

GHANA NATIONAL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN COALITION (GNECC)

2008 REGIONAL MONITORING REPORT



JUNE 2008

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INTRODUCTION

In keeping with the planned activities for 2008, GNECC National monitored the institutional framework and activity progress of six of its seven regional structures over the course of May and June 2008. The Greater Accra region was left out of this monitoring due to the recent departure of Muslim Relief Association of Ghana (MURAG) in the capacity of lead agency, resulting in regional inactivity. The purpose of the monitoring was to assess the level of effectiveness each of the regional lead agencies and coordinating committees demonstrated in the functioning of their structures, resources, programming, financial management, and activity status using a series of indicators before the end of the second quarter. The monitoring took the form of regional meetings with the Regional Coordinating Committee (including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and other Executive Council members), the Regional Coordinator, and GNECC National staff at each of the regional capitals. The discussions proved fruitful in addressing key issues affecting the smooth operation of the Coalition at the local level and identifying region specific challenges hindering activity delivery. It has been noted throughout the Coalition that over the last several quarters there have been delays in the release of funds which has inhibited the ability of the regions to implement activities. In order to bypass these obstacles, GNECC National placed the monitoring exercise high on their list of quarterly activities so as to evaluate regional efficiency in facilitating timely activity implementation and consistent advocacy work. Timely execution of this exercise ensured that 2008 will see two regional monitoring activities (the second occurring in October 2008) as well as creating an informed basis for discussion at the semi-annual Regional Coordinators Meetings that will follow the monitoring field visits on June 30th 2008.

This exercise marks the first time that GNECC is conducting a semi-annual monitoring of its regional structures due to the fact that there have been serious delays in project implementation over the last several quarters because of insufficient

release of funds. While delivery of project funds to the regions has only picked up since the beginning of 2008, sufficient time has passed to assess the progress of these activities and to ensure that all regions are on the same page regarding program implementation and monitoring. The following section examines the structure of the monitoring tool that was used to assess progress across all of the regions.

STRUCTURE OF THE MONITORING TOOL

The monitoring tool that was used for the 2008 monitoring field visits was created using institutional issues highlighted in the re-appraisal report, current issues affecting program delivery in the Coalition, and a cross section of indicators key to maintaining a strong Coalition and advocacy platform. In May and June of 2007, a re-appraisal of GNECC's regional structures was conducted in order to determine the capacity of the regions in meeting the necessary requirements for smooth functioning of GNECC local level activities. This meant evaluating the capacity of institutional and organizational structures such as financial management, record keeping, signatories, report writing, and membership drive. Each region was thoroughly evaluated, and in conjunction with the re-appraisal team, created a list of action steps to have been completed by the end of 2007. As the first monitoring since the re-appraisal, the monitoring tool evaluated these institutional issues and action steps and built upon them by adding a number of sections relevant to sound program delivery, building a strong advocacy platform, and maintaining an effective coalition such as communication, media engagement, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation, and information sharing.

Of the cross section of indicators created, the main components that dominated the monitoring discussions were that of **media engagement, communication, narrative report writing, financial report writing, monitoring and evaluation, fundraising, signatories, 1st/2nd quarter activity updates, information sharing, and member data base and membership drive.**

Media Engagement was highlighted in this monitoring exercise because it was realized that GNECC's local association with the media operates more like a client than a partner. Currently, GNECC utilizes the media at the regional level to report on activities and meetings instead of engaging them with the issues surrounding education so that they understand the problems and speak not only on the behalf of GNECC, but to better education for all Ghanaian children. The goal of advocacy work is to ultimately change the policies or practices of society on a particular issue, in this case, education. The most effective and cost efficient way to reach the majority of society is through the media, and thus an advocacy campaigns media engagement strategy becomes the most important tool they can possess. The main message to regions on this issue is that the media needs to be regarded as a partner who is involved in project planning and implementation so they will become participants of GNECC with a vested interest in education advocacy.

Communication at the regional level is the link between national and local level activities with good communication meaning an open and efficient flow of information from all levels. It has been noted that the level of communication between regional structures and their members and DEFATs has been below par, thus it became pertinent to evaluate what types of challenges exist and why in order to begin bridging the communication gap.

Narrative Report Writing has been a consistent problem in the regions over the years, despite the introduction of a common reporting format. In reviewing the various reports submitted by the regions, it has been determined that many reports are much too long due to narrative detail. The Programs Officer has therefore proposed the distribution of a new reporting format that will cut down on the length of reports by focusing on activity outcomes and impacts through highlighting on specific case studies, concluding with emerging issues and success stories. This will not only shorten reports, but will also make them more focused on the gains and impacts of GNECCs work which is what donors and partners are interested in.

Financial Report Writing is generally strong in the regions, especially in terms of accountability and delivery of receipts, however it has been noted that not all of the regions are using the same format which has complicated national reporting methods. In order to make reporting as simple as possible, GNECC National is asking all members to review their financial reporting method and to ensure that they are using cash vouchers, retirement forms, and honor certificates to categorize their expenditures. This will make financial management easier for all parties involved as well as ensuring the continuation of strong regional financial capacity.

Monitoring and Evaluation is an area of program implementation that the majority of regions have demonstrated low capacity in for a variety of reasons. However, the nature of advocacy and coalition work demands that this remain one of the most important components for determining results, challenges, and areas to apply pressure for achieving the desired results. In order to effectively implement monitoring, a region specific plan should be created that will allow for careful assessment of activities that is applicable to regional activities and situations.

Fundraising has been demonstrated as area that all regions face challenges in due to low capacity in proposal writing and donor scanning. It is also a critical component to decentralizing GNECC resources and building up the name of GNECC at the regional level so that regions can deliver activities pertinent to their communities. The situation of low fundraising capacity is being rectified through nation wide trainings on proposal writing and donor scanning in each of the regions. It is hoped that this training will build the capacity of the regions to begin soliciting external funds for GNECC projects at the regional and local level.

Signatories for regional accounts has emerged as a major issue in all the regions due to the nature of the requested change in the re-appraisal report. It was decided in June 2007 that the Regional Coordinator should be replaced as a signatory with one other Executive Council member before the Regional Coordinators meeting in June, making regional signatories the Chair, Treasurer, and one other Council Member with payments and expenditures being approved by the Chair. Many of the regions expressed grievances over this as it made the process of payment long and bureaucratic, with no obvious benefits coming to the Regional Coordinator who is still held accountable for all expenditures. While these grievances have been heard, and also found at the National level, due to the fact that this directive was agreed upon last year, it has to be implemented. Once this change has been demonstrated, then regions can lodge a complaint with the Executive Council as there will be evidence to support the claim.

1st and 2nd Quarter Activities saw disbursement of funds to the regions in March and June of 2008. A crucial aspect of the monitoring was to follow up with the regions regarding their ability to implement the activities for these quarters. Although there has been severe under funding of regional activities in the past, these actions have now been rectified and Regional Coordinators are assured that they will be receiving funds on a quarterly basis for project implementation, on the condition that all of the activities for a quarter are implemented within the allotted time period. Carrying over of activities will no longer be tolerated, as monies will not be released to regions who do not demonstrate the capacity to deliver activities in the designated period. Activities funded in the first quarter included: Regional Meeting, Radio Discussion, Follow up DEFAT Activity, DEFAT Meeting, Tracking of the Capitation Grant, and GAW (for E/R,C/R, and BA/R). The only activity given exception for completion is that of tracking the Capitation Grant which requires national hiring of a researcher and a revision of the tracking tool, thus this will go off in the third quarter. Activities funded for the second quarter included: Fund Raising Workshop/Regional Meeting, DEFAT Meeting, DEFAT Activity, and Follow Ups.

Information Sharing of quarterly and annual reports and the Education Agenda were highlighted as a monitoring indicator due to their importance in promoting GNECCs name at the regional level, engaging key stakeholders (ie. Local government) in GNECC activities, and ensuring unity amongst regional members and DEFATs.

Member Database/Membership Drive were discussed during the field visits because of their importance in maintaining the strength of the Coalition. Majority of regions have not submitted comprehensive regional databases despite frequent prompting leading to a lack of national knowledge of members and consequently no way of tracking the progress of the regions in their ability to recruit new members.

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF MONITORING RESULTS

Central Region Monitoring

Date: May 15, 2008

Location: Education for the Child Head Office, CAPE COAST

Monitors: Kofi Asare (Programs Officer), Bright Appiah (GNECC Chairman), and Courtney Strutt (WUSC Volunteer)

Lead Agency: Education for the Child

Participants: Mrs. Kate Warden – Regional Coordinator

Monitoring Checklist

Component	Regional Issues	Action Steps
Media Engagement	Use of media remains mostly on a report by activity basis, however some local media have agreed to form a more concrete partnership with the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work on creating a partnership with the local media to engage them in the implementation and planning processes of GNECC Central activities.
Report Writing	Reports are currently comprehensive, follow GNECC reporting format and are submitted in a timely fashion to GNECC National.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue using good practices. Begin to use newly disseminated reporting format for narrative reports.
Financial Reporting	<p>Financial reporting conducted according to the GNECC format of cash vouchers, retirement forms and honor certificates and submitted on a timely basis.</p> <p>Financial information sharing low between the Regional and District level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue using good financial reporting practices. Improve upon financial information sharing through presenting budgets and summaries of disbursement spending at Regional Meetings.
Communication	<p>Currently the region does not have a GNECC Central email account with emails going through the Regional Coordinators personal account.</p> <p>Communication within the region and districts is good due to frequent meetings at the regional and district level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a GNECC Central email account that all Regional Coordinating Council members have access to.
Fund Raising	Currently do not receive any other sources of funding for GNECC activities aside from national funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for identifying donors and soliciting funds for Central Regional activities.
Monitoring and Evaluation	A monitoring and evaluation plan for Central Region activities exists, however it isn't used frequently due to lack of funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be innovative with funds received in order to include monitoring into aspects of regional programming.
Signatories	The Regional Coordinator still remains a signatory on GNECC Central Accounts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace the Regional Coordinator as a signatory with one other Executive Council member before the Regional Coordinators meeting in June.
1 st and 2 nd Quarter Activities	All seven of the 1 st quarter activities (Regional meeting, DEFAT meeting and activity, radio program, training and tracking of DEFATs, and GAW) were held by the time of the monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep up the good work relating to timely execution of quarterly activities to continue receiving regular fund disbursements.

	2 nd quarter activities currently being implemented.	
Information Sharing	Not discussed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strong information sharing with members and key stakeholders through dissemination of quarterly reports and the Education Agenda.
Member Database and Membership Drive	<p>Member database compiled and stored at GNECC National.</p> <p>Membership drive is low.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue scanning for new members, especially targeting those that can make a difference in GNECC and form solid partnerships.

Regional Action Steps:

1. Create a partnership with the local media to engage them in the implementation and planning processes of GNECC Central activities beginning immediately.
2. Begin to use newly disseminated reporting format for narrative reports.
3. Improve upon financial information sharing through presenting budgets and summaries of disbursement spending at Regional Meetings, beginning with the next meeting.
4. Create a GNECC Central email account that all Regional Coordinating Council members have access to immediately.
5. Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for identifying donors and soliciting funds for Central Regional activities.
6. Be innovative with funds received in order to include monitoring into aspects of regional programming beginning in the third quarter.
7. Replace the Regional Coordinator as a signatory with one other Executive Council member before the Regional Coordinators meeting in June.
8. Ensure strong information sharing with members and key stakeholders through dissemination of quarterly reports and the Education Agenda.
9. Continue scanning for new members, especially targeting those that can make a difference in GNECC and form solid partnerships.

Western Region Monitoring

Date: May 16, 2008

Location: GNAT Head Office, TAKORADI

Monitors: Kofi Asare (Programs Officer), Bright Appiah (GNECC Chairman), and Courtney Strutt (WUSC Volunteer)

Lead Agency: New Generation Concern

Participants: Mrs. Pearl Azu – Regional Treasurer

Mr. Abraham Adjei – Regional Vice Chair

Mrs. Mycel Acquah-Mensah – Regional Secretary

Mr. Justice Darko – RCC Member (GNAT)

Monitoring Checklist

Component	Regional Issues	Action Steps
Media Engagement	Media engagement not strong as they are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a partnership with the

	only used as a tool to disseminate information on activities and issues in the region, but not a partner in GNECCs work.	local media to engage them in the implementation and planning processes of GNECC Western activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially focus on Skky as this is a Western Region only news station.
Report Writing	Reports don't follow the national reporting format and are too narrative. Report writing is not inclusive as the Regional Coordinator writes the reports and doesn't pass around to Coordinating Members for their input and information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin using newly disseminated reporting format that focuses on outcomes, impacts, and case studies. • Make report writing an inclusive procedures with all Coordinating Committee members
Financial Reporting	Financial reports aren't submitted using the required format of cash vouchers, retirement forms, and honor certificates. Financial information sharing is low as members and the Coordinating committee doesn't know how much was disbursed and what the monies were spent on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to use proper reporting format immediately. • Improve upon financial information sharing through presenting budgets and summaries of disbursement spending at Regional Meetings.
Communication	The regional email account is through the Regional Coordinators personal email. Communication is very low as the Regional Coordinator tends to create an information gap because he is not located in the regional capital and is without frequent internet and phone communication to members and the RCC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a GNECC Western email account that all RCC members have access to immediately. • Re-assess who the lead agency is or at least put in place a focal person in Takoradi who can coordinate communication amongst the various parties.
Fund Raising	Region receives no other funding apart from national funding due to low capacity to source funds in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for identifying donors and soliciting funds for Western Regional activities.
Monitoring and Evaluation	No monitoring plan or any initiatives to monitor the outcomes of activities is made in the region due to lack of funds and technical know-how.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a region specific monitoring plan to implement next quarter. • Innovatively use funds available to include monitoring in quarterly activities.
Signatories	Current signatories are the Regional Coordinator, Chairman, and Treasurer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the Regional Coordinator as a signatory with one other Executive Council member before the Regional Coordinators meeting in June.
1 st and 2 nd Quarter Activities	All four 1 st quarter activities (Regional and DEFAT meeting, DEFAT activity, and radio program) were conducted. 2 nd quarter activities pending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement all outstanding activities as soon as possible to prevent carry over of activities into the 3rd quarter and to receive 3rd quarter disbursements.

Information Sharing	Not discussed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strong information sharing with members and key stakeholders through dissemination of quarterly reports and the Education Agenda.
Member Database and Membership Drive	<p>Have not submitted a comprehensive Member Database to National.</p> <p>Region has low membership drive due to not seeking out and engaging potential members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile and send database to National by the end of the quarter. • Begin scanning for new members, especially targeting those that can form solid, beneficial partnerships.

Regional Specific Issues:

- **Budgetary Allocation:** Concerned raised by Vice Chair is that there is minimal financial compensation given to members for coordinating activities, which should be revisited. As well, the Western Region has the most number of DEFATs, thus perhaps the allocation of funds they receive for quarterly activities should be increased.

Western Region Action Steps:

1. Create a partnership with the local media to engage them in the implementation and planning processes of GNECC Western activities, especially linking up with Skky News.
2. Begin using newly disseminated narrative reporting format that focuses on outcomes, impacts, and case studies with the input of all Coordinating Committee members immediately.
3. Begin to use proper financial reporting format immediately.
4. Improve upon financial information sharing through presenting budgets and summaries of disbursement spending at Regional Meetings, beginning with the next meeting.
5. Create a GNECC Western email account that all RCC members have access to immediately.
6. Re-assess who the lead agency is or at least put in place a focal person in Takoradi who can coordinate communication amongst the various parties at the next Regional Meeting.
7. Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for identifying donors and soliciting funds for Western Regional activities.
8. Create a region specific monitoring plan to begin implementing follow up activities next quarter by innovatively using available funds and sourcing national for more.
9. Replace the Regional Coordinator as a signatory with one other Executive Council member before the Regional Coordinators meeting in June.
10. Implement all outstanding activities as soon as possible to prevent carry over of activities into the 3rd quarter and to receive 3rd quarter disbursements.
11. Ensure strong information sharing with members and key stakeholders through dissemination of quarterly reports and the Education Agenda.
12. Compile and send database to National by the end of the quarter.
13. Begin scanning for new members, especially targeting those that can form solid, beneficial partnerships.

Eastern Region Monitoring

Date: June 12,2008

Location: Child Educational Assistance Program Office, KOFORIDUA

Monitors: Kofi Asare (Programs Officer) and Courtney Strutt (WUSC Volunteer)

Lead Agency: Child Educational Assistance Program

Participants: Mr. Lawrence Batsa – Regional Coordinator
 Mrs. Francisca Bortey – Regional Chair
 Mrs. Rosina Badger – Regional Treasurer
 Mr. Agbodo Suze – Regional Accounting Officer
 Mr. James Boamah –Regional Executive Council Member

Monitoring Checklist

Component	Regional Issues	Action Steps
Media Engagement	Media used as a tool to disseminate information on activities and issues in the region, but not a partner in GNECC work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a partnership with the local media to engage them in the implementation and planning processes of GNECC Eastern activities.
Report Writing	<p>Used to hire a rapporteur to cover activities then have the regional coordinating committee make inputs, but now the reports find themselves being created at the Regional Coordinator level with minimal input from the rest of the Coordinating Committee.</p> <p>Reporting format currently being used allows for lengthy unfocused reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be an inclusive process; everyone on the RCC should know what Volta Regions report say so that if a donor came asking, the whole team knows. • Input required from all members • Utilize newly disseminated reporting format to make reports more concise.
Financial Reporting	Currently not completed according to the standard format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the report is submitted with the narrative and uses cash vouchers and honor certificates to record spending.

Communication	<p>Communicating information about programming and finances is low in the region due to lack of phone and email access of members.</p> <p>There is currently no GNECC Eastern Region email account, all mail goes directly to the Regional Coordinators personal mail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep members informed about programming, finances, and news from national/regional through sharing of repots and regular meetings at the local and regional level. • The Regional Coordinating Committee must ensure that a GNECC Eastern Region email account is set up before the Regional Coordinators meeting that all RCC members have access to.
Fund Raising	Currently receives funding for the support of GNECC activities from World Vision, Plan Ghana, Ghana Network, and WUSC volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to use current fundraising methods and newly acquired skills through the fundraising workshop as a launching point for soliciting funds for GNECC Eastern activities.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Currently the region does not have a monitoring plan although when funds are available they try to evaluate past activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region should come up with a monitoring plan that is specific to the region that can measure impacts and outcomes of activities on a quarterly basis.
Signatories	Change signatory from Regional Coordinator to Regional Chair, Treasurer and one other Council Member.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officially change signatories by the time of the Regional Coordinators meeting on June 30th so that ways forward can be determined with legitimacy
1 st and 2 nd Quarter Activities	Only activity completed out of the 1 st and 2 nd quarter activities was a regional meeting due to the fact that the region was under the impression they weren't going to receive funds again like last year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement all outstanding activities as soon as possible to prevent carry over of activities into the 3rd quarter and to receive 3rd quarter disbursements. • Provide reporting of all activities to the National Secretariat ASAP
Information Sharing	Distribution of regional and national quarterly reports and work plans to members and stakeholders is generally weak as they remain at the regional office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National to send 5 copies of quarterly reports to be matched by 5 more copies printed at the regional level so that members and key stakeholders can be informed of regional activities and results.
Member Database and Membership Drive	A complete Regional Member and DEFAT database has been sent to GNECC National.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute list of education NGOs in the Eastern Region for EMIS.

Regional Specific Issues

- **Newsletter:** The development of a regional newsletter to report on activities and results has not yet been completed due to a lack of funds. The information previously gathered is now out of date, however the region should compile current data, write the newsletter by the end of the quarter and send to national to print.
- **Regional Brochure:** The region has not yet constructed a brochure on GNECC Eastern's structure and activities as the region was told that regional brochures are not needed. It has been decided that this is a valid activity, so the region should collate their data and send to national to print by the third quarter.

Eastern Region Action Steps

1. Compile data on regional activities to compose a newsletter which can be sent to National for printing by the end of the quarter.
2. Collect data the region would like to see comprise their regional GNECC brochure and send to National for printing by the end of the third quarter.
3. Create a partnership with the local media to engage them in GNECC Eastern's Activities.
4. Ensure that regional report writing utilizes the new reporting format and sees input and work from all regional coordinating committee members.
5. Ensure that financial reports are submitted within one month of the end of the quarter and uses cash vouchers and honor certificates to record spending.
6. Keep members informed about programming, finances, and news from national/regional through sharing of reports and regular meetings at the local and regional level.
7. Create a GNECC Eastern Region email account that all Regional Coordinating Committee members have access to before the June 30th Regional Coordinators Meeting.
8. Use the fund raising training received to build on current methods to continue soliciting for external funding for GNECC activities.
9. Create a monitoring plan that is specific to the region which measures impacts and outcomes of activities on a quarterly basis.
10. Officially change signatories to the discussed persons by the time of the Regional Coordinators meeting on June 30th.
11. Implement all 1st and 2nd quarter activities as soon as possible to prevent carry over activities and to receive further quarterly disbursements.

Volta Region Monitoring

Date: June 13, 2008

Location: Keketi Hotel, HO

Monitors: Kofi Asare(Programs Officer) and Courtney Strutt (WUSC Volunteer)

Lead Agency: Center for Strategic Planning

Participants: Mr. Festus Longmatey – Regional Coordinator

Mr. Prosper Ayivebi – GNECC V/R Executive Council Member

Mr. Frank Awuku Amanor – Acting Treasurer

Mr. Dickson Pi-Banso - Acting Chair

Monitoring Checklist

Component	Regional Issues	Action Steps
Media Engagement	Have extended an invitation to media houses to attend meetings, but for now there is no relationship with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a partnership with the local media to engage them in GNECC Volta activities.
Report Writing	Handled by one member of the Regional Coordinating Committee to report on a program, then compiled into one comprehensive report by the Coordinator at the end of the quarter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be an inclusive process; everyone on the RCC should know what Volta Regions report say so that if a donor came asking, the whole team knows. • Input required from all members
Financial Reporting	Not submitted consistently on time and with the correct format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the report is submitted with the narrative and uses cash vouchers and honor certificates to record spending.
Communication	<p>Communicating information about programming and finances is low in the region which has negative effects on unity and group work.</p> <p>Only the Regional Coordinator has access to the GNECC Volta email account which means information from national only passes through him.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep members informed about programming, finances, and news from national by printing out any pertinent information received via email and give to members at regional/district meetings. • Ensure that all Regional Coordinating Committee members have access to the email account.
Fund Raising	Does not currently receive any external funding apart from GNECC National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for soliciting funds for Volta Region activities.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Did not discuss.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region should come up with a monitoring plan that they will use to follow post activity implementation to judge successes and challenges on a quarterly basis.
Signatories	<p>Change signatory from Regional Coordinator to Regional Chair, Treasurer and one other Council Member.</p> <p>Change the name of the old Regional Chair to the new one in the bank account</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officially change signatories by the time of the Regional Coordinators meeting on June 30th so that ways forward can be determined with legitimacy

1 st and 2 nd Quarter Activities	Only activity completed out of the 1 st and 2 nd quarter activities was the radio discussion which the Chair attended. Was a big success and he was asked to come back to do a free follow up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement outstanding activities as soon as possible to prevent carry over of activities into the 3rd quarter • Provide reporting of all activities to the National Secretariat ASAP
Information Sharing	<p>Copies of annual and quarterly reports are left at the regional office and not disseminated to key stakeholders.</p> <p>Each district only received 10 copies of the latest edition of the Education Agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National to send 5 copies of reports to be matched by another 5 printed by the regions to disseminate to key members • Increase the number of copies distributed to each region to 50 • Create a distribution list for newsletter and quarterly reports to identify key stakeholders and amount required
Member Database and Membership Drive	<p>Information for database collected but not yet comprehensive, thus the database has not been compiled until most current information is available.</p> <p>Have been able to generate membership interest through inviting potential new members to meetings and activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile all information on members and DEFATs and submit to National ASAP • Continue to invite new members and use strategies to get GNECC Volta's name out in the region.

Regional Specific Issues

- **Capacity of Lead Agency:** The capacity of the lead agency was focused on three main issues: Identifying and appointing auditors, finding suitable accommodation for the lead agency, and registering the organization with the Department of Social Welfare. Thus far, auditors have been identified but not yet commissioned, accommodation located but not yet moved into, and they have not yet registered with the Department of Social Welfare. Ways forward include ensuring that auditing takes place by the end of the third quarter, moving the head office into the discovered location, and registering with the Department of Social Welfare before the end of the quarter.

Volta Region Action Steps

1. Increase distribution and dissemination of GNECC activities, newsletters and reports to regional members in a timely fashion by creating distribution lists and enlisting the Secretariats help when needed.
2. Commission auditors to receive the lead agencies accounts.
3. Register lead agency with the Department of Social Welfare.
4. Officially change signatories by the time of the Regional Coordinators meeting on June 30th so that ways forward can be determined with legitimacy.
5. Compile all data on members and DEFATs into a comprehensive database to be submitted to GNECC National as soon as possible.
6. Change report writing styles to fit with the newly provided formats and ensure that the process is inclusive to all members of the Regional Coordinating Committee.
7. Form a partnership with the local media to engage them in educational advocacy issues in the region in order to make them a part of GNECC and get GNECC Volta's name out there as a self sufficient component of GNECC.
8. Formulate a better system of communicating program activities, finances, and Coalition news to regional and district members.
9. Ensure that all members of the Regional Coordinating Committee have access to the GNECC Volta Region email account.

10. Create a monitoring and evaluation plan that is tailored to the needs of the Volta Region regarding following up on the outcomes of activities.
11. Implement all outstanding 1st and 2nd activities.
12. Use the fundraising training to create a fundraising strategy in the region and brainstorm ideas for projects that the region would like to solicit external funds to support.

Brong Ahafo Region Monitoring

Date: June 23, 2008

Location: Rural Youth Service Head Office, SUNYANI

Monitors: Kofi Asare (Programs Officer), and Courtney Strutt (WUSC Volunteer)

Lead Agency: Rural Youth Service

Participants: Mr. Kobena Afena-Sam – Regional Coordinator

Mrs. Theresa Adjei Mensah – Regional Treasurer

Mr. Fofie Asiedu – RCT Member (GES)

Mr. Richard Sagodo – RCT Member (GNAT)

Mr. Pascal Assan-Edwards – RCT Member (Rural Youth Service)

Monitoring Checklist

Component	Regional Status	Action Steps
Media Engagement	Brong-Ahafo has attempted to engage the media in their activities several times, once last year by even holding a workshop for key media in the region,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to think of the media as a partner in the advocacy campaign of GNECC so as to ensure quality representation and

	however the response was not encouraging. Currently use the media as a tool for information dissemination but are pushing for a stronger partnership.	engagement in education issues.
Report Writing	The writing of reports is based on project specifics; if it is a meeting, the regional secretary writes the report and hands it over to the RC. If it is a community project by DEFATs, the DEFAT secretary writes the report and submits it to the RC. If it is a regional program organized for a range of members, a rapporteur is contracted. Ultimately, the final compilation is done by the Regional Coordinator with little alternative input from the rest of the Regional Coordinating Team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practice of creating activity reports is well done and should be maintained, however the quarterly reports need to take input from the rest of the Regional Coordinating Team so that all members are aware of what is happening in the region in order to report to interested parties if asked (ie. Donors) • Current format of reports is too lengthy and narrative; begin using newly disseminated format.
Financial Reporting	<p>Financial reports not received by national in a timely manner and those that come don't follow the reporting procedures of using cash vouchers, retirement forms, and honor certificates, due to training received from ActionAid which uses a different format.</p> <p>Bank statements currently not given to GNECC National.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin using financial reporting format stated by GNECC for all future reports. • Photocopies of all receipts and vouchers must be sent along with narrative and financial reports (originals to be kept in Sunyani). • GNECC National to provide 10 – 20 copies of the Payment Voucher book to the region. • Attach bank statements to financial reports.
Communication	<p>There is no GNECC B/A email account; currently all mail goes through the National Coordinators personal account that other members of the Regional Coordinating Team don't have access to.</p> <p>Members generally do not know the money has been distributed by GNECC National or the activities to which these funds have been assigned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a GNECC B/A email account by the end of the week that all members have access to. • Need to make financial and program information readily available to all members to promote accountability and unity in the region.
Fund Raising	Currently not receiving any funds aside from GNECC national	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for soliciting funds for B/A Regional activities.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Practice in the region has been to use council meetings as an opportunity to look at the various reports from DEFATs for updates, information and a way to flag emerging issues at the local level. Phone calls are also used on occasion to solicit follow ups on pertinent issues, however the persistence and continuity of this is weak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region should come up with a monitoring plan that they will use to follow post activity follow up to judge successes and challenges on a quarterly basis. • Report outcomes and impacts in reports and newsletters to show concrete results to donors and the community.

Signatories	Have always had their regional signatories as the Regional Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action to be completed.
1 st and 2 nd Quarter Activities	Regional Meeting and GAW 2008 activities held.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all outstanding activities ASAP to prevent carry over activities.
Information Sharing	Annual and Quarterly reports are not disseminated amongst members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GNECC National will print 5 copies of the quarterly report to be matched by 5 printed copies at the regional level and disseminated to key partners in the region, especially government
Member Database and Membership Drive	Member database is in the preliminary stages of data collection but is not yet comprehensive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish compiling as soon as possible so that it can be submitted to National to complete its full membership database.

Regional Specific Issues

- **Auditing:** As of June 2007, an auditor has been found to review the B/A Regional accounts, however they have yet to begin. Should commence auditing by the end of the third quarter to demonstrate financial accountability and capacity in the face of new potential donors.
- **Filing System:** Current practice is that all GNECC files are stored in one file entitled "GNECC" (except for financial which also has its own folder). Members realize the importance of needing to re-organize this and give GNECC a little more space so that documents can be filed by subject. Issue seems to be resources, however it is recommended this be mediated as soon as possible.
- **DEFATs:** Over the last year there have been no inauguration of DEFATs do the fact that there are serious funding restraints and the region would rather see those DEFATs they already have (roughly 15) strengthened and engaged. Major issue is that DEFATs are being underutilized, therefore they are not motivated which results in a high turnover of members making the work even more ineffective.
- **Over Spending:** Members state that sometimes money is not enough to cover expenses for activities; what is the policy for over spending? It was stated by the Programs Officer that any region is allowed to overspend up to 10% of the funds received. Not encouraging everyone to always budget, but keep in mind that there is a little bit of extra money if using it will help make your activity more successful.

Brong-Ahafo Action Steps

1. Begin to think of the media as a partner in the regional advocacy campaign and engage them as such, beginning with third quarter activities.
2. Utilize new narrative reporting format to cut down on the narrative and focus more on results.
3. Ensure that all members of the Regional Coordinating Committee have made input into each of the narrative reports.
4. Begin using financial reporting format stated by GNECC for all future reports.
5. Photocopies of all receipts and vouchers must be sent along with narrative and financial reports (originals to be kept in Sunyani).
6. Create a GNECC B/A Regional email account that all RCC members have access to within 24 hours.
7. Make all financial and program information (pre and post) available to all members, starting as of now.
8. Use the fund raising training as a base to begin soliciting for external funds for GNECC activities as soon as the training is completed.
9. Create a monitoring plan to be used every quarter to assess impacts and outcomes with results being reported to members, GNECC National, and through newsletters.
10. Complete all outstanding 1st and 2nd quarter activities as soon as possible.

11. Finish compiling regional member database by the end of July and submit to National.
12. Disseminate copies of quarterly reports to key stakeholders, especially government beginning with the next report.
13. Commence auditing of financial accounts by the end of the 3rd quarter.
14. Re-organize GNECC filing system in the region.

Ashanti Region Monitoring

Date: June 24, 2008

Location: Environmental Protection Association Head Office, KUMASI

Monitors: Kofi Asare (Programs Officer) and Courtney Strutt (WUSC Volunteer)

Lead Agency: Environmental Protection Association

Participants: Mr. John Owusu – Regional Coordinator

Mr. ??

Monitoring Checklist

Component	Regional Issues	Action Steps
Media Engagement	Relationships with the media have been attempted over the years, however the region is constrained due to lack of resources, thus the region remains on a client-seller relationship with the media focused on reporting on activities, not necessarily issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on creating a partnership with the local media to engage them in the implementation and planning processes of GNECC Ashanti activities in order to see a reporting on issues, not just activities.
Report Writing	<p>Reporting format followed, although they recognize that it was a bit too narrative and not focused enough on outcomes.</p> <p>Report writing is inclusive of the Regional Coordinating Team as all reports from district and regional activities get sent to the various members for input.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin using the new reporting format that will focus more on outcomes, impacts, and case studies. • Continue good practice of inclusive report writing at the regional level.
Financial Reporting	<p>Financial reports are submitted using the appropriate GNECC format.</p> <p>Financial information sharing is weak as the Regional Coordinating Team and other members are not aware of quarterly fund disbursements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue using good reporting and filing methods. • Strengthen financial information sharing through presenting budgets and summaries of disbursement spending at Regional Meetings.
Communication	The current email account for the region is the Regional Coordinators personal account.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a GNECC Ashanti email address that all Regional Coordinating members have the password to immediately.
Fund Raising	Region currently does not receive any other funding for GNECC activities aside from national funds due to the challenge of locating and contacting appropriate donors in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for identifying donors and soliciting funds for Ashanti Regional activities.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitoring currently exists on an ad hoc basis through phone calls and reading of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be innovative with the funds that are received to try and link

	<p>DEFAT reports due to resource constraints.</p> <p>An M&E idea created at the last Regional Executive meeting suggested making each member of the Executive Council responsible for monitoring the outcomes of a particular DEFAT, however this has not yet been implemented.</p>	<p>monitoring into current work plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a proposal to National with this idea to receive funding to implement as soon as possible.
Signatories	<p>Current signatories are the Chairman, Treasurer, and the Regional Coordinator as they were not aware of the decision made last year to remove the Coordinator from this role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the Regional Coordinator to another member of the Executive Council before the Regional Coordinators Meeting.
1 st and 2 nd Quarter Activities	<p>In the 1st Q, two of four activities (Regional and DEFAT meeting) were held due to late release of funds.</p> <p>For the 2nd quarter, none of the activities have been held with the regional meeting/fund raising training and DEFAT meeting pending.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish implementing all outstanding activities as soon as possible in order to prevent carry over of activities for the third quarter and receive third quarter disbursements.
Information Sharing	<p>Copies of quarterly and annual reports are disseminated to members at Regional Meetings, however key stakeholders in the region do not generally receive copies.</p> <p>Education Agenda not disseminated widely throughout the public and key stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that key stakeholders, especially government, receive copies of narrative reports. National to send 4 – 5 copies quarterly to be matched with photocopies by the region. • Begin distributing the Education Agenda on a wider basis to key stakeholders and public places.
Member Database and Membership Drive	<p>Stated that a comprehensive Member Database was submitted to GNECC National.</p> <p>Have scanned for potential members and invited them to meetings, however majority have a problem paying dues. Personal visits resulted in 2 new members since 2007.</p> <p>Want to hold an open forum on GNECC Ashanti geared at generating new members and invite all NGOs and pertinent stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GNECC National to verify this. • Continue scanning for new members, especially targeting those that can make a difference in GNECC and form solid partnerships. • Work on making this idea a reality, creating a budget and proposal to national if necessary.

Regional Specific Issues:

- **Newsletter:** Currently there is no regional newsletter, because although the Executive decided to set up a committee to put it together, there was a lack of activities to report on due to poor funding disbursements last year. This issue will be revisited at the next Executive Council Meeting.
- **Low Visibility of Regional GNECC:** The Ashanti Regional Branch of GNECC is still not visible to the wider community, and more importantly to the regional government structures (ie. Weren't invited to the Regional ESAR). This relationship must be strengthened through informing and engaging the GES in regional GNECC activities.

- **Program Planning:** Region programs are currently planned through having the Executive Members sit down and discuss activities for the year, as well as asking DEFATs for inputs and challenges from previous project implementation. The region should continue this good practice as well as sit down and create a strategic plan for the next 16 months that is tailored to region while still being mainstreamed with GNECC National objectives.
- **Audits:** Have copies of the regions audited reports since 2005.
- **Record Keeping:** Filing and organization of GNECC records at the lead agency is very efficient with all files having their own cupboard and organized according to topic, with a separate filing system for finances.

Ashanti Region Action Steps:

1. Create a partnership with the media geared at engaging them in the implementation and planning process to change the way they report on educational issues.
2. Begin using newly distributed reporting format.
3. Strengthen financial information sharing through presenting budgets and summaries of disbursement spending at Regional Meetings.
4. Create a GNECC Ashanti email address that all Regional Coordinating members have the password to as soon as possible.
5. Use the fundraising workshop as a launching point for identifying donors and soliciting funds for Ashanti Regional activities.
6. Be innovative with received funds to be able to include monitoring into regional activities (including implementing monitoring plan idea).
7. Change the Regional Coordinator as a signatory to another member of the Executive Council before the Regional Coordinators Meeting.
8. Finish implementing all outstanding quarterly activities as soon as possible in order to prevent carry over of activities and receive third quarter disbursements.
9. Ensure that key stakeholders, especially government, receive copies of narrative reports. National to send 4 – 5 copies to be matched with photocopies by the region.
10. Begin distributing the Education Agenda on a wider basis including key stakeholders and public places (shops, public libraries, etc.).
11. Continue scanning for new members that would allow for a solid partnership with GNECC through using current methods and new idea of open forum.
12. Strengthen relationship with regional GES through better communicated and engagement.
13. Create a regional specific strategic plan for the next 16 months.
14. Discuss producing a regional newsletter at the next Regional Meeting.

EMERGING ISSUES

Upon completing the monitoring field visits in the six operational regions, several issues emerged as unanimous issues requiring action or as topics that need further discussion at the Regional Coordinators Meeting in June 2008. These include:

1. **New GNECC Projects** - Provide updates on new projects and donors coming up in 2008 and 2009 such as those with PLAN Ghana, ActionAid, NOVIB, and DFID. This also includes a look at the capacity requirements regions will need to have to make use of these new donors and projects.
2. **Activity Restructuring** – Discuss GNECC’s plans for restructuring how regional and local level activities are determined. This includes looking at regional specific issues and creating regional strategic plans for the next 16 months.
3. **Signatories** - Discuss the issue of removing Regional Coordinators from the signatory position on regional accounts.
4. **Overspending** - Explain the allowance that members have for over spending on quarterly activities.
5. **Reporting Format** - Disseminate and discuss new narrative reporting formats.
6. **Courier Service** - Make information available about the new Courier Service relationship with FedEx.
7. **Education Agenda** - Discuss where and how the Education Agenda should be disseminated as well as the new idea of including regional success stories and case studies in each edition.
8. **Newsletters** - Determine if creating regional newsletters is an activity the regions are interested in, and if so, how

these will be compiled, funded, and disseminated.

9. **Regional Visibility** - Discuss the importance of GNECC visibility at the regional level and its implications. This includes the publishing of brochures, newsletters, posters, media activities, report sharing with key stakeholders, etc.
10. **October Monitoring** - The next monitoring should be held in conjunction with a Regional Meeting in October and will focus on assessing regional progress and challenges.

ACTION STEPS FOR GNECC NATIONAL

Although these monitoring field visits were conducted primarily to assess the level of efficiency at which regions are able to take on their responsibilities, the regions exist within a structure to which GNECC National plays a vital role. Several action steps arose from the activity that GNECC National will be responsible for delivering on. These include:

1. Print 5 copies of the national quarterly report per region for the next dissemination to facilitate better distribution in the regions.
2. Finish the GNECC National brochure and produce copies for the regions to help facilitate membership drive.
3. Make new concise narrative reporting format available to the regions.
4. Construct GNECC website by the end of the year.
5. Print and send out 10 – 20 copies of the Payment Voucher Book to each of the regions.
6. Put together contact information for the auditor that Kofi knows who is affordable and specializes in auditing NGOs.

Appendix 3 – “The Essence of Monitoring Field Visits”



The spiritual realm of post-fufu car rides...



Enos – Driver Extrordinaire



Ghana's #1 Glorified Secretary