GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE FOR RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN FOREST MANAGEMENT (GIRAF) PROJECT

END OF PROJECT EVALUATION

FINAL REPORT

EUROPEAN UNION & CARE DENMARK

December, 2012
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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACRN</td>
<td>Africa Community Rights Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO(s)</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFF</td>
<td>Community Forest Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIKOD</td>
<td>Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organisational Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Civic Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO(s)</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation(s)</td>
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<td>CWA</td>
<td>Central and West Africa Countries</td>
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<td>DFF</td>
<td>District Forest Forum</td>
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<td>ER</td>
<td>Expected Results</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation (of the United Nations)</td>
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<td>FC</td>
<td>Forestry Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>FF</td>
<td>Forest Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLEGT</td>
<td>Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>FoE-Gh</td>
<td>Friends of the Earth Ghana</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSD</td>
<td>Forest Services Division (of the FC)</td>
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<td>FWG</td>
<td>Forest Watch Ghana</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIRAF</td>
<td>Governance Initiative for Rights and Accountability in Forest Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>GoG</td>
<td>Government of Ghana</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSBAs</td>
<td>Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFM</td>
<td>Logical Framework (or Logframe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTR</td>
<td>Mid Term Review</td>
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<td>NCOM</td>
<td>National Coalition on Mining</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFF</td>
<td>National Forest Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO(s)</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation (s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NREG</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Environmental Governance (Sector Budget Support)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OD</td>
<td>Organisational Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMT</td>
<td>Project Management Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Project Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFF</td>
<td>Regional Forest Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSC</td>
<td>Resource Management Support Centre (of FC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROM</td>
<td>Results Oriented Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFM</td>
<td>Sustainable Forest Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Traditional Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
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<tr>
<td>VPA</td>
<td>Voluntary Partnership Agreement</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Evaluation Team wishes to express their sincere thanks to the many respondents from community to district to national level for all of their many helpful comments and suggestions. The Team would like to particularly acknowledge the staff of the partner organisations for the useful information they provided and for their patience in sitting for long hours to answer our numerous questions. Our special thanks also go to Albert Katakko and Elijah Yaw Danso for their useful comments and suggestions. We are very grateful to Leticia Heywood who helped in countless ways with the logistical support to the evaluation.

Finally, while the information presented in this evaluation originated in the keen observations and thoughtful reflections of the many kind people who shared in it, the fault for any inaccuracies or misinterpretations rests solely with the evaluation team.

Paul Sarfo-Mensah, Peter Donkor and Ebenezer Owusu-Addo

December, 2012
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Background

The overall objective of the Governance Initiative for Rights and Accountability in Forest management (GIRAF) project was that forest resources in Ghana are sustainably managed and contributing to poverty reduction. It was a 4-year project (2009-2012) funded by the EU (80%) with counterpart funding from CARE Denmark (20%).

GIRAF was implemented under a partnership arrangement amongst four NGOs [CARE Ghana, Civic Response, Friends of the Earth-Ghana (FoE-Gh) and Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD)] working together as equal partners. The partners are all members of Forest Watch Ghana, a platform which members have used to influence forest governance in Ghana.

The primary target group was 45,000 forest-dependent people living in 90 communities in 30 rural districts in the Brong-Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Northern, Volta and Western regions of Ghana. It also targeted local level institutions such as Community Resource Management Committees, District Forest Forums and Traditional Authorities.

Background of Evaluation

The overall objective of the evaluation was to conduct an end of Project Evaluation that will help provide evidence about the Project’s impact on the beneficiaries and also provide lessons learnt for the GIRAF Project.

The evaluation analysis was based on the European Commission criteria for assessment of Project performance (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability). A rating was assigned to each evaluation criterion on a six-point scale, where a rating of 1 indicates highly unsatisfactory and a rating of 6 indicates highly satisfactory performance.

The evaluation team visited selected project communities and districts to interact with project beneficiaries. Discussions were also held with the project partners and other facilitating NGOs. The period of the evaluation was between 8th and 21st December, 2012.

Project Implementation Results

ERI: Forest Forums in 30 districts support wide stakeholder engagement on forest governance and are linked up to regional and national Forest Forums

The project was able to achieve its target of supporting 30 district forest forums (DFFs) which are networked through district, zonal and national forums. The facilitation of community forest forums prior to the district forums adequately prepared community stakeholders to effectively engage stakeholders at the district level. However, the institutionalization and sustainability of the forums have to be critically looked into as there appeared to be no identity of the forums particularly at the community level.
Prior to the GIRAF project more than 17 DFF existed. According to the GIRAF document, the 1st round of capacity building targeted these DFFs to get them operational. Discussions with forum members at both district and community levels revealed that some community and district forums existed before the GIRAF project. However, in all the eight (8) districts and 24 communities visited by the Evaluation Team, it was reported that the forums were dormant and had been revived by the GIRAF project.

**ER2: Transparency in forest sector has improved in 30 districts through utilisation of public audits, community transparency scorecards and making results publicly available**

The Project has been effective in strengthening the capacity of Traditional Authorities (TAs) on modern concepts of accountability and transparency for improved forest governance. The project has created awareness on royalties and Social Responsibility Agreements (SRA). Prior to the project, there was very little discussion on royalties in terms of its calculation, use and accountability by beneficiaries. Also, the process of SRAs negotiations were taught to the traditional authorities and other forest stakeholders.

The project adopted the citizens’ report card produced by CIKOD and collected data over a broader scope. However, it had challenges particular with the integrity of the data collected by some facilitating NGOs. This affected the publication of the Transparency Reports as only the 2012 Report has so far been produced. But, CIKOD under the Making Forest Sector Transparent (MFST) project has produced two Transparency Reports which are being used for advocacy on forest governance.

**ER3: Increased public awareness of the value of forest resources and of FLEGT in Ghana and dissemination of Ghana’s experiences to other potential VPA countries**

The project has improved the level of awareness on forest issues at the community, district and national levels. The awareness creation approach adopted by the project (including the use of fliers, radio and TV programmes and websites) reached a large audience including the targeted beneficiaries. The media engagements on forest governance have deepened discussions on sustainable forest management. However, the participation of the Forum Facilitators in the radio programmes at the district level was low.

**ER 4: Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have demonstrated increased capacity to undertake advocacy for improved forest governance at district, national, and international levels.**

The project succeeded in building the advocacy capacity of the participating NGOs and Forest Watch Ghana. Several useful advocacy case studies have been shared at national and international levels by some of the participating NGOs. The 2011 Advocacy report was produced as envisaged in the Logframe. The 2012 Report is with printers.
Challenges and facilitating factors of the project implementation

The major implementation challenges that confronted the Project were in the areas of cash-flow, staff recruitment and the partnership arrangement (see section 3.1). The factors that enhanced the project implementation were: the design of the forums from the community, district, zonal to national level enhanced the quality of the issues deliberated upon by the forums; the forum facilitators were already working in the districts and communities and had a fair understanding of governance issues in the area; and the regular meetings of the FWG members as the platform enabled the facilitating NGOs to share experiences and keep up with trends in the forest sector.

Evaluation Analysis

Relevance

The project is rated as highly relevant to the national forest sector and poverty reduction agenda of government of Ghana. The Project also aligns with government’s policy on Natural Resource and Environmental Governance (NREG) which aims to improve transparency in systems and procedures for natural resource management. It is also in line with European Commission’s (EC) Country Strategy Paper for Ghana which supports decentralisation by strengthening social accountability and the capacity of civil society organisations to engage with local governments, and to the needs of the rural poor.

Effectiveness

The overall assessment of the project in terms of effectiveness was satisfactory. The Project has contributed to improved forest governance by playing a great role in terms of advocacy, awareness and education at the National, District and Community level.

Efficiency

The project was able to deliver on all the expected results within time and budget, therefore value for money was achieved as a reasonably surplus also remained. However, the fact that most FWG members who facilitated the community and district forest forums showed deficit budget for their planned activities demonstrates that the cost of running the forest forums and awareness creation was under-estimated. The overall efficiency was rated satisfactory.

Impact

The project has achieved some specific outcomes which have impacted on women, the communities, partner organizations and local NGOs in forest resource management.

It is very clear from observations made by the evaluation team in the field that the project created high level of awareness among the various beneficiary communities regarding their rights and forest policies. It also provided a lot of social benefits to community members in terms of the use of the Social Responsibility Agreement (SRA) for the development of the communities. Additionally, it brought about unity among communities culminating in local networking of communities for the protection of the forest resources. Finally, the project built the capacities of the facilitators of the
local NGOs and the 3 implementing partners (CIKOD, FoE-Gh and Civic Response) in advocacy for sustainable forest resource management.

**Sustainability**

From discussions and observations throughout the evaluation, it became clear that the sustainability of the project hinged on institutionalisation and financial sustainability of the forest forums. The question of ownership of the processes, institutional leadership, responsibility for forest forums, and the funding of the processes are the major issues that threaten the sustainability of the project. It is not clear whether the benefits of the forums particularly at the district level will be sustained after the project without external support. The evaluation team observed that in the design of the project, ownership of the forest forums and their processes were not clearly highlighted. This threatens the sustainability of the project. For instance, the district assemblies could have been drawn into the project as owners or joint owners of the forums at the district level. However, through the advocacy of GIRAF, the new Forest and Wildlife Policy has captured the funding of the forums. But this is yet to be given legal backing.

**Summary of overall project performance**

The project’s overall achievement is rated as satisfactory. Forest fringe communities in the Project areas understand their rights and responsibilities regarding forest management at the community level. Communities are able to engage duty bearers and demand accountability from them. Capacity of NGOs/CSOs has been built to champion advocacy on sustainable forest management at the district and community levels. The overall rating reflects the combined assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and innovation. Of these, impact and sustainability was considered to be moderately satisfactory. The table below provides the ratings of all the criteria.

**Summary of Evaluation Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Project Evaluation Ratings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A. Project performance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Project impact on:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Authorities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating partners and NGOs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest forums</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency in the forest sector</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public awareness on FLEGT/VPA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity of NGOs/CSOs to undertake advocacy on forest governance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

The project complementarity to existing interventions in the forest sector on governance is very strategic. The project activities have contributed to the achievement of the overall objective of ensuring sustainable management of forest resources in Ghana and contributing to poverty reduction. The high level of awareness created by the project at the community, district, zonal and national levels on forest governance has the potential to translate into sustainable forest management. The project has built advocacy capacity of communities, CBOs and NGOs/CSOs which would also contribute to sustainable forest management and poverty reduction in the long run.

The partnership arrangement used for the project implementation added value to the delivery of the project expected results. The technical competencies of the partner NGOs and the 11 facilitation NGOs, nine of which were FWG members, enabled the project to benefit from the synergies that were attributable to the NGOs working together. The benefits from the partnership arrangement and the chain of executing the project through the partnership far outweigh the management cost, and the occasional delays in the implementation processes arising from disagreement amongst the implementing NGOs.

Recommendations

Partners

✓ The implementation of the use of the community score cards should be done in a collaborative manner to ensure mutual benefit from the expertise of all the implementing organisations. This would enhance the quality and integrity of the data generated as well as the joint ownership of the report.

✓ The forum facilitators have acquired adequate knowledge in forest governance and can be used as resource persons to improve awareness creation at the community and district levels

✓ Follow-up visits to monitor the activities of the community forest forums (CFFs) members should be undertaken regularly by facilitators to build the confidence of forum members and also offer them the opportunity to discuss challenges they may face in exercising their rights to protect the forest.
✓ CARE Ghana in-house policies should be regularly discussed with sub grantees as a reminder of accountability obligations to the donor

✓ Women participation in the forum should be enhanced. Their representation in the forums at the district, zonal and national levels should be increased as they play a key role in advocacy at the community level.

✓ The project M&E system did not capture adequate information on the indicators in the logframe. Regular monitoring and data collection would enhance the quality of project reporting

✓ Adequate funds should be allocated for community and district forest forums. This would enable the Facilitating NGOs to cover more communities, make frequent follow-up visits to the communities and support community forum networking

✓ The partners must follow up on the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources to ensure speedy implementation of the legislative backing and provisions in the new FWP for funding for forest forums.

**European Union**

✓ Disbursement of project funds needs to be made to respond to the needs of partners and donors. The bureaucracies in the process must demonstrate transparency, accountability and responsible behaviour in the use of donor funds.

✓ The approach of using local NGOs in partnerships to implement EU development projects should be deepened. It has the potential to make wider impact on local level institutions, policy makers and community members

**Policy Makers**

✓ The project protocol arrangement under which DAs are expected to cede a percentage of timber royalties to the community forest forms needs to be reconsidered. This is because the DAs do not prioritise the use of the funds for forest and natural resources development but rather socio-economic infrastructural provision. Therefore, the government should commit some resources, through the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources to fund the operations of the forest forums.

**Other stakeholders**

✓ The forums as presently constituted do not have clear ownership at the community and district levels and this poses a threat to their institutionalisation and sustainability. Therefore, to ensure its ownership at the local levels the DAs, CSOs and CBOs should be encouraged to own the processes of the forums. The forums should also work closely with existing forums (including FC facilitated forums) to enhance their institutionalisation and sustainability.
✓ The existing local level institutions such as MoFA and FSD should also be assigned specific roles to play in the forums as they presently do not have any well defined roles.

Lessons Learnt

1. The structure of the forum i.e. from the community, district, zonal to the national level was very innovative. This enhanced wider stakeholder consultation and participation, especially at the community level where forest governance issues directly affect the poor and vulnerable.

2. In projects where partnership is involved, a comprehensive orientation should be organized for partners by an external organisation or resource person before project take-off. This will ensure a better understanding of partner roles and promote good working relationship, and also avoid the feeling of inequality amongst the partners.

3. The participation of women in the forums has the potential to deepen advocacy activities in forest fringe communities. For instance, in few communities like Wassa Saaman, where women were sensitised and actively participated in the forums, they had actively taken leadership roles in mobilizing their communities to protect their forest resources.

4. Involvement of traditional authorities in community-based projects that involve transparency and accountability enable them to open up to their subjects and other stakeholders.

5. To enhance visibility of EU funded rural development projects in beneficiary communities, activity lines for informing beneficiaries about EU must be part of the project implementation.
Figure 1: Project Coverage Area (The six beneficiary administrative regions: Northern; Brong Ahafo; Eastern; Western; Central; and Volta)
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background
Governance Initiative for Rights and Accountability in Forest management (GIRAF) was a 4-year project (2009-2012), funded by the EU (80%) with counterpart funding from CARE Denmark (20%). The overall objective of the project was that forest resources in Ghana are sustainably managed and contributing to poverty reduction. The aims of the project were four-fold: strengthening local networks and institutionalized platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogue; strengthening community actors’ capacity to monitor and evaluate policy implementation and the performance of institutions; enhancing public forest-governance awareness, creating a wider public audience for the debate about community forestry; and building the capacity of Forest Watch Ghana and cooperating Community Based Organisations to intervene directly in this discourse and conduct advocacy for Community Forest Management (CFM).

GIRAF was implemented by four NGOs [CARE Ghana, Civic Response, Friends of the Earth-Ghana (FoE-Gh) and Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD)] working together as partners. The partners are all members of the Forest Watch Ghana, a platform which members have used to influence forest governance in Ghana.

As a project that was meant to support the implementation of the Forest Laws and Enforcement Governance and Trade, (FLEGT) by facilitating stakeholders’ participation in forest governance, its strategic timing cannot be overemphasized. This is because the massive deforestation and forest degradation in the country can only be managed when rights and accountability are deeply enshrined in forest and natural resources governance.

1.2 Project Rationale
Clearly, the Project’s primary objective and sub-objectives were consistent with the national poverty reduction framework including the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA 2010-2013). The Project was also in tandem with recent government policy initiatives such as the Forest and Wildlife Policy. Government commitment to increasing effective forest governance and improving transparency and accountability in the forest sector were also captured in the Project objectives.

1.3 Project Area and Target Group
The project primarily targeted 45,000 forest-dependent people living in 90 communities in 30 rural districts in the Brong-Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Northern, Volta and Western regions of Ghana. The project also targeted local level institutions such as Community Resource Management Committees, District Forest Forums in existence before the project and traditional authorities.

1.4. Project Result Areas
GIRAF had four main result areas:

ER 1: Forest Forums in 30 districts support wide stakeholder engagement on forest governance and are linked up to regional and national Forest Forums;
ER 2: Transparency in forest sector has improved in 30 districts through utilisation of public audits, community transparency scorecards and making results publicly available;

ER3: Increased public awareness of the value of forest resources and of FLEGT in Ghana and dissemination of Ghana’s experiences to other potential VPA countries; and

ER4: Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have demonstrated increased capacity to undertake advocacy for improved forest governance at district, national, and international levels.

1.5 Organisation of the rest of the report

The report is organized into five sections. Section One is the Introduction. Background to Evaluation and Methodology is presented as Section Two. Section Three is Project Implementation Results whilst Section Four is the Evaluation Analysis. Conclusions and Recommendations are presented in Section Five.
2.0 Background to Evaluation and Methodology

2.1 Background of the Evaluation

The services of the Consultant was sought to conduct an end of Project Evaluation that will help provide evidence about the Project’s impact on the beneficiaries and also provide lessons learnt for the GIRAF Project. The Consult submitted Technical and Financial Proposals after an invitation to compete in a bid to undertake an End of Project Evaluation of the GIRAF Project. After the due competitive processes, the Consultant was declared the winner and a contract was signed on 18th of October 2012. However, it was agreed between the Client (CARE Ghana) and the Consultant that the assignment commenced on 8th of November, 2012. The terms of reference (TOR) for the assignment (see Annex 1) enjoined the consultants to:

- Make an overall independent assessment of the performance of the project paying particularly attention to concrete results, nature of benefits and impact of the project actions against its objectives;
- Assess whether value-for-money has been achieved, inputs were used economically to achieve the desired outputs;
- Determine whether the project was implemented in an efficient and effective way;
- Identify key lessons and propose practical recommendations for possible future interventions;
- Assess and provide evidence of extent of stakeholder ownership of processes and sustainability;
- Identify factors if any which enhanced or hampered Program implementation to the desired level;
- Assess the relevance of the project and its strategy in the context of the institutional and operational environment;
- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability of the results achieved in line with the indicators of the project log-frame; and
- Formulate lessons learned and best practices able to serve future EU Delegation portfolio in Rural Development or any other actions implemented in the sector.

2.2 Approach and Methodology

The Evaluation Team comprised an interdisciplinary team led by Dr. Paul Sarfo-Mensah (Socio-Economist). Other team members were Mr. Peter Donkor (Sustainable Livelihoods Expert) and Mr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo (Development Planner). The main fieldwork was conducted between November 8, 2012 and November 25, 2012. The team’s approach included:

- Planning meetings and plenary issues reviews with project staff in Accra;
- Review of project documents provided by CARE including Progress Reports, Annual Reports (2010 and 2011) and the Midterm Review Report;
- Meetings with partner organisations (NGOs/CSOs) in Accra;
- Meetings with EU Desk Officer in Accra;
- Meetings with focal persons of relevant sector ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) in selected Municipalities/Districts; and
Field visits to interact with project stakeholders at the community level; this included farmers in project communities, community based organisations (CBOs), and traditional authorities (TAs).

The Consultant used the evaluation criteria proposed by the European Commission (2006) to provide the basis for the assessment of Project performance. For each evaluation criterion a set of guiding evaluation questions was specified in the evaluation framework, as shown in Annex 2. A rating was assigned to each evaluation criterion on a six-point scale, where a rating of 1 indicates highly unsatisfactory and a rating of 6 indicates highly satisfactory performance. The evaluation paid special attention to discerning the proximate causes of good or less good performance in different expected result areas of the project.

Throughout the assessment, there was an explicit attempt by the team to interact with Project staff in a participatory manner and to discuss and debate findings as they came to light. This was intended to reinforce the open, transparent and action research modality that characterised the Project and its management. For example, the team facilitated debriefings with project staff and key actors at various levels, including selected beneficiary communities, districts, and national levels. In all this, the team was independent in its analysis of issues and was not in any way influenced in its decisions and conclusions by any of the Project actors.

2.3 Itinerary

The evaluation team participated in the Second Annual National Forest Forum organised by the Project and interacted with the forest forum facilitators, project implementing partners and stakeholders who have come from all the six participating regions. This afforded the team the opportunity to obtain an overview of the forum activities in all the three zones (Northern, Middle and Southern) of the project. The itinerary for the fieldwork (see annex 3) was also developed with the participation of the facilitators and the Agriculture and Natural Resources Coordinator of Care Ghana. It was agreed that the team visited four selected regions (Eastern, Brong Ahafo, Western and Central) in the Middle and Southern zones. A total of nine districts and 21 community forest forums were visited during the evaluation (see Annex 4). The choice of the study regions was based on those that have been participating since the inception of the project (Eastern, Brong Ahafo and Western regions) and one that joined in the successive years (Central region). The selection of the districts and communities was based on those that were considered to be comparatively performing well and those that had some serious challenges.
3.0 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS

At the time of the evaluation, activities bringing closure to the project were being implemented. According to the European Union, the major funding organisation, the Project will formally close on the 1st of January, 2013. Therefore, in assessing the implementation results, the evaluation approach was mindful of the ongoing operations and the likelihood of further achievement prior to project completion. The following analysis of implementation results is based on information taken from the Reports on Project Implementation for 2009, 2010 and 2011 produced by PMT, verified with data collected from the project’s monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and substantiated through field investigations.

3.1 Implementation Status

A review of project documents on the implementation of project activities under the four main result areas and discussions held with implementing partners on project achievements is summarized in Table 1 below. A look at the table indicated that most of the project activities were completed within the project time frame. However, under ER 1.3 the final Training Manual which was used to facilitate the Training of Trainers for forest forums was not ready at the time of the evaluation. The Consultants were informed it was at the printing stage. A draft version of the product sent to the printers was shared with the Consultants. The ToTs were facilitated with prepared presentations by individual resource persons. Also, under ER 2 the Transparency report for 2011 was not prepared due to inaccuracy of data collected by FWG members. A consultant was therefore hired to collect the information for the 2011 report. The analysis of the report has been completed and it is with the Printers. Even though data for the 2012 Transparency report has been collected, the analysis of the report is not complete and therefore the report is not yet ready. Detailed discussion on the implementation status is presented in sections 3.2.

Table 1: Summary of Project Implementation Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementation status</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ER 1: Forest Forums in 30 districts support wide stakeholder engagement on forest governance and are linked up to regional and national forest forums</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Review of the forestry forums experience in Ghana from 2002 to 2008</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Report available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Stakeholders strategic workshop</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Report Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Developed training kits and conduct ToT</td>
<td>ToT completed; manual development in progress. Various chapters of the manual completed. Manual with printer</td>
<td>The development of the content of the manual by the various partners became a challenge and this stalled the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Train and Support 30 District Forest Forum by the end of the project</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>DFFs were facilitated and supported in 30 districts; each of these districts had at least 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Implementation status</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>DFF per annum. Districts which had DFF facilitated from year 2 benefitted most because they had more DFFs than those in 2012.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>All the DFFs visited by the evaluation team were functioning and have attended NFFs. What were found lacking were continuous follow-up visits by the partner organization responsible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>+Network DFFs to strengthen the national forest forum process.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Two Zonal and two National Forums were held during the Project lifespan. Efforts to strengthen linkages with the FC organised NFF NGO was not successful due to irreconcilable differences in process, concept and approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ER 2</td>
<td>Transparency in forest sector improved in 30 districts through use of public audits, community transparency scorecards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Review Partners’ / FWG policy auditing skills and training needs</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Training needs conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>National FLEGT Monitoring Activities</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>FWG/GIRAF has sent written concerns to VPA Secretariat about the undue delays in the implementation of the VPA. FWG was instrumental in ensuring CSOs participation in the VPA negotiation, a clean legality definition for VPA and enforcement of TRMA. FWG also had a number of correspondence MLNR, EC and Parliament on illegal issues in the sector.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Implementation status</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Sensitize Traditional Authorities (TAs) on modern concepts of public accountability in 30 Districts</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>A total of 26 District level sensitization workshops for Traditional Authorities have been organized in 6 regions as at Midterm. As at July 2012, 26 districts had been covered. Additional EUR10000 was allocated to CIKOD in July for this activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Publish annual national forest governance report</td>
<td>Work in progress. Printing to be completed in December 2012</td>
<td>Data collected for 2011 report was not credible and therefore not used. A Consultant was engaged to recollect the data for 2011. Data has been analysed and report with the Printer. Same Consultant was used to collect data for 2012 governance report. This is yet to be sent for printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ER 3: Increased public awareness of the value of forest resources &amp; of FLEGT in Ghana and dissemination of Ghana’s experiences to other potential VPA countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Conduct communications research &amp; develop campaign strategy</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Campaign strategy developed and used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Conduct national awareness campaigns on forests &amp; forest governance</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>TV and radio programmes were aired in some of the regions; ICE material developed and distributed for awareness creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Share Ghana’s VPA experiences with CS networks in other VPA countries in West and Central Africa</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>FWG experiences have been shared at workshops in Ghana, Liberia and Cameroon. Awareness raising Materials placed on websites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Implementation status</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>ER 4:</td>
<td>NGOs and CSOs have demonstrated increased capacity to undertake advocacy for improved forest governance at district, national, and international levels.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Prepare an Advocacy Report on Community Forest Management</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>Advocacy reports documented various actions taken by communities as a result of FWG members’ advocacy on community forest management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Build advocacy capacity of FWG Secretariat and members</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>Every year, FWG holds 3 General meetings of its members. Each meeting lasts for 5 days. 2 days of the meeting is devoted to some training with an external resource person. Thus during the GIRAF period, there has been at least 12 capacity building workshops for members on REDD, Climate Change, FWP, TRMA, VPA, SRA etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Develop strategies and resources for advocacy directed at regional and pan-African institutions</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>Websites and an abridged version of Ghana’s VPA developed and shared with CWA countries currently negotiating their VPAs. Engaged in discussions on ECOWAS forest policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Support FWG and members advocacy programmes and campaigns</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>FWG members supported to engage MLNR on administration of permits; advocacy workshops, network meetings and press conferences were supported by the project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2. Results Achieved

The main results of the GIRAF are described hereafter according to the expected results of the revised logical framework.

ER 1: Forest Forums (FF) in 30 districts support wide stakeholder engagement on forest governance and are linked up to regional and national Forest Forums


This activity was executed in September, 2009. The results have been documented in a Report titled, “A Review of Forest Forums in Ghana, from 2002-2008” produced by Civic Response, 2009. The purpose of the activity was to review the existing forest forums processes and experiences. The review adopted the following criteria for assessing forest forum practice in Ghana: harmonization of efforts of various agencies implementing forums; alignment of internal systems; orientation of results; mutual accountability; and ownership. As per the Mid-term Review Report, two positions pertain regarding how the forums should be conceptualized; the FWG considers that the forums should play advocacy role whilst the FC sees the forums as organizations for supporting forest management. Findings from the field indicate that whilst FWG is of the view that the forums should be platforms for communities to discuss issues as and when they arise in a forum as advocacy groups, the FC forums are however considered as structured and run as NGOs having the capacity to seek for funding for their activities.

Community perceptions of forums

The communities perceive that the forums should reflect the decentralized natural resources management with communities playing a central role. The communities consider that they should be the pivot around which the forums should revolve because they are the people who own the forest and are immediately impacted by any positive and negative changes in the forest. This point is underscored by Lambert C. Arhin of Grumesa, Wassa Amenfi East District: “The forest is for us and the government is just the caretaker so we will do whatever it takes to protect it”.

2. Hold stakeholders strategic workshop

At the workshop it was decided that forest forums should be facilitated from the community level to the District and National levels. The evaluation shows that to date the forums have been organized along these lines. At the community level, two forums are held to prepare community members and their selected representatives for the district forum. At the district level one forum is held to discuss issues emanating from the community forums and to prioritize them for presentation at the zonal level. This level which originally was not included in the decisions taken at the Strategic Workshop, was an innovation adopted to reduce the number of participants at the Annual National Forest Forum to ensure active participation.

Submitted by Sarfo-Mensah and others

December, 2012
This framework is in tandem with the decentralized natural resources management and empowers communities to actively participate in forest governance at all levels. For example, the communities visited by the evaluation team demonstrated ample commitment to engaging stakeholders and holding themselves and duty bearers accountable for their respective roles in the sustainable management of the forest.

3. Develop training kits and conduct TOT

The development of the training manual for forest forum facilitators has not been completed as at the time of the evaluation. The project decided that the partner organizations should prepare the modules for manuals, based on their expertise. At the beginning of the project, the partners agreed on a general framework to develop an all in one manual and the content was to be developed by the partner NGOs depending on their expertise. The development of the content became a problem because not all the partner NGOs had the requisite expertise on the specific content of the manual. This proved a challenge. However, they were able to develop power point for their presentations at the ToTs but were never able to develop the draft content for the relevant sections. It was only CIKOD which was able to prepare their content for the training of Traditional Authorities. It was subsequently agreed among the partners that the manual be prepared by a consultant with the support of the partners. But after a while the project was unable to secure the services of a consultant. Finally, the Training Coordinator of the Project, who has no knowledge on the specific contents, was asked to coordinate the preparation of the manual using internal expertise and based on the experience of the GIRAF process. Currently, final drafts for Political Economy, Advocacy, Forest Policy, Guidelines for facilitating forest forums and SRA are with the printers.

4 Train and Support 30 DFFs

Training workshops have been organized for forest forum facilitators to enable them prepare community stakeholders to effectively participate in the district forest forums. Two community forums are organized in each of the six communities selected in a district to sensitize them on forest laws, policies and contemporary governance issues such as the Ghana and EU Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA)\(^1\) in the forest sector. As at the time the evaluation 30 DFF have been established and supported. This translates into the establishment of 180 Community Forest Forums (CFFs). As per the requirement that each district forum should have culminated from two rounds of community forums, thus total of 360 CFFs have been organized to date. The forums were mostly facilitated by members of Forest Watch Ghana (FWG).

At the CFF, discussions centred on wide range of issues including chainsaw operations, illegal mining, admitted farms, community’s rights and responsibilities, social responsibility agreement (SRA), royalties, checking of documents of concessioners and protection of informants. Each CFF appoints representatives to make a presentation on the issues discussed

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\(^1\) An agreement signed between the EU and Ghana that wish to eliminate illegal timber trade with the EU. The VPA is the means through which access into the EU will be restricted to only legally verified timber. Legally produced timber exported to the EU would be identified by means of licenses issued in Ghana.
during the DFF. Views expressed by CFF members who were interviewed during the evaluation indicated that the forums have created awareness on forest laws and forest governance at the community level. They now know their rights and responsibilities regarding forest management and are capable of effectively engaging stakeholders on forest issues.

Resources provided for the participants of the DFF included transport allowance, food, handouts and other stationery (pens and note pads). Resources persons who were mainly from MoFA, FSD, Wild Life Department and Fire Service were given some allowance.

The DFF creates a platform for stakeholder engagement on forest governance at the district level. A wide range of stakeholders attend the DFF and they include representatives from the District/Municipal Assembly, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Forest Services Division, the Police, NCCE, Wildlife Division, Traditional Authority, Timber and Mining companies, Customs Services, Fire Service, the communities among others. Representatives from each CFF make a presentation on the key issues discussed at the CFF and this forms the basis for discussion.

Prior to the GIRAF project 17 DFF existed. According to the GIRAF document, the 1st round of capacity building targeted these DFFs to get them operational. Discussions with forum members at both district and community levels revealed that some community and district forums existed before the GIRAF project. However, in all the eight (8) districts and 24 communities visited by the Evaluation Team, it was reported that the forums were dormant and had been revived by the GIRAF project. For instance, at Awaham in the West Akim District, a focus group discussion with opinion leaders revealed that the community forum had become defunct until three years ago when it was revived by the GIRAF project. Also at Apinamang, Atta Gyima, the Kwaebibirm District Forest Forum Secretary had this to say about the previous forest forums:

“Kwaebibirm District Forest Forum which was facilitated by FWG members under the RAVI became defunct because we did not receive any financial support for our operations. We became discouraged because our meetings were not regular. And most importantly we did not have money to travel to report incidences of encroachment to FSD. Consequently, we became de-motivated and the forum became dormant until GIRAF project revived it.”

The evaluation also revealed that GIRAF facilitated CFFs only met when FWG facilitators visited the communities to prepare them for DFF. Of the 24 communities visited during the evaluation, none was found to be meeting regularly as a forum to discuss forest issues. In some communities it was reported that forest issues are partly discussed when there is a town development committee meeting. The evaluation established that community forum representatives rarely gave feedback after attending the DFF. Reasons assigned for the above
included lack financial resources to hire public address system, lack of follow-up by facilitators and the pre-occupation of community members with their farming activities. It was also mentioned that because the forums have not been inaugurated to give it an identity, it offered little enticement to community members to identify themselves with it as they do with other CBOs such as Community Forest Committees (CFCs).

Similarly, while DFFs were facilitated in 30 districts, each of these districts had at least 2 DFF per annum. Thus those districts which had DFF facilitated from year 2 benefitted most as they had more DFFs than those in 2012. The evaluation revealed that there were no scheduled meetings after the FWG facilitators have organised meetings and prepared the district representatives for the Zonal and Annual National Forums. The current status of the forums suggests that their ownership was ambiguous. Discussions with stakeholders revealed that the implementation of decisions taken at the district level was left in limbo. For instance, at Jomoro District, the District Crops Officer, a stakeholder of the DFF, reported that Customs Officers had effected the arrest of illegal lumber operator and had reported the case to the FSD and were expecting a feedback but never heard about the case again. Also, in several of the communities visited members lamented that cases of illegalities reported to the FSD were not dealt with or it took a long time for them to give a feedback. At Grumesa in the Wassa Amenfi East District, a community member mentioned that they had reported to the FSD that they were suspicious that the concessionaire operating in the area was harvesting more than allowed under his Timber Utilization Contract (TUC) but nothing has been done to check his operations. Thus, the DFF were found not to be responsive to issues raised during the forums.

5. Network DFFs to strengthen the national forest forum process
DFFs facilitated by NGOs are currently networked at the zonal level to discuss issues that arise from their respective district forums and to share experiences and lessons emanating from the forums. For example, three zonal forums were held in 2012 and these were organised in three agro-ecological zones namely the northern savannas, the forest belt and the coastal savannas. These present opportunities for discussions on specific issues on governance in natural resources management that pertain to the three agro-ecological zones. The platforms also enable them to agree on issues and the selection of representation for the Annual National Forest Forums.

The project planned to hold two meetings in 2012 to discuss and network the GIRAF facilitated forest forums with the FC facilitated ones. The import of the meetings was to create a platform for sharing experiences and best practices for facilitating forest forums between the Forestry Commission initiated forest forums and the NGOs facilitated forums with the aim of agreeing on best and common practicing to enhance impact measurement, a united voice in addressing financial sustainability and institutionalization of forest forums. Examination of the 2012 annual action plan by the evaluation team revealed that the project did not itemize any scheduled meeting for the Jan – Dec 2012 Annual Action Plan. Discussions in the field with FC staff in the districts visited by the team during the evaluation also indicated that no such
meeting has taken place as at the time of the evaluation. Discussion with CARE Ghana ANR Programme Coordinator and correspondence provided however revealed that the national executives of the FC NFF refused to attend subsequent meeting unless GIRAF committed to meeting their demands by providing sitting allowances (aside hotel accommodation and transport cost). This posed a challenge to the Project since GIRAF was unable to meet that kind of demand. It must be mentioned, however, that District Forest Managers emphasized the need for collaboration between the FC and NGOs in enhancing the performance of the DFFs. For example, the District Customer Service Officer of the Sunyani Forest District confirmed that a common platform that enables the FC initiated forest forums and NGOs facilitated forest forums to share experiences will go a long way to enhance the sustainability of the project.

The process of discussing issues at the district and zonal levels before culminating in the national forum is a very good practice. This process prepares the participants from the DFFs to effectively articulate issues at the district and zonal levels at the national forums. Stakeholder representation at the national forums was also broad and represented a comprehensive spectrum of key actors in the forest sector. The issuing of a communiqué at the end of the national forums serves as an input into government policy and forest and natural resources governance in general. However, representation of the FC facilitated forums at all the four levels (CFF, DFF, ZFF and NFF) of networking was not clear. For example, the participation of FC at the NFF is limited to resource persons. There was no clear representation of FC facilitated forum members. Thus there should be a mechanism to ensure participation of all forest forms at all the levels.

**ER2: Transparency in forest sector has improved in 30 districts through utilization of public audits, community transparency scorecards and making results publicly available**

1. **Review Partners’ / FWG policy auditing skills and training needs**

This activity was reported to have been completed as at the midterm of the project. It involved the partners (CARE, CIKOD, FoE-Gh and Civic Response) meeting to review the various policy auditing skills and tools which can be used under the project. The review meetings also afforded the partners an opportunity to assess individual partner’s strengths and share information and experiences in forest sector governance issues. At one of such meetings it was realised that CIKOD was implementing citizens’ policy audit under the “Making the Forest Sector Transparent, a project funded by UKaid and implemented by Global Witness and CIKOD in Ghana and had developed policy auditing tools (citizens’ report cards) in collaboration with members of FWG. A decision was taken by the partners to adopt the tools Global Witness and CIKOD had put together.

2. **National FLEGT Monitoring Activities**

FWG has been monitoring the VPA implementation processes in Ghana. During the Project period several position papers were written and submitted to Parliament for consideration. One of such papers focused on the review of stumpage fees and related issues. The Project partners
felt satisfied that they were able to make contributions to the implementation of the FLEGT/VPA in Ghana. This activity is important giving its national and global perspectives. The engagement with parliament gave the FWG members experience which they could share with potential VPA members in the sub-region.

3. Sensitise Traditional Authorities on modern concepts of public accountability
The purpose of the activity was to improve accountability and transparency in the use of forest revenues received by traditional authorities (TAs) to benefit the forest dependent poor rural communities. CIKOD was the lead implementing partner of this activity. This activity was the only one assigned to CIKOD. As at the time of the evaluation all related sub-activities (reconnaissance visits/surveys and sensitisation workshops for traditional authorities) have been completed. The reconnaissance survey was conducted to assess the perception of communities on how TAs use royalties and this formed the basis for the sensitisation workshops for the TAs. The purpose of the sensitization workshop was to enhance accountability and transparency of the TAs on the use of forest revenues (royalties) received by TAs for benefit of the forest fringe communities. Evidence from the field suggests that now the TAs are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding the royalties and are making demand of what is due them. Some of the chiefs interviewed admitted that prior to the Project they had little knowledge about the processes involved in the calculation of the royalties. The statement below summarises the perception of a traditional leader at Awaham in the West Akim District.

“We are now aware that the amount of money accrued to the chiefs depends on the volume of trees harvested. The money goes to the stool land at the regional level and then disbursed to the traditional authorities. The process of calculating the money is however not transparent. For instance, you are only asked to sign for the amount due you without knowing how much money is in there.”

4. Publish annual forest governance report
Discussions with CIKOD revealed that the organisation has published two annual transparency reports (for 2009 and 2010) which were based on data from citizens’ report card in six districts (in the Western and Brong Ahafo regions), under the Making the Forest Sector Transparent (MFST) project. Under the GIRAF, it was reported that Civic Response expanded the use of the report card to other target districts. This was to ensure coverage in the remaining 24 target districts. The approach adopted was to train some District Forum Facilitators to collect data for the transparency reports. It was also an opportunity to build the capacity of the facilitators and communities in the use the score cards. However, the data gathered in 2011 lacked integrity. Subsequently, the consultant used by CIKOD in generating the data was used to collect the data for the 2011 Transparency Report which was with the printers at the time of doing the evaluation. In 2012 the service of the same consultant was engaged to administer and collect information for the 2012 Transparency report. The 2012 report was not ready at the time of the evaluation.
The use of the report card to generate data for the transparency reports had some challenges. This was attributed to the leadership of the FWG organisations whose staff were collecting the information. It was reported that the leadership of the FWG members did not provide adequate supervision to their staff during the period for this exercise even though they had received money for the activity. The rationale for using FWG members was to build their capacity and also enable them have access to information which they could use for their own advocacy.

The decision by the PMT to engage a consultant was a laudable initiative. However, as indicated above, the use of the FWG members has cost the Project in time and financial resources. As at the time of the evaluation no transparency report has been produced even though 3 reports were expected to be produced.

**ER3: Increased public awareness of the value of forest resources & of FLEGT in Ghana and Ghana’s experiences to other potential VPA countries**

1. **Conduct communications research & develop campaign strategy**
   This activity was undertaken by FoE-Gh in collaboration with the three other partners in 2010. The activity should have been completed in 2009 but due to challenges in recruitment of staff by FoE-Gh it was completed a year later. This was also partly attributed to the fact that Communication coordinator who was recruited did not stay for long at the initial stages of the project. The communication research was done by the development of a data collection instrument which was administered in 19 districts in six regions (Northern, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Western, Central and Volta) and 3 specific urban areas (Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi) to provide adequate information about the awareness levels of the urban middle income people and rural communities on issues in forest sector in Ghana. The data was analysed by an external consultant and a report produced. This report formed the basis for the communication strategy. The document was validated by all the partners (CIKOD, Care and Civic Response) with the participation of an external resource person from Tropenbos Ghana, who had expertise in communications. The entire process was best practice because of the participatory approaches that were adopted in making sure that experiences from all partners were brought to bear on the development of the strategy. Also, the input from Tropenbos was useful for quality assurance.

The implementation of the strategy was mainly done by the FoE-Gh but with active involvement of the other partners. For example, FoE-Gh ensured that they went to districts concurrently with the other partners when the latter were implementing some aspects of the project in areas that FoE-Gh had planned to do awareness creation. This, according to FoE-Gh ensured cost effectiveness of their operations.

2. **Develop detailed annual work plans**
   Draft annual work plans were prepared by FoE-Gh at the end of every year for the following year’s activities and circulated to other partners for their comments. These drafts were also
informed by the views gathered from FWG meetings. From the agreed annual work plans each partner organisation prepared their detailed annual activity plans. This approach was considered to have ensured harmonization of annual activities of the individual partners. The fact that the initial drafts were informed by views of FWG members suggests that local people’s concerns on transparency and accountability were adequately built into the detailed activities of the partners.

3. Conduct national awareness campaigns on forests & forest governance

FoE-Gh was responsible for the entire process. Two 15 minutes television documentaries were produced for the awareness campaigns; these were “Crisis in our forest sector” and the second documentary was “Combating the forest sector crisis”. The information for the preparation of the documentaries were gathered from 19 districts from 4 regions (B/A, Central, Ashanti and Greater Accra) on forest sector accountability and transparency on the part of government sector agencies and other stakeholders. Four airings were done in 2011 and two in 2012. These were done on Ghana Television because they have the widest coverage in the country. Prior information about the date and time of the airing of the documentaries was given to the beneficiary districts and communities through contact with the facilitators of the forums by telephone calls and emails.

Also, a total of 60 radio programmes were done in seven languages (including Twi, Fanti, Ewe, Ga, Nzema, Gonja and English). These comprised of pre-recorded programmes and “talk shows”. Evidence from the field suggests that the television and radio programmes made the required impact in awareness creation. For example, in the West Akim District, the District Forest Manager who participated in four radio talk shows as a panel member confirmed that a lot of people phoned into the programmes seeking clarification on a wide range of issues including rights to trees on their farms, compensation and SRA. He confirmed that the timing of the programmes which were between 6pm and 7pm enabled many people to listen and contribute to them.

4. Share Ghana’s VPA experiences with Civil Society networks in other VPA countries in Central and West Africa

All partners participated in the execution of this activity with Civic Response and FoE-Gh acting as the lead partners. Both national and international conferences were used as platforms by the project to share Ghana’s VPA experience with Central and Western Africa (CWA) Countries who are currently negotiating VPA with the EU. For example, in 2010, a staff of Civic Response attended the Africa Community Rights Network (ACRN) meetings in Liberia held between 27th to 30th April and shared Ghana’s experience on VPA with Liberian Civil Society who were participating in the negotiation phase of the VPA with the EU. Also, at the request of the EU VPA Advisor for Liberia and Ghana, FWG members met with representatives of the Liberian Industry, Civil Society and Government on 19th August 2010 and shared with them Ghana’s experience on VPA negotiation processes and the role played by civil society, the challenges and what contributed to the successes achieved. These and other similar platforms both local and international were utilized by the project to enhance civil society networks participation in the forest sector governance. These opportunities according to
the partner NGOs enabled them to have insight into how VPA processes were being managed in the Western and Central African Sub-regions.

One significant observation made during the evaluation was the capacities that have built within the partner NGOs under this particular activity. For example, a staff member of FoE-Gh presented a paper entitled, “Forest Laws Enforcement, Trade and Governance process in Ghana: Strengthening the weak elements of community participation in Ghana” at a Conference in Accra on, “Experiences from the Voluntary Partnership Agreement in West and Central Africa,” held between 23-25 October, 2012. The same organisation will participate in Conference in Copenhagen between the 6 and 7 December, 2012. These opportunities from the project have given exposure to individual staff members of the partner NGOs and visibility to their organisations.

The setting up and management of the websites (http://www.girafghana.org and regular contributions to www.loggingoff.com) by the project were strategic infrastructure that have facilitated information dissemination and sharing with other CWA countries. For instance, Civil Society brief on the VPA processes and experience in Ghana was developed by Civic Response for sharing and was hosted on one of the websites (www.loggingoff.com). Also under the project, FoE-Gh developed a website (www.foegh.com) to augment the www.loggingoff.com website. The website has information on GIRAF activities and the status of Ghana’s VPA implementation process. The collaborative effort by the partner organisations to develop and manage websites made it possible for FWG members to share information on the monitoring of the VPA processes in Ghana.

ER4: NGOs and CSOs have demonstrated increased capacity to undertake advocacy for improved forest governance at district, national, and international levels.

1. Prepare an Advocacy Report on Community Forest Management
During the period of implementation of the Project, advocacy on community forest management was done by several FWG members at the grassroots level to help communities to hold duty bearers accountable and demand transparency in the use of forest revenues. These were routinely captured in members’ progress reports including those of the partnering NGOs on the Project. The Project also benefited from FWG meetings where several members presented their advocacy case studies which documented various actions taken by communities as a result of FWG members’ advocacy on community forest management. It also important to note that, evidence from the field suggests that not only were these case studies prepared and presented at the FWG meetings but were positively used to enhance the visibility of the Project. For example, a staff of PROMAG which was the Facilitating NGOs of the Community and District Forest Forums in the Sefwi Wiaso District was invited to present a case study on advocacy on Community Forest Management which was about the assertiveness of a community on their rights and entitlement to forest resources and transparent benefit sharing at an International Conference in Cameroun in 2011.
2. Build advocacy capacity of FWG Secretariat and members

Capacity building workshops were organised to build the advocacy capacity of FWG secretariat and its members. Evidence from the field suggests that the Project to a large extent succeeded in enhancing the advocacy capacity of FWG secretariat and that of members. During the field visits the evaluation team learnt of several community positive actions in demanding for transparency and accountability in forest governance at the local level which were attributed to support they received from the FWG Secretariat and that of the Facilitating NGOs, which are members of FWG. The team was told of instances that community members were brought to Accra to make press conferences in highlighting poor forest governance in their areas after which they swiftly received positive response from “recalcitrant” stakeholders. In most of these instances, the communities involved indicated that their travel to Accra and the resources they required to enable them present their cases at the press conference were jointly facilitated by the local FWG member and the Secretariat (see a Case Study in Section 4.4.1).

Other significant achievement that underscores the enhanced capacity of the FWG Secretariat was the lead role it played in the process of developing and submitting a memorandum on natural resources issues to the constitutional review commission of Ghana. Documentary evidence from a member of the Constitutional Review Committee shows that 10 principles are recommended for enshrining into the Constitution to ensure natural resource governance serves the interest of Ghana first and foremost, and it is transparent, equitable and fair. This will make it unavoidable for all natural resource governance laws to take their root from the Constitution. This advocacy effort has resulted in the coming together of a number of networks in the country (FWG, NCOM PFAG, CICOL and NETRIGHT) to push for amendments of clauses in Ghana’s 1992 constitution that are inimical to effective governance and management of natural resources. Also, the Project has supported the Forest Watch Ghana General meetings to strategise campaign against the swapping of the Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas (GSBAs) for logging by Samartex in the Western Region.

The evaluation team observed that capacity has been built at the FWG Secretariat and amongst FWG members for advocacy but they lacked financial and other material resources to make full use of these capacities. For example, FWG members interviewed in the field emphasized that they would not have been able to support the travel of communities to Accra to present their cases at press conference if the Project had not provided the financial support.

3. Develop strategies and resources for advocacy directed at regional and Pan-African institutions

The development of a communication strategy and printing of awareness creation materials on FLEGT/VPA, simplified forest sector laws in Ghana (Timber Resources Management Act), and GIRAF project fliers greatly improved awareness on forestry in the forest communities. Additionally, the production of two sets of Television (TV) documentaries: “Crisis in the forest sector in Ghana”, and “Contribution of the GIRAF project, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Government agencies to addressing the crisis”, has gone a long way in further raising the level of awareness in rural forest fringed communities. These efforts have not only been
directed towards advocacy campaign in Ghana, but to some extent, to other regional and Pan-African institutions in West and East African countries. Strategies adopted to promote an effective advocacy campaign at the international level have included the following:

- A new website (www.foegh.com) has been designed by Friends of the Earth-Ghana to augment the www.loggingoff.com website which is co-managed by Civic Response. The two website hosts some of GIRAF activities and the status of Ghana’s VPA implementation process.

- An abridged version of the Ghana’s VPA has been developed for the purposes of awareness creation and sharing with other countries currently negotiating VPA with the EU.

- A Civil Society brief on the VPA processes / experience in Ghana has also been developed by Civic Response for sharing. The brief provides civil society perspectives on how the VPA process has been managed and the outcomes. It is currently being circulated to all stakeholders in the forest sector and is available at www.loggingof.com. However, a more structured strategy is needed to make participation in regional networks more consequential to the work of local advocacy. For instance, a partnership of CSOs in countries implementing VPA, REDD etc. in planning common regional positions will provide a stronger push. FWG also participated in and made input into the ECOWAS Forest policy based on experiences from implementing Ghana’s FWP.

4. Support FWG and members’ advocacy program and campaigns

Over the life of the project GIRAF funds were used to support advocacy programmes and campaign activities undertaken by FWG and members. These activities included workshops, network meetings and press conferences. Specifically, the under-listed activities received GIRAF funding support through Civic Response.

- Forest Watch Ghana (FWG) conducted 3 strategic workshops each year, for its members and a broader group of civil society groups engaged in forest governance advocacy on the forest policy and legislation, REDD, Climate Change, FLEGT and VPA updates. These workshops were meant to increase the capacity of organizations and individuals to effectively engage duty bears in the forest sector.

- The women of Saaman in the Wassa Amanfi District organized a press conference, facilitated by New Generation and Civic Response, at the International Press Centre in Accra to inform the public on how the mining companies are infringing on their rights and destroying their lands and water bodies.

- Forest Watch Ghana (FWG) led a process of developing and submitting memorandum on natural resources issues to the constitutional review commission of Ghana. This advocacy effort has resulted in the coming together of a number of networks in the country (FWG, NCOM PFAG, CICOL and NETRIGHT) to push for amendments of clauses in Ghana’s 1992 constitution that are inimical to effective governance and management of natural resources. This has received very positive response from the Constitutional Review
Committee (CRC). The next steps are for CSOs to keep the pressure on the CRC to ensure the recommendations get entrenched into the Constitution.

- GIRAF supported meetings of Forest Watch Ghana to strategize a campaign against the swapping of the Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas (GSBAs) for logging by Samartex in the Western Region.

### 3.3 Key implementation challenges

The major implementation challenges that confronted the Project at the field level were in the following areas:

**Cashflow**

Apart from the first year of the project, cash flow was a major problem in the three successive years. The EU as the major financier (80%) of the project would only release funds when an audited financial report of the previous expenditure was submitted by CARE-Ghana. The situation which, in some cases, was caused by the Implementing Partners inability to submit returns on time, to enable CARE Ghana submit returns for reimbursement. This seriously affected project implementation.

The Evaluation team observed that the Implementing partners were not happy about CARE’s in-house financial policy the project was using for accountability of funds. They found the policy not workable in the field. For example, when delays in disbursement of funds occurred, the partners had to pre finance their project activities. But they encountered difficulties, in some cases, to cover expenses made on the project with receipts which were acceptable to CARE. In such cases monies spent were not paid by CARE, Ghana. There was a system where before the payment of next project money was made to the partner, CARE had to come in and verify the expenses made, using a set of rules to determine what should pass as expenditure.

**Partnership arrangement**

The three Implementing partners (CIKOD, FoE-Gh and Civic Response) for the project were selected based on their previous experiences in similar projects in the past. They were part of the project design with their Executive Directors serving on the project management committee. However, there was a perception of unequal partnership relationship between CARE and the other partners and this could be related to the structuring of the project. To them, a central role for FWG Management Committee could help foster better partnership. The three partners had the view that they developed the GIRAF project but CARE’s relationship with them and posturing was that of a donor (and a senior partner) rather than collegial. However, from CARE’s perspective it was difficult to manage the partnership based on equality due to the responsibility they had towards the EU as a contract holder; CARE was accountable to the EU. This perception resulted in loss of faith in the steering committee meetings and poor working relationship between the partners and CARE-GHANA. The internal system of CARE was
believed to have affected the smooth running of the project and many of the partner organisations lost confidence in CARE as an organisation. To deal with this and other differences which seemed to have arisen in the partnership, an organisational development session, led by an OD specialist was conducted with all the partners to iron out differences and chart a new course.

**Staff Recruitment**

Regardless of the serious efforts made to recruit project staff to ensure early start of the project, the implementation of the project was delayed. This was mainly due to the problems of recruiting a Project Manager, and later with the Communications Coordinator and the M&E Officer. These delays adversely affected the smooth implementation of the project. For example, by the end of 2010, only 28% of the total budget allocated to activities had been justified (first EU advance) which included advances made to partners. Most of the ER1 and ER2 outputs scheduled to be completed were still in the process to be delivered. The only activity started in 2009 was the review of the forestry forums experience in Ghana from 2002 to 2008. This was followed by the first annual forest forum stakeholders’ strategic workshop held in April 2010 and the Training of Trainers’ workshop for Forest Forum facilitators in May and August, 2010. These processes delayed the National and District Forest Forum workshops, the first of which started in August 2011.

In spite of late recruitment of staff for the project, the project also suffered from high staff turnover. Field evidence suggested that some of the implementing partners lost project staff during the implementation of the project. The most significant was the departure of the M&E Officer and Project Manager at the end of the third year.

3.4 **Factors that enhanced project implementation**

- The design of the forums: community-district-zonal –national forums enhanced the quality of the issues deliberated upon by the forums

- The forum facilitators were already working in the districts and communities and had a fair understanding of governance issues in the area. They also had been engaging with the communities and therefore had good rapport with the local people. This enhanced the sensitisation and awareness creation activities in the communities.

- The project benefited from the regular meetings of the FWG members as the platform enabled the facilitating NGOs to share experiences
4.0 Evaluation Analysis

4.1 Relevance

4.1.1 Relevance of objectives

Overall, the GIRAF project is rated as highly relevant to the national forest sector and poverty reduction agenda, to European Commission’s (EC) Country Strategy Paper (2008-2013) for Ghana which supports decentralisation by strengthening social accountability and the capacity of civil society organisations to engage with local governments, and to the needs of the rural poor. The objectives of GIRAF are consistent with the Government’s development objective as outlined in GPRS I and II at the time of project design. The Project also aligns with government’s policy on Natural Resource and Environmental Governance (NREG) which aims to improve transparency in systems and procedures for natural resource management, which could lead to more effective forest law enforcement, improved collection of revenues in the forestry sector, and mainstreaming environment and climate change in economic planning and development. Furthermore, with the release of GSGDA (2010-2013) in 2010, the GIRAF objectives have become even more integral to the national poverty reduction and Natural Resource Management agenda. The project is the major thrust of the Government in relation to forest governance and is achieving significant recognition of the potential of effective natural resource management for poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas. The project objectives are compatible with the national decentralisation agenda that aims to strengthen the capacity of local actors through encouraging District Assemblies to take responsibility for decentralised natural resources management. There is synergy between the design of GIRAF and other projects within the EU Ghana country programme. In particular, the VPA and FLEGT have benefited from the GIRAF’s strategy of developing and strengthening Forest Forums, improving local capacities to undertake public audits, creating awareness and promoting advocacy for improved forest governance. The project also builds capacity at the partners level (Civic Respond - CR, Centre of Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development, CIKOD, and Friends of Earth Ghana – FoE-Gh) and supports broad engagement of the National platform for the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in this sector: Forest Watch Ghana (FWG). This platform was partly created by CARE and the present project approach is focusing on the involvement of its key bodies as FF Facilitators at the District level.

The project further responds directly to the needs of the target groups (forest-dependent people, Traditional Authorities, Community Resource Management Committees, District Forest Forums and the media) by facilitating and strengthening platforms for stakeholder’s engagement for effective forest governance. At the community level the project offers opportunities for community participation in decision making and creates platforms for the voice of the forest fringe communities to be heard. The statement below captures Ruth’s (FoE-Gh) view on the relevance of the Project.

“The Project is highly relevant as it came at a time when there were discussions around forest governance........It was around this time that the Forest and Wildlife Policy was undergoing a review and VPA and FLEGT issues were being discussed. GIRAF is an intervention which went down to the community level”.
4.1.2 Relevance of design
The overall design in terms of the structure and components was highly relevant to the context at the time. The experience of forest forum review provided the starting point for the implementation of the GIRAF. The project design comprehensively identified the main constraints to forest sector governance at the local level at that time and devised strategies and approaches that were appropriate within the context of the country. The project design took into account the need for synergy with other programs and projects in the country, such as Making the Forest Sector Transparent (funded by UKaid and implemented by Global Witness and CIKOD Ghana; IUCN Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy; FAO National Forest Programme; ACRN – Civic Response / Forest Watch Ghana’s project on the Rights and Resources Initiative. The project also took into consideration lessons learnt from projects such as the FC facilitated forest forums, particularly in relation to establishing forest forums at the district level. The Project thus reinforces existing interventions in the forest sector.

The GIRAF design strongly supported Government’s policy emphasis on ensuring that NRE policies are developed through fully inclusive process of open government. The institutional structure of the project through the implementing partners (CARE, Civic Response, FoE-Gh and CIKOD) and the use of Forest Watch Ghana members were coherent for project implementation and were important for future forest sector projects.

4.1.3 Design approach and activities
The targeting approach used by the project was in line with EU’s approach to poverty targeting, with the majority of beneficiaries being the poor although the level of poverty varies considerably from community to community. The activities of the four result areas were appropriate to the needs of the target group. The establishment and strengthening of the CFFs was a highly relevant approach. The CFFs create a platform for communities to discuss forest issues at their own level. It also builds capacity of community-stakeholders to participate effectively in policy, law and governance debates, effectively demand accountability from duty bearers and press for local forest management. The DFF approach has relevance in terms of the need for stakeholder dialogue on forest governance within the districts. The ZFF which was introduced in 2012 was relevant for effective stakeholder participation at the forum. The NFF also provided the CSOs, and district and community level stakeholders to engage with the FC, MoFA and MLNR on government policies and commitment to sustainable forest management.

The project has a myriad of activities at the national, regional, district and community levels. Project activities were found to be relevant to the achievement of project objectives and result areas. The GIRAF activities were highly relevant to the government’s priorities as outlined in the revised Forest and Wildlife Policy. The activities are consistent with and complement each other to achieve project objectives.

4.1.4 Participation in design and implementation
The GIRAF design was strongly integrated in the decentralised natural resources management and planning processes, with in-depth input from the Project partners. Furthermore, the design benefited greatly from the review of forest forums in Ghana (2002-2008) and the Stakeholders Strategic Workshop. The project also benefitted from the experience of CIKOD in implementing the Public Audit and the use of Transparency reports.
4.2 Effectiveness

4.2.1 Effectiveness in achieving project objectives.
The overall goal of the GIRAF was to ensure sustainable management of forest resources in Ghana and contribute to poverty reduction. In this respect, GIRAF has been partially effective. There is little evidence in terms of the Project’s contribution to improved forest cover. There is no evidence from this evaluation that the Project has contributed to increased revenue flow from forest resources as captured in the project logframe. But it has contributed to future steady flow of revenue from the forest by putting pressure on MLNR to stop rampant issuance of administrative permits and stopping parliament from passing an LI for the FC to issue administrative permits for off-reserve timber logging. It has also reminded the FC severally of its failure to review stumpage fees quarterly as required by law since 2004 and the consequent financial loss to both state and resource owning communities.

Also, the Project has contributed to improved forest governance by playing a great role in terms of advocacy, awareness and education at the National, District and Community level. The CFFs have helped built the capacity of community level stakeholders to actively engage district wide stakeholders on forest governance. In all the communities visited by the evaluation team it was reported that due to the high level of awareness created by the Project, communities now demand accountability from traditional authorities, timber and mining companies, the Forestry Services Division and the District Assembly. Through the CFFs the Project has therefore given a voice to the forest dependent communities who were previously marginalised and wield less power in engaging with duty bearers. There also exist some evidence that the Project has resulted in increase in the number and improvement of existing social amenities in forest dependent communities (see the impact section).

4.2.2 Forest Forum Support
The Project expected result was that Forest Forums in 30 districts support wide stakeholder engagement on forest governance and are linked up to regional and national Forest Forums. In this regard, the Project has achieved positive results by providing support to forest forums at the community, district, zonal and national levels. The Project has built FWG members’ capacity to facilitate forest forums and enhanced their relations with key state agencies and advanced sections of the Industry and chieftaincy establishments. The Project trained a total of 40 forest forum facilitators who have been very effective in facilitating the 30 DFFs and the 360 CFFs (refer to section 3, sub-section 1.4). Of the 3 NFFs planned under the GIRAF, 2 were organised due to the delays in project implementation. The first NFF was organized in September 5-9, 2011 and participants from 19 districts attended the forum. The second NFF was held on November 10-13, 2012 and participants from 30 districts across the country attended the forum. The NFFs provided a platform to share experiences and learn from the various issues that were raised during DFFs. The NFFs were also used as a platform to learn about new initiatives in the forestry sector (e.g. Plantation Development, Forest Investment Program,), the revised Forest and Wildlife Policy, Forest Laws, and get updated about ongoing initiatives like the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA). Other issues discussed include the challenges in the forest sector, the need for institutionalisation of the forums and the financial sustainability of the forums. A major output from these forums is a communiqué which serve as input into government policy in the forest sector.
4.2.3 Transparency in Forest Sector: Citizens’ Audit and Community Report Card
CIKOD and CR were the implementing partners of this expected result. The primary objective of this ER was that Transparency in forest sector has improved in 30 districts through utilization of public audits, community transparency scorecards and making results publicly available.

The Project has been effective in its approach of strengthening the capacity of Traditional Authorities (TAs) on modern concepts of accountability and transparency for improved forest governance. CIKOD has organised sensitisation workshops for TAs and other forest sector stakeholders in all Project regions to discuss challenges impeding accountability and transparency of local duty bearers in the forest sector. Following the sensitization workshops, capacity building workshops were organised for the TAs on policy and legal literacy to enable them better understand their own roles and responsibilities and that of other duty bearers. Project has exceeded the target of reaching 30 districts. Discussions with CIKOD indicated that so far, 34 districts have been covered and 26 traditional areas have been reached with the capacity building workshops in the six regions covered by the GIRAF. The sensitisation workshops have helped TAs to be abreast with the factors that affect accountability and transparency in the forest sector. The positive attitude and acknowledgement of the TAs on the lack of transparency and accountability within their institution was a breakthrough and provided opportunity for working with the TAs to address the issue. The capacity building workshops enlightened the TAs on the processes of sharing royalties among the key stakeholders (Administrator of Stool Lands and District Assembly).

One of the significant achievements under the ER 2 is the facilitation of the launching of the Charter developed by the Brong Ahafo Regional House of Chiefs on Management of Natural Resources and Socio Cultural Resources under the MFST supported by DFID. In this Charter, TAs demonstrate their commitment to effectively managing the natural resources based on guiding principles outlined in the Charter. The Charter has given the TAs impetus to demand accountability from the District Assemblies on how moneys accrued from forest resources are being utilised. CIKOD also assisted the Wasa Amenfi East District Assembly to develop by Laws on Natural Resources Management.

At the design state of the Project it was very difficult to convince them (other partners) that the traditional authority will have a role because they were seen as the problem because they were not accountable for royalties...I argued that even if they’re the problem they are the same people who are at the community everyday so even if they are the problem can we correct that mistake and use them in terms of leadership for forest governance and make them more accountable. We have gone very far because now the traditional authorities have their own charter on Management of Natural and Socio Cultural Resources in which they tell the communities how they are going to manage the resource. Executive Director, CIKOD
The outstanding output under ER2 where the Project has not been effective is the implementation of Transparency Report Card. The Project adopted the community score cards developed by CIKOD under the Making Forest Sector Transparent (MFST) project and trained some FWG members to collect the data as a means of building their capacity. However, the data collected by the FWG partners to expand the base of the score cards lacked integrity and therefore could not be used. A Consultant was therefore engaged who collected and analysed the 2011 data which at the time of the evaluation, was with the printer. The same consultant was used to collect the data for the 2012 transparency report. At the time of the evaluation, the 2012 data was being analysed and is yet to be published. CIKOD under the MFST project has however published two annual transparency reports (2009 and 2010) using community score cards in six districts (in the Western and Brong Ahafo regions). There was some evidence to suggest that the reports have been used for advocacy at the district and community levels. For example, the evaluation team observed that district and community forum members were actively involved in advocacy activities especially around SRA, illegal mining in forests and royalties.

The FWG through monitoring of the VPA implementation processes has submitted position papers to Parliament for consideration. One of such papers focused on the review of stumpage fees and related issues. The engagement with parliament gave the FWG members experience which they could share with potential VPA members in the sub-region.

4.2.4 Increase Public Awareness on Forest Governance Issues

The expected output of this ER was to increase public awareness of the value of forest resources & of FLEGT in Ghana and dissemination of Ghana’s experiences to other potential VPA countries. FoE-Gh and Civic Response were responsible for this result area.

To improve awareness creation on forest governance, a communication strategy was developed by FoE-Gh to provide a roadmap for awareness creation campaign. FoE-Gh developed and distributed different types of Information Communication and Educational (ICE) materials to about 200 communities and stakeholders (Parliamentary committee on Forest and Natural Resources, Media houses,) for awareness creation on forestry in Ghana. These include:

- 2000 copies of the abridged version of the FLEGT/VPA,
- 2000 copies of the simplified forest sector laws in Ghana,
- 500 copies of GIRAF project flier, and
- 500 copies of SRA Negotiation Process

These materials have to some extent contributed to awareness creation on the crisis in the forest sector in all the GIRAF operational Regions. For instance, the materials were used for awareness creation at the rural and urban community levels. Community stakeholders were educated on the content of the materials and this increased their awareness of forest governance issues which enhanced their capacity to effectively participate in radio discussions that were organized by the project.
Two set of Television (TV) documentaries on; a) Crisis in the forest sector in Ghana and b) the Contributions of the GIRAF project, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Government agencies in addressing the crisis were completed and aired on Ghana Television (GTV). A TV discussion on forestry in Ghana was organised on GTV Breakfast Show as part of the awareness raising campaign. The project held a meeting with the Ghana Editors Forum at the Ghana International Press Centre on April 20th 2011 as part of its strategies for getting the Ghana media to increase their reportage in the forest sector. About 31 participants representing private and state-owned media houses including GTV, Metro TV, Public Agenda, Ghanaian Times, Ghana Business news and others attended the meeting. The meeting provided a platform for FWG members to interact with Editors and to solicit their support in raising awareness about the critical issues of forest governance. Two meetings were also held with the Parliamentary Select Committee on Lands and Forestry to discuss forest crisis issues in Ghana.

A total of 60 radio discussions on forestry were conducted in seven regions (Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Western, Central, Eastern, Greater Accra and Volta Regions. Discussions with some members of the district forest forums indicated that the radio programmes created awareness about the VPA/FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade) and general forest governance issues such as community rights to forest resources, SRA, cause of forest degradation, climate change and the VPA process and benefits. The panel members for the radio discussions comprised representatives of major stakeholders (District forest officers, Police, Fire Service, Community opinion leaders) in the forest sector. The evaluation is not conclusive on the total number of listeners reached by the radio programs due to the relatively small sample size of the participants.

The forum facilitators interviewed lamented that even though the IEC materials used for awareness creation were distributed to them, the radio discussion programmes carried out at the district level did not involve them. There is therefore the need to strengthen the collaboration between forum facilitators and FoE-Gh in hosting the radio programmes for awareness creation at the district level.

4.2.5 Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening of NGOs/ CSOs for Advocacy

The purpose of this output was to increase NGOs and CSOs capacity to undertake advocacy for improved forest governance at district, national, and international levels. Civic Response was responsible for this result area.

FWG conducted about 12 strategic workshops for its members and a broader group of civil society groups engaged in forest governance advocacy on the forest policy and legislation, the political economy of Ghana’s forest sector, strategies for advocacy, leadership, among others. These workshops have helped increase the capacity of NGOs/CSOs and individuals to effectively engage duty bearers in the forest sector.
4.3 Efficiency

4.3.1 Introduction
The evaluation addressed the issue of “Efficiency” in the context of efficiency of implementation (output results achieved against inputs and budgets used). Key questions that were explored included:

- Quality of estimation of unit costs for the main actions or achievements
- Extent to which the costs of the project have been justified by the results and impacts of the project (comparison with similar projects can be established).
- Whether management of financial resources has been adequate and the extent to which those resources have been used as initially planned. What main modifications have occurred?
- Has the project built a sound infrastructure to manage costs and monitor disbursement? Has financial reporting been used to optimize cost efficiencies?
- How well have lessons learned from previous programs been applied to the Program

If the project’s overall efficiency is based on the successful execution of all project activities within planned time and budget, then it can be reasonably conjectured that value for money has been achieved as a reasonably surplus remained (see Table 2). However, the fact that most FWG members who facilitated the community and district forest forums showed deficit budget for their planned activities (see Table 3) demonstrates that the cost of running the forest forums and awareness creation was under-estimated.

4.3.2 Management and Organization
The project was implemented under a partnership arrangement amongst members of Forest Watch Ghana, namely, CARE Ghana, Civic Response, Friends of the Earth, and the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD). Technical advice and project management was provided by CARE Denmark which is the contract holder. The overall responsibility for the implementation of the project was held by CARE Ghana. It also chaired the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and hosted the Project Manager and the M&E Officer.

The PSC comprised heads of the partner organisations, the Forest and Natural Resource Programme Coordinator of CARE Ghana and the Project Manager. The PSC was supposed to contribute to strategic decisions regarding the project implementation and was to ensure that project implementation was on track. Discussions with partner organisations and review of project documents underscored the important roles the PSC played in the overall management of the project, particularly in ensuring that delays were dealt with in reporting and the delivery of other project outputs. However, strong reservations were made about the committee’s inability to regularly organise it’s once every quarter meetings. For instance, at the time of the Mid-Term Review, the PSC had met only thrice and an attempted fourth meeting did not obtain a quorum. And indeed after the appointment of the last Project Manager, just after the Midterm review, there has not been any PSC meeting. This was partly attributed to the fact that the other partner organisation felt slighted because CARE Ghana was represented by their ANR Programme Manager but not the head of the organisation as the other partners had done. There was also the undercurrent that CARE Ghana was imposing its in-house policies on the
other partners after they have collectively designed the project and were implementing it as equal partners. The other implementing partners felt that there was very little room for policy and budget reviews, which were embedded in the contract and virtually directed by CARE Denmark. These challenges notwithstanding, the PSC was able to contribute significantly to the project implementation as it ensured that partner organisations were able to execute their mandated roles and responsibilities. This was evidenced by the successful completion of almost all project activities as at the time of the evaluation.

Contrary to the challenges that confronted the PSC, the Project management team (PMT), composed of the frontline implementing personnel in the partner organisations including the financial managers, was able to meet monthly to review project progress and deal with implementation challenges. According to respondents, the PMT was very regular with its meetings and have been effective in supporting project implementation.

It must also be stated that the project suffered initially from a long delay in the recruitment of a Project Manager which affected project coordination in the greater part of first year. Indeed, according to partner organisations and Forest Forum Facilitating NGOs which the evaluation team interacted with, not much activity occurred in the first year of the project, and this was partly attributed to the absence of a Project Manager. However, the project was able to quicken its implementation processes in the second and the subsequent years. But the departure of the Project Manager at the beginning of the 4th year of the project could have impacted adversely on the project had management not acted swiftly to recruit a temporary staff to fill the position, bearing in mind that it was going to be extremely difficult to find a full time staff for a project that had only one year duration.

4.3.3 Reporting and Information Management

The main reporting lines of the project were quarterly reports from the implementing partners and annual reports to the donor. The evaluation team observed that the partner organisations were still preparing and sharing their quarterly reports against the recommendation in the Midterm review that the quarterly reports should be replaced with Bi-annual reports. Indications were that the quarterly reports enabled members to bring issues of concern across to the other partners early thus minimizing the possibility of any fall out. The team also observed that based on the findings of the Midterm review that quarterly reports were delayed, there had been significant improvement in the reporting schedules. For example, at the time of the evaluation all the partner organisations had prepared and submitted their last quarter reports to CARE Ghana. However, the Annual report for 2012 had not been prepared. As at the time of the evaluation, three annual reports have been prepared i.e. 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Discussions with the partner organisations suggested that they were satisfied with the reporting schedules and the formats that were used. The evaluation team also observed that partner organisations had their reports digitally stored and had hard copies as well. This was useful as they helped for easier retrieval. For example, during the evaluation, the team was privileged to have easy access to partners’ reports. However, the team observed that documentation by the Facilitating NGOs in the districts might have had some challenges. For instance, demand for progress reports from some NGOs by the evaluation team drew blank.
The coordination of annual reporting by CARE Denmark to the donor, EU, was in line with best practice. It offered the opportunity to ensure quality assurance and enhanced ownership. Financial reports were submitted quarterly. The evaluation team observed that the quarterly financial reporting which stipulated that 75% of funds be expended by partners before they could submit returns for reimbursements was acceptable to the partners. However, the partner organisations indicated that the retirement processes of budget were too cumbersome. It was pointed out by the partners that CARE Ghana used methods that were not flexible thus slowing down the processes of applying for and the release of funds which affected their cash flow. The evaluation team also found that generally, the project suffered from cash flow problems as was demonstrated by the late release of second, third and fourth year budgets. Since the release of project funds from EU is tied to CARE Denmark submission of the annual report and subsequent request for the next tranche of funding, it may be conjectured that the cash flow problems were “self-inflicted”.

4.3.4 Partnership Arrangements

GIRAF was designed and implemented under an arrangement that brought four Ghanaian NGOs together as equal implementing partners. One unique advantage of the partnership was that all the members belonged to the FWG and therefore had existing working relationships. The project benefited in terms of mutual institutional familiarity which enhanced camaraderie amongst the partners enabling them to collectively oversee the successful implementation of the project over its four-year duration. However, as reported by the Midterm review and confirmed by the evaluation team, not all was rosy with the partnership arrangement. One particular point of emphasis by the three other NGOs was that CARE Ghana in-house policy on retirement of project funds slowed the implementation processes, and affected the other implementing partners’ ability to effectively deliver on their contracts. For example, when questioned about CARE Ghana posturing in the partnership arrangement being an impediment to the entire management of the project, responses received from the partners indicated that they would have preferred a situation where each partner was truly regarded as “equal partner”. There was strong emphasis that CARE Ghana was too bureaucratic and should have been flexible with some of its in-house polices which were not considered during the project design but were imposed during the project implementation.

However, the partnership arrangement used for the project implementation added value to the delivery of the project expected results. The technical competencies the partner NGOs and the 11 facilitation NGOs, nine of which were FWG members, enabled the project to benefit from the synergies that were attributable to the NGOs working together. The benefits from the partnership arrangement and the chain of executing the project through the partnership far outweigh the management cost, and the occasional delays in the implementation processes arising from disagreement amongst the implementing NGOs. Advocacy capacities of the partners were also found to have been enhanced by the project. For example, Forest Watch Ghana (FWG) led a process of developing and submitting a memorandum on natural resources issues to the Constitution Review Commission of Ghana. The effort culminated into a number of networks in the country (FWG, NCOM and NETRIGHT) to push for amendments of clauses in the Ghana’s 1992 constitution that are inimical to effective governance and management of natural resources. The process led to the recommendations that other customary institutions other than chieftaincy that were relevant for natural resources
management should be recognised and given support in the Constitution. Forest Watch Ghana also through its member’s advocacy work at the grassroots level helped communities to continue to hold duty bearers accountable and demanding transparency in the use of forest revenues.

4.3.5 Technical Assistance to Management and Partners
This arrangement was not varied during the four years of the project implementation: CARE Ghana, through its Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) programme coordinator provided general oversight and management support to the Project Manager. Technical support, especially on financial management was provided regularly by CARE to the partners. Due to institutional challenges identified with FOE-Gh at the end of the 1st year of the project, FOE-Gh was supported by the project to develop and implement a capacity building plan which enabled it to improve tremendously in its finance management and reporting. At the district level, partners especially Civic Response through the various training sessions, provided support to the Forum Facilitators. The arrangement was efficient as it enabled the completion of most project activities within the given time frame. However, the inability of the project to deliver the Training Manual for the conduct of training of trainers (ToT), a major activity under the awareness creation, suggests that technical assistance provided to Civic Response for coordinating the preparation of the document was not adequate. The evaluation team felt that the preparation of the manual should have been outsourced to external consultant.

4.3.6 Means and Cost in relation to Outputs
The project total expenditure as at the time of the evaluation was €943,228 which represents 75.46% of the total budget (see Table 2). Compared with the Midterm rate of 51%, the project outtake of funds slowed down in the last half of its implementation. Indeed, discussions with the CARE ANR Coordinator confirmed that the project had cash flow challenges in the second to the final year which might have contributed to the situation.
As indicated earlier in the introduction, the project may finally close with a positive balance of €306,739 i.e. 24.54% of the total budget. This is quite significant. Since the project funds were managed through CARE financial management systems, it may be conjectured that partner NGOs concerns about the lack of flexibility and bureaucracy of the system might have contributed to the situation.

Another reason could be an underestimation of the cost of running the forest forums and awareness creation. One major observation in the field in terms of project budget was the consistency in the underestimation of the budget lines for this activity. Almost all the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>Total Budget (EUR)</th>
<th>Cumulated Expenditure (from start of implementation to date) (in EUR)</th>
<th>Estimated Budget Surplus (in EUR)</th>
<th>Expenditure as a percentage of total budget (Burn rate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Human Resources</td>
<td>560,127</td>
<td>377,822</td>
<td>182,305</td>
<td>67.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Travel</td>
<td>10,550</td>
<td>6,015.58</td>
<td>4,534</td>
<td>44.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Equipment and supplies</td>
<td>65,698</td>
<td>60,237</td>
<td>-164,907</td>
<td>91.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Local office</td>
<td>149,284</td>
<td>69,388.91</td>
<td>79,895</td>
<td>46.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Other costs, services</td>
<td>78,484</td>
<td>37,722</td>
<td>40,762</td>
<td>34.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Project activities</td>
<td>281,144</td>
<td>184,850</td>
<td>96,294</td>
<td>37.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ER 1</strong></td>
<td>112330</td>
<td>68,978</td>
<td>43,352</td>
<td>61.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ER 2</strong></td>
<td>90780</td>
<td>73,556</td>
<td>17,224</td>
<td>81.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ER 3</strong></td>
<td>50934</td>
<td>30,260</td>
<td>20,674</td>
<td>59.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ER 4</strong></td>
<td>27100</td>
<td>12,056</td>
<td>15,044</td>
<td>44.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Direct eligible costs of all project activities (1-6)</td>
<td>1,145,287</td>
<td>906,403</td>
<td>238,884</td>
<td>79.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provision for contingency (2 %)</td>
<td>22906</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22906</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Total direct eligible costs of all project activities (7+ 8)</td>
<td>1,168,193</td>
<td>906,403</td>
<td>261,790</td>
<td>45.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Administrative costs (7 %)</td>
<td>81773.51</td>
<td>36,825.53</td>
<td>44,948</td>
<td>45.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Total eligible costs (9+10)</td>
<td>1,249,967</td>
<td>943,228</td>
<td>306,739</td>
<td>75.46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Facilitating NGOs demonstrated that they had budget deficit for running their activities under the forest forums and the awareness campaigns (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount (GHC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Snacks for 41 participants @ GHC7</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lunch for 41 participants @ GHC10</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 Cartons of water @ GHC12</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Transport for 40 participants</td>
<td>1170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Community sensitization in five communities @ GHC 60</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Administrative cost; two resource persons @ GHC 50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2315</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.5 Procurement Process
Apart from the dissatisfaction expressed by Civic Response about the Dell laptops that were procured by CARE Ghana which was reported by the Midterm review, no unfavourable comments were made about the procurement processes. Indeed, CARE Ghana responded professionally by withdrawing them and allowing the partners to purchase Laptops of their choice.

4.3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation
The project M&E included periodic reporting by implementing partners (quarterly by implementing partners and annually by CARE to the EU for narrative. CARE Ghana reviews partners’ financial report as at when they request for reimbursement of funds utilized. Similarly, CARE is allowed to submit audited financial reports to the EU at any time CARE intends to request for reimbursement of monies used. This is possible once CARE has spent about 75% of the cash advanced by the EU at the beginning of the project). Monthly meetings of the PMT provide opportunity for peer review of partner performance on implementation. Results oriented monitoring (ROM) by the EU also provides annual monitoring information. At the time of the evaluation of the project two of such monitoring had been done (2010 and 2011). It must also be mentioned that the basis for the project monitoring had improved after the Midterm review when the project logframe was revised to enhance the measurable indicators. It must be emphasized that revised logframe was only used as a working document to enhance monitoring of indicators. However, the evaluation team did not observe any rigorous M&E at the district and community levels where the actual implementation of the project activities happened. This is because our interviews with Facilitating NGOs suggested that not much follow-up were done by the project implementing partners after the district forums have been organised. They also emphasized when follow-up visits were undertaken they were limited mainly to the district level. Our observations also showed that the Facilitating NGOs did little follow-up in the communities for the obvious reason that their budget was too little to enable them undertake such activities.
4.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impacts of governance programmes, are usually only visible in the long term, and so could only be assessed after several years. However the project has achieved some specific outcomes/results which have impacted on the role of women, the communities, partner organizations and local NGOs, in forest resource management as well as the Forestry Commission, MLNR and the Parliamentary Select Committee on Lands and Natural Resources.

It is very clear from observations made by the evaluation team in the field that the project created undisputed awareness among the various beneficiary communities regarding their rights and forest policies. It also provided a lot of social benefits to community members in terms of the use of the SRA for the development of the communities. Additionally, it brought about unity among communities culminating in local networking of communities for the protection of their forest resources. Finally the project built the capacities of the facilitators of the local NGOs and the 3 implementing partners (CIKOD, FoE-Gh and Civic Response) in the management of forest resources. For example, the training workshops organised for the forest forum facilitators have equipped them with skills to effectively organise and facilitate Community and District forest forums. For the three implementing partners, the exposure the project has given them at local and international workshops and conferences on forest management, especially on policy advocacy and implementation of international protocols such as the VPA and FLEGT, has enhanced their knowledge in forest governance.

4.4.1 Impact on Women

The participation of women in the project was generally low, and time constraints, illiteracy and lack of confidence were cited as the contributing factors. This notwithstanding, the evaluation team realised that the project empowered women in many communities in the Wassa Amenfi District to be fearless in joining their men in protecting their rights in forest management. Specifically, the team recorded the following outcomes:

- In Dawurampong, Wassa Amenfi District, the Queenmother distooled the Chief for not accounting for royalties collected

- In Dokoto Junction, a woman was able to organize other women in the community to stop SAMATEX from operating in the area for not paying the SRA

- The case of Saaman in the Wassa Amenfi District, where the women have taken over from the men and assigned to themselves the responsibility of protecting their forest resources, presents an interesting story:
The women, led by a female teacher in the community were able to organise themselves into a strong group and prevented a popular mining company, Golden Star Mining Company of Bogoso, from operating in the area. The women followed this up with a press conference, facilitated by New Generation and Civic Response, at the International Press Centre in Accra to inform the public on how the mining companies are infringing on their rights and destroying their lands and water bodies. As a result of the press conference, a tripartite meeting was held between the District Assembly, Golden Star and the women to resolve the problem. The meeting ended in favour of the women who finally banned the company from undertaking any mining activities in the Saaman forest.

The strong advocacy role of the Saaman women in the area provided the impetus for women in the community forum to receive funding from the French Embassy to sensitise women in the other communities on royalties paid to the chiefs in 2011. The sensitization brought awareness for the people to know that the royalties, unlike the SRA which is for community development, are small monies meant for the use of the chiefs.

The ripple effect of the Saaman case was observed in other near-by communities like Afranse and Wassu Dompoase (a non-GIRAF Community), which have also prevented mining companies from operating in their areas.

### 4.4.2 Impact on Communities

Community members are now aware of their rights and responsibilities and are able to challenge illegal chain saw operators and timber contractors, negotiate for the payment of SRA and in some cases, challenge chiefs to be accountable for royalties. Specific case studies are:

- At Wantram in the Wassa Amenfi district and Breku Manso in the Asamankese Municipality, timber companies which refused to pay their negotiated SRAs were prevented from operating in their forest concessions.
- At Akim Awaham in the Asamankese Municipality, the community forum was able to meet Birim Timber (Oda) to successfully discuss the company’s delay in the payment of the SRA.

**Teachers Quarters and School Block supported with SRA at Atakrom**

The outcome of the community awareness is that many communities do apply their rights to seek transparency and accountability in SRA payments, a situation which often generates bad relationship between the chiefs and the communities, especially the forum members in some few communities.
In Gyasikrom in Asunafo-North the people challenged the chief who had signed SRA with a timber Contractor (Ayum Timber Company) without their knowledge. The people vehemently protested and subsequently denied the Company access to the forest until the Chief of Goaso interceded on behalf of the Company. Finally, the community was supplied with 5 packets of roofing sheet and 50 bags of cement by the company. And at Mfama, the chief collected 20 bags of cement from a timber company for the rehabilitation of his palace. He was challenged by community members and finally 15 out of the 20 bags of the cement were collected from the chief for development work in the town.

Also, the GIRAF project revived many FC forums that had collapsed before the start of the project. These ‘dead’ forums are now active at the district level and operating under the GIRAF project.

4.4.3 Impact on Traditional Authorities (TAs)

The Sensitization of Traditional Authorities on modern concepts of accountability and transparency has enhanced accountability and transparency in forest revenues (Royalties and SRAs) accrued by traditional authorities to benefit the forest dependent poor rural communities. In the districts where the sensitization took place the TAs have been receptive to the sensitization process and have shown their commitment to the process. The positive attitude and acknowledgement of the traditional leaders on the lack of transparency and accountability within their institution is a breakthrough and provides opportunity for working with the Traditional Authorities to address the issue.

“"The Project has really enlightened us on SRAs and royalties. At first when the timber companies come here they just enter the chiefs palace and give schnapps and a small envelop to Nana then they start cutting the trees. But now through the project we know that we have to sign SRA agreement with the company before they start their job. We demand the 5% stumpage enshrined in the constitution.” Mr. Emmanuel Gyimah, Gyasikrom.

4.4.4 Networking between Communities

One of the project’s objectives was to strengthen local networks and institutionalized platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogue. In meeting this objective, the project paved the way for the collaboration of both GIRAF and non-GIRAF communities in the enforcement of forest policies. Akannting, Koboroso and Osenase in the Asamankese Municipality are now networking and assisting each other when it comes to the issue of forest management in the Awaham area. These communities are also working together to address a common issue regarding trenches left behind by illegal mining operators which serves as breeding grounds for mosquitoes and death traps for innocent children. The same is found in Mfama and Gyasikrom and six surrounding communities, in the Asunafo –North district. Mfama and Gyesikrom are planning to form an electoral area SRA committee to deal with issues of SRA. In the Wassa Amenfi district, Wassa Saaman has been playing a leading role in enforcing forest policies, especially on the SRA, and other communities like Afranse, Wantram, Mamieso and Dogromasa consult Saaman for advice on how to engage the mining companies in SRA negotiations.
4.4.5 Impact on implementing partners and participating NGOs

The formation of DOLTA which is made up of traders, chain saw machine owners and operators, bench millers, small scale carpenters and lumber dealers (Brokers) had been supported by FWG. But the group’s capacity was enhanced under GIRAF and they led forum facilitation in the Eastern region, an attribute not usually aligned with chainsaw operators. The GIRAF project created awareness of their rights and responsibilities in forest management and as an association, they became active in the protection and conservation of forest though tree planting as well as engage the FC on access to legal timber for the domestic market.

The GIRAF project extended the area of operation of the Participating NGOs, which are now more visible in many communities of the project beneficiary districts. The project also helped build the capacity of the partner organizations and field facilitators (NGOs). For example, a Training of Trainers’ workshop for Forest Forum facilitators was organised from May 25th to 26th, 2010., and in August 2010 (24th-28th), a detailed Forest Forum (FF) Facilitators training workshop was organised which trained 30 Forest Forum facilitators from 19 Districts. The facilitators were trained on how to use standardised module of facilitating Forest Forums (developed with inputs from the Stakeholders’ Strategic Workshop) and also how to report on Forest Forums.

Forest Watch Ghana (FWG) conducted at least 3 strategic workshops for its members and a broader group of civil society groups engaged in forest governance advocacy on the forest policy and legislation, the political economy of Ghana’s forest sector, strategies for advocacy, leadership, etc. These workshops have increased the capacity of organizations and individuals to effectively engage duty bears in the forest sector.

At the national level, the project has provided opportunity for civil society to engage more constructively with the processes on the review of the Forest and Wildlife Policy. FWG and other CSO partners developed common positions on issues that needed to be included in the policy review. Similarly, the partners were brought together to present input in the national constitutional review. For example, FWG in conjunction with 2 other networks in the country (NCOM and NETRIGHT) submitted a memorandum on natural resources management to the 1992 Constitution Review Commission of Ghana for the amendments of sections of the Ghana’s 1992 constitution that are inimical to effective governance and management of forest and natural resources. The project partners have also made recommendations that the recognition of the Chieftaincy institutions alone in the 1992 Constitution to the exclusion of other customary institutions relevant for natural resources management marginalizes and affects their performance.

Also, at the last NFF, The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources specifically told FWG to make inputs into the Master Forest Development Plan which would be the vehicle for implementing the New FWP. It is significant to note that unlike previously, the Ministry has demonstrated that it is not going to sit in the office and write the New FWP all alone. This is a far departure from the past and recognition of the role of civil society.
4.4.6 Impact of Forums on forest governance
The forums have given stakeholders a better understanding of forest governance because they have the opportunity to discuss issues of concern openly and freely at wider platforms from the community to the national level. Stakeholders, especially the forest fringe communities, are adequately informed about where to go to seek for redress on their rights and benefits. For example, the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands has received more enquiries on stumpage fees and royalties from chiefs and community members. Also, an increasing number of stakeholders at the community and district levels are now demanding accountability and transparency in forest governance from duty bearers.

4.4.7 Public awareness on FLEGT/VPA
Timber trade is increasingly being recognised as business that has to conform to national and international regulations and protocols. For example, the project has improved the understanding of timber trade associations including Domestic Lumber and Trade Association (DOLTA) which has a wide range of membership nationally (traders, chainsaw machine owners and operators, bench saw-millers, small-scale carpenters and lumber dealers/brokers) about forest sustainability and compliance with timber regulation. The association is also embarking on plantation development to improve domestic supply of lumber and reduce pressure on existing forest resources.

The level of awareness of timber concessionaires and companies on export timber certification has been enhanced by the project. The forums at the district, zonal and national levels offered opportunity for timber companies and concessionaires to seek clarification on the FLEGT/VPA. Also at the community level, local people now insist on verifying the documentation of concessionaires and companies whether the timber they harvest conforms to the timber rights they have been allocated. For example, at Grumesa in the Wassa Amenfi East District in the Western region, local farmers indicated that they are aware that they are not only to concern themselves with the SRA agreements but also they should check to ensure that concessionaires harvest the right number of trees allocated to them.
4.5 Sustainability

4.5.1 Introduction

From discussions and observations throughout the evaluation, it became clear that the sustainability of the project hinged on the survival and replicability of the forest forums. The question of ownership of the processes, institutional leadership and responsibility for forest forums, and the funding of the processes were some of the major issues that came up from respondents when they were questioned about the sustainability of the project. Most of the respondents agreed that the forest forums were useful platform for constructive engagement amongst all stakeholders in the forest sector, and gave the grassroots people in forest dependent communities the opportunity to hold accountable duty bearers and policy makers.

4.5.2 Institutionalisation of the forest forums

Respondents agreed that the forest forums should be institutionalized to give them the required legitimacy. And indeed the institutionalization of the forums as platforms for multi-stakeholder engagement was a key aim of GIRAF. As they are currently constituted the forums, particularly at the community and district levels, are not adequately grounded and recognised as social institutions. For example, in most of the communities the evaluation team visited, respondents could easily point out the existence of Community Forest Committees (CFCs) and their leadership, but were not too clear about the existence of forest forums. Whilst some respondents in the communities said they did not know about the forums, some mentioned that they have only heard about the forums but were awaiting their formal inauguration in their communities. Some District Assembly staff the evaluation team interacted with also agreed that the forums were yet to be institutionalized because the District Assemblies have participated in some of their meetings but were unsure that the forums have gained adequate recognition as institutions in the districts.

The threat to the institutionalization of the forums at the community level was that they were perceived to be constituted only by the community representatives who participated in its processes at the district level. The inability of these representatives to give feedback to the local people and to organise regular forum meetings were also found to have undermined the institutionalization of the forums in the communities. Since the community level institutionalization is key to achieving the GIRAF overall objective of sustainable forest management and poverty reduction, structuring them along the lines that will be recognised, for example as CFC, can get them much more integrated into the communities.

Respondents also suggested that regular organisation of forums at the district level, at least once every quarter, will enhance its institutionalization. Some district assemblies staff the team interviewed indicated that the assemblies were prepared to sponsor such meetings because the issues relating to sustainable natural resources management and poverty reduction, were among the core mandates of the district assemblies and the forums would provide a useful platform for sustained stakeholder engagement. The team also observed that the zonal and national forest forums enhanced the visibility of the forums and gave them the needed recognition by political actors and decision makers. It was emphasized by respondents that the forums should not only be concerned with annual national meetings but look into the possibility of constituting recognisable district, zonal and national structures to coordinate the forums activities which will embed them as institutions.
The evaluation team also agrees with the observation made by the Midterm review that as a project implemented by members of the same coalition, the institutional embedding of the project is assured and the smooth continuation of activities after the project is not disputable. However, the team observed that the perception of unequal partnership amongst the NGOs may threaten the arrangement. The team also observed that the limited management capacity of some of the partners and the need for activity coordination may reduce sustainability of the project.

4.5.3 Ownership

The evaluation team observed that in the design of the project ownership of the forest forums and their processes were not clearly highlighted. This may threaten the sustainability of the project. For instance, the district assemblies could have been drawn into the project as owners or joint owners of the forums at the district level. Indeed, projects that have strong community and district character such as the forest forums, have their sustainability enhanced when local political structures such as district assemblies are drafted into them to own the entire processes or parts of them. For example, the Rural Enterprises Project used the district assemblies to house the Business Advisory Centres and the Rural Technology Facilities, the two main structures of the project at the district level. Thus, when the project ended, these two facilities become the permanent face of the project in all the beneficiary districts ensuring that the flow of benefits to the beneficiary communities and districts are sustained. Discussions with MoFA and FC staff further suggested that their active involvement would enhance the sustainability of the project. For instance, the Deputy Director of MoFA of Sefwi Wiawso District had this to say:

“Our extension officers in the communities would be able to facilitate the community forest forums as part of our extensions services. We reach more communities and FBOs, and the strong link between agriculture and forestry positions our staff to deal with local issues that are discussed at the forums.”

Similarly, the Kwaebibrim District Forest Manager emphasized that:

“FSD, MoFA and DA should be able to own the district and community forums. Our three institutions have the capacity, in terms of technical and financial, to run the forums when the project ends. However, in the project we were not assigned any specific roles except that we are asked to participate in the forums as resource persons and at other times serve as panel members of radio discussions programmes.”

Indeed, the capacity built in CSOs in facilitating the forums is an important element for sustainability and will motivate them to own some of the processes. However, discussions with the Facilitating NGOs indicated that most of them lacked the financial resources to continue to facilitate the processes when the project comes to an end. Also the approach of developing the forums through community level forums would enhance sense of ownership among many participants in the forums. However, as indicated above, majority of our respondents at the community level considered the forum as solely constituted by the community representatives at the district level. Some of the communities were also frustrated by lack of feedback from these representatives and the apparent indifference shown by FSD staff to adequately address issues raised by the forums.
4. 5.4 Financial sustainability
When asked about the sustainability of the forums, respondents were quick to point to sustained flow of funds to run the processes involved in organising the meetings of the forums. Most of them were unsure where funding will be sourced to organise the meetings. In this regard, the main concerns expressed were the payment of transport allowances and meals at the district level forums. The community level forums did not require much financial resources, except money needed to hire public address systems during the meetings, and when they have to travel to the district to report cases of illegal activities. Most respondents were therefore of the view that sustainability of the district forums which required much more financial resources was more threatened than the community forums.

In the project design, the financial sustainability was hinged on sustained financing at the level of the local government from the timber royalty payments made to the assemblies. Apart from the fact that no clear design activity and dedicated resources were allocated to achieving that aim, discussions with district assemblies visited indicated that they did not prioritize the use of the royalties for such activities. Their priorities were in socio-economic infrastructural development. However, there were indications from some of the assemblies that they were prepared to fund some of the processes such as allowing the use of assembly hall for the forum meetings and to contribute to the payment of transport allowance of participants. However, through the advocacy of GIRAF, the new Forest and Wildlife Policy has captured the funding of the forums. But this is yet to be given legal backing.

4. 5.5 Policy embedding
The annual national forest forums provided excellent platform for policy dialogue and the subsequent embedding of pertinent issues at the local level into the policy discourse. The participation of CSOs, community level duty bearers and representatives, policy makers and government appointees among others in the forum offers opportunity for constructive engagement. Communiqués issued at the end of the forums was a useful tool for influencing the direction of policy. But more work on advocacy is required to get politicians and policy makers to get committed to the processes.

The evaluation team would like to reiterate the observation made by the midterm review that, the forest forums have inadequate linkages with key policy making institutions and platforms at the district (environmental and forestry sub-committees) and this affects the uptake of issues generated at the forums. We also share the view that government commitment has nothing to do with whether the forums are facilitated by the FC or CSOs. It must also be emphasised that Government will be motivated to respond to concerns when it is pressurized by strong and persistent advocacy, an area that CSOs have advantage over the FC facilitated forums.

4. 5.6 Replicability
The evaluation team concluded that the project specific approaches and interventions were viable and replicable. They were amenable to nation-wide adoption to open up transparency in policy decision making in the forest sector and other sectors. But as indicated above, these require resources and well defined structures to own the processes.
4.6 Summary of Overall Performance

The project’s overall achievement has been rated as satisfactory. Awareness has been created at the community level on forest governance. Forest fringe communities in the Project areas understand their rights and responsibilities regarding forest management at the community level. Communities are able to engage their duty bearers and demand accountability from them. Capacity of NGOs/CSOs has been built to champion advocacy on sustainable forest management at the district and community levels. The overall rating reflects the combined assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and innovation. Of these impact and sustainability was considered to be moderately satisfactory, as discussed in sections 4.4 and 4.5, and this is not sufficient to affect the satisfactory rating overall. Table 4 provides the ratings of all the criteria, which are consistent with the analysis in sections 3 and 4.

Table 4. Summary of Evaluation Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Project Evaluation Ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Project performance</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Project impact on:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Authorities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating partners and NGOs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest forums</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency in the forest sector</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public awareness on FLEGT/VPA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity of NGOs/CSOs to undertake advocacy on forest governance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Other performance criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation, replication and scaling up</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Overall project achievement</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.0 Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learnt

5.1 Conclusions

The overall objective of GIRAF was to ensure sustainable management of forest resources in Ghana and contribute to poverty reduction. The project activities have contributed to the achievement of this overall objective. The high level of awareness created by the project at the community, district, zonal and national levels on forest governance has the potential to translate into sustainable forest management. The project has also built advocacy capacity of communities, CBOs and NGOs/CSOs which would also contribute to sustainable forest management and poverty reduction in the long run. The project complementarity to existing interventions in the forest sector on governance is very strategic.

ER1

The project was able to achieve its target of supporting 30 district forest forums which are networked through district, zonal and national forums. The facilitation of community forest forums prior to the district forums adequately prepared community stakeholders to effectively engage stakeholders at the district level. However, the institutionalization and sustainability of the forums have to be critically looked into as there appeared to be no identity of the forums particularly at the community level.

Prior to the GIRAF project 17 DFF existed. According to the GIRAF document, the 1st round of capacity building targeted these DFFs to get them operational. Discussions with forum members at both district and community levels revealed that some community and district forums existed before the GIRAF project. However, in all the eight (8) districts and 24 communities visited by the Evaluation Team, it was reported that the forums were dormant and had been revived by the GIRAF project.

ER2

The Project has been effective in strengthening the capacity of Traditional Authorities (TAs) on modern concepts of accountability and transparency for improved forest governance. The project has created awareness on royalties and SRAs. Prior to the project, there was very little discussion on royalties in terms of its calculation, use and accountability by beneficiaries.

The Transparency Reports for 2011 and 2012 are yet to be produced. However, CIKOD under the Making Forest Sector Transparent (MFST) project has produced two Transparency Reports (2009 and 2010) which are being used for advocacy on forest governance.

ER3

The project has improved the level of awareness on forest issues at the community, district and national levels. The awareness creation approach adopted by the project (including the use of fliers, radio and TV programmes and websites) reached a large audience including the targeted beneficiaries. The media engagements on forest governance have deepened discussions on
sustainable forest management. However, the participation of the Forum Facilitators in the radio programmes at the district level was low.

**ER 4**

The project succeeded in building the advocacy capacity of the participating NGOs. Several useful advocacy case studies have been shared at national and international levels by some of the participating NGOs. However, under the project no advocacy reports were produced as envisaged in the Logframe.

**5.2 Recommendations**

**Partners**

- The implementation of the use of the community score cards should be done in a collaborative manner to ensure mutual benefit from the expertise of all the implementing organisations. This would enhance the quality and integrity of the data generated as well as the joint ownership of the report.

- The forum facilitators have acquired adequate knowledge in forest governance and can be used as resource persons to improve awareness creation at the community and district levels.

- Follow-up visits to monitor the activities of the CFF members should be undertaken regularly by facilitators to build the confidence of forum members and also offer them the opportunity to discuss challenges they may face in exercising their rights to protect the forest.

- CARE Ghana in-house polices should be discussed with FWG members during project design to allow buy-in by its partners to enhance smooth implementation of project activities.

- Women participation in the forum should be enhanced. Their representation in the forums at the district, zonal and national levels should be increased as they play a key role in advocacy at the community level.

- The project M&E system did not capture adequate information on the indicators in the logframe. Regular monitoring and data collection would enhance the quality of project reporting.

- Adequate funds should be allocated for community and district forest forums. This would enable the Facilitating NGOs to cover more communities, make frequent follow-up visits to the communities and support community forum networking.

**European Union**

- Disbursement of project funds needs to be made less bureaucratic and flexible to enable implementing partners to easily account for funds allocated to them. This would ensure speedy implementation of project activities and efficient uptake of project funds.
In future, the EU should demand for an institutional audit of potential members of a partnership to ascertain that the members have the requisite capacities and control systems that would enhance project financial and organisational management.

The approach of using local NGOs in partnerships to implement EU development projects should be deepened. It has the potential to make wider impact on local level institutions, policy makers and community members.

Policy Makers

The project protocol arrangement under which DAs are expected to cede a percentage of timber royalties to the community forest forms needs to be reconsidered. This is because the DAs do not prioritise the use of the funds for forest and natural resources development but rather socio-economic infrastructural provision. Therefore, the government should commit some resources, through the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources to fund the operations of the forest forums.

Other stakeholders

The forums as presently constituted do not have clear ownership at the community and district levels and this poses a threat to their institutionalisation and sustainability. Therefore, to ensure its ownership at the local levels the DAs, CSOs and CBOs should be encouraged to own the processes of the forums. The forums should also work closely with existing forums (including FC facilitated forums) to enhance their institutionalisation and sustainability.

The existing local level institutions such as MoFA and FSD should also be assigned specific roles to play in the forums as they presently do not have any well defined roles.

5.3 Lessons Learnt

1. The structure of the forum i.e. from the community, district, zonal to the national level was very innovative. This enhanced wider stakeholder consultation and participation, especially at the community level where forest governance issues directly affect the poor and vulnerable.

2. In projects where partnership is involved, a comprehensive orientation should be organized for partners before project take-off. This will ensure a better understanding of partner roles and promote good working relationship.

3. The participation of women in the forums has the potential to deepen advocacy activities in forest fringe communities. For instance, in few communities like Wassa Saaman, where women were sensitised and actively participated in the forums, they had taken over the responsibilities of their male counterparts or at least joined them in protecting their forest resources.

4. Involvement of traditional authorities in Community-based projects that involve transparency and accountability enable them to open up to their subjects and other stakeholders.
5. To enhance visibility of EU funded rural development projects in beneficiary communities, activity lines for informing beneficiaries about EU must be part of the project implementation.
Bibliography

1. Annual Transparency Report 2010: Making the Forest Sector Transparent
2. Annual Transparency Report 2011: Making the Forest Sector Transparent
3. GIRAF Annual Report 2009
4. GIRAF Annual Report 2010
5. GIRAF Annual Report 2011
6. GIRAF Mid-Term Review Report, 2011
10. ROM Report 2010
11. ROM Report 2011
Annex 1: Terms of Reference and Scope of Work

Governance Initiative for Rights and Accountability in Forest Management (GIRAF) Project

Terms of Reference for Consultancy for GIRAF End of Project Evaluation

1. Project Background

Distortions in forest stakeholder power relations in Ghana have led to systemic abuse of community resource rights and undermined achievement of official policy objectives for forest sector governance. For over a century, the state has converted communities' resources into long-term industrial or conservation reserves. In this ‘timberised’ environment, private timber companies eventually captured policymaking and removed effective regulatory restrictions to logging leading to the state and communities subsidizing the operations of the timber industry.

The results of distorted power relations are apparent now. In biodiversity terms, Ghana lost 80% of its forest cover between 1909 and 1990 and continues to lose more forest cover at a rate of 65000 ha per annum. Annual reforestation / plantation development over the last 10 year has been estimated at 10,000 ha which is not commensurate with the rate of forest loss. This poses a threat to biodiversity, the survival of the domestic wood industry and rural economy. Substantial natural forest remaining in about 260 state managed forest reserves now also suffer serious degradation with some losing as much as 90% of cover between 1990 and 2000. There is massive encroachment of some of these forest reserves by cocoa farmers because of the marginalization of communities in forest resource management and the inability of the state apparatus to monitor activities in the forest reserves. Economically, the timber sector accounts for 6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but costs 3.5 % of GDP in environmental damage leaving a suboptimal net contribution of 2.5% compared to land uses like agriculture. Illegal logging / non enforcement of timber laws costs Ghana an average of US $100 million per year. In security terms, there is an increase in resource-related conflict within communities, between communities and between communities on the one hand and companies and the state on the other. Some of these conflicts have turned violent posing a serious long-term threat to national stability.

Distorted power relations is not only between the state and industry on the one hand and communities on the other. At the local level, District Assemblies and Traditional Authorities who are direct beneficiaries of forest revenues have failed to be transparent and accountable for these revenues to their constituencies and local communities because transparency and accountability is not practiced at the national level either.

In recent years, State in line with global demands for forest sector governance, has acknowledged that the forest sector suffers from lack of governance and not just technical, managerial, financial capacity or ‘law enforcement’ problems. They have shown greater willingness to recognise community tenure, decentralized management of forest resources and development of local forest enterprises. In the last 6 years, this thinking has been reflected in official policy positions. Ghana, for example, signed the 2003 Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance Ministerial Declaration. It was the first country to commit to Forest Laws Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) negotiations (2003) and completed negotiations and signed with the European Union (EU) the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) in September 2008. Ghana’s FLEGT process has enabled unprecedented stakeholder participation in policy processes. The state has committed to institutionalizing this process and announced a three-year agenda for policy, legislative and institutional reforms that strengthen community tenure, management and enterprise development rights and responsibilities.

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2 Forest Watch Ghana Advertisers Announcement October 2004
ensure transparency in the sector. Even though the state has signed the AFLEG and VPA, governments continue to pursue actions that are not transparent and still are not accountable to stakeholders. Clearly systems that would compel the government to be accountable to the implementation of these commitments are missing. For example demands / pressure from forest resource owning communities on the state for transparency and accountability in the management of their resources is very limited so far for a number of reasons:

- Majority of forest owning communities are ignorant about their rights and responsibilities as well as the rights and responsibilities of other forest stakeholders (government, industry) and therefore are unable to assert them
- Communities are not organized around asserting their rights and demanding accountability
- There is limited platform for resource owning communities to make their voices heard

2. Project Description

GIRAF is a 4-year project (2009-2012), funded by the EU (80%) with counterpart funding from CARE Denmark (20%). The Overall Objective of the project is that forest resources in Ghana are sustainably managed and contributing to poverty reduction. Specifically the project is aimed at strengthening local networks and institutionalized platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogue. It strengthens community actors’ capacity to monitor and evaluate policy implementation and the performance of institutions. It enhances public forest-governance awareness, creating a wider public audience for the debate about community forestry. Finally, it builds the capacity of Forest Watch Ghana and cooperating Community Based Organisations to intervene directly in this discourse and conduct advocacy for Community Forest Management (CFM).

GIRAF is expected to deliver the following results:

- a) Forest Forums in 30 districts support wide stakeholder engagement on forest governance and are linked up to regional and national Forest Forums
- b) Transparency in forest sector has improved in 30 districts through utilisation of public audits, community transparency scorecards and making results publicly available
- c) Increased public awareness of the value of forest resources and of FLEGT in Ghana and dissemination of Ghana’s experiences to other potential VPA countries
- d) Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have demonstrated increased capacity to undertake advocacy for improved forest governance at district, national, and international levels

GIRAF is implemented in 6 Regions (Brong Ahafo, Western, Central, Volta, Northern and Eastern) by four NGOs working together as partners (CARE Ghana, Civic Response, Friends of the Earth-Ghana and Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development).

3. Project Target groups and Institutions

The project primarily targets 45,000 forest-dependent people living in 90 communities in 30 rural districts in the Brong-Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Northern, Volta and Western regions of Ghana. The project also targets local level institutions such as Community Resource Management Committees, District Forest Forums and traditional authorities.
4. Objectives of the End of Project Evaluation

In line with the project document and CARE International policy, an end of project evaluation should be conducted to assess impacts made. The objectives of the evaluation are:

- Make an overall independent assessment of the performance of the project paying particularly attention to concrete results, nature of benefits and impact of the project actions against its objectives;
- Assess whether value-for-money has been achieved, inputs were used economically to achieve the desired outputs;
- Determine whether the project was implemented in an efficient and effective way;
- Identify key lessons and propose practical recommendations for possible future interventions.
- Assess and provide evidence of extent of stakeholder ownership of processes and sustainability;
- Identify factors if any which enhanced or hampered Program implementation to the desired level;
- Assess the relevance of the project and its strategy in the context of the institutional and operational environment;
- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability of the results achieved in line with the indicators of the project log-frame;
- Formulate lessons learned and best practices able to serve future EU Delegation portfolio in Rural Development or any other actions implemented in the sector.

5. Requested services, including suggested methodology

The Consultant is required to carry out this assignment in accordance with the Project Cycle Management Guidelines\(^3\) and the Evaluation Methodology of the European Commission\(^4\).

The final evaluation shall be based on a participatory approach, involving beneficiaries and all stakeholders concerned as well as in accordance with the OECD's Development Assistance Committee’s (DAC) agreed set of standard international criteria to guide all evaluations of development assistance. The DAC criteria are shown below:

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\(^3\) [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/reports/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/reports/index_en.htm)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAC Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with recipients’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and donors’ policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the not benefit flow over time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Consultant’s Tasks

Task One: Preparations

The Consultant shall

- Respond to TOR providing methodology for the evaluation, itinerary / timeframe and budget for undertaking the consultancy
- Agree on fees with CARE
- Agree on methodologies, itinerary and tools for conducting the evaluation with project partners
- Have preliminary meetings with CARE and the Donor to clarify expectations

Task Two: Desk Review

The Consultant shall

- Review GIRAF Project documents and reports noting key achievements against or beyond targets, lessons and challenges in the project implementation against planned activities and Result Areas
- Review the follow-up to the conclusions and recommendations of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the project. The final appreciation of the intervention should be assessed from different stakeholders’ perspectives and recommendations on the way forward will be based on lessons learnt from observations on the ground as well as making good use of ideas emanating from the various stakeholders.

Task Three: Field Visits

The Consultant shall

- Conduct interviews with the project partners to ascertain level of implementation and grant management
- Conduct interview with a cross section of project beneficiary communities and district stakeholders to ascertain the achievements of key expected outcomes of the project and unexpected outcomes
- Identify key successes and challenges affecting project implementation both at the partners and community levels.
- Assess how gender is mainstreamed in the project implementation

Task Four: Stakeholder Validation workshop and Report writing

- Prepare draft report based on agreed reporting outline
- Present report to Stakeholder’s Validation meeting to discuss main findings and interpretation of findings
- Submit final evaluation report with a description of the evaluation process followed, methodology and tools used including formats, questionnaires and recommendations on their usefulness for GIRAF.

Submitted by Sarfo-Mensah and others

December, 2012
The consultant is requested to follow the methodology prevailing for EU projects (refer to the Project Cycle Management Guidelines\(^5\) and the Evaluation Methodology of the European Commission\(^6\))

### 7. Resource Materials and logistical support

**GIRAF** Project Management will provide the consultant with:

- GIRAF Project documents and Progress reports –
  - GIRAF Project document
  - GIRAF IPIA
  - GIRAF Mid Term Review Report
  - Forest Forum Reports
  - Traditional Authorities Reconnaissance Reports
  - Citizens Awareness Creation Report

- Any other relevant documentation as may be required by the consultant.
- Transport for field work
- Per diems and cost of accommodation during field as well as other approved travel cost.

### 8. Expected Outputs of the End of Project Evaluation

- Methodology for the evaluation, work-plan and itinerary,
- Raw data generated during the evaluation
- A de-briefing of preliminary results to be held in Accra with the participation of staff and partners and donor
- Draft End of Project evaluation report which responds to the objectives of the consultancy including description of the evaluation process followed, methodology, tools used, formats, questionnaires and recommendations by the 17th day
- Submit final report on the 20th day including a short aide memoire (4 or 5 pages)

### 9. Competencies of the Consultant

- The consultant should have at least a Masters Degree in social sciences or natural resource management with at least 15 years post qualification working experience in the NRE sector.
- Demonstrated experience in facilitation reflective learning and action sessions
- Demonstrated experience in utilizing participatory approaches
- Strong communication, documentation and presentation skills
- Demonstrated experience in project review and evaluation, strategic planning and organizational development.
- Experience in EU funded projects (Budget lines or EDF projects) will be considered as an asset.

\(^5\) [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/reports/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/reports/index_en.htm)

10. Conditions

Duration of consultancy: A total of 20 days within the given period.

Calendar: The suggested time frame is from 1st to 30th November, 2012 both days included

Payment: 60% payment upon delivery of 1st draft. Final payment (i.e. 40% balance) within 15 days of the submission of final report.

Contacts:

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Project Manager

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Email address: albert.katako@co.care.org

Godfrey Mitti
Senior Program Coordinator
Tel: 0248 122 369
Email address: Godfrey.mitti@co.care.org
Appendix 2: Evaluation Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA</th>
<th>EVALUATION QUESTIONS</th>
<th>SOURCES OF DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Project Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Submitted by Sarfo-Mensah and others

December, 2012

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## A. Relevance

**Policy alignment:**
- Were project objectives realistic and consistent with national development framework (forest governance and poverty reduction strategies and policies) as well as the needs of the rural poor?
- How coherent was the project with respect to the policies, programmes and projects undertaken by the Government and other development partners?
- How was the internal coherence of the project in terms of synergies and complementarity between objectives, components, activities and inputs?

**Participatory design**
- Was the project design participatory? Did it take into consideration the inputs and needs of key stakeholders, including the Government, executing agencies, co-financiers and the expected beneficiaries and their grassroots organizations?

**Learning Approach**
- Did the project benefit from available knowledge (for example, the experience of other similar projects in the country) during its design and implementation?

**Targeting:** What was the envisaged targeting approach? What were the implications for targeting of the project’s commodity chain/beneficiaries?

**Overall project coherence:** In general, were project design and implementation approach (including financial allocations, project management and execution, supervision and implementation support, and M&E arrangements) appropriate for achieving the project’s objectives?

### ROM Reports
- Mid-term Review
- Implementation Status Reports

### Interviews Respondents
- Civic Response, CARE, CIKOD, FoE-Gh
- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders
### B. Effectiveness (achievement of intermediate objectives and beyond outputs)

**Actual achievements and outcomes:**
- To what extent have the expected project objectives been attained both in quantitative and qualitative terms?
- Did the project succeed in providing sustainable training and services to the Forest Forum facilitators?
- Did the creation of Forestry Forums lead to improvement in forest governance?
- Did the poor benefit from improvement in forest governance?

**Internal factors affecting outcomes:**
- What factors in project design and implementation account for the estimated results in terms of project effectiveness?

**Role of project risk**
- Did any of the risks identified at project appraisal affect the achievement of objectives?
- If yes, could these risks have been better managed?

**External factors affecting outcomes**
- Have there been any major changes in the country context (e.g. policy framework, political situation, institutional set-up, economic shocks, etc) that affected the effectiveness of results?
- If yes, did EU and the Project partners make the required adjustments to project design and implementation to ensure the achievement of objectives?

### CRITERIA | EVALUATION QUESTIONS | DATA SOURCES
--- | --- | ---
I. Project Performance (cont.) | **C. Efficiency**
- **Project costs:** What were the costs of activities and inputs invested to develop specific project outputs? Do the costs of investments to develop specific project outputs compared with national standards?
- Extent to which the costs of the project have been justified by the results and impacts of the project (comparison with similar projects can be established).
- **Cost ratios:** Is the cost ratio of inputs to outputs comparable to local, national or regional benchmarks?

- **Interviews Respondents:**
  - Civic Response, CARE, CIKOD, FoE-Gh
- Group discussion with beneficiaries
- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders
- Direct observation

- **Data Sources:**
  - Appraisal Report
  - ROM Reports
  - Mid-term Review
  - Implementation Status reports
II. Project Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Women</th>
<th>To what extent did the project empower women and the rural poor? Do they play more effective roles in decision-making on forest governance?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Communities</td>
<td>Did the project increase awareness on sustainable forest governance at the community level? Did this translate into any benefits?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Traditional Authorities</td>
<td>Did the project contribute to making the traditional authorities more accountable and transparent on issues regarding forest governance?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Implementing Partners and participating NGOs</td>
<td>Did the project strengthen the capacity of NGOs/CSOs to undertake advocacy on forest governance? Did the project contribute to improved forest governance?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Institutions and policies</th>
<th>Did the project contribute to increased transparency and improved governance of authorities and institutions in the Forestry Sector? To what extend have the FRs been involved in the project improved their responsiveness and accountability to the needs of the rural poor? To what extent has the project impacted policy at the national and local levels? To what extend have or are the opportunities for lessons learned from the project to be integrated into broader National policy? To what extend did the project contribute to improved performance of service providers (particularly using private and NGO providers) in servicing the rural</th>
<th>CARE, CIKOD, FoE-Gh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Interviews Respondents
Civic Response, CARE, CIKOD, FoE-Gh
- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders

CARE, CIKOD, FoE-Gh
- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders

- ROM reports
- Mid-term Review
- Implementation Status Reports

Appraisal Report
- Mid-term Review
- Implementation Status Reports

Interviews Respondents
Civic Response, CARE, CIKOD, FoE-Gh
### III. Other Performance Criteria

#### A. Sustainability

- To what extent did IFAD operations contribute to the enforcement of the national/sector policies that positively affect the livelihoods of the rural poor?

- Was a specific exit strategy or approach prepared and agreed upon by key partners to ensure post-project sustainability? Was this effective?

- What are the chances that benefits generated by the project will continue after project closure, and what factors mitigate in favour of or against maintaining benefits? What is the likely resilience of economic activities to shocks or progressive exposure to competition and reduction of subsidies?

- Is there a clear indication of government commitment after the loan/grant closing date, for example, in terms of provision of funds for selected activities, human resources availability, continuity of pro-poor policies and participatory development approaches, and institutional support? Did the EU project design anticipate that such support would be needed after loan closure?

- Did project activities benefit from the engagement, participation and ownership of local communities, grassroots organizations, and the rural poor?

- Are adopted approaches technically viable?

- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviews Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civic Response, CARE, CIKOD FoE-Gh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROM reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervision Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Review</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders
### III. Other Performance Criteria (cont.)

#### B. Innovation, replication and scaling up

- What are the innovation(s) promoted by the project?
- How did the innovation originate (e.g., through the beneficiaries, Government, EU, CARE Denmark, NGOs, research institution, etc) and was it adapted in any particular way during project design?
- Were successfully promoted innovations documented and shared? Were other specific activities (e.g., workshops, exchange visits, etc.) undertaken to disseminate the innovative experiences?
- Have these innovations been replicated and scaled up and, if so, by whom? If not, what are the realistic prospects that they can and will be replicated and scaled up by the Government, other donors and/or the private sector?
- Mid-term Review
- Implementation Status Reports

**Interviews Respondents**
- Civic Response,
- CARE,
- CIKOD
- FoE-Gh
- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders members

### Lessons learned and the way forward

#### Lessons Learned

- What has been the most significant change/contribution of the GIRAF? And why was that significant?
- In the absence of the GIRAF what would have happened?
- What are the lessons learned from the project?

**Interviews Respondents**
- Civic Response,
- CARE,
- CIKOD
- FoE-Gh
- Individual interviews in the field with stakeholders

#### The way forward

- Recommendations to ensure better performance of the project in the future?
### Annex 3: Itinerary for Field Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>District Forest Forums</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Facilitating NGO</th>
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<tr>
<td>07/11/12</td>
<td>07/11/12</td>
<td>08/11/12</td>
<td>Meet with EU Desk Officer</td>
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<td>12/11/12</td>
<td>14/11/12</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Attend 2012 National Forest Forum</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Partner NGOs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Forum Facilitators</td>
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<tr>
<td>14/11/12</td>
<td>14/11/12</td>
<td>17/11/12</td>
<td>Hold interviews with beneficiaries at community and district levels</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Kwawibibrem (Kade)</td>
<td>Topremang Apinamang</td>
<td>DOLTA</td>
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<td>West Akyim (Asamankessi)</td>
<td>Akanteng Kobriso</td>
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<td>Birim North (New Abirem)</td>
<td>New Abirem Ntronang,</td>
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<tr>
<td>17/11/12</td>
<td>17/11/12</td>
<td>19/11/12</td>
<td>Hold interviews with beneficiaries at community and district levels</td>
<td>Brong Ahafo North</td>
<td>Asunafo North</td>
<td>Akrodie Gyasikrom Mfema Anwianwia Goaso Sunyani</td>
<td>RUDEYA</td>
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<td>Sunyani</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/11/12</td>
<td>19/11/12</td>
<td>22/11/12</td>
<td>Hold interviews with beneficiaries at community and district levels</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Sefwi Wiawso</td>
<td>Attakrom Betenase Sefwi Wiaso</td>
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### Annex 4: List of informants met

#### 1. EASTERN REGION

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<th>Name of Respondent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nana Akwasi Ankoma</td>
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<td>Akanteng</td>
<td>Asamankese Municipality (AM)</td>
<td>0248367513</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anane Boamah</td>
<td>Unit Committee Secretary</td>
<td>Akanteng</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>0543645084</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kofi Takyi</td>
<td>Unit Committee Vice Chairman</td>
<td>Akanteng</td>
<td>AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nana Owusu Amo</td>
<td>Ninfahene</td>
<td>Akanteng</td>
<td>AM</td>
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<td>Nana Kwabena Yeboah</td>
<td>Sanaahene</td>
<td>Akanteng</td>
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<td>Nana Kwame Appiah</td>
<td>Gyasehene</td>
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<td>Baafour Kofi Anim</td>
<td>Krontihene</td>
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<td>Barima Appiah Darkwa III</td>
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<td>Amso Budu</td>
<td>Assemblyman</td>
<td>Kobroso</td>
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<td>Efia Aboagyewaa</td>
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<td>Juliana Adobea</td>
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<td>Nicolas Obeng</td>
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<td>Patience Akutey</td>
<td>Financial Secretary, West Akim DFF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ebenezer Adu Kona</td>
<td>Coordinator, NFPD, DOLTA</td>
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<td>Atta Gyimah</td>
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<td>Francis Boateng</td>
<td>Assemblyman</td>
<td>Topremang</td>
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<td>Cosmas Sogodo</td>
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<td>Hon. Emmanuel Osae</td>
<td>District Chief Executive</td>
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#### 2. BRONG AHAFO REGION

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<td>Nana F K Duah</td>
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<td>Obeng Ababio</td>
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<td>Nana Opoku Atta Ababio</td>
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<td>Kwesi Ayili</td>
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<td>John Tuffour</td>
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<td>Peter Mensah</td>
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<td>Betenase</td>
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<td>Fredrick Owusu</td>
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<td>Elvis Oppong Mensah</td>
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<td>Bismark Mensah Brako</td>
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<td>Sefwi Wiawso</td>
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<td>Kwame Atobra</td>
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<td>Kweku Kaya</td>
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<td>Isaac Danquah</td>
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5. GREATER ACCRA

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<td>Herve Delsol</td>
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<td>Ruth Richardson</td>
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<td>Kafui Denkabe</td>
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<td>Bernard Guri</td>
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<td>William Asamoah</td>
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<td>Willie Laate</td>
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<td>Elijah Danso</td>
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