Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre

2013 Annual Report
Championing the course of women and young people

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2013 Annual Report

The 2013 annual report was generated from information collected from various sources. These include NORSAAC published quarterly reports and monitoring project progress reports. The annual report reflects the current situation in NORSAAC operational areas between January and December 2013.

About NORSAAC

Established in 2002, the Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC) is a gender based advocacy organisation and has gained national recognition for its success in areas of women’s rights and governance, sexual and reproductive health rights, and livelihood and skills training. Initially started as a community based organization mobilizing community youth to find possible ways of addressing HIV and AIDS issues in schools and communities our capacities have significantly grown across the Northern Region.

Our Vision
A society in which every human being enjoys equal rights, including their sexual rights

Our Mission
Working with communities and community structures to build the capacity of the marginalised in order to empower them to access their needs on a sustainable basis

Core Values:
- **Commitment:** We are committed to the poor, the under privileged, the marginalized, the handicapped and People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAS)
- **Justice:** We believe in social justice and in carrying out this philosophy, we work to ensure equal opportunities to all irrespective of gender, colour, ethnicity, age, religion and race.
- **Respect:** We value and regard all people and act in a way that respects the dignity, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every person; the needy, donors, our staff and their families, the board and volunteers.
- **Partnership:** We accept the obligations of joint participation, shared goal and mutual accountability that our partnership requires.
- **Responsiveness:** We are willing and ready to take calculated risk and act quickly with experience and sensitivity to what the situation requires. We also recognize the contribution of the destitute, the needy and PLWHAS.
- **Gender Sensitive:** The organization in all its dealing would respect involvement of all sexes. It shall promote inclusion, participation and voice. Management and board would also be constituted with consideration of gender sensitivity
Chairman of the Board - Alhaji A.B. Yakubu

The year 2013 saw NORSAAC adding more achievements to the success stories of the previous years. From a modest beginning as a community based organization mobilizing community youth to address the HIV and AIDs pandemic in schools and communities, NORSAAC has significantly widened its scope and nurtured its capacity across 2 regions and 10 partnership projects with International and local donors. We are humble in discussing the progress that we have made and will continue to remain focus in designing our programmes. We acknowledge that the dedication of my colleague board members and the three hard working management team as well as other staff members have contributed greatly in the massive results we recorded this year.

We distinguish ourselves from other organizations by ensuring that board and management have clear understanding of their roles and responsibility and that, systems put in place function as expected.

The year under review marked the end of Organizational Strategic Paper One (OSP1) which guided our operations for the period. We are satisfied with progress in meeting our set objectives as outlined in the OSP1. Our OSP1 was the culmination of an extensive consultation process which had taken over a year to complete and was seen as our first formal step on the road to partnership. It clearly demonstrated to partners the strategic direction of the organization for the three years. We are in another participatory process to develop Organizational Strategic Paper One (OSP1) which will span from 2014 to 2016. We use this medium to encourage our partners at all levels to get involved and ask the critical questions.

On programme implementation, the board were full of ecstasy for management not only for the professionalism in the implementation but the impact on the poor people and the vulnerable at the community level. For instance, the initiative of encouraging mothers to educate their children on Sexuality and involving men in maternal health issues under the Sexual and Reproductive Rights project was described many districts as a great innovation and worthy of replication across the entire country as Ghana re-strategizes for the attainment of the MDGs goal 4 and 5.

NORSAAC has also made substantial progress in the area of women representation and political participation in governance through the formation of groups such as the Young Female Parliament, the Northern Region Assembly Women Caucus on Good Governance as well as the Magazias groups who facilitate advocacy work at the community, district and schools levels. Nonetheless, there are still challenges that require more concerted efforts by all stakeholders to effectively address the situation.

While applauding the many stakeholders for their keen interest and continued support to our dear organisation, the Board of Directors would want to admonish management and staff not to be complaisant with the achievements so far chalked but strive for more laurels in the coming year. We wish to reaffirm our resolve to support move NORSAAC to even greater heights in the ensuing year.

In conclusion, I will like to express my sincerest gratitude to all our donor partners for making the road relatively easier for us and assure that that we shall continue to supervise the work of management and ensure that we account fully for resources entrusted to us on behalf of the vulnerable youth, women and the hard-to-reach communities.
I write with some difficulty in convincing myself that 2013 which was supposed to mark the end of NORSAAC first Organizational Strategic Paper One (OSP1) had finally come to an end. In 2010/2011, Board, Management and staff, donor partners and beneficiary communities overly declared two main programme areas for concentration. We undoubtedly have made significant progress in the two areas which are the sexuality and reproductive health and women’s rights and governance.

On sexuality and reproductive health, we had partners like AXIS (a Danish based organization), Global Fund Round 8, STAR- Ghana, PPAG, Mariestopes International and SIMAVI. The partnership from the above organizations resulted in the organization reaching out to 11 districts with different project and target group. We distributed over one million (1,000,000) condoms to youth and most at risk population, we are able to influence teaching of sexuality education in over 40 schools in Savelugu/ Nantong and Karaga districts through participatory development of tools with teachers and both Ghana Education and Health Services. We have been able to break through a highly cherished cultural practice like “Paga prigibu” and home delivery in number of communities by introducing our Male Maternal Champions concept. Several stakeholders at district and regional levels have admired our work in this area and praised staff visibility in local communities.

The women’s rights and governance programme within the OSP1 period suffered funding challenges but continues to engage attention of Actionaid Ghana and Ibis in Ghana. VGIF and STAR-Ghana however supported the area with one year short term funding. Our desire to always make maximum impact with scarce resources available enabled us to achieve some of the following; mobilizing 42 CSOs including some government agencies to observe both 2010 district level elections and 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections, mobilizing 195 women to contest 2010 district level elections, conducting research on reasons why electorates will vote for a particular candidate, Production of Women’s Voice (Pagaba Kukoya), creating and sustaining Young Females Parliament, strengthening capacities of community women’s leaders popularly called “Magazias”, strengthening capacities of Northern Assembly Women’s Caucus on Good Governance (NORWACGG) and raising critical policy issues around women’s participation in governance and the need to halt all forms of violence against women. We continued to play leading role in mobilizing CSOs, Women, Government agencies to observe international events like International Women’s Day and 16 days of Activism.

Even though we rejoice over the achievement, we believe much could have been attained if our resources were not erratic and inconsistent. We are determined to strengthen where possible introduce structures to make us well resource for more result and impact on the lives of the people we represent and serve.

On the part of management, NORSAAC continues to enjoy high staff retention but had to painfully take critical decisions to enhance programme quality and efficiency. In the process, a number of positions had to be realigned and it resulted in some staff losing their jobs.
I expressed gratitude to all staff that were part of the OSP1 which was a major transformation stage of our work as professional and result hungry organization.

The achievement of the organization could have come to not if our donors did not show the needed commitment and I will like to express my profound gratitude to you.

Our board of directors deserve enormous commendation not only for sharing the vision, mission and values of the organization but also the critical interrogations of management plans and resource utilization.

My message will be incomplete if I do not recognize the contributions of our beneficiaries and their structures like YFP, NORWACGG, CHTs, MMC, PSG, Youth Leaders, Teacher-Facilitators, Peer Educators, Magazias, Community Based Volunteers (CBVs) amongst others.

I sincerely thank all those who deserved to be mentioned for their various roles which have resulted in the significant progress that we have made.

Thank you.
2013 Projects

NORSAAC is committed to supporting the rights of all people, including their sexual rights. Our work is premised on implementing projects that reflect our unique core values while combining our efforts with long term innovative sustainable solutions. In 2013, NORSAAC has made strides in our programming efforts and continue to witness key milestone achievements.

Strategic Outline
To better address the needs of our beneficiaries NORSAAC has utilised key strategies to ensure project success. These include:
• Advocacy and lobbying
• Media engagements and campaign
• Capacity building and trainings
• Research and analysis
• Sensitisation and awareness creation

Our Coverage and Impact

- 22 Districts
- 58 Communities
- 10 Projects
- 1230 Primary Beneficiaries
- 13,923 Secondary Beneficiaries
**Operational Areas**

Within the Northern Region, NORSAAC is currently present in 22 districts. In 2013 our reach has extended to $X$ new districts. With such success in 2013, we hope to scale our efforts in 2014 to include $X$ new communities within our existing districts. Our primary focus will still continue to place emphasis on implementing efficient and effective programmes in the communities where we can make the greatest impact.
Women’s Rights and Governance

The women rights and governance programme of NORSAAC has a mandate to promote women representation and participation in decision making at all levels both at traditional and decentralised bodies in the Northern Region of Ghana. NORSAAC has made substantial progress in this area through the formation of groups such as the Young Female Parliament (YFP), the Northern Region Assembly Women Caucus on Good Governance (NORWACGG) as well as the Magazias groups who facilitate advocacy work at their various levels (community, district and schools).

Current Projects:

- **Female Youth in Government** - Young Female Parliamentarians (YFP)
  Young Female Parliament was instituted to promote and increase the confidence of young girls in school governance as well as encourage them to participate in leadership positions. This concept has been well received and 40 young girls within a batch have received several trainings that have built their confidence in areas such as advocacy, leadership and community mobilisation. Most of the girls have mobilised colleagues and have challenged structural weaknesses, which have impeded young female active participation in governance at all levels.

- **Community Women in Government** - Magazia
  The Magazia project is aimed at strengthening the capacities of community women leaders. This year, Magazias from 36 communities have strengthened their capacity to influence participation in community level decision-making and development. Additionally, they have witnessed success in leading campaigns against violence on young girls and women. Our work this year has positioned the women to challenge unacceptable interest rates from financial institutions and also enable them to critically engage institutions like DOVVSU, CHRAJ and Legal Aid on critical issues affecting them and their girls.

- **Assembly women in Governance** - Northern Assembly Women’s Caucus on Good Governance (NORWACGG)
  The existing partnership between NORWACGG and NORSAAC seeks to increase women’s participation of women to influence assemblies and community development processes at the local regional and national level. Recently they have presented several petitions to government in an attempt to reform and address women representation.

Newly Awarded 2014 Projects:

- Women for 2014 District Level Elections: The National Decentralisation Plan Factor (STAR Ghana)
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School Sensitisation

Research conducted through YFP has shown that trends in school leadership still favour men. By implementing sensitisation strategies in schools emphasis was placed on ideal leadership structures that equally promotes young girls in leadership and decision making roles.

Current YFP identified barriers include:
- Gender Inequality
- Financial Constraints
- Peer Scrutiny and Judgment
- Cultural and Religious Beliefs

Promoting women in leadership and decision-making processes supports gender equality and female empowerment.
Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

NORSAAC’s Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights programme focuses on sexuality education in schools and communities, maternal health education as well as enhanced School Health Education project (e-SHEP). Our focus in 2013 has placed emphasis on the following objectives:

- Develop and enhance a teaching model for peer educators and junior and senior high school teachers in promoting sexuality health rights
- Advocate and sensitize male community members in becoming male maternal champions that support antenatal and postnatal health care
- Support and monitor primary and junior schools in implementing sexuality education, nutrition, guidance and counselling, disaster risk management, WASH in curriculum

Current Projects:

- Innovative Sexuality Education Project (Axis)
  Create safe spaces while calling for cultural, gender, and context sensitive strategies and methodologies for discussing sexual health and reproductive rights with young people

- Initiative to Promote Safe Delivery/ ASK (Simavi)
  Promoting child and maternal health care including strategies to reduce maternal mortality

- Living Births, Smiling Mothers (STAR Ghana)
  Increasing access to antenatal, facility based and post natal care services

- Family Planning and Contraceptive (Marie Stopes)
  Raising awareness of contraceptive use and services available at the Marie Stopes Centre in Tamale

- Enhanced School Health Education Project – e-SHEP (UNICEF)
  Monitoring the promotion of enhanced health education co-curriculum activities in schools

Newly Awarded 2014 Projects:

- Youth Empowerment for Access and Service YEAS (RFSU)
  Increasing youth knowledge on sexual and reproductive health rights and access to sexual and reproductive services
Mothers Educating their Children on Sexuality

ISEP (which is currently in its second phase) includes mothers as a primary target to facilitate sexuality education at the community level with youth peer educators. The mothers and youth peer educators have adopted picture exercise as one way of carrying out sexuality education to their children and other colleagues since they could use easily as compared to text reading. They found out that using this methodology was very participatory and educative since opinions are gathered from all participants during the sessions held. As a result of our activities more mothers are discussing sexual and reproductive health and community youth are informed of their sexual rights.

Men Promoting Maternal Health

An innovative strategy used by NORSAC to promote maternal health related issues was the initiation of the Male Maternal Champions (MMC) as a way of facilitating the process of getting men involved in supporting their wives to attend antenatal and postnatal services. This strategy helped improve community participation during durbars and community meetings.

Knowledge of sexual reproductive health education leads to reductions in school drop out rates, lower child mortality and healthier pregnancies
Youth Entrepreneurship and Skills Advancement (YESAC)

In 2013 NORSAAC has closely worked with EMpower to address community understanding of gendered job roles and expectations. We have exhibited great success in the following areas:

- Improvements in community member knowledge on job stereotypes that dictate female job roles
- Increased financial literacy and business management skills among participating youth
- Successful training on bicycle and mobile phone repairs for all trainees

“I have gained a lot after the financial literacy training I had in 2012. I used not to record my purchases and sales until I learnt that all these are part of business successes. Since I started implementing the skills I acquired there has been some change in the business. Am now able to realize my profit due to the record keeping. I am thinking that if we are refreshed yearly it will help a lot and I will request that other people in the district are enrolled.”
In Numbers:

To date, NORSAAC has witnessed several successes within our youth entrepreneurship and skills advancement programme.

- 24 Trainees from 2 batches have graduated from the training centre
- 48 Young people have acquired skills and knowledge on financial and business management
- 4 Girls have graduated from the Northern Region RLG technology training centre in Tamale
- 8 Business sustainability loans given to trainee alumni

Educate youth with skills and hands on experience and their futures will be brighter
Organisational and Project Issues and Challenges

Although NORSAAC witnessed great project success and organisational growth in 2013, it was without its challenges. NORSAAC will be working towards addressing concerns in the following key areas throughout 2014 to improve organisational efficiency and project outcomes.

• Limited Resources
During 2013, NORSAAC has experienced challenges with current resources available for effective project implementation and monitoring. One of the largest obstacles has been the result of limited transportation. Although NORSAAC currently possesses 1 vehicle and 10 motorcycles, poor road and driving conditions mixed with an increase in project areas has highlighted the need for an additional vehicle. NORSAAC will be working closely with our partners in 2014 in efforts to procure a new vehicle.

• Staffing
In 2013 NORSAAC staff realised the potential to enhance capacity through the development and support of educational and skill improvements. Noticing the increasingly competitive and changing nature of development work in Ghana, NORSAAC continually seeks to contribute innovative strategies to our projects. As a result of this, NORSAAC has found it increasingly necessary to create the space for staff members to pursue opportunities for additional learning and knowledge sharing.

• Time Management
Challenges associated with time management have negatively affected the organisation’s efficiency. In 2013, NORSAAC witnessed an increase in un-anticipated visits and event attendances. Additionally, with a growth in the number of NORSAAC projects, the organisation has found it necessary to introduce internal tools and processes to better support and plan for 2014 activities while prioritising organisation interests and needs.
Financial Overview

During the 2013 financial year, NORSAAC had an income of 945,161GHC that derives from several donors (Ibis Ghana, Axis-Danida, Star Ghana, Marie Stopes International, Simavi, EMpower, ActionAid Ghana, African Women Development Fund). NORSAAC remains committed in adopting a value for money approach while designing and implementing efficient and cost effective programming.

All awarded funds support projects that have been developed in collaboration with funding partners, community members and other key stakeholders to ensure project success. NORSAAC works with communities in 22 districts in the Northern Region to promote innovative and sustainable solutions to issues impacting women’s rights and development. By establishing and replicating successful models of intervention, NORSAAC continues to thrive, with national recognition, for the accomplishments we make. In doing so, we continue to empower youth, families and entire communities to successfully realise, demand and acquire their rights.
The Board of Directors

NORSAAC Currently has an 8-member board that are nominated and appointed to participate in activities that lend themselves to improving the organisation’s accountability and transparency. Each member’s unique background and professional experience are looked towards to better facilitate and support NORSAAC operations.

Alhaji A.B. Yakubu
Chairman of the Board
District Health Director Gushiegu – Tamale, Northern Region

Ashietu Abdul Mumuni
Vice-Chairman of the Board
District Finance Officer – Nkuranza, Brong Ahafo Region

Alhaji T.A. Mahama
Board Member
GES. Head of Tamale Senior High School – Tamale, Northern Region

Adam Seidu Dawuda
Board Member
Head of Planning – Tolon/Kumbungu District, Northern Region

Habiba Amama
Board Member
UNICEF Child Development Specialist – Tamale, Northern Region

Justina Angiagere
Board Member
SNV Portfolio Coordinator Netherlands Development Organisation – Tamale, Northern Region

Alhassan Mohammed Awal
Board Member
NORSAAC Executive Director – Tamale, Northern Region
Senior Management Team

Alhassan Mohammed Awal
Executive Director

Hafsahtu Sey Sumani
Programmes Coordinator

Hafsahtu is a co-founder of the Northern Sector Action on Awareness (NORSAAC) a local gender based advocacy NGO based in Tamale and focuses its work on women’s empowerment. She is a very resourceful person with a high level of reliability and gender awareness with many years of programme management, administrative and field experience.

Alhassan Suale
Finance and Administrative Officer

With over eight years of work experience with donor-funded projects and civil society organizations Suale has worked with NORSAAC since 2011 managing the accounts of the organization and donor-funded projects. He is currently studying with Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA),UK (Skills model). He has a degree in accounting from GIMPA, Higher National Diploma in accounting from Tamale Polytechnic and High School Certificate from West Africa Examinations Council through Ghana Secondary School, Tamale.

Championing the course of women and young people
**NORSAAC Staff**

With thematic experts in gender based advocacy, reproductive health issues, women’s rights and governance, NORSAAC has over 10 years of development experience in the Northern Region. Together, NORSAAC’s 12 permanent team members and over 227 volunteers closely coordinate their activities to ensure project success.
A Special Note of Thanks:
NORSAAC would like to take this opportunity to thank our donors and beneficiaries for their support and contributions that have led to our success in 2013. We are grateful for the recognition you have given us in being a leading organisation that champions gender equality. With our collective commitment to bringing positive change to women in Ghana, our work will continue to bring into question the status quo and challenge issues that have prevented progress in the areas of women’s rights and governance, sexual and reproductive health and right as well as youth entrepreneurship and skills advancement.