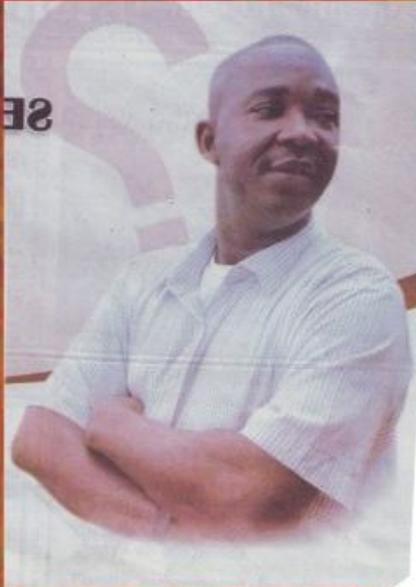




RAINS

In

2008



1.0 Message from the Board Chairman

Thoughts of Abdul-Samed Seidu occupied my mind as I embarked upon writing this message. The mysterious disappearance of this young, intelligent and dynamic development worker remains a puzzle to many people. That the state investigative machinery has been unable to uncover or offer any clues as to the whereabouts of Samed, who is presumed murdered gives every admirer of justice, security and fair play lots of worrying moments. On 13th May 2009, it will be exactly 2 years since anybody has heard from or seen Abdul-Samed. We take consolation in the fact that a lot of friends, partners and well wishers offered diverse support in this period of grief and uncertainty. Although our best efforts can never compensate for the pain and suffering, we are determined to replace devastation and despair with hope and confidence in the future while continuing to pursue our vision of poverty reduction. We are indeed spurred on by the fact that justice, no matter how long it will take will arrive one day.

The challenges of our time are unprecedented. It is not simply a question of replacing school infrastructure, meeting school going needs or meeting other rural infrastructure needs. Restoring the livelihoods of some of the poorest communities will be an equally complex task. Complex because of the rapid loss of biodiversity and indigenous crop species; complex because of the inappropriate notion that plantation-type commercial farming driven by profit motives represents the best opportunity to escape from poverty and trigger growth; complex because communities are not empowered

enough to demand accountability for the usage of community resources.

I am happy that we have started to engage with some communities on issues around land grabbing and biofuels. We are not unaware of the deliberate attempts to misrepresent our intentions by the perpetrators. We are also in the know of attempts to incite communities against all those who seek genuine dialogue and transparency in community resource management. We will continue our policy advocacy work, and will reach out to the media and other partners to ensure that development is people-centred, and will not in any way endanger the livelihoods of this and future generations.

Several initiatives adopted in 2008 will allow RAINS to enhance its development effectiveness. Integral to this is RAINS' commitment to manage for development results. We strengthened the capacity of Community Surveillance Teams (CSTs) to manage local level development in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Transport and other logistics have been provided to 20 CSTs to enhance monitoring.

The year also saw notable progress in the Child trafficking work. We were able to reach out to 2,800 young people who were either trafficked or stood the risk of being trafficked. 1,600 of this number are enrolled in formal schools whilst the rest are undergoing various forms of vocational training. We are currently reviewing this component of work to better address the needs of girls already

in hazardous forms of labour, and also to strengthen aspects relating to reintegration.

In 2008 we also developed a comprehensive database, new information systems and technology strategy together with a review of several other major strategies. Also, Professor Awudu Abudulai of the Kiev University, Germany joined the Board of Trustees. Professor Abudulai has extensive experience in research and international development, and his expertise is already reflecting in the quality of programming at RAINS. These and many other initiatives helped ensure that RAINS remains an effective, dynamic development partner to meet the challenges of our time.

I will like to thank my colleagues on the Board for the sacrifices they continue to make in order to meet the objectives of RAINS. Our staff and volunteers did a lot to meet our targets and objectives. Your efforts are hugely recognized, and I am convinced that you will put in more efforts in 2009.

It is also my pleasure to extend thanks and gratitude to our numerous supporters and partners who ensured that our plans and strategies did not remain on paper, and that many people and communities had access to resources to enhance welfare. In no particular order I mention Comic Relief, Hope for Children UK, American Jewish World Service (AJWS), IBIS Ghana, Canadian Feed the Children, African Biodiversity Network, Artist Project Earth (APE), OSIWA, Ghana Education Service, District Assemblies, The African Studies Centre, University of Ghana,

GoalGhana and several other community partners. We are grateful and look forward to working with you in 2009 and beyond.

It now remains for me to invite you to read our 2008 review. Many thanks and may God bless you all.

2.0 Working with Communities to Prevent child trafficking

According to the ILO, Ghana is a major supply, transit and receiving destination for trafficked victims. It further maintains that 57% of all children in exploitative labour are found in the agricultural sector. This is of particular interest to northern Ghana given its high poverty profile and its peasant agrarian economy. The enormity of the problem and urgent need to work towards its elimination resulted in the promulgation of the Human Trafficking Act 694 in December 2005.

2.1.1 Tackling the Causes and not the Symptoms

Our project is adopting a mix of strategies to tackle child trafficking focusing especially on prevention. We are using a combination of education, vocational training, health care, livelihoods development and media and advocacy. This is aimed at tackling the root causes rather than the symptoms of the problem. In 2008 we supported the enrolment and education of 1,600 girls in 20 communities in the Savelugu/Nanton and West Mamprusi Districts of the Northern Region. These children who are currently enrolled in school are in two categories: 1000 girls who were already in school but prone to be trafficked because of the high poverty of their families and 600 girls who are now been enrolled and attending school for the first time. All of these girls have received school uniforms, shoes, teaching and learning materials and are receiving ongoing counseling and school-based support. Also 1200 young girls who are above the average school going age have been withdrawn from exploitative labour and have been placed for vocational skill training. These children and other peers have together formed coalitions and are undertaking peer advocacy

to educate their friends and parents on the ills of trafficking. They have therefore constituted a safety net to co-protect children.

2.1.2 Fostering Community Ownership

To encourage local level ownership and sustainability under this project we have worked with local communities themselves to establish Child Surveillance Teams (CSTs) as the first point of contact. The local CSTs which are still in their infant stages are serving as focal point for detecting, intercepting, rescuing and reporting suspected cases of child labour, abuse and trafficking. The CSTs are preventing a number of trafficking and kayayei situations and rely solely on local level knowledge and relationships to ensure that children grow in a safe and welcoming and environment.

Case Study

About six foster parents did not enroll their fostered children in schools. The Takorayili CST in the West Mamprusi District talked to, and engaged with the foster parents. The foster mothers complained of

The CSTs are receiving ongoing training and support from resource persons drawn from the Department of Social Welfare and the Attorney General's Department to enable them respond to changing dynamics of child trafficking in their communities. We have also trained the social services sub-committees of the 2 District Assemblies on a wide range of topics including advocacy, influencing and on Act 560. We are working with the Two Assemblies to enact bye-laws that will protect children in the communities.

2.2 Vocational Training and Life Skills

As part of the NGP 42 young girls, most of them kayayei returnees are learning dressmaking and life skills at the Mandela Development Centre at RAINS to facilitate their integration into communities and enhance their welfare. Training courses are also available in business management and record keeping, Guidance and Counseling, family planning, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS education as an integral part of the skills development programme. Sports and recreation are being introduced to them to boost their confidence and psychological wellbeing.

Trainees at the Mandela Centre are very happy about the quality of training and the extent of care that is being extended to them. All trainees are unanimous that a substantial contribution is being made to enhance their personal development and that there are no further incentives to embark on the needless journey down south to undertake menial and risky jobs. Plans are far advanced to enroll 30 other working children for training courses in carpentry at the Mandela Development Centre.

Focus on Change

The training here has helped to relieve me of some sort of emotional thoughts which have occupied my mind for a long time. I have always felt lonely and lost hope as I felt the streets of Accra did not give the needed hope and inspiration. Now I am confident that I am getting a vocation that will earn me a decent income. My confidence is also greatly enhanced after this exposure. During break time we interact with each and share ideas on a wide range of issues. My interpersonal relation has also improved. I have learnt to

be more patient with people, be accommodating and generally focused on the future. **Inusah Fati Maltiti, 23 years**

2.3 RAINS Collaborates with IBIS on Vocational Training and Life skills

This collaboration is addressing issues of life skills for young people in the Bole and Sawla/Tuna/Kalba Districts of the Northern Region through vocational training. The skills training component is enabling young people add values to their lives through the acquisition of skills and knowledge concurrently. The aim of this is to reduce youth vulnerability and support the attainment of self-sufficiency to secure their lives.

The life skills aspects addresses life planning knowledge, numeracy and literacy skills, reproductive health issues, enterprise development and general basic studies. A total of 316 girls and boys are receiving skill training at 2 training centres and on an apprenticeship

scheme. These include 110 trainees receiving skills in dressmaking, hairdressing, batik making, weaving and secretarial duties at the Bole training centre.



At the Sawla Vocational training school 186 trainees are receiving skills in hairdressing, dressmaking, catering, batik. The



Girls learning carpentry at St' Kizito's

apprenticeship scheme which established master craftsman relationship with the St' Kizitos VTC, is growing stronger. Twenty (20) young men and young women are receiving training in carpentry and masonry skills. It is also creating an opportunity for local artisans to contribute to training unskilled youth. Partnerships with local artisans as trainers has a value addition of multiplying opportunities for self employment creation, developing entrepreneurial culture among the youth, reversing scarce local skill expertise capacity gaps and creating a pool of master trainers from the trainees who are expected to help train other youth.

2.3.1 Collaboration with Stakeholders

Because of the life skills orientation we are working closely with a broad range of stakeholders including the Ghana Education Service, Rural Enterprises Project, the Bole Hospital, the Bole District Mutual Health Insurance Scheme and the Department of Social Welfare. These agencies are handling other issues of development confronting the youth including enterprise development, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.

Young people are also benefitting from mentoring from these stakeholders. Our expectation is that these young people will not only be transformed, but on the wider note become agents for the transformation of households and for change of communities. Care has been taken to ensure wider inclusion of all potential trainees including people living with HIV/AIDS. A tolerant environment exists for amicable interaction with the rest of the groups and limitless latitude for expression without hindrances of any kind. We are inspired by the fact that this programme is dismantling barriers, and contributing to removing discrimination for people living with HIV/AIDS

Focus on Impact

I have found a new lease of life in this centre. There is no discrimination here compared to other places in this community. Trainees appreciate me when I share my life experiences, including the side of living with HIV/AIDS with them. Life could not have been any better without this engagement. I really will love a day when this type of welcoming environment is replicated everywhere in the community - 21 year old trainee living with HIV/AIDS

3.0 Girls' Education continues to receive attention

Our girls' education strategy addresses the constraints of girls' education in Northern Ghana in a context of extreme poverty. In 2008 we worked with a wide range of stakeholders to enhance enrolment and retention for 500 girls in 3 deprived Districts in the Northern Region. We are employing a mix of strategies including service delivery and advocacy to tackle some of the barriers to girls'

education. This project is an extension of the RAINS' comprehensive education programme that is addressing the constraints to girls' education in a holistic manner. The strategies include direct material and financial support, community mobilization, strengthening school level structures, enhancing participation of communities in educational management and galvanizing local and national support for girls' education.

In 2008 we continued with our collaboration with AJWS that has already extended support to **1,000** girls in 3 Districts in the Northern Region. This year we supported the education of 300 additional girls in 3 different Districts of the Northern Region. These Districts have been carefully chosen to reflect the growing needs of poor and difficult-to-reach communities. We catered for the school going costs of underprivileged girls in these Districts by providing uniform, shoes and books to all **300 girls**. In addition, **60** bicycles were provided to girls on need basis and were principally directed at girls who commute long distances to access education. Community based committees selected these girls in partnership with District Girl Child officers, and ensured that ongoing support and care are extended to these girls. The participating districts are the Yendi, Central Gonja and Bunkpurugu/Yunyoo Districts in the Northern Region

Focus on Impact

I am so grateful for this support. Now I don't have to worry about whether my sandals are worn out or my uniform is torn. I will look neat now and be punctual and regular at school. This will encourage me to study hard to fulfill my ambition of becoming a lawyer. Paul Abena, Primary 4, SDA Primary school, Yendi

4.0 Improving the School Environment

The School environment is an important component in the drive towards quality education. We have always worked with communities to identify priorities for community schools. In 2008 our school improvement work was carried out in the Savelugu Nanton and Nanumba North Districts. With support from the RBC Dexia Investor Services and HOPE for Children UK we provided a hostel facility for girls at the Savelugu Senior High School. The Hostel provides safe term time accommodation to 50 girls, most of who come from communities outside the Savelugu Township. The headmaster of the school is confident that the facility will go a long way to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.



Savelugu Girls Hostel



Bimbila School Renovated

In the Nanumba North District we partnered with the Canadian Feed the Children and the local community to renovate a school block for the Naa Abdulai School. We also provided 50 dual desks to the school. This created additional sitting places and removed the trauma of learning under dilapidated structures, and lying down to write. This has inspired confidence in the kids who are also benefitting from health and environmental education.

5.0 Promoting Inclusive Education – Partnership with the Yumba Special School

The Yumba Special School in Tamale was established in 2003 to cater for the educational and development needs of mentally retarded children in Northern Ghana. The first of its kind in the region, the school faced a number of challenges. The school lacked several facilities including places of convenience, boarding facilities, technical workshops and suitable means of transport. Society has not also done much to support the development of mentally retarded children. For close to 2 years, the headmistress of the school use to pick kids from their homes to school using only a small pick-up truck provided by the Ministry of Education. The kids had to sit in the bucket of the truck exposing them to danger. The school had, and still has several challenges. In 2008 we



started work with authorities of the school to address some of the challenges. Our overall objective is to contribute progressively towards an inclusive society where everybody especially mentally retarded children have adequate access to education and other

resources in order to realize their potential. With support from the RBC Dexia Investor Services and HOPE for Children UK we provided the school with a 21-seater bus to help in transporting children to and from school. We also provided a 10-seater modern place of convenience and wash rooms for the school. This has helped in improving sanitation in the school. In the coming days we will be working with the authorities of the school to bring to the fore the extent of neglect faced by mentally retarded children and to mobilize various key stakeholders in the region and beyond for work towards improved treatment

These interventions are contributing significantly to the development of the school. The bus has ensured that all kids get to school in a safe and stress free manner. The kids also use to attend to nature's call in the open and in nearby bushes exposing them to significant risks. In one instance we had to walk several kilometers to locate a student who did not return from the bushes after attending to nature's call. The place of convenience will not only improve sanitation but will also ensure that kids are safe and do not move far into the bushes. I think, it is appropriate other stakeholders join hands to provide a fence wall for the school. We are extremely grateful to RBC Dexia Investor Services, HOPE and RAINS-Mrs Georgina Anaba Nuagah, headmistress of Yumba Special School.

6.0 Transforming lives through Sports: *Dema min Lebgimsim* work reaches out to more young people

Through our partnership with GoalGhana, a UK-based charity, we have been able to mobilise rural communities and young people (boys and girls) in a manner that opens the frontiers to inclusive

development. This programme recognizes the power of sports and recreation to the overall development of young people, and the power of soccer to draw communities together. It is also helping to unearth talents in rural communities in Northern Ghana. . Our experience shows that sports can serve as a means to building leadership, strong character, and confidence in young people, thereby preparing them to meet the challenges in an increasingly competitive world. **Dema mini Lebgimsim** currently operates in 3 districts of the Northern Region and is actively engaging 270 young boys and girls. This involves organized football clubs according to age groups in all three (3) communities in the districts. The communities are Boganaayili in the Tolon-Kumbugu district, Savelugu in the Savelugu/Nanton district and Tamale in the Tamale Metropolis.

During training sessions and community gala matches, coaches working in this area of work and resource persons take the opportunity to educate the kids on HIV/AIDS, combining soccer with education and other social issues.

Again in 2008, we collaborated with GoalGhana and Tackle Africa who sent 3 FA Coaches to Tamale. They organised refresher courses for our team of local coaches to upgrade their skills



Some Results

- **National Sports Academy selects one of our players.** Mohammed Zakaria from Savelugu has been selected into the National Sports Academy. This means Mohammed will be combining academic work with sports. Mohammed Zakaria is the only selected player from the Northern Region.
- **Women's Confidence Enhanced.** 2 of our girls have been admitted into Teacher Training Colleges. 3 girls were invited by the National U-17 team to play justifiers, though they were not selected finally for the national team, their confidence level has enhanced and other girls have developed interests in soccer.
- **Emotional Needs.** During training sessions the boys and girls receive counseling on HIV/AIDS, combining education with sports and other social issues. It is also important to add that all 270 boys and girls are regularly attending training sessions with no drop outs recorded.
- **Ibrahim Shaibu, Dema min Lebgimsim head Coach Honoured.** Mr. Shaibu received an award for promoting

female soccer and was also appointed Public Relations Officer (PRO) for women soccer in Northern Region.

More communities are approaching RAINS and the coaching team to extend the initiative to their communities. In the coming days we intend to incorporate more life skills elements into the intervention.

7.0 Community, Environment and Governance

RAINS recognises the critical importance of care for the environment in the lives of the predominantly rural and agricultural communities of Ghana. Similarly, we believe that it is only by building on the knowledge base of these communities on the harmonious relationship with nature, that we can guarantee food, nutrition and livelihood security and resilience. To this end, RAINS has worked in partnership with the Gaia Foundation, the Africa Biodiversity Network, Taimako Centre for Plant Medicine, and rural communities to adopt various strategies towards meeting this goal.

7.1 Mid Volta Ecosystem Restoration Project Starts

The Volta River basin drains approximately forty (40%) percent of the land area of Ghana. On account of the rainfall regime in the northern parts of the country, the basin area is home to an intricate ecosystem that supports diverse flora and fauna and a wide range of communities. The biodiversity in this river basin has been undergoing stress as the regime of the river has over the past years

become highly unpredictable. The basin area has witnessed periods of flood and drought in recent years hence these floods are interspersed with periods of extremely low water inflows that have promoted siltation have left islands of sand dunes within the water belt. The siltation of the river bed has also aggravated those periods of floods with destructive consequences for life and biodiversity within the basin.

These changes occasioned by climate variability, are putting stress on the capacity of immediate communities within the basin area to cope with these new challenges. Responses emerging from these communities as a result of changes in the weather seem to pose serious challenges to their resilience to unpredictable weather conditions as was shown by the floods in 2007 in Northern Ghana.

In 2008 we carried out a series of community meetings to raise awareness with respect to the key challenges along the Basin. A wider forum is being provided to enable community members and other stakeholders such as the Water Resources Commission, the Volta river authority, the District Assemblies in the Areas, the Traditional Councils etc to further explore the issues that the communities identify as the challenges to their livelihood strategies in order to agree on key interventions. Community members are keen to restore and maintain the ecological integrity in the basin area. RAINS will be working further with them to carry out these initiatives in the coming years.

Case Study

I now appreciate the responsibility that falls on me and the other traditional rulers in this area to mobilize our people to save the river from losing all its fish stock. We are looking forward to a fruitful partnership with government institutions especially the security agencies to help arrest some of the negative practices along the river. The river is our life and because of the loss of its fish stock and the poor agricultural harvests, life now is not as exciting as it was in our villages when I was a young man.

-Zauguwura Jakpa 66 years, Chief of Zawgu village which oversees some of the most important ponds along the river bemoans the good old days



Meeting with the traditional rulers and other community members to analyse the problems of the basin area

7.2 Climate, Seed and Knowledge (CSK) work starts at Zoosali

The Agricultural sector is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change which include increased frequency of extreme weather events such as drought, fire and flooding. The impact of climate change on agricultural productivity also has the potential to impact negatively on other natural resource management challenges currently facing communities in Northern Ghana.

The CSK engagement aims at highlighting the role of women in indigenous seed selection, preservation and maintenance. It also aims at exploring opportunities for the involvement of women in



Joint Activity on the field

indigenous seed issues and also issues around climate change and indigenous farming methods and ultimately boosting food security in the light of global food crisis and price hikes.

The project also supports rural communities involving men and women to devise practical means to resolving some of the burdens imposed by climate change and other unsustainable extractive

practices. This engagement is being implemented in Zoosali in the Northern Region of the Republic of Ghana.

As part of this engagement, women groups are being supported to cultivate some of the local crops/vegetables that are getting extinct in the area due to introduction of foreign varieties. This is because, crops yields in the area are dwindling yearly because the grains/vegetables that used to sustain the people all year round have been abandoned due to the foreign varieties introduced to our farmers under the guise of modernization of agriculture in the country. Women in the community have been identified as hardworking and are always willing to put in their best in farming to feed their children. Women in the community have also exhibited enthusiasm in championing traditional knowledge and preservation systems.

RAINS with support from the African Biodiversity Network (ABN) bore the cost of ploughing the fields and organic manure where necessary whilst weeding, harvest and processing of seeds are being done by the women themselves. The women welcome this sharing process noting that they will put in their best and effort to revive indigenous seeds as a more sustainable way of enhancing food security



Traditional Food storage house

The CSK engagement has succeeded in highlighting issues of climate change and its impact on rural livelihoods. The project has not only made local communities keen observers of climate change but has highlighted the need to draw on and consolidate existing mechanisms for coping with short-term adverse climate conditions such as droughts or flooding. Communities are much aware of the impact climate change has on livelihoods and food security now than before.

A participant Speaks

This is what our forefathers did. We had plenty of food. We did not have the environmental challenges and difficulties engulfing our communities today. I think we should ensure that this process is properly documented for the benefit of generations yet unborn- Ayi Mahamadu, 48 years, Zoosali

7.3 Agro Fuels and land grabbing Campaign

In 2008 we started a campaign to sensitise communities on Agro fuels and land grabbing. This is against a background of large scale acquisition of community lands for biofuel production. We also commissioned a study into this issue to assess the extent and nature of the agrofuel invasion and to devise appropriate advocacy responses. Among others, the study found that *“The greatest challenge to the sustainability of agro-fuel cultivation in Ghana is related to the legal status of land earmarked for bio-fuel cultivation. Customary lands constitute a target for large scale acquisitions. These lands are communally owned and their acquisition if not properly regulated would pose a serious threat to the sustainability of these interventions. This is because the stakes of the communities are too high even though not too*

obvious to the outsider. A key ingredient is therefore that any disposition of such lands must receive the concern of the head and principal members of the community. The current status of most of the lands so far acquired for jatropha production leaves a lot to be questioned. The livelihood of the owners of these lands is badly threatened. Large-scale monocultures encourage deforestation and pose a threat to biodiversity, food production, apart from land rights. The diversion of food crops such as cassava, corn, palm oil, soybeans and sugarcane to bio-fuels may lead to sharp rises in food prices in the coming years”.

Acquired Jatropha plantation field



Source: Field Trip, (2008)

It is increasingly becoming clear commercial motives are driving this development almost to the exclusion of environmental, climate and food security issues. The crux of our advocacy work is not to derail corporate profit but to engage communities and policy makers and indeed the general public to appreciate the fact that, trade-offs between the nexus of energy security, climate change and food security objectives, must be monitored and integrated into both food and bio-fuel policy actions.

So far the advocacy work has been able to compel some major players in the field of Jatropha production to open negotiations with the traditional leadership. RAINS has provided the appropriate support to traditional leaders in the course of these

negotiations. Our advocacy, led by Bakari Nyari has also involved engagement with the traditional rulers and appropriate guidelines have been fashioned out with the Gonja Traditional Council on how to manage request for large acquisitions of land, a new phenomenon that is emerging. It is hoped that in the coming years this will be extended to the other traditional councils. This will arm them sufficiently to have constructive engagements regarding these demands.

8.0 Relief and Emergency Interventions

In partnership with HOPE for Children we supported a number of relief and emergency projects across the country targeting mostly women and children. A total of Eight thousand and two people (8,002) benefitted from these interventions. Areas of intervention included enterprise development for women, rehabilitation of school blocks and houses affected by floods, medical treatment, microfinance and agro processing activities. These interventions enabled rural women and children to cope with temporary shocks as more lasting approaches are sought to enable them access mainstream development services.

Case Study

I was totally devastated by the flooding. I had no option that to put up with friends. The inconvenience and uncertainty put me through a lot of stress. I had lost hope and did not know the next steps to take since all my crops were also washed away by the floods. The assistance to rehabilitate my home has given me a breather. It will prepare me both physically and psychologically for the next farming season. I am really grateful. Soale Iddrisu, 38 years, Nabogu



Women Farmers in Yendi

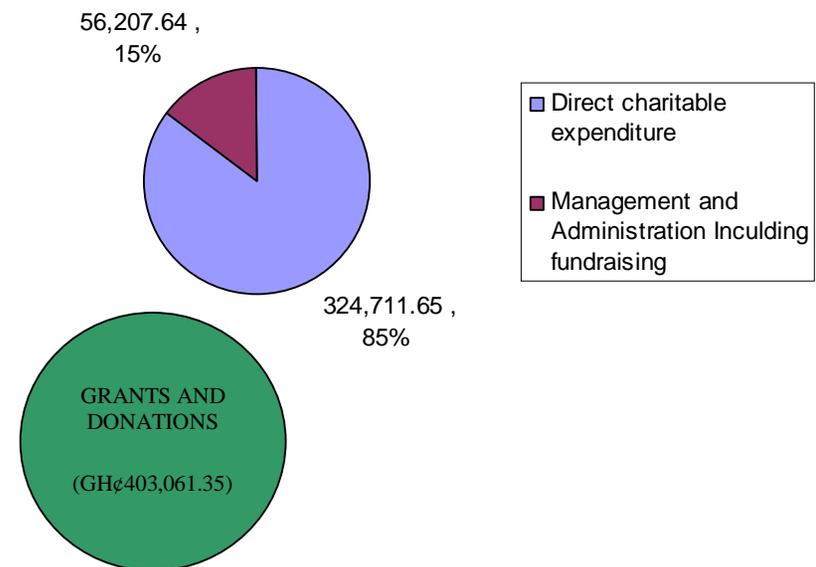


Presentation to Nabogu Flood Victims

9.0 Finance

In 2008 Grants and donations from partners amounted to GH¢403,061.35 representing an increase of 53% over the 2007 figure of GH¢264,273. This increment is attributable to the increased inflow from the NGP funding, and also to the funding support from IBIS. A total of GH¢324,711.65 representing 85% of total expenditure went into direct charitable activities whilst management and administrative costs including fundraising costs accounted for 15%. These figures are extracts from our 2008 audited accounts. The full statutory accounts have been filed with regulatory agencies.

Resources Expended in 2008



Funders for 2008

Comic Relief

Hope for Children

American Jewish World Service

Canadian Feed the Children

IBIS

African Biodiversity Network

Artist Project Earth

RBC Dexia Investor Services

GoalGhana, UK