter	Yes
7	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
<b>3.2 Please explain the basis of the ranking; what criteria were you using for the ranking?</b>				
<p>The major thrust of ABANTU's programme in this period is to enhance the participation of women in governance. We have had to continue to run programmes aimed at increasing women's participation in local governance. This is due to the upcoming, district assembly elections in September 2006. Those programmes that directly benefited assemblywomen have been ranked highest. This is followed by programmes that target policy makers for policy change (since these take a long time to happen) and those that strengthen our own capacity to be effective. The production of our newsletter is next, as this is the information support for the earlier initiatives. The capacity building effort with Budumburam refugees is ranked last because this is an on-going collaboration rather than something which is time-bound like the district assembly elections. Thus the ranking here took into account the extent of urgency about the subject matter or advocacy issue.</p>				



<p><b>4. Organisation: evidence of <u>significant</u> progress / change / results in the following areas</b> please refer to the self-assessment formats for more detail</p>
<p><b>4.1 Strategy, planning, decision making, knowledge management</b></p> <p>ABANTU's access to GRAP funding has enabled it to significantly continue with its ability to process, store and disseminate information and knowledge generated through our programmes and networking. Decision making continues to be broad-based, participatory and effective. There are regular review meetings (monthly and quarterly) to assess planned activities against proposed outcomes. Our information and knowledge management capabilities is being enhanced through the set-up of our website: <a href="http://www.abanturowa.org">www.abanturowa.org</a> . This will soon be launched.</p>
<p><b>4.2 Funding base development and financial management</b></p> <p>As a result of the effectiveness of our interventions on local governance, we have been able to secure CIDA-DANIDA funding. We have also continued to obtain funds from ActionAid –Ghana, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and the Global Fund for Women. This has strengthened our funding resource base and enabled us to implement relevant programmes to benefit women and their groups. However ABANTU has received its last tranche of funding from the Ford Foundation. This poses challenges for future financial security against the background of increasing demand for our services. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) and Government Accountability Improves Trust (GAIT) II concretised their discussion of collaboration with ABANTU by working with us to implement a number of strategic programmes in connection with the district assembly elections. Our competence in the area of financial management is one of our major strength, with accountability, transparency and anti-corruption principles, being at the centre of our financial management policy.</p>
<p><b>4.3 Recruitment, development and retention of staff; HR planning; incentives</b></p> <p>Programme staff have had access to different kinds of training opportunities. We have been able to attract qualified gender experts and other professionals as "ABANTU Associates" thereby enabling them to contribute to the execution of strategic tasks. Our internship programme has also been strengthened with an increasing numbers of young people both from Ghana and abroad, applying to work in ABANTU. Through this, ten (10) young persons, (9 female and 1male), have enhanced their knowledge and skills as they contribute to the implementation of programmes. All staff are at post due to a high sense of commitment, ability to learn, and fulfilment.</p>
<p><b>4.3 Organisational structure, board, management team</b></p> <p>No significant change occurred during the period because these structures are already effective and participatory. There was however more delegation of duty to other management staff to enable the Regional Programme Manager play a more strategic role in the national civil society space.</p>
<p><b>4.4 Marketing, public relations, communication</b></p> <p>ABANTU is on the cutting edge of effective media relations exemplified by the enhanced coverage of activities and positive image projected. Additionally, quality reports and publications are contributing to our effectiveness in communicating to the public.</p>
<p><b>5. Grant and report related issues</b></p>
<p><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> <p>The real challenge for this period has been the extent to which ABANTU has had to measure up to the responsibility of playing a leadership role on the urgent work of promoting and preparing women for the district assembly elections. The ability to work with coalition and network members is an important strategy in this case for getting the vision shared and actually translating this into getting a lot of activities implemented within a short space of time. Given our previous experience and capability in being able to mobilise and organise women's groups within a short space of time across the country, (i.e Women's Manifesto) this challenge has been surmounted. There has been little change in the workplan of this period given the known circumstances within which we were operating at this period. Funds were also available so that acted as a catalyst for enabling us perform creditably.</p>
<p><b>5.2 Please indicate any issues you wish to raise relating to the Grant or to G-RAP management, monitoring or financial procedures.</b></p>

For a funding initiative such as GRAP, continuous dialogue and discussion about conception, processes and procedures is very critical in establishing a strong foundation. One of the lessons from the G-RAP experience is that dialogue and participation are key principles for effective collaborative relationships. Clearly, securing funding is critical for development work but the conditions and procedures for securing and utilising such funds is even more critical if democracy has to be translated to mean effective participation in all processes and relationships. We should continue to look at our relationships and address any gaps that hinder effectiveness and limit our ability in promoting gender sensitive development. In this connection, it is important that the engendering processes of GRAP is monitored and actively promoted to benefit women and promote greater equity in development work.

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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