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2016

Annual Report

Increasing Possibilities, Claiming Rights



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



3rd Time Winners – CIMG Not-for-Profit Organisation of the Year 2015

EDITORIAL, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

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Foreword



On behalf of the management, Board and General Assembly, I wish to share the progress we have made in 2016 towards achieving our Country Strategy Paper (CSP) objectives. 2016 was an eventful and challenging year. Rising levels of inequality, terrorism and humanitarian catastrophes around the world impacted on the lives of people living in poverty, especially women and children.

The effects of climate change had begun to show in the Horn of Africa and West Africa, especially in Nigeria, resulting in drought, failure of crops and the destruction of livestock. These challenges continued to test the impact of our programmes.

As a social justice organisation working in the interest of people living in poverty and exclusion, we have often been asked how we are protecting the rights of those mostly affected by failed policies and widening inequalities.

In responding to increasing inequalities, technological and financial challenges in development work, the Federation came out with a new global strategy '*Action for Global Justice*'. Proposing decisive and critical shifts, the strategy focuses on fulfillment of people's rights, redistribution of power and the resilience of communities. The new strategy also proposes bold ways of achieving social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication.

The new vision and mission that are proposed in the new strategy challenge us to work with activists, movements and people's organisations to achieve social justice.

Country Strategy Paper V (CSP V), '*Increasing Possibilities, Claiming Rights*' which has guided our work since 2015, is due for a midterm review, to track the progress made towards the four (4) mission objectives we set for ourselves and the enablers. We would take the opportunity to align the strategy with '*Action for Global Justice*.' While we have made some progress in implementation, and in some cases achieving commendable targets, we need to double our efforts and realign a few areas of our operations to work towards the full realisation of our overall goal.

I am particularly grateful to all our child sponsors, high-value and institutional donors for supporting our work with people living in poverty. As we strengthen our partnerships and explore more progressive ways of working together for the benefit of our communities, we hope to bridge the inequality gap, dismantle visible and invisible barriers to development, and empower people, especially women, to achieve their full potential.

I wish to thank the Board, General Assembly, staff, partners and institutional collaborators for working with us in the year under review. You have contributed in various ways in working towards our vision of a just, equitable and sustainable world.

Thank you very much.

Sumaila Abdul-Rahman

Acronyms

AA	ActionAid
AA Denmark	ActionAid Denmark
AAG	ActionAid Ghana
AAI	ActionAid International
AAUK	ActionAid United Kingdom
ACERWC	African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ASUDEV	Action for Sustainable Development
AU	African Union
BACOSA	Bands Competition of the Security Agencies
CALID	Centre for Active Learning and Integrated Development
CARD	Community Aid for Rural Development
CBE	Complementary Basic Education
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CIMG	Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana
CMCE	Centre for Maternal and Children Empowerment
COMBAT	Community Based Anti-Violence Team
CRSA	Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DCMT	District Citizens Monitoring Team
DFID	Department for International Development
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
EC	Electoral Commission
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
FEV	Female Extension Volunteers
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FLOW	Funding Leadership Opportunities for Women
GACCES	Gender Action on Climate Change for Equality and Sustainability
GAWU	General Agricultural Workers Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GES	Ghana Education Service
GNEC	Ghana National Education Coalition
GS	Global Secretariat
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HRPPM	Human Resource Policies and Procedures Manual
IDD	Institutional Development Directorate

IGP	Inspector General of Police
ILGS	Institute of Local Government Studies
IRWD	International Rural Women's Day
ISSER	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LOCOMS	Local Community Sponsorship Scheme
LOGNET	Local Government Network
LRP	Local Rights Programme
MASLOC	Microfinance and Small Loans Centre
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MESTI	Ministry of Environment Science, Technology and Innovation
MIS	Management Information System
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MP	Member of Parliament
MTTU	Motor Transport and Traffic Unit
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NCCP	National Climate Change Policy
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGGA	Northern Ghana Governance for Agriculture
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PDA	Positive Discipline Approach
PPA	Programme Partnership Agreement
PRRP	Participatory Review and Reflection Process
POWER	Promoting Opportunities for Women Empowerment and Rights
PRS	Promoting Rights in School
RG	Regular Giving
RIPS	Regional Institute for Population Studies
SARI	Savannah Agricultural Research Institute
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SODIA	Social Development Improvement Agency
TUDRIDEP	Tumu Deanery Rural Integrated Development Programme
UK	United Kingdom
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
URBANET	Urban Agricultural Network
USA	United States of America
WAFSN	West Africa Food Security Network
YFP	Young Female Parliament
YUW	Young Urban Women

Who we are

ActionAid Ghana (AAG) is an Affiliate of ActionAid, a global justice Federation working to achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication. Throughout the world, ActionAid works to strengthen the capacity and active agency of people living in poverty and exclusion to assert their rights. In Ghana, we work in the most deprived and marginalised communities, empowering economically and socially disadvantaged people, especially women and children, to access their basic human rights to food security, education and economic empowerment.

To achieve a just world for all, we address the structural causes of poverty and discrimination through our programmes, policies and campaigns, by empowering people and investing in their capacities to catalyse social change and promote sustainable development.

We contribute to social justice and power shifts through our 3 Rs: fulfilment of rights, redistribution of power and resources, and strengthening the resilience of communities and movements. This is based on our understanding of how change happens (Theory of Change), our programme framework and our innovative use of technology.

Transformative Feminist Leadership

ActionAid is guided by feminist and rights-based principles and approaches to shift and transform power in all forms, being hidden, visible or invisible, to ensure that every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity.

Women are central to our work, because we believe that when women are supported to realise and fulfill their rights, it leads to greater transformation of their families, communities and the world. We believe that change is possible and people power is our greatest defence against injustice. It is also our greatest force in achieving a just and sustainable world for all.

Vision

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

Mission

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

Values

Mutual Respect – requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity

Equity and Justice – requiring us to ensure the realisation of our vision for everyone, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, HIV status, disability, location and religion

Integrity – requiring us to be honest, transparent and accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and our use of resources and open in our judgements and communications with others

Solidarity with People Living in Poverty and Exclusion will be the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty, injustice, and gender inequality

Courage of Conviction – requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative - without fear of failure - in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty, injustice, and gender inequality

Independence from any religious or party-political affiliation

Humility in our presentation and behaviour, recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty

Where we work

We work in the most deprived and marginalised communities in six (6) regions in Ghana: Upper East, Upper West, Northern, Greater Accra, Volta and Brong Ahafo regions. There are plans to expand our operations into other regions.

Country Strategy Paper V (2015 - 2019)

Under the name '*Increasing Possibilities, Claiming Rights*', AAG has been working towards the following four (4) mission objectives in Country Strategy Paper V (CSP V):

- 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.***

Map of Ghana showing AAG Operational Regions



Our Theory of Change

Our long term engagement with people living in poverty, their communities and allies informed our theory of change. AAG aspires to see a positive increase of people's possibility and capacity in order to make the most of their potential to live as full 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 a change that will create just and supportive opportunities for poor and excluded people to expand their possibilities and options.

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

The theory of change has informed our approaches. The approaches 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 Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), advancing women's rights, promoting rights-based sustainable alternatives, partnership and alliance building, working with the youth and local, national, sub-regional and regional linkages.

1.0 EXTERNAL CONTEXT

Global political and security events in 2016 impacted on national governments and the international community, causing major shifts in the global financial and economic system. The election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the USA, terrorist activities in France and Brussels, and an attempted military coup in Turkey, were defining moments in the year.

Britain had voted in a historic referendum for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, ushering in Theresa May as the new Prime Minister. These events continue to inform the direction of the campaigns and advocacy programmes of policy think-tanks, human rights organisations and social justice movements, including AAG.

Ghanaians went to the polls on 7th December, 2016 to vote in the 7th Presidential and Parliamentary Elections under the Fourth Republic. Out of 15,712,499 registered voters, 10,615,361 voted in the elections, representing 68.62%. Six (6) political parties and one (1) independent candidate contested in the Presidential elections.

Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) won 5,716,026 votes, representing 53.85%, while John Mahama of the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) polled 4,713,277, accounting for 44.40%. The NPP also won 169 out of 275 seats in Parliament while the NDC had 106. Ghana maintains her credentials as the beacon of democracy in Africa, having successfully and peacefully transferred power between five (5) Presidents from two (2) major political traditions since 1992.

AAG and other civil society organisations sponsored and participated in peace campaigns, voter education and other civic engagements to advocate for peace before, during and after the elections. This resulted in the signing of a Peace Accord by all the political parties contesting in the 2016 elections

Ghana's population grew by 2.27% from 27,409,983 in 2015 to 28,033,375 in 2016 (UN Data, 2017). According to the Ghana Statistical Service, Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 4% in the third quarter of 2016, relative to 3.5% in the same period in 2015. However, the gap between rural and urban inequality continue to widen, with rural poverty almost four times (4) as high as urban poverty compared to twice as high in the 1990s (The Ghana Poverty and Inequality Report, 2016). The Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions have the highest poverty rates, with Upper West recording depressing levels in the depth of poverty. Poverty depth also increased in four (4) regions (Western, Volta, Central and Ashanti).

In 2015, Ghanaians experienced challenges with the supply and cost of basic utilities, such as electricity, water and petroleum products with a knock-on effect on productivity. The Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) reported that since 2010 Ghana lost \$24 billion due to the energy crises. However, after many months of power fluctuations which affected economic and social life in the country, the power fluctuation (Dumsor) stabilized albeit some intermittent black-outs.

2.0 INTERNAL CONTEXT

In 2016, financial and other development challenges had devastating effects on International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) such as ours. Some of these challenges included the migrant crisis affecting all our Funding Affiliates. Additionally, Greece went through turbulent economic crisis leading to challenges with Regular Giving (RG) while AA UK and AA Denmark, two big supporters of the Federation, suffered serious financial setbacks following a review of their governments' overseas development assistance strategies.

The governments of the two countries have reviewed a Programme Partnership Agreement (PPA) that hitherto granted unconditional flexible fund of an average of £4.1 Million on annual basis to AAUK and ActionAid Denmark, who suffered a loss of 33% of their total income on similar grounds. This has led to a drastic decline in the income available to the Global Secretariat (GS).

Again, at the Federation level, ActionAid missed partnership funding target by more than €90m. Regular Giving (RG) continued to dip. This necessitated some painful changes and new thinking. The GS had to cut short the lifespan of our international strategy '*People's Action To End Poverty*', derestricted RG and restructured to cope with the situation. Over 20 countries had to also downsize, with other programmes completely closed down while over five (5) were earmarked for closure in the new strategy period.

We in ActionAid Ghana have also had a fair share of these challenges, the rise in utility prices, exchange volatility exacerbated by BREXIT, and an 8% decline in RG. The opportunity the austerity presented was for us to figure out how to position ourselves both at the national and international levels to raise funds to strengthen our financial position and guarantee our survival, which, we did diligently. We worked hard and sacrificed to take advantage of this opportunity, thereby contributing to our financial sustainability and making us the Not-For-Profit organisation of choice to many of our peers and collaborators.

We won the Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana (CMIG) award for the third consecutive time, which sped us on to work assiduously to achieve great successes in raising money to implement important interventions in our programme areas to improve the lives of people living in poverty.

We gave staff the opportunity to attend workshops and specialised career training programmes to enhance their skills and expertise for programme delivery. As part of our deliberate plan to motivate staff, we focused most recruitment into internal vacancies to demonstrate the value we place on our own staff and ensure the creative use of our human resource. We hope to continue in this direction in 2017.

On programmes, the year also saw remarkable improvement in programme quality. Our flagship initiatives such as the Young Urban Women (YUW) and Promoting Opportunities for Women Empowerment and Rights (POWER) initiatives received a great boost. In 2017, we will build on the foundation laid by these initiatives as the basis of the new ways of working at the community level to drive our programme work.

The new strategy '*Action for Global Justice*', which replaces '*People's Action to End Poverty* (2012-2017),' comes with some organisational shifts and a new identity of ActionAid as a social justice organisation. In the new strategy, we will be working with people living in poverty, movements and activists.

Within the year, we hosted Diane Abbott, the first black woman of the British Parliament and Shadow Secretary for International Development of the Labour Party, to visit our women development and youth empowerment interventions in our Greater Accra programme area. The Member of Parliament (MP) also participated in our Tax Justice programmes with the Tax Justice Coalition of Ghana.



Diane Abbott (seated second left) with AAUK, AAG staff and members of the Tax Justice Coalition of Ghana

The Africa Director for the Horn and West Africa at the Institutional Development Directorate (IDD) of ActionAid, Olutayo Bankole-Bolawole also visited Ghana to assess AAG's organisational performance and development coordination in the light of our development partnerships and policy direction. The Director met with the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, women groups and other national partners.



Olutayo Bankole-Bolawole and AAG's Country Leadership met the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Hon. Nana Oye Lithur

AAG was awarded the Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana (CIMG) Not-for-Profit Organisation of the year for the third time at the 2016 National Marketing Performance Awards. The three awards project AAG's profile as an influential social justice organisation impacting lives and forging strategic partnerships for national development.

3.0 GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

The AAG Board and General Assembly provided strategic direction to promote effective programme implementation, good governance and financial sustainability.

3.1 Membership of Board and General Assembly

Marilyn Aniwa	Chairperson
Ken Agyemang Attafuah	Vice Chairperson
Afia Darkwa-Amanor	Member
Chris Dadzie	Member
Elsie Bunyan	Treasurer
Ennie Chipembere	AAI Member
Hilary Gbedemah	Member
Issahaku Al-Hassan	Member
Kwaku Mensa-Bonsu	Member
Samuel Arku-Kelly	Member
Samuel Sedegah	Member
Zeinabu Ayariga	Member

3.2 Membership of the General Assembly

Abena Oduro
Akua Debrah
Bennie Brown
Christiana Ago Badoo
Emmanuel Asamoah
Ennam Gbekor
Martin Addison
Nana Yaw Okyere-Aduachie
Perez Kassim
Rosaline Gbeho
Salatu Abubarkar

4.0 PROGRAMME COVERAGE

Our programme and project work covers our six (6) programme areas, where we directly impacted more than 150,129 people in addition to 12,900 sponsored children in our sponsorship communities across our programmes. While our development programmes are implemented in sponsorship communities in our programme areas, our interventions have a regional focus. This enabled us to impact people living in poverty who are outside our child sponsorship communities and project areas. Our local community interventions, therefore, have a national development approach.

5.0 PROGRESS ON PROGRAMME PRIORITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Mission Objective One

5.1 Women farmers increase yield through CRSA

In 2016, we continued to support women farmers to increase productivity through CRSA. 30,068 smallholder farmers received trainings in various forms which included preparation of organic manure, mulching, crop-rotation, mixed cropping such as integrating legumes with cereals, and composting for improving soil fertility. The trainings provided the farmers with various skills and techniques which enabled them to improve their farming practices.

This was an improvement on the interventions in our CRSA programme in 2015, where farmers were trained in mono-cropping, intercropping and other agronomic practices. The women farmers also adopted the use of soil-water conservation techniques such as earth bunding to conserve water and soil moisture to mitigate the effect of the continual decrease in rainfall patterns largely driven by climate change.

Smallholder women farmers were facilitated to access CRSA extension services by adopting a low cost approach that reduces the huge margin of deficit in extension officers across the country. In the Adaklu, Jirapa, Tain and Asutifi Districts, 2,200 women from 157 communities were trained to support the newly formed rural women groups. These trainings were done together with our partners, Female Extension Volunteers (FEVs) and the Department of Agriculture.

They were provided with logistics such as bicycles, wellington boots and mobile phones to ensure easy access by their fellow women. The women, in turn, transferred their practical knowledge in agronomic practices to their fellow group members.

As a result of the trainings provided in 2015 and 2016, 26,947 smallholder farmers practiced and applied various CRSA techniques on their farms, which enabled them to increase their yields.

A 52-year old Comfort Adobea from Kenyasi No. 3 shares her experience.



“I participated in some of the trainings organised by the FEV in my community on compost preparation and planting in lines. After the training, they supported our pepper group to prepare the compost. When it was ready for use, I was given a portion for my farm.

Initially, I was hesitant to prepare and use the compost because I found the preparation difficult. However, I applied some of the compost on some part of my pepper farm. The plants in the area I applied the compost have seen tremendous growth and the fruits multiplied. In

2015, I harvested two baskets of pepper on the same land. Now, I have harvested four baskets and still there are some areas left to harvest. I have now decided to prepare the compost and spread it on every part of my farm. I thank the FEV in my community for supporting me with this education to increase my yield. I was told these FEVs had their training from ActionAid and its partner Centre for Maternal and Children Empowerment (CMCE). I am therefore, so grateful for their support for making basic extension practice readily accessible to farmers in my community.”

5.2 Better storage facilities to increase incomes of farmers

More farmers are increasingly finding it useful to effectively store their produce using the narrow crib method. When farmers are able to store the produce for some time in a safe environment, they are able to sell at better prices than at harvest time. In 2016, eight (8) new farmers comprising (six (6) women and two (2) men) in Tain District in the Brong Ahafo region, built their own narrow crib to store their produce. They were able to increase their income because they sold their produce at better prices.

More women in the district are learning from the successful examples of these women farmers to build narrow cribs in their communities.



The narrow crib used for storage

Due to non-availability of storage facilities, smallholder farmers are compelled to sell their products cheap to buyers. As a result ActionAid in collaboration with the District Agricultural Agency in 2011 constructed '**Narrow Cribs**' for 13 farmers.

After using the narrow crib innovation for five (5) years, Hanna Kwartemaa 36, a farmer from Yabraso in the Tain district, shared her experience:



“Previously, I used to store yam, maize, pepper and groundnuts in my room after harvesting. My family has limited space to keep our personal belongings. Usually, this situation compelled me to sell my produce from the farm immediately after harvesting at a low price since the produce were in abundance during harvesting time.

ActionAid and its partners have been working in this community for the past 10 years, assisting farmers to increase their yield through improved farming practices. This intervention has ensured that many farmers are able to secure better market for their produce to increase their incomes. ActionAid invited

District Agriculture officials to educate us on various methods of storing farm produce. We became excited when they introduced us to the “narrow crib” in 2011. ActionAid provided funds to purchase roofing sheets and cost of carpentry whilst the farmers

provided the local materials for the construction of the facility. Luckily, I was one of the two beneficiaries in this community.

With the “narrow crib” I do not sell my produce at low prices again as I have enough space to store them until prices are high. Currently, I am able to store my yams from last year’s harvest which are being sold between GH¢ 630 - GH¢730 for every 100 tubers depending on the size as compared to GH¢70 and 100 per 100 tubers during the harvesting season. I was approached by two women farmers who observed that I was realising higher farm incomes so I taught them how to construct and maintain the narrow crib in 2015. Now they are also reaping the benefits. I am very glad for this initiative as this is helping a lot in increasing our income levels”.

5.3 Demonstration farms motivate more farmers to adopt CRSA

Following the establishment of 10 CRSA model farms in 2015, the demonstration farms have become a centre for learning in the Upper West region, serving farmers in the communities and nearby districts who visit the farms for exposure programmes. In 2016, 237 smallholder farmers consisting of 219 females and 18 males were trained by trainers and introduced to improved agricultural practices by showcasing the success stories of the CRSA demonstration farms. It is expected that the trainers will also train and share their experiences with other learners. This is an improvement on the figure in 2015, where only 96 farmers participated in the trainings.

The farmers embarked on regular learning visits to the fields at various stages of the demonstrations. The planting field day involved land preparation, seed selection and planting while the green field day was devoted to different treatments on the fields. Farmers observed differences in cereals intercropped with legumes, mono-cropping and crops treated with organic fertilizer compared with those treated with chemical fertilizer. The brown field day was the last stage of the demonstrations where crops that had undergone different treatments on the demonstration fields were harvested and compared.

As a result of the demonstrations, 229 farmers pledged to adopt intercropping as well as locally-bred crop varieties such as Wandata (maize variety) produced by the Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) known to mature early, high yielding and tolerant of extreme weathers. 121 farmers also pledged to adopt the preparation and use of organic manure for crop production.

It was observed that different yield levels were recorded when different communities applied the same techniques and farming methods, including the fertility level of the soils in the various communities. Fields that were intercropped with cereals and legumes did better than where only cereals were planted, revealing the strategic importance of intercropping.



Jalia Bashiru, a 37 year old farmer from the Kong community shares the benefits of participating in the CRSA demonstration field days: *"I used to plant my crops anyhow. I planted one crop every year on the same piece of land. Also, I used any quantity of seed that I thought was enough for the farm. I fetched the seed from my stored grains. I had been recording low crop yields until my group leader informed me that I had been selected to be part of a farmer field day organised by ActionAid. I was happy to receive the news!*

After attending the farmer field days, I learnt the best ways to intercropping and planting at a distance, use of certified seed to the recommended moisture content and the right time to plant. In 2016, I decided to apply the little' knowledge I acquired by intercropping maize and soybeans on an acre of land. I bought 6 bowls of soya and 9kg of maize. To my surprise, I cultivated 12 bags of maize and 7 bags of soya from the same field at a much reduced production cost. Before this intervention, I harvested 6 bags of maize from an acre of land.

What makes me happy is that I was able to get very good yield while improving the fertility of the soil for children tomorrow. This I call a double win! I have started preparing some compost to apply on my vegetable field for a start in the coming season. I also intend to practice crop rotation next year. I plan using some of the maize and soya I harvested to prepare 'tombrown' for my family consumption and also sell some to pay my children school fees and also renew their health insurance. I say a big thank you to ActionAid and partner for putting a smile on my face."



Challenges

1. Lack of

2. L

5.4 Mobilising women's movements for agricultural development

In line with our new ways of working, we embarked on vigorous mobilisation of women's movements in 2016 to strengthen our response to agricultural development at the regional and national level. Women Platforms were established to strengthen agriculture governance. In all, 24 platforms came together to form the movement, working with local authorities on issues of inclusive governance towards improved agriculture.



Inauguration of Women's Movement in WA, Upper West

There have been strategic and consultative meetings by the movements, including Women in Agriculture Networking Process, who brought together representatives from 34 women's groups from six (6) districts across the three (3) Northern regions. Existing women farmer groups have been identified and profiled to join the movement following the intense advocacy from the movement.

District Citizens Monitoring Teams (DCMTs) have been also sensitised and equipped with the necessary tools and information to enable them play their key role in the agriculture policy monitoring and advocacy, early earning and response mechanism and data collection.

5.5 Women farmers demand right to own agricultural land

The women's movements have used their platforms to advocate for the right of women to own land for agricultural production. Due to patriarchy and other discriminatory traditional practices, women in all our Local Rights Programmes (LRPs) are usually denied their right to own and control of agricultural land and other productive resources. This has affected their livelihoods and support for their families.

The movements have provided opportunities for the women to mobilise and engage with duty bearers such as district assemblies and traditional authorities. For example, women groups from Tizza and Ul-Kpong in the Jirapa District of the Upper West Region demanded their right to land from community leaders, chiefs, Assembly men, Landlords (Tindaana) and Queen mothers.

The leaders ceded to their demands and promised to take steps to allocate large acres of productive land to women for group farming. They also encouraged family heads and land owners to meet the demands of women in their communities.

Under the POWER initiative, 25 women groups made up of 709 women were mobilised and trained on how to access their right to land and other natural resources.

Throughout the programme areas, AAG organised solidarity marches in regional and district capitals as part of the 2016 International Rural Women's Day which fell on the 14th of October, 2016. Rural women from our LRPs were supported to campaign for their right to land. In the Jirapa District for instance, the campaign brought together about 120 women from 10 communities who marched through the principal streets, displaying messages on placards and distributing information and education materials on women's right to land.

The women presented communiques to the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection through their various District Chief Executives.

Nana Oduro, a community chief, commended the efforts of the women's movements:

"This is a noble initiative by ActionAid and its partners. If all of us are able to support women to get fertile land to farm without requesting for any collateral, more women will go into large scale farming and their incomes will increase. With increased incomes, the burden on men to give housekeeping money will be lessened.

Women would be able to contribute to the upkeep of the family. If we continue to request for husbands of women to serve as collateral before granting lands to women for farming, what happens to widows and those who are not married? I would therefore meet with my elders and the family heads to give women more access to productive land in the community to enable them engage in meaningful economic activities to develop this community. I would also urge you, women to report to me any family head who will request for any form of collateral before offering you land to farm".



Patricia Teni, 52, a facilitator for Akuapa Women's Group also said:

“On behalf of the group members, I would like to appreciate the gesture demonstrated by the chiefs. I will continue to make a passionate appeal to make adjustments in our culture so that we can engage land owners and traditional leaders without our husbands for land. By so doing, women will be more productive and contribute significantly to the upkeep of their families. I am so grateful to ActionAid and its partners for their continued support.”

5.6 Capacity building of media for CRSA campaigns

To increase our advocacy interventions on CRSA, we work with media partners and other publicity organisations to build understanding and inform our rightholders, policy organisations and the general public about our CRSA initiative. Across the regions, various training programmes were organised for our media.

Having recognised the important role of the media in development communication, particularly on matters that directly impact on the lives of the community, the training sought to introduce the media to AAG's HRBA development framework, theory of change and community development interventions. The trainings have strengthened our relationship with the media and improved their understanding on CRSA, unpaid care work and AAG's working approach.



Participant explaining a point during the training

Mission Objective Two

5.7 Working with girls' clubs and communities to end child marriage

In 2016, the End Child Marriage campaign held community dialogues with religious leaders, chiefs, queen mothers and girls' clubs to sensitise communities on their roles and responsibilities to challenge cultural prejudices which violate the rights of children, especially girls.

The campaign ambassador toured selected communities to interact with girls' clubs and other community stakeholders to support female education and resist child marriage. A campaign song composed to promote awareness of the dangers of child marriage continues to enjoy air play on national and community radios across the country.

Child marriage is a violation of the right of children, especially girls. The practice compromises the development of girls and often results in early pregnancy and social isolation. To end child marriage in our programme areas, AAG worked with girls' clubs to create awareness of the rights of children, particularly girls, as well as develop their confidence, self-esteem and assertiveness.

As part of the campaign, AAG produced training manuals for 340 girls' clubs in all our schools. The manuals provided useful guide on how to manage and teach girls to appreciate their basic human rights and pursue their educational, professional and leadership ambitions.

In the Upper East region for instance, we promoted the campaign by working with girls' club members and pursued series of activities to educate their peers and communities on the causes and effects of early marriage on girl's education and development. The programmes included drama, poetry recitals, singing and peer education. As a result of the sensitisation campaigns and activities, the girls have become more aware of their rights, resulting in many school girls resisting marriage. Hence, there were many reported cases of child marriage in their communities.



**Jemila, a Girl's Club matron
at Binguri JHS**

Jemila, one of the club patrons, shared her experience:

"I am happy with the knowledge acquired and wish to share my joy for the training. I am happy with the training on how to manage the girls clubs. Since I was selected to take charge of the club, I have not been introduced formally on how to manage girls' clubs. I really did not know some of my duties until this training. However, I have been counselling some of the girls involved in child marriage. I also taught them that they can still come to school after giving birth since most of them are usually pregnant. There is a girl who followed my advice and came back to school and now she has completed senior secondary school. Currently, due to the campaign I am following up

with three girls who also got pregnant and were forced to marry. This training has given me more ideas as to what to do to get them back to school.”



Blessing Anapoka is back in school

Blessing Anapoka, a 16 year old girl from Vea-Kulpeelga JHS, was rescued from child marriage and counselled by her patron.

“I am very happy that Madam Helen came to rescue me from the man’s house and now I am free to continue my education. My uncle convinced my parents to let me stop school and marry. My parents agreed and forced me to marry a man, but thank God Madam Helen traced me and finally released me. My dream of becoming a nurse in future will come to pass, I am happy.”

Kende Ayindana, 18, is another child marriage survivor from the Tanga Girl’s club, who has been supported to go back to school:

“I have made a serious mistake in my life and I wish to share with my sisters so that they can resist child marriage. Two years ago, when I was about to complete junior high school, I got married to a man and dropped out of school. I passed through series of abuses and regretted being a mother at a younger age. At the moment, I have a child who is one and half years. I was privileged to be educated on the importance of education by some of my friends who are members of the club. My mother also encouraged me to listen to what my friends were saying.

My mother assured me of taking care of the child to enable me to go back to school. The information from my friends made me understand that education is the key to my future. I took a decision to come back to school. I am proud to say that I am in JHS 2 at Tanga community. I am no more with the man who deceived and impregnated me. I am now focusing on my education and I do not think I will marry him after my education since he is now in Accra. I wish to use this opportunity to advise girls that they should

focus on their book and reject the demands of these boys and men who use sweet words to deceive them.”

Ethel Lamisi Akugri, 17, is a single mother who has returned to school after participating in interventions under the End Child Marriage campaign sponsored by UNICEF. As a mother to an 8-month old son, Ethel balances her education with motherhood and is working hard to achieve her career dreams. She shares her story:



“I travelled from my village, Kulugu, to stay with my sister and there I met and started dating a young man in Sampa. He convinced me to marry him and I moved in with him. Soon I was pregnant. My sister was unhappy with me, so she stopped talking to me.

When ActionAid Ghana introduced the End Child Marriage campaign in the Binduri district, my sister was trained as a peer educator for the project. Despite Susana’s disappointment in me, she advises me that even though I had a child, it was never too late to go back to school. She reminded me of my excellent academic record and skills and influenced me to take my life back. At that point, I was being abused physically by the man and I knew that I had no future with him. I followed my sister’s advice and decided to go back to school. Currently, I am in Form 1 at Bawku Senior High School and reading Home Economics. I am also an advocate of sexual and reproductive health rights and sexual relationships and I spend time talking to some of the students and my colleagues on these issues.

Now, I go to school and come back to take care of my child and also make time to study. My involvement with men was influenced by peers and curiosity but I have learnt from my mistakes and I am making sure I create a better life for myself, my child and my family so I don’t play with my education. I really study hard because I want to be successful in future to make my elder sister proud”.

5.8 Women’s group demand the reduction of unpaid care work

On International Rural Women’s Day (IRWD), women groups in our programme areas campaigned about the effects of unpaid care work and demanded the provision of child care development centres for their children. This will give them time to pursue income

generating and other productive activities while affording their children a good foundation in education.

The occasion was aimed at creating a platform for rural women farmers to amplify their voices on challenges of unpaid care work and demanded government's response. The campaign heightened awareness of women's unpaid care work and how it contributes to the marginalisation of women, thereby hampering their empowerment and development efforts in pursuing leadership, economic livelihoods and personal growth.

The 2016 International Women's Day coincided with the Kilimanjaro campaign on women's rights to land. The occasion was used to highlight the struggles of women small holder farmers, especially regarding their ownership of land and other productive resources.



Rural women engaging in advocacy march on International Rural Women's Day

The women voiced out the challenges they face in their domestic and farming activities and called on government to recognise and reduce their daily drudgery of unpaid care work.

For instance, in the Upper East region where 197 women participated in a regional march, a communiqué was presented to government representatives and the traditional authorities, demanding the provision of daycare centres in rural communities.



Madam Margaret Barbon presenting a communiqué on behalf of the women

5.9 Women groups meet parliamentary aspirants on access to productive resources

To address the challenges of women's low representation in policy formulation, various meetings were organised by women's groups for parliamentary aspirants and others seeking office to local and community power structures in electoral areas and constituencies. The main purpose of the meetings was to create a platform for the aspirants to commit to champion issues affecting women, such as low representation in local governance, cultural and traditional acts of violence, lack of capital and sexual harassment. This will create the space to work together with elected representatives on local priorities towards sustainable community development.

Madam Victoria Ayini, member of a women's group in the Upper East region, shares her experience:



“I wish to draw your attention to the fact that the education of girls is very low in the constituency which has also influenced vices such as child abuse, child marriage and teenage pregnancy. It has also caused migration to the southern part of Ghana for economic opportunities. I hope the aspirants could make some commitment on what they will do with their common fund to support efforts to arrest these negative practices endured by girls in their constituencies”.

Dr. Mark Nawaani, MP for Nabdam, pledged to work closely with the women groups to encourage and prepare them to hold leadership positions in the constituency.



Dr. Mark Nawaani, MP for Nabdam, addressing women groups

He also promised to ensure that young women who are out of school in the constituency have access to skills development such as hair dressing, weaving, and dress making to improve their income level. To improve agriculture for women, the aspirant indicated his support for women in Nabdam to get access to agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, improved seeds and tractor service to improve their productivity.

5.10 COMBAT mother rescues daughter four times from marriage by abduction

To respond to human rights violations, traditional and customary acts of violence and promote community development, AAG created the Community-Based Anti-violence Teams (COMBATs) in our programme communities. Composed of seven (7) volunteers



including at least two (2) women, COMBAT is a community structure that allows rural communities in remote areas to access social protection amenities and institutional structures such as police stations and CHRAJ in cases of rights violations and community conflict.

COMBAT refers to a group of rights-minded and development-oriented men and women who have undergone extensive training on the Domestic Violence Act, arrest procedures and other relevant laws to promote peace and development in the community. These advocates promote human rights in their various communities by campaigning against child marriage, domestic violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and other rights abuses. They are the eyes and ears of DoVVSU and the Ghana Police Service in their communities, providing crucial information and evidence on human rights abuses in their communities.

In the Upper West region, AAG has established many COMBAT groups who meet to discuss community security and child protection issues, campaign challenges and community development. Fredous Balali, 40 years and mother of five (5) children is a member of the COMBAT squad in Sakalu, a rural community in the Sissala East District of the Upper West region.

Fredous' involvement with COMBAT began in 2011 when she underwent a number of trainings and workshops on Gender-Based Violence and the incidence of child marriage. According to her, at the time, at least five girls were victims of child marriage every three

months on average, a startling figure she, along with other COMBAT members in her community, have helped to reduce. Fredous has also been involved in not only rescuing 27 girls from child marriage but returning them to their families and ensuring they are back in school to continue their education.

As a trained advocate against child marriage, Fredous has been working along with other COMBAT members in the Sakalu community to prevent and reduce the incidence of child marriage. However, she never knew that very soon she would be rescuing her own daughter from the practice.

According to Fredous, the knowledge of human and child rights and the laws of Ghana has empowered her to rescue her own child four times from child marriage:



Fredous Balali, a proud member of the Sakalu COMBAT squad



“At 15-years old, my daughter, Adilata Balali was abducted by a young man while returning home from school and taken to the Walembelle community in our district. When I got hint of this, I said to myself, knowing the consequences, that, “I would never allow any of my daughters to suffer through child marriage!” So I went to that community the next day and brought her back home. Two months later, she was again abducted to the Nankpawie community. I followed her once again and brought her home with me. Just before turning 16 years, she was once more abducted and taken to a community known as Vamboi, which is where my mother hails from. I was not deterred and went to that community to rescue her and send her back to school. The fourth time was the final straw for me.”



Fredous Balali stands next to her daughter Adilata

“I reported all the incidences of child abduction and child marriage to DoVVSU and the ActionAid Office in the Upper West region to seek justice. I was not afraid and wanted to pursue justice for my daughter and set an example for her two sisters, while at the same time dissuade potential abductors from attempting to kidnap them for marriage. More importantly, I wanted to give them an opportunity to live a more empowered life and enjoy their rights. DoVVSU wrote a letter summoning the perpetrators to report to the Police Station with my daughter the next day and they did. They were cautioned and my daughter given back to me. I brought her home and she is currently in Form Two at the Junior High School level. I am filled with pride that I did it. I thank ActionAid and their supporters for building my confidence.”

Fredous says that her greatest joy as a member of COMBAT was being able to rescue Adilata, not just one, or twice, but four times from child marriage.

ActionAid has rescued more than 170 girls from child marriage in over 57 communities in the Upper West region through our unique collaboration with DoVVSU, community members and the relentless efforts of COMBAT.

All across our programme communities, men and women like Fredous Balali are ensuring the protection and promotion of the rights of people in their communities, especially girls. Fredous is a true example of ActionAid's belief and strategy of empowering people living in poverty to create change for themselves, their families and their communities.

5.11 District Assemblies adopt COMBATs in district budgets

After taking the COMBAT initiative from the community to the district level, we worked with Sissala East and Jirapa District assemblies to establish COMBAT networks at the district level. The objective was to motivate the district assemblies to adopt the COMBAT initiative and replicate it in many more communities to fight violence against women in rural communities.

This resulted in the Assemblies incorporating the COMBAT initiative into their medium term development plans. Hence the 2016 action plans and composite budgets of the assemblies prioritised the COMBATs following continuous engagement by the District's COMBATs network.

The assemblies have replicated the COMBAT initiative in eight (8) more communities in the Sissala East District, bringing the number of COMBAT communities in the district to 35. The assemblies will also be supporting the existing COMBATs to enable them function effectively.



Salifu Kanton (right), Coordinating Director of Sissala East District Assembly

At the inauguration of COMBAT, Mr. Salifu B. Kanton, the District Coordinating Director, said:

“The Sissala East District Assembly closely followed the COMBAT programme initiated by ActionAid Ghana and its partners over couple of years. It has been a unique initiative

that builds synergy between local communities and government institutions charged with maintaining law, order and harmony. The Assembly is particularly delighted with the efforts of the COMBATs in rescuing girls from early and forced marriages and solving minor disputes among couples and family members. Under the traditional and cultural setting where social ties are highly cherished, our society is not yet inclined to using the law enforcements institutions and courts to resolving disputes and rights abuses.

The boost is that the COMBATs are local inhabitants who are familiar with these social relationships. Having also been trained on the dictates of the law, they are better positioned to find a balance in liaising with law enforcement institutions to enforce the national laws while taking cognizance of not breaking social harmony. It is for these reasons that the Assembly added the expansion of the COMBAT programme to its priority interventions. The Assembly hopes to improve on its internally generated funds and be able to spend a part of it on such worthy partnership interventions.”



The composition of a typical COMBAT squad

5.12 COMBAT rescues 13 year old girl from abusive grandmother

Seidu Sakina, a 13-year old girl at Kramokrom suffered years of maltreatment by her grandmother. Her community is close to Yaw Brefo in the Asutifi North district where COMBAT members are very active.

COMBAT reported the case to the Department of Social Welfare and DOVVSU and the grandmother was invited for interrogation. After the first meeting with DOVVSU, Sakina

ran away with her belongings to an unknown destination. Through the investigations of the Department of Social Welfare, we got to know that some of her relatives are at Derma in the Tano South district of the Brong Ahafo Region. AAG in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare traced her and handed her over to her relatives as Derma.

She shares her experience:

“My grandmother Hawa Akosua was maltreating me and also refused to give me food to eat. She sometimes did not allow me to sleep in the house. Sometimes, I slept in the classroom. One day my grandmother beat me up and I walked from my community to Kenyasi, the district capital, a distance of about 18 kilometres to go and beg for money and travel to Kumasi. At Kenyasi I slept alone in an uncompleted building. A kind driver saw me and inquired about where I came from and brought me back to my community. After learning about my predicament, a community member me to a nearby community to discuss with the COMBAT members on how they could help me. After a discussion with one of the elders in the community, one of the COMBAT members took me home to stay with his wife.

I thank Mr. Asante Dominic, a COMBAT member and his wife, the department of social welfare ActionAid Ghana for supporting me to locate my relatives”.

5.13 Leadership conference inspires girls to reach higher levels of education

To promote the participation of women in political governance and community leadership, AAG organised women empowerment programmes and leadership conferences to build the confidence of women to achieve high levels in education and aspire to leadership and professional development.

In our programme areas, our interventions with smallholder farmers, women groups and girls’ clubs have resulted in many women and girls expressing great enthusiasm in pursuing leadership roles at the local, community and regional levels. Through targeted trainings and rights-based empowerment programmes, the girls are taking control of their lives and exhibiting leadership qualities in their schools and community life.

After attending a leadership conference for girls in Kenyasi in the Brong Ahafo region, Mary Akurugu, a 27 year old headmistress from Merista Care School, shares her testimony:

“At the conference we discussed topics including building self-esteem, assertiveness and confidence building, leadership skills, sexual maturation, reading skills, and study clubs. These topics inspired me and I took my studies seriously. This helped me throughout my education from the primary to the tertiary level. The interaction with the role models gave me the hope that with determination and hard work, I could achieve my goals regardless of my background.



During my tertiary education, I held positions like the Youth President at Assemblies of God Church in Kenyasi. I am now the headmistress of Merista Care School in Kenyasi. I had the opportunity to share my experience with a group of girls at 2016 annual girl's leadership conference held at Serwaa Kesse Senior High at Duayaw Nkwanta in the Brong Ahafo region.

Now, I have been empowered and inspired to serve as a mentor and role model for many girls in my school. I will share my experience and continue to inspire young girls in my school and community to reach higher. I thank ActionAid and partners for creating the platform and nurturing young girls like me”.

5.14 Young females advocate to end open defecation in school

The Young Female Parliamentarians (YFP) have been empowered to contest for leadership roles, claim their rights in education and advocate for better conditions of life. In 2016, the YFP of Yendi Senior High School met educational and community leaders to discuss issues affecting them in their schools. The girls interacted with the Dagbon of Yendi and the Yendi Municipal Assembly about the lack of toilet facilities at the Girls' dormitory, which has promoted the practice of open defecation in the school.

Ms Abdul-Wahab Azara, the speaker of YFP and the Girls' Prefect of the School, made the appeal on behalf of her colleagues.

She said “The Girls' dormitory houses more than 500 students but it does not have a functioning place of convenience. We face the danger of being bitten by snakes in the bush, being raped by unscrupulous men, and facing fatal accidents on the roads as we walk miles into the bushes. There had even been armed robbery attempts on some students.”



Young Female Parliamentarians in a meeting with the DCE and security officials

Mr. Edward Bismark Akakpo, the Assistant Headmaster in-charge of Domestic at Yendi SHS, added that the lack of toilet facilities at the school's girls dormitory was a security threat, which needed to be urgently addressed. The YFP members also called on the Regent of Dagbon to appeal to him to use his high influence to get a toilet facility for the girls' dormitory.

The Regent acknowledged the need for the construction of a toilet and offered the group an amount of GHC 600 as his indication of his commitment and commended the confidence of the girls and their bold initiative.



The Regent of Dagbon interacting with the Young Female Parliamentarians

The YFP have engaged various stakeholders both at the school and district level to advocate for the provision of necessary educational and health facilities for women. As a result, there have been reduced cases of candidiasis among girls in Kumbungu Senior High School due to increased education on the disease in the school.

Mission Objective Three

5.15 Working with Colleges of Education to improve early childhood education

AAG has expanded its programmes in education to cover Early Childhood Education (ECE). This is to promote quality public childhood education and ensure that children enjoy their rights to quality life in a safe and educational environment. In many communities in our operational districts, we have constructed early childhood development centers to provide quality care and education for children.

This initiative provided an opportunity for AAG to advocate for more early childhood facilities in our programme areas while demanding the provision of professional teachers to care for children in these centers. AAG also advocated for colleges of education to include early childhood development programmes in their curriculum. For instance, it was found that none of the colleges of education in the Northern region offer programmes in early childhood development.

AAG held a series of meetings with directors and principals of colleges of education on the state of early childhood in the region, where the school heads committed to the proposals, agreeing that at least one college of education in the region would introduce early childhood education in their curriculum. As a result of the advocacy, the Principal of Tamale College of Education indicated the institution's interest to include early childhood development in their academic programmes.

5.16 Former girls' camper leads colleagues in school environmental protection

As pioneers in the organisation of girls' camps in Ghana, AAG has trained and empowered many girls from its sponsorship communities in marginalised and deprived rural settlements. 15 years after the camp innovation, many of the girls continue to impact their communities and contribute to development.

Kassim Rashida, 15, a former girl camper from Tadamuni Islamic Junior High School, led her colleagues in flower planting to protect and beautify her school environment. Inspired and motivated by the learnings from the 2016 Regional Girls' camp, Rashida had this to say:

"At first I did not know girls could make good suggestions in the midst of men, let alone leading others to perform a meaningful task. After participating in the 2016 Regional Girls camp organised by ActionAid, I learnt a lot through interactions with the resource persons at the camp. I was taught that a girl can lead a development process even without the involvement of our male counterparts."



Rashida with her friends during a planting exercise

The idea of flower planting came about when we visited Ghana Senior High School in Tamale, I admired and appreciated the beauty of the environment and wished my school had such an opportunity. However, after listening to the presentation from the Regional Gender Officer and the Regional Motor Transport and Traffic Unit (MTTU) Commander who were both females, and studying their biographies and achievements, I convinced myself that even at our level, we can also support in the development of our schools and communities.”

After returning from the camp, Rashida mobilised her colleagues at their club meeting to start the discussion on how they could beautify their school.

“I supported our club secretary to write a letter to the headmaster through our mentor, and the head was happy and quickly permitted us to carry on. I thank Songtaba and ActionAid for organising camps and other workshops and training for girls.”

5.17 Teachers and education supervisors join campaign on Positive Discipline

To promote effective learning in a violence-free environment, AAG works with teachers, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and other stakeholders in education to protect the rights of children in education. Following our Promoting Rights in Schools (PRS) model, we embarked on series of training programmes and workshops, exposing teachers and parents to the dangers of corporal punishment while educating children about their basic responsibilities and rights to quality education.

In 2016, we worked with many educational stakeholders in all our programme areas. In the Northern region, AAG local partner Songtaba organised a three (3) day workshop to train circuit supervisors, head teachers and teachers in sponsorship communities on the Positive Discipline Approach (PDA). The initiative is a more progressive way of ensuring that children learn better in a safe environment and are motivated to stay and complete school.

The aim of the training was to expose participants to alternative forms of discipline rather than corporal punishment. Many schools in the region participated in the training to learn about the advantages of PDA and the fundamental rights of children in schools.

In attendance were circuit supervisors from the Ghana Education Service (GES), supervisors, head teachers and teachers each from the schools.



Participants undergoing training on Positive Discipline

In addition, we monitored ten (10) communities to assess the implementation of PDA in schools. The communities include Lungni, Daadayili, Lankani, Kukuo, Naabayili, Kpalisugu, Kanjou, Montanaya, Baaduli and Sakpe where parents and students were interviewed on PDA. The monitoring guide assessed the mode of punishment in school, changes that occurred in the past two years, relationships between teachers and students and the effects of PDA on the pupil's academic performance. The assessment also included the challenges in PDA implementation and incidences of rights violations at home.

The monitoring revealed that the student followed PDA recommended punishment models, such as getting advice, writing exercise as a punishment, denial of play time, and taking work home to be presented the next day.

As a result of the training and workshops, it was observed that teachers monitor children who are conscious of their rights, since they report cases of violence to the appropriate authorities in the schools. Teachers and seniors who bully students are reported to the head teachers or teachers on duty. The monitoring also uncovered that the mode of punishment at home was always corporal punishment but with the introduction of PDA in school, teachers and parents are cooperating on the best ways to improve the emotional, social and academic development of children. PDA has improved discipline in school because children have become aware of their rights and have built the confidence to challenge rights violations.

Harsh punishments such as lashing children on tables, digging trenches, fetching water, weeding during class time, carrying stones, and bullying by seniors in school have decreased in many schools in our programme areas. This has increased school attendance as children who skipped school because of harsh punishment are now punctual and participate effectively during classes.

5.18 Girls mark International Day of the African Child

The Day of the African Child is celebrated every year on 16 June by member states of the African Union (AU) and other partners.

This occasion is a commemoration of the 1976 uprisings in Soweto when a protest by school children in South Africa against the apartheid-inspired education system resulted in the public killing of young protesters by the police.

Governments, international institutions and communities used the occasion to review their commitments to child protection, organising programmes to improve the lives of marginalised and vulnerable children.

On the 2016 Day of the African Child, AAG organised series of child-focused programmes at the local and regional programme levels to promote our advocacy initiatives on women empowerment and female leadership in local and national governance.

In Ghana, the day was used to highlight the need for peace during the 2016 elections under the theme "*Election 2016: Protecting the rights of all children in Ghana.*"

In the Northern region, 250 girls were mobilised by AAG, CAMFED, World Vision and Regional Advisory Information and Network Systems (RAINS) to participate in series of activities to mark the day.

The celebration was aimed at highlighting the key issues affecting children and the need for all stakeholders to put in measures to protect the rights of all children before, during and after the 2016 elections. A community drama on the effects of electoral violence on

children and the society was held at Yong Dakamyilli in the Tamale Metropolitan area in the Northern region. There was a durbar and street procession of children with placards displaying messages of solidarity.

The celebrations ended with most stakeholders like the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), chiefs, and parents pledging to ensure that all children are safe and protected from violence during the 2016 elections.

5.19 Promoting functional literacy and numeracy skills for out-of-school children

To promote quality education and bridge the inequality gap, AAG is committed to global development initiatives such as the Education for All Programme and the Sustainable Development Goals. Under the Complementary Basic Education (CBE) intervention, AAG has mobilised out-of-school children between 8-14 years to provide them functional literacy and numeracy skills. The purpose of the intervention is to provide a standard nine (9)-month functional education to out-of-school children in literacy, numeracy and writing skills in their mother tongue in order to integrate them into the formal school system.

AAG has been implementing the CBE project in the Upper East, Northern and Brong Ahafo regions since 2013. The project is implemented in collaboration with Ghana Education Service and District Assemblies and supported by DFID and USAID. In the Upper East Region, 3,125 out of school children in the Garu-Tempane and East Mamprussi districts benefited from the intervention. It has also achieved more than 50% enrolment for girls in the districts, bringing education to the door steps of the community.

A beneficiary of the intervention shares her joy of being in school to learn how to read and write:

“I am Fulera and I am 12 years old. I had never been to school before since there is no school in my community. I am very happy to be enrolled in the Complementary Basic Education programme of ActionAid Ghana. I am happy because I can now write my name, read and also sing songs in school. I am going to learn seriously so that I can go to the formal school after I graduate from my class. I wish to become a nurse in future. I am happy for the opportunity to learn.”

Fulera is just one of many unlucky girls who would not have had the opportunity to benefit from any form of formal education if the CBE had not been introduced. The project has therefore ensured that children like Fulera are given the necessary support to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills to transition into formal school.



Fulera happily reading her lesson notes

Mission Objective Four

5.20 Mainstreaming gender into policy in the extractive industry

To ensure equitable redistribution of resources and eradicate poverty, AAG promotes gender responsiveness in the mining and extractive industry. In 2016, our interventions in mining communities included local campaigns on the rights and responsibilities of stakeholders in the sector, formation of women groups and Participatory Review and Reflection Process (PRRP) sessions.

Through our campaigns, policy briefs and research programmes, we have found that vulnerable groups in many communities, especially women, continue to bear the brunt of policies and activities of companies and other stakeholders involved in the extractives. The interests of women have been neglected in these communities, where the formulation and implementation of policies are motivated by profits and other business factors. As a result, policies and activities implemented in the sector are not gender responsive, thereby promoting social inequalities and poverty among women.

To promote gender responsiveness of policies in the extractive industry, AAG has been engaging with stakeholders in the sector to explore ways to mainstream gender into policy decisions. Two policy dialogues were held in Takoradi and Accra to document the impact of the extractive industries on the livelihoods of people living in poverty in the Western Region. The purpose was to identify strategies to reduce the negative impact of policies in the oil and gas sector on women and other vulnerable groups.

The dialogues were held under the theme, *“Strengthening Capacities on Extractive Sector Issues for Effective Gender Responsive Advocacy.”* The workshops brought together over 30 participants from governmental and non-governmental organisations and coalitions, including the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS), Gender Action on Climate Change for Equality and Sustainability (GACCES), and the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS).

The workshops discussed the absence of sex disaggregated data within the extractive sector which undermines efforts to monitor gender related issues on appointments and recruitment. The low employment of the local people in the sector and poor patronage of local goods were also discussed.



Participants during the dialogue in Accra

Participants also learnt from experiences of other countries on the impact of the oil and gas sector on the economic livelihoods of people living in poverty.

The dialogues have helped in creating gender conscious civil societies, ready to address gender gaps in institutional and regulatory frameworks governing the oil and gas sector.

5.21 Advocacy on economic inequalities and inclusive development

To promote the vision of a just, equitable and sustainable world in which every person enjoys the right to dignity, AAG has been working towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5 and 10 regarding gender inequality and reducing inequalities.

Assessing Ghana's preparedness towards meeting the SDG 5 & 10, AAG's campaigns and advocacy programmes target policies and laws that perpetuate social and economic inequalities, especially between men and women.

At the international campaign level, ActionAid launched the Inequalities Report at a major UN forum in 2016, which increased the momentum for the fight against inequality in all ActionAid member countries, including Ghana.

At the national level, we collaborated with UNICEF to organise a national Inclusive Development Forum that brought together over 250 participants across government, civil society, trade institutions, private sector, development partners and academia. The

programme was part of national discussions towards the Long-Term National Development Plan. The key output of the event is a set of agreed policy actions to promote inclusive development in the country.

5.22 Advocacy for peaceful election campaigns in Ghana

As promoters of good governance and community development, AAG works with local community structures and engages in regional and national advocacy to address structural causes of violence and social instability in our operational regions.

During the 2016 Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Ghana, we organised series of activities with women groups, youth networks and traditional authorities to ensure peaceful conduct of voters in their constituencies during the elections.

At the national level, AAG partnered with the National Peace Council to campaign for peace in elections. The partners distributed educational materials on free and fair democratic elections and peaceful conduct to members of the public, especially in areas that had been identified as flashpoints for violence. The campaigns also included engagements with key stakeholders, including the media, to build greater awareness for the public towards peaceful and incident-free elections.



AAG joined Christian Aid and IBIS to sponsor peace marches and health walks in Bawku, Yendi, Kumasi and Accra, which attracted thousands of volunteers, including youth and women's groups, students and other participants from a broad range of professional and social backgrounds.

After a successful regional march in Bawku, the Municipal Chief Executive said:

“The people of Bawku and I have been looking for an opportunity to tell the whole world that the Bawku you knew yesterday is not the same Bawku today. The Bawku today is peaceful, inclusive, and tolerant of divergent views. In Bawku today, our concern is the development of the area in terms of health, education, inclusive governance and economic growth. We very much understood that the various conflicts fought in Bawku yielded no positive result. The pain and the losses affected every citizen of Bawku and became everybody’s responsibility. I want to assure the National Peace Council, development partners who have ever worked with the Assembly, the Government, and the world at large that, this election will come and go but Bawku will continue to be peaceful.”

Peace Concerts were held in some regional capitals by the bands of security and law enforcement agencies in Ghana. These included the Police, Fire Service, Prisons and the Immigration Service. The Bands Competition of the Security Agencies (BACOSA) events brought together hundreds of people and political party followers to join the campaign for peace. Senior security officials, including the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Ministers of Defence and Interior, made commitments to ensure peaceful elections and guarantee the protection of all Ghanaians, before, during and after the elections.

BACOSA is an initiative by the Ministry of Interior aimed at fostering unity among security agencies, other state agencies and civil society through music. Election violence within the sub-region and Africa have destabilised the peace of many countries, resulting in destruction of property, institutional structures and human lives, especially women and children.

BACOSA was instituted in 2014 by the Ministry of Interior where the Immigration Service emerged winners. The 2016 event was used by the ministry and the National Peace Council to create national platforms in conflict prone areas to promote peace in the general elections.

In a message, the Minister of Interior assured Ghanaians that there would be peace before, during and after the elections as elaborate plans had been laid down to ensure peace:

“The President has given the nation the strongest assurance that he will ensure that there will be peace before, during and after the elections. No one single Ghanaian blood is worth spilling because of a contest for power. The security will be deployed appropriately to all areas on Election Day. However, the security will not tolerate any individual or organisation that seeks to cause trouble in any part of the country. As a government, I want to assure the whole nation that the country will be peaceful after the election...”

The 2016 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, which led to the election of a new government and a new Parliament, offered AAG a major opportunity to improve its advocacy on the promotion of women's rights in Ghana. It also provided a unique advocacy space for AAG to increase its campaign on the representation of women in decision making, especially in Parliament.



BACOSA Night at the National Theatre

6.0 WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS IN 2016

In 2016, AAG worked with 12 local agencies and three (3) national level partners towards our fight against poverty and injustice.

We embarked on a partnership rationalisation exercise which resulted in ending our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with some local partners, including URBANET, Centre for Active Learning and Integrated Development (CALID), BONATADU and TUDRIDEP. Two reasons accounted for this. First, there was sharp decline in Regular Giving and second to align with 'Action for Global Justice' which enjoins us to work more with social movements, therefore limiting each LRP to one partner.

At the national level, we suspended our relationship with Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) due to financial irregularities and lack of accountability.

Below is a list of our partners and collaborators in 2016:

Table 1: Regional Locations

Regional Programme	Location	Local Partners
Northern Region	Tamale, Northern Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • URBANET • NORSAAC • Centre for Active Learning and Integrated Development (CALID) • Songtaba
Upper East	Zebila, Upper East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Botataaba Nahiru Taaba Development Union (BONATADU) • Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM) • Belim Wusa Development Agency (BEWDA)
Upper West	Tumu, Upper West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action for Sustainable Development (ASUDEV) • Community Aid for Rural Development (CARD) • Tumu Deanery Rural Integrated Development Programme (TUDRIDEP)
Brong Ahafo	Sunyani, Brong Ahafo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Maternal Health and Community Empowerment (CMCE) • Social Development and Improvement Agency (SODIA)
Greater Accra	Accra, Greater Accra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Urban Women's Movement • Kpobiman Women's Association
Volta Region	Ho, Volta Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Action for Women Empowerment (GLOWA) • Network of Communities in Development (NOCID)

Table 2: National Partners and Collaborators

National Level Partners	Institutional Collaborators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABANTU for Development • Ghana National Education Coalition Campaign (GNECC) • General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU) • Tax Justice Coalition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection • Ghana Education Service - Ministry of Education • Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) • Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) • Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) • Regional Houses Chiefs

Some of our partners share their experiences of our collaboration in 2016:

6.1 Social Development and Improvement Agency (SODIA)

“SODIA’s partnership with ActionAid in 2016 presented a fantastic opportunity to learn and deepen our understanding of the work we have been doing together, especially regarding the impact we are making at the community, district and regional levels. To us, it is a reflection of the true brand image of an organisation aiming at building the capacity and structures of indigenous organisations to enable them deliver on their mandates and ensure better value for money.

Through our rewarding partnership, we shared useful lessons and took advantage of many capacity building initiatives, including development workshops, report writing, photography, content production, and media relations. These enabled us to promote critical advocacy and useful campaigns at the local and regional levels in furtherance of our development mandates and our partnership goals.

We can say that most of our partners are commending us for demonstrating increased volumes and quality of stories and content to support our work and advocacy agenda. Again we were able to come out with reports based on programme evidence with high quality, using our HRBA. We look forward to a stronger partnership with ActionAid as we continue to work together to improve the lives people living in poverty.”

6.2 Young Urban Women’s Movement - “ActionAid Ghana was there for us”

“The Young Urban Women’s Movement is a group of 2,000 young women mobilised from peri-urban communities in Tamale and Greater Accra to engage in regional and national advocacy on women empowerment, unpaid care work and sexual reproductive health rights. We have worked to expand our network and empower youth groups to contribute to community development. We hold a special place for women and girls because our experience has taught us that empowerment creates room for all.

2016 was another successful year working as a partner organisation of ActionAid Ghana, reaching thousands of people through education, end child marriage campaign, research, building partnerships for women’s rights, among other development projects.

Through our partnership with ActionAid, we have been exposed to new realities in gender equality and women’s rights by participating in local and international fora to share our perspectives as young urban women. ActionAid has helped to build our capacities in all spheres of social issues, equipping us with economic livelihood skills for fashion and design, beads making, soap making and other immeasurable benefits.



Young Urban Women performing a sketch at the inauguration of their resource centre

We are excited about the development prospects that our partnership with ActionAid has afforded us. Today, we see our communities progressing and we are proud to be part of the development process, serving as a catalyst for change. Our advocacy groups have become agents of change, working to empower other young women to take control of their lives and to be more independent.

It has been a fulfilling and rewarding experience working with ActionAid Ghana. We see greater opportunities to work together to overcome challenges in our communities. We look forward to more fruitful working years with ActionAid Ghana.”

7.0 CHILD SPONSORSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The total sponsorship links, including child and non-child sponsorship links, stood at 13,400 at the beginning of the year. By the end of December 2016, the links had reduced by 3.2% to 12,967. The links have been declining over the last 5 years. Analysis of the link level by funding affiliates shows that links from UK reduced by the highest percentage of 10.0%, followed by that of Greece by 9.7%. Links from Italy reduced by 5.2%. The ‘Next Step’ links also reduced by 5.1% from 2,052 to 1,947. The only Funding Affiliate to record an increase in total link level is Brazil, where the figure increased by 51% from 833 to 1,268 in 2016.

7.1 Partnership Funding

AAG secured £4,153,850 to implement various projects over the next 4 years. Details of the efforts and activities carried out to improve on partnership funding in 2016 are as follows:

AAG secured a €822,876 contract with the European Commission (EC) to implement the “*Sustainable Livelihoods and Transparent Local Authorities*” (SLATLA) initiative, a 42-month intervention aimed at improving economic livelihoods and local government transparency. AAG and two local assemblies – La-Nkwatanang-Madina Municipal and the Sunyani West District Assembly will, however, provide a co-financing amount of €122,876.

AAG secured GHC4.4M (equivalent of about £720,000) from DFID (through Crown Agents) for the implementation of the fourth cycle of the Complementary Basic Education intervention in five (5) districts in three (3) regions namey Upper East, Northern and Brong Ahafo regions.

We were part of a multi-country proposal led and submitted by ActionAid Denmark (with AAG as co-applicant) to EC on ‘*Mobilising civil society support for the implementation of African Governance Architecture*’. The proposal was approved for funding and a contract signed. AAG is expected to receive €300,000 for 3 years.

AAG also secured £2,478,530 from the Dutch Government through the Funding Leadership Opportunities for Women (FLOW) funding window, to support 6,000 women in Ghana to expand income generating opportunities and increase their ability to control their income through practising CRSA and reducing unpaid care work.

7.2 High value funding

AAG partnered with ActionAid Italy to secure funding of €26,504, to support girls to attend and complete their basic education through the distribution of bicycles to 140 girls. AAG also secured an amount of £57,200 to transform livelihoods and early childhood education in Upper East, particularly in Nabdam district. We will supplement the secured funds with an amount of £35,000. Following a programme visit from a group of ‘Ambassadors’ from UK, AAG received an amount of £8,900 from one (1) donor to support the implementation of a project aimed at ending child marriage in 12 districts in Ghana.

8.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

8.1 Advocacy on witchcraft accusations

To promote our advocacy for the reintegration of the alleged witches in the Northern region, AAG developed a communication strategy to support the implementation of the roadmap for the reintegration programme. The strategy was inspired by AAG’s current communication strategy, and our HRBA development framework, to guide our efforts in addressing the increasing rate of witchcraft accusations and related human rights abuses in the region.



An accused woman in front of her mud house at a witch camp

The use of the strategy has strengthened our collaborative work with the reintegration committee, traditional authorities and partners, contributing to our human rights interventions at the witch camps.

Our programmes at the witch camps are aimed at creating awareness about the human rights violations at the camps, reintegrating the women into mainstream society and disbanding the camps. In December 2014, AAG in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the traditional authorities of the Central Gonja traditional area, closed down the Bonyasi witch camp. The five (5) remaining camps are Kuku, Kpatinga, Gambaga, Gnani, and Nabuli. AAG has been working with the Alleged Witches Reintegration Committee and the Northern Regional House of Chiefs towards the closure of the Nabuli camp next year.

We also partnered with local and international media to expand our audience base and strengthen our partnerships. While our weekly column in The Finder newspaper 'Development in Action' received great commendation from our readers in 2016, new partnerships with international media were pursued, which created space for the publication of some of our significant interventions in some credible foreign newspapers and online media.

8.2 International media collaboration

International media collaborations in 2016 included our work with The Daily Mail in the UK which researched and published our reintegration work at the witch camps and other development initiatives in the communities where the camps are situated. The

publications appeared on the MailOnline, which has more than 200 Million readers, and on other international news portals, thereby extending AAG's reach across several credible traditional and online media sources around the world.

Another important media collaboration in the year was with an international photojournalist from New York whose work is popular with British and American media. Her elaborate investigations at the witch camps included analysing the voting patterns of the accused women, most of whom were too old and frail to walk the long distance to their polling stations to exercise their democratic right to vote. As a result, most of them did not vote in the 2016 elections. The stories and photographs appeared in some international news websites and newspapers.



AAG's growing following on all digital communication platforms including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, strengthened our digital presence, resulting in increased numbers



A shot of AAG Twitter page

and content engagement. Regular and interactive updates on social media about local and international campaigns and advocacy programmes expanded our digital networks, attracting youth groups, school-based clubs and professional associations. Improvements in content updates on our official website also increased visitor traffic in 2016.

9.0 CAMPAIGNS AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMMES

9.1 Rural women demand access to land – Kilimanjaro Initiative

AAG joined the international campaign on the Kilimanjaro Initiative as part of efforts to promote women's rights to land and natural resources towards food and nutritional security on the continent.

In October 2016, we sponsored three rural (3) women and one (1) AAG staff to join more than 500 women in a mass assembly in Arusha-Tanzania on land rights campaign. The women were mostly smallholder farmers drawn from our programme communities in the Brong Ahafo, Upper East and Upper West regions. Four (4) regional caravans from North, South, East and West Africa departed to form a mass assembly of women at the foot of the mountain. It was followed by the climbing of the mountain by a delegation of women to symbolically launch a charter of principles and demands on women's right to land and control of other productive resources from the highest point on the continent.

The Kilimanjaro initiative was an idea conceived by rural women and supported by civil society organisations in 2012 to campaign for the rights of African women to land and other productive natural resources. The symbolic climbing of the tallest mountain is a demonstration of determination of women to surmount the monumental laxity and difficulties in the implementation of international, continental and country level policies that should protect women's rights to land. Mountain Kilimanjaro measures 5,895 metres above sea level and stands out as the highest peak in Africa and the tallest free standing mountain in the world.

2016 was declared by the African Union (AU) as the African Year of "*Human Rights with Particular Focus on the Rights of Women.*" The advocacy and campaign efforts of the Kilimanjaro initiative targeted the 2016 AU Summit and the AU Permanent Representative Council, where women presented the charter of rights.

At the local levels, marches were organised in three (3) districts (Jirapa, Adaklu and Nabdam) by rural women in October, 2016 as part of the Kilimanjaro Initiative. The women marched through some principal streets of the district capitals to create awareness on women rights to productive land and to draw public attention to issues affecting rural women farmers and the burden of unpaid care work.



Women claiming their rights through advocacy

government's Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC) properly targets rural women to enable them access credit for improved agricultural production.

Key government officials who attended the programme responded to issues raised by the rural women in the communiqué. After receiving the communiqué, the Jirapa District Chief Executive (DCE) said:

"I am very happy to be part of this programme and will also like to express my sincerest gratitude to ActionAid for all the support they have been giving to the people of this district".

The DCE also assured the women farmers that the Jirapa District Assembly will take the necessary steps to engage with the chiefs, Tindaanas (landowners) and communities on women's access to fertile land and other productive resources in the District. The Assembly will ensure the



AAG delegation to Arusha, Tanzania

9.2. National Forum on Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA)

To promote responsible agriculture and respond to the effects and threats of climate change, AAG embarked on national and community level advocacy on the negative impact of climate change on smallholder women farmers.

In 2016, AAG organised a forum on CRSA at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Accra to assess government's commitment to investment in CRSA interventions at the district, regional and national levels and also provide local level evidence from demonstration farms. The forum also discussed the viability and sustainability of CRSA in Ghana.

The forum created a platform for civil society organisations to learn more about interventions by government such as the development of the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) and the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy to address the effects of climate change on smallholder farmers. Projects being implemented as part of government policies include the Integrated Dry Land Development Project, Ghana Environmental Management Project, Sustainable Land and Water Management Project, and the Adaptation of Agro-Ecological Zones to Climate Change among others.

Government officials learned from AAG's experiences in practicing CRSA, including mobilisation and training of women groups on soil conservation practices, earth bunding, soil coverage mulching, composting, intercropping, sustainable water management and community seed banks. The trainings have yielded positive results among smallholder farmers resulting in increased food production among farming communities, high yields during harvesting, increased income and a resilient lifestyle among farmers both on the field and out of the field.

Two female extension volunteers-Memuna Kusiau and Afisatu Iddrisu-from the Upper West region, who are beneficiaries of the various trainings sessions and services offered by AAG, participated in the forum. They gave evidence of the viability of CRSA approaches and the role of smallholders in the implementation process. The women had been trained to provide extension services to their colleague female farmers who also applied the principles of CRSA on their farms and realised good yield.

9.3 Regional advocacy and campaigns workshop on West African Food Security Network (WAFSN)

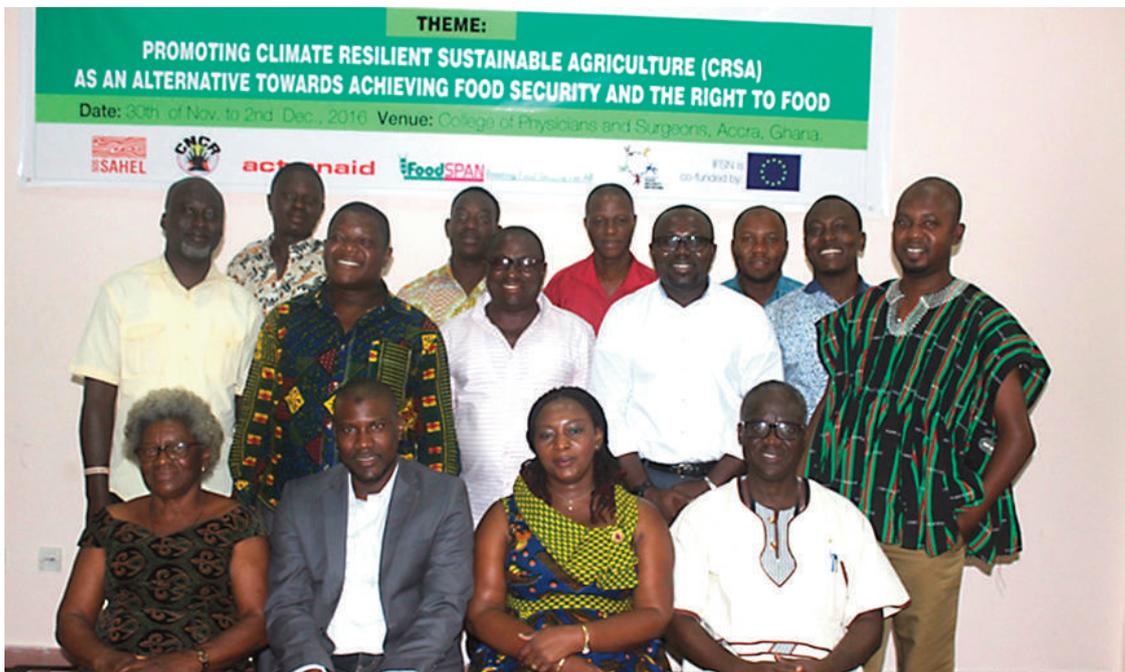
As a member of FoodSPAN and other food security initiatives, AAG worked with civil society and policy organisations to promote international and national initiatives on food security advocacy.

During the year, AAG hosted members of the WAFSN to promote advocacy programmes on the adoption of CRSA as a sustainable way to achieve food security and the right to food. In December 2016, participants from Ghana, The Gambia, Burkina Faso, and

Senegal took part in a 3-day workshop on the theme “Promoting Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA) as an Alternative towards Achieving Food Security and the Right to Food.”

Food security experts, climate change campaigners and agricultural groups developed a roadmap to work with government, civil society groups and policy institutions for the implementation of a CRSA policy that protects the livelihoods of smallholder farmers across the sub-region. The workshop called for the inclusion of CRSA at the national, sub-regional and regional agricultural policies and practices.

The workshop also came out with a position paper and policy recommendations for the development of agriculture policy on climate change in Ghana.



Participants of the CRSA and food security workshop in Accra

9.4 Global Platform (GP) – Train the world, Change the world

The Global Platform Ghana pursued important development and advocacy programmes in 2016, including several tailor made trainings for AAG’s UNICEF-sponsored End Child Marriage initiative, presentation skills workshop for AAG Senior Management and HRBA training on the right to water and sanitation for WaterAid. Our Youth Hub activities expanded in the year, impacting more young people through sustained advocacy and campaigns.

The Youth Hub activities started in 2016 to promote activities in school debates, youth journalism, publishing of a youth journal, development of movies and documentaries. The programmes were to serve as the basis for debate and dialogue about social change, youth radio, and getting young people’s voice on relevant issues.

The Global Change Campaign course in the year focused on peaceful elections in Ghana. Participants collected peace pledges and organised a peace flash mob with the media, police service, judiciary service and traditional leaders to commit to peace in the 2016 elections.

In the year, the GP successfully launched Activista Ghana, bringing together youth groups from six (6) regions to form a movement to enforce AAG's campaigns and advocacy plans. As a regional training hub, the GP hosted various youth groups from The Gambia, Senegal, Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone and also organised foreign trainings for ActionAid Liberia.

The GP exceeded the 2016 targets for the number of people trained, scoring higher in our evaluation ratings. This resulted in improving our capacity to work with volunteers who were able to conduct our basic trainings with supervision.

The most important result of the 2016 Youth Hub activities was the vibrant environment it created at the GP. Volunteers were actively involved in our trainings as well as our Youth Hub activities. The volunteer community at the GP thrived during the year, from being almost non-existent to becoming a very active group.

In the year, Salamatu Shiraz, a beneficiary of GP trainings in advocacy and campaign execution, led a campaign on reclaiming public education in Ghana.

Salamatu Shiraz is a 22 year old activist from Tamale, the capital town of the Northern Region of Ghana. She is the oldest daughter of a single mother, and grew up with very limited resources. As a child, Salamatu went to a public school, where she experienced the poor conditions of educational rights in Tamale.

The school lacked chairs and desks and five (5) students had to share a single textbook. In addition, the school had what Salamatu calls "hidden fees" for exams and furniture, forcing the students to work long hours to earn money or eventually to drop out. Salamatu did what she could to pay her own school fees by selling bread at the local market, and she just avoided dropping out of school, as she received an NGO sponsorship for marginalised girls going to school. Since Salamatu successfully managed to graduate from High School, she has been following one clear personal goal: "I want to give back to society the benefits of my education".

With this personal goal in mind, Salamatu decided to join a Campaign training at Global Platform Ghana; ActionAid's training hub for empowerment and activism.

She and 21 other participants selected "The right to education" to be the theme of their campaign at the Global Platform training, where they would have to plan, organise and carry out a full-scale social change campaign.

As part of the campaign research, the participants realised that the Ghana Education Service is actually legally bound to provide sufficient books, desks and chairs to public

schools for all students. Salamatu was very surprised about this finding, remembering her own school life: “Growing up I didn’t know that it is mandatory for the government to provide books - I have never had any single textbook from Primary School to Junior High School”.

The young activists demanded the provision of adequate learning materials (such as furniture and books) to public schools in the rural areas of Ghana. Together with the campaign team, Salamatu met with the Regional Education Director of the Northern region of Ghana, and presented their campaign research report, showing evidence of lack of learning materials.

The participants managed to mobilise more than 400 youth, school representatives and active citizens and gained a strong support among citizens and organisations to continue the pressure on the local school authorities.

As a result of the campaign, the Ghana Education Service made the commitment to distribute desks and learning materials to four (4) schools.

The campaign gave Salamatu a chance to speak up for the right to quality education, becoming the co-spokesperson of the campaign and a leading figure in organising and mobilising youth around the issue. Her passion and zeal earned her the nickname “Action Mama”.

She gave public speeches to raise awareness in the busiest streets of Tamale, participated in radio debates, and spoke at the campaign march at the Independence Square of Tamale.



Salamatu Shiraz in campaign mood

Being part of the Campaign training gave Salamatu insight into the structural reasons behind the challenges she faced as a student and empowered her with tools to make her voice heard and continue her work with reclaiming public education: “After each training session at the Global Platform, you feel like you shouldn’t keep it to yourself. You feel like going out there to educate others on what you learned. I have been a victim - now I have the power to stand for people!”

10.0 HUMAN RESOURCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AAG operated with staff strength of 68 in 2016 to support the implementation of development interventions in our operational areas. The year started with 68 staff in January, increasing to 70 by September and declining to 68 in December due to two (2) voluntary resignations. The table below indicates the staff composition as at December, 2016.

Table 3: Staff categorisation by regions and sex

No.	Office	Females	Males	Total
1.	Accra	10	15	25
2.	Greater Accra/Volta	1	2	3
3.	Upper East	2	6	8
4.	Upper West	1	8	9
5.	Brong-Ahafo	2	4	6
6.	Northern	12	5	17
		28	40	68

Table 4: Staff categorisation by levels

Level	Male	Female	Total
Senior Management	10	4	14
Middle	19	23	42
Junior	11	1	12
Overall staff			68

Staff gender ratio for the period under review stood at 59% males and 41% females representing a 1% increase in the female percentage as against that of the previous year. Percentage of women in leadership, however, decreased to 14.28% as against 15.89% in the previous year.

10.1 Design of learning and development plan

To support the capacity development efforts of staff, the HR unit designed a learning and development plan using information on staff learning needs identified from the performance management system. Based on the learning needs, various learning interventions, including training, were proposed to guide staff development activities.

Various training institutions were identified for staff to undertake various courses.

10.2 Training and development

The Global Platform organised a training on Power-Point presentation to improve the presentation skills of senior managers. The training took place at the 2016 1st quarter senior management meeting held in Bolgatanga. There was also an Management Information Systems (MIS) training by the Quality and Impact Assessment Manager for Monitoring and Evaluation Focal Persons on AAG's new MIS. The Platform also trained four (4) staff members on conflict management. Two (2) staff members were supported to attend a course in Project management in South Africa. On the whole, the training and development spend for the year constituted 94% of the total training and development budget.

A learning transfer template was designed to enable the organisation track the learnings of staff through such interventions while supporting staff to transfer the knowledge that emerges from various development interventions.

10.3 International visits and workshops

Various local and international travels for staff, board members, other AA officials and guests of AAG were facilitated by the department. International workshops undertaken in 2016 included an exposure visit to the Upper West Region of a 12-member team from ActionAid Gambia and Senegal on the Agro-Ecology and Resilience (AER) Project from 23rd to 30th October, 2016. The international regional meeting of the POWER initiative was held from 6th to 9th November 2016. AAG also hosted an international workshop on CRSA from 30th November to 2nd December 2016.

10.4 Women's Forum

The AAG Women's Forum embarked on various activities including sharing of resource information on leadership and women's development. The forum created a platform for the discussion of topical issues that affect the development of women, using the occasion to encourage women to aspire for national level leadership positions.

11.0 FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

11.1 Overview

This section provides an overview of the financial position of AAG as at 31st December 2016. It further analyzes our performance in terms of income realized and programme implementation over the period.

11.2 Performance Summary



Total income for the period (January-December 2016) was £3,408k against expenditure of £2,683k for the same period, resulting in surplus of £725k. From the income analysis, we realised more income than planned. Regular giving income increased by 15% compared to planned income. In addition, we secured new projects during the year which increased partnership funding

11.3 Income

Total income realised for the reporting period was £3,408k, which is £1,325k more than planned income, representing an increase of 64%. In comparison to actual income realised for the same period last year, this period's income represents an increase of 22%. The growth in income was as a result of increase in both RG and Partnership income. Our commitment to fundraising continued to yield fruits in 2016.

During the year, we secured some major projects which increased our Partnership funding. The projects included the Northern Ghana Governance Activity (NGGA) and POWER which contributed 40% of total partnership funding. Also, RG income, which in previous years had decreased, improved by 15% compared to planned income. Given the fundraising mechanisms put in place, we are positive that our income will continue to grow in the ensuing years.

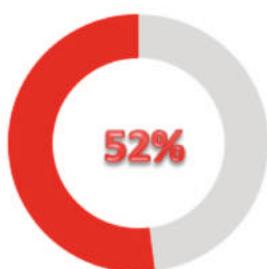
Details and variance analysis of the income realised for the reporting period is shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Income Analysis

	2016				2015	
	Actual £'000	Plan £'000	Var £'000	%	£'000	% Change
Child Sponsorship	1,227	1065	158	115	1,200	2%
Big Step	338	297	41	114	300	13%
Next Step	375	309	66	121	395	-5%
Amico Paese	5	3	2	167	5	0%
Gift and General Funds	5	2	3	250	5	0%
Net Transfers	(178)	(136)	(38)	128	(170)	2%
Partnership - Affiliates	180	130	50	138	300	-40%
Partnership Local	1,421	413	1,008	344	712	100%
Other Income	35	0	35	0	54	-35%
Total	3,408	2,083	1,325	164	2,801	22%

11.4 Supporter Marketing and Regular Giving Income

From Table 5 above, income realised from child sponsorship accounts for the greatest proportion of the country's income mix. RG (sponsorship) income constituted 52% of total income and is also 15% higher than planned income for the year.



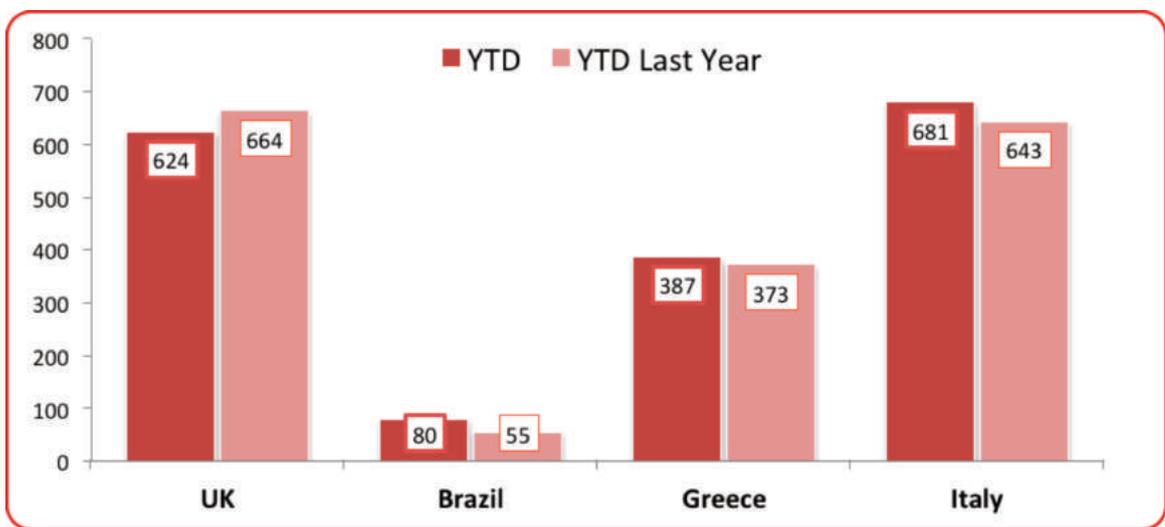
However, it shows a year-on-year increase of 2%. The increase in regular giving income is attributed to additional sponsor links allocated to the Affiliate Programme. Further analysis of the income performance indicates that RG and Partnership income mix have

improved, with RG accounting for 52% of total income in 2016 as compared to 62% in 2015.

From the review of the performance in our income flows, RG income from UK and Italy contributed 35% and 38% respectively, accounting for 73% of total income. They were followed by Greece and Brazil, which contributed 22% and 5% respectively. Overall, RG from Funding Affiliates increased marginally except UK, which decreased by three (3) percentage points.

Regular Giving Income Distribution

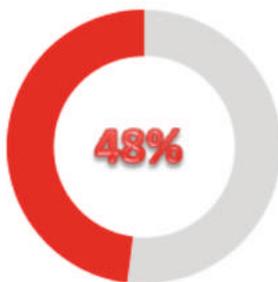
It is expected that reforms introduced by the International Fundraising unit will help reduce RG related expenditure and make more funds available to countries for



programme work. We have embraced these reforms by taking steps to process sponsors letters electronically to cut down on cost of printing and postage. Our Fundraising team will continue to work together with Funding Affiliates to sustain the interest of sponsors to reduce the level of attrition.

11.5 Partnership Income

Partnership Income for the period was £1,601 which represented 48% of total income as compared to £1,012 which is 36% of total income realised in 2015.



The significant increase in income is mainly due to new projects secured in the year.

Table 6 below demonstrates sources of partnership income for the reporting period January- December 2016.

Table 6: Partnership Income Sources

Project Name	Donor	AAI	Local	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000
COMPLEMENTARY BASIC EDUCATION	Crown Agents		657	657
PROMOTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND RIGHTS	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	374		374
NORTHERN GHANA GOVERNANCE ACTIVITY	CARE		50	50
PEOPLE FOR CHANGE	Denmark	8		8
WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S CLUBS (CHILD MARRIAGE PROJECT)	UNICEF		183	183
BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE PROJECT	GHANA AIDS COMMISSION		17	17
TRANSFORMING EARLY CHILD EDUCATION	AAI Transfer	20		20
YOUNG URBAN WOMEN PROJECT	Norwegian Agency for Development	86		86
FOODSPAN GHANA	EC		7	7
GLOBAL PLATFORM	AA Denmark		149	149
WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES & CHILDREN'S CLUBS (CHILD MARRIAGE PROJECT)	AAUK	50		50
Total		538	1,063	1,601

11.6 Other income

Total income realised from other sources is £35k while exchange gains form the greatest proportion of this income, accounting for £15k. The remaining was income generated from staff fundraising initiatives, amounting to £5k of our local community sponsorship (LOCOMS), and the sale of assets, representing £15k.

11.7 Expenditure summary

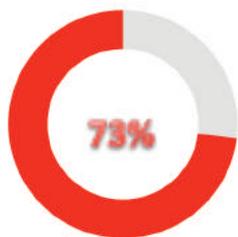
Total expenditure of £2,683k was 41% higher compared to planned expenditure of £1,909. The increase in expenditure can be attributed to unplanned project expenditure resulting from Partnership funded projects. However, 2016 expenditure is 26% lower than the expenditure for 2015.

11.8 Statutory cost Analysis

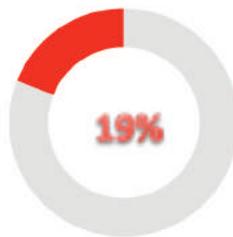
The exhibit below analyzes expenditure by statutory cost.
Statutory cost analysis – GBP'000)

Table 7: Statutory cost analysis

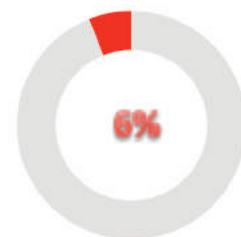
	Actual	Forecast	Plan	Var	Util %	Prop	2015	% Change
Programme	1,968	1,783	1,323	(645)	149%	73%	2,281	-16%
Fundraising	155	164	157	2	99%	6%	142	8%
Governance	52	41	42	(10)	124%	2%	56	-7%
Support	508	489	387	(121)	131%	19%	575	-13%
Total	2,683	2,477	1,909	(774)	141%	100%	3,054	-14%



Programme



Support



Fundraising

By the AAI Key Performance Indicator (KPI), ideal support cost proportion is supposed to be a maximum of 15% of total expenditure for any given period. However, the proportion of actual support cost for the reporting period was 19%. This is 4% higher than the AAI KPI. As the significant proportion of support cost was fixed, the decline in programmes cost due to a drop in RG income resulted in the increase in support cost ratio.

However, this trend will be reversed in subsequent years as we have secured more Partnership funded projects which will increase programme cost, which is 73% of total expenditure and 10% higher than KPI target of 65%.

Fundraising cost, on the other hand, recorded 6% utilisation compared with KPI target of 22%. However, expenditure is 9% more compared to 2015.



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