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ghana

Annual Report
2017



Increasing Possibilities, Claiming Rights



Annual Report
"Increasing Possibilities, Claiming Rights"
2017



ActionAid is a global justice federation working to achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication



**CIMG Not-for-Profit Organisation of the
Year 2013, 2014, 2015**

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Benjamin Kwesi Tawiah

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Charles R. Tachie-Menson Jnr

Pictures provided by ActionAid Ghana

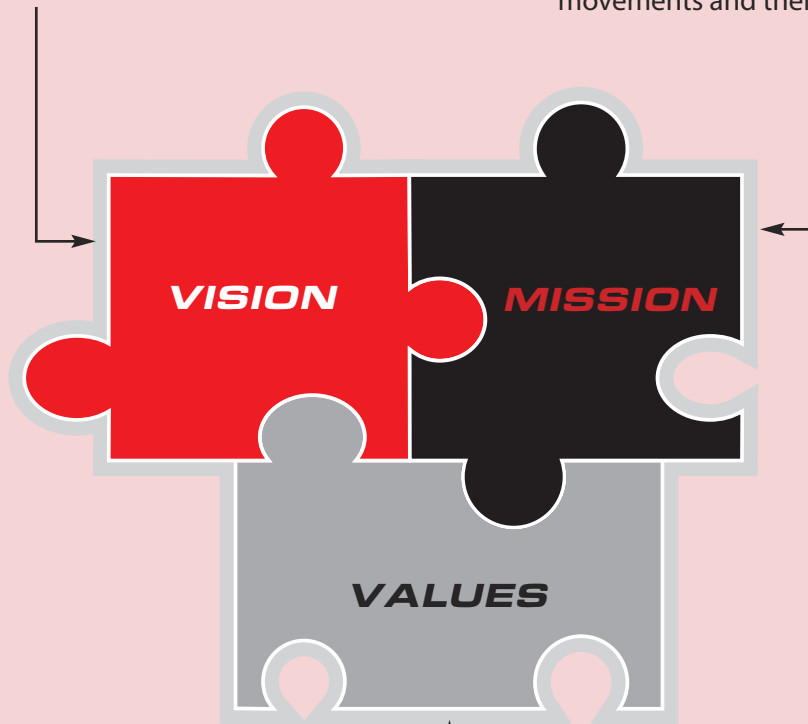
Printed in 2018 by ActionAid Ghana
P. O. Box AN 19083, Accra-North

+233 244 316 392, +233 289 109 560
aaghana@actionaid.org
www.actionaid.org/ghana
facebook.com/actionaidghana
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"A just, equitable and sustainable world in which every person enjoys the right to a life of dignity, freedom from poverty and all forms of oppression"

"To achieve social justice, gender equality, and poverty eradication by working with people living in poverty and exclusion, their communities, people's organisations, activists, social movements and their supporters"



- Mutual Respect
- Equity and Justice
- Integrity
- Solidarity with People Living in Poverty and Exclusion
- Courage of Conviction
- Independence
- Humility

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ACRONYMS

AA	ActionAid
AADK	ActionAid Denmark
AAG	ActionAid Ghana
ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
AGA	African Governance Architecture
ASUDEV	Action for Sustainable Development
AU	African Union
BEWDA	Belim Wusa Development Agency
CARD	Community Aid for Rural Development
CBE	Complementary Basic Education
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CMS	Contract Management System
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRSA	Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
ECED	Early Childhood Education Development
EC PANAF	Mobilising Civil Society Support for Implementation of the African Governance Architecture
EU	European Union
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FEV	Female Extension Volunteer
GES	Ghana Education Service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLOWA	Global Action for Women Empowerment
GRPS	Gender Responsive Public Services
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
IWD	International Women's Day
KG	Kindergarten
LRP	Local Rights Programme

ACRONYMS

MASLOC	Microfinance and Small Loans Centre
MIS	Management Information System
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal District Assemblies
MOs	Mission Objectives
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
NBSSI	National Board for Small Scale Industries
NGGA	Northern Ghana Governance Activity
NIIT	National Institute of Information Technology
NOCID	Network of Communities in Development
NRDP	Northern Regional Development Programme
NVTI	National Vocational Training Institute
PI	Partnership Income
PPL	People's Postcode Lottery
POWER	Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RBIA	Risk-Based Integrated Audit
RG	Regular Giving
SDG's	Sustainable Development Goals
SHS	Senior High School
SLATLA	Sustainable Livelihoods and Transparent Local Authorities
SMC	School Management Committee
SODIA	Social Development Improvement Agency
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
TOC	Theory of Change
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UCW	Unpaid Care Work
USA	United States of America
WAPs	Women in Agriculture Platforms
WOM	Widows and Orphans Movement
YFP	Young Female Parliament
YTD	Year To End

FOREWORD



On behalf of the General Assembly, our Board and hardworking staff, I am delighted to share with you our annual report for 2017, as part of our accountability to our rightholders, donors, institutional collaborators and other partners who supported us to impact lives and inspire change in the year.

In this report, we present our progress, impact stories and challenges from interventions in our programme areas, national campaigns and advocacy work with our social movements, activists and people's organisations. We also share our most inspiring moments with our donors, international partners and the media. As defenders of human rights, especially for women, we were guided by our feminist principles and Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to extend our impact beyond our sponsorship communities to other areas of need. This afforded us the opportunity to reach more marginalised communities with pro-poor interventions and human rights campaigns.

2017 was a successful but challenging year which witnessed increased displacements and insecurities in areas of political disturbance, resulting in mass migration, social and economic difficulties. While globally we made great efforts to impact the lives of people living in poverty, social and economic inequalities persisted, thereby widening the gap between the rich and the poor. In developing economies, inadequate social protection and

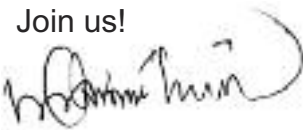
safety nets have rendered people living in poverty vulnerable to the effects of ineffective policies.

Within the year, we launched our new global strategy 'Action for Global Justice,' which enjoined us to intensify our work with social movements, activists and people's organisations towards our vision of achieving social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication. In furtherance of this, we promoted national and regional level campaigns with our Smallholder Women Farmers' Movement, Activista, the Young Urban Women's Movement and other advocacy groups. We deepened our work with farmer networks, youth groups and community structures in our programme areas to sustain the gains we have made over the years.

We exceeded our fundraising targets in the year, which enabled us to implement more development programmes and also embark on aggressive campaigns to raise awareness about rights violations, gender-based violence and other forms of cultural and traditional acts of violence. The strong financial position was as a result of effective financial and auditing practices, improved accountability systems and proactive communication of our achievements and impact stories. We will strengthen our fundraising systems and competitively project AAG to attract more support from our donors. We would also invest and explore local fundraising opportunities to impact more lives in the ensuing years.

We wish to thank our Board, General Assembly and our supporters, especially our donors, movements and rightholders, for joining our fight against poverty, injustice and inequalities. We are in alliance to create a better world for people living in poverty and exclusion. We believe that a just, equitable and sustainable world is possible if we all work together to promote social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication.

Join us!



Sumaila Abdul-Rahman
Country Director

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Francis Atta-Doku
Head, Finance

MAP OF GHANA SHOWING OUR OPERATIONAL AREAS



OUR MISSION OBJECTIVES IN 2017

In 2017, we worked towards four (4) Mission Objectives (MOs), as contained in our Country Strategy Paper V (CSP V), which comes under the name *'Increasing Possibilities, Claiming Rights.'* The four (4) MOs are listed below:

- 1. Promote Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA); women's secured access to and control over land and other productive resources.*
- 2. Advance the political influence of women and girls; reduce women's unpaid care work and violence against women and girls.*
- 3. Promote access to quality public education for boys and girls which respects their rights and enhance the capacity of young people to drive their development priorities.*
- 4. Improve gender responsiveness of mining and extractive companies and ensure fair redistribution of resources to eradicate poverty.*

1.0 EXTERNAL CONTEXT

2017 was a tumultuous but eventful year marked by political upheavals, mass migration, social unrests and the threat of nuclear war, as tensions between the USA and North Korea reached alarming levels. The genocide in Myanmar forced about 650,000 Rohingyas to flee into Bangladesh following the crackdown by the military in the Buddhist majority. Syria faced uncertain future as the Islamic State war loomed, bringing to the fore massive human rights violations, displacements and starvation. The security in the region extended to Lebanon, where the Prime Minister announced his resignation, citing Iran's interference.

In the USA, suspicions of collusion by Russia in the American elections continued to dominate discussions on diplomatic relations and democratic accountability. There were further tensions in America's relations with other countries when President Donald Trump announced a ban on citizens of some Muslim countries from entering the USA. These events, including the USA's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, highlighted critical

issues of power relations at the global level while exposing the social and economic insecurities among people living in poverty during humanitarian emergencies.

In Zimbabwe, a non-violent military takeover and citizen activism forced Robert Mugabe to resign from office after 37 years as President. Other African Presidents who left power in the year include Yahya Jammeh who ruled The Gambia for 22 years. Jammeh had conceded defeat to Adama Barrow in democratic elections but refused to step down, citing electoral irregularities. Pressure from West African states and the international community compelled Jammeh to flee into exile in Equatorial Guinea.

In August 2017, another long serving African leader, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, voluntarily left office after announcing his exit in December 2016. Other significant political events in Africa include the historic Supreme Court ruling that annulled and nullified the results of the General Elections in Kenya, and the landslide victory of President Paul Kagame in Rwanda. These landmark political events, including the election of President George Opong Weah in Liberia on December 2017, marked modest beginnings for democratic accountability in Africa amidst many challenging electoral deficiencies and human rights violations.

In Ghana, the new government of President Nana Akufo-Addo embarked on social and economic development initiatives in fulfilment of electoral promises. Some of the interventions include the flagship free Senior High School (SHS) education, restoration of allowances for teachers and nurses, the Planting for Food and Jobs programme and the launch of a Digital Address system to facilitate easy location of addresses. The government also initiated plans to create four (4) new regions to promote efficient development and ensure parity in resource distribution. The 'One District, One Factory' policy was also launched within the year.

The introduction of these policies engendered national discussions among citizens, CSOs and other social actors. However, the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) and some think-tanks raised questions about the financial sustainability, suitability and the timeliness of some of the programmes.

The fight against illegal small-scale mining (galamsey) continued in 2017. It brought together environmental activists, media partners and public agencies to increase awareness about the effects of the menace on Ghana's water bodies, livelihoods and environmental sustainability. The campaign also highlighted the interests and activities of foreign nationals in galamsey, the cost to life and the impact on youth unemployment.

2.0 INTERNAL CONTEXT

Ghana's economy grew by 8.5% in 2017, the highest rate in five (5) years. The growth was mainly due to increased production in oil and gas, according to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS). The growth rate of the oil subsector was 80% while agriculture grew by 8.4%, representing a GDP value of GH 8,441.3million, largely driven by the 9.4% growth rate in the crop sector. The annual growth rate in the economy was 4.9%, excluding oil.

The GSS also reported that the economic expansion was influenced by industry, which grew at the rate of 16.7% with a GDP value of GH9,887.8 million. The services sector recorded the lowest growth rate at 4.3%, representing a GDP value of GH19,553.8. This was due to the challenges in the banking and insurance sectors since 2013. The provisional annual GDP estimate for the year was GH205,914.0 million, with the corresponding per capita GDP being GH7,110. As at March 2017, the inflation rate was 10.4%.

Despite the economic growth, the 2016 *Ghana Poverty and Inequality Report* reveals that inequality and poverty were prevalent in many parts of the country. According to the Report, a lot of progress has been made for the extreme poor in recent years than for those living close to the poverty line. The gap between urban and rural poverty has doubled, with rural poverty almost four (4) times as high as urban poverty, compared to the 1990s. The report found that households in urban areas have a lower average rate of poverty than those in rural areas (10.6% versus 37.9%).

The three (3) regions of the North (Upper East, Upper West, Northern regions) continued to have the highest poverty levels due to a lack of inclusive development and adequate welfare and safety nets. While the rate of poverty in the Upper East region reduced from 70% in 2016 to 44% in 2013, the

Northern region did not see much improvement in terms of poverty reduction (56% to 50%). The region has seen the smallest reduction in poverty since the 1990s.

ActionAid launched Strategy 2028: *'Action for Global Justice'* to promote social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication. The strategy seeks to work with social movements, activists and people's organisations to address the structural causes of poverty and injustice while promoting climate justice, accountability and transformative women-led leadership. We were guided by feminist principles and our HRBA to promote programmes and campaigns that protect the rights of people living in poverty, especially women, while facilitating the equitable redistribution of resources to strengthen their resilience.

To address the demands of the new strategy, we intensified our work with social movements, partners and institutional collaborators to enable us extend the impact of our work to more communities. We deepened our work with the Young Urban Women's Movement, Smallholder Women Farmers' Movement, Activista and other youth groups.

We began a midterm review of CSP V to assess our progress and evaluate our work. The review indicated a progressive and largely successful programme implementation that impacted many lives in our communities. However, there were a few areas we needed to improve to achieve our targets. The midterm review was also to locate AAG's development plans within the framework of the collective programme priorities of the global strategy, and address recommendations from our supporters and stakeholders. We began the development of a new strategy (CSP VI), which will be launched in the first quarter of 2018.

Within the year, we hosted the Secretary-General of the ActionAid Federation and the Global Leadership in Accra. We also organised the Africa Regional Review meeting of the Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER) initiative. We organised the first National Smallholder Women Farmers' Conference in Wa, which brought together hundreds of women farmers from our regional programme areas to advocate for their right to land, agricultural inputs, market access and involvement in policy decisions.

In 2017, we expanded our programme and advocacy work on youth empowerment and gender-based violence by establishing a multi-purpose Centre for Youth Activism in the Upper East region and a Centre for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Girls in the Upper West region. The work of Activista and the development of youth-led campaign initiatives afforded AAG the opportunity to work with teeming young people in our programme areas. We hope to expand our work with young people in the coming years and extend more development opportunities to people living in poverty.



*Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection
Hon. Otiko Afisa Djaba, launching POWER Baseline Report in Accra*

3.0 COVERAGE

Our work in 2017 focused on the implementation of programme interventions, campaigns and advocacy initiatives in six (6) regions: Upper East, Upper West, Northern, Volta, Greater Accra and Brong Ahafo. We were guided by the four (4) MOs we set for ourselves in CSP V to tailor specific interventions to address the strategic needs of people living in poverty and exclusion. Due to our regional focus to development, we impacted many communities outside our sponsorship areas, directly working with people living in poverty, social movements, farmer networks, women groups and our institutional collaborators.

In addition to our interventions in our sponsorship communities, where we worked to promote the education and rights of more than 13,000 sponsored children, we impacted more than 258,307 direct beneficiaries, excluding our social movements and their allies. The key learnings and successes from our programme work in 2017 have improved our accountability with our internal and external stakeholders, especially our donors, partners, supporters and rightholders. We would improve our programme quality and impact by clearly demonstrating the evidence from our interventions.

4.0 OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Our long term engagement with people living in poverty, their communities and allies informed our Theory of Change (ToC). AAG aspires to see a positive increase in people's possibility and capacity in order to make the most of their potential to live as full and creative human beings. It is about respecting, protecting, promoting and fulfilling people's basic rights for survival and aspirations for human dignity and respect. AAG seeks change to create just and supportive opportunities for people living in poverty and exclusion and expand their possibilities and options.

AAG believes that increasing people's possibilities to claim their rights can be achieved when they are supported to build active constituencies and enabled by strategic alliances and credible alternatives to contest and claim their rights.

The ToC has informed our approaches which focus on expanding spaces for the participation and empowerment of people living in poverty. This is to

legitimise and support the struggle of people living in poverty to secure the full spectrum of their rights by paying attention to structural and indirect forms of vulnerability and discrimination in terms of public policies (or lack thereof), local power structures or cultural practices.

It also installs processes and procedures for advancing alternatives to strengthen accountability and make it possible for ordinary people to claim their rights. The approaches include using the HRBA, advancing women's rights, promoting rights-based sustainable alternatives, partnership and alliance building, working with the youth, and promoting local, national, sub-regional and regional linkages.

5.0 PROGRAMME FOCUS, IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT

To demonstrate the impact of our programmes, campaigns and advocacy work across our operational areas, we pursued clear targets in our regional programme strategies against the overall performance indicators in CSP V. Based on human rights-based analysis and the critical assessment of the development needs of people in poverty, we designed and implemented specific programmes at the community, regional and national levels. Below, we present some impact stories from the six (6) regional programmes on each MO and our national campaigns.

MISSION OBJECTIVE ONE (MO1)

5.1 Female Extension Volunteers (FEVs) fight army worms and preserve indigenous crops

The Female Extension Volunteers (FEVs) initiative has offered rural farmers, especially women farmers, the opportunity to follow good agronomic practices and increase their yield. In 2017, the FEVs embarked on community and farmer-to-farmer education, using demonstration farms to expose farmers to practices such as compost preparation, mulching, intercropping and crop rotation. To enable them impact more communities, the FEVs were provided with bicycles and other resources to improve their work with rural farmers, especially women.

For instance, in the Jirapa district of the Upper West region, the FEVs worked with the Department of Agriculture to control the outbreak of the Fall Army

worm, which threatened to destroy crops in the rainy season. 18 FEVs mobilised women farmers from different communities to benefit from insecticides supplied by the government to control the outbreak. As a result of the work of the FEVs in the district, 1,500 farmers made up of 500 males and 1,000 females benefited from CRSA practices, which helped to improve their yield.

Elizabeth Dakurah, a FEV from UI-Kpong in the Jirapa district, trained four (4) women groups, comprising 20 men and 40 women on some CRSA practices. She also motivated women farmers involved in cowpea farming to spray their crops with extracts from the 'neem' plant and apply the droppings of animals as manure to their farms.



Elizabeth riding her bicycle to work as a Female Extension Volunteer

The FEVs in the Sissala East district mobilised to work towards the preservation and promotion of indigenous seed varieties such as millet, black beans, yellow beans (cow pea), sorghum, and white beans. Due to competition from hybrid varieties and fast-maturing crops, most farmers in the area had abandoned millet and other indigenous crops for maize, because maize cultivation is easier and has better demand than millet. However, millet is more adaptable to the effects of climate change and has better nutritional value. In addition, maize has a higher cost of production.

The lack of appropriate technology and research to support the production of these indigenous crops have contributed to their marginalisation in preference for other crops. To whip up interest of local farmers for these indigenous varieties, the FEVs established demonstration fields in five (5) communities. The objective was to promote these crop varieties and show smallholder women farmers the benefits of the crops while encouraging other farmers to go into the production of indigenous varieties.

In the Brong Ahafo region where the FEVs have been very active, many farmers have realised tremendous growth on their farms after receiving continuous CRSA education from the FEVs. In Subriso in the Asutifi district, the FEVs worked directly with 667 women farmers from different communities, assisting them with improved farming practices to transform their farms for better yield. In the Tain and Asutifi South districts, the FEVs took twelve (12) women groups through trainings to improve their cowpea and maize farming. The women were assisted to replant with quality seeds to enhance productivity and increase their income.

In Kenyasi No. 3 in the Asutifi North district, Salina Owusu, a 35 year old member of the FEV, mobilised six (6) vegetable farmers into a progressive group to successfully practice CRSA on their demonstration farms, which has resulted in improved yield. Selina shares her testimony:

“As a volunteer, I mobilised six (6) women to use a demonstration farm as a learning point to impart knowledge to each other. We decided to cultivate tomato using local materials such as compost as manure and “neem” tree to control pest. This helped us to increase our production with minimal cost. We harvested eight (8) boxes of tomato which we sold at GH¢80.00 per box.



Salina Owusu on the group vegetable farm

Previously, we harvested only four (4) boxes because the tomatoes were affected by insects. With the use of the “neem” trees, the insects couldn’t attack the tomatoes. We will expand and add garden eggs to our crops. I thank ActionAid for their support in improving our livelihood.”

5.2 Smallholder farmers benefit from ‘Planting for Food and Jobs’ Programme

The Women in Agriculture Platform (WAP) formed as part of the Northern Ghana Governance Activity (NGGA), intensified advocacy for the inclusion of more smallholder women farmers in the government’s ‘Planting for Food and Jobs’ programme. The WAPs participated in meetings with regional and national stakeholders in agriculture and other fora to raise concerns about the lack of gender responsiveness in the design and implementation of the programme. The ‘Planting for Food and Jobs’ programme initially required a minimum of five (5) hectares (i.e. 12.5 acres) of land to qualify for registration while most smallholder women farmers cultivate between one (1) to three (3) acres.

Additionally, the crops promoted by the programme excluded groundnuts and cowpea, which are major crops usually cultivated by women. The WAPs brought these concerns to the attention of the Minister of State in charge of Agriculture. They also demanded the extension of the registration period for the programme, to enable more women benefit from the intervention.

As a result, 33,514 farmers in the Upper West region comprising 18,313 males and 15,201 females participated in the programme in the 2017 cropping season. Prior to the advocacy by the WAPs, only 17,000 farmers from the Upper West Region had registered for the programme. Following the work of the WAPs, the percentage of women beneficiaries increased from 25% to 46%. In addition, crops such as groundnuts and cowpea, crops normally cultivated by women, were added to the list of crops permitted under the programme.

Due to the extension of the registration period, the WAPs mobilised more smallholder women farmers from surrounding communities to join the programme. As part of AAG's commitment to build a formidable social movement of women farmers in Ghana, the WAPs have intensified their mobilisation for regional and national advocacy to influence national agricultural policies in the interest of women.

As a result of their impactful advocacy, a total of 10,428 women joined the WAPs in the year. Out of this, 2,671 came from the Upper West region, 3,727 from Upper East while 4,030 were drawn from the Northern region. In October 2017, a National Smallholder Women Farmers' Conference was held in Wa to officially launch the movement.

5.3 More rural communities in Upper East ready to combat effects of climate change

Due to erratic rainfall patterns, many farming communities in the Upper East region suffer environmental challenges and other harsh effects of climate change, which negatively impact on food security and the livelihoods of people living in poverty, especially women. The geological formation and unfavourable climatic situation in the region have rendered many farm lands unproductive and prone to destruction. While the region, has two (2) weather seasons (rainy and dry) rainfall causes severe erosion in many communities, as many of the farms are not on flat lands.

Over the years, the effect of climate change on farmlands has been very severe, with its devastating impact felt by smallholder farmers in the community. As a result, the soil nutrients continue to deplete, resulting in low yield from farms.

To promote food security and improve income levels among farmers, especially smallholder women farmers, AAG, in collaboration with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), organised capacity building sessions for farmer networks on CRSA to enable the communities address food insecurity while responding to the adverse effects of climate change. The training covered soil conservation, sustainable water management, agro-biodiversity and livelihood diversification. As a result of the training, many rural farmers are applying modern agronomic practices on their farms, resulting in higher yield and greater income. With support from MoFA, the women's groups were monitored and provided with further support to enable them transfer the knowledge and skills to other local farmers.

Madam Issifu Namawu, a 42 year old smallholder farmer, had this to say:



"I was part of the women who were trained on CRSA practices in the midyear of 2016. Due to the infertility of the land and poor agricultural practices in my community, we always record poor yield, which has worsened the poverty situation of women in the Pusiga community, thereby contributing to the marginalisation of women by men. Women are generally not able to support the upkeep of the family because of lower income levels and other traditional practices which prevent them from realising their potential. With the knowledge and skills acquired, I shared the learnings with my colleague women and also applied the skills on my farm. After following the CRSA practices, I was able to get

two (2) additional bags of maize from the same piece of land I farmed on last year. I sold some to pay for my child's school fees in the Senior High School and also have enough food to feed my children. I will apply the CRSA practices on my farm every year since it has improved my situation."

Sapakbil Bawa, a 55 year old male farmer from Duusi, also shared his impressions:

"It is so unfortunate that in this region, there is only one rainy season in the whole year; the rest of the year is dry between May and October. In addition, our soils are poor and the lands are rocky. Sometimes, the rains fail us, affecting our ability to produce enough food to feed our families. In 2016, I was selected by my group to attend a training organised by ActionAid on CRSA, where we were introduced to practices such as composting, stone bonding and mulching among others. With the skills that I gained, I started using stone bonding and applying manure on my farm. I also passed on the skills to my fellow group members. After following the methods I learnt during the training, my soil is no more washed away by rains, which used to be a common problem during the rainy season. All the crops I planted on this land have been successful. I harvested five (5) bags of millet this year, compared to two (2) bags on the same three (3) acre land last year."

5.4 Smallholder women farmers in Adaklu access their right to land and embrace CRSA

In the Adaklu district of the Volta region, about 1,400 smallholder women farmers drawn from 30 groups were organised and trained in modern CRSA practices to enable them realise more yield from their farms. The training, which included market access strategies, have exposed many smallholder women farmers from deprived communities to market access strategies and financial management practices. As a result, more farmers are focusing on soil and water conservation and using compost on their farms to improve productivity. Local farmers have also learnt to prepare and apply urea, neem tree extracts and ashes as pesticides to protect their crops from insects and other pests.

Other CRSA practices that are yielding good results are crop rotation, intercropping, and ridge tillage, where crops are planted on ridges formed during previous tillage or seedbed preparations. The farmers have also embarked on seed multiplication to preserve their local seed varieties and improve agrobiodiversity. Consequently, smallholder farmers are expanding their farms and gradually transitioning from conventional farming to sustainable agriculture, to improve their livelihood and build their resilience to the effects of climate change. Also, local farmers have realised the positive impact of CRSA practices and are now able to produce enough food for their families. In addition, they are able to supply food to other markets outside their district and sell the surplus to other communities.

In the year, smallholder women farmers in Adaklu and surrounding communities successfully advocated for their right to fertile and productive lands. They had been denied their rights due to the patriarchal nature of the communities, where men controlled many resources and dominated in decision making. Women were usually given infertile lands in remote locations, to discourage them from active farming. As a result of the campaign, AAG women groups in the communities were able to have access and control over lands for their group farms.

Ali, pictured below, testifies about how his wife influenced him to patronise the work of the women's group:



“My name is Ali from Aziedukope. I can say I am a member of the women’s group even though I’m a man. My wife, Adjo, influenced me to always participate in their meetings. She shares a lot with me whenever she comes back from the meetings, so I decided to visit the women during their meeting days. Being with them has helped me a lot as a family man and a farmer. I have three (3) different parcels of lands at different locations. Over the past years, I could count the number of bags of maize and tubers of

cassava I harvested from my farms. It was more or less hand to mouth business. Thanks a lot for introducing our community to CRSA practices. I have applied only compost this year on my farm and you can see how my crops are doing. I'm very grateful to ActionAid for enlightening us with this modern agricultural practice, which virtually cost us nothing compared to fertilizer."

Kyeame Afiba, a member of the Women's group said:



"I am the traditional queen mother of Tokor community. I have been cultivating my backyard garden and farm for decades now but I only use it to feed my family. I didn't consider farming a profitable business. As a member of the women's group in my community, I took all our meeting discussions seriously and put into practice whatever the leader taught us. I was very glad to see your team with the agricultural extension officer coming to my community to

teach us how to prepare compost. It was very simple to do but due to ignorance, we denied ourselves of the many benefits. I have applied compost to my farm this year and I am expecting a bumper harvest. I am most grateful to ActionAid for the support to women in my community."

5.5 "Buyers say organic vegetables taste better than the inorganic"

1,986 smallholder women vegetable farmers in rural communities in the Northern region have found improved ways of cultivating and packaging their vegetables for the market after undergoing training on CRSA by AAG. In Sanarigu and other surrounding communities in Tamale, female vegetable producers were supported by the FEVs to establish an organic farm where they learnt improved farming methods such as applying compost and green manure to improve vegetable farming and boost the income of women farmers. The women were applying synthetic chemicals on their vegetables and experienced difficulties with pest control and disease infestation, resulting in limited access to market and smaller profits.

After the training, women farmers had greater value for their vegetables on the markets and were able to gain more income to support their families.

Ramatu, a member of the vegetable farmers group, shared her experience:



Ramatu harvesting her organic vegetables

“Now, I have a different opinion about vegetable farming after taking part in the CRSA training, because I have tried it and I have seen the change. I harvested three (3) times in a month from my organic farm. I made a sale of GHC200 from each harvest because of the high demand. Apart from the money I made, I feed my family with the vegetables too. I am also able to support my husband to pay our children’s school fees. I will continue to farm organically because I know there is high demand for it. The cost of production is less with organics than synthetic. Buyers say organically

produced vegetables taste better than inorganic. Thank you ActionAid Ghana for changing this wrong mind-set I had about organic farming.”

5.6 Industrious local women produce mosquito repellent for sale

To enable smalholder women farmers create opportunities for themselves and gain unimpeded access markets, AAG provided specialised trainings for women groups in some rural communities. The trainings were also to ensure that the items produced by the women meet standard market requirements for processing and packaging and also conform to the existing legislative and quality standards. As a result of the training, many women acquired entrepreneurial skills to venture into local production of medicinal products and other useful items.

From the Baatingli community in Bimbilla, Abiba, 45, shared her successful story of how she was able to penetrate the market with her specially packaged sheabutter product:

“The training I attended on packaging, processing and value addition has really helped me a lot. It gave me useful ideas to improve my business. I am able to package my sheabutter into kilos even though I have never been to school. This is more profitable because I now use the right standard of measurement to package my sheabutter. I also produce mosquito repellent and body cream in addition to the processing of the sheabutter from neem oil. The production of mosquito repellent and the body cream is fetching me a lot of money because we are now in the harmattan season.

I intend to produce and sell more of the mosquito repellent outside my community. I intend to expand my business by supplying to traders in Bimbilla on wholesale. I am so happy and thankful to ActionAid for adding more value to my business.”



Abiba (right) receiving a measuring scale donated by ActionAid

MISSION OBJECTIVE TWO (MO 2)

5.7 Aspire to inspire –YFP member sees no boundaries to becoming a doctor

The Young Female Parliament (YFP) is a unique mentoring and leadership training platform for the empowerment of girls in secondary schools, universities and other tertiary institutions. It seeks to nurture the leadership potentials of young women to enable them claim their rights to leadership and decision-making positions. They also engage in campaigns to promote their interests. At the Chereponi Senior High School in the Northern region, members of the YFP underwent mentoring training where they interacted with career coaches and role models. After participating in the 2017 Parliament sessions in the Yendi Cluster, Ibrahim Latifa, a prominent YFP member, shared her experiences:



“My name is Ibrahim Latifa, a member of the Young Female Parliament (YFP) of Chereponi Senior High School. In July 2016, I took part in mentorship sessions in my school organised by ActionAid and NORSAAC. Before the mentorship sessions, I thought becoming a doctor was difficult for women, so I was really scared and didn’t have confidence in myself. During the mentorship sessions,

however, I interacted with Dr. Eyonam Abiti Gifty, who was a medical student. She inspired me a lot and assured me that there are no boundaries to becoming a doctor. Through my continuous interactions with her, I am confident that I can achieve my dream to make my family proud.”

5.8 District Assemblies to include human rights of alleged witches in development plans

AAG has been working with the alleged witches in the Northern region to promote their basic human rights, meet their immediate needs and reintegrate them into their communities. Despite intensive advocacy and various interventions by other stakeholders, including the Reintegration Committee and Regional House of Chiefs, the accused women face discrimination, stigma and other human rights violations which deny them their right to a life of dignity. Presently, there are five (5) alleged witches' camps in the region housing more than 400 accused men and women banished from rural communities, mostly in the three (3) regions of the North. While more than 250 women have been successfully reintegrated into their communities, there are many challenges that need to be addressed through effective collaboration with national and local stakeholders.



Portrait of survival and endurance: Two (2) alleged witches in their camp

One of the effective ways to address these challenges is to ensure that the District Assemblies close to the locations of the witches' camps prioritise interventions that directly target the plight of the alleged witches. To achieve this, AAG has been collaborating with the assemblies through meetings and dialogues where the human rights of marginalised groups, especially women, are discussed. As a result of regular interactions, four (4) Metropolitan, Municipal District Assemblies (MMDAs) indicated their willingness to include the needs of alleged witches in their Medium Term Development Plans (MTDPs).

A planner of the Yendi Municipal Assembly lauded the collaboration between AAG and the Assembly, and shares his insights:

"I have been working as a Planner for the Yendi Municipality for a long time but only appreciated the plight of the women better in today's meeting. I will include activities to cater for the alleged witches in the MTDP and urge all colleague planners in this meeting to do same. Let's not allow our personal belief systems to affect our professional conduct in the discharge of our duties."

5.9 Reducing women's UCW and challenging male dominance in Adaklu

As part of the campaign against women's Unpaid Care Work (UCW) and violence against women and girls, women's groups in rural communities in Adaklu were trained in leadership and economic empowerment activities to enable them work towards changing discriminatory attitudes and behaviours that disadvantage women in patriarchal societies. The women were supported to create platforms to challenge power relations and ensure their full participation in economic, social and political activities. The objective of the interventions was to promote the recognition, reduction and redistribution of UCW between men and women in their homes and communities. Using time diaries as measurement tools, a baseline research into women's time use in the communities revealed that women spend a lot of time undertaking UCW, which prevented them from pursuing profitable economic activities.

As a result of the campaigns and empowerment programmes, men in many communities have consciously started supporting their spouses to perform domestic chores usually reserved as traditional roles for women. Child care



A woman working on a Time Diary Card to calculate her hours of work

centres have been provided in many communities to enable children receive quality care in decent and child-friendly educational environment. This has given women time to engage in productive activities to reduce their UCW.

Fo Cudjoe, a 46 year old father from Adaklu Dawanu, shares his perspectives on women's UCW:



“I never sat down to consciously think about the stress women go through in keeping the house in order for every family member to enjoy. Growing up, I had three (3) sisters who virtually did everything for me.

I grew up with the mentality that women are supposed to take care of their homes, their spouses as well as children. The first day my wife asked me to support her carry some food crops from the farm, I felt disrespected as a man and warned her never to take me for granted again. Gradually, as I followed her to women's group

meetings, I heard testimonies and experiences from other women on how their spouses are supporting them at home and the joy it is bringing in their marriage. Although I was shy at the beginning, I planned to surprise my wife that day by laying the bed that night. It was amazing to my wife to see me take part in the performance of domestic activities. Naturally, I did not believe that men should support their wives in domestic work. Gradually, my wife introduced me to cutting vegetables for food preparation and now I am able to cook for the entire family. Thanks to ActionAid for the education and support to our community.”

5.10 Child marriage on the decline as community leaders report more cases

The End Child Marriage Campaign aims to work with school clubs and traditional authorities to reduce socio-cultural practices that promote child marriage in Ghana, especially in rural communities. It is also to empower children to acquire knowledge and skills to resist child marriage and stay in school. While the national average of child marriage is 12%, the practice is most prevalent in the Upper East, Upper West, Brong Ahafo and Greater Accra regions where the campaign was implemented. In all, the intervention was implemented in 15 districts and 120 communities.

In 2017, community and national level programmes were promoted to raise the needed awareness among traditional authorities, school children, peer educators and community members. This intervention was to intensify the sensitisation of communities and protect the rights and dignity of young girls, especially those in school.

In the Tain, Banda and Atebubu-Amantin districts of the Brong Ahafo region, sensitisation trainings were held with community members, Girls' Clubs, religious and opinion leaders, to advocate for more support for the campaign against child marriage. The groups were also educated on the rights of the girl child and existing child protection legislations in Ghana. The participants were sensitised on how to report cases of child marriage to the police, to serve as a deterrent to perpetrators.

As a result of the campaigns, many child marriage cases were reported by girls and community members to the police and other appropriate authorities.



Chief of Tampaala, a proactive and progressive community leader championing human rights and fighting against child marriage in the Upper West region

While some of the cases were resolved through community alternative conflict resolution structures, more serious infractions were referred to DoVVSU for justice.

In the Tain and Banda districts, 48 teenage mothers returned to school after receiving psycho-social counselling by child rights experts, psychologists and other professionals with support from AAG.

Alhaji Nsiah Seidu, a 61 year old Muslim leader from Namasa in the Tain district, remarked:



“It is a fact that child marriage is common in Muslim communities. In Namasa, my community, the practice has been with us for a long time and we accept it as part of our culture. However, with the inception of the End Child Marriage Project in the Tain district, people are beginning to accept the message. Since our last meeting, three (3) girls have escaped from being married, and are now in Senior High School. As a Muslim leader, I think it is my responsibility to protect our children for a better future. I wish to register my sincere appreciation to ActionAid and its partners for the kind gesture and also appeal to them to extend the campaign to other communities to save more girls from child marriage. I will continue to champion the cause in my own small way.”

Abedinego Dong, a 36 year old teacher of Kwame Brentim Primary School in the Tain District, also shared how he will be assisting girls to escape child marriage:

“On my part, I will ensure that people in the communities, especially men who engage in child marriage and other traditional acts of violence that lead to child marriage, put a stop to it. In my community, I will continue to use the knowledge I have acquired to help the girls pursue their dreams. I am proud that I have worked to rescue a girl from child marriage, who has since returned to school. Some of the practices that push these young girls into early marriages are customs that have been passed down from generations. It is not easy to change these old traditions but I feel it is part of what I should do to help these girls. I will make sure all cases are reported to the appropriate offices like DOVVSU, Police, GES and ActionAid. We are very grateful for this opportunity.”



5.11 Community radio stations partner AAG to campaign against gender-based violence

As part of our campaigns and interventions to promote human rights and end gender-based violence, AAG worked with regional and community level radio stations to extend our impact to many affected communities in our programme areas. We used our strong partnerships with the media and other advocacy organisations to promote the campaigns.

In the Upper West region for instance, we partnered with regional and local media houses to reach many communities. Some of the media houses included GBC radio, Puopele FM and Radford FM in Tumu. The partnerships enabled us to reach more than 700,000 people in remote communities where acts of violence such as child marriage, outmoded widowhood rites and teenage pregnancy are widespread. The radio stations played drama series and End Child Marriage campaign songs which enjoyed great listenership and exciting feedback from concerned stakeholders such as teachers, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), School Management Committees (SMCs), child marriage survivors, chiefs and local assemblies.

As a result of the radio campaigns, traditional councils in Tumu, Jirapa, Lambussie and Gwollu, supported our programmes and advocacy on the effects of child marriage and teenage pregnancy in rural communities. The Assembly Man and leaders of the Sentu community in the Lambussie Traditional area, rescued three (3) girls from child marriage, who are currently continuing their education. In Samoa, community leaders stopped the marriage of pregnant teenage girls by reporting perpetrators to the police. The girls have since been rescued and returned to school.

Other communities in the Jirapa and Sissala districts showed commitment to end child marriage by regularly reporting defilement cases. One of the cases involving a 10 year old primary 3 pupil who had been defiled by her Head teacher ended at the Wa Circuit Court, where AAG assisted in the prosecution by providing relevant witnesses to testify in court. AAG also collaborated with Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Ghana Education Service (GES), Criminal Investigations Department (CID) and traditional authorities in the affected communities in the prosecution of the case.

In addition to these successes, we formed Anti-Violence Platforms in 16 communities in the Jirapa and Lambussie districts where different interest groups in the communities met to deliberate on actions and strategies for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.

5.12 Women demand alternative livelihood opportunities on International Women's Day

International Women's Day (IWD) is observed in all AAG programme areas and partner communities to celebrate the achievements of women and draw attention to the challenges women face in their daily lives. In 2017, smallholder women farmers and widows in the Upper East region celebrated IWD with a call to duty bearers to provide alternative livelihood opportunities to improve their incomes and wellbeing. They also used the occasion to demand improved access to markets for women farmers and producers under the Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC) to ensure easy access to credit for agricultural production, processing and packaging.

The celebration brought together regional and district level stakeholders, including the Upper East Regional Minister, gender rights advocates, smallholder women farmers and other women groups. The women used the





Women reading a petition on IWD

opportunity to present a communique to the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection through the Regional Minister, demanding the formulation of gender-responsive policies to reduce UCW.

The women also advocated for government's support to enable them access agricultural inputs such as improved seeds, financial resources, technical assistance and grain banks.

The Regional Minister assured the women of government's commitment through policies such as 'Planting for Food and Jobs' and 'One district, One factory,' which will enable smallholder farmers engage in agro processing to improve their access to markets and create jobs in communities.

Mary Ayine, a 41 year old smallholder woman farmer in Pwalugu, testified about her participation in the celebrations:

"Thanks to ActionAid for the opportunity to participate in an event of this nature. In order to make life comfortable, there is the need to have a livelihood alternative. As a women's rights organisation, ActionAid recognised this critical support and has provided us with series of trainings to build our capacity. They provided us with small ruminants, rice processor distoner, and other inputs to enable us work towards our economic independence. As a result of this support, we are now engaged in productive activities and most of us are going into production and processing. This platform of experience sharing with the relevant stakeholders like the banks, National Board for

Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), MOFA, TradeAid among others, has given us the opportunity to learn about existing channels of financial assistance.

We have learnt the various strategies for market access, which has given me the confidence that rural women can also claim their rights. We have also come to realise that there are other markets available for rural women and there are many avenues of support to improve our lives. We were also encouraged to keep good records of the sales of our products, which will help us monitor our expenditure and incomes. My group and I will take advantage of these opportunities to find markets for our rice and baskets.”



Hon. Rockson Bukari, Upper East Regional Minister, receiving a communique

5.13 Men's cooking competition in Nangodi wins community hearts

To reduce UCW and promote women's economic empowerment, AAG has invested in the provision of child care centres and other interventions to reduce and distribute the care burden on women.

In Nangodi and surrounding communities in the Upper East region, negative traditional attitudes towards women are changing due to AAG's campaigns against UCW and gender-based violence. During the inauguration of a child care center funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, AAG organised a cooking competition to give men the opportunity to share experiences about cooking and sensitise other men in the community on UCW. It also allowed the competitors to demonstrate their appreciation of gender roles and responsibilities and the support men need to offer in the performance of domestic activities, such as cooking, sweeping and taking care of children.

Five (5) men were selected by the women's group to participate in the competition. The men prepared traditional dishes such as Tuozaafi, Tubani, Wasila, Konkonte and beans. More than 300 community members, including traditional leaders, teachers, women groups, children and the media attended the cooking competition.

As a major outcome of the cooking competition, men in Nangodi and surrounding communities are now supporting their wives and sisters at home in sharing household responsibilities. The men also publicly declared their support as champions and role models for UCW while allowing women time to engage in economic activities like farming, trading and weaving, to support the upkeep of their families.

A delighted participant in the cooking competition had this to say:

"My name is Tenga Boabil, a native of the Nangodi community. I am married with two (2) children. Initially when I heard people talk about unpaid care work, I always gave the excuse that it is a waste of time to support women. All changed when a friend from the nearby community told me about how he is benefiting from supporting his wife at home. I told myself I will give it a try and see the results. I had a meeting with my wife and we shared roles in the house. I started helping my wife with cooking, sweeping, cleaning and washing of



dishes while she also took care of bathing the children for school and washing the clothes. Sometimes we interchange roles.

Surprisingly, she was able to make some time to go to the market and sell, engage in group farming and attend important community and group meetings. She is currently learning a trade in dressmaking. Now, my wife is able to bring home ingredients and foodstuff, which allows me to save money to pay the school fees of our children. I have now become a champion against UCW. Thanks to ActionAid for the enlightenment and support.”

MISSION OBJECTIVE THREE (MO 3)

5.14 Youth groups partner with TUC to campaign for gender responsive services

As a strategic priority, AAG works with young people, youth groups and young activists to campaign against human rights violations, poverty and gender inequality. Our youth movements, such as Activista and the Young Urban Women’s Movement (YUWM), have been involved in national and local campaigns. Over the years, our interventions have focused on harnessing the potentials of young people and empowering them to claim their rights, demand accountability and pursue their development priorities.

To deepen our work with the youth in 2017, we worked with youth groups in peri-urban communities in the Greater Accra region to campaign on critical social services in deprived and marginalised communities. In commemoration of the 2017 International Youth Day, the YUWM and other peri-urban youth groups, collaborated with the national youth wing of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) to demand for decent work and Gender Responsive Public Services (GRPS) in their communities. The youth groups participated in a national symposium where they called for safe and decent working environments. They also called for the provision of critical basic services such as potable water, child care centres and gender-friendly washrooms for girls in schools and other public areas.

Following the sustained advocacy by the youth groups, their communities have become more informed about their right to basic amenities while engagements with district assemblies and other stakeholders have yielded positive results.

5.15 TX Foundation supports Konkon community with modern schools

In many rural communities in Ghana, children are denied their fundamental right to quality education in a conducive learning environment. Lack of educational infrastructure, inadequate learning and teaching materials, and lack of quality trained teachers, have resulted in low performance and poor education delivery.

To improve the quality of education and empower school children to demand their right to free and compulsory education, AAG has collaborated with public and private stakeholders in education such as the GES, child rights campaigners, donors, and PTAs to demand investments in model schools to enhance good educational outcomes.

In 2017, AAG partnered with the Tzu-Xing (TX) Foundation, a philanthropic organisation from Taiwan, to construct a model Kindergarten and JHS block in Konkon in the GA South District of the Greater Accra region at the cost of \$105, 307. The facilities included classrooms, office spaces, store rooms, toilets, furniture and playground equipment.



TX Foundation and AAG break ground for the construction of the facilities

The two (2) model structures were commissioned on 7th December, 2017 at a community durbar in Konkon by representatives of the Tzu-Xing Foundation. Teachers of the Konkon MA Basic School and community leaders expressed great appreciation to the donors for the model facilities. Before the intervention by Tzu-Xing, the kindergarten and JHS lessons were



Cutting the sod after the completion of the KG and JHS blocks



New KG block for Konkon

held in uncompleted structures, which exposed the children to harsh weather and environmental dangers. The children of Konkon MA Basic and JHS can now look forward to receiving quality education in a conducive environment.

5.16 Early childhood education makes gains in rural communities

As a social justice organisation committed to bridging the inequality gap in education, AAG works with partners and stakeholders to deliver inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (SDG 4). In marginalised communities where children are denied their right to quality education, AAG has been implementing various development interventions to promote access to quality public education for boys and girls.

In the Upper East region, AAG supported three (3) communities (Sakote, Kotintabik and Nangodi) with child care centres and KG blocks to improve Early Childhood Education Development (ECED) in the communities. The facilities were equipped with teaching and learning materials, playground equipment, offices and stores for storage. In addition, furniture, toys, water tanks and teaching aids were provided to ensure full and complete education in a comfortable and child-friendly environment.

In these deprived communities, children had been denied their right to early childhood education due to the absence of child care centres and other

amenities necessary for the development of children. Children learnt under trees, which exposed them to many hazards and impeded effective teaching and learning. With the provision of the model educational infrastructure, children in the communities are now enjoying their fundamental right to quality care. The facilities have also relieved most parents, especially women, of the burden of staying at home to care for their kids during school hours, which also prevented them from pursuing profitable economic interests.



Kids in Sakote studied under trees before the provision of KG



The joy of learning in a conducive environment which promotes the rights of children

5.17 ActionAid Secretary-General visits Young Urban Women's Movement in Kpobiman

In November, 2017, AAG hosted the Secretary-General of ActionAid, Adriano Campolina and the Federation Leadership Team in Accra for the international leadership meetings. The team paid a working visit to the YUWM at Kpobiman in the Ga West district of Greater Accra. The young women shared exciting elements of their thematic campaign programmes with the Secretary-General, highlighting their achievements and impact stories in their advocacy work. Some of the topics discussed include UCW, decent work, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and other rights awareness interventions on gender-based violence in peri-urban communities. The young women also shared key successes in their advocacy programmes with local assemblies, trade unions and vocational institutes.

The Secretary-General lauded the leadership and organisational skills of the young women and shared experiences from other development contexts. He also answered questions on the new Global Strategy 'Action for Global Justice', funding, global campaigns and women's rights.



Demonstration Time: YUWM treat the Global Leadership to signature songs



Secretary-General, Adraino Campolina and International Director of Programmes, Everjoice Win, admiring some of the products by the YUWM.



Adraino Campolina delivering an address at the CSO Expert Dialogue in Accra



Secretary-General, Adraino Campolina with the Vice-President of Ghana, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, at the Jubilee House

The YUWM is a vibrant group of more than 2,000 girls and young women mobilised from peri-urban communities in Tamale and Greater Accra, to campaign for their rights and influence the development of their communities through advocacy, leadership and empowerment programmes.

As part of his visit, the Secretary-General interacted with the Vice-President of Ghana, His Excellency Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, at the Jubilee House on ActionAid's work in Ghana and around the globe. They also explored opportunities for development collaboration between the Government of Ghana and ActionAid. The delegation was led by AAG Board Chair, Prof. Ken Attafuah and included the Country Director of AAG, Sumaila Abdul-Rahman.

5.18 Breaking myths: Girls' Clubs show sterling leadership in their communities

As part of the fight against gender-based violence in schools, Girls' Clubs have been strengthened and equipped with leadership and campaign skills to enable them make demands for their development and educational needs. Through youth empowerment and trainings on human-rights, members of our Girls' Clubs have become more conscious of their human rights and are challenging rights violations in their communities.

In the Upper West region where school girls suffer negative cultural practices such as child marriage and marriage by abduction, Girls' Clubs have been empowered through regular leadership and mentoring activities to challenge these violations. As a result, some of the girls were elected into leadership positions in their schools, such as school prefect. This enabled them to influence decision-making and other interventions for the protection of the rights of young women. In these patriarchal communities, the position of school prefect and other leadership roles are the preserve of boys while girls face cultural and traditional acts of violence, such as abduction for marriage, teenage pregnancy and other discriminatory practices that challenge their education.

The leaders of the Girls' Clubs in schools in the Sissala East, Jirapa, Sissala West and Lambussie districts, inspired their clubs to impact the development of their communities through school-based advocacy programmes and other campaign activities. They sensitised members of their communities on the effects of child marriage and also demanded gender-responsive services to promote girl child education.

The girls joined the campaign on UCW where they called for the recognition and redistribution of domestic roles such as cleaning, cooking, caring for children, among others. Refresher trainings were also organised for 160 patrons of the Girls' Clubs in the four (4) districts, where participants were introduced to various participatory methodologies and leadership models which enabled them to effectively manage the clubs using AAG's Girls' Club manual.

Following their sterling leadership examples, schools in other communities such as Tizza and Sentu in the Jirapa and Lambussie districts, have elected girls as senior prefects, an unprecedented feat in the districts. Teachers in these schools and others where the Girls' Clubs are vibrant, reported great improvement in the academic work of members of the clubs.

5.19 Women demand more DOVVSU offices in Brong Ahafo

Ghana is a signatory to important international charters and conventions, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and others that seek to protect women and girls from violence. However, violence against women and girls persist in all the regions of Ghana, especially in marginalised communities where some cultures and traditions do not promote the rights and dignity of women.

Many communities in AAG's operational areas lack adequate legal and institutional structures to deal expeditiously with cases of violence against women. In these communities, many cases of violence are not resolved because victims lack the confidence to report cases to appropriate authorities. This has resulted in campaigns and advocacy by our women's groups, Community-Based Anti-Violence Teams (COMBATs) and social movements.

As part of activities to commemorate 16 Days of Activism, women groups in our Brong Ahafo programme area, walked through the principal streets of Sunyani, the Brong Ahafo Regional capital, to campaign against gender based violence on the theme *"Leave No One Behind: End Violence Against Women and Girls."*



Women embarking on a procession to campaign against domestic violence

The women used the occasion to call for more DoVVSU offices in the region to facilitate the adjudication of cases of gender-based violence. The region has only three (3) DOVVSU offices, which prevents many victims and survivors from finding justice. The walk was organised by AAG in collaboration with the Department of Gender and DoVVSU.

The Municipal Chief Executive of Sunyani, Hon. Evelyn Amma Kumi Richardson, reiterated the government's commitment to deal with gender-based violence through rigorous community education and enforcement of domestic violence laws. She also encouraged the women to report cases of violence to DoVVSU, Social Welfare and other institutions.

MISSION OBJECTIVE FOUR (MO 4)

5.20 Tax Justice Campaign gears up for bigger national impact

The campaign against harmful tax incentives and bad treaties has received widespread support in many AA member countries where billions of dollars are lost in tax incentives given to multinational companies to attract investment. An AAG research report on tax incentives published in 2014 estimates that Ghana loses close to \$1.2 billion every year to harmful tax incentives. “The West African Giveaway: Use and Abuse of Corporate Tax Incentives in ECOWAS” estimates that three (3) African countries lose a combined \$5.8 billion (Ghana \$2.27 billion, Nigeria \$2.9 billion and Senegal \$638.7 million) by granting corporate tax incentives to multinational companies.

The loss in revenue denies government money for development in critical sectors to bring relief to people living in poverty, especially women and children. To advocate for progressive taxation through the removal of needless tax incentives, AAG partnered with concerned public and private organisations to raise the awareness of the citizenry about the impact of harmful tax incentives on the lives of people living in poverty and exclusion.

As part of our Tax Power campaign, we organised a series of workshops in 2017 at the national and regional levels, to equip staff and partners with advocacy and campaign skills to intensify the campaign. In November, 2017, we organised a special stakeholders’ meeting in Koforidua for members of the Tax Justice Coalition, Activista, Women’s Rights organisations and the TUC on tax incentives, treaties and advocacy planning. Other subjects included taxation laws in Ghana, corporate tax, campaign design and execution in relation to GRPS and women’s UCW.

The workshop improved the campaign and advocacy skills of participants while facilitating critical partnerships among campaign partners and other stakeholders.

5.21 Tax justice, education privatisation and the right to education

We continued our Tax Power Campaign in the year by working with our partners to research and analyse the effect of education privatisation on the fundamental right to education. The study also examined the role effective taxation can play in delivering quality public education to all children in Ghana. The research found that while public financing for important sectors such as education has been declining over the years, effective taxation was observed as a potential source to increase government funding for the sector. It found that in 2014, the Government allocated 20.5% of its budget to education, which reduced to 17.8% in 2015, and 13.5% in 2016. This violates the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which enjoins Governments to provide free compulsory primary education for all.

**You say there's
no money, we say
cut back wasteful
tax exemptions.**

#FundEducation
#taxjustice



Ghana's
estimated
revenue loss:
US\$2 billion to
tax incentives

Ghana loses an estimated
US\$2 billion each year to
tax incentives. Just **1.8%**
of this could educate all
289,456 girls currently out
of primary school.

#FundTheFuture



Pupils from public schools speaking about the impact of tax on education



Resource persons from NAGRAT and the Tax Justice Coalition

As a result of these challenges in public education financing, the study revealed that there has been a dramatic shift to education privatisation, where Ghanaians were paying more to give their children quality education in the privately managed institutions. Consequently, many children have been denied their right to quality public education, contrary to the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) and constitutional provisions on quality basic public education for all Ghanaian children.

In October 2017, we launched our report on 'Tax, education privatisation and the right to education' to promote national advocacy for quality basic education and demand better public financing for education through effective taxation. The launch brought together members of the Tax Justice Coalition, teachers, university lecturers, basic school pupils, representatives of civil society and the TUC.

The report recommended the abolishment of harmful tax incentives to enable government mobilise adequate domestic revenue to finance quality education. It proposed that 20% of the billions of dollars given in tax incentives

could provide more than 600,000 extra places for children in schools, or feed 6 million children every year. In addition, 92,000 more teachers would be employed to improve teaching and learning to more than 319,000 children in schools in deprived and marginalised communities who are out of school.

Following the publication of the report, AAG has strengthened partnerships with education campaigners and child right advocates to promote quality public education for all children in Ghana.

5.22 Gender Analysis on Agriculture spending to influence national budgets

To promote our advocacy on gender-responsiveness in policy formulation and implementation, AAG works to mainstream women's rights in campaigns and programmes at the community and national levels. Through research, policy reviews and stakeholder engagements, AAG has influenced important gender-sensitive public policies and programmes to promote the interests and development priorities of women and girls. In 2017, we conducted a gender analysis on three (3) government budgets (2015, 2016, 2017) to examine how much was spent on agriculture in relation to smallholder farmers in the three (3) regions of the North.

The research found that budgetary allocations from the central government and the MMDAs to the agricultural sector in the three (3) regions were inadequate. Additionally, the allocations were not disbursed to the districts on time. This impacts negatively on the work of smallholder women farmers, thereby affecting food security and the livelihoods of people living in poverty, especially women. The limited budgetary support made it difficult for the Departments of Agriculture at the local and regional levels to design and implement effective programmes to improve the work of smallholder women farmers. Women also suffer cultural violence, gender discrimination and other acts of traditional violence which hamper their right to land, agricultural extension service and other critical services.

The study involved field visits, desk reviews, interviews with women farmers and officials of government agencies.

AAG submitted a memorandum of recommendations to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture towards the preparation of the 2018 national budget.

5.23 AAG works with district assemblies to change lives

As part of our commitment to empower local communities and promote sustainable livelihoods, AAG worked with two (2) district assemblies and national level technical institutions to meet the needs of local communities in some of our programme areas. Under the Sustainable Livelihoods and Transparent Local Authorities (SLATLA) intervention, we partnered with the Sunyani West District Assembly in the Brong Ahafo region and the La-Nkwantanang-Madina Municipal Assembly in the Greater Accra region to work with local youth groups, artisans and people living with disabilities. We also assisted people engaged in agribusinesses to promote poultry production, mushroom farming and vegetable cultivation.

The intervention, which was sponsored by the European Union (EU), addressed key problems in the informal sector of Ghana by providing job opportunities to boost economic activities at the local level while tackling environmental practices that reduce economic productivity. It also sought to address the low revenue mobilisation of local assemblies by introducing digital technologies for effective revenue collection while improving transparency and accountability at the district assemblies.

In 2017, we worked with the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) and the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT) to implement various interventions and training programmes in 25 communities in Sunyani West and 15 communities in La Nkwantanang Madina district. The interventions included skills enhancement training in Information Communication Technology (ICT), support for poultry production, feed processing, grasscutter and mushroom farming. We also provided training support for artisans involved in tiling, plumbing and embroidery to improve their skills and expand their businesses.

In the La-Nkwatantang Madina district, Paul Kadja, a mushroom farmer, shared his experiences after receiving support and training for his mushroom business:



Paul Kadja, 31, beneficiary of SLATLA Mushroom Farming Training

“I can now pay my utility bills and other things from the sales I make from mushroom farming. It is very profitable because I sell at least five (5) kilos at GH¢ 15.00 per kilo every day. I do not have to spend much on food because we also eat the mushrooms. I have introduced my wife to the mushroom business, so she supports me on the farm. I will use the savings from the sale of the mushrooms to expand the business. I am very grateful to ActionAid, the La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipal Assembly and the European Union.”



An official of La-Nakwantang-Madina Municipal Assembly leading a workshop



Representative of the European Commission sharing a message of support during the project launch

6.0 ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS

6.1 Promoting Democracy, Elections and Governance in Ghana

In 2017, we promoted many national and local campaigns in the areas of governance, public accountability, gender-based violence and social justice. In the thematic area of governance, we promoted the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, (ACDEG) in Ghana. The African Governance Architecture (AGA) is an initiative to promote good governance and strengthen democracy in Africa. It is also aimed at providing an avenue for stakeholders to dialogue on practices that impact on effective governance and translate the AU's values into national governance policies and democratic practices.



AAG and partners campaign to promote the involvement of the youth in governance

The AGA is organised along five (5) clusters, namely democracy, governance, constitutionalism, human rights and humanitarian assistance.

To achieve the objectives of the Platform, we partnered with ActionAid Denmark (AADK) and ActionAid member countries in Africa to develop the EC PANAF Project under the title, “*Mobilising Civil Society Support for Implementation of the African Governance Architecture.*” We worked with youth groups and other stakeholders in the Upper East, Brong Ahafo and Volta regions in planned activities, training and skills development programmes.

The aim of the training was to empower young people in African countries with relevant knowledge and experiences to organise and advocate for the implementation of the AGA and ACDEG.

Afako Eric, a participant of one of the training programmes remarked:

“The future is now! The youth of today are poised for action to participate actively in governance. We had no knowledge about the AGA and other

democratic platforms but now we have acquired insight which will allow us to advocate for the removal of dictators in Africa. We will also champion this campaign for more youth and women's involvement in elections, democracy and governance in Ghana, especially in the Volta Region."

Participants from the Adaklu and other districts expressed gratitude to AAG and the donors for the training programme and also pledged to start sensitisation on democracy, elections and governance in their communities.

6.2 National campaign walk against Unpaid Care Work

As a signature campaign of the ActionAid Federation, the advocacy on UCW has formed part of the national campaign and programme priorities of many member countries, including AAG. In 2017, we embarked on campaigns on UCW in all our six (6) regional programmes and at the national level to draw public attention to the effects of UCW on women's productivity and national development. The campaigns involved radio discussions, community drama, local floats and stakeholder dialogues.

As part of the 2017 IWD, smallholder women farmers from our programme areas converged in Accra for a national campaign on UCW, tax justice and GRPS. The women walked through some principal streets in the capital and displayed placards and other publicity materials to demonstrate the interconnectedness between UCW, women rights and harmful tax incentives.

The women granted interviews to national media on how UCW robs them of quality time to engage in productive work, thereby preventing them from



AAG's Advocacy and Campaigns Manager, Margaret Brew-Ward, explaining the interconnectedness between UCW, Tax Justice and Women's Rights



Smallholder woman farmer sharing a campaign message with the media

contributing to the upkeep of their families. The women also used picture stands to demand recognition, reduction and redistribution of UCW.

Linking tax justice to women's UCW, the campaign highlighted the crucial role effective taxation plays in financing GRPS to reduce women's UCW. It stressed the need to end harmful tax incentives given to multinationals to enable government mobilise the necessary resources to finance critical services for citizens, especially women. The theme of the national campaign was *'Tax Justice for Women's Rights.'*

The campaigns have awakened the consciousness of people living in poverty and exclusion to identify with common struggles and advocate for change as part of a bigger movement.

6.3 First National Smallholder Women Farmer's Conference

To promote our work with social movements, activists and people's organisations, we organised the first national smallholder women farmer's conference in Wa, Upper West, in October 2017. It brought together more than 1,000 smallholder women farmers from six (6) regions, agricultural experts and other women's rights groups in the country. The objective of the conference was to give women farmers a platform to interact with policy



Paulina Addy, a Director at the Women in Agriculture Department (WIAD), speaking at the Conference



A woman farmer addressing the conference in Wa

makers and demand gender-responsive budgets for smallholder agriculture. It was also to promote networking and alliance building among women farmers in Ghana. The occasion was used to share the findings of AAG's research on gender-responsive agricultural budgets and highlight conditions required to promote women's involvement in agriculture.

The women raised critical concerns about their limited access to tractor services, inadequate agricultural extension officers, lack of credit facilities and limited market access. They also demanded equal participation and representation in local and national decision-making on agriculture while advocating for special provisions for smallholder women farmers in the 'Planting for Food and Jobs' Programme. The women farmers elected their national and regional executives and shared roles on specific advocacy topics to promote regional and national campaigns.

Some of the women farmers shared experiences and success stories of their advocacy work in their communities and districts, which resulted in some district assemblies including local women in budget planning meetings. The women also shared impact lessons on their successful negotiation with land owners for their right to fertile land. They also highlighted their role in radio discussions and demonstrations in their communities, which attracted other smallholder women farmers to join their movement.

As a result of the conference, the Women Farmers' Movement has increased in size, attracting farmer groups and networks of other women activists to join the movement. Some of the local farmers have since participated in international campaigns, including the Kilimanjaro Initiative in Tanzania.

The conference was attended by representatives from the Women in Agriculture Department (WIAD), MoGCSP, MoFA, and other stakeholders under the theme *"Influencing Gender-Responsive Budgets for Agriculture: Time to Increase Investments for Smallholder Women Farmers."*

7.0 INTERNAL AUDIT

7.1 Strengthening auditing, financial reporting and accountability systems

To improve our financial reporting systems, planning and accountability, we carried out financial and programme audits in the activities of our regional programmes, donor-funded interventions and our partners in the regions.

In addition to scheduled audits, we conducted random and periodic audits to achieve 100% annual audit execution. We also conducted project closure audits and supported the audits of other countries, including Liberia while providing guidance to our external auditors to fulfil our strategic objective of meeting international auditing standards.

In line with best practices in internal auditing, we promoted a risk-based paperless internal audit environment to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our audit system and ensure value for money in our operations.

Through effective financial management and proactive auditing, we provided value added auditing services to staff and management by monitoring and guiding programme and project implementation to ensure effective decision-making. We also adopted a Risk-Based Integrated Audit (RBIA) approach by providing timely information towards programme and financial performance. This ensured that effective organisational policies and procedures were followed to achieve our mission objectives.

8.0 WORKING WITH PARTNERS, MOVEMENTS AND COLLABORATORS IN 2017

In 2017, we worked with three (3) social movements, 11 local partners, national level campaign partners and several institutional collaborators. We leveraged our longstanding community rootedness to extend our impact to networks of women's groups and young people in our efforts to form larger movements to promote our social justice work. To promote effective work at the regional programme level, we limited every LRP to one local partner.

Following a partnership rationalisation, we ended our MoU with some local partners to enable us focus more on our people's organisations and intensify our regional development approach. The partners included Community Aid for Rural Development (CARD), BONADATU, Centre for Active Learning and Integrated Development (CALID), Tumu Deanery Rural Integrated Development Programme (TUDRIDEP) and Urban Agricultural Network (UrbANeT).



Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection, Hon Otiko Afisa Djaba, interacting with the Country Director of ActionAid Rwanda, Josephine Uwamariya, at her office in Accra

We present below a list of our partners and collaborators in 2017.

Table 1: Social Movements

Name of Movement	Coverage and Location	Campaign Focus
Activista	National, with regional chapters	Youth activism, poverty, inequalities, governance
Young Urban Women's Movement	National, with established resource centres in Accra and Tamale and regional chapters	SRHR, decent work, UCW, gender equality
Smallholder Women Farmers' Movement	National, with chapters in six (6) regions	Agricultural governance, Gender responsive policies, agricultural inputs

Table 2: Regional and Local Partners

Regional Programme	Location	Partners
Northern	Tamale	Songtaba NORSAAC
Upper East	Zebilla	Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM) Belim Wusa Development Agency (BEWDA)
Upper West	Wa	Action for Sustainable Development (ASUDEV)
Volta	Kadjebi Adaklu	Global Action for Women Empowerment (GLOWA) Network of Communities in Development (NOCID)
Brong Ahafo	Sunyani	Social Development Improvement Agency (SODIA) Centre for Maternal Health and Community Empowerment (CMCE)
Greater Accra	Greater Accra	Young Urban Women's Movement

Table 3: National Level Partners and Collaborators

National Level Partners	Institutional Collaborators
ABANTU for Development General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU) Trades Union Congress (TUC) Tax Justice Coalition	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) Ghana Education Service (GES) Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) Regional Houses of Chiefs Regional Coordinating Councils Metropolitan, Municipal District Assemblies (MMDAS)

We are pleased to share below experiences from some of the partners who worked with us in the year:

8.1 Moving to challenging heights and breaking new grounds with ActionAid

“Social Development and Improvement Agency (SODIA) improved our working relationship with ActionAid Ghana in 2017. We strengthened our partnership through clear and timely communication, quarterly partners’ review meetings, yearly Participatory Review and Reflection Processes (PRRPs), among others. These meetings provided us innumerable opportunities to forge a strategic development direction together, to achieve our collective goals.

As a young and fast growing organisation, SODIA has benefited from mentorship, capacity building and technical support from ActionAid, to aid our work. These interventions have enhanced our image within our districts and other operational areas, and given us some leverage and influence in the region and the nation as a whole. As a result, we achieved remarkable successes in the implementation of our programme work and projects such as End Child Marriage, Complementary Basic Education (CBE), and

Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER), all geared towards the empowerment of women and girls.

Our partnership has further deepened our social development focus of putting people at the centre of development. At the community level, we sensitised people through campaigns to awaken their consciousness and build their capacities to claim their rights and demand accountability from duty bearers. Our good working relationships have benefitted our communities, who have received a lot of commendation for their collaborative effort. We anticipate that this useful engagement will continue in the years ahead to enable us achieve our development objectives as partners and improve the lives of people living in poverty.”

8.2 Building stronger partnership for better results

“Action for Sustainable Development (ASUDEV) remained a core partner of ActionAid Ghana in 2017, working assiduously with ActionAid Ghana to implement various development interventions in our LRP. We supported AAG’s countrywide partnership restructuring, which resulted in AAG ending their partnership with some local partners. Consequently, ASUDEV became the only core partner in the region. This resulted in the expansion of the scope of our partnership interventions to include programmes under the CRSA thematic area and child sponsorship. ASUDEV spiritedly took up the challenge and deepened our work in the communities, contributing to the overall AAG vision of ending poverty and injustice.

ASUDEV benefitted tremendously from AAG not only from the provision of financial resources for our work, but also in other areas of capacity building and training. Key areas of training included CRSA, sponsorship communication, feminism, M&E and financial management coaching. These trainings contributed to enhance the quality of our advocacy and campaign work.

Our interventions focused on addressing the structural causes of poverty by analysing inequalities and vulnerabilities emanating from social, political, cultural norms and practices that perpetuate poverty, especially amongst women and children in our communities.

In the area of gender and women’s rights, we sought to reduce various forms of violence and socio-cultural practices that inhibit the rights of women and

girls by promoting engagements among COMBATs, Chiefs, Queen Mothers and law enforcement agencies. We also worked to deepen our advocacy on women's UCW. Under education, our interventions sought to promote safe and conducive school environments for both girls and boys. We also worked to enhance the capacity of community members to participate in the governance and management of schools through their PTAs.

It has been a fruitful partnership and we look forward to many more years of work with ActionAid Ghana, to bring change to the lives of people living in poverty and injustice.”

9.0 FUNDRAISING, CHILD SPONSORSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

9.1 Child Sponsorship

At the end of 2017, the total sponsorship links, including child and non-child sponsorship, was 12,126. This represents a reduction of 6.4% from the beginning of the year when the links stood at 12,967. Links from Brazil recorded a percentage decrease of 8.8%, followed by Greece (6.7%). Links from Italy reduced by 5.8%, while UK links dropped to 4.9%. The reduction was as a result of supporter withdrawals attributable mainly to difficult economic conditions of sponsors, which compelled some of them to limit their external commitments.

We expect a further decrease in the link level in the next few years, especially as Brazil has indicated mass withdrawal of supporters in Ghana from the second quarter of 2018. This is due to worsening economic and social conditions in Brazil. Generally, the local fundraising environment has been challenging, which has affected development work and expansion programmes, not only for AAG but for many development organisations. This will significantly affect our operations in Bawku and Adaklu, but we are working to establish other viable partnerships to support our programmes in these areas.



Child sponsors and volunteers from Greece contributing to the construction of teacher's quarters in Koru in the Kadjebi District of the Volta region



With free books and pencils, these sponsored kids toast to the benefits of ActionAid Child Sponsorship Scheme

9.2 Institutional Partnerships and High Value Funding

We intensified efforts to establish funding partnerships to enable us implement interventions to meet the strategic needs of people living in poverty. In 2017, we secured £1,736,824 to implement various projects in our communities, details of which are provided below.

We entered into a partnership with the Sunyani West District Assembly and La-Nkwantanang Madina Municipal Assembly to implement an EU-funded project in 40 communities across the two (2) districts. The total budget for the 42-month project titled 'Sustainable Livelihood and Transparent Local Authorities' is €822,876 with 85% of the total amount provided by the European Commission.

We secured the cedi-equivalent of £495,000 from DFID (through Crown Agents) for the implementation of the fifth (5th) cycle of the Complementary Basic Education (CBE) intervention. The funding covers four (4) districts: Tain in Brong Ahafo; Nanumba North, Gushiegu and East Mamprusi in the Northern region.

We also received £310,000 from the People's Postcode Lottery (PPL) in the UK to implement the '*Combating Violence against Women and Girls*' project, which is under implementation in four (4) districts in Ghana: Wa Municipal and Sissala East in Upper West region; Bawku East in Upper East and Nanumba North in the Northern region. The activities include the construction of two 3-unit classrooms, a 6-unit classroom and a multi-purpose centre to provide shelter for rescued women and girls who have survived violence.

We established a rewarding funding partnership with Tzu-Xing (TX) Foundation, a philanthropic organisation based in Taiwan, who donated \$105,307 towards the construction of two (2) school projects in the Ga South Municipal area of the Greater Accra region. The infrastructure provided access to a safe school environment for children in KonKon and surrounding communities.

Within the year, we secured \$94,000 from Hewlett Foundation in the USA, which enabled us to continue our work with the YUWM. With the additional funding support, we were able to expand the intervention from the Greater



Former AAG Country Director, Adwoa Kwateng-Kluyiste, interacting with some sponsored children in the Upper East Region

Accra and Northern regions to the Upper East region, to benefit young women in the region.

We also secured £45,000 from the Foreign Service of the Faroes towards our End Child Marriage Campaign in Ghana. We raised additional £20,000 through a collaborative effort between AAG and the Community and Events Team of ActionAid UK, to further the campaign.

9.3 Contract Management System

As part of our system improvements, the ActionAid Federation started the development of a Contract Management System (CMS) to promote the efficient management and monitoring of all contracts. The system would ensure that members in the Federation have a central point of contact to monitor the different interventions funded by donors in member countries

within the Federation. It would greatly improve donor management and serve as a reference point to promote effective project monitoring and implementation.

We expect that the CMS and our Management Information System (MIS) will promote efficiency in contract management and serve as a useful information resource to guide the decision making processes of our Board of Trustees and staff on matters related to donor contracts and project management.

10.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

Effective communication played a pivotal role in projecting a positive image of AAG in 2017. This enabled us to publicise our impact stories and interventions to our communities, partners, collaborators and other publics. We used proactive audience segmentation and regular news analysis to reach our rightholders, especially people living in poverty and exclusion, with relevant and targeted information, while strengthening critical partnerships with our stakeholders and institutional collaborators.

Within the year, we used a variety of communication tools such as press releases, policy briefs, research reports, video documentaries and publicity materials to address media and stakeholders' communication demands.

10.1 Local and international media partnerships

We strengthened our partnerships with local and international media organisations to promote our global signature campaigns, especially women's rights and UCW, and support our advocacy work and campaigns on thematic interventions. We maintained our weekly column (Development in Action) in the Finder Newspaper, which enabled our staff and partners to regularly contribute articles on critical development subjects to promote our work.

This ensured that AAG always featured in the news with critical updates on development programmes in our operational areas. We also collaborated effectively with the international media, particularly regarding our work on child marriage and the campaign for the reintegration of alleged witches' in the Northern region. As a result, many of our impact and success stories were published in foreign media and on countless digital platforms, which projected AAG to donors, sponsors and development enthusiasts to support our work.

10.2 Social media management

We expanded our social media following in the year, especially on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, which enabled us to stay interactive with our followers while attracting new people to our pages. As at December 2017, our numbers on Facebook had reached 9,749 while our following on other social media platforms grew steadily. We invested in social media promotions and adopted innovative digital communication and marketing practices to remain competitive in the digital space.



Alesha Dixon sharing experiences with Felicia, a teenage mother, in Tampaala

10.3 Celebrity campaign against Marriage by Abduction

We collaborated with British celebrity Alesha Dixon to promote our campaign against child marriage and marriage by abduction. Alesha interacted with teenage mothers, survivors of marriage by abduction, Girls Clubs, teachers and traditional authorities in rural communities in the Sissala East district of the Upper West region. As a result of the partnership, AAG's many interventions in Ghana were highlighted and discussed by influential media organisations in the UK, including the BBC, ITV, Radio 4, the Daily Mail and several media outlets. The international campaign promoted AAG to a wider international audience and opened up many sponsorship and donor opportunities.

11.0 HUMAN RESOURCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ADMINISTRATION

In 2017, we worked with a staff strength of 66 to implement varied development interventions in our operational areas. This was to fulfil our enabling objective in CSP V, which sought to "increase capacity and motivation of staff to deliver the strategy and promote women and youth leadership." While we did not achieve a 50:50 gender parity in 2017, we ended the year with 25 females, representing 41% and 37 males accounting for 59% of total staff strength. At the senior management level, the female to male ratio was 31% and 69% respectively. Females in middle management positions constituted 58% while 42% were men. At the junior level, only 8% were females and 92% men.

We also gave opportunities to some non-permanent staff to enable us achieve our targets within the period. We will continue to involve more women in our recruitment and selection processes and implement women- sensitive policies to attract and motivate more women to progress to leadership positions.

To fulfil our objective of resourcing young professionals with practical skills for the world of work, we provided placement opportunities for nineteen (19) persons including interns, national service personnel, 'inspirators' and temporary staff. This represents 90% increase of the number of non-permanent staff we worked with in 2016.

Staff categorisation by gender and levels

Quarters	General staff			Senior level			Middle level			Junior level		
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
1	68	27	41	16	5	11	39	22	17	13	1	12
2	70	29	41	16	5	11	41	24	17	13	1	12
3	66	28	38	17	6	11	37	21	16	12	1	11
4	60	24	36	16	5	11	34	19	15	10	0	10

11.1 Relocation of Global Platform to Accra

In the year, AAG's training hub, the Global Platform, relocated to Accra from Tamale to promote effective training programmes and lend support to national campaigns. The relocation enabled the trainers to plan and execute training programmes for institutions in Accra and other regions. We also appointed a local manager to lead the Platform when the contracts of expatriate staff expired. The relocation ensured the financial sustainability of the training hub.

11.2 More female appointments and transfers in 2017

In the year, we recruited more females than men to fill vacant staff positions to ensure that we had the required number of staff to implement our programmes. We were guided by our feminist principles and belief in the leadership potentials of women to fill vacant positions with suitable women.

Out of ten (10) new appointments in the period, 70% were females while 30% were males. The appointments fulfilled AAG's objective in CSP V to promote women and youth leadership. 90% of the appointments were within the age bracket of 27-35 years.

We promoted transfers of key programme and project staff to improve and expand our interventions. The intervention enabled us to retain staff with

transferable skills and prevent staff attrition. It also ensured continuity of our interventions by maintaining experienced staff to meet donor reporting demands and other programme management requirements.

11.3 Performance Management

In the year, we implemented a simplified Performance Management System (PMS), to improve performance and address the training needs of all staff. This enabled us to coordinate the processes of target setting, mid-year reviews and end of year appraisals of staff. As part of the implementation of the PMS, performance increases were awarded to motivate staff to be innovative and achieve higher targets towards our organisational goals. This ensured that qualified and experienced staff worked hard to meet the demands of our communities and stakeholders.

11.4 Donor and solidarity visits

We worked towards our dual role as a member of an agile Federation and a nationally recognised development organisation by encouraging visits and partnerships with international partners, our peers in the Federation and celebrities. In the year, we hosted AAUK Board members, High Value donors from the UK, partners from AA Kenya and project review participants from 40 ActionAid member countries, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Netherlands and the UK for the POWER Project. AAG also hosted the Secretary-General of the ActionAid Federation in Accra for the Global Leadership meetings and also provided support to 37 volunteers from ActionAid Greece.

12.0 FINANCE AND EXPENDITURE PERFORMANCE

12.1 Performance summary

In this section, we present an overview of AAG's financial position and expenditure performance as at 31st December, 2017. In the year, we raised additional income to implement programme interventions and campaigns to meet the needs of people living in poverty and exclusion. We realised a total income of £3,944k, representing an increase of 16% compared to our income in 2016. We present below the summary performance of income and operational expenditure for the period.

Table 1: Summary Performance

Total Income

2017	£3,944
2016	£3,408
2015	£2,831

Regular Giving Income

2017	£1,855
2016	£1,772
2015	£1,565

Partnership Income

2017	£2,437
2016	£1,801
2015	£1,012

Other Income

2017	£108
2016	£18
2015	£54

Total Expenditure

2017	£3,344
2016	£2,683
2015	£3,054

Total income for the period (January-December 2017) was **£3,944k** against expenditure of **£3,344k** for the same period, resulting in surplus of **£600k**.

From the income analysis, this year's income increased by **16%** compared to last year. The significant increase in income can be attributed to improvements in partnership fundraising, resulting in an increase in partnership income from **£1,601k** (2016) to **£2,437** (2017).

However, regular giving income decreased marginally by **7%** compared to 2016.

Total expenditure in 2017 (**£3,344**) increased by **25%** compared to **£2,683** in 2016.



12.2 Income

The income trend analysis for the past three (3) years indicates a progressive and sustainable financial position. We collaborated effectively with key donors and partners to raise more partnership income to expand our interventions in our operational areas.

Total income realised in the year was £3,944k, which is £1,014k more than the planned income (£2,930k), representing 35% increase. In comparison to actual income for the same period last year, our income in 2017 increased by 16%.

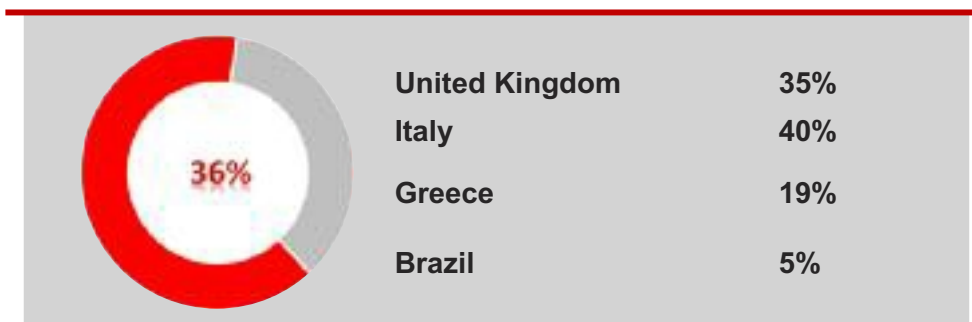
During the year, we secured some major projects which increased our Partnership Funding for many interventions. We received a total of £406k in donor support from the People's Postcode Lottery (UK), the European Commission (EC) and TX Foundation from Taiwan.

As a result of the partnership support, we were able to raise funds to address the funding gap, which had been created by the decline in Regular Giving (RG) income.

Table 2: Income Analysis

	2017					2016	
	Actual £'000	Plan £'000	Forecast £'000	Var £'000	%	£'000	% Change
Child Sponsorship	942	967	942	-25	97	1,223	-23%
Big Step	347	339	347	8	102	338	3%
Next Step	358	244	358	114	147	375	-5%
Amico Paese	5	5	5	0	100	5	0%
Gift and General Funds	4	2	4	2	200	5	-20%
Net Transfers	-247	-226	-236	-10	104	-174	42%
Partnership - Affiliates	1,262	601	1,166	565	194	180	612%
Partnership Local	1,189	982	1,271	289	129	1,421	-16%
Other Income	64	18	108	90	0	35	94%
Total	3,944	2,930	3,963	1,033	135	3,408	16%

Chart 1: Supporter Marketing and Regular Giving



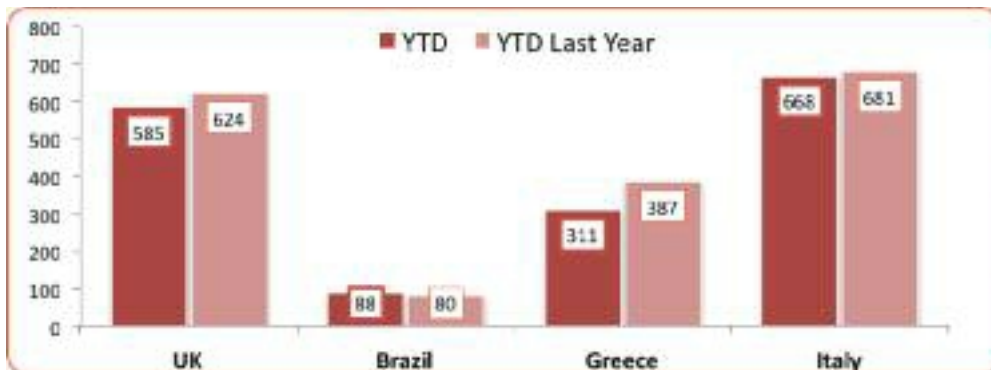
Child Sponsorship (CS) income accounts for 36% of AAG's income mix. RG income was 6% lower than planned income for the year, which showed year-on-year decrease of 7%. The decrease in RG income is mainly attributed to the derestriction of the Next Step income, which continues to impact negatively on our income since 2015.

From the review of the performance in CS income streams, income from UK and Italy contributed 35% and 40% respectively, accounting for 75% of total income. Greece and Brazil contributed 19% and 5% respectively. From Chart 2 below, RG from all Funding Affiliates decreased marginally except Brazil, which increased by 10%. However, Brazil withdrew sponsorship links from Ghana to

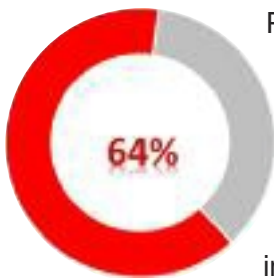
enable them restructure their sponsorship scheme and commit to fewer countries to sustain their sponsorship programme.

AAG would liaise with the Global Secretariat (GS) to ensure a smooth transfer of Brazil sponsorship links and request for new links from other Funding Affiliates to sustain our interventions in the affected LRPs.

Chart 2: Regular Giving Income Distribution



12.3 Partnership income



Partnership Income (PI) for the period was £2,471k which represented 64% of total income, compared to £1,601k for the same period in 2016. This was £888k higher than planned PI for the period due to new projects secured during the period. From the income mix analysis, PI increased by 16% compared to 48% in 2016. The significant increase in PI was as a result of efforts to secure more PI to reduce the overreliance on RG.

The objective to raise more PI will be intensified in CSP VI, which is projected to reach 85% of total income by the end of the strategy period in 2022. To achieve this, we will build the skills of staff in proposal writing and strengthen strategic partnerships with peer NGOs.

12.4 Other Income

Total income realised from other sources was £64k. Exchange gains formed the greatest proportion of this income, accounting for £27k. The remaining was income generated from staff fundraising initiatives and our Local Community Sponsorship Scheme (LOCOMS), amounting to £2k. The remaining was sale of assets representing £19k and training fees of £17k. No emergency income was secured during the year.

12.5 Expenditure Summary

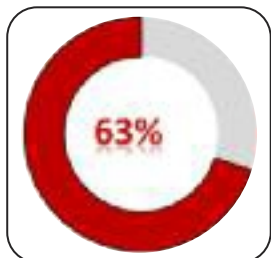
Total expenditure in the year was £3,344k, which was 75% higher compared to planned expenditure of £1,909. The increase in expenditure was due to unplanned project expenditure resulting from Partnership funded projects. However, compared to the expenditure in 2016, there was an increase of 25%.

Table 3 below analyses expenditure utilisation and associated variances by natural cost.

Table 3 - Natural Cost Analysis (2017) (GBP'000)

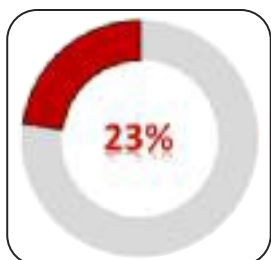
	Actual	Forecast	Plan	Var	Util %	Prop	2016	% Change
Grants and Community Inputs	2,090	2,366	1,083	(1,011)	193%	63%	1,495	40%
Staff Cost	770	776	589	(181)	131%	23%	753	2%
Travel and Transport	158	164	55	(103)	287%	5%	128	23%
Office and Service	246	224	171	(75)	144%	7%	285	-14%
Capital	80	78	11	(69)	727%	2%	22	264%
Total	3,344	3,608	1,909	(1,439)	175%	100%	2,683	25%

Grants and Community inputs



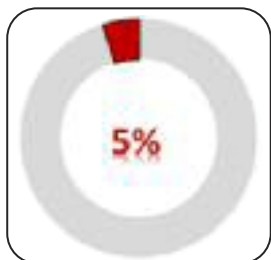
In the year, expenditure from grants and community inputs amounted to £2,090k, which was 63% of total expenditure. This represents 40% increase in expenditure from 2016, as indicated in the table above. The increase was largely due to new projects secured during the year.

Staff cost



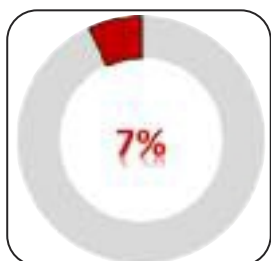
Expenditure for staff cost in 2017 was £770k which represents 23% of total expenditure for the period, and 2% above the 2016 expenditure of £753. Staff cost increased by £181k compared to planned expenditure. The significant variance in staff cost was as a result of project staff recruited during the year and staff motivation packages approved by our Board and Management.

Travel and transportation



In this area, we exceeded planned expenditure by £103k resulting in utilisation of 233%. However, utilisation was 96% compared to forecast expenditure. The variance between planned and forecast expenditure was as result of the new projects secured during the year.

Office and Service Cost



In the year, office and service cost amounted to £246k. This was £75k and £22k more than planned and forecast expenditure respectively. As indicated earlier, the variance between planned and forecast expenditure resulted from the new projects. In spite of this, we exceeded our budget by £22k. To address the decline in RG and meet escalating office costs, we effectively pursued full cost recovery of all projects. As a result, we reduced office expenditure by 14%.

Chart 3: Expenditure by natural cost

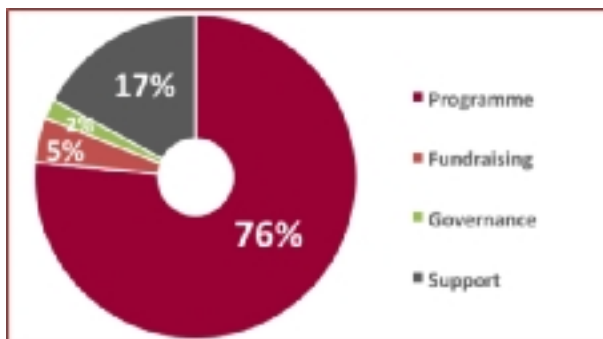


Statutory cost Analysis (2017) (GBP'000)

	Actual	Forecast	Plan	Var	Util %	Prop	2016	% Change
Programme	2,556	2,722	2,234	(326)	115%	76%	1,968	30%
Fundraising	150	176	176	26	85%	4%	155	-3%
Governance	66	72	53	(13)	125%	2%	52	27%
Support	572	638	441	(131)	130%	17%	508	13%
Total	3,344	3,608	2,904	(444)	115%	100%	2,683	25%

From chart 3, support cost for the period was 17% of total expenditure. This was 2% points higher than the GS KPI of 15%. We employed efficient cost-cutting strategies and embarked on programme and project integration to manage cost. These resulted in the reduction of support cost ratio from 19%

Chart 3: Statutory cost ratio



in 2016 to 17% in 2017. Programme cost in the year was 76% of total expenditure, which was 11% higher than the GS KPI target of 65%. The cost was 30% higher than the expenditure in 2016.

Fundraising cost accounted for 4% of total expenditure, which was 3% lower compared to the expenditure in 2016.

12.6 Reserve Analysis

As at the beginning of the year, AAG's reserves stood at £1,343k, which increased to £1,942k. Out of this, £757k was held for donor projects while £1,198k was for RG. The total reserves for the period was £883k.

12.7 Financial outlook in 2018

While our strong financial position in 2017 enabled us to promote viable interventions in our programme areas, we would mobilise financial resources from diverse sources aligned to our vision and values through a culture of adaptation and innovation. As we begin the implementation of a new CSP in 2018, we have computed new financial projections in line with the CSP targets and funding mix.

To sustain our interventions and expand our operations into more communities, we have projected to raise more partnership income to address the decline in RG income.

We would improve our financial systems and promote efficiency in our work by adopting effective financial practices and technological innovations to build a robust financial management system.

We would support the modernisation of the CS scheme, which aims to improve RG by digitalising the collection and distribution of communications to our child sponsors, and invest in vibrant institutional partnerships to raise more funds for our work.



P. O. Box AN 19083, Accra-North
Tel: +233 (0) 302 544 714 / 5 • +233 244 316 392 • +233 289 109 560
aaghana@actionaid.org
www.actionaid.org/ghana

     @ActionAidGhana

Location: Oko Kotey Link, East Legon, Accra