

ANNEX 5

Narrative Progress Report

Report period July-Dec. 2007

Contract Ref. No. _____ **Organisation** The Ark Foundation

Contact Tel. No. 021-511610 **Report Date** 19th Dec. 2007

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Please do not write in green coloured sections; refer to notes at last page for explanations

1. National pro-poor policies

What do you think were the most important changes in pro-poor government policies in the last six months? What were the main causes? What contribution did your organisation make to any of these changes?

Pro-poor policy changes/initiatives include Gender budgeting initiative in Ministries, Departments and Agencies led by MOWAC; National Policy and Plan of Action for implementing the Domestic Violence Act (Act 732) initiative, currently at final draft stages; the Public hearings of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament and its implications for reducing corrupt practices; Continuation of the opening up of spaces for CSO participation in national budget process; Continuing implementation of School feeding program and its particular positive effects on enrolment of girls; and NYEP implementation, among other things. However delays in adopting the Social Protection strategy (SPS), even though there are indications that the pilot phase of the Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) activities under the SPS will start soon in selected districts in the North; delay in amending NHIS provision to gain better equity for women and children and delay in setting up implementing systems for Human Trafficking Act is a cause for concern. The Ark has participated in consultations, discussions and advocacy for the Social Protection Strategy led by the MMYE, and participated in the Growth and Poverty Forum led by IDEG; has played a critical role in pushing for a cabinet adopted Policy and Institutional strengthening for addressing Domestic Violence and not merely adopting an Implementation Plan. Also The Ark has contributed to mentoring 1000 school girls who receive scholarships under a program it runs with World Education, supporting the achievement of MDG 3 goal in conjunction with the school feeding program. In the other initiatives The Ark has been keeping its eye on the processes; also supporting and having participated in advocacy for gender budgeting, is pleased to see results coming from the recent initiatives. The Ark is also concerned about effects of signing of EPA Interim agreement by government on the livelihoods of people, especially women.

2. Public image

How has the credibility and legitimacy of RAOs changed in the eyes of GoG and the Ghana public? What is your interpretation? Is there a reference to this evidence of change?

Over the years RAO's have advocated for the rights of many especially the vulnerable in the Ghanaian Society. This has resulted in the formulation of policies that are aimed at benefiting the poor. Although policy diffusion, non-implementation, economic constraints and institutional gaps and failures undermine the good intentions of such policies, RAO vigilance through advocacy, lobbying and engagement with state institutions on critical areas has helped prevent colossal breakdown in systems, structures and implementation of policy. For example, the passage of the Disability Law, Human Trafficking Law, the Domestic Violence Act, Whistleblowers Act etc show how active Civil Society has been. It is also true that real implementation of all these laws and policies will largely be the result of civil society activism and partnership with state personnel who take an active interest in

such issues. RAO work in research, policy analysis and advocacy cannot be ignored by the government, and increasingly government is paying attention to such work. There also seems to be much better government RAO partnerships in addressing issues – in security, human rights, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and the economy which is seen in consultation meetings, panel discussions, use of CSO Practitioners as consultants and technical advisors to governments and execution of joint projects. These developments positively impact the government’s image, improving the record in good governance. However there are still many challenges to deal with – a real and pressing one being the current Trust Bill intended to regulate Trusts and NGOs. Thus while on the one hand, the government and the Ghanaian Public see the RAO’s as partners in National Development, on the other RAO’s are still viewed with some amount of suspicion and are seen as requiring a “heavy dose” of regulation to keep them in check.

3. Collaboration, coalitions and networking

Using the format below, list the most important organisations you collaborated with over the period, under each of the sectors listed below. For each organisation, give an indication of the issues or themes you worked on, its status and the outcomes.

	Organisation or coalition	Policy issue / theme / nature Starting / ongoing / ending	Outcome
Government -executive -judiciary -legislation	MOWAC, some Parliamentarians and the Chief Justice; Police Stations, especially DOVVSU of Ghana Police Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With MOWAC, engaging Government to adopt a National <i>Policy</i> and Plan of implementation of the DV Act. Also to ensure that Policy addresses Violence Against Women broadly in Institutional arrangements to prevent discriminatory responses. Ongoing • With Parliamentarians on the same issue within the consultations • A meeting was held with the Chief Justice on judicial response and approaches by which the Domestic Violence Act can be effectively implemented. • DOVVSU – referrals of cases, training, impact assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Cabinet adopted Policy Framework attached to national plan of Action to implement the DV Act. This has been accepted by MOWAC and the Policy framework is in final drafting stage. • Response to Violence against women is now broadly considered in draft policy framework and Plan on DV Act. • CJ taken an active interest in response by the Judiciary. Further consultations required, especially within framework of implementation plan. • Strengthened institutional relationship at local level with Police and DOVVSU branches
Coalition, network	DV Coalition, NETRIGHT, Women’s Manifesto Coalition; WILDAF, Growth and Poverty Forum; Spousal Property Rights Bill Coalition; RAO Convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under NAP Project, contributing to advocacy for Implementation of Domestic Violence Act • Co-organizer with NETRIGHT for the First National Feminist Forum 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and National Plan of Implementation document in draft. • Strengthened capacity and knowledge of 38 women selected from all regions of Ghana regarding approaches and principles of Feminist

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As member of WiLDAF Board, contributing to restructuring of WiLDAF Board and institutional arrangements • Monitoring the GPRSII; participating in AU Civil Society Forum • Collaborating with Attorney-General's Dept, MOWAC and other women's advocacy organizations to pass the Spousal Property Bill. A new initiative coalition • RAO Convention initiative on the Trust Bill 	<p>work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring of WiLDAF Board, increasing organizational competency and delivery • Ongoing work requiring enhancement of analysis and engagement capacities of participating CSOs to be more effective in GPRS monitoring to ensure pro-poor impacts • Work only beginning under the Spousal Property Rights Bill consultations. Further agreements to be reached at meeting scheduled for 18th January 2008 • Communique from RAO Convention on the current Trust Bill calling on government to reconsider provisions; Agreements on further actions by the Working Group
<p>RAO, NGO, I-NGO</p>	<p>- LAWA, WISE, FIDA; AWLA, WILDAF, - RUMNET; - IBIS; - ACTIONAID - RADNET (Rights and Development Network of East Akyem, initiated by The Ark under REAP Project)</p>	<p>* The human rights protection of persons particularly women and children. Collaborating on Spousal property rights work, anti-violence education with advocacy and service delivery LAWA, FIDA, WISE, AWLA, WILDAF,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy and training Partnership on stopping child marriages in Northern Ghana with RUMNET; • Final phase execution of Leadership Development Program for Women's Rights Organizations with IBIS • Working on influencing Churches policy and practice of sexual and gender-based violence under project with ACTIONAID • Under RAVI supported funding, The Ark's REAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced networking, information sharing and referrals; collaboration on projects like Spousal Property Rights • Training conducted for community leaders and institutional heads in Saboba Chereponi District; Cementing of relationship for further work in Northern Ghana with RUMNET • Formation of dynamic young women advocacy group – Sisters Against Disrespectful Adverts, engaging primary decision makers on changing stereotypical portrayal of women in media adverts with mentoring and support from The Ark • Capacity of selected churches built in knowledge and response to SGBV; setting up of response teams • Several projects completed (boreholes, electricity extension, clinic from RBA

		<p>has reached final phase of advocacy and empowerment project with 10 CBOs; but continuing networking for RBA work and anti-violence at local governance level in Eastern Region</p>	<p>process of engagement; RADNET remains a force to reckon with as a model for organizing and engaging; Also serving as local points for anti-violence advocacy and education at local community level; Empowered community women who are able to voice out their rights on development to duty-bearers from local to national level</p>
<p>Donor institution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G-RAP • RAVI • ACTIONAID • WORLD EDUCATION • CORDAID • AWDF 	<p>G-RAP: Core Funding , coordinating RAO Convention</p> <p>RAVI – Providing funding support for The Ark’s Rights, Empowerment, Access and Participation Project with CBOS in Eastern Region</p> <p>With ACTIONAID on Sexual and Gender-based Violence education</p> <p>World Education for Girls’ Scholarships and mentoring Program</p> <p>CORDAID – Core funding, support for Policy Advocacy Project (NAP)</p> <p>With AWDF on strengthening Feminist approaches for women’s rights organizations through dialogues; Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS Publication; Participating in Where is the Money for Women’s Rights? Pan-African Forum with focus on Aid effectiveness agenda and gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved staff motivation and retention; improved organizational infrastructure; clarity in strategic focus and direction of The Ark • Effective RBA engagement work by majority of CBOs with evidence of provision of community projects by the government • The intensive public education has led to increased reporting of cases by women and children who access services including justice from courts. • A thousand (1000) girls in the East Akim District have been mentored and supported to aspire to become women leaders in their communities; 99% success in retention of girls supported in schools, improved school results. • Strengthening of institutional systems; enhanced salaries; NAP Policy work with other stakeholders has produced draft Policy and Plan of Action on DV, etc • 1st National Feminist Forum organized in collaboration with NETRIGHT; Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS publication out and disseminated to over 1000 institutions (MDAs, CSOs, Schools, INGOs, Commissions, Health institutions, etc)

CBO/DA <i>(please indicate district)</i>	<p>Akoko Traders Association Nobi Gayheart club, Anyinasin AL-Nur club,</p> <p>New Tafo Health club Voice of the Youth, Bunso Paralegal Association</p> <p>Noble Youth club , CRIG Workers' Wives Assoc Concerned Youth Association of Sagyemaase .</p> <p>All the above mentioned CBO's are in the East Akim District.</p>	<p>CBOs trained and hand held to carry out direct Citizen-Government Engagement (CGE), using the Rights Based Approach (RBA) and People Centred Advocacy process. <i>Some of the issues of the CBOs were:</i> <u>Voice of the Youth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrading the electricity network extension and provision of street lights. <p><u>Norbi Gayheart club</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of a new JSS block <p><u>Concerned Youth Association of Sagyemaase</u></p> <p>Provision of good drinking water</p>	<p><i>Some of the outcomes of their engagement are as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity network was duly upgraded. The systems were stepped up again and they were provided with two additional transformers. The old school block was demolished and a new one constructed. The physical construction of the mechanised bore hole has been amended on contract A bore hole was constructed by the government A community hospital construction is underway For the first time, CBOs were invited to participate in the district tender board process Strengthened relationship between The Ark and CBOs ; and The Ark and the East Akyem District Assembly – necessary for launching further RBA work at local level
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4. Outputs on research and advocacy products and/or services delivered

List the outputs as you have presented in the Workplan submitted to G-RAP.

Make sure that you:

- Indicate estimated levels of completion per output
- Indicate target groups that used / received the output delivered
- Attach copy of concept paper per output
- Attach copy of product output

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	National Advocacy Partnership Project- Completion of Survey report and dissemination; Follow up Consultations	Policy makers, MOWAC, Service Providers, NAP partners, Parliamentarians, Dev't Partners	Reports; Survey Report; Listserve	
2	Rights Empowerment Access and Participation Project (REAP) –Capacity building for five new CBOs; hand holding and engagement	Ten selected CBOs working in Communities in East Akyem District; Community citizens, East Akyem District Assembly	Reports	

3	Community Awareness Project (Campaigns and Outreach on anti-Sexual and Gender-based Violence)	General Public, - Market centres and selected communities in the Greater Accra and Eastern Region; State institutions – police, Dept of Social Welfare	Reports	
4	Church based Anti-Violence Programme	Charismatic and Orthodox churches; church leaders, church counselling units; congregations	Reports	
5	OTHER OUTPUTS ACHIEVED IN REPORTING PERIOD Advocacy for Advocates Training Program under the Women’s Law and Human Rights Institute	CSO Practitioners (male and female)	Report	
6	Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS Publication – launch and dissemination	Policy makers, development partners, service providers and caregivers, schools, CSOs, CBOs	Publication	
7	Legal Services (Mediation and representation), Counselling and rehabilitation for survivors of SGBV	Survivors of SGBV	Client case files (confidential); Case Management Reports	

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

Ranking not in any particular order since all outputs are of significance and relevance to our constituents and are also interrelated.

5. Organisation: evidence of significant progress / change

What are major changes in the organisation’s circumstances that are likely to have impacted your outputs over the period?

- **Organisational structure / board / management team**
- **Strategy / planning / decision making / knowledge management**
- **Human resource issues**
- **Marketing / communication / public relations**

Organisation: evidence of significant progress / change / results in the following areas

please refer to the self-assessment formats for more detail

Strategy, planning, decision making, knowledge management

- **Strengthened staff appraisal system**

The reviewed appraisal system gives staff members the opportunity to evaluate their own performance against the overall goal of their unit as well as their responsibilities outlined in their job descriptions, at the end of each appraisal session staff are challenged to perform better on the job.

- **Use of action-learning, reviews and incorporation into learning**

Periodically, staff review meetings are held where all programs and activities are reviewed, staff members also evaluate and reflect on processes used in conducting programs. Outcomes are noted and incorporated into subsequent programs for organisational learning.

- **Leadership Feedback and other organizational feedback processes**

This instituted process gives staff the opportunity to comment on the leadership of unit heads and the Executive Director. There is also a feedback forum between all staff held in the middle and end of year. We have also continued with feedback to staff who facilitate in-house trainings. Continuous feedback to each other is done by dropping short notes into each other's pigeon-hole.

- **Intra-office transfers and review**

As part of the organisational strategic planning, learning, and management succession staff have been assigned to new working areas to enhance staff capacity, a broad understanding of the organization and professionalism.

- **Strengthening of planning and budgeting processes and presentation of final accounts**

The organisational approach for annual planning has been reviewed. Annual planning is currently done in smaller teams (at the unit and program levels) to ensure efficiency in planning and full participation by all staff. Programs and activities planned at the beginning of every year are budgeted for by the Finance Team. The Ark continues use of cross checking of accounts by an Internal Auditor and audited by an External Auditor to ensure a true and fair view of the state of accounts.

- **Initiation of internal evaluation**

An internal evaluation process has been set up and the team responsible are supposed to conduct internal checks on the operations, culture, systems and structure of the organization. The Monitoring and evaluation team will collect and collate evaluation reports from programs, projects and activities and ensure sharing of the results and incorporation into organisational learning.

- **Review of M&E Framework for adoption**

The organisational Monitoring and Evaluation Framework drafted in 2004 has been reviewed for adoption. The framework will further aim at promoting short term, medium term and long-range planning for results at the organisation, units and program levels.

- **Staff salaries enhancement**

Staff salaries have been upgraded a bit however they are still not competitive, they need to be further enhanced.

- **Leadership and Management Team (LMT) and expansion**

After the resignation of a member of the team, two more staff have been added on to the LMT (making four instead of three) who assist in day-to-day decision making of the organisation.

Funding base development and financial management

A fund development activity conducted in July 2007 to help the organization develop strategies for financial sustainability of The Ark has yielded positive responses from corporate organisations, but it is not very easy to get enlisted on their Corporate Social Responsibility Policies. Follow-up activities concerning the ideas are yielding some good results. A reputable Telecom Company has released a cheque to The Ark to support the production of a Documentary. The documentary will be aimed at publicizing the work The Ark does in violence against women and children and also to solicit for public support. Several other organisations are lobbying at their Board levels to include The Ark on their Corporate Social Responsibility Policies. The Ark has also sought some donors consent to invest a considerable amount of funds that are not going to be immediately used on projects and interests that will be accrued will be used to further support part of institutional costs.

Recruitment, development and retention of staff; HR planning; incentives

The organisation sometimes relies on Consultants in recruiting staff. Through workshops, seminars, in-house training, external trainings and conferences the potentials of staff are developed. The Ark has declared 2008 as its Learning Year, with the view to strengthening capacities and skills of all staff. As part of the efforts to motivate and retain staff a provident fund has been instituted to serve as a form of investment account. The HR planning has taken several forms: review of monitoring and evaluation framework, strong emphasis on learning

and the transfers of staff from one working area to another.

Organisational structure, board, management team

The Ark continues to be governed by a five member board of trustees. The Board members served for a period of two years and were given the opportunity to renew/renounce their commitment according to Board Procedures. Currently, The Ark is looking forward to replace a member of the Board who is now a Minister Counsellor of the Ghana High Commission in the United Kingdom.

As stated above, The Ark also has a four member leadership and management team that assists the Executive Director in the day-to-day management of the organisation. The Ark continues to operate a horizontal 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 participatory planning and coordinating of projects/activities and shared leadership.

Marketing, public relations, communication

Efforts are underway to produce a documentary on the Ark. This will be aired on all Television stations for the general public to know the work of The Ark. As part of this strategy there will be a short code number available for the Ghanaian public to text to support the work of The Ark.

Our primary organizational marketing approach strategy has been in the form of disseminating our publications (for example: a recent information manual on HIV/AIDS) to service providers, gender advocates, Civil Society Organizations, Parliamentarians, departments, Ministries, media, service providers, school libraries and other relevant agencies to serve as a reference material and a guide. Copies of such publications are placed in The Ark's library for use by researchers and students. During our community campaigns the Ark uses posters, brochures and leaflets to publicise her services, hotline number, etc. Also, The Ark continues to maintain open communication lines and has good working relations with all her network partners.

However the organization's marketing/PR/Communication needs to be improved. The Ark is planning a major Communication strategy development event to assess its communication/PR needs, and how to mobilize resources to develop and implement the strategy

6. Grant and report related issues

6.1 What issues you wish to raise relating to the Grant or to G-RAP management?

6.2 What parts of the report are confidential or cannot be shared without prior consent

Grant and report related issues

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 Work plan as attached to the Grant contract.

A number of important outputs were achieved during the period of reporting, a few of which are captured above in addition to what was presented in the workplan. This is influenced by the Ahadzie report and presentation at the 2007 RAO Convention which raised the issue about the need for more detailed but relevant information in G-RAP reports from RAOs.

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

The Ark has addressed the benchmarks set for it by the FC for 2007. We kindly request that our financial reporting be submitted half-yearly to G-RAP, since the recommendation about improving The Ark's financial system was not due to lack of competence of our Finance Team but a misunderstanding of the actual work involved in submitting aspects of financial information.

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

None.