Social Appraisal of Ghana’s Poverty Reduction Efforts and Key Development Sectors: with a look at Civil Society Role

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Executive Summary

The current democratic stage in which Ghana has entered along with its development partners based on the new aid architecture suggests the need for a stronger more vibrant civil society engagement with the state. Ghana has been praised for significant strides towards macroeconomic stability, achieving some growth targets, poverty reduction and setting in place democratic systems of governance. The counterbalance has also been the weaknesses within the state in respect to service delivery, access to information, efficiency, transparency, openness to civil society and the management of public resources (CDD, 2009); weaknesses have also included the lack and ability of state structures to ensure transparent and accountable mechanisms for shared/targeted resources in reducing inequity particularly across the poverty zones, growing spatial, and continued income and horizontal inequities, lack of prioritisation and targeting in favour of the poor; weak consultative processes which engage the citizenry in order to maximize people’s participation and voice (CDD, 2009; ODI, 2007; Mo Ibrahim’s Participation and Human Rights Index, 2009).

Research in Ghana also suggests that social capital and patronage politics continue to influence the weak positioning and opportunities for the poor in current day Ghana (Casely-Hayford, 2009). Their linkages to people in power and influence is beginning to have repercussions on the empowerment of youth and children, access to quality services, perceived equity and the priority setting of development at district, regional and national levels.

While the modern state continues to evolve, Ghana’s traditional socio-economic structures and systems of kinship, economics, trade and politics continue to shape the social and economic fabric, functioning and positioning of today’s Ghana. These traditional systems have in turn resulted in social, economic, and political systems which have deep implications for the socio-cultural and gender transformation so needed for holistic development. Although the Ghanaian traditional systems encompass diverse social organisations, they remain influential particularly at community and district levels of governance with varied impact at the regional and national levels.

The civil society movement is characterised by the traditional and modern structures of organisation in Ghana. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) attempt to bridge the divide between these modern and traditional systems, particularly at the district and regional levels. As community resource ownership and management have often been in the hands of traditional leaders/custodians, civil society is helping the poor recognise their right to speak out in these often uncontested arenas of decision-making. The same process is happening at the family level where traditional beliefs, which in some cases promote negative cultural practices, disempower women and girls. Organisations that are focused on uprooting negative socio-cultural practices and empowering women and men to promote gender equity within the family and society at large continue to challenge such practices.

As Ghana’s new aid policy positions the state and the Ministry of Finance in particular, as the key conduit for aid flows to Ghana, the question of the State’s openness to dialogue, scrutiny
and monitoring by non-state actors, including donors, begins to emerge. Ghana’s civil society movement has been reinventing itself over the last ten years particularly as a result of new approaches and donor funding including rights based advocacy, equity platforms and the need for greater voice from the grassroots to ensure social accountability mechanisms are firmly embedded in processes of state control and the just distribution of resources.

1.0 Introduction

This appraisal reviews the social dimensions of the change processes taking place from a poverty, social equity and a civil society perspective. Some of the questions addressed in the appraisal include:

- How effective has the state been at the delivery of services and opening up to CSO scrutiny of the processes?
- How effective have the civil society groups themselves been at working with the State to hold them to account and provide support in improving their delivery of the services?
- Finally, what entry points exist for further support to CSOs and what type of funding support/ enabling environment is needed to make this happen?

This appraisal therefore takes a layered approach:

- It presents the current state of play across several poverty, gender equity and social service arenas… attempting to analyse in each section what remains to be done and where the “soft spots” are in relation to the CSOs’ interface with the State along with analysis on the ways CSOs make a difference;
- Secondary, it analyses the degree of voice and participation that grassroots organisations have had and the space for engagement of CSO in the past (upwards); it also attempts to look at the response of government to this engagement process.
- Finally, the analysis turns to the CSO arena itself, mapping out where the value added of CSOs work has been in the past and where future support may make a difference.

Key Entry Points and Opportunities:

In most societies change is brought about not only through top down legislative and governance mechanisms working better but also through grassroots empowerment processes which help to steer and ensure the state can interpret the direction, priorities and needs of the people. In emergent democracies, change can be brought about in many ways: Through systematic and collective action which informs the state of a particular grievance of an interest group (e.g. disability policy or domestic violence policy). It can also be brought about through social networking within a particular sector, location or constituency presenting the evidence or demonstrating that something that is working is worth investing in (e.g. complementary education policy for out of school children) or the need for something to work better.

Whichever the approach to change taken, it involves several actors, often including the state, civil society, traditional leaders, academia and the private sector. Several factors have begun to strengthen the civil society sector in Ghana to engage with these actors in order to bring about change. Socio-cultural change processes, social organisations, development programming, youth empowerment, education, media and support to the
CSOs mobilising people at the grassroots have all helped to strengthen advocacy and accountability mechanisms.

The entry points for strengthening change processes in Ghana vary depending on the where one is positioned. At the national level, there appears to be a limited degree of synergy between Parliament, media and the State along with stronger nationally based research and advocacy groups learning from the grassroots about their needs. Change is also being supported at the national level within a particular sector through the Ghana Poverty Reduction Fund (GPRS) processes, multi donor budgetary support (MDBS) and openings within the sectors leveraged by different development partners (e.g. sector performance reviews). From the community and district level, the change process appears to be more about “who one knows” and working closely with the political agents such as the MPs, traditional leaderships and district chief executives (DCEs) for a particular district to help bring about and invest in the change process with CSOs (RAVI experience), along with enhanced CSO linkages to the District Assemblies.

The CSO movement in Ghana is still at a nascent stage where effects of the engagement process are only beginning to take shape and produce outcomes. The question is still how effective and what outcomes are arising from this engagement and how to effect better measurements and monitoring to learn from best practice of the processes. Based on the limited evidence available, the current entry points appear to be both CSO driven/generated and to a lesser extent state facilitated. Some examples of CSO entry points with the State include:

- Policy dialogue, social networking and advocacy with key actors
- Performance monitoring and evaluation at all levels of the system from the bottom up or top down (including community based/citizen score cards, monitoring key government programs and CSO budget tracking);
- Participation in the budget process and engaging with parliamentary sub committees on thematic issues;
- Technical support for demonstrating programming and the advocacy of certain methodologies to be adopted by the State to improve efficiency;
- Representation coalitions which develop platforms for engagement or have a seat at existing meetings and within sector or national structures (e.g. GPRS, MDBS working groups, sector wide approach (SWAP) meetings within the sector etc).

The focus on changing systems of state governance and accountability will not drive change alone. There is a need to address social institutional and power inequities which challenge and help to stimulate higher degrees of human development, social justice and well being. Socio-cultural institutions at the grassroots and community levels have to be considered; also how institutions enable and disable people from having voice in their communities, particularly given the issues of extractive industries and the evidence suggesting a rise in horizontal and socio-economic inequity in regions and areas where social services are not delivered in a fair manner.
2.0 Poverty, Social Equity and Dynamics within the Ghanaian Context

The following section reviews the dimensions of poverty and social inequities which currently characterise Ghanaian Society. These include the spatial inequity between the north and south, the growing indices of rural urban divide, income inequity among different occupational groups and between men and women, social as well as gender inequities. The section reveals that poverty figures often obscure differentiation and vulnerability within households including the intergenerational inequities caused by poverty impacting on Ghana’s youth and child populations along with the varied coping mechanisms used at household levels.

Ghana ranks 142 out of 179 on the UNDP’s Human Development Index (HDR, 2008). Ghana is also one of two countries in sub Saharan West Africa ranked as “medium” in terms of its human development indicators. The latest Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 5, 2006) indicates significant declines in the percentage of the population living in poverty moving from 39.5% in 1998 to 28.5% in 2007 with a population of 23.5 million. Although the same trends cannot be stated for those living in extreme poverty, where much less of a shift was realised.

There has also been positive movement towards attaining MDG 2 in terms of universal primary education. Net enrolment rates, have increased from 59.1% (2005) to 83.4% in 2008 with gender parity close to achievement at 99% on a national level. Preliminary results on 2008 Demographic Health Survey (DHS) show impressive decreases in under-5 mortality from 80 to 50 live births out of 1000 over the five year span which demonstrates some progress overall. There is however extremely high and stagnating maternal mortality.

Unfortunately key child health indices continue to be of concern with under-5 stunting at 22% in 2008 nationally, along with high rates of maternal mortality (5%). Ghana continues to be ranked as a “low income food deficit country” with large rural urban and inter regional disparities in poverty levels, food insecurity and access to basic services. There are recent signs of deepening poverty among food crop farmers and slum dwellers according to analysis by the WFP. In the three northern regions and some coastal areas, there continues to be persistent food insecurity and poor progress towards MDGs on all fronts.

Ghana’s new aid architecture spawned on by the Paris Declaration and triple AAA mandates have placed government firmly as the primary driver of change and aid delivery. Increasing flows of budget support have meant that governance structures at all levels have become progressively important to donor agencies monitoring and ensuring performance in relation to their own tax payers but also to the Ghanaian people who, unaware of the shifts in development assistance, are waiting to see the results in their own lives, families and communities.

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2 UNICEF, Global data base on child malnutrition (June 2008); Ghana Demographic Health Survey, 2008.
5 Accra Agenda for Aid Effectiveness.
2.1 Poverty Trends and the Deepening of Poverty in Ghana

Over the last two decades, Ghana is one of the few Sub Saharan African countries which have made significant progress in reducing the incidence of poverty. According to the Ghana Statistical Services poverty trend studies, the incidence of poverty fell from 51.7% in 1991/92 to 39.5% in 1998/99 and further to 28.5% in 2005/06. Studies project that Ghana will achieve the first of the MDGs of halving poverty by 2015, if the economy sustains high enough growth (ADF, 2008). While the proportion of the poor has declined in rural areas, from 64% in 1991/92 to 39% in 2005/06, poverty remains a rural phenomenon since over 85% of the population living below the poverty line, is from rural areas; the proportion of the poor is also inequitably distributed among different occupational groupings, women and the three northern savannah regions along with a few other regions of the country (Central and Volta) (GLSS 5, 2007).

The incidence of poverty among the population indicated that food crop farmers (46%) are considered poor compared to people engaged in other economic activities. Women make up a high proportion of food crop farmers (70%) according to Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) studies and are more vulnerable to poverty since they are engaged in food crop activities (Casely-Hayford, 2004). The ADF study on the gender profile of women indicated that women experience poverty in non poor households due to systematic inequalities. “In Ghana women have limited access to critical resources such as land, labour, and credit, ownership of land, farm implements and markets to improve their income and reduce poverty” (p4., ADF, 2008). The ADF study argues that despite a reduction of poverty among female headed households over the last ten years, this should not be considered as a reduction of poverty among all women.

The Participatory Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment (PPVA, 2009), a more qualitative assessment than the GLSS, focuses on the poverty from a community perspective suggesting that households experience different trajectories of poverty. Some are poor in absolute terms often threatened with starvation on a daily basis; others are “wading in and out of poverty” but unable to build up significant asset holdings. The study found that only a few people are seen as flourishing. The study found that the same households can suffer from different levels of well being especially if there are disabled or aged members in the family. The study also found that child poverty manifested itself in several ways including hunger, child neglect, irregular or non attendance of children at school and child labour in the form of maid servants at the household level and farm workers. Adults perceived children as “property” and as a potential social/farm labour or as insurance in old age.

The PPVA found that there are several factors driving poverty which are interlinked including increasing discordant climate change with extremes of drought, flooding and windstorms resulting in a single annual harvest of subsistence crops as against the past with at least two harvests and farming seasons per year. The PPVA found that there are some enabling factors which have helped northern households transition up the wellbeing ladder including: migration and migrant remittances, secondary education and skills training, unfettered rights and access to land, financial capital, diversified livelihoods and access to cattle and other animals. The PPVA also revealed that traditional coping mechanisms such as the family are also breaking down due to the inability of family members to share and claim support from their kin/extended family.
2.2 Regional and Spatial Disparities and Inequalities

The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003-5) identified regional inequality as a key aspect of poverty, but apart from a bias of public expenditure in certain categories (feeder roads, irrigation) was unable to fully address the issue of regional inequality within that round. Regional inequality remains significant across Ghana with an average per capita income in the northern regions of 2-4 times lower than elsewhere in Ghana, and, while inter-regional income inequality increased in the 1990s and has continued. The incidence of poverty fell a little in the north (and the average depth of poverty increased), while it fell moderately in many parts of the south. Part of the reason has been the dependency of northerners on ‘food crop farming’, an occupation which did not benefit from the liberalised economy of the 1980s and 1990s. There have been disproportionately few investment projects in the northern regions in the early part of this decade, confirming the likelihood that there will be little growth-induced reduction of north-south inequality or poverty in the north (World Development Report Series, 2007)\(^6\).

Human development (educational and health) inequality is also substantial; the northern regions remain massively disadvantaged in terms of medical services, education and health provision. They account for half of Ghana’s population living under the poverty line.\(^7\) With regard to education, primary gross enrolment is 35% lower in the north than in the Greater Accra Region with girls’ enrolment behind boys at all levels particularly upper primary, junior secondary and senior secondary.\(^8\) Infant and maternal mortality rates, under-5 stunting and poverty rates are all considerably higher across the three northern regions than the national average with maternal mortality rates increasing.\(^9\)

The northern regions are also the areas most prone to adverse weather conditions, and have been disproportionately affected by food prices\(^10\). In 2008, WFP found that food price increases ranged from 71% to 114% for all the major commodities with significant increases in the staple foods such as pulses and cereals in the food deficit northern regions. There are also other forms of spatial inequality including the rural urban divide with the urban dweller having better access to services particularly education and health care; a generally higher standard of living compared to families in the rural areas. The outcomes of this inequality often result in migration patterns from north to south and from rural to urban areas of the country.

2.3 Income and Class Inequalities

The Mo Ibrahim’s index indicates that there has been growing inequality in relation to poverty based on income distribution. The GLSS 5 indicated a growing rise in inequality particularly since 1998/99 (GLSS 1) with the gini index for Ghana increasing from 0.353 in 1991 to 0.394 in 2005/6. Without this increase in inequality the poverty rate would have fallen by 4.3% points which would mean that MDG1 would have been achieved (DFID Ghana, 2009)\(^11\). Income inequality is considered to be in a middle range in comparison to other West African countries which may change with oil revenues (ibid).

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\(^6\) Shepard, A. Gyimah Boadi, with Gariba, S. et al. (2006) Bridging the North South Divide, World Development Report working papers on Equity and Development

\(^7\) UNICEF: Ghana at a glance, 2009


\(^11\) DfID Ghana (2009) “Inequality in Ghana: How we might respond”
Research under the RECOUP project in Ghana also indicates a growing level of class inequality particularly within the urban seating with access to social services being firmly manipulated by the higher classes within urban Ghana due to social capital. Studies by AfC Ghana suggest that youth in urban Ghana among the higher income classes are able to access better quality education particularly at senior and tertiary levels, compared to the lower socio-economic classes. RECOUP studies on gender, youth and citizenship in Ghana also indicate growing structural inequalities which are limiting the outcomes of education in Ghana to the higher socio-economic classes and restricting access for the rural youth who obtain substandard education quality and opportunity (Casely-Hayford et al, 2009).

2.4 Horizontal Inequalities
Horizontal inequalities are inequalities between socio-cultural groups such as ethnic, religious, and social class who experience differences in relation to resource access etc; they are multidimensional in nature, involving economic, social and political dimensions. Langer, Mustapha and Stewart, 2007; Tsikata and Seini, (2004) argue that intra and inter-ethnic conflicts in Ghana arise due to the Government’s inability to tackle forms of horizontal inequality in the midst of socio-economic inequality. These studies suggest that some ethnic groups have felt “marginalised and treated as second class citizens by the traditional and modern political administration” over time, as evidenced in the Konkomba or Bawku disputes. It highlights the very real danger of not addressing inequalities between different groups (DFID Inequality paper, 2009).

2.5 Children and Youth: Intergenerational Inequality
Despite evidence within the poverty literature of progress in halving the poverty trends, human development reporting in Ghana suggests that there are still major hurdles in relation to addressing Ghana’s key human development indicators particularly in relation to children, youth, women and the vulnerable. Poverty affects different age groups differently due to their vulnerability, and the growing evidence that social institutions such as the family no longer protect children, alongside the challenge of poverty and ensuring the child’s welfare (UNICEF, 2006). The following section briefly reviews the key indicators for children, youth and women including child welfare trends (e.g. infant and under-5 mortality rates, child labour trends).

Over 60% of the Ghanaian population is considered to be children and youth (GLSS 5). Children under 15 account for about 40% of the population while aged persons over 65 form 4.7%. The dependency ratio is has improved from 82 (GLSS 5) compared to 96 at the time of the GLSS 4 survey. The proportion of children in rural areas is significantly higher than in Accra (30.7%) and other urban areas (36.4%). The GLSS 5 survey also indicates that 30% of all households in Ghana are headed by single parents with over a quarter of these households living with their mothers. Studies also suggest that an increasing number of children are living with HIV/AIDS and are orphans (250,000).

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Child health and poverty indicators are particularly worrisome. According to the UNICEF MICS\textsuperscript{15} study (2006) the infant mortality rate in Ghana is 71 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality rates are 111 deaths per 1,000 live births. There is a higher under-5 mortality rate for male children (131 per 1,000) compared to females (89 per 1,000). Mortality among rural under-5 children is also higher (72) compared to urban children (68). In terms of nutritional status: 18\% are underweight and 3\% of children are severely underweight in Ghana although this varies widely when looking at the regional figures (children in the Upper East and northern regions are more underweight, stunted and wasted. Most astounding is that 22\% of Ghanaian Children are stunted and 5\% are wasted with very little change in these indicators over the last five years. Only 64\% of children (12 to 23 months) in Ghana are fully immunised.

Increasingly the child labour problem is being documented. Estimates by UNICEF MICS suggest approximately 34\% of children between 5-14 years of age are engaged in harmful practices of child labour; more than 39\% of children between 5-11 years of age, but only 22\% between the ages of 12 to 14. 48\% of children in the poorest quintiles are engaged in child labour practices.

The MICS study also revealed a high rate of violence against children within the home; studies also suggest that this is also a common practice in the schools and other institutions. 89\% of children between 2-14 were subjected to some form of psychological and/or physical punishment. 10\% were subjected to severe physical punishment and 69\% to minor punishment. Qualitative studies have flourished on the issues of abuse of children within the school system, an institution which one often associates with the protection of children. Studies have suggested high degrees of physical, sexual and psychological abuse particularly in rural areas of Ghana where supervision is lacking and communities continue to exist in a “culture of silence” (Vivian, F /Mauread Dunne work).

Despite these challenges there are very few platforms for children and families themselves to speak out about their situation. There is only one national coalition on the Rights of the Child (Ghana NGO coalition on the Rights of the Child) which has some regional branches but has not been as visible. The RAVI fund did not have any particular focus on children and the vulnerable although some of the selected grantees work on children’s and women’s issues. The civil society movement is not well placed to deal with the problems of vulnerability within the child and youth population partly as a result of the emphasis on gender mainstreaming at the neglect of broader more encompassing analysis on the vulnerable, including children, youth and disabled.

**Ghana’s Youth –**

A growing issue for the Ghanaian government along with several other African Governments is the rising incidence of youth disaffection particularly when expectations from the social system, education and employment are not realised (Casely-Hayford et al, 2009; IDEG, 2008)\textsuperscript{16}. Studies of growing inequality also suggest that when increasing socio-economic inequality is mixed with the marginalisation of political voice this can lead to violence and demonstrations (DFID Inequality Paper, 2009).

\textsuperscript{15} Multi indicator cluster study (UNICEF, 2006)

\textsuperscript{16} The Education Outcomes Gap: youth dislocation and disaffection in northern Ghana.
Recent GLSS 5 studies found that 19.2% of the population is between the ages of 15 to 24 years of age meaning that close to 60% of the population is considered youth and children (GLSS 5). The GLSS 5 survey reveals that in Ghana, the mean age at first marriage is 22.5 years with females marrying about four years earlier than their male counterparts. Age at first marriage varies by locality in the rural areas, the mean age at first marriage is 23.8 years compared to 24.5 years in the urban areas. The survey results show that females in both the rural and urban areas marry earlier (20.9 years for rural and 21.4 years for urban) than their male counterparts (24.9 years for rural and 26.1 years for urban).

Migration patterns in Ghana also indicate that it is a growing social change factor characterising urban and rural Ghana with a larger percentage of the productive youth migrating from smaller cities and rural areas to find work leaving behind an increasingly dependent population. A little over half (52%) of the population aged 7 years and older in Ghana are highly mobile. Return migrants constitute 33 percent while in-migrants form 19 percent. The distribution of migrants by age group shows that mobility of persons tends to increase with age up to age 25-29 and tapers off with increasing age. Young adults, aged 25 to 29 constitute the largest proportion of migrants. Over four-fifth (89%) of migrants in Accra are from other urban areas. The main impetus for migration in Ghana is socio-economic and family considerations.

UNICEF/MICS studies found that 7% of young women and 5% of young men had sex before the age of 15. Studies have found a high level of knowledge in relation to HIV/AIDS but very little testing among the youth population with 9% of men and 14% of women having been actually tested for HIV. Health experts in the sector suggest that despite the low prevalence rate (1.7%) within Ghana, the low level of testing within the population may not have fully revealed the current rates of HIV/AIDS and the pandemic status.

**Youth Unemployment**

Studies in Ghana suggest that 230,000 youth join the nation’s labour force every year with only 2% of them finding formal employment. Some of the remaining youth find work in the informal sector usually as traders or small scale business people, the vast majority enter the labour market as apprentices to informal workers and trades people or remain unemployed (GLSS 5, 2009; AIF 2009; IDEG 2005). Studies by Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) and Institute for Statistical and Social and Economic Research (ISSER) suggest that there are gross underestimations of the rate of youth unemployment with some figures at 16.5% which underestimate the under-employment of youth across many districts of the country.

Another major contributor to the youth unemployment and under-employment is the inability of the formal and informal economy to absorb the majority of youth who graduate from Junior Secondary School and are unable to continue to SSS or other secondary institutions. These youth are usually between 15 to 20 years of age and form an increasing group of unemployed youth (AIF, 2009). Some of the factors which contribute to the consistent youth unemployment problem include:

- Poor quality education and literacy outcomes among youth who graduate from the JSS;

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Lack of skills among the youth who end their educational careers at JSS (nine years of schooling);
The negative attitudes of youth towards agriculture;
Failure of the economy to expand at the pace needed to absorb graduates from JSS and beyond;
Discrimination of youth in the labour market since experienced workers are preferred.

Very little policy support has been provided for youth in Ghana due to the cross cutting nature of the issue and lack of government commitment. There have been several attempts to develop a youth policy for Ghana but this has not been realised partly due to lack of sustained pressure by CSOs working on youth issues. Issues of youth also cut across several ministries including education, social welfare and agriculture etc. Much more work could be done to ensure that youth have a voice and are able to position themselves as key stakeholders in Ghana’s development agenda.

3.0 Women’s Rights and Gender Equality

“Gender inequality continues to undermine local and national efforts for improving living conditions, reducing poverty and enhancing national development in Ghana, even though gender discussions entered the national development discourse right from independence. These discussions have received slow programming and low levels of programming support. Over the years the Ghanaian national government has ratified conventions, created structures and extended support to gender work. However progress has been slow. (ADF, 2008).”

Gender Mainstreaming and Policy Processes

There has been some government commitment towards gender mainstreaming in the appointment of gender officers across all sector ministries, gender working groups to monitor MDBS performance along with work by the Parliamentary sub-committee on women and children, but major constraints still appear in the level and lack of implementation and gender sensitive analysis, particularly across the key social sectors and other parliamentary sub committees (e.g. education, health and the Ministry in charge of Women and Children’s Affairs (MOWAC) itself).

In 2006, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) team noted that the marginalisation of women remains a very real problem in Ghana despite constitutional and other legislative provisions to protect and secure the rights of women. There has been a significant attempt by Government to ensure that gender is mainstreamed across the national development process including all ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). The National Gender and Children’s policy (2004) framework has not been widely circulated among key stakeholders (ADF, 2008). MOWAC has also suffered from weak institutional capacity and budgetary constraints. Gender mainstreaming within each ministry is designated to gender desk officers who are often not working on a full time basis and become weaker as one moves to the district and sub district levels (ADF, 2008).

Ghana has made some notable progress in relation to reforming legal frameworks for the protection of women’s and children’s rights including:

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• The Constitution (1992) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender;
• Domestic Violence Bill (2008);
• The Human Trafficking Law (2006);
• The criminalisation of harmful traditional practices such as Trokosi (ritual servitude) and female genital cutting and mutilation;
• The Children’s Act (1998) which criminalised forced or under-age marriage.

Despite these achievements there remain significant weaknesses and gaps in the protection of women’s property rights (draft bill on spousal property rights). Gender advocates and gender rights CSOs report that significant challenges remain due to lack of capacity and lack of resources in order to fully implement the existing laws.

Gender monitoring within the sectors is also weak or absent from most state and non state institutions including CSOs and statistics remain a concern at all levels. For instance, within the education sector there are no CSOs currently monitoring education policy processes and financing to ensure that gender issues across the Education Strategic Plan are monitored regularly and systematically.

The Ghana Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) 2006-2009 has shown improvement in analyses of gender equity considerations. The inclusion of key equality targets within MDBS has been a major achievement which includes: gender parity in primary and secondary education, gender statistics and resource allocations for implementing the domestic violence action plan in the Performance appraisal framework (PAF) for 2009/2010. Another indication that government is serious about the gender agenda is the collaboration between MOWAC, MOFEP and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) to pilot gender responsive budgeting in three ministries (Agriculture, Education and Health) (MOWAC report, 2009). The Government’s reaffirmation of its commitment to the implementation of Affirmative Action (AA) policy was demonstrated through the appointment of female Ministers and Deputy Ministers. The Government is also committed to ensure that at least 30% of government appointees to the District Assemblies (DAs) are women and 50% of unit committees are women.

The passing of the Domestic Violence Bill was probably the most outstanding achievement by and for women in Ghana due to the strategic positioning of civil society, support from donors through mechanisms such as Ghana Research and Advocacy Program (G-RAP) and RAVI and the openness and leadership of the sector minister at the time (herself a lawyer). Several of these achievements were directly due to the engagement, agenda setting and leadership of the civil society sector and their ability to work closely with the relevant sector ministries.

According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census\(^\text{19}\) 50.1 % of the population is female, the vast majority of whom are under 30 years of age and 43.8% living urban areas. According to the census one in three households in Ghana are headed by women with distinct regional

\(^{19}\) The GSS: 2000 Population and Housing Census is the latest population census conducted in Ghana.
variation. Rural Ghana accounts for 40% of female headed households compared to urban Ghana with 39.3%. According to the census 50.8% of the population is in consensual unions which include a high rate of females in polygamous unions.

**Governance, Decision-making and Gender: Women in Politics**

Currently women’s representation in the national parliament stands at less than 10% with several female MPs losing their seats in the last general election (2008). Recent research by MOWAC (2009) suggests that there has been some growth from 1992 (with 8% of parliamentarians) to 2004 (11% of parliamentarians) in terms of women’s representation in decision-making positions, although the 2008 elections saw a decline in parliamentary representation to 9%. Out of the 28 Government appointed boards only three met with affirmative action requirements which included the Export Development Investment Fund, the National Disability Council and the Ghana Free Zones Board with 40% and 75% 44% of staffing respectively (MOWAC, 2009).

The gender analysis by MOWAC suggests that there continues to be low participation of women in decision making positions at all levels due to their low literacy status and the need to ensure girls are assisted to reach higher levels of education. Current trends among girls at senior secondary level suggest that less than 30% of girls at the JSS are transitioning to the SSS level which is even lower in rural and deprived areas of the country (e.g. western, northern and Volta regions). The Ministry of Education’s (MOE) policies of girls’ scholarships have to be better monitored in order to reverse this trend. Socio-cultural challenges and multiple roles also remain a major barrier and the need to open up the policy space for equal participation by ensuring that affirmative action is legislated across all Ministries and Departments.

The Ghana Government adopted an affirmative action policy which places female appointments at the District Assembly level at 40% which resulted in women constituting 35.5% of the appointed members of District Assemblies in 2006 in 97 out of 110 districts (Parliamentary Centre, 2008).

Some of the influencing factors for women’s low participation in public offices include:

- Discriminatory beliefs and attitudes towards women;
- Women’s unwillingness to take up such challenges;
- Lack of programmes that mentor and empower women and young girls to build their capacity and prepare them for leadership positions;
- Women’s low level of educational attainment particularly at secondary (35%) and tertiary levels of education;
- Low female literacy rates particularly in rural areas (20%).

**Women in the Economic Sphere**

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20 Like the previous rounds of the GLSS, the GLSS 5 indicates that a greater proportion of households are headed by males (70.5%) (Fig.1.1). The proportion of female-headed households is higher in urban areas outside of Accra (35.1%), rural coastal (34.3%) and rural forest (31.2%) than in Accra (28.1%) and rural savannah (14.9%). The proportion of male-headed households is highest in the rural savannah (85.1%).
Women account for a very small proportion of the formal sector of employment compared to men with only 5% of women in formal employment compared to 19% of men. 21% of economically active women work as unpaid family workers in agriculture compared to 9.6% of men. The informal sector accounts for the majority of work and employment for men and women. Wage differentials continue to persist with women earning 76% less than what men earned in 2002 (ADF, 2008). Women tend to operate more traditional low income businesses such as food processing, handicrafts and dressmaking with low potential for growth. According to the ADF study, service delivery (financial and non-financial) to women entrepreneurs is very weak, policies lack the targeted operational goals to support the growth of female owned businesses.

The limited use of improved technologies, low access to energy sources, limited access to micro-credit schemes and lack of access to markets are key challenges within the agriculture and food crop farming sector which is led by 70% of women. Probably the largest issue confronting women in rural Ghana is their access to land which affects their socio-economic status, overall wellbeing and that of their families. Customary laws continue to discriminate against women due to the traditional lineage, inheritance, marriage and contractual arrangements. Women often lose the security of land holdings (ownership and user rights) due to divorce or death of spouses. The Land Administration Project (LAP) recognises these challenges but efforts to sensitise traditional authorities must be supported by legal reforms that secure women’s property rights for lasting change and sustainable solutions.

**Women in the Social Sphere, Media and Negative/Discriminatory practices**

There are several pervasive forms of gender-based violence in Ghanaian society, especially domestic violence and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and early marriage which are compounded to a large extent by gender biases in the media. One of the most influential and detrimental processes which continues to reinforce the negative stereotypes of women and undermine gender advocacy and equality work particularly for Ghana’s youthful female population is the portrayal of negative images of women on television. Local Ghanaian and Nigerian teledramas portray women in a very negative manner and reinforcing their low status and encouraging notions of sexual violence and transactional sex in society.

One of the major challenges for women is the increased vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS due to both the anatomical, economic and socio-cultural conditions which increase their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. Mother to child transmission account for 15% of new infections in Ghana; socio-cultural barriers to women asserting their rights to reproductive health prevent women from translating their high levels of awareness into protective behaviour.

There are still several discriminatory practices against women despite the traction made in relation to improving women’s rights in Ghana. Analysis of barriers to education, health, social change and gender equality in Ghana point to persistence of negative cultural practices and outmoded beliefs against women (see Annex 1 for details). There is still a high incidence of early marriage, negative practices against women who are found to be infertile, female genital mutilation, and child fostering which have negative outcomes for the girl child, female youth and adult (Casely-Hayford, 2004).

**Recommendations for the Ghana Accountability and Rights Initiative (GHARI)**
Social and gender analysis in Ghana suggests that the following are still needed to reverse the inequality trends and improve governance structures within Ghana from a gender perspective\textsuperscript{21}:

- Focus on girl child education particularly transition to higher SSS levels as one of the most important investments across social and economic sectors including enhancing democratic processes, better governance and peace building efforts;
- Strengthening of MOWAC and other gender agencies in order to improve gender statistics, planning, monitoring and evaluation;
- Expand investment in girls’ education particularly at post primary levels; promote science and technology fields;
- Open dialogue and consensus building on draft spousal poverty rights law with key stakeholders in order to prepare for parliamentary approval;
- More work on mentoring and training women in political positions and to enter politics;
- Support NGOs and CSO’s to monitor gender targets and budgets within the sectors particularly agriculture, education and health which have gender responsive budgeting being implemented and across MDBS;
- More emphasis on increasing voice particularly related to discriminatory practices related to FGM;
- Ensure that major gains in the domestic violence bill are translated into action and implementation through government apparatus (e.g. police and action planning etc);
- Support removal of negative imaging of women in the media.

4.0 Government and CSO Effectiveness and Response

This section provides analysis of how the CSO sector has held the state to account for performance, the quality of delivery and the degree to which government has delivered on its development agenda. There has been relatively limited external analysis of the performance of social sectors apart from the yearly MDBS performance appraisals and the internal performance reviews by NDPC and the sectors themselves\textsuperscript{22}. As the aid architecture shifts towards more central government control of resources through budget support, the mechanisms for performance assessment have also shifted towards improving the Government’s own internal systems of review (e.g. the Ministries own monitoring and evaluation departments) which provide overall performance assessments at the end of each year.

Within this context, the government has to some degree opened up to civil society engagement particularly in sectors where there are strong, well organized and vocal thematic coalitions or private/NGO providers such as in the health, water, decentralisation and education sector. Some of these sectors have also opened up due to consistent donor leveraging to enable CSOs to better participate within the sector (e.g. Donors within the Health Sector). CSO’s in the Agriculture sector have increasingly facilitated engagement at the national level through support by the International NGO’s which provide regular support to the coalitions in Agriculture and Trade. The same has been the case for the Education sector where International NGO’s and some donors have continued to support CSO national and regional coalitions provide support to the education sector and to attain a place at the policy table.

\textsuperscript{21} These are based on the Ghana’s Women’s Manifesto and gender policy advisors inputs.

\textsuperscript{22} Atampugre, N. Opportunities for CS Engagement with Aid Effectiveness in Ghana: an overview of aid polity, harmonization and delivery mechanisms. (Report for SEND Ghana)
This support by International NGOs, donors along with significant efforts by the CSO coalitions has enabled the Ministries to gradually extend performance review processes to include CSO representatives in order to more closely engage but much is needed to move CSOs towards independent monitoring. The ODI assessment of MDBS (2007) along with other assessments indicated that the space for dialogue within government on issues of budgetary development was beginning to improve in relation to engaging with CSOs. Policy space has also improved for CSOs in relation to the GPRS planning processes through the advocacy work by coalitions such as the Ghana Poverty Forum.

Finally, the coalitions and some select CSOs focused on research and advocacy (RAO’s) are also positioning themselves in the aid effectiveness dialogue; these groups are attempting to develop platforms in order to relate to existing MDBS working groups across at least 11 sectors/issues e.g. governance/decentralization, gender, monitoring and evaluation, education, health, agriculture, water etc).

4.1 The CSO Experience in State Engagement

Interviews with key CSO stakeholders indicate that the current policy and governance environment provides excellent opportunities for civil society engagement. There is recognition within the CSO movement itself that this space may not always exist and CSOs should work hard in the coming years to secure their place as Ghana’s democratic institutions and policy making processes continue to evolve.

Several CSO programs have developed over the last ten years to ensure that the State is equitably supporting social services and safety nets particularly targeted at the poor. Some of the processes which have helped CSOs to engage with the state and open dialogue include programs which monitor and track budget expenditure from the centre to the district and community levels (RAVI, 2007; ISODEC, 2005). Other methods include:

- Advocacy, dialogue, and the facilitation of stakeholder platforms at national, regional and district level;
- Tracking of specific social support programs such as the capitation grant, school feeding program, National Health Insurance Scheme;
- Social and Beneficiary Assessments which involve community score carding and forums for stakeholder to discuss results face to face with duty bearers;
- Tracking of public expenditure (e.g. the HIPC fund, District Assembly Fund and the Ghana Education Trust Fund)

Several entry points for this engagement have been highlighted in the documentation and through consultations with CSOs; these include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry points stimulated by and based on efforts within the CSO movement itself:</th>
<th>Response and entry points facilitated by Government/ the state:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sector focused dialogue and events</td>
<td>Organizing CSOs into coalitions and networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO coalitions are invited to represent CSOs on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 The term RAO refers to Research and Advocacy Organisations which are mainly focused on policy research many of which are leading and facilitating some type of coalition or thematic network.

24 RAVI 2007 “Making Change Matter”; Social Accountability and Poverty Reduction: community assessments in pilot Districts (ISODEC, 2005);
What this hierarchy of CSO engagement attempts to demonstrate that as CSOs become more complex in their levels of professional expertise, synergy with a broad range of CSOs including non-traditional CSOs at the grass roots, they are able to use more entry points to engage directly with government at the national and parliamentary levels. Another finding from the social appraisal has been that coalitions are very much driving the sector interface in relation to CSO engagement at the sector levels. Studies suggest that there is a need to facilitate much more space within the CSO movement itself and for a larger variety of CSOs to engage (ODI, 2005). Lesson learned suggest that more entry points emerge when leveraging of international NGO’s and donors opens up the policy space and supports evidence based research in the sector.

There were a number of disabling factors which also constrain the engagements of CSO with the state which include: lack of coordination and collaboration between CSOs themselves, the changing nature of donor priorities; lack of consultation with civil society on the part of government, conflict, the decentralisations process, over reliance on donor funding and negative perceptions of the state towards CSOs. Also a genuine lack of CSO understanding and skill sets about how to engage particularly in relation to the dynamics/drivers of policy change and engagement with parliamentary /legislative processes.

GHARI design consultations and CSO reports indicate that CSOs do not feel that they have fully developed their capacities to address issues of advocacy and rights in a way that does not “confront district assemblies.” Methodologies which help CSOs develop capacities as technical partners to rectify gaps in the service delivery do exist (e.g. Link Community Development/upper east) and have been found to be highly effective in holding government to account in different sectors helping transform poor service delivery at district level where senior district management were open. One of the greatest weaknesses in CSO engagement with the state

25 Based on EU study, CSO reports and CSO design workshop consultation across the country
26 Link community Development Evaluation (LCD external evaluation, 2009) sponsored by the VSO Ghana.
appears to be at the grassroots level and across the more vulnerable groups including children and youth which limit their direct engagement in activities which facilitate their own voices being heard.  

4.2 CSO effectiveness in holding the state accountable:

Public expenditure tracking in Ghana has had some impact at the national level based on the CSO experience of tracking the district assembly common fund which led government to take a closer look at its own disbursements and accountability at the National/ District levels. International evidence of Ghanaian CSOs engaged in public expenditure /budget tracking suggests there has been limited impact of budget tracking processes in terms of engagement, attribution and interface but more evidence of government take up of the findings in influencing policy (ODI, 2005).  

Although government and decentralised agencies are still not as transparent and accountable to rights bearers, CSOs have secured some policy space for communities to increase their engagement with duty bearers and government on development issues (CDD, 2009; RAVI, 2007; Civicus, 2005; DDU, 2003). Before strategic donor support to CSOs on accountability and good governance (RAVI, GAIT, GGHR and GRAP), assessments found that very few CSOs were engaging with duty bearers to claim their rights, the poor and vulnerable groups had little voice, and there was a low demand for accountability. Through the funding to CSO work related to governance and accountability, communities and CSOs began engaging with local and national structures using a rights based approach (RBA) and increased their ability to develop space for engagement. Social appraisal and beneficiaries assessment processes were making a significant difference to letting duty bearers know that they were being monitored (Making Change Matter, RAVI 2007; ODI/CDD, 2007; DDU report, 2003).

4.2 Levels of Voice, Openness and Participation

Data from global governance monitoring mechanisms reveal on the whole a positive picture for participation and voice in Ghana. A summary of the Mo Ibrahim Indices ranked Ghana 8th overall for Africa based on indicators of participation and human rights as well as safety and security in which it scored high with ratings of 86% and 80% respectively. The Afro Barometer indices which related to the freedom of speech indicates that over the period between 1999 to 2005 there is a declining number of people who think that freedom of speech has improved for the better.

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27 UNICEF and a few CSOs have been spearheading some direct consultations among youth and children in order to facilitate engagements of younger stakeholders in policy analysis but much more is needed. What is needed is to facilitate larger voice platforms for youth and children.

28 Paolo de Renzio (2005) ODI study on CSOs and Budgets linking evidence and pro poor policies:


31 There has been some level of improvement regarding participation and human rights which include freedom of speech, participation in governance with Ghana moving from 16 in 2000 to 8th position in Africa (2006) according to the Index on African Governance.
Ghana is also performing well in terms of global governance indicators. The Freedom House combined average rating of 1.5 for Ghana indicates that there has been advancement in terms of civic and political rights. The analysis of the World Wide Governance indicators between 1998 and 2008 also indicate that Ghana has shown substantive improvement in governance ranking 60 out of 220 countries in the world.

Research and evaluative work from Ibis’s Public Participation in Local Governance (PPLG), Good Governance and Human Rights Fund, and USAID’s Governance and Accountably Improves Trust (GAIT) as well as the RAVI experience all indicate growing levels of civic responsibility, civic participation and voice. One important development has been the growth of self sustained civil unions in about 25 districts across the country through the combined efforts of several of these funds particularly GAIT. These civil unions represent substantive membership based organizations from within the districts and are growing in their capacities to engage with the District Assemblies and Regional Institutions.

The CSO funding experiences also suggest that community grassroots initiatives take time to spawn and requires genuinely interested organisations to nurture civic groups and not only focussed on their own “organizational survival.” The existing governance fund experience suggests that moving beyond the usual NGO intermediaries will be essential if grassroots civil society is to benefit from CSO funding of this nature and that the selection of intermediaries will need to be assessed carefully in order to ensure that they have a track record and good reputation for supporting: small civic groups, understand change processes and provide capacity building training.

4.3 Government responsiveness towards Citizenry

The relationships between key state actors including parliament, government, media and the CSO movement remains weak. Recent ODI/CDD analysis of the current state of relations among the key actors in the governance arena suggests that CSOs engaging with government and elected representatives in the policy process was moderate to low (CDD 2009). Similarly, the study found that the relationship between CSOs and the media was weak. Interviews with key CSO stakeholders and during the CSO consultative process indicate that there are still major challenges related to how the Ghana government bureaucracy and elected leaders relate to CSOs. Some of the limiting factors mentioned in CSO consultations were the: weak parliamentary process, lack of channels to voice complaints, the inability to meet with duty bearers and the limited understanding of how policy is made and the entry points for engagement.

Analysis from key CSO funds suggests that there has been very little change in the environment and responsiveness of Government to engage at the national levels; there has been some improvement at the district and local levels due to the proximity and growing number of many of the CSOs who are engaged in rights based approaches. RAVI, (2007) analysis indicates that there has been the least change at national levels and this is where the most challenge remains in citizen engagement with government. Government continues to limit

33 Three CSO workshop reports are available on the web site: www.associatesforchange.org
34 RAVI, GRAP, GGHR, PPLG, GAIT;
access to information related to performance reports, final appraisals/aid memoires and development plans;

There has been some modest shift in this responsiveness particularly in recognizing that CSOs have some added value and their inputs can make a difference with regard to sharing evidence and transmitting the local level perspective. There are some District Assemblies who have invited CSOs as regular observers at assembly meeting and in some cases DA’s have allocated a spot for CSOs on the assembly. The response is also shifting within the traditional authority structures with traditional chiefs gradually opening up to consultation within the community, ensuring more inclusiveness and voice from the people.

4.4 Government performance in service delivery

Where the state continues to fall short is in relation to its ability to delivery efficient and effective services which translate into higher levels of human and social development. According to the 2008 Mo Ibrahim Index Ghana scored quite low in terms of human development (64.3%) and lower in sustainable economic opportunities (47.3%). The human development index indicators include poverty, education, health and sanitation while the economic sustainability index includes macroeconomic stability, wealth creation, infrastructure and the environment.

The only external assessment of the performance of Government was conducted by CDD and ODI in 2007. The overall assessment of social service provision through funding from MDBS was mixed particularly in relation to the assessment of health sector performance. Despite the increased financing by government to support the health sector, there was no indication that this was making a difference in terms better access by the poor to health services and enhanced quality of delivery. The report concluded that despite policy dialogue and to some degree budget tracking by donors, CSOs and government, important decisions around efficiency, targeting and effectiveness of strategies were not adequate in bringing about health status among the majority of the poor (CDD, 2008). Please refer to annex 2 for overall government performance in assessing service delivery across a variety of sectors.

Against this backdrop the experience of the Ghana government in not only demonstrated that the formulation but implementation of pro poor policies is uneven particularly in relation to targeting the poor, gender sensitizing the policy and ensuring that spatial, geographic and gender inequalities are taken into account; not to mention horizontal inequality. Even the Capitation grant, despite the positive success in helping increase access and participation needed refinement in terms of targeting. The national health insurance scheme was also found to be less favourable to the poor (ODI/CDD, 2007) due to slow disbursement, and poor implementation of health fee exemptions. The conclusion was that the institutional environment for pro poor policy making was weak across at least three sectors: health, education and gender.

The Ghanaian state bureaucracy rated very low in terms of governance performance due to low levels of transparency accountability and very low levels of efficiency and decency in relation to service delivery (CDD, 2009). The low efficiency of state delivery was related to inefficiencies in the district assemblies, weak regulatory capacity, inadequate resourcing, lack of accountability, low human resource capacity and poor revenue mobilization (CDD, 2009). Overall the study found that the quality of the state stewardship was poor with the principle of efficiency scored
the lowest particularly in the arenas of local government, judiciary and bureaucracy (CDD, 2009).

Conclusions

There is not enough systematic evidence that current methods of holding the state accountable will result in actual better outcomes for the poor particularly in relation to service delivery. Much more work is needed within the CSO community to monitor, pilot and learn about different approaches to improving the service delivery mechanisms and ensuring their quality and efficiency particularly with regard to health, education, agriculture and water reach higher levels of reform and outcomes due to CSO involvement. The RBA approach assumes that there will be reasonable response of the state to make changes in the access and quality of various levels in the system of governance. Levels of commitment to make change, share information, open up for critique and engagement will also have to be monitored.

5.0 The Civil Society Map, the Lessons Learned and Gaps

Civil Society is in a process of strengthening its position as an important, visible and needed partner in an emerging democracy. Organized civil society over the last two decades has seen dramatic growth across Ghana; most importantly, the emergence of civil society has been closely associated with the needs, inequities and experiences by communities and their groupings in many parts of Ghana to organize around transformational processes. More recently, in the last ten years, the new agenda for improving human rights, democratic development and gender rights has spurred on other types of issue based groups which have mobilized public demand for elections, accountability and improved social, economic, political and cultural rights (Ibis, 2008).

As the funding opened up for good governance, democracy and social accountability agenda’s in part a result of the increasing aid flows to the central state, advocacy focused CSOs became a noticeable addition to the Ghanaian CSO landscape; these CSOs formed the basis of research and advocacy institutes, think tanks and women’s rights advocates for marginalized groups.

5.1 The characteristics of civil society

Estimates reveal that there are over 4,000 -5,000 NGO’s operating across the country with at least 3,600 registered NGO’s within the Social Welfare department. The vast majority of these CSOs are operating in the rural areas focusing on issues of poverty reduction, social/economic development and service delivery. There is a wide range and diversity of CSOs operating in Ghana with some falling into the mainstream CSO category and others more non traditional in nature. More traditional CSOs include NGO’s, community based organizations, and faith based

35 See the institutional appraisal for the evolution of civil society in Ghana.
organizations including their “development offices and wings.” Ghanaian civil society also includes professional associations and business associations. Trade unions and the media are also an important component of the CSO landscape in Ghana.

The “non traditional” CSOs rarely come under the purview of development interventions but are a major part of associational life that is socially rooted and politically significant. These include: alumni associations, parent teacher associations, trade associations, home town and ethnic associations in Ghana and abroad, migrant and youth associations. These associations do not rely on donor support and have organically evolved from the grassroots to meet a need. Studies by Booth et al (2004) suggest that the most successful CBO’s are those that have integrated both local and diaspora elites (esp. the “returnees”) into their programs and structures.

The characteristics of the CSO community is not as easily compartmentalized when one considers the diverse traditional and social institutions at the grassroots which are indigenous to the socio cultural landscape of Ghanaian communities: community elders councils, traditional women’s groups and women’s leaders, community development committees, youth groups and youth associations and farmers groups which have mainly evolve organically to meet the growing needs of the community and focus on welfare and development issues.

The EU CSO mapping study (2008) uses four typologies which include:

**Level 1: Emerging CSOs** which are mainly rural based CSOs which are often called Community Based Organizations. They represent a relatively large group of the CSOs present in Ghana and are focused mainly on socio-economic improvement and service delivery efforts within the rural communities they work. The study found that this group often has low staffing levels, limited financial resources and low organizational capacity often using informal and loose practices. These emergent CSOs are still lacking the necessary capacity to fully challenge and engage with local governments on public spending and demand for full accountability,

**Level 2: National CSO Category** had at least three main sub categories including: international CSOs, well established and mostly urban based national CSOs and rural based national CSOs with lower capacity. The international CSOs were found to have “high levels of clout in the national policy debate and easy access to government and donors. (p12)” The well established CSOs were largely shifting their agenda’s to include citizen and accountability work and had attracted the bulk of bilateral funding for advocacy policy and research work over the last 5-10 years. This was confirmed through International NGO’s and donors reports/interviews which indicated that a relatively small group of “big boys and girls” in Accra were attracting several of the same donors to the table --- not always in a harmonized manner.

The EU mapping study (2008) found that the rural NGO’s have relatively low capacities and low levels of activity but locate themselves in communities where the bulk of Ghana’s’ poor live. Urban based NGO’s are seen to be more visible and often have more capacities.

**Level 3: networks** comprise thematic and geographic networks including membership organizations, umbrella groups, regional and national thematic network at national, regional and
district levels. A network of networks—the Coalition of NGO networks (CONnet) was just developing at the time of the GHARI design work which includes representation from approximately 11 networks in the country across thematic lines including education, health, local government and poverty reduction. Some of these thematic networks have been heavily engaged in policy dialogue, performance reviews and critiques engaging their membership where necessary (e.g. Water Sanitation, Agriculture etc). There have been challenges in sustaining many of these networks due to the lack of secured core funding, donor fatigue and the scarcity of funds for strengthening the networks in Ghana.

Level 4: **Coalitions:** refers to the “loose networks which are often called platforms or coalitions which come together for a purpose or a specific issue (e.g. Domestic Rights coalition). The majority of the coalitions in Ghana operate at the national level sometimes having regional branches and representation such as the “Rights of the Child Coalition”, the WERENGO and some of the regional NGO coalitions; their importance is continuing to grow in Ghana particularly around issues of gender equity, women’s rights, health, agriculture/trade decentralization, education etc.

**Faith based organizations (FBO’s)** have also played significant roles in Ghana’s CSO landscape. According to the Drivers of Change analysis “FBO’s are undoubtedly one of the most significant and vigorous developments of Ghanaian CSOs,” since Ghana is predominantly a Christian country with 60% of all Ghanaians and 16% in the Muslim faith; the remainder professing various African traditional beliefs. Although there are no figures, estimates within one Muslim sect indicate that about 200,000 FBO’s are involved with the Ahmadiyya movement (Haynes, 1996). There are increasing numbers of FBO’s engaged in charitable work inspired and sometimes financed by the Middle East. FBO’s are both deeply rooted in Ghanaian society and socially and economically independent of the state; having tentacles often abroad which generate their own funding. Many are making a significant contribution in the health and education fields with most churches having youth and women’s fellowships and associations. In this respect they form part of the CBO level typology;

The regional spread of CSOs suggests that the vast majority of traditional CSOs/NGO’s are often concentrated in the high poverty zones or where donor programs are concentrated with the largest number across the northern regions, Eastern region (where the incidence of HIV/AIDS rates remain high). CSO consultations across the Ghana revealed that the orientation and issues of primary importance to the CSO sector varied across the regions with Accra based NGO’s very much focused on good governance issues, and engagements with the state while more regional and physically distanced CSOs expressed interest in serving their rural constituencies and meeting the local demands for service delivery.\(^\text{37}\)

The implications for GHARI include the need to have a diverse range of funding windows and incentives which will enable the non traditional NGO’s to work with more traditional NGO’s and vice versa. There needs to be support for particularly rural based and emergent NGO’s which

\[\text{37} \text{ See the CSO Workshop reports.}\]
may require regional orientation programs and possibly an office in the middle to northern sector. Finally, although international experience is mixed on the usage of coalitions and networks, the CSO landscape in Ghana does suggest the need to work/strengthen more regional and thematic coalitions and avoid duplication in funding the same Accra Based CSOs.

5.2 Looking forward: Strategic entry points for civil society

The social appraisal process has also highlighted the need for CSOs to be more engaged with the policy processes within the sectors by ensuring that their own representation is well thought out in order to ensure that they add value to the policy dialogue, better represent and inform the other CSOs who do not have direct access to the policy processes. Two factors will be critical to continued engagement by a broader range of CSOs with government: the CSO sector's ability to find existing platforms and organize themselves to respond; secondly, their ability to internally coordinate and share with each other, and in particular their constituencies, vital information and analysis which diverse groups including the grassroots organizations have had limited access to. This will help to build trust within the CSO community which appears quite limited at the moment. Other support to CSOs to improve accountability and governance entry points at national and district levels should include:

- Working with parliamentary subcommittee level has proven more effectiveness internationally than working with executive arms of state which include government and ministries.

- The international research which compared Ghana to other countries also suggests a much broader grouping of CSOs need to be trained in budget tracking and social appraisal methodologies in order to build capacities of a larger grouping of CSOs exerting more pressure on Government (ODI, 2005)\textsuperscript{38}.

- Training courses for local government staff on budget tracking was also seen as an effective entry point.

Within the current development context of Ghana three important entry points for CSOs will also be the SADA mechanisms in the monitoring the implementation of the fund to ensure gender, social and horizontal equity, the GPRS II monitoring and evaluation processes, the yearly budget processes and District Development Fund (DDF). CSOs will require more orientation by the new pooled CSO fund staff: on entry point engagement, access to information on the entry points and modes of engagement in order to refine /and coordinate their approaches across sectors and nationally (A more detailed analysis of the entry points within each sectors is contained in annex 2). There will also be the need to continually map the diverse and changing nature of these entry points, the aid architecture and the drivers of change within the Ghanaian context in order to strategically plan with CSOs and sensitize their engagement processes with the state at various levels.

\textsuperscript{38} De Renzio, P (2005b) CSOs and Budgets: Linking Evidence and Pro poor Policies. CSPP Paper; London ODI.
5.3 The gaps in previous funding and tensions with donor expectations

There are several challenges which remain in attempting to engage the CSO sector in holding government accountable and improving the enabling environment for dialogue across the sectors and within the new aid regime (e.g. MDBS). These include:

- Lack of openness and responsiveness on the part of Government to engage with the CSOs at national and district levels…
- Lack of capacity of the CSOs to engage in a professional, coordinated and well organized manner;
- Lack of core financing for CSO coalition building;
- Lack of financing for demonstration projects which allow CSOs to showcase methodologies which promote participation of grassroots stakeholders in holding duty bearers particularly teachers and health workers accountable.

Service Delivery vs. Rights based approach

The EU study on CSOs mentioned several trends in civil society including: a shift within civil society towards voice and accountability activities at the “neglect of basic human needs.” This trend was echoed and re-echoed throughout CSO studies in Ghana (EU, Civicas) and during the consultations with CSOs across the three regions including Accra, Tamale and Takoradi. The decline in financing to CSOs and the move towards “rights based approaches” within the international NGO and donor community had effectively shifted the funding and agenda of CSOs in Ghana.

The outcomes of this shift were that CSOs of all types across the first three categories (type 1 to type 4) were now focusing on advocacy issues and attempting to improve their research base; some interviews with CSOs indicated that networks/coalitions were shifting towards RAO status in order to attract higher levels of core funding from GRAP. Others were moving from a service delivery mode in the rural areas to increasing their research and advocacy work.

Strengthening the voice: an expanding arena of advocacy work which is beginning to emerge is the need for several smaller civic groups such as farmer based groups, PTA’s SMCs, trade associations and youth associations (non traditional CSOs) to work together to strengthen their voices. The experience of GAIT I and GAIT 11 demonstrate the potential outcomes of harnessing several smaller actors and different types of groups using the “civic union” approach which can add a dynamic voice to the district level. Other examples include the need for PTA/SMC umbrella groups which help to strengthen, protect and lead on sensitive issues at district level such as teacher absenteeism, time on task and teacher accountability for performance without making any one group vulnerable.
Weak constituency…

The issues of legitimacy, representation and constituency were also mentioned in key donor evaluative studies of the CSO sector reflecting the need towards supporting synergy between non traditional and more traditional CSOs who together could more effectively engage the state. There is also the need to generate and support much more CBO activity around an issue with vested interest groups. Interviews and analysis during the design process suggest that donor funding was gradually building a power elite within the CSO community and still not able to reach the organizations which were working directly with the constituencies who could best articulate the issues and sustain interest. Lessons from across the CSO community confirmed that intermediaries and middle sized NGO’s were not always sharing the information/resources with smaller CSOs and were sometimes considered as “gate keepers” in the delivery and results from the programs. There were also very positive examples of how CSO intermediaries had built the capacity of smaller CSOs but tensions did exist within the relationships and a new fund would have to carefully select intermediaries and ensure that the proper procedures protected smaller CSOs.

Lack of synergy and collaboration with strategic partners

Lack of synergy between CSOs and the academic community: apart from not being able to fully harness the energy and talent of the Research and Advocacy (RAO) community in relation to assisting smaller CBO groups on a sustained basis, there is also the gaps in collaboration between traditional CSOs and the University research community or academics which have better access to the state machinery; these same academics often advise the state in various capacities and participate on a wide range of government committees. Partnerships between CSOs and universities could greater enhance the bargaining power within the CSO sector in advocating for a specific right, providing the evidence for a particular problem, find an appropriate platform or entry point which they already know of and monitoring the change process.

5.4 Lessons learned and best practices in supporting the civil society sector

There is no question that the introduction and support for CSO funding mechanisms (e.g. RAVI, GGHR and GRAP) over the last ten years have strengthened the voice and introduced methods to hold state accountable at national and district levels. This support has also strengthened CSO/RAO engagement with the state and parliament through the lobbying and monitoring legislative change processes but there remains a long road ahead to start seeing more sustained impact, CSO capacity and effectiveness in terms of accountability and good governance (see annex 3 for detailed description of lessons learned). Lesson learnt from consultations with CSOs, and analysis of the evaluative documentation from other donor funds suggests that despite the increasing number of CSOs focused on accountability issues this does not necessarily lead to an active and vibrant civil society based and accountable to a broader constituency of citizens.
6.0 Implications and Recommendations for GHARI

The new CSO pooled funding mechanism will need to be inclusive of accountability issues across several arena’s including the modern state systems, citizens relationships to traditional leadership/governance and within the CSO community itself. The social appraisal found that good governance should be the aim of the fund across these different domains of accountability and in relation to the citizenry of Ghana.

The new fund should also focus on human development and ensure that inequities in relation to health, education, skills development, agriculture and livelihoods are a major focus for the fund. This will ensure that a pro poor agenda is at the forefront of CSO funding, helping government attain the MDG’s with a focus on the most vulnerable groups including women, youth and children. Special incentives will also have to be put in place in order to ensure equitable spread across different types of CSOs in the country and ensure that particularly poverty zones are targeted. Incentives within the fund will also be needed to better facilitate synergy between CSOs with different capacities and strengths (e.g. emerging CSOs, non traditional CSOs working with better positioned CSOs).

Taking into consideration Ghana’s Poverty profile

The new pooled fund (GHARI) will have to focus efforts on the spatial, gender and socio-cultural inequalities with a focus on reducing negative cultural practices in order to enhance the safety, security and status of women in these areas; stronger focus on monitoring social protection programs is needed to ensure they are better targeted, achieve equitable delivery (e.g. school feeding, capitation, NHIS etc) in order to reduce the number of people living in chronic poverty.

The PPVA study makes a strong case for affirmative action in relation to closing the asset gaps between the northern savannah and providing increased opportunities to help people escape the poverty trap. The study calls for a “multi pronged combination of short and long term initiatives” with systemic change in social accountability. Given the increasing fragility of the north due to climatic change, food insecurity and pockets of civil unrest possibly driven by horizontal inequity most if not all funding windows for GHARI should have some level of vulnerability analysis and social appraisal tied to their acceptance. This should include gender analysis along with issues of how the programs will effect youth and children.

A focus on overcoming inequality

Although not an easy “pill to swallow”, the CSO movement should begin to hold government accountable on the equality agenda which pushes the debate to focus on the spatial, regional, social and horizontal inequalities within the country not just gender inequality. This agenda must be strategically and more systematically researched. The Savannah Accelerated Development Fund (SADA) provides an opportunity for CSOs to engage in the debate, negotiate resources for the poor and facilitate some of the programmes.

The international community’s focus on human development in Ghana’s extreme poverty zones offers exit routes for poor people, but only if human capital improvements in education and
health are made which lead to greater returns: the evidence so far is that the economic returns to education in Ghana, for example, are very limited. This means that human development as the main development strategy to address inter-regional inequality has limitations unless properly targeted. Studies suggest that without greater returns in education particularly for northern youth this could be a major underlying reason for instability among Ghana’s youth population. Much more work among CSOs is needed to promote issues affecting young women and girls particularly in the poverty zones.

**Building on the current strengths of CSOs within some sectors**

The social appraisal across the key GPRS sectors indicate that there is better traction on the part of CSOs being well organized, capacitated and positioned to contribute effectively to holding the state accountable for delivery on MDBS and GPRS. Evidence from the education, health, local government, water and agriculture sectors suggest that International and national CSOs are well positioned to support engagement with the state in a larger and more dynamic way by moving the CSO engagement towards parliamentary subcommittee levels, and in the overall MDBS platforms. Three of these arena’s are also targeted for gender budgeting by Government (Health, Education and Local Government).

**Social and Gender issues:**

There is still much work to be done in relation to ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed across state and government sectors, within traditional governance systems and also across the CSO movement itself. Lessons learned demonstrate the need for CSOs to become more competent advocates of women’s rights and gender related concerns particularly at the decentralised levels. The strategic and long term interventions which assist girls become educated women will likely go a long way in strengthening the voice and participation of women in all arena’s of governance, politics and the CSO community itself. More work is needed to ensure budget tracking on a gender basis and gender disaggregated data is available.

In terms of the fund providing support for improving gender equity particularly from rural deprived areas, and within key governance institutions: a two pronged approach is needed with support for short term measures to entice more women into politics and support longer term strategies for improving the educational opportunities for female youth particularly in relation to their empowerment, strengthening their capacities/ voice and improving access at higher levels of education.

**The need to reach and grow emergent CSOs**

The “bulk of CSOs constitute rural based level 1 organizations”, are mainly non traditional CSOs and continue to suffer from a lack of information, voice and access to funding. Studies in Ghana suggest the need to enhance coverage and reach out to these smaller CSOs through using intermediaries and/or having offices in the more deprived areas in order to facilitate capacity building directly (e.g. IBIS GGHR). The CSO design consultations confirmed the need for better strategic targeting through existing networks and workshops at the district and regional levels.
The new GHARI fund will have to enable funding information and capacity building mechanisms to be regionally based in order to reach out to more level 1 and level 2 CSOs and work more effectively with smaller CBO’s, civic unions or groups. This will help to ensure that there is equitable spread across the country in the resourcing and enhance the ability of the fund to further build the capacities of weaker organizations. There is also need for more support to networks, coalitions and regionally based think tanks across Ghana in order to better develop synergy and engage with the state.

**Service delivery, rights and advocacy**

Currently CSOs are demonstrating added value in increasing efficiency in service delivery approaches for reaching deprived rural areas (e.g. health, education and water) sectors. Much more support for innovative approaches and partnership arrangements between CSOs and DAs which demonstrate methods to hold duty bearers and implementers accountable for their performance (e.g. teachers and health workers) is needed. Secondly, more support is also needed to assist CSOs organize community based responses to issues of state inefficiency in the delivery of infrastructure, agriculture, water, health and education services.

**Synergy between the voice and the policy makers:** There is need for the new funding mechanism to ensure that the processes of synergy and cross CSO engagement are enhanced through a bottom up approaches which link genuine CBO’s and civic groups to the research/advocacy groups, media groups and Universities who can provide some voice at the national level. Part of this momentum will depend on regional and district based networks/coalitions emerging which are closer to the population and advocate for at the national level. Another approach will involve thematic networks working closer with the RAO community at the national level and implementing more research and advocacy work with their constituency. Overall, the CSO community will have to be better oriented towards working with Parliament, building the skills to work with sub committees and identify state entry points in order to ensure advocacy work is effective.

**Self regulation, assessment and accountability within the CSO sector:** As the visibility and number of funding mechanisms for CSOs begins to increase, CSOs will have to be increasingly vigilant with their own resources, financing and ensure that accountability of their own organizations remains primary. Increased measures of good governance, democratic accountability, standard setting, peer review and social accountability of their own organizations will be essential in order to ensure CSOs themselves are “role models “and not caught pointing fingers when they have not cleaned up “their own house”. Part of this will involve having regular dialogue with their own constituency and ensuring there is transparency and processes of good governance/consultation embedded within their own organizations.

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39 The experience of CEFS is a clear example of this where the project works to engage in community based participatory planning processes to improve the priority targeting by the district assemblies.
Ensuring better coordination and collaboration within the CSO sector: Despite the high incidence of competition among CSOs particularly related to funding, GHARI should ensure that there are stronger incentives to assist CSOs to work together on rights and voice issues. Research by the SNV/Ibis suggests that lack of collaboration and coordination of CSOs has created lapses in impact particularly on issues of human development. GHARI should ensure that incentives for monitoring and tracking CSO impact are also part of the package of new governance and accountability work across Ghana; this would help to better position CSOs as authentic players in a given sector.

There is need for future policy level interface to be more systematic across the sectors in terms of ensuring a minimum standard of interaction with the civil society sector; for instance sectors should be able to achieve the following:

- enable civil society to engage in sector wide performance reviews,
- engage in national poverty monitoring and planning through NDPC,
- identify key actors for their engagement at the MDBS working group level,
- Present representatives at the aid effectiveness platforms

Monitoring and evaluating the change processes
Monitoring and evaluation will require several measurements including the tracking of change processes and impact within the CSO movement itself, CSO engagement with government, degrees of accountability, governance processes in relation to CSO beneficiaries/constituencies, achievement of rights and quality services. Several outcome and results indicators will be needed to ensure the new pooled fund is able to effectively track change due to the CSO methods used and government responses to these processes (see annex 4 for detailed recommendations).

Conclusion
The new GHARI fund for CSO support to governance and accountability in Ghana is timely and provides the opportunity for donors to support a key stage in civil society evolution. Given the continued inequalities across Ghana, the growing tensions in resource extractive areas and the mobility of Ghana’s rural youth, a stronger emphasis on assisting civil society reach key human development and equity goals is critical for empowering the very youth who will become the leaders and duty bearers of tomorrow. Increasing the focus on basic human needs and equality across deprived regions, genders, income groups and socio-cultural groupings is vital for civil society to become better positioned as partners with the modern and traditional governance structures at the same time that it works to transform its own constituency into conscious advocates and a participating citizenry.
Annex 1: Negative Cultural Practices

There is still a higher proportion of young women being subjected to Female Genital Mutilation or cutting. The MICS study (UNICEF, 2006) found that 4% of women between 15-49 years of age had experienced some form of FGM/C which was most prevalent in the Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana. Close to 96% of women also believe that the practice should be discontinued (UNICEF, 2006).

Early marriage was also found in 4% of women who were married before the age of 15 and 26% of women were married before the age of 18-- which is the legal age of marriage. More than half the population of women were in a marriage before the age of 25 and 90% are in a marriage by the age of 30 or above (UNICEF, 2006). Women were found to marry four years earlier than men on average and the mean age of marriage was 22.5 (GLSS 5).

Acceptance of domestic violence is highest in the Upper West with (76% of the population agreeing and lowest in Greater Accra (28%). Forty seven percent of women aged 15 to 49 years of age believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife. "This belief is held among a higher proportion of women in the rural areas (57%) than the urban areas (36%). A lower proportion of men believe that wife beating is justified (36%).
Annex 2: Performance across the sectors, and CSO entry points

Evidence was clear that despite high levels of funding in the health sector change in the status of communicable diseases like polio, TB and under five malaria were gaining some ground but other service delivery issues were not meeting the targets set by government and in some cases declining. The assessment of the education sector was slightly more positive with the increases of funding in the sector through budget support/MDBS achieving better results in terms of access and participation outcomes in the sector. The effectiveness of the capitation grant and the abolition of user fees (e.g. sports and cultural fees etc) was a major policy achievement in the education sector and had direct impact on the poor. The assessment did indicate that there could have been better targeting. Challenges still remained in seeing qualitative improvement particularly given the difficulties which government was having in attempting to address the issues of teacher deployment and ensuring trained teachers vacancies in rural deprived areas (CDD, 2008).

Overall performance of the social sectors and in terms of MDBS being pro poor suggests that: “There are real doubts over the ability of current processes of sector policy formation, budget preparation and execution to convert allocations into actions. Strategies are inadequately conceived, the budget structure does not permit the use of programs as a focus for budget allocation and service management and budget execution continues to deviate sharply from planned budgets (CDD/ODI, 2007)”

Health Sector

The health sector probably has the most established Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) with regular performance reviews which engage with civil society sector. Civil society has also set up a health coalition and reproductive health coalition to provide an organized voice and strengthens engagement with the state. The Health Coalitions yearly coalition retreats enable civil society to strategize on pressing issues in health and engage with each other and government based on current research and trends. Surprisingly, despite the space for civil society to engage with the health sector, interviews revealed that there has been limited take up by the state to use and support civil society in any real collaborative arrangement apart from the distribution of ARVs. Their sector strategy does mention funding available for Public Private Partnerships (PPP) but this have not yet been accessed by the CSO community.

CSOs working in health continue to enjoy two streams of funding: the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB and the Ghana Aids Commission funding support to CSOs which focuses on community outreach programming for HIV/AIDS work. The CSOs in health continue to make major contributions in supporting health care delivery in the country particularly in the remote rural areas. These two funding streams have enabled smaller NGOs to continue to access the necessary funds for some of their service delivery work although relatively small.

Performance reports in the health sector indicate that there have been significant achievements in relation to setting up the national health insurance scheme and ensuring that there are free prenatal and delivery services for women. According to the Demographic Health Survey (2003) only 46% of births were delivered in health facilities whole the rest
were at home. Despite these interventions the maternal mortality ratio (214 per 100,000 live births remains high along with the infant mortality rate of 64 per 1,000 live births) compared to other African Countries. Various cultural practices and the high cost of services often discourage women from seeking health services in the past. Key issues highlighted in the Aid memoire following the Health summit include:

- Additional concerns were raised about the slow progress on the maternal death audit as well as the socio-cultural barriers which continue to prevent women from delivery in facilities.
- Childhood malnutrition and anemia continue to remain a serious threat in Ghana.
- Additionally, the need to include family planning as part of the overall maternal health benefit package under the NHIS was raised.
- Ensure that community based service delivery mechanisms are well implemented.

Significant progress has been made on launching the national health insurance program but Development Partners (DPs) feel that there is the need for more accountability mechanisms and financial management strengthening to effectively implement the program. A gender policy has also been developed within the Ministry of Health (MOH) in the last year.

**Education sector performance and entry points**

Education performance reports over the last three years suggest that there are some achievements which the state has been able to attain related to improving access and attaining universal basic education for Ghana. Net enrolment and gross enrolment rates have increased significantly reaching close to 85% across Ghana. Although there are some significant problems in northern Ghana which continue to restrict particularly girls from access to primary education overall there have been improvements. The main challenges which have been highlighted in the latest sector reviews have been with regard to the following issues:

- Continual poor quality within the sector with less than 20% of children attaining basic literacy skills; -- no change in the last ten years (AESR, 2009).
- Poor transition rates among rural children particularly girls from Primary to JSS and onwards particularly to SSS with 64.5% of boys and 35.5% of girls attaining SSS levels.
- Wide gender gaps remain at post basic levels with 64.5% of boys and 30.4% of girls enrolling at polytechnic levels; and science and technology fields are much lower.
- Literacy gaps continue to characterize the adult population particularly in rural Ghana and among women.\(^{40}\)

\(^{40}\) In Accra, 80 percent of adults are literate, but only 22 percent of adults in rural savannah are literate.
There is some recognition particularly in the last two education performance reports of the work of civil society particularly in closing the access and participation gaps in rural deprived areas of the country where complementary systems of education have been operating for the last 14 years. Government is attempting to support these efforts by engaging in dialogue and providing a policy framework whereby CSOs can continue to expand and implement complementary education with more cost sharing approaches.

The CSO sector is also well positioned to provide policy and implementation monitoring support due to two strong coalitions which have emerged in the last ten years: the Northern Network for Education and Development (NNED), and the Ghana National Education Coalition Campaign (GNECC). Studies within the CSO movement suggest that there is need for more coalition and platforms to emerge particularly in relation to girls’ education and gender issues within the sector in order to monitor progress and lobby (SNV, 2009).

**Water Sector**

Only 38% of the Ghanaian population has access to pipe born water in their dwelling, compound or through public taps. 29% and 6% of the population get their drinking water from boreholes and protected wells respectively (MICS/ UNICEF, 2006). Despite the fact that water and sanitation are crucial basic human needs and that the current government’s manifesto states that increasing access to water as a key priority for Ghana, the Water and Sanitation Sector continue to be almost exclusively funded (95%) by international donors. As such, there is a critical need for advocacy on behalf of Civil Society to pressure government to allocate more of its own funding to the sector.

The Water and Sanitation Sector has a Civil Society Network which falls largely under CONIWAS which is functioning but, there is a need to provide additional support in order to increase its scope and influence. There is a continued need to:

- Mobilize and enlighten users to understand and claim their rights to water and sanitation services and demand accountability for government and service providers
- Improve coordination in the sector, promote local ownership and encourage quality access to water and sanitation services for all.
- CSOs can push MDAs to perform their new roles in policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation more effectively and to hold MMDA to play their implementing role more effectively.
- CSOs can encourage the use of water efficiency techniques to reduce transmission losses of water.
- CSOs could collaborate on research relating to water as a finite and vulnerable resource, integration of water resource management with environmental management, and the impact of climate variability and change on the supply and demand for water.
- CSOs could collaborate with government on the elimination of water-borne diseases and better hygiene through public education.

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41 This section was gleaned from contributions/ from donor advisors to the water sector.
Gender groups could monitor water and sanitation interventions to ensure that the specific needs and roles of men, women, children and the physically challenged are recognized and met.

As local government take on more responsibility, CSOs should better understand the budget and reporting cycle, how to engage in effective advocacy, and know how to integrate themselves into processes and committees.

**Social protection and safety nets**

Opportunities – monitoring implementation, assistance in targeting? What? The Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment (2009) suggests that the services and access to social safety nets such as immunization programs, mobile health services and mass cocoa spraying are particularly beneficial to poor and vulnerable groups. Communities reported incidents of benefit leakages in the LEAP program and other social protection programs; there were doubts about the consistency of selection and the effectiveness of implementation procedures; some respondents in the PPVA also perceived that access to social protection programs were mediated by patronage politics.

There are several social protection programs currently operating in Ghana including the LEAP, National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP), mass literacy programmes e.g. recent financial literacy programmes and NCCE activities are examples of programmes. These programs attempt to empower and reduce inequality. Subsidies targeted at particular groups e.g. farmers to help them improve their livelihoods and gain access to markets.

The National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) is another attempt to reduce social exclusion and inequities between households “recognizing that that certain groups of individuals e.g. elderly women, people living with disabilities, or orphaned children, who often also happen to have the lowest income, tend to be excluded from access to certain basic services and opportunities”. The NSPS will provide a key entry point to work on remaining “pockets of poverty” as Ghana moves towards middle income status. This policy formulation also provides CSOs with an important opportunity to engage with the state on social policy issues.

**Agriculture and Food Security**

There are several areas where the CSO movement can hold Government accountable in rationalizing the policies and incentives around financing of the agricultural sector. The sector continues to lack pro poor policies and proper extension services for poor; there is an extremely high extension officer farmer ratio (1:1,500). Given the current food insecurity in northern Ghana there is a growing need for targeted services particularly to northern Ghana where high rates of child malnourished, climatic vulnerability and long periods of “hunger” continue to characterize the region. There has been growing involvement of CSOs engagement with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) through coalitions such as Food SPAN and the Trade and

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42 This section was supported through dialogue with Agriculture and food security advisors in CIDA.
Livelihood Coalition.

Attention of civil society should focus on improving coordination in the sector and encourage better quality access to agricultural services. It should mobilize citizens to claim their rights to food security and farmers to claim their rights to extension services. Funding key civil society groups and networks working in agriculture and food security, (such as Food SPAN, ACDEP, FBOs, Agribusiness Entrepreneurs and Food Crop Exporters), would ensure that focused attention is brought to the sector. If civil society can monitor disbursement, draw correlations between costs and eventual impact, measure increases in productivity, and decreases in losses, then it can better hold MOFA to account.

Civil society organizations could collaborate to address environmental issues in food and agriculture and demonstrate in very practical terms, how to mainstream and mitigate negative impacts associated with climate change.
### Annex 3: Lessons learnt

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Annex 4: Monitoring and evaluating the change processes

The first level of baseline indicators should include: levels of citizen engagement before the fund is launched similar to measure indicators which track governance and accountability within the system and in relation to CSOs interface with the state media and their own constituencies; secondly, result or outcomes indicators should track change at a higher level including:

- The MDBS own assessment of its performance across the sectors
- Sector performance tracking in terms of service delivery from a beneficiary perspective and a national perspective;
- An assessment of the budget, its disbursement and outcomes;

Process indicators will also have to include: the capacities of the CSOs themselves in relation to advocacy, voice and accountability issues, the degree to which voice has increased, the number of entry points at all levels of the system which have opened up and the success in terms of engagement of CSOs with the state and its response at national and district levels. District monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be assessed from a decentralized perspective in order to track change at the District Assembly level and in relation to CSO’s who have benefited from GHARI on an ongoing basis in order to capture the complexity of change over the time of the fund implementation.