
**DRAFT REPORT ON STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING FOR
GHANA RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMME (G-RAP)
TO DISCUSS THE DESIGN OPTIONS FOR G-RAP II
HELD AT THE VOLTA HOTEL, AKOSOMBO**

SUBMITTED BY

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TO

G-RAP PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM

PMB ACCRA – NORTH

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NORTH RIDGE

ACCRA

13TH JULY, 2009

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BUSAC	Business Centre Advocacy Challenge Fund
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
DPs	Development Partners
EU	European Union
G-RAP	Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme
“KASA”	Two word for Speak, Dutch Embassy Fund for CSOs and Media
	Organizations on NREG
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDBS	Multi Donor Budget Support
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
NREG	Natural Resource and Environmental Governance
PB	Programme Board
PMT	Programme Management Team
RAOs	Research and Advocacy Organisations
RAVI	Rights and Voice Initiative
SP	Service Provider
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report contains five (5) short sections:

1. This introduction;
2. A background section;
3. A section on the objectives and proceedings of the workshop;
4. The results of group work sessions and plenary discussions around four broad areas in the design of G-RAP II; and
5. Recommendations.

For the purposes of strategic discussion and decision making, it is possible to skip to sections 4 and 5 of the report.

2.0 BACKGROUND

“The Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme (G-RAP) is a fund which supports the institutional development of Research and Advocacy Organizations (RAOs) in Ghana. It offers both core funding to qualifying RAOs, as well as one-off grants for networks and coalitions engaged in special advocacy projects. G-RAP is jointly funded by the British Department for International Development (DFID,) The Danish Embassy/DANIDA, the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA). Approximately 9 million US\$ has been committed for 2008 - 2010. Since March 2008, G-RAP has been managed by a new Programme Management Team (PMT) under CARE UK/CARE.”¹

The current phase of G-RAP comes to an end in March 2010. Accordingly, on 11th and 12th July, 2009, the key stakeholders of G-RAP-the donors, the G-RAP Programme Board, Staff of CARE, the PMT, and RAOs-came together at Akosombo to discuss the process of designing the new phase of G-RAP. The list of participants at the workshop is attached as **Appendix 1**.

“In preparation for the meeting, the PMT contracted a consultant to gather the perspectives of the stakeholders on the next phase of G-RAP and based on this offer design options for discussion at the retreat.”²

The Paper prepared by Ms. Taaka Awori and attached to this report as **Appendix 2**, identified four (4) key areas of G-RAP I that need re-examination in the process of designing G-RAP II. These are:

1. The Overall Goal/Purpose of G-RAP;
2. The Governance of G-RAP;
3. The Funding Mechanism for G-RAP; and
4. Programme/Project Funding from G-RAP.

¹ Taaka Awori, “G-RAP Phase II Design Options-Background Report for G-RAP Stakeholders Retreat”, July 2009, p. 1.

² *Ibid.*

For each area, the Paper contained options for consideration in the design of G-RAP II.

3.0 WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES AND PROCEEDINGS

The main objective of the workshop, as ultimately agreed by the PMT, the Consultant and the Facilitator (Dr. Raymond A. Atuguba), was to thoroughly discuss the options for the design of G-RAP II in the four areas and to agree on what needs to be done in order to decide on which option or combination of options would work for G-RAP II.

After the welcome address by the Programme Management Team Leader, Ms. Lawrencina Adams, the Consultant presented a summary of the paper she prepared in PowerPoint format. A copy of the presentation is attached as **Appendix 3**. There was a plenary discussion after the presentation during which participants stated their general impressions about the presentation. The main comments are summarized as follows:

1. We need to question the overall purpose of RAOs providing knowledge resources to assist government to implement pro-poor policies. There may be times when government is actually implementing policies that are not pro-poor and RAOs will need to engage with government to ensure that the whole policy framework is changed. At such times RAOs will not be working to assist government on a particular policy trajectory. On the contrary, they will be working to make government change their entire policy framework.
2. There are countless instances where RAOs have successfully gotten government to implement pro-poor policies; the question is how much of this is attributable to G-RAP funding.
3. Funding government agencies in order to ensure that they are more responsive to the pro-poor policies developed by RAOs may take G-RAP away from its core business of growing RAOs. In any case, there is already a lot of donor support for government from other sources meant to improve their responsiveness to pro-poor policies.
4. The question is not whether or not there should be linkages between RAOs and CBOs; it is what type of linkages we need for RAOs and CBOs to better achieve their common goal of getting government to implement pro-poor policies. These relationships can get complex and are not really fruitful when:
 - a. RAOs treat CBOs as mere dispensable appendages who are used once in a while for specific purposes of the RAO.
 - b. CBOs maintain a strategic presence or posture in communities in order to benefit from resources that “partner” RAOs sprinkle around when they zoom by periodically.
 - c. The ideology and values of RAOs and CBOs do not quite fit or are misaligned.
5. Transforming G-RAP into a trust raises a lot of issues relating to the ownership and control of the trust. If the trust is to be funded by donors, it may perpetrate a dependency syndrome. Again, a trust may discourage donors from providing funds since they may not wish to lock their monies in an independent trust, without the option of withdrawing it.
6. We need to think about G-RAP II in the context of the current financial crises.
7. From a donor perspective, there are issues to consider for G-RAP II:

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- a. There is the Accra Agenda for Action and its implications for the harmonization and alignment of donor funding initiatives; and
 - b. There is the pressure on donors by their domestic publics to be accountable and to show results, mainly quantifiable results, for monies spent as aid.

4.0 GROUP WORK OUTPUT AND DISCUSSION

Below are the outputs of the working group discussions around the four (4) areas for consideration in the design of G-RAP II, followed in each case by the major points made by stakeholders after the presentation. The questions for the groups and the list of members in each group are attached as **Appendices 4 and 5** respectively.

4.1 GROUP ONE-PURPOSE OF G-RAP II

4.1.1 OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

② *The overall goal is Government to formulate and implement more pro-poor policies*

☐ *Option 1: Keep as is, but :*

☐ *Increased “brokering” role by PMT and donors to foster constructive engagement between RAOs and Government.*

☐ *Increased linkages between G-RAP and RAVI.*

☐ *Option 2: Two windows in G-RAP: (i) Competitive grants to CSOs; (ii) Support to Parliament, Local Government and MDAs to get them to better engage with CSOs and be more responsive and accountable to the needs of the poor.*

☐ *Option 3: Fund CBOs and district level organizations; provide significant support for capacity building.*

1. *The current goal is “for government to formulate and implement pro-poor policies”. Should this continue to be the goal for G-RAP II? In other words, what are we trying to achieve in G-RAP II?*
2. *Given what we are trying to achieve, what is the range of strategies?*
3. *What do we need to do in order to decide between the different strategies for G-RAP II?*

4.1.2 GROUP REPORT

GROUP ONE: PURPOSE OF G-RAP

QUESTION 1: GOAL OF G-RAP:

The current goal of G-RAP should be broadened to include the dynamic role of civil society engagement to ensure that government actually formulates and implements pro-poor policies.

OPTIONS FOR G-RAP II:

Options I and III will enhance achievement of the expanded goal.

However, option II should be reformulated to reflect the need to facilitate the deepening of existing and emerging public spaces for RAOs and CBOs to engage with state institutions at the local and national levels, rather than set up a separate funding window for such processes.

While acknowledging the usefulness of option III in enhancing the effectiveness of the G-RAP goal, it should be conceived as subsidiary to the core business of G-RAP in enhancing RAO effectiveness in engaging with pro-poor policies, promoting civil society participation in policy formulation and implementation and increasing linkages between G-RAP and RAVI.

In pursuing these objects, sight should not be lost of the importance of promoting local ownership and RAO vibrancy as significant character and vision of G-RAP.

QUESTION 2: RANGE OF STRATEGIES

Making effective use of existing policy spaces and taking advantage of emerging ones that are being established/created.

Promoting linkages between RAOs and relevant CBOs and deepening outreach programmes so as to promote transparency, advance accountability of RAOs to the constituencies they service, as well as the inclusiveness/participation, and effectiveness of CBOs.

Deepening the gains so far made with regards to the engendering of G-RAP.

Need for a period of transition (including an evaluation of G-RAP as programme and evaluation of RAOs-tools/effectiveness, as well as the baseline for the change we are seeking) based on these new perspectives to assess the form of future relationship between G-RAP and RAVI for optimum outcomes, including the possibility of harmonising G-RAP and RAVI.

The institutional relationships of funders, RAOs, and G-RAP should draw on the worldwide lessons and responses to the current global economic/financial crisis in seeking to achieve the goal of G-RAP.

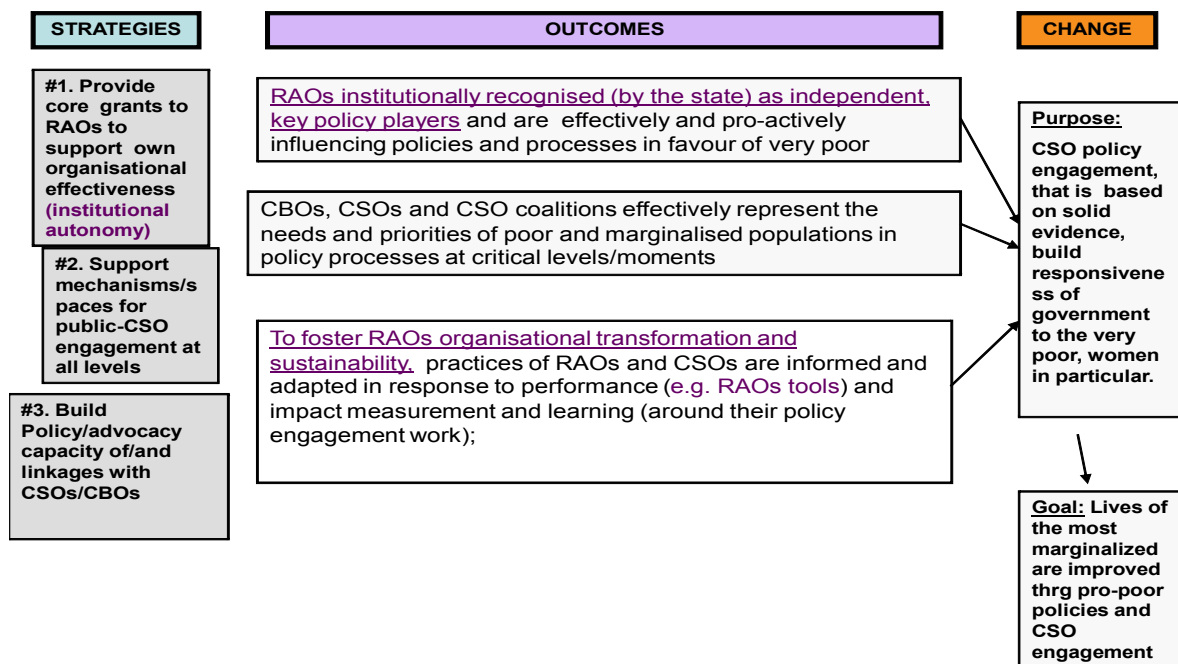
The need to conceptualise the evaluation of G-RAP more comprehensively to include multi-form, qualitative and intangible indicators of the impact of RAOs and not to simply reduce it to quantitative measures.

QUESTION 3: STRATEGIC CHOICES FOR G-RAP PHASE II:

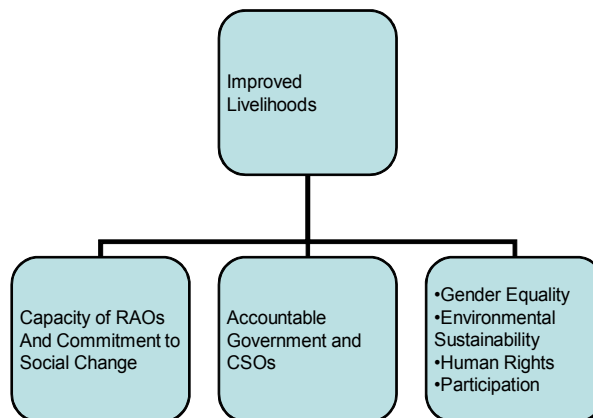
Active and vibrant RAO community as a basis for greater knowledge, experience and information sharing.

G-RAP needs to prioritise its areas of funding given approach recommended.

THEORY OF CHANGE



(THEORY OF CHANGE)



4.1.3 GROUP DISCUSSION

The following key points were made by stakeholders after the presentation by Group One:

1. G-RAP will change, whether we like it or not. The change is to accord with commitments made by donors and civil society organisations on how to make aid more effective. What we should concentrate on is how to manage the type, dynamics and pace of change so as to design a new G-RAP that would be capable of achieving the purpose we set for it.
2. Flowing from the above, and given that aid effectiveness may mean the creation of a single pool of funds with multiple funding streams, it is important that the design of G-RAP II keeps an eye on the design of sister funds like RAVI, BUSAC and KASA.
3. The theory of change concept presented by Group One is very useful as it emphasises that the General Goal is for the lives of the most marginalised to be improved through pro-poor policies. This goal applies not only to G-RAP but to many other initiatives. For G-RAP to achieve this goal:
 - a. RAOs must effectively and pro-actively influence policies and processes in favour of the very poor;

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- b. CBOs, CSO and CSO coalitions must effectively present the needs of the poor in policy processes;
 - c. Practices of RAOs and CSOs must be informed and adapted to performance and impact measurement and learning.
 4. It is important to note that the mere generation of pro-poor policies by RAOs will not automatically lead to government implementing pro-poor policies. There are a whole range of issues to be tackled in that continuum. RAOs will need to engage with government in a number of strategic ways to ensure that the pro-poor policies they generate will actually be implemented by government.
 5. Flowing from the above, we need to remember that government institutions are not designed to search for or receive and process information of the type generated by RAOs; and to take account of same in the process of policy making. This means that RAOs will have to engage closely with government and ensure that the pro-poor policies they generate are actually utilised in the process of policymaking. This will take time and money.
 6. A more ambitious attempt at ensuring receptiveness of pro-poor policies from RAOs by government will be to work at redesigning the structure of government institutions so that they are better able to receive and process information from RAOs when they make policy; in other words, work to redefine the policy spaces so that government clearly recognises the role of CSOs in policymaking. This could eventually change the posture of government towards CSOs and lead even to the funding of CSOs by government when government recognises and values the critical role of CSOs in policymaking. Transformational change such as this will require more funding for RAOs from G-RAP.
 7. It is critical for G-RAP to provide funding to RAOs so that they are not only able to produce pro-poor policies but are also able to engage with government to ensure that the pro-poor policies generated are implemented.
 8. It should be noted that there are some critical political considerations which sometimes lead government to implement policies that are not necessarily pro-poor but which will normally not be changed no matter the intervention by RAOs.
 9. G-RAP should not fund government to be receptive to the pro-poor policies generated by RAOs as this will shift its focus from growing RAOs to something else.
 10. It is critical that we commission a thorough evaluation which will assess the purpose, strategies, programmes, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of G-RAP I as a basis for further discussion and agreement on options for the design of G-RAP II.
 11. An evaluation will have the added advantage of assisting RAOs reposition themselves to ensure they are better able to realise their objects. It will assist RAOs think strategically of where they have been, where they are now, and where they want to be in the next 10 years. For example, it appears that most RAOs are more reactive to government policies than proactive in generating policy or policy alternatives for government.
 12. RAOs and other CSOs need to think seriously about the sustainability of G-RAP and their own independence and autonomy. Since G-RAP funding will not be available to RAOs forever, it is critical that G-RAP has, as part of its agenda, the growing of RAOs into independent and robust institutions/think-tanks that can ensure that government implements pro-poor policies. In this regard, building RAOs institutionally could be an end in itself.

4.2 GROUP TWO-GOVERNANCE

4.2.1 OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

② ***Service Provider (SP) holds legal accountability on G-RAP, yet they are absent from the Board***

- ***Option One: Keep SP off the board but ensure Board decisions do not affect SP's accountability.***
- ***Option Two: Include SP ex officio on the Board but ensure local ownership is not undermined.***
- ***Option Three: Register G-RAP as a legal entity with direct accountability to donor.***

1. *What are the pros and cons of the three options around governance of G-RAP?*
2. *What steps do we need to take in order to decide on these issues?*

4.2.2 GROUP REPORT

- The group was of the view that before we can determine a new governance structure we must:
 - Have an idea of the new framework or purpose of G-RAP for the future (harmonized? or status quo? structure).
 - Conclude G-RAP evaluation
- Once the above is resolved we can determine the new governance structure.

- Our views on the 3 Options when the G-RAP mandate is renewed
 - Option 1 (status quo) – to be maintained
 - Option 2 – will not work
 - Option 3- is not necessary

- To give reasons shortly

Option 1-Keep SP off Board

- SP will have a light touch management
- Option ensures:
 - Clarity of functions
 - Separation of roles
 - SP performance monitoring by all stakeholders
 - PMT resource support from SP

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- PMT independence and autonomy
 - Reduced conflict of interest
 - PMT backup from SP

 - To improve option 1
 - Improve communication and information flow from PMT to SP (e.g. submit board minutes)
 - CARE is already on Programme Board by virtue of G-RAP PMT Leader who attends

Option 2-Include SP as *Ex Officio* on Board

- Even though SP can add value
- There is likelihood of issues of
 - Conflict of interest
 - Objectivity

Option 3 – G-RAP as separate entity

- As separate legal entity with direct accountability to donor
- Provide management services
- Seeks resources from several donors
- Could be a consortium
- Not feasible at this time
- Main reason why this will not work:
 - G-RAP established to meet a particular need and is not a permanent entity;
 - If system is working there is no need to change it;
 - There is no Trust Bill and so difficult to register G-RAP as Trust;
 - Questions like – PB dissolve itself will come up?

- Other issues like
 - Acceptance by all stakeholders
 - Competition for resources with NGOs that it supports
 - Endowments for the entity may run dry
 - May have a learning curve – need capacity building

4.2.3 GROUP DISCUSSION

The following key points were made by stakeholders after the presentation by Group Two:

1. The PMT Leader is engaged by CARE and is a non-voting member of the Programme Board. The PMT Leader is actually the secretary to the Board. This arrangement is enough to deal with the SP accountability issue relating to the governance of G-RAP.

2. There is a lot of accountability mapping to be done in the way that G-RAP I was meant to be governed and the way in which it was in fact governed. Such a mapping exercise will outline the real lines of accountability between the following: the Donors; the Funders Committee; the Programme Board; the SP; the PMT; and the RAOs. An evaluation of G-

RAP I should include an accountability mapping which will inform the governance of G-RAP II.

3. An evaluation of G-RAP I must also examine its management in order to see what added value was provided by the SP and whether it was cost effective to use an SP. The agency relationship between CARE and the PMT should also be examined for its bureaucratic, communication and cost effectiveness.
4. The process of engaging the SP must be more transparent in the future and include opening it up for Ghanaian organisations to apply. This will include local advertisements of the opportunity.
5. The Programme Board should be involved in the process of engaging an SP.
6. We need to agree that the SP should not have representation on the Programme Board beyond their representation by the PMT Leader, and that their representative should not have voting powers on the Board.

4.3 GROUP THREE-FUNDING MECHANISM

4.3.1 OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

GROUP 3: FUNDING MECHANISM GROUP

- ② ***Currently, there are four main funds for CSO advocacy: RAVI, KASA, BUSAC, and G-RAP***
 - ☐ ***Option One: From a funding perspective, one option is to put money into the separate funds, each with its own management costs.***
 - ☐ ***Option Two: Have pooled donor funds in one facility from which all civil society projects may be funded.***

1. *What are the pros and cons of the two options around the funding mechanism?*
2. *What information do we need to have in order to decide between the options?*

4.3.2 GROUP REPORT

Option One: Put money into separate funds, each with its own management cost.

- Pros:
 - Gives different sources of funds and allows for flexibility
 - Simple management
 - Allows for competition

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- Cons:
 - High transaction costs
 - Possibility of double funding
 - Limited opportunity for information sharing and learning
 - Duplication of effort by some donors

Option Two: Pool donor funds into one facility from which all civil society projects may be funded.

- Pros:
 - Harmonisation as the likely way forward
 - Easy to handle for donors
 - Saves time and energies
 - Lowers transaction costs
 - Opportunity for learning
 - Avoids double funding
- Cons:
 - Complicated structure
 - Possibility of political hijacking
 - Lacks specialisation – one size fits all

Preferred Option by RAOs

- RAOs will prefer to have stand-alone funding mechanism which is tailor-made.
- But if the way forward is harmonisation and a single funding facility, then the following design issues need to be addressed:
 - Allow for local ownership
 - Allow for funding windows
 - Allow for flexibility
 - Allow for transparency in assessment
- Other Issues to Consider:
 - Discussions to be broadened to include other sister funds
 - More discussions amongst donors to the various sister funds, since attribution may be an issue here
 - Contractors perception of funding mechanism

4.3.3 GROUP DISCUSSION

The following key points were made by stakeholders after the presentation by Group Three:

1. There is the need to clarify the meaning of “diversity in sources of funding” as an advantage of having multiple streams of funding available to CSOs. What CSOs have consistently insisted on is their own diversity, not diversity in the sources of funding for their programmes and projects.

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2. Having different funding mechanisms/streams means different consultative processes; different designs; different contracting procedures; etc which is resource intensive. A single facility will definitely save time and money.
 3. We need to be cautious so that we do not create a monstrous monolithic funding structure with enormous power and control over the CSO terrain.
 4. It is important to have cross-conversations with sister funds, like RAVI, which is also at its redesign stage. It would be useful for the funds to self-assess and then learn from each other in the process leading up to re-design.
 5. It is not useful to engage CSOs in the design process after the donors have essentially taken all key decisions concerning the redesign of the facility. At another level, it is important for donors to bring CSOs up to speed on decisions that they have taken as donors and which will affect the funding terrain for CSO activities.
 6. Whatever funding mechanism is used for G-RAP II should take account of the challenges of G-RAP I. This calls for an evaluation of G-RAP I in order to surface those challenges.

4.4 GROUP FOUR-PROGRAMME FUNDING

4.4.1 OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

GROUP 4: PROGRAMME FUNDING GROUP

- ***Issue: G-RAP funding not for programmes; source of programme funding has either been outside of Ghana or directly from donor agencies in country; latter is decreasing.***

- ***Option One: G-RAP funding becomes more flexible and can be used for programmes.***
- ***Option Two: Keep G-RAP primarily for core funding and encourage RAOs to apply to other basket funds.***

1. *What are the pros and cons of the two options around programme funding?*
2. *What information do we need to have in order to decide between the options?*

4.5 GROUP REPORT

Option One: G-RAP funding becomes more flexible and can be used for programmes

- Create an enhanced core grant which allows greater flexibility in the use of grants.
 - This would require an increase in grants allocated to RAOs.
 - Donors must increase their commitment to G-RAP.

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- Ceiling must be set for the allocation of grant between core and programme costs.
 - This would enable the PMT monitor the use of grant resources.

 - Pros
 - This would reduce the risk of larger RAO's crowding out smaller organizations.
 - Minimize uncertainty in programme funding.

 - Key Considerations
 - PMT's capacity must be enhanced to effectively monitor utilisation of programme support.
 - Grant making guidelines should be able to demonstrate how much of core grants may be used for programmes/core. These guidelines must be approved by the programme Board.

Option Two: Keep G-RAP primarily for core funding and encourage RAOs to apply to other basket funds

- G-RAP should continue to provide core funding to RAOs. RAOs should seek programme funding from DP's on bilateral terms.
- G-RAP should continue to provide core funding to RAOs. RAOs could apply for programme support from other basket funds.
 - Basket funds must have clear guidelines to keep funding both larger and smaller RAOs.

- Pros
 - Funding targeted at the institutional development of RAOs

- Cons
 - RAO lose ownership of programmes because they continuously change programmes to meet donor funding objectives.
 - There is the risk that some DP's may not be interested in the themes RAOs are working on and not provide them with project funding.
 - Danger here is that bigger RAO's would crowd out smaller CSOs from the basket funds.

4.6 GROUP DISCUSSION

The following key points were made by stakeholders after the presentation by Group Four:

1. It is important to clarify what institutional support means in the context of G-RAP. G-RAP funding is to provide core funding to RAOs so that they are better able to run their programmes. This means that G-RAP funding is programme funding. G-RAP funding is, however, not for specific projects. The right distinction to make is therefore between core/programme funding and project funding.
2. Flowing from the above, when RAOs report to G-RAP, they report not only on administrative expenses but also on programme areas. This accords with the strategy of G-RAP to fund RAOs to better execute their programmes.
3. The programme areas of CSOs hardly change; and it is not a credible argument that in the absence of G-RAP funding for projects, the programme areas of RAOs will change with changes in funding opportunities. There is, however, the risk of having huge project funds from particular donors to meet shortfalls in programme funding, which project funding,

may compromise the integrity of the programme area the CSO has build over the years with G-RAP support. This can be averted where there is the option of securing G-RAP support to fill critical programme funding gaps without compromising the integrity of the programme area.

4. Grants to RAOs should generally be enhanced.
5. Donors do not have a sense of the absorptive capacity of CSOs in Ghana. It is essential that studies are conducted in this regard so that demands for more funding may be assessed in the light of the absorptive capacity of RAOs.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following key recommendations were made during the last plenary session:

1. There should be a thorough evaluation of G-RAP to take account of all of the issues that arose from the group discussion reports and the plenary discussions. This will ensure that the design of G-RAP II benefits from the strengths of G-RAP I and avoids its pitfalls.
2. When options for the design of G-RAP II are derived from the evaluation exercise, it may be necessary to commission papers which will thoroughly argue the case for and against each option in order to feed into the discussion and choice of options.
3. There is clearly commonality of issues in the design of G-RAP and the design of other sister funds like RAVI. There is the need for cross-learning during the evaluation and re-design phases of these funds.
4. RAOs must understand that donors are going to change the funding mechanism as part of the move towards the harmonization of aid and should think strategically about how their issues can be addressed in the context of the impending changes.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 APPENDIX 1: LIST OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

G-RAP STRATEGY MEETING AT THE VOLTA HOTEL AKOSOMBO 10TH -12th July, 2009

Participant Registration Form

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Mr. Akoto Ampaw	Board Member G-rap	021-253900	
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Daniel Batidam	Royal Netherlands Embassy	020 6237380	
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G-RAP Phase II Design Options
Background Report for
G-RAP Stakeholders Retreat

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G-RAP Phase II – Design Options

Background report for g-rap stakeholders retreat

1. BACKGROUND

The Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme (G-RAP) is a fund which supports the institutional development of Research and Advocacy Organizations (RAOs) in Ghana. It offers both core funding to qualifying RAOs, as well as one-off grants for networks and coalitions engaged in special advocacy projects. G-RAP is jointly funded by the British Department for International Development (DFID,) The Danish Embassy/DANIDA, the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA). Approximately 9 million US\$ has been committed for 2008 - 2010. Since March 2008, G-RAP has been managed by a new Programme Management Team (PMT) under CARE UK/CARE. The current phase of G-RAP is coming to an end in March 2010. Accordingly, on July 11th and 12th the key stakeholders in G-RAP, namely the PMT, donors, RAOs, and Programme Board will come together in Akosombo to discuss the process of designing the new phase of G-RAP.

In preparation for the meeting, the PMT contracted a consultant to gather the perspectives of the stakeholders on the next phase of G-RAP and based on this offer design options for discussion at the retreat. Between June 15th and July 1st, interviews were held with representatives of CARE (both in Ghana and the UK), representatives of the four donor agencies, the PMT, a member of the Programme Board and two RAO representatives. A full list of people interviewed is attached as Appendix 1.

2. STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES ON G-RAP II

The design of a new phase of a programme is always an opportune time to think again and afresh about the approach taken in the first phase. Assumptions can be challenged, new approaches may be adopted or the programme may be kept as is with minor changes. This paper captures the perspectives of stakeholders on G-RAP II. The issues raised fall within three broad areas namely the purpose of G-RAP, the funding framework and the governance structure. A number of options are presented to address the issues raised in the next phase of G-RAP. While the Akosombo retreat will be an important space to critically discuss the issues, the design process, particularly the final evaluation of G-RAP and consultations with a broader set of stakeholders, will be essential for stakeholders to make the decisions on which options to take.

The Objectives of G-RAP: Focusing exclusively on RAOs or Going Beyond

The current log frame provides that the purpose of G-RAP is to strengthen RAOs in Ghana so that they are able to have better access to funding, attract capable staff, generate and effectively package high quality research and work better with other RAOs. Supporting RAOs is not an end in of itself, rather the goal is for Government to adopt and effectively implement pro-poor policies which will eventually reduce poverty, the supra goal. The purpose, therefore, represents the

particular strategy or approach with which G-RAP has taken to influence Government policy making. The approach, which is focused on exclusively strengthening RAOs, is based on a number of assumptions set forth in the Programme Memorandum.³ They include:

- RAOs are available to increase the pool of information available to Government to make informed pro-poor policy choices;
- RAOs provide evaluation and feedback on existing policies and programmes;
- RAOs provide concrete information on the functioning of particular public institutions;
- RAOs contribute directly to the formulation of policy proposals;
- RAOs help to enhance the demand side of the policy process;
- RAOs will give voice to poor and marginalized groups;
- RAOs will develop links with community based organizations (CBOs);
- Additional mechanisms/funds will directly support CBOs and other NGOs which don't qualify as RAOs; and
- There is a willingness within government to take up information and ideas generated by RAOs.

The final evaluation of G-RAP will have to assess the extent to which these assumptions have held true and therefore the extent to which RAOs are contributing to Government formulation and implementation of pro-poor policies. Stakeholders interviewed raised a number of concerns about some assumptions noted above and therefore the impact of G-RAP RAOs on policy making in Ghana.

Supporting both Supply and Demand: One of the concerns raised about the assumptions in G-RAP is on the supply side, more specifically, Government willingness to engage with and take up RAO policy demands. It is argued that by focusing only on the demand side, one cannot assume that Government will automatically become responsive to CSOs. Support also has to be provided to the supply side to engage with or take up the issues from CSOs. In the case of G-RAP II, one option would be to open up the support to Parliament, Local Government and Ministries, Departments or Agencies (MDAs). The support to these institutions would be focused on getting them to better engage with CSOs and be more responsive and accountable to the needs of the poor. Operationally, G-RAP would continue to have a civil society fund which is disbursed on a competitive basis to RAOs but would also have a separate window with specific initiatives targeted at these other institutions.

Another option would be to continue to limit G-RAP to RAOs but for the PMT or the funding donors, who have close and influential relationships with government, to play a brokering role between CSOs and Government. For example, increasingly a lot of policy discourse takes place within the Multi Donor Budget Support (MDBS) sector groups. If a RAO is conducting research or advocacy relevant to a particular sector, a donor who co-chairs the sector group with Government, could suggest inviting the RAO to present their findings. Currently many sectors have CSOs as regular members of the sector group thus invitation could extend to more regular participation in sector group meetings if appropriate.

Linkages with constituencies of the poor: Another concern raised by stakeholders is the predominance of RAOs in Accra without a strong constituency amongst the poor in rural areas. During the design of the first phase of G-RAP, the potential elitism of the Fund was recognized with the result that RAOs were encouraged to develop links with CBOs as part of coalitions for

³ G-RAP Programme Memorandum at pgs. 2-8.

research and advocacy. Indeed the 6th purpose of G-RAP in the log frame is: “RAOs build up a strategic set of relationships with CBOs.” The extent to which this has happened will have to be determined by the final evaluation. The general impression, however, is that these links are weak and as a result the impact of G-RAP on the poor and the issues of concern to them is limited.

To strengthen the linkage between G-RAP and the poor in the second phase, one option is to open up the fund beyond RAOs to CBOs and district level organizations which work much more closely with communities. Opening up to these types of organizations, will have to be accompanied by significant support for capacity building in terms of institutional strengthening and policy engagement/ influencing skills.

Another option is to continue to limit support to RAOs but strengthen the linkages between G-RAP and RAVI which funds CBOs and district based organizations. For example, the fund managers of G-RAP and RAVI can work together to bring grantees working on the same issues to share experiences. These sessions would be well facilitated, focused on a particular theme or issues, and limited to the CSO grantees working directly on those issues. Attempts have been made to strengthen RAO’s collaboration with others, some more successful than others. Lessons will have been learned from these experiences in the design of G-RAP II.

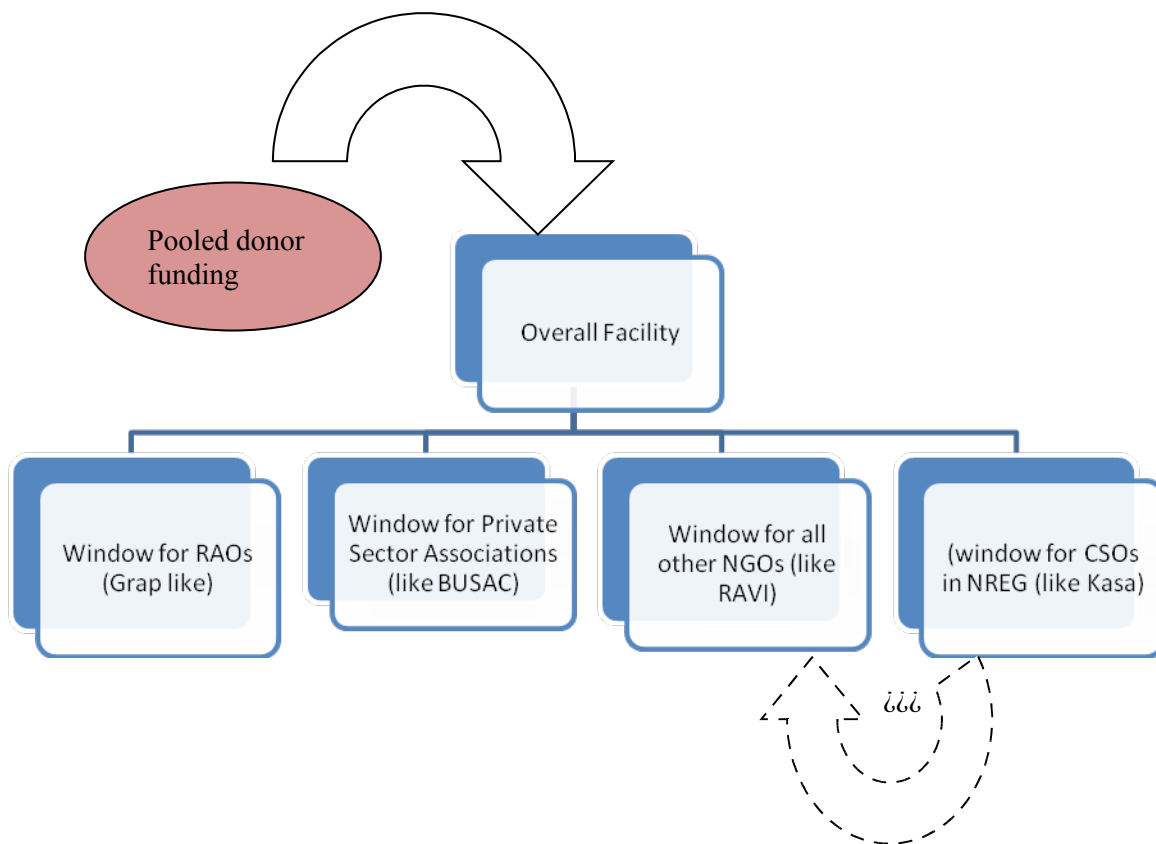
The preceding discussion only highlights some of the design options that may arise when one re-examines the approach taken or purpose of G-RAP. The evaluation will provide useful feedback on the extent to which the strategic approach taken in Phase I to focus exclusively on RAOs has contributed to the desired impact on pro-poor policies. As part of the design process, other options should be presented to strengthen the ability of G-RAP to achieve its ultimate goal.

3. THE FUNDING FRAMEWORK

Another issue raised, primarily by funding stakeholders, is the number of funds for CSO advocacy operating in Ghana. Currently there are four main funding mechanisms for CSO advocacy:

- RAVI – funds CSOs at all levels (national, district, community) engaging with government on rights issues; currently funded by DFID only, but possibilities of CIDA and the European Union (EU) joining in the next phase in 2010.
- KASA (Twi word for speak) – project supporting CSOs and media organizations to advocate for equitable access, accountability and transparency in natural resources and environmental governance; currently funded by the Dutch Embassy.
- The Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund (BUSAC) – supports the private sector, including business membership organizations, trades unions and media, to influence public policy formulation through research and advocacy; currently funded by DFID, DANIDA and the US Agency for International Development (USAID); and
- G-RAP.

From a funding perspective, one option is to put money into the separate funds, each with its own management costs or another option is to put money into one fund within different windows for each of the existing funds as the following diagram indicates:



Stakeholders have made arguments for both options. Civil society stakeholders have argued for the first Option as they are keen to ensure that there is a diversity of funds from which they can access resources. They state that if one facility has control over all funding for CSO advocacy in the country, it is more vulnerable to political interference. There is also a concern that even though there will be windows for different types of NGOs, the tendency will increasingly be to use a one size fits all approach. On the other hand, some donors argue that in addition to minimizing transactional costs, having one facility ensures that there are better linkages between the grantees of the different funding windows, which can in turn lead to a larger impact rather than the islands of success currently seen. Where there is consensus between the diverging views is that at least in the next five years, the context in Ghana is not appropriate for the single facility scenario. To determine, however, whether or not the single facility model is something that G-RAP stakeholders want to work towards, during the design process, in-depth analysis should be conducted to better understand the potential risks and benefits. In addition, during G-RAP II, efforts to strengthen the linkages between the funds should continue. This should not only include attempts to bring the grantees together as was described earlier but should also include more collaboration in fund management.

4. GOVERNANCE

On the whole the stakeholders interviewed stated that they appreciated the current governance structure and assuming the purpose of G-RAP remained the same, would want to maintain this framework. The current structure, which was put in place after a governance review of G-RAP towards the end of 2007, consists of:

- A Programme Board which provides overall management and strategic direction;

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- A funders committee which provides programme funding;
 - A grants selection sub-committee which selects grantees from applicants to each call for proposals; and
 - The PMT which serves as the G-RAP secretariat.

One issue of concern raised, however, is the absence of the Service Provider, in this case, CARE, from decision making on the Programme Board. Currently, the Programme Board is comprised of a representative of the donors, 2 RAO representatives, 2 Eminent Ghanaians and 2 members of Parliament. The PMT serves as Secretary to the Board and thus attends Board meetings but does not participate in decision making.

The absence of the Service Provider on the Programme Board has been explained by the fact that the latter serves as an executive board that holds the Service Provider accountable through the PMT. In this respect, the Service Provider cannot also make decisions on the same Board that is holding it accountable. The difficulty for the Service Provider, however, is that even though it is not part of decision making, it is ultimately accountable because it holds the contract with the donor (in this case DFID). The risk for the provider is that decisions may be made by the Board that may compromise its ability to meet its accountability to DFID.

During design a number of options may be explored to address this issue. The first option would be to keep the status quo but explore ways to ensure that the Service Provider's accountability to the donor cannot be undermined by a decision of the Board. The second option is to include a senior member of the Service Provider on the Programme Board and re-frame the accountability framework where the Board only holds the PMT accountable. In this case, the Service Provider would have to be careful to manage its presence on the Board so as not to take away the local ownership that has grown through the active participation of Ghanaians on the Board. A third option, which is more relevant for the long term rather than the short term, is to explore registering G-RAP as an NGO or a Trust. G-RAP could then legally enter into a contract with a donor to manage civil society funds. This is a model that has emerged in other countries but would require careful consideration to determine whether it would be appropriate in this context. In 2005, a legal consultancy was commissioned to examine the options for registration of G-RAP. Since then Government has begun a process of revising the legislation governing the registration of NGOs and Trusts. Given these changes, during the design process, it may be worth commissioning further legal expertise to enable G-RAP stakeholders to decide whether registration is the direction they would like to go in the long term and if so what needs to happen in phase II to prepare for this.

5. CONCLUSION

By thinking through the options for the second phase of G-RAP well in advance of the completion of the first phase, stakeholders have increased the likelihood of developing a well-designed and effective second phase. It is hoped that this paper, which has captured the perspectives of stakeholders on the second phase, will be useful to deliberations in Akosombo.

6.3 APPENDIX 1: list OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

6.4 APPENDIX 3: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION BY CONSULTANT

(This can be found in the annexure attached)

6.5 APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

GROUP 1: PURPOSE GROUP

- ② **The overall goal is Government to formulate and implement more pro-poor policies**
 - ☐ **Option 1: Keep as is, but :**
 - ☐ **Increased “brokering” role by PMT and donors to foster constructive engagement between RAOs and Government.**
 - ☐ **Increased linkages between G-RAP and RAVI**
 - ☐ **Option 2: Two windows in G-RAP: (i) Competitive grants to CSOs; (ii) Support to Parliament, Local Government and MDAs to get them to better engage with CSOs and be more responsive and accountable to the needs of the poor.**
 - ☐ **Option3: Fund CBOs and district level organizations; provide significant support for capacity building.**

1. The current goal is “for government to formulate and implement pro-poor policies”. Should this continue to be the goal for G-RAP II? In other words, what are we trying to achieve in G-RAP II?
2. Given what we are trying to achieve, what is the range of strategies?
3. What do we need to do in order to decide between the different strategies for G-RAP II?

GROUP 2: GOVERNANCE GROUP

- ② **Service Provider (SP) holds legal accountability on G-RAP, yet they are absent from the Board**
 - ☐ **Option One: Keep SP off the board but ensure Board decisions do not affect SP’s accountability.**

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- ☐ **Option Two: Include SP *ex officio* on the Board but ensure local ownership is not undermined.**
 - ☐ **Option Three: Register G-RAP as a legal entity with direct accountability to donor.**

1. What are the pros and cons of the three options around governance of G-RAP?
2. What steps do we need to take in order to decide on these issues?

GROUP 3: FUNDING MECHANISM GROUP

- ② **Currently, there are four main funds for CSO advocacy: RAVI, KASA, BUSAC, and GRAP**

- ☐ **Option One: From a funding perspective, one option is to put money into the separate funds, each with its own management costs.**
- ☐ **Option Two: Have pooled donor funds in one facility from which all civil society projects may be funded.**

1. What are the pros and cons of the two options around the funding mechanism?
2. What information do we need to have in order to decide between the options?

GROUP 4: PROGRAMME FUNDING GROUP

- ② **Issue: GRAP funding not for programmes; source of programme funding has either been outside of Ghana or directly from donor agencies in country; latter is decreasing.**

- ☐ **Option One: G-RAP funding becomes more flexible and can be used for programmes.**
- ☐ **Option Two: Keep G-RAP primarily for core funding and encourage RAOs to apply to other basket funds.**

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1. What are the pros and cons of the two options around programme funding?
 2. What information do we need to have in order to decide between the options?

6.6 APPENDIX 5: LIST OF MEMBERS IN GROUPS 1 TO 4

GROUP ONE

1. Graham Gass - DFID
2. Rose Mensah – Kutin – ABANTU
3. Dominic Ayine - CEPIL
4. Akoto Ampaw - Board Member
5. Afurika Juvenal – CARE International

GROUP TWO

1. Alice Broeng Anderson – Danish Embassy
2. Salas Mensah - Ex Board Member
3. Prof. Ama Ata Aidoo – Board Member
4. Kojo Ansah – CARE International
5. Cheryl – Board Member

GROUP THREE

1. Lynn Maacaulay - DFID
2. Ama Jantuah Banful – Ministry of Justice
3. Angela Dwamena-Aboagye – ARK Foundation
4. Yakubu Zakaria - ISODEC

GROUP FOUR

1. Daniel Batidam – Royal Netherlands Embassy
2. Jeanette Quarcoopome - MFWA
3. Vitus Azeem – GII
4. Prof. Kwame Ninsin - Board Member