

ANNEX 5: NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT**Six-Month and Annual Reporting**

version 50622

General information	
Name of the Organisation: The Ark Foundation, Ghana	Contract Ref. No.:
Report Prepared by: Yvette Amissah and Joseph Andoh Signature:	Report Period: July – December 2006
Report Approved by: Angela Dwamena - Aboagye Signature:	Report Date: 9 th March, 2006
	Contact Tel. No.: 021 511610

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?

The recent introduction of School feeding programme and free transportation for school children in elementary schools has gone a long way to reduce the financial burden on the poor. The educational rights of children guaranteed by the 1992 Constitution have partially been restored. The Ark over the years has advocated meeting the educational rights of children.

The passage of the Disability bill into law in recent times, primarily as a result of significant pressure from disability groups has provided some hope for the vulnerable. The Ark continues to advocate for a more concrete working plan to enhance its implementation.

The Social Protection Strategy, being formulated to respond to the needs of the vulnerable and the excluded is still in draft stages, according to the government. While a series of consultations have been held with civil society groups and other relevant stakeholders to make input into this strategy it is doubtful whether the poor and most socially excluded themselves have had much to do with what goes into this policy.

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

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.

Nationally, The Ark has collaborated with a number of Civil Society organisations in its advocacy work. For instance several dialogue sessions were held with Parliamentarians to pressurize them on the issue of Domestic Violence and the need to support the passage of the Domestic Violence Bill.

Under The Ark's *Rights Empowerment Access and Participation (REAP) Project* in the Eastern Region, five CBO's have had their capacity built to engage the East Akyem District Assembly to facilitate the process to provide their communities with their needs. This process, using a Rights-based and People Centred Advocacy approach has been extremely successful.

A national Partnership consultation forum was organized by The Ark, during the period under review; this brought together various stakeholders (Civil Society Organisations and government officials) to discuss the issue of achieving a national policy framework for a coordinated approach to addressing Violence Against Women and Children. The Partnership now consists of 40 members who have agreed to engage the government to achieve this aim.

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

Generally, collaboration with Government agencies and CSO's has been enhanced. The Ark has trained agencies like the Police on the incidents and causes of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and how the Police can adequately respond to Domestic Violence cases reported to them.

Police officers, Parliamentarians and District Chief Executives and District Assembly members have attended The Ark's Community Outreach Campaigns. These officials have joined in educating the public on the effects of Domestic Violence. Specifically some Parliamentarians at these gatherings expressed their support for the passage of the Domestic Violence Bill into Law.

The Ark has continued to work closely with LAWA-Ghana, FIDA-Ghana, WILDAF-Ghana, Abantu, and others on different aspect of women's human rights and gender equality issues. Also The Ark has continued to play a leading role hosting the Domestic Violence Coalition and supporting its work. The Ark has also contributed to the Growth and Poverty Forum's work on engaging the state on the GPRS.

At the community level also, work with the REAP Project has improved networking relations between The Ark and its beneficiary communities, the Community leaders and local civil society.

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 sometimes seen by the Government as partners in its development agenda. At certain times due to their persistent demand for change in Policy they have been perceived by the government and the general public as pursuing their own personal interests. However RAOs cannot be wished away, and increasingly Government has had to pay attention to the demands made by RAOs because these are legitimate, rights based demands on the state.

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	Community Outreach Programme	General Public, - Market centres and selected communities in the Greater Accra and Eastern Region	Reports	
2	Church Anti Violence Programme	Charismatic and Orthodox churches in Greater Accra including church leaders	Reports	
3	National Advocacy Partnership Project – Consultation and Partnership formation Phase	Policy makers, Service Providers	Reports	
4	The Ark's National Alumnae Conference and Annual event	Alumnae of The Ark	Reports	
5	Rights Empowerment Access and Participation Project	Ten selected CBO's working in Communities in East Akyem District	Reports	
3.2 Please explain the basis of the ranking; what criteria were you using for the ranking?				
It is challenging to rank the output of the above projects since all yielded maximum expected impact The above have therefore not been listed in any particular order.				
We authorise G-RAP to post this information on its website				Yes

<p>4. Organisation: evidence of significant progress / change / results in the following areas please refer to the self-assessment formats for more detail</p>
<p>4.1 Strategy, planning, decision making, knowledge management</p> <p>A new five member Board was set up after the nine member board mandate had expired. The Board gives policy direction, approves budgeting and reviews the programmes and activities of The Ark.</p> <p>The Ark has a three member leadership and management team that assist the Executive Director in the day to day management and decisions making of the organisation.</p> <p>A Staff review meeting is organised bi-monthly to discuss and evaluate programmes and activities of the organisation. A lot of information and learning is also shared at this meeting.</p> <p>Team planning and reviews using the action-learning cycle – The Ark uses the action- learning cycle as a process of change to reflect on activities and review programmes.</p> <p>Annual Planning Process – All staff members participate in the annual planning process of The Ark</p> <p>Budget Planning Process – Various unit heads together with the Finance team cost all unit activities</p> <p>Institution of feedback system – This system allows staff to give feedback to Project Coordinators, through a review meeting. It also allows staff to give feedback in an informal way through a pigeon hole system.</p> <p>Leadership feedback system – This gives staff the opportunity to appraise their supervisors and their Executive Director</p>
<p>4.2 Funding base development and financial management</p> <p>CORDAID in The Netherlands has been The Ark’s main donor supporting about 50% of The Ark’s projects. There is therefore the need to expand the funding base and also develop a means of financially sustaining the organisation. Consequently The Ark intends to organize a Fund Development Consultation Event to gain ideas for resource mobilization. The ideas generated will be assessed, ranked and implemented.</p> <p>Another challenging aspect of funding for The Ark is that very few donors have shown interest in providing institutional support hence The Ark finds it challenging in meeting its overhead costs.</p>
<p>4.3a Recruitment, development and retention of staff; HR planning; incentives</p> <p>The background of recruited staff ranges from Master’s degree, Bachelor degrees to Diplomas who have exhibited high skills in their area of work. Volunteers and interns from various institutions in Ghana and Abroad form an important part of the workforce of The Ark.</p> <p>Staff are developed through workshops and seminars and in house trainings. Due to the youthful nature of staff, occasionally some staff leave to further their education.</p> <p>As a result of few Donors supporting the payment of salaries, generally staff salaries are low. The Ark will therefore be grateful if G-rap will expand its Core Support to the organization to enable us pay more attractive salaries to staff.</p>
<p>4.3b Organisational structure, board, management team</p> <p>The Ark is a non- membership organisation. It is currently governed by a five member board of trustees, each with relevant expertise and experience to steer the organisation towards achievement of its goals and objectives. The Board gives policy direction, approves budgeting and reviews the programmes and activities of The Ark.</p> <p>There is the Executive Director who is not a member of the Board. She has the mandate to propose programmes and activities, as well as operational budgets to the Board, which examines the proposals, and give approval, or provide guidance for more effective implementation of the programmes .Issues of management and internal controls are also examined by the Board.</p> <p>The Ark also has a three member leadership and management team that assist the Executive Director in the day to day management of the organisation. The Ark strives to operate a horizontal and organic management system, and a lot of emphasis is placed on team work and coordination. Every effort is made to develop leadership skills among staff through planning and coordinating of projects/ activities.</p>
<p>4.4 Marketing, public relations, communication</p> <p>Posters, brochures and leaflets are mainly used to publicize the organisation. The idea of having a specialized Public Relations Officer for the organization has been discussed however; currently there are no available funds to recruit. An Advocacy Officer handles the public relations issues.</p> <p>Report writing, feedback on activities and Review meetings form key aspect of internal communication and information sharing.</p> <p>The Ark has a website which will be revamped to make it more functional.</p>
<p>Yes</p>

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.	
<p>The differences in the fiscal year of G-rap and The Ark Foundation pose an initial challenge in submitting The Ark's Annual Work Plan, this however was resolved.</p> <p>Under the One Year Core Support grant for The Ark, \$6,500 was budgeted for rent payment. However, we have found it expedient to use the funds to support renovation works on our property to enable us to move from the current rented premises into The Ark's own premises. A request has been sent for approval to G-rap for the change in expenditure line. This however will not affect the execution of the Annual Work plan</p>	
5.2 Please indicate any issues you wish to raise relating to the Grant or to G-RAP management, monitoring or financial procedures.	
<p>We expect an approval in the change of expenditure line as stated above. The Ark hopes that G-rap will extend its Core support after the first year.</p>	
We authorise G-RAP to post this information on its website	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
5.3 Please indicate any aspects of this report which are confidential and should not be communicated beyond G-RAP without prior consent.	
<p>None.</p>	