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**2021
ANNUAL
REPORT**

Fulfilling Rights and Building Resilience

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Fulfilling Rights and Building Resilience

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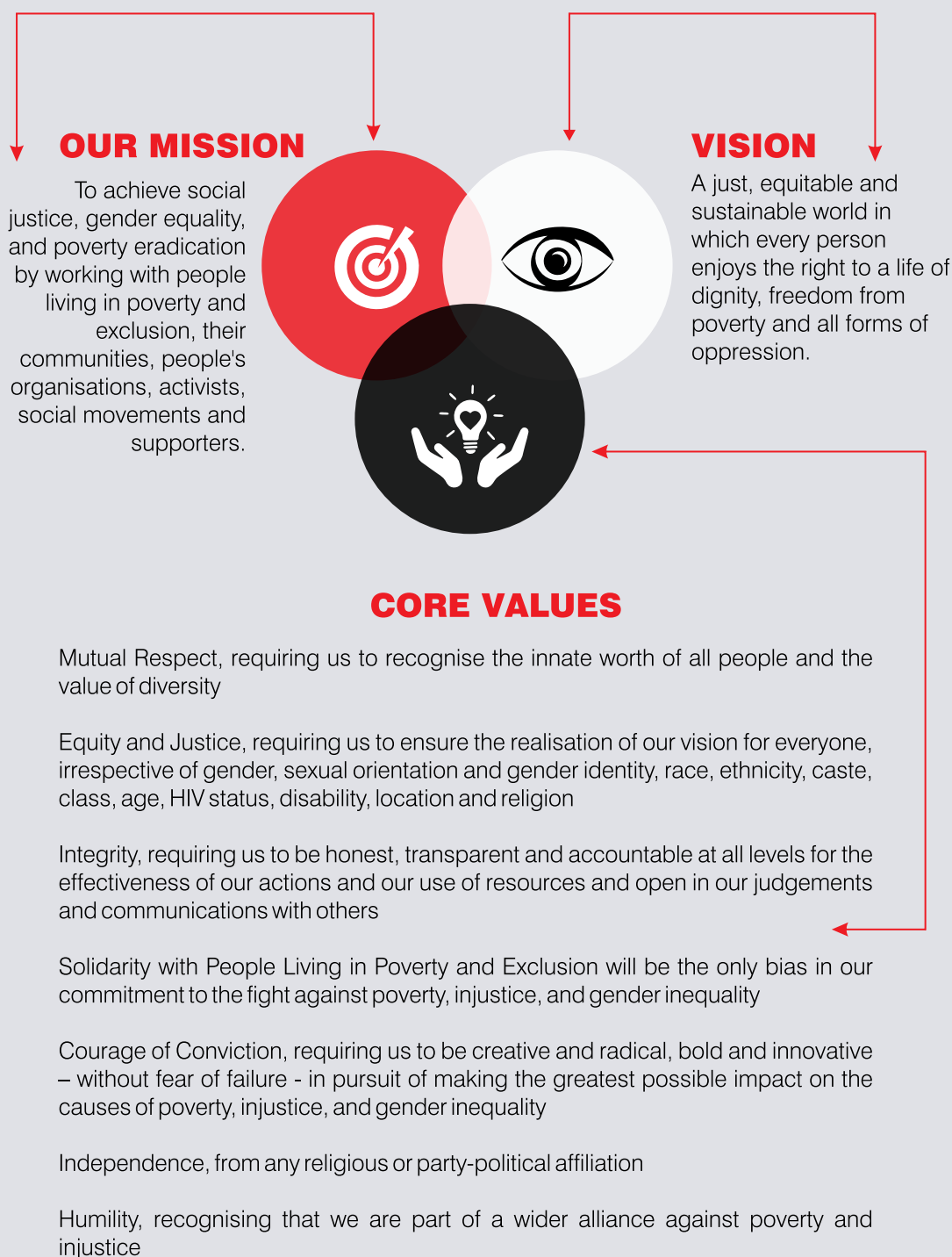
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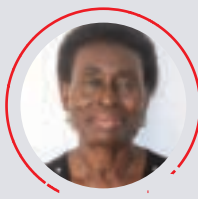
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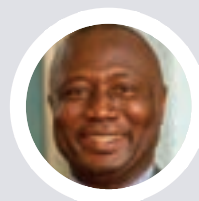
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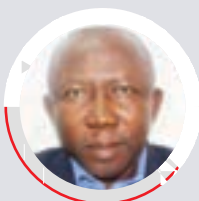
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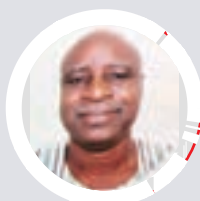
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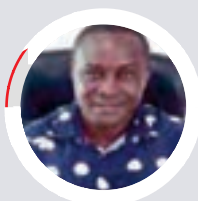
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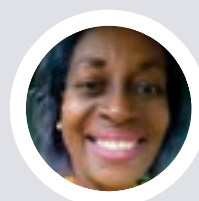
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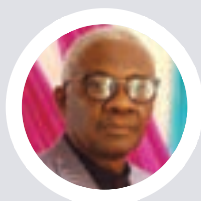
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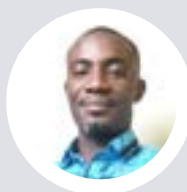
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAG	–	ActionAid Ghana
AAI	–	ActionAid International
AAUK	–	ActionAid UK
AEA	–	Agriculture Extension Agents
ALPs	–	Accountability Learning and Planning System
BECE	–	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CBOs	–	Community-Based Organisations
CMS	–	Contract Management System
CMS	–	Combatting Modern Slavery Project
COP	–	Conference of the Parties
CRSA	–	Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture
CS	–	Child Sponsorship
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	–	Country Strategy Paper
DAP	–	Direct Aid Programme
EU	–	European Union
EC	-	European Commission
EOI	-	Expression of Interest
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FEV	–	Female Extension Volunteer
GEAP	–	Girls Empowerment and Advocacy Platform
GES	–	Ghana Education Service
GLSS	–	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GRPS	–	Gender-Responsive Public Services
GPG	–	Global Platform Ghana
GS	–	Global Secretariat
HRBA	–	Human Rights-Based Approach
HRMIS	–	Human Resource Management Information System
HROE	–	Human Resource and Organisational Effectiveness
ILO	–	International Labour Organisation
IMF	–	International Monetary Fund
JHS	–	Junior High School
KPI	–	Key Performance Indicators
MoELR	–	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
MoFA	–	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MOU	–	Memorandum of Understanding
NACCAS	–	National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
NCAP	–	National Climate Adaptation Plan
NDPC	–	National Development Planning Commission
NDC	–	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGIDP	–	Northern Ghana Integrated Development Project
Norad	–	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
PEOY	–	Providing Employment Opportunities for Young People in Ghana
PI	–	Partnership Income
PPL	–	People's Postcode Lottery
PRRP	–	Participatory Review and Reflection Process
PFJ	–	Planting for Food and Jobs
PLWD	–	People Living with Disability

PTA	–	Parent-Teacher Association
RG	–	Regular Giving
SHEA	–	Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse
SIF	–	Strategic Implementation Framework
SMC	–	School Management Committee
TUC	–	Trade Union Congress
TJC	–	Tax Justice Coalition
UK	–	United Kingdom
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
UNER	–	University of Energy and Natural Resources
UNICEF	–	United Nations Children's Fund
VSLA	–	Village Savings and Loans Association
WASSCE	–	West African Senior School Certificate Examination
WHO	–	World Health Organisation
YUWM	–	Young Urban Women Movement

LIST OF LOCAL PARTNERS

ASUDEV	–	Action for Sustainable Development
JIFAN	–	Jirapa Farmers Network
BEWDA	–	Belim-Wusa Development Agency
WOM	–	Widows and Orphans Movement
CMCE	–	Centre for Maternal Health and Community Empowerment
NOCID	–	Network of Communities in Development
SODIA	–	Social Development and Improvement Agency
URBANET	–	Urban Agriculture Network
GAWU	–	General Agriculture Workers Union
GSPCA	–	Ghana Society for the Protection and Care of Animals
GRATIS FOUNDATION		
SOGNTABA		
NORSAAC		

DONORS AND INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- I. The European Union (EU)
- II. Norwegian Agency for Development and Cooperation (Norad)
- III. Hewlett Foundation
- IV. ActionAid UK
- V. Barrowman Foundation, UK
- VI. The Donkey Sanctuary (TDS)
- VII. Medicor Foundation
- VIII. People's Postcode Lottery (PPL), UK
- IX. Australian High Commission
- X. Italian High Value Donor

CHILD SPONSORSHIP FUNDING SOURCES

- I. United Kingdom (UK)
- II. Greece
- III. Italy

FOREWORD



Mr. John Nkaw, Country Director, ActionAid Ghana

The year 2021 marks the fourth year since the roll-out of ActionAid Ghana's Country Strategy Paper VI (CSP VI), which is under the theme, "People's Power for Social Justice." The strategy defines the scope, aspirations, direction, and strategic focus of AAG's interventions as an affiliate programme and the expected outcomes.

The year has been described by many as building back from the world's most ravaging public health crisis caused by COVID-19. Approaching this from a global perspective, we will describe 2021 as challenging due to the rise of neoliberalism globally which obligated many countries, including Ghana, to open up its economy to multi-national foreign direct investments. We believe these factors pushed many urban, peri-urban and rural communities to lease out their arable lands for industrial agriculture and extractives. This has contributed to some

food crop production challenges and sustainability. These developments had implications on our advocacy for climate resilient and sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty, food systems, and land rights.

Secondly, the global health crisis has resulted in a decline in funding sources and opportunities for most Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) including AAG. In the communities, we continue to witness the negative implications of the health crisis on the livelihoods of our constituents. Despite these snags, we positioned ourselves to deliver our interventions in all districts, regions and at the national level.

In our contribution to international advocacy, we joined all countries within the ActionAid Federation and presented a collective voice at the Conference of the Parties (COP26). The first benchmark was on countries most responsible for our warming world to pay

their fair share in a form of grants, not loans of climate finance to those hit hardest but who have done the least to cause the climate crisis.

Stakeholders were also requested to focus on an agriculture negotiation that agree on a transition away from the harm caused by industrial agriculture and intensive animal farming, towards agroecological farming practices.

As an organisation that believes in partnerships to achieve a common goal, AAG built strong alliances with likeminded organisations, community leaders, people's rights organisations, social movements, and government agencies to intensify awareness capacity building and advocacy on climate resilient agriculture, decent work and gender responsive public services.

The 2021 annual report lays out our accomplishment of yet another important milestone in the fight against poverty and inequality. It also highlights our contribution to national, regional and community development under the four (4) priority areas of our operations. The report provides insights into our role and the reach of our programmes and projects in building human capital, breaking the cycle of poverty, promoting economic productivity and eliminating social disparities and inequalities.

In solidarity!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Nkaw', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Nkaw
Country Director
ActionAid Ghana

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report forms part of AAG's accountability to internal and external stakeholders. It presents key highlights of the interventions being implemented by AAG and how these are contributing towards the fulfilment of the

CSP VI priorities and the Strategic Implementation Framework 2 (SIF2). It also presents the success stories that affirm the propriety, validity, and learnings relating to the organisation's Theory of Change (ToC).

1.1 Building Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture

AAG remains steadfast in promoting agroecology practices through grassroots policy education and campaigns, advocating for the implementation of National Climate Change Adaptation Plans (NCCAPs) and holding government accountable for the fulfilment of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Vulnerable communities have also been supported to develop and implement disaster risk preparedness, mitigation, and response plans. Moreover, the organization strategically collaborated with academia and other research institutions such as the University of Natural and Environmental Resources (UNER) to organize a high-level seminar in Sunyani, which successfully shed light on climate change impact and the required adaptation actions to be employed to address the situation through a social justice perspective. The ultimate end is to build the resilience of communities and guarantee sustainable food systems. It was, therefore, gratifying to see government roll-out the "Greening Ghana" initiative under which over seven (7) million trees were planted. AAG made its contribution by supporting Activista, under the technical facilitation of Global Platform Ghana, employed artistic activism to sensitise communities. AAG sponsored smallholder

women farmers' movements across the country and actively participated in the tree planting exercise. Over 50 communities were also supported to develop their Climate Adaptation Plans (CAPs) which are being implemented and is helping to build their resilience against climate change.

Recognising the extension service delivery gap that exists in Ghana, AAG has been rolling out a medium-term intervention known as Female Extension Volunteers (FEVs). Under the Northern Ghana Integrated Project (NGIDP) funded by the European Union, 900 FEVs were recruited, trained and their services principally accessed by over 10,000 smallholder farmers in the Upper East, Upper West and Northern regions. Another priority intervention area for AAG has been the provision of access to decent and resilient livelihood opportunities for vulnerable women and youth. The Providing Employment Opportunities for Young (PEOY) people in Ghana and NGID projects in particular, supported over 3,000 people to be gainfully employed in agribusiness, tiling, plumbing, bead work, pastries, weaving, soap making and dressmaking ventures. Most of these women and youth earn monthly incomes between GH¢1,000.00 and GH¢1,500.00

1.2 Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls and Promoting Decent Work

In the area of addressing violence against women and girls and reducing burden of unpaid care work, the year 2021 focused on advocating for the ratification and domestication of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 190, which seeks to address protection from violence and harassment in the world of work. The Young Urban Women's (YUW) Movement, whose membership increased from 4,083 to over 5,200, was at the forefront of the advocacy. Against this backdrop, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) initiated engagements with key stakeholders, which included AAG, to identify and recommend relevant provisions of the ILO conventions that should be incorporated into the review of the Labour Act 2003 (Act 651). A nation-wide survey was also commissioned by the Ministry to gather data on the level of violence and harassment in the world of work to back steps being taken to specifically push for the ratification of C190. These feats are work in progress, hence AAG is strategising to pursue an intensified and more targeted advocacy and campaigning in 2022 when the Young Urban Women Movement (YUWM), Activista and Young Female Platforms (YFPs) will be the frontline advocates.

In its quest to find a sustainable solution to the concern over accusation of older women as witches in Ghana, AAG took the fight to the national level by partnering Sanneh Institute and jointly sought audience with the Speaker of Parliament in June, 2021. The two organisations appealed to the Rt. Hon. A.S.K Bagbin for support to initiate processes to criminalise the practice in Ghana. Consequently, a Private Members' Bill was initiated by three (3) Members of Parliament

(MPs) to amend sections of the Criminal Offences Act to make it an offence to unjustifiably accuse older women of witchcraft and molest them. They are; MPs for Madina-Abokobi, Pusiga, and Wa East. The campaign to protect and secure the dignity of alleged witches received another boost from a short-term project funded by the Australian High Commission in Ghana. Key stakeholders, including traditional and religious authorities, have been engaged and conscientised to do away with negative socio-cultural beliefs and practices and to protect vulnerable women from human rights violations. As part of the support, a solar mechanised borehole and a six-seater bio digester toilet facility have been provided for dwellers of Gnani alleged witches' camp, which is benefiting the larger community. Thus, access to portable drinking water and hygiene has been improved for over 700 members of the Gnani community. On the subject matter of Unpaid Care Work (UCW), AAG continues to influence change in social norms towards recognising, redistributing, and reducing UCW burden on women and girls through awareness raising activities such as; time use diary filling and cooking competition among boys.

The decent work campaigns have also been taken to another level following the implementation of the Combatting Modern Slavery Project, which is funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Corporation (Norad). The project is primarily focused on advocating and calling on stakeholders to take action in dealing with issues of child labour, forced labour, unfair contract practices, human trafficking, domestic servitude and other exploitative practices.

1.3 Promoting Gender Responsive Public Education

AAG also contributed to the fulfilment of universal access to a girl-friendly quality public basic education. Campaigns have been undertaken with social movements such as; Activista, Girls Empowerment and Advocacy Platforms (GEAPs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) Networks and Young Urban Women (YUW) as part of the national back-to-school campaigns. In the Upper East Region for instance, 3,020 children (1,320 boys and 1,700 girls) in Bawku Municipal, were reported absent when school reopened in January, 2021. The PTA Network undertook aggressive follow-ups and succeeded in getting 2,406 children back to school, out of which 402 were final year students that sat for the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

Another intervention stream is the advocacy being undertaken for reforms to eliminate gender stereotypical and discriminatory practices in schools. One key focus here, is championing the implementation of the policy on retention of pregnant girls and re-admission of teenage mothers, which has resulted in many young girls returning to school after childbirth. The other agenda being pursued is to dismantle the convention that makes the Senior Prefect position a

preserve for boys alongside the stereotyped Girls Prefect position. AAG's Northern Regional Programme and its partners chalked up a great milestone in this advocacy drive. The Northern Regional Education Director endorsed the gender inclusive school leadership structure for roll-out across all Senior High Schools in the region.

In complementing the state's obligation, AAG has also been providing model schools equipped with requisite sanitation and ancillary facilities. These model schools showcase standards by which educational infrastructure should be provided to deprived communities to enhance access to, and delivery of, quality education. During the year under review, by courtesy of funding received from Barrowman Foundation, a six-unit model primary school was provided to Chamba community in Sagnarigu Municipal, which has given over 400 pupils access to a congenial learning environment. Similarly, funding received from an Italian high value donor, made it possible for a model Kindergarten School, with mechanised water system, to be provided for the Drobo community in the Bono Region. Over 80 pupils have benefited in this regard.

1.4 Civic Awareness and Public Accountability Campaigns

AAG has recorded significant achievements in promoting civic awareness, engagement, and public accountability in Ghana. Over the years, AAG has been conducting research and reviews on Ghana's tax policies and regulations to unearth evidence and recommend progressive taxation and revenue mobilisation strategies. Under the umbrella of the Tax Justice Coalition, the clarion call has been for the state to end the harmful and abusive tax incentives, holidays, exemptions, and waivers mostly granted to multi-national companies and investors. Domestic resource mobilisation has

remained low, thereby limiting the ability of the economic managers to redistribute and allocate the required resources for the provision of gender responsive public services in the education, health, water, social protection, sanitation, and other sectors. Accordingly, government of Ghana has shown a greater degree of responsiveness to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) demand for an end to the harmful tax exemptions. The government formulated and laid before Parliament, the Tax Exemptions Bill in November, 2021. Given that a similar bill was laid in 2019 but

could not be passed before the end of term of the previous Parliament, CSOs coalitions are strategising to double-up their advocacy and engagement efforts to ensure that its passage is not unduly delayed.

Closely related are the conversations ignited by the study conducted by ActionAid, in partnership with Public Services International (PSI) and Education International, titled “**The Public Versus Austerity**”. The study highlights the effects of public sector wage bill constraints, usually pushed down the throats of some developing countries by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in their

quest to assist these countries recover and stabilise their economies. Thus, the state’s obligation to deliver essential public services, including recruitments, is usually hindered as was witnessed when Ghana signed-up for International Monetary Fund (IMF) support between 2014 and 2017. AAG held national level stakeholder engagements on the findings of the Ghana study and published a policy brief. This led to several invitations from media institutions for discussions on the findings of the report. The Parliamentary Select Committee on Finance and Education subsequently called for a meeting on the way forward for the country.



Agnes Awunu, a
smallholder farmer
feeding her birds

Photo: Misper

2.0 INTRODUCTION

ActionAid Ghana (AAG) has been working in Ghana since 1990. AAG later acquired the status of Affiliate Member of ActionAid Global justice federation which is working towards achieving social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication in the over forty-five (45) countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

ActionAid Ghana has been working in deprived communities in eleven (11) out of the sixteen (16) administrative regions, namely; Upper East, Upper West, North - East, Savannah, Northern, Bono East, Bono, Ahafo, Oti, Volta, and Greater Accra. Working primarily under the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and from a feminist perspective, our interventions are aimed at tackling the structural causes and manifestations of poverty and injustice while addressing immediate needs in a manner that builds solidarity and empowerment.

For the period between 2018 and 2022, AAG has been rolling out and implementing its Country Strategy Paper Six (CSP VI) under the theme, ***“People’s Power for Social Justice”***. The mid-term review of this strategy, which was commissioned in 2020, was completed in 2021. The review validated the key milestones and success stories routinely documented and shared by programme teams. It is worthy of mention that impressive levels of progress have been made towards achieving the key programme priorities and expected outcomes.

In view of AAG’s ‘dual citizenship’, obligations towards fulfilling its country

programme and federation priorities, steps were taken, in 2021, to build the capacity of staff members. Continuous shared learning on the direction and priorities of the Strategic Implementation Framework 2 (SIF2) was also undertaken. This has enabled programme teams to keep clear focus on assessing the alignment and contribution of the interventions being implemented towards accomplishing the CSP VI and SIF2 priorities. This shared learning endeavour will continue in 2022. The field operational staff, partners, leaders of social movements and key collaborators, will be the primary targets.

Keeping an eye on the organisational sustainability outlook, AAG is currently undergoing a Country Model Review (CMR) having previously held the status of “Full Country Presence”. The organisation has submitted its Planning and Change Readiness Assessment Plan to the Global secretariat and will continue with the CMR processes in 2022. The country programme’s operations are largely stable, considering the effort being made to sustain the child sponsorship fundraising scheme. From 10,770 child sponsorship links at the beginning of 2021, a marginal decline of 3.75% was recorded to close the country links at 10,366. However, following the allocation of an additional 4,645 new links to Ghana, there is a positive outlook moving forward. With the encouraging commitment to project proposal development, more institutional partnership funding is being attracted, thereby giving a stable outlook to the country programme’s operations within the short to medium term.

3.0 CONTEXT OF OUR WORK

3.1 EXTERNAL CONTEXT

Ghana and the world at large, are still making effort to recover and rebuild from the debilitating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in 2020. The pandemic caused havoc and retarded progress made towards poverty eradication, attaining economic growth and creating jobs. Indeed, the pandemic did not only come along as a public health issue, it also created economic crisis for countries all over the globe. Significant economic impact occurred across the globe due to reduced productivity, loss of lives, business closures, trade disruption, and collapse of the tourism industry, leading to the largest global recession in recent times. For the first time since its inception in 1990, the Human Development Index (HDI), whose measurement includes education, health and living standards, declined into negative¹. The pandemic also exposed the weak foundations and gaps that still prevail in the quest to guarantee universal access to quality public education, health, water, and sanitation services. It exacerbated the vulnerabilities of people living in poverty, and exposed women and girls in particular, to greater gender-based violence.

The world pharmaceutical industry had to race against time to develop vaccines to curb the pandemic. By the end of the last quarter of 2020, based on available data pointing to acceptable standards of quality, safety, efficacy, and suitability in low- and middle-income countries, the World Health Organisation (WHO) approved Emergency Use Listing (EUL) to COVID-19 vaccines. As of January, 2022, the EUL had been granted to eight (8) different vaccines which include; Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Johnson and Johnson and Moderna. But countries retained

sovereign power and discretion to issue domestic emergency use authorizations in line with their national regulations and legislation.

Despite the successful development and roll-out of vaccines, the end of the pandemic is not yet in sight. Covid-19 continued to surge through the first to the fourth waves with persistent mutations and variants of the virus emerging. The global inequality dynamics played out in the distribution and access to these vaccines. This is evident in the fact that by 3rd January, 2022, out of a total 2,090,119,497 vaccination doses administered globally, Africa had done only 52,621,135, whereas places like Europe and Americas had administered 756,161,292 and 758,486,128 respectively².

Ghana also raced up for the vaccine uptake and was the first African country to receive vaccination doses from the COVAX Facility in March, 2021. However, due to the vaccine access challenge and other factors, only around 1,653,422 vaccine doses were administered by end of September, 2021. So, aggressive vaccine uptake campaigns had to be undertaken by the government and health authorities, which resulted in 8,848,172 vaccine doses administered by 5th January, 2022 amidst reduction in infection rates, hospitalisation, and death rates³.

While acknowledging the unprecedented and ravaging effects of COVID-19, issues of climate change and its threat to the survival of humanity and other natural species remain a major concern. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its 30th anniversary edition of the Human Development Report, titled "*The Next Frontier: Human Development and the*

¹ COVID-19: Human development on course to decline this year for the first time since 1990 | Human Development Reports (undp.org)

² WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard | WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard With Vaccination Data

³ Ghana: total COVID-19 jabs received 2022 | Statista

Anthropocene" (2020)⁴, points attention to the looming global threat arising out of the immense pressure being exerted on the environment and the natural world. The report notes that unless humans, and for that matter countries, take bold steps to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and material footprint, humanity's progress will stall. To illustrate the point, UNDP introduced an experimental new lens to the measurement of the Human Development Index (HDI) by adjusting the parameters to include these two planetary threats. An undesirable picture emerges. It shows clearer assessment of human progress where more than 50 countries dropped out of the very high human development category. This reflects their dependence on fossil fuels and material footprint. Only countries such as Costa Rica, Moldova, and Panama moved upwards by at least 30 places, which shows that development can thrive amidst lighter pressure on the planet.

Undoubtedly, the quest to limit global warming to the target of 1.5 degrees is not being achieved. Catastrophic flooding, bush fires, extreme weather and destruction of species, continue to be witnessed. Accordingly, the Conference of the Parties (COP26) that was held at Glasgow in November, 2021, sought to mobilise and accelerate global momentum on implementing climate change mitigation and adaptation actions⁵. The AAG Technical Lead for Resilience and Climate Justice had the privilege of joining the AA federation team to

push our key priorities. Developed countries and the largest emitters have been charged to take the lead in reducing emissions across their entire economy and/or in specific sectors to align with reaching net zero by the middle of the century. They have also been called upon to deliver on their promise to mobilise \$100 billion every year from 2020 in climate finance to support developing countries and 50% targeted to be invested in adaptation interventions.

On the sphere of continental governance, political stability became key matters of concern, particularly within the West Africa sub-region. Apart from Mali, whose government was toppled in August 2020, three other coup d'états occurred in Chad, Guinea, and Sudan in 2021. Then in January 2022, Burkina Faso also suffered a military take-over and an attempted coup was foiled in Guinea-Bissau.

The above global contextual underpinnings find greater alignment with ActionAid's (AA) strategic intervention focus. The key highlight of AAG's Strategy Implementation Framework (SIF2) revolves around influencing and advancing System Changes for Economic and Climate Justice, alongside securing humanitarian resilience. Accordingly, AAG found good grounds in 2021, to implement notable interventions that significantly contributed to rebuilding resilient socio-economic systems, for especially, local societies, in furtherance of its Country Strategy Paper (CSP) VI roll-out.

⁴ Human Development Report 2020: The next frontier - Human development and the Anthropocene - World | ReliefWeb

⁵ COP 26 Explained: What to Know About the UN Climate Change Conference (unfoundation.org)

3.2 THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

ActionAid Ghana's operations and campaigns during the year under review were guided by its mission objectives and

approaches in relation to the development context at the national and local levels. The context is examined below:

3.2.1 Ghana's Political and Economic Dynamics

On the political front, Ghana's democratic and constitutional governance continue to be graciously safeguarded. The 2020 election outcome was disputed by the major opposition candidate alleging electoral malpractices and regulatory breaches. So, an election petition was submitted to the Supreme Court. The object of the suit was to challenge the validity of the results of the election. The case was adjudicated in good time with an affirmation of the incumbent President as validly elected. However, the election produced a hung parliament, which means the governing (New Patriotic Party-NPP) and major opposition party (National Democratic Congress-NDC), both had 137 representatives in the Legislature with one independent member to make up the 275-member House. The independent candidate, a disgruntled member of the NPP nonetheless declared his alliance with the governing party. This resulted in a new creation in Ghana's Parliament called the Majority Group- the NPP instead of the conventional Majority Caucus. Given these dynamics, the NDC made a case for its member and former MP for Nadowli West Constituency, Rt. Hon. Alban Sumana Kingsford Bagbin, to be elected as the Speaker of Parliament. A new sphere of executive and parliamentary governance has thus dawned which requires cooperation and consensus building. Unfortunately, this is proving elusive, particularly from the inception of the Electronic Transfer Levy (E-

Levy) to its passage as part of the revenue mobilisation measures for the 2022 budget.

With regard to Ghana's economic development, data from the World Bank⁶ shows that the economy had grown at an average of seven percent (7%) between 2017 and 2019, but experienced sharp contraction thus ended up with 0.9 percent growth. Poverty rate is estimated to have slightly increased from 25 percent in 2019 to 25.5 percent in 2020. Overall fiscal deficit doubled to 15.2 percent and public debt increased to 81.1 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), placing Ghana at a significant risk of debt distress. Despite the roll out of economic recovery programmes, the fiscal deficit is expected to remain high and is projected to narrow to 14 percent of GDP in 2021 and 9.5 percent by 2023, which will still be above the five percent (5%) ceiling provided for by the Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2018.

Ghana, like every nation focused attention on designing recovery policies and programmes that will help build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable economies to bounce back from the negative and minimal growth rates recorded in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 'new normal' that the pandemic engendered, came with positives that included the heightened use of technology, particularly virtual meetings that saved most organisations, significant cost. Eventually, measures implemented by the government made it possible for a gradual opening of the system for commerce and socio-economic activities

⁶ Ghana Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank

including the reopening of schools in January 2021.

As part of measures to salvage the economy, to shore-up and broaden revenue mobilisation to meet the 2022 budget and appropriation obligations, government proposed and presented the Electronic Transfer Levy Bill (popularly known as E-Levy) to Ghana's Parliament for passage. However, a greater proportion of the Ghanaian population protested the proposed E-Levy. They were supported by stiff resistance from the opposition party in Parliament. This notwithstanding, the E-Levy was passed by a Majority-only Parliament under

intense protest from the opposition who had staged a walk out during the deliberation stages.

Consequently, Ghana's economy continues to make slow recovery and has been described by most analysts as deeply challenged with high debt distress. So, the year 2022 was ushered in with increasing cost of living amidst huge depreciation of the Ghanaian currency (the cedi), rising inflation and frequent hikes in petroleum prices, which the government attributes to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and other global exigencies such as, the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

3.2.2 Climate Resilience and Ghana's Food Systems

Ghana's food system is facing some challenges due to government's neoliberal policies that promote industrial agriculture with high vulnerabilities to climate change. In advancing AAG's programmatic focus of promoting climate resilient sustainable agriculture, policy reviews are usually conducted, and Ghana's food system has largely been found not to be resilient. During 2021, the rains largely failed within the transition/middle zone regions of Bono, Bono East and Ahafo while late torrential rains poured over the northern belt. This caused sporadic floods and destroyed farms, homes, and road infrastructure across the Upper West, Upper East, North-East Northern and Savannah regions.

It is clearly emerging that the conventional and external input driven crop production system being aggressively pursued under the government's Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) programme, is not sustainable. The PFJ input subsidy investment suffered setbacks and authorities could not save the situation very much. Given the low promotion and uptake of agro ecological alternatives like use of organic fertilizer/manure, farmers

had to bear the stress of buying non-subsidized synthetic fertiliser at exorbitant prices above GH¢200.00 for a 50kg of NPK. Thus, food crop production was significantly affected.

A report published by Ghana News Agency (10th December, 2021)⁷ explicitly captures the Upper East situational report shared by the Regional Director of Agriculture. The region witnessed 13 percent decline in food produced, from 542,176 metric tons in 2020 to 518,105 metric tons in 2021. This came about because the PFJ received and distributed 693,799 of 25kg NPK fertilizer and 46,400 of 25kg of Urea in 2021 compared to 1,390,402 of 25kg of NPK and 495,429 of 25kg Urea in 2020. This led to a decline in the numbers of beneficiary farmers from 185,012 in 2020 to 84,822 in 2021. The Minister for Food and Agriculture (MoFA) attributed the difficulties encountered to effects of COVID-19. He cited the inability of China and Russia to produce much for the international market which resulted in the price of a metric ton of Urea increasing from \$321.00 in 2020 to \$1,200.00 in 2021. That compelled the government to scale-down on the quantity of fertilizer it targeted to procure and supply.

⁷ Food production in Upper East decline, fertilizer shortage blamed (gna.org.gh)

In terms of forestry and biodiversity, it has been reported that forest resources contribute up to 38 percent to the income of Ghana's forest dwellers and about 6 percent annually to the Gross Domestic Product of the country. But with the current rate of deforestation, Ghana's forests and larger environment is being put into critical jeopardy. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Ghana lost a total of 33.7 percent of forest cover, or around 2,508,000 ha was lost between 1990 and 2010⁸. Also, data published by Global Forest Watch show that from 2001 to 2020, Ghana lost 1.31Milli-on Hectors (Mha) of tree cover, equivalent to a 19 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 676Mt of CO₂e emissions⁹. The vegetative cover, land and water resources are being destroyed by the

activities of illegal logging, illegal mining ('galamsey'), unbridled agriculture production systems and other unworthy practices. The unabated fight against 'galamsey' has produced minimal success as little has been achieved in terms of restoring polluted rivers and replenishing depleted vegetation.

However, a worthy initiative that must be acknowledged is the "Green Ghana Project" which was launched in 2021 as a government-led afforestation and reforestation programme. Over seven (7) million trees are reported to have been planted with 85% seedling survival rate achieved. The target for 2022 is to plant 20 million trees¹⁰.

3.2.3 Promoting Decent Work and Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls

Gender-Based Violence (GBV), mostly suffered by vulnerable women and girls, has been a long-standing human rights issue. It is manifested in various forms, ranging from physical, sexual, economic, psychological/emotional abuse and other acts of neglect or deprivation.

Violence occurs within the family, school and community environments and even cyberspace. It is usually perpetrated by close/intimate relations, neighbours and teachers, among others.

According to a Ghana Statistical Service report on the impact of COVID-19 referenced by UNICEF, domestic violence and assault incidences increased by 3.7 percent and 3.1 percent respectively. Referencing its own rapid assessment on violence and abuse at home during COVID-19 in May 2020, UNICEF further revealed that 32 percent of

respondents (adolescent and young people) reported having seen an increase of abusive or violent behaviour within their families during the lock-down period of March and April 2020¹¹.

As part of Ghana's legal and institutional set-up for preventing and responding to domestic violence matters, the Domestic Violence Act 2007 (Act 732) and its Legislative Instrument 2016 (L.I. 2237) were passed. Accordingly, the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service has the mandate to respond to acts of violence against victims under the collaborative support of other institutions such as the Department of Social Welfare. As a foundation for operationalisation of the law, Section 9 of Act 732 demands that a Domestic Violence Fund be set-up to cater for the basic material needs of victims, training of families, rehabilitation, and reintegration as well as

⁸ Ghana Forest Information and Data (mongabay.com)

⁹ Ghana Deforestation Rates & Statistics | GFW (globalforestwatch.org)

¹⁰ Green Ghana Project was successful, over 7 million trees were planted - Lands Ministry - MyJoyOnline.com

¹¹ Budget Brief - Funding Services for Child and Women Survivors of Sexual Violence.pdf (unicef.org)

construction of reception shelters for victims in the regions and districts, including the training and capacity building for officers and other connected service providers. An analysis conducted in 2020 revealed that since the initial seed capital of GH¢50,000.00 over eleven years ago, no further allocation had been made to the Fund¹². In terms of office and personnel set-up as of 2020, a UNICEF publication¹³ indicates that DOVVSU operates 112 offices across the country with Ashanti and Eastern regions having the largest of 22 and 19 respectively. Its staff strength is also reported to be around 831 staff, including 46 senior Police officers.

To combat human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery, the Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694) and its Legislative Instrument 2015 (L.I. 2219) have also been passed. Subsequently, Anti-Human

Trafficking Units (AHTU) have been set-up within the Ghana Police Service and Ghana Immigration Service with the Labour Department also having a high stake. However, the AHTU of the Ghana Police Service is headquartered in Accra and has only ten regional offices with a total of 78 staff.

Despite the policy and legal framework, implementation is weak. This creates inhibitions to accessing justice which need to be addressed to incentivise survivors to report cases and seek redress, thereby deter perpetrators. AAG on its part has been implementing prevention and response actions with community and local authorities towards contributing to curbing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

3.2.4 Gender-Responsive Public Services: Quality Public Education in Focus

During the 2019/2020 academic year, education reforms were carried out at the basic level. This involved restructuring of the curriculum to create more relevant content for learning and development of cognitive skills and aptitudes. However, the required teaching and learning materials, particularly textbooks, have not been provided, thereby affecting quality teaching and learning. At the secondary level, the Free Senior High School Programme was introduced during the 2017/2018 academic year amidst inadequate infrastructure. This necessitated the implementation of the 'double-track system' which has now been phased out following infrastructure expansion embarked upon by the government. However, it must be noted that the kindergarten, primary and junior high school levels have not received the required attention even after the curriculum revision. A study published by Africa Education Watch¹⁴

revealed that on average, five (5) teachers handle KG 1 to Basic 6 in over 70% of the schools, hence are compelled to adopt multi-grade system of teaching. The JHS level had one (1) teacher handling an average of three (3) subjects from JHS 1 to 3. About 30 to 40 percent of students have no seating and writing spaces respectively in public basic schools at the national level. It further revealed that only about 35 percent of learners had access to a seating place. Additionally, an average of three to four learners share a dual desk - meant for two pupils.

Another subject matter of concern is teenage pregnancy and child marriage which remains a major setback for girls' education. A Ghana Health Service data reported by Citi News in June, 2021¹⁵ revealed that between 2016 and 2020, about 555,575 teenagers aged 10 to 19

¹² Make allocations to Domestic Violence Fund in 2021 Budget - CSOs - Graphic Online

¹³ Budget Brief - Funding systems to end VAC and child trafficking.pdf (unicef.org)

¹⁴ PowerPoint Presentation (africaeducationwatch.org). The Extent of Deprivation of Public Schools in Deprived

Communities and its Impacts on Quality Learning Outcomes of Learners

¹⁵ Teenage pregnancies in Ghana hit 555,575 in five years (citinewsroom.com)

years, were impregnated. Further disaggregation shows that 13,444 teenagers were between the ages of 10 and 14 while 542,131 teenagers were aged 15 to 19 years.

Moving forward, an intersectional social movement advocacy and campaigning approach will be adopted to demand responsive and remedial actions from relevant duty-bearers. AAG will work with cross-movements including; Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Networks, Activista, Young Urban Women Movement (YUWM), Girls Empowerment and Advocacy Platforms (GEAPs), Young Female Platforms (YFPs)

and Children's Parliament to demand that government, community opinion leaders and CSOs join hands to address this rising negative phenomenon. The Global Platform of Ghana will remain a pivotal capacity development unit to propel the adoption of appropriate and effective social mobilisation and artistic activism strategies. AAG will also build stronger networking between its grassroots social movements and national networks such as the Tax Justice Coalition. This collaboration will facilitate sustained advocacy for the delivery of gender-responsive public services.



Smallholder women
farmers preparing
compost to improve yields

Photo: Misper

4.0 AAG's INTERVENTION STREAMS

Below is the scope of programme interventions implemented through the Regular Giving Income as well as the

Institutional Partnership funded projects in 2021. The projects for which funding had been secured to commence implementation in 2022 have been added to the list.

4.1 Interventions Funded through Regular Giving

The Regular Giving Income refers to the child sponsorship funding usually mobilized through ActionAid's funding affiliates in the United Kingdom (UK), Greece and Italy. The funding scheme is grounded on the periodic collection and submission of child profiles and messages to philanthropic sponsors. Donations by these sponsors are then pooled for programme delivery. The programme work revolves around advocacy for and promotion of climate resilient sustainable agriculture (agroecology and

food sovereignty), addressing violence against women and girls, promoting decent work, demanding and supporting quality gender responsive public education delivery, active citizens participation, and fair and progressive mobilisation and accountable use of public resources. Despite the vigorous efforts being made to sustain the child sponsorship, this fundraising window continues to dwindle due to various factors that lead to sponsors withdrawing from the funding scheme.

4.2 Institutional Partnership Funded Projects

Within the framework of an integrated programme – project integration approach, the implementation of the programmatic interventions outlined above is boosted by

the institutional partnership projects. These are usually secured through proposal development. The list of projects for 2021 and how they dovetail into 2022 are as follows:

Table 1: AAG's Institutional Partnership Funded Projects

Name of Project	Funding Partner	Start and End Date	Implementation Scope
Promoting Employment Opportunities for Young People (PEOY)	Medicor Foundation	Jul 2019 – Jun 2022	4 districts in Northern, Upper East, and Bono regions.
Northern Ghana Integrated Development Project (NGIDP)	European Union (EU)	Jun 2019 – May 2023	15 districts in Upper East, Northern, Upper West regions.
Improving Access to Quality Education	Barrowman Foundation	Nov 2020 – Oct 2023	3 districts in Bono, Northern and Upper East regions.
Donkey Welfare for Women's Livelihoods	The Donkey Sanctuary (TDS)	Nov 2020 – Jun 2022	Sissala East District in Upper West Region.
Zero Violence Project Phase 1	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), UK	Nov 2020 – Mar 2021	6 regions (Upper West, Northern, Upper East, Bono, Greater Accra and Volta)

Combatting Modern Slavery in Ghana	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)	Jan 2021 – Dec 2023	12 districts in Upper West, Northern, Bono and Oti regions.
Women's Rights and Stop Witchcraft Accusations	Australian High Commission in Ghana	Feb 2021 – Aug 2021	Northern and Savannah regions.
Young Urban Women (YUW) Project	Hewlett Foundation	Apr 2021 – Mar 2023	5 regions (Greater Accra, Bono, Volta, Northern and Upper East regions.
Quality Basic Education (QBE) - Drobo School Project	Italian High Value Donor	May 2021 – Apr 2022	Drobo in Bono Region.
Zero Violence Project Phase 2	AAUK/Peoples Postcode Lottery (PPL-UK)	Jan 2022 – Dec 2022	6 regions namely; Upper West, Upper East, Northern, Bono, Greater Accra and Volta.
Transformative Action for Gender Equality (TAGE)	European Union (EU)	Feb 2022 – Jul 2024	8 districts in Upper East, Oti, Northern and Greater Accra regions.
Donkey Welfare for Women's Livelihoods (Revised Project)	The Donkey Sanctuary (TDS)	Proposal at final review	Sissala East District in Upper West Region.

5.0 PROGRAMME PRIORITIES AND BENEFICIARIES

5.1 AAG CSP VI Mission Priorities (MPs) and Focused Areas (FAs)

The table below captures AAG's Mission Priorities (MPs) and Focused Areas (FAs) as stipulated in its Sixth Country Strategy Paper (CSP VI).

MP1: Strengthen Resilient Livelihoods and Contribute to Secure Climate Justice

MP1:FA1: Promote Food Sovereignty, Agro-Ecology and Resilient Livelihoods

MP1:FA2: Promote Women's Secured Access and Control Over Land and Other Productive Resources

MP1:FA3: Strengthen Alliance Building and Advocacy for Climate Justice

MP2: Address the Root Causes of Violence Against Women and Girls, Reduce Unpaid Care Work and Promote Decent Work

MP2:FA1: Enhance Redistribution of Unpaid Care Work and Access to Decent Work

MP2:FA2: Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls

MP3: Promote the Rights of All Citizens to Equitable Access to Good-Quality, Child-Friendly Public Education that Builds their Confidence and Self-Esteem to Demand Transparency and Accountability from Duty Bearers

MP3:FA1: Promote Gender Responsive Public Education

MP3:FA2: Increase Public Education Financing

MP4: Improved Citizen's Participation, Public Accountability, Effective Mobilisation And Fair Redistribution of Public Resources Towards Gender Responsive Public Service

MP4:FA1: Promote Civic Awareness, Engagement and Public Accountability

MP4:FA2: Increase Public Resource Mobilisation and Redistribution; Progressive Taxation and Tax Expenditure and Allocation

5.2 Number of People Directly Reached

Following the easing of the COVID-19 restriction with regard to social gathering, implementation of programmes and projects were largely executed through face-to-face approach under strict observance of the safety protocols. Accordingly, the number of people directly reached under AAG's interventions in 2021 was 175,888. This number comprises 109,258 females, representing 62 percent and 66,630 males, representing 38 percent. Further

disaggregation by age shows 15,789 children (8,537 girls and 7,252 boys), 71,097 youth (44,295 females and 26,802 males) and 89,002 adults (56,426 females and 32,576 males). Notably, the people directly reached in 2021 far exceeded the 80,365 people (49,312 females and 31,053 males) reached in 2020. The increase in number signifies the appreciable rebound from the era of social gathering restrictions due to COVID-19 towards normal social engagements.

Table 2: Number of People Directly Reached in 2021

Mission Priority (MP)	Focus Area (FA)	NUMBERS OF PEOPLE REACHED									
		Children		Youth		Adults		FA & MP Aggregates			
		Boys	Girls	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Sub-Total	Total
MP 1	FA 1	56	72	7,551	21,871	2,603	13,305	10,210	35,248	45,458	62,366
	FA 2	-	-	1,248	2,913	254	1,512	1,502	4,425	5,927	
	FA 3	-	-	529	679	2,800	6,972	3,329	7,651	10,980	
MP2	FA 1	1,533	1,533	4,406	6,185	6,761	8,381	12,700	16,099	28,799	79,510
	FA 2	400	553	5,257	7,873	16,057	20,564	21,721	28,990	50,711	
MP3	FA 1	3,479	4,415	5,956	2,059	2,929	4,043	12,364	10,517	22,881	24,510
	FA 2	729	829	3	5	7	56	739	890	1,629	
MP4	FA 1	255	285	1,245	1,510	1,115	1,543	2,615	3,338	5,953	9,503
	FA 2	800	850	600	1,200	50	50	1,450	2,100	3,550	
Sub-Total		7,252	8,537	26,802	44,295	32,576	56,426	66,630	109,258	175,888	
Total		15,789		71,097		89,002		175,888			

From an extrapolative standpoint, over a million people benefited from AAG's 2021 programme and project interventions. This is because the approach used for the training programmes is mostly Trainer of Trainees (ToT). As such, down-streaming to community level targets is guaranteed. Likewise, the dialogues usually involve representatives of larger stakeholder groups. In addition, the power of traditional and social media as publicity channels is brought to bear in amplifying information dissemination and sensitisation activities.

In fact, we continued the use of media and digital channels in our advocacy programmes and public sensitisation

engagements. The Young Urban Women Movement undertook intensive media advocacy and engagements on the ratification of the ILO Convention 190 to eliminate violence and harassment at workplaces. They also used the opportunity to highlight the need to implement the Labour (Domestic Workers) Regulations, 2020 (LI 2408) to protect domestic workers from exploitation and abuse. Other key areas were the anti-witchcraft campaigns and combatting modern slavery (child labour, forced labour, unfair contracts, human trafficking, domestic servitude, etc.). A cumulative estimated audience of over 20 million people were reached through traditional and social media advocacy and engagements.

6.0 THE EMERGING SOCIAL CHANGES AND POWER SHIFTS

While Covid-19 had negative impact on many economies around the world and eroded the capacity of some countries to support and sustain the livelihoods of their populations, there was some progress in retooling livelihoods and strengthening social protection systems. AAG made

substantial contribution to the lives of people living in poverty and created many opportunities for livelihood empowerment. The change stories below illustrate the impact of AAG's work in fulfilment of our mission priorities.

6.1 Mission Priority One (MP1): Strengthen Resilient Livelihoods and Contribute to Secure Climate Justice

Under this Mission Priority, programmes, projects and campaigns were implemented to promote sustainable food production systems and execution of resilient agricultural practices. Key focus areas are

on promoting women's secured access and control over land and other productive resources as well as strengthening alliance building and advocacy for climate justice. Some key outcomes, impacts and change stories are highlighted below:

6.1.2 Farmers Adopt Best Climate Resilient Practices

The devastating impact of climate related activities on the livelihoods of individuals in some communities have increased the need for the establishment of learning centers/demonstration farms to educate smallholder farmers on the importance of organic manure and compost, improved varieties and intercropping as part of climate resilient approaches. The 200 demonstration farms were established with the aim of reducing rural poverty in Ghana through economic development, adoption of environmentally sustainable agriculture policies and practice, as well as greater

access to social protection in 15 districts in Ghana.

Majority of the 6,078 trained farmers have expressed their readiness to adopt and implement the acquired skills in the coming season. Their resolve is influenced by the good results from the learning centers that they witnessed.

A 34-year-old woman, Madam Amwient with a household size of 11 at Kanjaga Janingsa started the production of compost towards the next farming season. Madam Amwient spoke in the local Builsa language. This has been translated as follows:

“ *I have seen the good results of the use of compost. I have also been taught how to prepare the compost. The chemical fertilizers are too costly, thus some of us cannot afford. I have harvested 29 mini-bags of compost from 2 compost pits so far. I will continue the production until I have enough compost. I want to cultivate 7 acres of maize during the next farming season and my target is to get more than 100 mini-bags of compost before the season starts* **”**



Salifu Hawa, Magazia, Kpasera Women's Group.

Magazia of Kpasera women's Group also shares her story:

“ With the establishment of this community learning space, I have been able to learn new farming practices that I previously had no idea about. I didn't know that we could even make our compost from the husk of groundnuts, and our farm residue. Kpasera was not a community that cultivated groundnut, and we used to think that our soil wasn't fertile enough, but through this activity, we know that we can. I have also learned that, when cultivating groundnut, I can inter-crop with maize which will provide the necessary nitrogen that the maize requires ”

6.1.3 Village Saving Loans Association Enhance Financial Inclusion for women

Financial Inclusion is positioned prominently as an enabler of other developmental goals in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), where it is featured as a target in

Ghana's achievement of these targets, the NGID project continues to promote and facilitate access to social protection schemes for vulnerable smallholder women



A financially empowered Musah Sanatu sharing her experience at a forum.

eight of the seventeen goals. As part of ActionAid Ghana's contribution towards

farmers, persons with disabilities, other marginalised and vulnerable community

members, all of whom are not adequately served by the government interventions.

The Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) is a concept designed to provide social protection and access to financial support for these underserved community members. It involves a group of people who collectively support a structured process for

saving money and offering loans at a local level. AAG has established over 500 VSLAs across all 11 regions.

Musah Sanatu is a beneficiary who feels financially empowered because of her unrestricted access to finance to support her economic activities.

“ The introduction of VSLA to the women farmer group has brought an enormous benefit and financial relief to women in the Zantili. I have been able to borrow money from the group and used it for farming activities this year. Without the VSLA, I do not think I would have been able to farm the number of acres that I cultivated this year. I do not have to go to money lenders to borrow money at a high interest rate. I do not have to farm on credit and use my farm produce as payment when I do not even know if my harvest would be able to take care of the debt. Members of the group can borrow money from the box to take care of their financial problems. Previously, they would have relied on the benevolence of people when they are cash-strapped. From our contribution, we can take care of each other in times of need, and this has fostered unity and camaraderie amongst us. We are grateful to ActionAid and URBANET for training us and providing us with the savings box, and the European Union for funding this great project. ”

6.1.4 Female Extension Volunteers Provide Timely Agricultural Services

The objective to increase smallholder farmers' resilience to the impact of climate change through more effective biodiversity preservation and sustainable agricultural practices, requires the willingness of stakeholders to cure the challenges associated with inadequate Extension officers in the various communities.

In response, ActionAid collaborated with the Department of Agriculture to mobilise and set up networks of Female Extension Volunteers (FEVs) in Lawra, Lambussie, Sissala East and Wa East districts of the Upper West Region to offer smallholder farmers basic extension services in the communities in which they live.

Female Extension Volunteers are female farmers who have acquired skills and knowledge in basic agronomic practices and providing services in hard to reach areas.



Rashida beaming with smiles after the training.

Rashida Tongu, a 25-year-old woman from Halimboi, a community in the Wa East District expressed joy about the training offered by the female extension volunteers. She had this to say:

“ I have never seen any Agric officer coming to administer extension services in my community. When ActionAid came to my community with interventions targeting women farmers, I was selected by my group, including two (2) other women, to be trained as female extension volunteers. This opportunity was the only way farmers from my community could gain access to agricultural extension services. After participating in the three (3) days practical training facilitated by the district office, I gained a lot of knowledge and innovations in modern farming such as, simple agronomic practices, personal hygiene, household nutrition management as well as animal rearing. For instance, I did not know that there are appropriate periods for planting various crops at specific times. I used to plant anyhow and sometimes it affects the yields. Early planting resulted in post-harvest loses, as crops matured in the middle of rains, and late planting at times affected the maturity of the crops. The knowledge gained has helped me to improve upon my decisions in farm management. I have also adopted better farming practices this year. Now, I am able to reach out to other farmers in their farms and guide them to adopt best agronomic practices to improve crop yield and soil fertility. Through the trainings and engagements with Agric officers, members of my group were linked to an inputs dealer in the district, and we were able to buy farm inputs on credit without collateral. This has reduced farmers stress and burden of buying farm inputs from the open market which is very expensive but of less quality. We have confidence that this year's harvest will be great, since our crops look good and healthy. This training came in handy and will go a long way to help us increase our yield and take care of our families. Thanks to ActionAid Ghana and the NGIDP team for supporting women farmers in my community ”

6.1.5 Communities Develop Climate Adaptation Plans for Building Resilience

In recent times, climate change has gained great attention in many rural communities. As an agrarian economy, the source of livelihood of most residents of rural communities is their farming activities.

Although the activities of residents of rural communities contribute less to the destruction of the climate, they face the adverse consequences such as low yields, extreme weather conditions, prolonged



Community members planting a seedling.

periods of flooding and droughts, high temperatures and erratic rainfall patterns. This phenomenon negatively affects crop yields and food production.

To achieve the target of implementing actions to build the resilience of farmers, ActionAid supported 54 communities to develop their own implementable community-based climate change adaptation plans.

In Kenyasi No.3, the chiefs in the community took keen interest in the processes to develop their adaptation plans. Currently, they are leading the implementation. Two chiefs from Kenyasi No.3 and Hiamankyene in the Ahafo and Bono regions respectively, are employing the community information

centres in their towns to educate residents about bush fires and the importance of planting trees. The education has reached over 500 people including children in the communities. This has resulted in change in attitudes on the application of farming methods, especially, farming at the river side and burning of the bush in preparation towards the farming season.

Nana Kwabena Antwi is a sub chief in Kenyasi No.3. He is among the five (5)-member local committee overseeing the implementation of the community adaptation plans. Nana has been using the community information centre to educate the residents about issues of climate change as well as sharing the impact of the initiative on the community:

“As a leader, one core responsibility is to create a favourable environment which supports people’s livelihoods. Over the years, we have been burning our farms and using synthetic agrochemicals for our crops without knowing the consequences it poses. I was born



A contented Nana Kwabena Antwi.

and raised in this community and sometime ago, we could predict when the rains will start and stop but these days, things have changed. One cannot know when the rains will start and when it will stop. This has made farming, which is our major source of income and livelihood in this community, difficult as we solely depend on the rains. Some of our activities like bush burning, illegal felling of trees, use of excessive agrochemicals etc are affecting our ability to be more resilient against the impact of climate change. During my participation in the AAG community sensitisation meetings which was to enable us to develop our CAPs, I became aware that even though the rich countries contribute the most to causing climate change, some of our own activities are making us vulnerable to the impact of the climate change. I took keen

interest in the processes and offered myself as a member of the local committee to lead in the implementation of the CAPs in my community. We were supported to develop our own plan, using participatory tools. My initial misconceptions about our contribution to the climate destruction changed, looking at the contributions from other countries. This notwithstanding, there was the need to build our resilience through the adaptation plans we have developed

so that we can mitigate the impact on our livelihoods. After the development of the plan, the committee members agreed to conduct community education as part of the plan. They decided to use the community information centre to deepen the understanding of the residents on the various strategies in the plan to reduce our vulnerability. We have done sensitization on bush fires and the importance of planting trees to support our farming systems. Through the educational programmes, 20 people in the community who were among those known to be notorious for felling trees, have testified about how they have stopped cutting trees for charcoal, not only from their farms, but also from the surrounding bushes ”

6.1.6 Building Economic Resilience of the Youth through Skills Training



Beneficiaries of the training admiring their start-up tools.

Under the Providing Employment Opportunities for Young People in Ghana and Young Urban Women's projects, over 665 youth acquired livelihood skills training across the Northern, Upper East, Bono, Greater Accra and Volta regions. Beneficiaries were trained in the following artisanal areas: Auto-mechanics, Pastry Making, Bead Making, Basket Weaving,

Sandal Work, Soap Making, Phone Repairs and Tiling. The training was conducted by National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) and other master craftsmen. The graduates were given proficiency certificates upon completion of the training. ActionAid further equipped the trainees with soft skills in Business Management and Social Media Marketing. The beneficiaries were also

provided with start-up tools and materials to start their own businesses.

One such beneficiary is 35-year-old Esther Debra from Koforidua who is married with four children (one girl and three boys). She remarked as follows:



Esther (Left) beams with smiles

“ I am now financially free and I can provide basic needs for my children. I am a native of this community and a beneficiary of the ActionAid entrepreneurial skill training. I am married with four children, all boys. I used to find it difficult to cater for my children as a farmer. As a woman with little resources, I could only work as a smallholder farmer. My husband was equally a smallholder farmer. Due to this, our harvest was always not enough to cater for the family. I always had to borrow from my neighbours, repayment for which

sometimes became difficult. For this reason, people started labelling me as “Okafuor” - the debtor.

Luckily, ActionAid came to our community to discuss the selection of young people for employable skills training. I was fortunate to be selected. Initially, I thought it was one of the scams people normally do, because I knew that it is virtually impossible to equip someone with entrepreneurial skills for free. Twenty-five (25) youths from my community (16 females and 9 males) benefited from the skills training. Of the number, thirteen of us were trained in pastry making.

We were also trained in group dynamics, advocacy and campaigning, as well as financial management. I have now started my own pastries business with the start-up tools and materials provided by ActionAid after the training.

Now, I have been able to save an amount of four hundred Ghana cedis (GH¢400.00) from my small business. I have also started providing training for some young girls who have dropped out of school and want to learn a trade at no cost to them. I think, this is my way of giving back to the community what I have gotten from ActionAid. **”**

Another youth beneficiary who is reaping immensely from the entrepreneurship training is 23-year-old Ibrahim Ayinbila from Dapoore community in the Upper East Region.

“ I dropped out of Senior High School in 2018 because my results were not good enough to further my education. I was seen as a useless boy because I failed in school. My parents were disappointed in me because they felt they had wasted their money to fund my education. This created a strain in our relationship. I idled hopelessly. Through ActionAid’s sensitization, I realized that formal education is not the only means to achieve one’s dream of becoming successful in life. We can also become successful people through craftwork and trade. So I decided to learn a vocational skill. I explored and experimented with many skill areas and finally settled on learning basketry under the PEOY project. Though I started learning basketry with my uncle before I joined the PEOY project, I did not know that basketry is a very lucrative business until ActionAid enlightened me on the job. So I learnt the skill with all seriousness. ActionAid provided me another opportunity to do apprenticeship with a well-established basket weaving businessman where I learnt the skill with some other colleagues. Upon completion, I was given start-up tools. Subsequently, I started weaving baskets on my own and selling to middlemen in Bolga, who have customers in Europe, Asia, USA and other parts of the world. I became known in the basket market in no time because of the quality of my wares. I recruited five youths in my community, and I am training them in basket weaving.



I make an average monthly income of GH¢ 1,400.00 (EUR 191.17) which I use to support my parents to provide the needs of the family. Through this business, I have bought a tricycle popularly called, ‘Can do’ for commercial use. This business earns me extra income, an average of GH¢600.00 (EUR 81.93) monthly. We are all now happy in the family because I can make money and contribute to the upkeep of the family. I want to thank ActionAid for helping me to discover my purpose in life and for making me a useful person in my family. My hope in the next five years is to own a big basket weaving firm where I can employ more young people to also make meaningful impacts in their households ”

6.2 Mission Priority Two (MP2): Address the Root Causes of Violence Against Women and Girls, Reduce Unpaid Care Work and Promote Decent Work

Under this Mission Priority, our interventions focused on enhancing the redistribution of Unpaid Care Work and access to decent

work. These interventions take into account the elimination of violence against women and girls -through advocacy.

6.2.1 Water facility reduces care burden on Women in Wakii Community

Wakii is a community in the Talensi District of the Upper East Region. Due to the hilly topography of the community, residents especially, women and children walk long

distances in search of potable water for domestic use. This situation called for an intervention to ameliorate the burden of work on these women and children. As part of efforts to promote gender responsive public services and reduce women unpaid care work, AAG constructed a mechanized water supply facility for the community under the Wakii water project with funding support from ActionAid Hellas. The facility currently supplies water to over 100 households as well as the community health centre. Nagpoka Bogre, a 23-year-old mother of two, is a resident of the community. Nagpoka shares how the facility has reduced the burden of work on her.



Nagpoka Bogre fetching water from the newly constructed facility.



'Convenient source of healthy water', Nagpoka Bogre seem to say as she walks away happily with water from the facility.

“ I cannot express my happiness enough. What I am seeing today is unimaginable. Hitherto, this water I am carrying on my head would have taken me three (3) hours to fetch from the only borehole that exists in the community. But now you can see for yourself that I have not spent more than five (5) minutes here but I am going home. I have saved a lot of time which I can use to engage in other productive activities. This borehole is less stressful to use. It is like a tap and flows very fast. As a nursing mother, I am no more afraid of leaving my child behind while going to fetch water. Previously, especially during the dry season, I would have been carrying this child on my back while walking over 8

kilometres to and from the stream to fetch water. Water that is usually not wholesome and when we drink it, we fall sick and visit the clinic often. With this water system provided by ActionAid, our water and health problems are over for now. I can only thank ActionAid and the donors for making life better for us. I want the District Assembly to construct another one for us so that our water problems will be solved forever ”

6.2.2 Shifting power through male cooking contest

For male pupils to imbibe the culture of shared household work early in their growth process, cooking competitions were held among them. One of these contests took



George trying his hands at cooking.

place at Tizza Basic School in the Jirapa municipality of the Upper West Region. George is a 19-year-old boy currently staying with his grandmother and one of his younger sisters in Tizza-Mwafo because both of his parents and other siblings live in Kumasi. He is in the basic six class. George now participates in domestic chores like cooking, fetching of water, sweeping, and fetching of firewood. The young man explains his motivation for doing so:



George Kpieodoe takes over cooking of the household meal from his grandmother. This gesture has allowed grandma some space to perform other chores.

“ My desire to take part in some of these household chores started from the day I was given the chance to cook in the presence of all the students and some visitors who came to observe the process. Previously, I watched my sister and grandmother struggling with a lot of

domestic work without helping them because of my notion that such activities are the preserve of women or girls. Immediately after participating in the cooking competition, I fetched water with my sister and when we returned, my sister swept while I set fire. When my grandmother saw me, she exclaimed, “Sieli”, meaning surprise. She asked me what has changed and my response to her was that I am a changed George and from now onwards, they will see me doing a lot of such duties. Because I perform household chores, some of my male colleagues now call me ‘Dor Lie Poge’ which means ‘man/boy turned woman/girl’. But I am not disturbed because my sister now finds time to learn and do her homework. Now, she likes me very much. I will continue and talk to other boys to change as well ”

6.2.3 Building a Happy Home through Domestic Work Support (Redistribution of care work build a happy home)

Patriarchal system is deeply rooted and practiced in most communities in Ghana. Gender roles are strictly assigned among

and participating in the care burden. This provides respite and offer space for women to engage in profitable activities.



Adisah sharing her experience at a community durbar.

males and females. Men and boys who attempt to perform female stereotyped roles are mocked. Through the sensitisation, advocacy, campaigns, and the collection and analysis of time use diaries being implemented by ActionAid and Sogntaba, men and boys are increasingly appreciating

Adisah is a 45-year-old small holder farmer from Nassamba community in the Nanumba South District who currently goes about her economic activities as a result of her husband's support with household chores. Adisah shares her joy:

“ I now have enough time to move round the community to sell my rice. My husband supports by taking care of the children while I go to fetch water. He also prepares them for school as I make their breakfast. The support from my husband gives me an opportunity to meet my customers before they leave for their farms. Many of those who buy my food are famers, thus any delay on my part in leaving the house may lead to not meeting them at home to patronize my food.

As a matter of fact, when my husband was not supporting me, my business wasn't good. I was always overburdened with household chores. This resulted in being late in moving out to sell my food. Now, the situation has improved. I therefore wish to use this special day to thank ActionAid and Songtaba for convincing our husbands to support us at home ”

6.2.4 Reducing women burden of care through Child Care Centres



Over the period of 2016 to 2020, ActionAid constructed 50 Child Care Centres and Kindergartens across operational regions. The Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER) project in particular provided majority of this project as a contribution to reducing the unpaid care work burden on women.

One of the Child Care Centres was provided for Sienchem community in the Asutifi South District of the Ahafo Region. Sixty-eight (68) women are benefiting from the services of the centre. The center has provided them a relief from the challenges of providing their children with care whilst engaging in economic activities. These women have been able to increase their farm sizes and expanded their businesses with a resultant rise in their incomes. Currently, the Sienchem Child Care Centre is one of the most successful centers in the Ahafo Region. It is managed by the women group who have engaged care givers, paid their monthly stipends, and ensured that all the food and care items needed for the smooth running of the facility are in constant supply. As a result, the center is currently running at its full capacity with 50 children. A total of 18 children have transitioned from the center to the kindergarten school to begin their formal schooling in the community in 2021.

Madam Mary Acheampong is a 25-year-old farmer and a trader from Sienchem. She is a mother of three (3) children, and one of the 68 women who have benefited from the Sienchem Child Care Center. She shared her story about how the center has afforded her more time for farming activities and bread making business, thereby increasing her income. Mary narrates her story:

“ I live with my 3 children and husband at Sienchem. Previously, the challenge of combining care work for my children, engaging in farming activities and running a small bread making business was not going well. I did not have much time for my bread making business and the farming activities. Each morning after the household chores, I have to take 2 of my children to the farm with me because they were not of age to start formal education. This was

affecting me as much time was needed to take care of them. The establishment of the Child Care Centre in the community in 2020 therefore came to me personally as a big relief. Now, each morning, I take the children there to be cared for while I spent much time on my small cocoa farm. In 2021, I was able to expand my cocoa farm from 2 to 5 acres. Additionally, I have also been able to increase the number of bags of flour I used to buy for the bread making business from 2 to 4 bags. Even though I have few people helping me in the bread making business, it's good that I have more time to engage in it myself. It has made it possible for me to supervise them to ensure that they are doing the right things. Each week, with the increased number of bags of flour from 2 to 4, I am able to get a profit of at least three hundred Ghana cedis (GH¢300.00) after covering all my cost, including paying all those helping me in the business. By the end of the year in 2021, I was able to save ten thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢10,000.00) as proceeds from my bread business and my cocoa farm. It was some of this income that I used to expand the cocoa farm. I and my husband now take better care of our home and children. We are able to pay for the feeding and care of our two little children at the childcare center ”

6.2.5 From an Abusive Job to a Fulfilling Economic Venture: Story of Ivy Amoako

Gender-based violence is rooted in strong social, cultural and traditional norms. An AAG research titled, “*Falling Through the Cracks*,” provided a visual lens on cases of sexual harassment and violence at the workplace. The research, which focused on young urban women in the informal sector showed that 44% have suffered repeated, sexual oriented behaviour such as touching, rubbing, or groping, 49% have been sexually abused in the world of work and 44% harassed more than once.



Ivy Amoako at the training session organised by AAG.

Ivy Amoako is a member of Young Urban Women's Movement and resident of La, in the Greater Accra Region. As a waitress at a club (entertainment center), Ivy faced series of sexual harassment from customers but could neither resist nor quit her job due to inadequate alternative sources of income. In 2020, Ivy became a beneficiary of a training organised by AAG on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 183, 189 and 190 and Ghana's labour laws. She got empowered and understood the protection and rights guaranteed under maternity, protection as a domestic worker and freedom from violence and harassment at workplace.

Subsequently, AAG presented another opportunity to YUW members to acquire skills in various livelihood enhancement activities. Ivy availed herself and it has been a great leap to her life changing story. Ivy narrates the previous unpleasant experience from her job as a waitress and the current fulfilling income generating venture she is engaged in.

“ I have been working as a waitress in a club, customers who patronise the services harass us on daily basis. Unfortunately, we did not know how to handle it. Our employers will tell you that it is expected as part of the job and that should not constitute grounds to disrespect or misbehave towards customers and drive them away. But my participation in the AAG training on the international conventions and Ghana labour laws enlightened us about our rights and the reporting mechanisms to seek redress. The other trainees and I agreed to share the knowledge with our colleagues for us to work towards forming a union to give us collective bargaining power to demand for risk allowance and a smoking room outside the working area. Then COVID-19 came, and we were laid-off and I was wondering where I will turn to for survival ”

AAG gave Ivy and about 150 others the opportunity to learn soap making and other income generating ventures under the Young Urban Women Project.



“ I got trained in how to make soap. I produce liquid soap and supply to various washing bays, institutions, and shops. In fact, I earn more than what I am paid for my services as a waitress. I produce about 200 bottles of soap every month and earn about GH¢1,500.00. I am grateful to ActionAid for helping me find a sustainable and fulfilling livelihood. But I have decided to continue to render my services in the hospitality industry where I raise awareness among my colleagues about their labour rights and politely call customers to order to desist from harassing ladies as their bodies are distinct from the services they render. I have also been part of the YUW voices advocating for Ghana to ratify ILO C190 to guarantee violence-free work environments. It has been a life changing process for me and many young women and we are grateful to ActionAid and its supporters ”

6.3 Mission Priority Three: Promote the Rights of All Citizens to Equitable Access to Good-Quality, Child-Friendly Public Education that Builds their Confidence and Self-Esteem to Demand Transparency and Accountability from Duty Bearers

Our work under this mission priority revolves around the promotion of gender-responsive public education and advocacy for increase

in public education financing. The notable outcomes and change stories under this priority are:

6.3.1 Girls actively participate in leadership and decision-making in schools and communities

Over the years, AAG has been empowering girls in rural and peri-urban communities to take up leadership roles and actively participate in students' governance.

Monitoring of the Young Female Platform (YFP) schools in Northern Region revealed that many girls are now taking up leadership positions at both classroom and general

school administration levels. The male dominated positions such as ‘grounds/compound’ prefect and Senior Prefect are being occupied by girls as seen in Vittin Senior High Technical School and Tamale Senior High School. Mentors in these schools have made commitment to push for the effective roll out of the Gender-Friendly Leadership Structure (GFLS) in the 2022 academic year.

In pushing for an institutionalised gender-inclusive school leadership system, Norsaac and AAG held discussions with the Regional Education Directorate and the regional

leadership of Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS) to reflect on existing policies and norms inhibiting girls’ full and active participation in student governance. This resulted in the design of a new structure referred to as the Gender-Friendly Leadership Structure. The roll out of the structure led to the election of the first female senior prefect at Tamale Senior High School in the Tamale Metropolis.

Hajia Amina Musah is an executive of CHASS and had this to share:



“ In fact, girls have always been placed at the bottom when it comes to leadership. This, to some extent, has to do with culture and religion, especially for our part of the country, northern Ghana. Our girls are groomed to be reserved and timid. Today, let’s change the narrative. I particularly like this structure because it will encourage young girls to challenge themselves to get to higher spaces and I support it. I think that this should be instituted in our schools. But for us to succeed, there is the need for this

structure to form part of all first year’s orientation so that they will begin their journey with an open mind. We also need to sensitize boys, so that they see the need to vote for females when they contest for these positions **”**

6.3.2 ActionAid supports 20 Teenage Mothers to Return to School

AAG is one of the lead advocates for teenage-pregnant girls to stay in school or return to continue their education after childbirth. These teenagers drop out from school due to their inability to withstand the stigma associated with the pregnancy.

In 2021, AAG supported the Girls Empowerment and Advocacy Platforms

(GEAP), also known as Girls Clubs and the Young Female Platform (YFP), to embark on campaigns aimed at reducing the cases of teenage pregnancies recorded in the Bono, Ahafo and Northern Regions. Stakeholder meetings and sensitizations were conducted through radio channels to encourage teenage mothers to return to school. This yielded positive results as 19

teenage mothers from the Asutifi North and South, Nanumba North and South and Lambusie districts returned to school.

Lydia Yiribare a 19-year-old mother from Hakyagang community in the Lambusie District, is one of the young females who have immensely benefited from the

programme. According to her, the career guidance processes and skills trainings offered, provided the needed clarity for her to return to the classroom. In our interactions with the excited mother, whose educational aspiration has been brought back on track, this is what she had to say:

“ I got pregnant in 2018 at the age of 16 when I was in Junior High School and I felt ashamed of myself, so I stopped going to school. Any time I went out, my colleagues would be pointing fingers at me because I got pregnant at an early age. I moved away from my mother to live with the man who impregnated me.

Fortunately, I heard the news about the YFP in Piina from the Assembly man, and they asked for more young girls like myself to join. I was a bit hesitant because I thought I would be mocked, but another young girl in my area who is also a member, encouraged me to join. She told me that all the girls in the YFP and the mentor are welcoming and will be glad to see me.



Lydia Yiribare defies childbirth stigma and returns school

I followed her to one of their meetings and got registered. When I joined the YFP, I learnt a lot of things that helped me to appreciate my self-worth. After hearing the story of other young girls and how they are moving on in life, all the shame and self-blame I put myself through ended and I became bold to freely move round and mingle with people. Immediately I gave birth and the baby started crawling, I gave her to my mother and went back to school in 2020.

That is because I know this is what will help me instead of staying in marriage at this age without any job and source of income to care for myself and the child. I am currently in form two at the Hakyagang Junior High School. My dream is to be a teacher or a nurse in future”

Hajara is also a teenage mother of twins who returned to school.

“ It all started when I was living with my mother’s younger sister. I was engaging in sexual activities with men despite advice from my aunts and uncles to desist from that behaviour. My aunt became angry and took me back to my mother to advise me. Unfortunately, I got impregnated by one apprentice who denied responsibility at the initial stage. Being pregnant at that young age, I thought my life was coming to an end as I believed I could not go to school again. All my life, I have been dreaming of becoming a teacher, but the situation made me lose hope. I gave birth to twins (two boys). I lost hope entirely as I thought it will be very difficult for me to care for the twins and at the same time continue my education. Fortunately, ActionAid and partners visited our community and heard of my story and started encouraging me. They assured me that the Ghana Education Service has a re-entry policy for girls who get pregnant. This made me regain confidence and sat for the Basic Education Certificate Examination. I will use my story as a case study to educate my peers to desist from anything that can take them away from their education and reaching their goals”

6.3.3 Civic Awareness Raising Results in Supply of School Furniture



Todome is a community in the South Dayi District of the Volta Region. Since the 1960s, the community has been operating a

primary school without a Junior High School. Students who complete primary education and wish to enroll at the Junior High School are compelled to walk for over 14 kilometres to a nearby community for academic activities. As a result, many students aborted their educational dreams. To build the confidence of residents to demand accountability, ActionAid organised capacity building workshops for the (Parent-Teacher Association-PTA) and the School Management Council. John Todome, a 45-year-old Teacher and Assembly Member for the community had this to say:

“ The Junior High School began full operations three years ago. Our pupils after completing Basic six (6) leave for Ahamansu to continue their education. That situation used to come with its own challenges, including majority of the girls dropping out of school because they either got pregnant or were tired of walking over 14 kilometers daily to access

education. Through the capacity building training for PTAs, the community engaged the education directorate for about three (3) years and were permitted to start a Junior High School. We held communal labour and built a pavilion to enable us to start the Junior High School in the community. The major challenge we face since the establishment of the Junior High School education, is inadequate furniture. The school authorities met the Association to find a solution to this challenge. The PTA, after several demands from the local authority to supply the school with furniture and other supplies failed, decided to appeal to other community members to get some furniture. Mr. Korku Foli volunteered to offer wood. The PTA agreed to provide funds for the construction of dual desks. In the interim, the Parent-Teacher Association has constructed 50 dual desks from the donated wood and looking forward to construct additional 100. This initiative became possible because of the frequent sensitisation programmes held by ActionAid that strengthened PTA/SMC networks ”

6.4 Mission Priority Four: Improve Citizen's Participation, Public Accountability, Effective Mobilisation and Fair Redistribution of Public Resources towards Gender-Responsive Public Service

The implementation of interventions in this priority area sought to promote civic awareness, engagement and public

accountability and increase public resource mobilisation and redistribution, progressive taxation and tax expenditure and allocation.

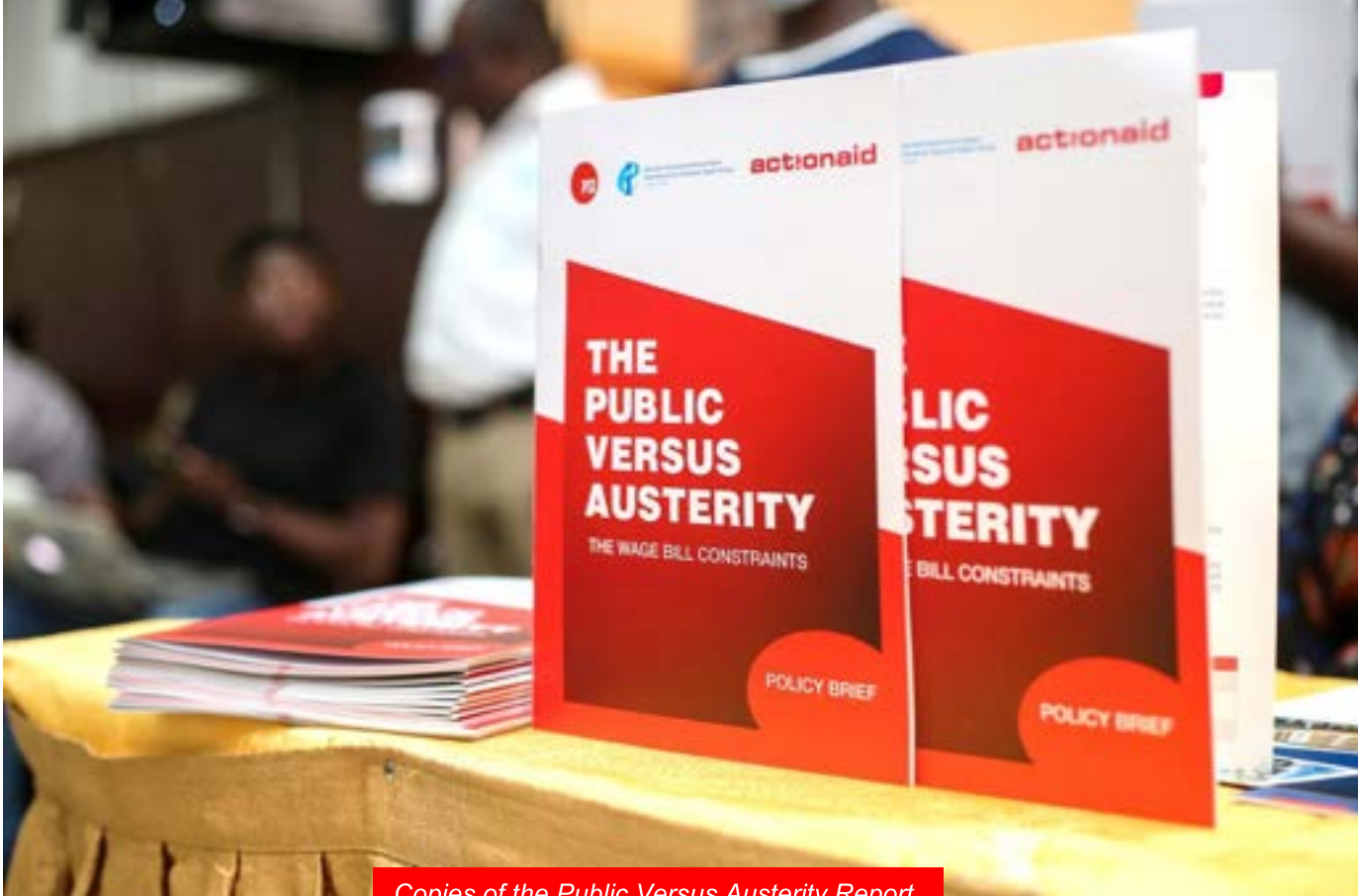
6.4.1 Young Activists Petition Ministers for Ratification of ILO Convention 190

Campaigning and influencing are highly embedded in ActionAid Ghana's Human Rights- Based Approach. ActionAid believes some of the fundamental causes of poverty can be addressed through effective campaigns by mobilising people to shift national and international policies or

practices. To increase demand for the ratification of the International Labour Convention 190, members of the Young Urban Women's Movement in the Volta, Upper East and Bono regions presented petitions to the Regional Ministers.



Photos: Young Urban Women members meeting with Regional Ministers



Copies of the Public Versus Austerity Report.

6.4.2 AAG Intensifies Progressive Taxation Campaigns through “The Public Versus Austerity Research and Stakeholder Engagements”

Periodically, AAG conducts research and reviews on Ghana's tax policies and regulations to unearth evidence and recommend progressive taxation and revenue mobilisation strategies. Under the umbrella of the Tax Justice Coalition, the clarion call has been for the state to end the harmful and abusive tax incentives mostly granted to multi-national companies and investors. Ghana's domestic resource mobilisation has remained low, thereby limiting the ability of the economic managers to redistribute and allocate the required resources for the provision of gender- responsive public services. This is particularly the case in the education, health, water, social protection, sanitation, and

other sectors. In response, the government of Ghana formulated and laid before Parliament, the Tax Exemptions Bill in November 2021. Given that a similar bill was laid in 2019 but could not be passed before the end of term of the previous Parliament, CSOs coalitions are strategising to double-up their advocacy and engagement efforts to ensure that its passage is not unduly delayed.

Closely connected are the conversations ignited from the study conducted by ActionAid in partnership with Public Services International (PSI) and Education International, titled “*The Public Versus Austerity*”.



The study highlights the effects of public sector wage bill constraints, usually pushed down by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the quest to assist countries recover and stabilise their economies. Thus, the state's obligation to deliver essential public services including recruitments, is usually hindered as was witnessed when Ghana signed-up for IMF support between 2014 and 2017. AAG held national level stakeholder engagement on the Ghana study findings and also published a policy brief. Key messages on the findings of the report aligned with the editorial stance of many media houses which generated series of publications across television, radio, newspapers, and online portals. This led to several invitations from media institutions for discussions on the findings of the report. The Parliamentary select Committee on Finance and Education also called for a meeting in 2022 on the way forward for the country.

7.0 KEY APPROACHES THAT SHAPE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The principal approaches that shape and guide the design and implementation of programme and project interventions are outlined below:

7.1 Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)

The overarching development paradigm that shapes the implementation of AAG's programmes is the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA). It is anchored on many pillars, namely; the fulfilment of rights, building resilience and equitably redistributing power and resources, through awareness raising, right-holder mobilisation, capacity building/strengthening, piloting, and showcasing right-based alternatives, and supporting social movement building to undertake advocacy and campaigns. HRBA is broadly encapsulated within the foundational pillars of right-holder

empowerment, solidarity building and campaigning.

The key target groups AAG works with are; women, girls, and youth (including people with disabilities and other underserved populations). Participatory analyses approaches are used to raise the consciousness of these right-holder groups and then supported to organise and claim their rights by confronting the socio-cultural, political, and economic power imbalances as well as holding duty-bearers accountable.

7.2 Advancing Women's Rights and Feminist Leadership

Girls' and women suffer the highest consequences of unjust traditions and beliefs in patriarchal societies, including rights violations and marginalization when it comes to accessing opportunities. It is for this reason that AAG has its interventions focused on promoting the rights and well-being of women, girls, and other marginalised/excluded groups. The analysis and dialogue on issues is always viewed

with a gendered lens. It is recognised that men, women, children, and other categories of social groups are affected differently and may require customized engagement and intervention approaches. The ultimate objective is to address the structural causes of poverty, gender inequality, and injustice by shifting visible power and decrease invisible and hidden power.

7.3 Working with Social Movements and People's Organisations

AAG builds strategic partnerships and collaborations by working with like-minded organisations, including entering into alliances, networks and coalitions. Examples of these include the Tax Justice Coalition, Domestic Violence Coalition and Access to Justice Working Group.

At the right holder level, AAG has over the last couple of years invested in mobilizing and nurturing people's organisations and social movements to take center stage in the social change process. The social movements being nurtured include; Smallholder Women Farmers Movement

(SHWFM), Women in Agriculture Platforms (WAPs), Female Extension Volunteers (FEV), Young Urban Women Movement (YUWM), Activista (Youth Activist Network), Girls Empowerment and Advocacy Platforms (GEAPs) also known as Girls Clubs, Young Female Platforms (YFPs) and Community Based Anti-violence Teams (COMBATs). Global Platform Ghana (GPG) which is the training and Youth division of ActionAid Ghana has been instrumental in

strengthening the capacity of youth-led social movements, initiated innovative youth led project on artistic activism and provided tailored trainings to AAG partners on Leadership, effective campaigns, business skills, governance and Modern slavery prevention.

7.4 Working with Young People

AAG youth programming takes the dimension of working with community level youth groups and broad-based district, regional and national networks as in the case of Activista, Young Urban Women Movement (YUWM) and Young Female Platforms (YFPs). The PEOY project has been dedicated to youth entrepreneurship and skills development where over 500 people have been empowered and are

earning decent livelihoods from various activities. AAG facilitates and funds strategic engagements with national youth agencies and institutions such as the National Youth Authority (NYA), Ghana Enterprise Agency (GEA) and National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI). By this, the youth are able to influence youth policy formulation and implementation and explore the possibility of accessing emerging opportunities.

7.5 Digitisation and Artistic Activism

The use of digital tools and media for information dissemination, campaigning and engagements has become more imperative within the context of the 'new normal' imposed by COVID-19. For AAG's office level work, it has a very secure and reliable internet service for its smooth operations. The capacity of staff was increased by the IT and Communication Units on use of digital tools such as Microsoft Teams for meetings and training. Representatives of the social movements

also received capacity building on effective use of Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook to amplify their advocacy and campaigns.

Artistic activism has also been adopted for sensitisations and campaigns using drama, role play and songs to educate communities and to drive home key messages. Artistes compose short songs and jingles which are aired via radio, television, and social media platforms to create awareness.



8.0 CHILD SPONSORSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL FUNDRAISING

In 2021, we continued our fundraising efforts, which involved increasing the capacities of AAG and partner staff. Particular emphasis was placed on modern trends in child sponsorship within the federation as well as setting up teams to participate in proposal development workshops. We worked with the AA Global Business Development Team to develop our collective technical competencies and consulted with experts, stakeholders and intended beneficiaries during the development of project proposals. This

ensured that our proposals are responsive to donor requirements to build the resilience of beneficiaries and relevant to the changing needs of the marginalized and people living in poverty. AAG invested time and efforts into strengthening its partnerships with donors and sponsors in order to be competitive and improve its chances of securing more financial resources to fund programmes. AAG will continue to strengthen these approaches while building our internal capacities and external relationships to sustain our success rate.

8.1 Child Sponsorship (CS)

The year began with child and non-child links of 10,770 which declined by 3.75% to a total Country links of 10,366 by the end of 2021. Out of this total number of links, Greece had 2,327 representing 22.44%, UK had 3,235 links representing 31.20% and Italian links were 4,804, representing 46.34% of the total country links. Italian links remained stable for the year while that of UK increased by 2.06% but that of Greece reduced by 2.21%. The overall decline in country links can be attributed to the global economic impact of COVID-19 on the livelihood of supporters and slow recovery of most economies. However, most of the supporters have kept faith with us and have honoured their commitment to the programme to ensure that we continue with our work to bring the needed changes in the

lives of people living in poverty. From the ongoing Country Model Review (CMR) processes, AAG was reallocated a total of 4,645 links for profiles collection to shore up its CS funding. The breakdown of the links are 3,983 from UK, 496 from Italy and 166 from Greece. All efforts are being marshalled to collect the profiles for these links.

To improve and modernise supporter servicing and Child Sponsorship management, a transition was made from Nkonsokonson (NK) to Shakom (SK) in August 2021. AAG and some partner staff were trained and are abreast with the new trends in CS business processes. All primary data of children were successfully migrated to SK and was used to collect child messages for the second set of media (photos and child messages) for 2021.

8.2 Institutional and High Value Fundraising

Within the year under review, three institutional donor funded projects closed-out. These were; the Agriculture Governance, Resilience and Economic Empowerment (AGREE) funded by USAID through Care International, Action to Promote Women's Rights and Stop

Witchcraft Accusations funded by Australian High Commission through the Direct Aid Programme (DAP) and Zero Violence Project funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK Government.

However, AAG continued to invest efforts into raising institutional funding and

succeeded in attracting the following projects.

8.2.1 Improving Access to Quality Basic Education Through The Provision Of Modern Infrastructure in Drobo Community:

In collaboration with AA Italia, we secured funding from a high value donor to implement a 12-month project that provided school infrastructure for the Drobo Community and built the capacity of the

School Management Committee and the Parent-Teacher Association. The project commenced in May 2021 with a total budget of €69,333.70. The school structure was completed on schedule and was commissioned and handed over to GES in February 2022.

8.2.2 Zero Violence Phase 2: In September 2021, AAG collaborated with AAUK to apply for funding from Peoples Postcode Lottery (PPL) to implement a 12-month phase 2 of the Zero Violence Project within the informal sector. Following the approval of the Expression of Interest (EOI), the fundraising team led the development of the project proposal for implementation across all the operational regions. The purpose of this

project is to guarantee decent work devoid of sexual harassment and rights violations at informal sector workplaces. It also includes intensive advocacy for the ratification of the ILO C190. The informal sector workers, employers, Labour Office and DOVVSU are the main targets. To kick start implementation of the project in January 2022, AAG received the first instalment of £117,086.5.

8.2.3 Transformative Action for Gender Equality (TAGE): Another project funded by the European Union Delegation to Ghana has been secured to prevent and reduce violence experienced among underserved groups such as women and girls across eight (8) districts in four (4) regions. These are Binduri and Pusiga in Upper East Region, Nanumba North and Sagnarigu

Municipalities in Northern Region, Ho Municipal and Adaklu District in Volta Region and lastly, Ga South and Ga West in Greater Accra Region. The project seeks to enhance knowledge, influence positive societal attitudes and responsiveness of state actors. The total budget for the project is €550,000.77.

8.2.4 Co-Financing Obligations for Projects: AAG was able to mobilise funding

of £769,167.00 to bridge fund gaps for on-going projects.

9.0 COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The communication and Public Relations activities in the year 2021 were steered by the AAG communication strategy which focuses on amplifying the voices of women, young people, social movements, and right holders. During the year under review, we contributed to strategic key national discussions on Climate Justice, Decent Work, Tax Justice, and Violence and

Harassment at the Workplace. The adoption of a proactive traditional media engagement approach as well as intensive use of digital tools to disseminate compelling stories and AAG's position on key issues of national interest, increased our brand visibility. AAG's thought leadership status was also brought to bear on issues that fall within the scope of our work.

9.1 Digital and Traditional Media Engagement

As part of our strategy to intensify the use of AAG's owned media channels to enhance visibility of our programmes and projects, we continued to deploy the six most valuable digital platforms; Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and our website. We posted engaging content on our activities and interventions on these platforms.

Feedback from our audience indicate that they found the content very useful.

We intensified our digital engagement on the ratification of the ILO Convention 190 by organising a joint digital activism activity-Twitter Rally with Activista Ghana and Young Urban Women's Movement. Focusing on the issue of sexual harassment, young people from all over the country converged on Twitter to unpack the complexities of sexual harassment and make a case for the ratification of ILO C190. During the International Women's Day celebrations, stories on women in the informal sector were shared using series of offline and online activities to heighten awareness on the need for the ratification of Convention 190. The success of this activity was evidenced by the fact that the official hashtag, #RatifyLOC190, trended on Twitter. The needed awareness on the issues and the

attention of stakeholders were drawn to the discussion accordingly.

Overall, our digital drive on content relating to our Climate Resilient Agriculture, Women Unpaid Care Work, Gender-Responsive Public Services and advocacy on the Ratification of the ILO C190 reached 249,269 people. Consequently, these target audience became aware of our messages on these core campaign areas.

Comparatively, the AAG social media pages received high engagement rate within the federation. Our Facebook following increased from 13,200 in 2020 to 14,850 in 2021. On Twitter, our followers increased from 3,805 to 4,080. Our number of followers on Instagram currently stands at 2,819. This organic growth has supported the dissemination of information to our external audience.

Our national level mainstream media campaigns reached over 20 million people across 45 traditional (radio, television and newspapers) and online news platforms.

The focus for the coming year will be to position AAG through the release of position papers to contribute to national discourse and influence policy in our areas of work.

10.0 FINANCE AND EXPENDITURE PERFORMANCE

This section of the annual report presents financial details and analyses of the income and expenditure performance of ActionAid Ghana for the period January to December 2021.

10.1 Income

The trend analysis of income for the past three years indicates that AAG operated with an average annual income of £3,006,000. This amount of annual income point to strong performance in raising income and provides a strong indication that the Ghana Affiliate Programme is financially sustainable and viable within the next couple of years.

Total income (including transfers) realized in 2021 was £2,513,000, which is £229,000 more than the planned income (£2,284,000) representing a 10% positive variance. However, AAG's income decreased by 13% from £2,903,000 in 2020 to £2,513,000 for 2021. This was driven largely by a decline in partnership income resulting from the completion of some major projects. The huge variance between actual and forecast income was because of the deferred income. Total income of £794,000 was deferred to 2022.

Management worked on several projects and received positive feedback from donors. The major ones are; the PPL/AAUK funded Zero Violence Phase 2 Project and the EU funded TAGE Project. The Zero Violence Phase 2 Project was secured for one year with total income of £117,000 while TAGE is for two and a half years with a total budget of €550,000. The implementation of both projects will start from the first quarter of 2022. In 2022, Management will raise more Partnership Income as we strengthen our fundraising efforts in collaboration with the Global Secretariat (GS) and Affiliate countries.

The national level reserves are however low, but within acceptable reserve cover of 3 months. Management will work hard to increase the national reserves to enable us to undertake some strategic decisions like increasing staff remunerations to make us a competitive employer among our peers.

Table3: Income Analysis for the Year 2021

	Actual £'000	Planned £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	%	£'000	% Change
Child Sponsorship	697	756	756	-59	-8%	663	5%
Big Step	365	403	403	-38	-9%	395	-8%
Next Step	47	55	55	-8	-15%	88	-47%
Amico Paese	3	5	5	-2	-40%	5	-40%
Gift and General Funds	8	2	2	6	300%	2	300%

Net Transfers	-40	-40	-40	0	0%	-42	-5%
Partnership – Affiliates	850	453	453	397	88%	1,203	-29%
Partnership Local	567	650	650	-83	-13%	500	13%
Other Income	16	0	16	16		47	-66%
Total	2,513	2,284	2,307	229	10%	2,861	-12%

10.1.1 Individual Giving

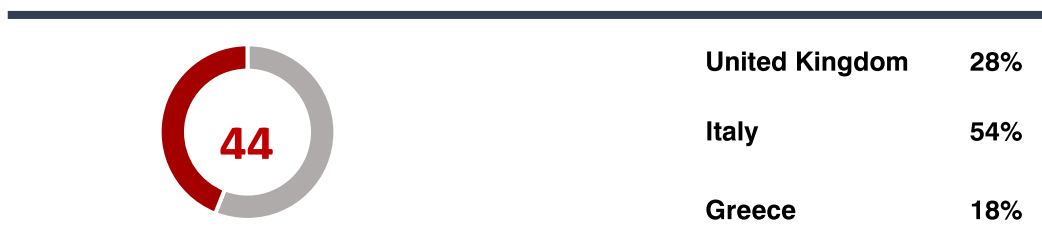


Figure 1:

Individual Giving accounts for 44% of the country's total income mix. This year's income mix is 4% higher than last year's income mix of 40%. Individual Giving income is however, 6% higher than the actual income received in 2020. The increase in the Individual Giving income was due to new links that were allocated to some (Local Regional Programmes) during the year.

Again, from the review of the performance in Individual Giving streams, income from UK and Italy contributed 28% and 54% respectively accounting for 82% of total income. They were followed by Greece, which contributed 18%. From Chart 1 below, Regular Giving from all Funding Affiliates decreased marginally.

Chart 1: Individual Giving Distribution

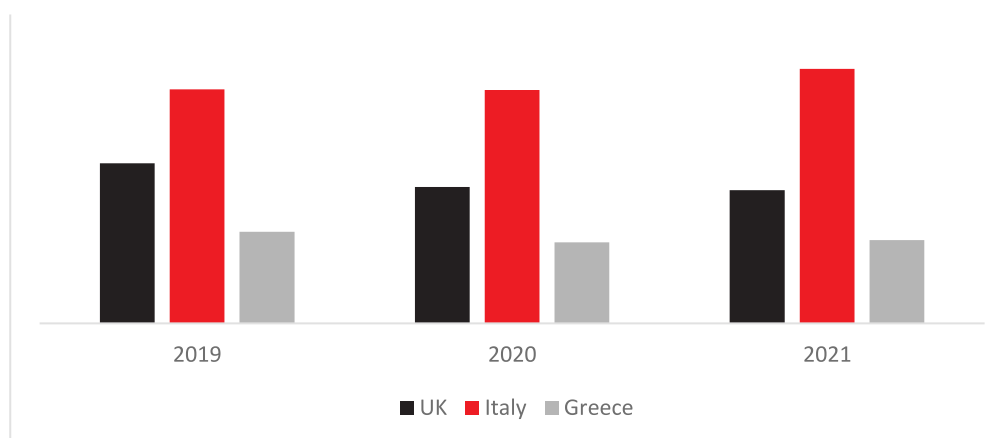


Figure 2:

10.1.2 Partnership Income

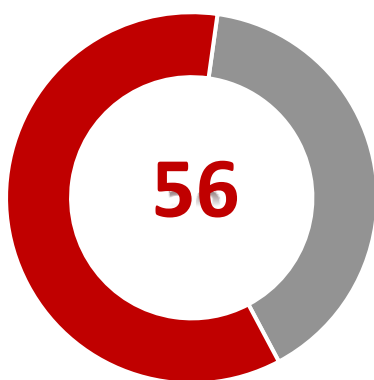


Figure 3

About 56% of our total income in 2021 was in the form of Partnership Income (contracts, donations and grants). The Partnership Income decreased from £1,703.00 in 2020 to £1,318.00 in 2021 (£385.00 decrease). This represents about 23% decrease in Partnership Income during the period. The decrease in this source of income was because of completion of some major donor projects in 2020, coupled with the effects of COVID-19 and its impact on the global economy in general. However, Management is positive about the outlook of Partnership Income as we continue to secure new projects and receive positive feedback from major donors.

Table 4: Partnership Income Sources for the Year 2021

Project Name	Donor	Location	AAI	Local	Total
			£'000	£'000	£'000
Zero Violence Project	CSSF Common Wealth	NR, UE, UW, BA, GA, VR	67		67
Providing Employment Opportunities For Young People	AAUK	NR, UE	145		145
Improving Access to Quality Education in Ghana	AAUK	UE, NR, BA	102		102
Building Livelihoods For Women And Young People	AAUK	ACCRA	12		12
YUW + VWW/ GEF Sub-Grant- YUWP	AA USA	NR, UE, GA VR	109		109
Public Sector Wage Bill	AAI	UW, UE, NR	9		9
People's Postcode Lottery 2020	AAUK	GA	10		10
Donkeys Sanctuary	AAI	BA, VR	54		54
Tax Justice	AAI	UE,UW,NR,BA	26		26

NORAD Modern Slavery Project	AAUK	UW	201		201
Mobilising Civil Society Support African Government Architecture – European Commission	DENMARK	UE		33	33
Northern Ghana Integrated Development Project	EU			446	446
CARE Sub-grant-AGREE (close-out)	CARE/USAID	NR, UE		44	44
Promoting Opportunity for Women Empowerment and Right (Close Out)	NETHERLAND	NR, UE, UW, BA, GA, VR	-39		-39
MCP: Frame grant CIV (DANIDA)/Global Platform	DENMARK	NR, UE, GA, VR		76	76
Stop Witchcraft Allegation (Australian High Commission)	Australian High Commission	NR		23	23
TOTAL			696	622	1,318

10.2 Expenditure

Total expenditure of £2,610 was 4% higher than planned, but 10% lower than the prior year expenditure of £2,912. The additional expenditure was because of funding secured during the period.

Management also took strategic measures to ensure that the outbreak of new variants of the COVID-19 pandemic did not negatively impact on programme implementation.

Table 5: Analysis of Expenditure and Associated Variances by Natural Cost

	Actual (£'000)	Planned (£'000)	Var (£'000)	Utilisation %	Proportion	2020 (£'000)	% Change
Grants and Community Inputs	1,747	1,669	-78	105%	67%	1,878	7%
Staff Cost	586	577	-9	102%	22%	676	13%
Travel and Transport	61	93	32	66%	2%	85	28%
Office and Service	188	160	-28	118%	7%	263	29%
Capital	28	0	71	0%	1%	10	-180%
Total	2,610	2,499	103	104%	100%	2,912	10%

Chart 2: Natural Cost Distribution Comparison Between 2021 and 2020

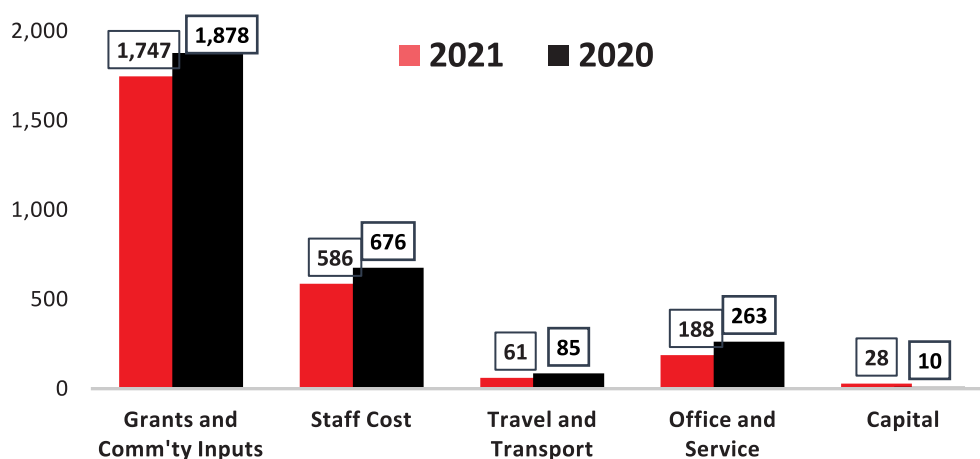


Figure 4

The following can be deduced from the expenditure analyses presented above;

- **Grants and Community inputs** expenditure of £1,747,000 was 67% of total expenditure. This represents a 7% decrease in expenditure compared to last year. From the table above, programme expenditure increased by £78,000 compared to planned. As explained above, this was due to additional funding received during the year for the implementation of programme -

coupled with innovative measures employed by Management to drive this forward.

- **Staff cost** expenditure was £586,000 for the reporting period. This represents 22% of total expenditure for the period, but 13% below prior year expenditure of £676,000. The decrease in staff cost was mainly due to completion of some major projects in addition to some level of staff turnover at the Management level during the year.

- **Travel and Transportation** expenditure was £61,000.00 resulting in utilization of 66%. The reduction in Travel and Transport cost is due to the use of virtual means of implementing some activities due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Travel and Transport costs were 28% lower than that of the prior year.
- **Office and Service Cost** for the reporting period was £188,000.00. This is £28,000.00 more than planned, but £75,000.00 higher than the office and service costs for 2020. The variance is because of the use of office facilities in implementing some programme work through virtual meetings. Office costs such as electricity and internet are used mostly if staff work from the office.

Table 6: Statutory Cost Analysis (2021) (£'000)

	Actual	Forecast	Planned	Variance	Utilisation %	Proportion	2020	% Change
Programme	2,315	2,061	2,040	-275	113%	89%	2,424	4%
Fundraising	34	452	70	36	49%	1%	86	60%
Governance	34	162	37	3	92%	1%	53	36%
Support	227	38	352	125	64%	9%	349	35%
Total	2,610	2,713	2,499	527	104%	100%	2,912	10%

In terms of statutory cost classification, AAG complied with the Global Secretariat's key performance indicators. From the table above, programme cost was 89% of total expenditure, 24 percentage points above Global Secretariat (GS) Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of 65%. This is a demonstration to our donors and supporters that a greater portion of their investment/funds are invested in the lives of people living in poverty.

For three consecutive years, the AAG has managed to operate below the support cost KPI of 15%. The support cost ratio for 2021 was 11% of total expenditure. This achievement was because of Management's commitment to adhere strictly to cost-effective measures instituted during the year.

Fundraising cost, on the other hand, accounted for 1% of total expenditure. Fundraising cost decreased substantially by 60% compared to prior year. We could not implement most of the fundraising activities because of the pandemic. The fundraising team is strategizing on how to effectively carry out its sponsorship activities without risking the lives of staff and community members.

Governance cost decreased by 36% compared to prior year. The reduction in governance cost can be attributed to new meeting strategies adopted. Most of our meetings were held online, which was less costly. Internet bundles were provided to Board members for the virtual meetings.

10.3 Reserve Analysis

Reserves held as at beginning of the year was £1,094,000. At the end of the reporting period, total Net asset decreased to £1,325,000. Out of this figure, £89,000 relates to unspent funds held for donor projects. The remaining

amount of £1,005,000 was Regular Giving reserve which is equivalent to 5.0 months' expenditure. The total reserve held at AAI increased from £934,000 to £1,049,000

10.4 Balance Sheet Analysis

Property Plants and Equipment value is £320,000. There was addition of two motor vehicles costing £68,000. There was no disposal of any assets with depreciable value during the year under review. Debtors' balances at the end of the reporting period was £1,178,000 Also

included in the debtors' amount is AAI debt of £1,049. The remaining amounts are prepayment of £12,000 and other debt of £86,000 (mainly partners' grant yet to be retired). At the end of the period, accrued income amounted to £22,000.

10.5 Exchange Rate Movements

Planned exchange rate for the reporting period was £1.00 to GH¢6.70. Average exchange rate for the year was £1.00 to

GHS7.37. The period exchange rate deviation from the plan was 10%.

Table 7: Exchange Rate Movements

Period	£	GH¢
Rate at 1st January, 2021	1	8.03
Planned rate for 2021	1	7.49
Average rate for 2021	1	8.24
Rate at 31 st December, 2021	1	8.78
Planned rate versus Average rate variance	10%	
Variance between opening and closing rates	9%	

10.6 Organisational Risk Management

The year 2021 started on a slow pace due to the continued uncertainties created by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the internal audit activities progressed steadily as new ways of working were adopted. These include desk reviews and virtual meetings with fewer travels.

Between January and December, 2021, a total of 10 audits out of 12 planned

audits were completed. The key issues raised and being addressed are as follows:

- Accelerating implementation of programmes and projects to deal with the low budget utilization rates.
- Examining working conditions and other motivations to reduce staff turnover.

- Fundraising to fulfil cost share (co-financing) contributions for projects.
- Strengthening internal controls and prudent utilisation of financial resources.
- Working on the revision of local policies such as the HRPPM, LFPPM, Partnership Framework,

Anti-Modern Slavery, and Fraud Policy.

Other major tasks undertaken were; completion of 2020 Assurance Reporting to GS, revised Risk Register to incorporate emerging risks including COVID-19 pandemic and reviewed 16 partners MOUs to incorporate SHEA & Safeguarding policies as part of AAI assurance compliance requirements.

10.7 Summary of Income and Expenditure Streams

WHERE YOUR FUND GOES

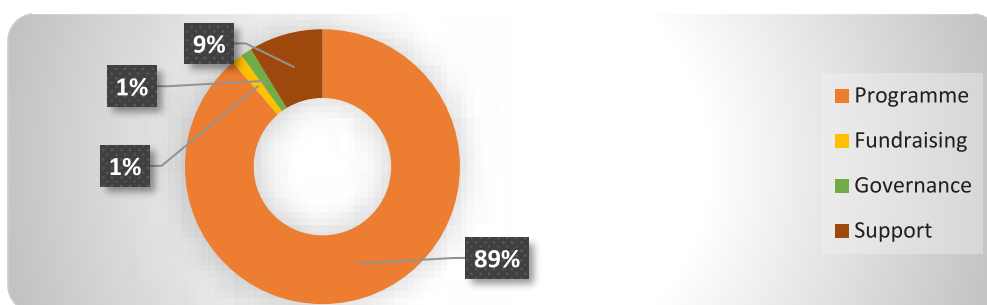


Figure 5:

HOW OUR WORK IS FUNDED

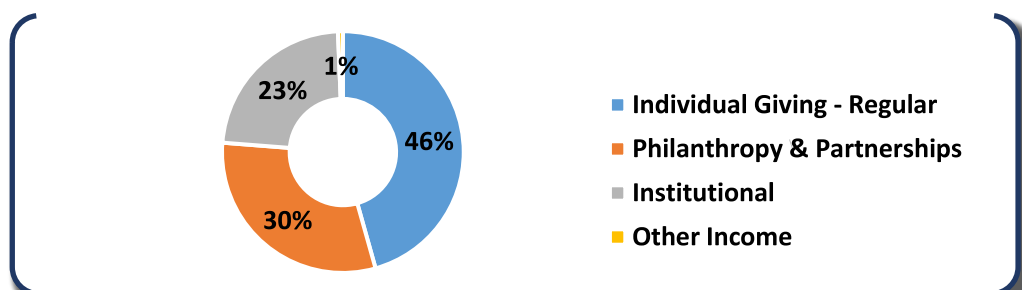


Figure 7:

HOW THE FUNDS WERE UTILIZED

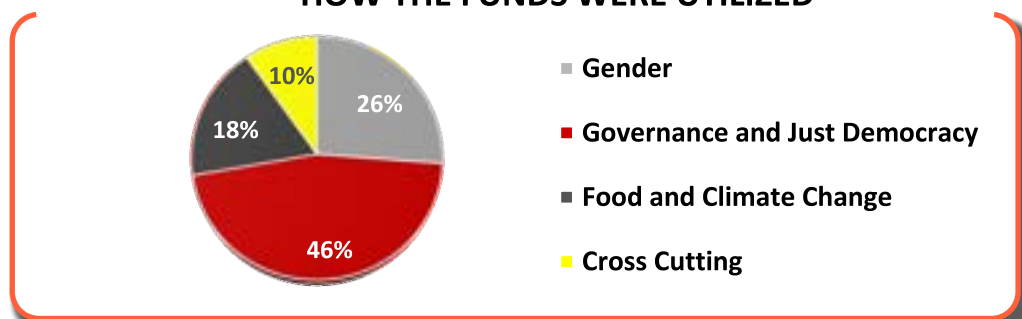


Figure 7 :

11.0 HUMAN RESOURCE AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (HROE)

AAG's CSP VI Strategic Enabler Four sets out the objectives being pursued in terms of our human resource and organisation effectiveness aspirations. Strategic actions are designed and implemented to motivate staff towards the achievement of our vision. As routinely done, we embarked on staff recruitment to fill critical vacancies, deepened the awareness of staff on our feminist leadership principles, Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse (SHEA) and Safeguarding. The development of AAG's Human Resource Management Information System

(HRMIS) was also completed. Staff were trained on personnel management, specifically processing of leave of absence resumed online.

One other key task in 2021 was the SHEA and Safeguarding mapping exercise which was commissioned by the Global Team to assess the country programme's commitment towards embedding the policies and principles in its operations. The process has been carried into 2022 and will lead to the development of a SHEA and Safeguarding Strategy for AAG.

11.1 Staffing Situation for the Year

The staffing goal of AAG is to achieve a gender parity ratio of 50:50. However, AAG began 2021 with 54 staff, comprising 34 males and 20 females. This translates into a gender parity ratio of 63:37. Amidst a balancing situation of exits and recruitments, the staff numbers increased marginally to 55 comprising 35 males and 20 females, by mid-year.

By the close of the year, the staff strength was 50 comprising 32 males and 18 females. The gender parity ratio therefore changed to 64:36. Management remained committed to offering job opportunities to qualified females during recruitments to close the gender parity gap. The details on new joiners, promotions and exits is presented below.

11.1.1 Recruitments During the Year

The first-half of the year witnessed six (6) new joiners (4 males and 2 females) recruited for the Combatting Modern Slavery Project (CMSP), Young Urban Women Project, and Programme Support Officers (PSO) for the Northern and Upper West Regions. The second-half saw three (3) new joiners (2 males and 1 female) recruited to fill the vacant positions of Communication and Public Relations Manager and M&E Officers for NGIDP. Thus, a total of nine (9) new joiners (6 males and 3 females) came on board in 2021.

Also, three (3) staff (2 males and 1 female) after undergoing competitive process were elevated and appointed as Head of Finance, NRP Accountant and UWRP Manager.

Following the exit of some key Country Leadership Team (CLT) members, AAG developed a transitional plan and appointed an interim Country Director to provide leadership and supervise the implementation of the transitional plan.

11.2 Staff Health and Safety

(i) COVID-19 Update - Recorded Cases

ActionAid Ghana recorded eight (8) cases of COVID-19 involving 4 males and 4 females. The affected staff were offered the required support to receive treatment and resumed duty after

recovery. The affected offices were thus temporarily closed for disinfection while staff worked from home. Normal work resumed after the disinfection exercise under intensified enforcement of the safety protocols.

(ii) Observance of COVID-19 Safety Protocols, Vaccination and Working Arrangements

The Communication and Public Relations Manager regularly shared updates on Ghana's COVID-19 situation. Staff who felt exposed to the virus or noticed any manifestations of the COVID-19 symptoms informed their supervisors, stayed away from office and sought immediate medical attention. AAG continued to provide handwashing stations and automatic sanitizers at vantage points in all the offices for use by staff while at work. Nose masks were also provided to participants during face-to-face meetings.

The Communication and Public Relations Manager also regularly shared

information with staff on the locations they could get the COVID-19 vaccination and staff were encouraged not to fear any side effects from taking the jab. By the close of the year, all staff had taken the two jabs and no untoward incidents were recorded.

ActionAid Ghana offices across the country remained in full operation from Mondays to Fridays. But in line with section 3.8.2 of AAG's HRPPM and the COVID-19 protocols, staff were given the opportunity to periodically opt for the flexibility of working from home when the need arose.

(iii) SHEA and Safeguarding

No Sexual Harassment Exploitation Abuse and Safeguarding case was recorded during the year under review.

12.0 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

- Poor internet access, especially in some districts and in rural communities, is inhibiting the quest to adopt virtual or online means for engagements and trainings, hence making face-to-face meetings the viable option.
- Advocacy for policy reform by apolitical youth movements yields results slowly. These groups tend to feel that the politically aligned groups tend to achieve their demands more quickly. This is breeding some frustration among AAG sponsored movements. AAG has reviewed its HRBA manual to help retrain and retool movement building to foster broader alliances or mass movements in order to gain much influence and cutting-edge advocacy.
- Inadequate funding is a major issue hampering the high demand for livelihood support and skills training by women and youth groups in Ghana. AAG is reviewing its fundraising strategy to attract more funding opportunities from the private sector, individual philanthropists and benevolent institutions.
- Child Sponsorship has been going on for a while in AAG. However, community members are increasingly expressing different expectations. This makes it difficult to collect stories in a timely manner from some sponsored children. The organization has countered this by visiting all the sponsored children and interacting with them and their families to reiterate the importance of accurate and regular reporting.
- Awareness raising on issues of Modern Slavery is sometimes misconstrued as denying children an opportunity to learn livelihood skills. This is because the target beneficiaries (including community leaders and smallholder women farmers) perceive child labour and other forms of modern slavery as normal child training activities. Such training has a longstanding history and border on the culture and traditions of the people. Hence, some of these target audiences do not see the need to engage on it. This situation therefore calls for tact and diplomacy in introducing the concept to avoid possible backlash.

13.0 REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

In accordance with the provisions of ActionAid's Accountability, Learning and Planning System (ALPS), Participatory Review and Reflection Processes (PRRPs) were regularly undertaken with

relevant stakeholders including partners, governmental collaborators, community-level rights-holder groups and social movements. The key lessons documented during the year under review are as follows:

:

- The agriculture development system spearheaded by government over the years, particularly the over promotion of inorganic chemical inputs under the PFJ programme, has largely not been responsive to climate change threats and risks. More so, the difficulties farmers experienced in 2021 in accessing fertilizer re-enforced the need for more reflections. The 2021 fertilizer crisis offers grounds for critical reflection and paradigm shift towards the promotion of agro ecological options such as the use of compost as has been advocated by AAG.
- Addressing sexual harassment in the world of work and other forms of gender-based violence is key for young women's access to decent work. Stakeholders have confirmed increased reporting of violence and cases of harassment of young women in informal workspaces due to AAG's campaign on the issue. As a result, AAG and partners will increasingly demand the ratification of ILO Convention 190 which is aimed at enhancing policies that ensure safer workspaces for women and vulnerable groups.
- Investment in education infrastructure at pre-tertiary level is still inadequate. This poses a threat to quality public education. Communities are concerned about the inadequate government investment in some public services such as education infrastructure at the Kindergarten level, especially in rural communities amidst high enrolment figures. As such, AAG will demand increased investment or budgetary allocation to the education sector.
- The incidence of teenage pregnancy is becoming an alarming phenomenon in Ghana. This exacerbated during the period schools were closed for almost a year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within the period, we observed incidences of stigmatisation and misconceptions to the effect that the re-entry policy for teenage mothers rather serves as incentive for teenage pregnancy. AAG and its partners will revise their approach and intensify demand for urgent multi-stakeholder actions to address the situation in order to secure the future of young girls.
- With the increasing trend of unemployment in Ghana, livelihood and vocational skills training has the potential of creating employment opportunities for the youth, especially the vulnerable and excluded. AAG will strengthen and improve targeting of the youth with skills training. So far, some beneficiaries of AAG skills programmes have established business entities and transferred skills by engaging/employing other youths in their communities.

- Using artistic activism (Drama) to educate people has been found to be effective and innovative means of getting people's attention and support to change behaviors and demand policy reform.
- The Village Savings and Loans Associations concept has become an effective tool that fosters group cohesion and contributes immensely to group sustainability after the project lifespan. This was very evident during monitoring visits to these groups after the project.

14.0 CONCLUSION

The year 2021 was largely a fulfilling one as lives began bouncing back to normalcy from the wrecking effects of COVID-19. The contributions made by AAG towards improving the lives of vulnerable women and young people was significant. It also generated critical evidence from research activities to influence the policies and legal systems.

AAG will intensify its social movement and coalition building to pursue national advocacy actions as well as join global campaigns. The advocacies will be geared towards influencing national and international public and private funding streams to shift from climate-harming agribusiness investments to gender-responsive and climate-resilient agro ecological farming systems. Government will also be held

accountable on its climate mitigation and adaption pledges enshrined in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), so as to contribute to the green economy objective.

The momentum will also be sustained on working with the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Tax Justice Coalition (TJC) and Access to Justice Coalition to promote decent work, violence-free working environments, and tax justice campaigns. The campaigns will be consciously linked to international events such as International Women's Day, Global Action Week for Education (GAWE), the International Youth Days, International Rural Women's Day, and 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence.

Photo Gallery



Women group engaged in farming activities



AAG commission congenial model infrastructure for Sagnarigu Girl's Model Basic School





Young Urban Women presenting a petition on ratification of International Labour Convention 190 to the Upper East regional minister



Commissioning of a 6- seater bio- digester toilet facility for Gnani alleged witches camp



Wakii communities members excited about the newly commissioned water facility





act!onaid

Oko Kotey Link, East Legon.
P. O. Box AN 19083,
Accra-North. Ghana
Tel: +233 (0) 302544714/5
Fax: +233 (0) 302764930

 aaghana@actionaid.org
 ghana.actionaid.org
    [actionaidghana](https://www.youtube.com/actionaidghana)

<https://ghana.actionaid.org/>