

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: Prof. Ernest Aryeetey Signature:	Report Period: Jul-Dec 2006
Report Approved by: Prof. Ernest Aryeetey Signature:	Report Date: January 2007
	Contact Tel. No.:512506

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?

In August 2006, the National Development Planning Commission initiated the process of preparing a long-term development plan as a complement to the GPRS II. The rationale behind the long-term plan is that the GPRS required a development anchor that would reflect the broader set of development issues that would lead to poverty reduction. The plan is expected to argue that the main thrust of all policies should be to contribute to faster growth and development sustained by structural transformation, and propose no more than five specific objectives to this end. It will argue for agricultural development-led industrialization, with a focus on enhancing the productivity of human capital as the means to generating higher incomes and reducing dramatically the incidence of poverty.

The plan will also articulate a strategy for achieving the proposed objectives. The strategy will dwell on strengthened partnership between the public and private sectors in initiating investment in carefully selected sectors where competitiveness and employment-creating capacity will be major determinants. A major facet of the strategy is to let the state facilitate the functioning of all factor markets, intervening where necessary to deal with market failure and remove structural constraints in order for the private sector to operate efficiently.

The changes came about as a consequence of several views expressed by various stakeholders, including ourselves on the need for a broader development anchor for GPRS II. ISSER researchers are actively involved in the preparation of the plan.

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 is now carrying out 23 research/consultancy assignments throughout Ghana. These are largely funded by donors through overseas universities, as well as Ghana Government agencies. The growth in project numbers reflects the improvements in the relationship with funding agencies and users of our research.

The Land Policy Reform project, funded by USAID, reflects best the improving relationship with donors and government. As earlier reported the objective of the research is to provide greater clarity and knowledge about the nature and problems of land tenure and administration in Ghana in order to assist policy makers and civil society groups in their deliberations about the direction and character that land tenure reforms in Ghana may take to create an enabling environment for national development.

In the second half of the year ISSER executed contracts with the World Bank, Millennium Challenge Corporation, World Health Organization, UNDP, Ministry of Public Sector Reform, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and National Development Planning Commission. Many of the projects involved in these contracts were executed in districts outside of Accra, thus giving us an opportunity to serve the District Assemblies. In sum, our relations with various stakeholders have continued to grow considerably in the last three years.

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

ISSER continues to work with other RAOs and CSOs. As indicated previously, the main instrument used by ISSER to achieve a very positive outcome has been the creation of the Economy of Ghana Network. ISSER researchers continue to participate in the programmes of other RAOs including as research collaborators. In September 2006 ISSER and EGN worked with University of Development Studies and selected northern Ghana NGOs to organize a week-long workshop on “Economic Development and Northern Ghana in Tamale. The occasion was used to address critical policy failures that have contributed to the regional disparities observable in Ghana.

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?

As earlier reported, the credibility and legitimacy of several RAOs continue to improve in the eyes of government and the public as the analytic content of their output has improved. ISSER continues to be acknowledged for the improving quality of its contribution to national debates.

The changes reflect the generally more open atmosphere prevailing in the country. They also come from the increased number of products being offered by RAOs. As RAOs have become more visible by their activities seen by the public, so have they made themselves more credible. It is good that doors generally refer to the activities of some RAOs.

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
2	Staff salaries (including sessional workers)	All Staff receive a salary top-up. Staff morale continues to be high with this. An average of 2 Ph.D holders apply for positions at ISSER monthly as a result.	Annual Report 2006 Project Accounts	
1	Ph.D Training: There are currently 8 Principal Research Assistants and 1 Junior Research Fellow doing Ph.D outside.	Principal Research Assistants (PRAs) and Junior Research Fellows are the main targets. Staff development is one of the most significant areas of engagement for a research institute. Plan is to have 15 new Ph.Ds over the next five years.	Annual Report 2006 Project Accounts	
5	Advertising, publicity and recruitment and training materials	Seminar, conference and training programme participants: ISSER is now able to advertise its training/seminar/workshop programmes regularly. More than €120 million was spent on adverts and publicity in 2006.	Project Accounts	
4	Printing, design and photocopying	General public. ISSER produced the State of the Ghanaian Economy Report in September and two other publications after July	Annual Report Project Accounts	
6	Equipment	All offices at ISSER had their air conditioners replaced	ISSER accounts	
7	Development costs (Library)	ISSER is now able to regularly add to the stock of library materials, including subscription to new journals.	Annual Report Project Accounts	
8	Catering, venue hire accommodation etc	ISSER continued to hire various venues for public lectures, workshops, etc.	Project Accounts	
3.2 Please explain the basis of the ranking; what criteria were you using for the ranking?				
<p>The ranking suggests the significance of activity for ISSER's future productivity. Also a higher ranking reflects the availability or otherwise of alternative funding. Thus, in the absence of G-RAP funds it will be very difficult to find alternative sources of funds for Ph.D training hence the high ranking.</p>				

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
ISSER continues to focus on issues of equity and poverty reduction. Staff development at all levels has been pursued. Five persons providing support services to researchers went on different training programmes in 2006. Decisions continue to be made in a demonstrably transparent and democratic manner through the committee system.
4.2 Funding base development and financial management
Total grants received in 2006 amounted to \$600,000 from some 13 projects. For the same period in 2005 only 75% of this amount was received. As we reported earlier, in view of the growing skill demands in the management of funds, account personnel have been assisted to participate in international training programmes.
4.3 Recruitment, development and retention of staff; HR planning; incentives
Three members of staff retired from the service of the University of Ghana at the end of July 2006. Two persons went to study for Ph.D overseas in September. ISSER hired 6 Principal Research Assistants in October in anticipation of the requirements of a new large survey to be undertaken in 2007.
4.3 Organisational structure, board, management team
The Internal Management Committee continued to meet monthly throughout 2006. The Management Committee and the Advisory Board, as well as the Finance Committee continued to meet each semester as prescribed in the University's statutes. Meetings were properly organized and proper records have been kept
4.4 Marketing, public relations, communication
The most significant activity that gave ISSER considerable media coverage was the organization of the "Northern Roadshow" together with the University of Development Studies in Tamale. The event focused on an issue of considerable interest to the media and the people of northern Ghana. The twice-monthly development seminars funded by Merchant Bank also continue to attract considerable attention and enhance the image of the institute. ISSER was listed in the "World Directory of Think-Tanks" published in Tokyo, Japan.

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 release of our grant for the fourth quarter of 2006 was very much delayed for reasons associated with donor disbursements. We do not anticipate any major consequences for the work plan in view remedial action taken by management.
5.2 Please indicate any issues you wish to raise relating to the Grant or to G-RAP management, monitoring or financial procedures.
None
5.3 Please indicate any aspects of this report which are confidential and should not be communicated beyond G-RAP without prior consent.
None