ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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Acronyms

ASK  Access, Services and Knowledge
CAC  Comprehensive Abortion Care
CAGs  Community Advocacy Groups
CCM  Children against Child Marriage
CSO  Civil Society Organization
DA  District Assembly
DDE  District Directors of Education
EPA  Environmental Protection Agency
FP  Family Planning
GES  Ghana Education Service
GHS  Ghana Health Service
GUSO  Get up, Speak out
ISEP  Innovative Sexuality Education Project
ISODEC  Integrated Social Development Center
LEGS  Let the Girls Smile
NORAD  Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
RFSU  Swedish Association for Sexuality Education
SDGs  Sustainable Development Goals
SHOW  Strengthening Health Outcomes for Women and Children
SHS  Senior High School
SLIP  Sustainable Livelihood Initiative Project
SRHR  Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STIs  Sexually Transmitted Infection
TFSR  Tools for Self-Reliance
UNICEF  United Nations Children’s Fund
YEAS  Youth Empowerment for Access and Service
YFP  Young Female Parliamentarians
YUW  Young Urban Woman
YUWP  Young Urban Women Project
Acknowledgement

With immense pleasure, the board of directors, management and the entire staff of NORSAAC express their profound gratitude to our donors, partners, youth groups, students, young men and women, opinion leaders, and traditional and religious authorities for their generosity and support throughout the year in helping us carry out our mission.

The support and cooperation of the following state Institutions/Departments have been cardinal in our project implementations for which due acknowledgments are given: Ghana Education and Health Services; Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, Department of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, National Commission for Civil Education, National Population Council, National Youth Authority, Regional Coordinating Councils and the District/Municipal/Metro Assemblies.

The support received from donors helps change lives and build communities, hence representing a mighty force with immense benefits. Undoubtedly, NORSAAC values each of its donors and is greatly indebted to them all; their contributions are helping the organization accomplish great milestones. We specifically single out EMpower- a US based organization working with NORSAAC for the past seven years for providing sustainability grant to the organization for a period of two years. It has significantly improved critical areas of the organization.

To the millions of citizens who have contributed in diverse ways towards the success of NORSAAC in 2017, we say “tipagya”.

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Forward

I am proud to present 2017 annual report. This year has been a very successful one for NORSAAC. Our organization has expanded significantly over the last twelve months and we have made a number of particularly notable achievements. Major projects that we recently embarked on are progressing very satisfactorily and many new opportunities are opening up for us. NORSAAC is now growing into a complex organization with multiple components and gaining national level recognition at an encouraging spate. We face a very exciting future.

As this report underscores, NORSAAC strongly commits to disrupting the status quo and collaboratively set new norms, through the delivery of well-targeted programmes and projects. NORSAAC is committed to accelerating the pace of change and development in the Ghanaian society through the empowering of women and young people. We shall continue to resist injustices and all forms of rights violations.

The NORSAAC Strategic Document (2015-2019), “Taking Action” which was unveiled 3 years ago to guide the operations of the organization has been reviewed and the performance of the programme areas per the document revealed. The review report revealed that our sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) programme area enjoyed greater donor support compared to the others for the past three years. The report showed that the organization performed remarkably well in informing, educating and creating enabling environment for women and young people to live dignified lives devoid of intimidation and discrimination. The review report also awakened us since many of our activities went undocumented considering the recommendations made in the review report. On the whole, the report described NORSAAC’s achievements per its strategic document as “on track”. We have learnt a lot from the review and the recommendation will be put to good use. I am particularly grateful to EMpower- a US based organization for providing us with the needed resources to review the strategic document.

The nation in January, 2017 witnessed yet another peaceful transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another. This peaceful transition, which has become synonymous to Ghana’s elections was considered exciting for us. We did not only contribute to achieving this feat in our own humble way; we are also assured of peaceful environment for smooth operation. Donors equally feel safe dealing with us. However, the changes in office holders at the district, regional and national levels was an issue we were confronted it. We have however managed the changes in offices successfully. We are always ready and willing to collaborate with any leader with the constitutional mandate to govern.
NORSAAC is 15 years and we considered the year as a period of reflection on the journey so far and for the future. How far we have come has been confirmed but how far we can go is what we look at with hope. The year was used to renew our relationship with state institutions and to consolidate the confidence they repose in us. The year 2017 was not all rosy. The organization witnessed the coming to an end of some major projects that had some implication on the future of some staff. NORSAAC faces other challenges, including the need to preserve the flexible and democratic structure of the organisation as we continue to expand. In addition, in these times of shrinking resources for advocacy and humanitarian purposes, there is always the challenge of finding the money to support our projects. In order to address this issue we are examining ways to diversify our funding sources. The fundraising plan, which the organization is yet to finalize, will be put to use in 2018 to raise funds internally to complement the great support of our donors. In summary, I believe 2017 has been a great year. We are satisfied with the continuing growth of our organization and are looking forward enthusiastically to the years ahead. Together we can usher in a new era that is more just, dignified, and inclusive of all especially for women and young people.

Alhassan Mohammed Awal

Executive Director
**NORSAAC: Who we are**

NORSAAC is a Ghanaian local based empowerment for change non-governmental organization focusing on women and young people. The organization envisages a world where women and young people live a life of dignity and believes that empowerment of those directly affected (women and young people) will ensure that.

NORSAAC has been in existence for 15 years now and previously focused on women’s rights and governance, and sexual and reproductive health rights. Upon reflection and consideration of the need to address prevailing issues, the organization in 2015 accepted the following four key areas as focus for its five-year strategic document – 2015 to 2019. These are the Gender and Governance Program, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Livelihood & Entrepreneurial Development, and Education.

**What we stand for**

**Vision:** A society in which every person enjoys their rights and lives a life of dignity.

**Mission:** to work with communities, community-based structures, and like-minded organizations to build the capacities of community members and the affected groups to enjoy their rights and live a life of dignity.

**Core Values**

- Commitment
- Justice
- Mutual respect
- Partnership
- Responsiveness
- Gender sensitivity
**Brief Overview of Operational Areas**

**Our Coverage:** Our coverage for 2017 was in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana. All our operational districts have been categorized into primary and secondary districts based on duration of project implementation, number of projects running and number of communities covered in the district.

In 2017, the **primary districts of NORSAAC** were; Karaga, Gushegu, Mion, Sagnerigu, Tamale, Zabzugu, Tatale, Mamprugu Moadugri, Savelugu and Kumbungu.

The **secondary districts** were; Talensi, Builsa North and South, Kasena-Nankana, Bawku West, Bongo, Nadowli, Sissala East District, Bole District, Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District, Central Gonja District, Chereponi District, East Gonja District, East Mamprusi District, Gushegu District, Kpandai District, Nanumba North District, Nanumba South District, North Gonja District, Saboba District, Savelugu-Nanton District, Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District, Tolon District, West Gonja District, West Mamprusi District and Yendi Municipal District.

Despite influencing change in the above-mentioned districts, NORSAAC had number of actions at the national level to influence change of policies for the betterment of its constituents.

**Beneficiaries and stakeholders:** Our primary beneficiaries for 2017 were women, children and young people. We worked with all state institutions on areas that they are constitutionally mandated to oversee as well as traditional and religious leaders at all level in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions.
SITUATION OF WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN GHANA

The Situation of Women and Young People in Ghana

According to the UNFPA (2015), there were 1.2 billion youth aged 15-24 years globally in 2015, accounting for one out of every six people worldwide. By 2030, the target date for the sustainable development goals, the number of youth is projected to grow to nearly 1.3 billion worldwide.

Women and young people in developing countries including Ghana continue to face challenges that limit their future potentials. Such challenges include high unemployment rates, poor quality of education and educational opportunities; limited access to sexual and reproductive health rights, child marriage prevalence rates, limited civic engagement as well as participation and inclusion opportunities.

Maternal Health Issues in Ghana

Though maternal health care has improved over the past 20 years, the pace has been slow (Ghana Health Service report, 2015) and extra efforts are required for Ghana to achieve the sustainable development goals, especially goals 3 and 10. The lifetime risk of maternal death in Ghana in 2016 was estimated at 1 in 66. However, significant inequalities remain by gender, wealth quintile, rural-urban divide, regional divide and among age groups. The Northern, Upper East and West Regions have appalling maternal health statistics that limit universal access to sexual reproductive health information and rights and will affect Ghana meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs). More women are able to decide if, when and how often to have children as contraceptive use among currently married women aged 15-49 has increased from 43% in 2002 to 45% in 2014 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017). However, in spite of this increase, unmet need for family planning among this cohort of women remains relatively high at 21%. For adolescents, only 18% of sexually active unmarried girls and 36% of married girl’s aged 15-19 are currently using modern contraception (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).
Young People in Ghana

Ghana has a young age structure, with approximately 57% of the population under the age of 25 (Index Mundi, 2018). The youth cohort has continued to grow, as Ghana’s fertility rates remain high at 4.0. Evidence-based projections indicate Ghana will have a population of 35 million by 2030. Key drivers of this youth bulge include; high adolescent fertility rates currently at 130 per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 years, high child marriage prevalence rates of 21% for the nation and 34% for Northern Region. This makes young women vulnerable to lifetime risks of high fertility and high risk of dying from a pregnancy related death. The presence of young mothers are more common in rural areas than in urban areas, as well as in the three lowest wealth quintiles. The youth are further challenged with seeking employment due to lack of employable skills. Their participation in governance at all levels are usually limited due to limited knowledge, will power and sometimes frustration from the larger society (NORSAAC field report, 2015).
MAJOR EVENTS FOR THE YEAR, 2017

NORSAAC Holds Public Lecture on Youth Vigilantism (November 2017)

The activities of party youth groups have provoked political violence not only in Ghana but across the continent in both past and contemporary times, and has attracted raging debate in academic and policy cycles. Partisan youth groups have demonstrated to be agents of threat in destabilizing the fairly solid democracy in Ghana. They easily transcend official politics into party ‘foot soldiers’ that are constituting increased social problems. NORSAAC held a public lecture that created one of the rear platforms that brought experts and wide range of audience together to thoroughly examine the actions of political party youth groups and their threat to national security and democracy. The speakers at the lecture were Dr. Emmanuel Kwesi Anning of the Kofi Annan International peacekeeping and Training Centre and Lawyer Samson Lardy Anyenneni of JOY FM. The lecture attracted 350 participants from academia, the business community, traditional and religious authorities, students, security forces and partner NGOs. Participants expressed delight for such an innovation and made commitments to help curb youth vigilantism in Ghana.
Young Female Parliamentarians (YFP) Hold Maiden Inter-School YFP Debate
(October 2017)

The Young Female Parliament (YFP) sessions were designed to provide a platform for girls to boost their confidence in public speaking, prepare them to engage stakeholders at all levels, and most importantly dialogue on issues affecting them in their schools, districts and the nation as a whole. These issues include those which have been perceived overtime as “a no go area” for discussion. In October 2017, YFP Schools were put into 5 clusters for the maiden inter-school parliamentary sessions. The 5 parliamentary sessions were held in the form of debates on various topics concerning women’s reproductive health. The YFP members in the debate demonstrated confidence in building their arguments on issues and convincing others on their ideas. This demonstrated significant progress in the ability of the YFP to engage people on issues of concern to them.
NORSAAC Holds First Ever SRHR Conference for Young People in Northern Ghana (August 2017)

The maiden Northern Ghana SRHR Conference for young people brought together 228 young people from the Northern, Brong Ahafo, Upper East, Ashanti and Greater Accra regions to Tamale Girls Senior High School, Tamale for the conference. It was on the theme, “PROMOTING PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT FOR ENHANCED SRHR EDUCATION AND SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE”. The participants were taken through series of lectures and discussions with well-seasoned resource persons and among themselves. These discussions brought very edging issues along four key Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) areas. The SRHR issues discussed were Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), Family Planning (FP), Youth Friendly Services (YFS) and Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC). The primary purpose of the conference was to create a platform for young people to know about existing policies on their Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information and services. The conference also paved the way for the young people to make demand with references to what the policies say and initiated a youth led advocacy for quality information and service on their SRHR.
Tools for Self-Reliance-UK (TFSR) visits project area and beneficiaries
In September, 2017 TFSR, a donor to NORSAAC visited Ghana to meet its partners and beneficiaries in order to have a feel of what was happening on the ground for future partnership and programming. A number of beneficiaries were visited and evaluations carried out. Their visit also witnessed the organization of M&E/partners’ workshop at NORSAAC’s headquarters with other partners such as WUDEP and Trax Ghana. The capacity building session contributed in reviewing information and outcomes of partner projects, developed effective monitoring and evaluation systems and improved the impact of respective partners’ projects.

ISEP Roll-out CSE in Northern Region
The Northern Regional Education Directorate accepted to implement comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools by adopting a model and a manual jointly developed with NORSAAC. The manual dubbed “Alternative choices for young people’s manual”, consists of various tools to be incorporated into school’s syllabi. A protocol consisting of guidelines to ensure the successful delivery of CSE by GES in the Northern Region was written by NORSAAC and the GES. The GES regional technical team invited District Directors of Education from all the 26 districts in the Northern Region to review and validate the protocol and subsequently adopt it. The Northern Regional Education Director, who graced the occasion, encouraged NORSAAC to continue its good work and assured of his office’s readiness to work with very serious organizations that show commitment towards ensuring quality education.
NORSAAC holds 2nd Partnership Conference with AXIS (Denmark)

A partnership conference was organized and hosted by NORSAAC and RAINS in Tamale within the first quarter of 2017. The participating organizations included AXIS from Denmark, AMNET (Sierra Leone) RAINS and NORSAAC (Ghana). The purpose was to deepen partnership in a manner that strengthens their capabilities to deliver appropriate development interventions especially on SRHR as well as Education and Livelihood. The conference created a solid foundation that will define specifically what program the partnership could work on. It also strengthened the relationship amongst the organizations, creating platforms for continuous sharing of knowledge and practices and setting up clear modalities for the development of a joint partnership project for purposes of a proposal on a development intervention to jointly seeking for funding for that intervention.
PROGRAMME AREAS

NORSAAC in 2017 actively worked in the four programme areas contained in its Strategic Document-“Taking Action” (2015-2019). These programme areas are Sexual Reproductive Health and Right (SRHR), Gender and Governance, Livelihood and Entrepreneurial Development, and Education.

Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Programme Area

The SRHR programme area promotes information, education and the creation of enabling environment for women and young people to have quality healthcare. The programme promotes the health outcomes of women and children through integrated models, the inclusion of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the curriculum of schools and open dialogue between parents and children on SRHR issues of young people.

Snap Shot of 2017 Results

Objective 1: Reduced maternal, Neonatal, Child Mortality and Morbidity through Improved and Informed Practices

NORSAAC reached out to about 30,000 people educating them on the various family planning services and where to access those

NORSAAC’s peer educators successfully referred at least 1,010 young people to access SRHR services in operational communities through capacity building

NORSAAC supported five health service centres to provide youth friendly reproductive health services to a youth population of at least 100,000 in five districts in the Northern Region

6 midwives were trained on a safe delivery app to contribute to maternal health in the Northern Region; the first of its kind in Ghana
Objective 2: Safe Sexual Practices through Increased Knowledge of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

Over 20,000 Young people (in school) with partnership from GES accessed information on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

315 teachers in the Northern Region were equipped with knowledge to deliver effective comprehensive sexuality education in their schools.

Objective 3: Enhanced, enabling environment and greater respect for sexual and reproductive health rights of young people

30 Health workers were equipped with specialized knowledge and skills in the delivery of youth friendly services in the Northern Region.

The GES reported a reduction in teenage pregnancy among students, to which NORSAAC contributed.

Community leaders are open to discussion on SRHR in our operational communities and beyond due to our interventions.

The number of people reached by campaigns on young people’s SRHR increased from estimated 200,000 in 2016 to 450,000 in 2017.

NORSAAC made significant contributions in policy reforms aimed at enhancing an enabling environment for young people to enjoy their SRHR.
Projects in the SRHR Programme Area

Innovative Sexuality Education Project (ISEP III)

The Innovative Sexuality Education project phase 3 focuses on supporting the Ghana Education Service (GES) in Northern Region to implement Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in all basic schools. It is a wish to have young people in Northern Region, Ghana have adequate knowledge and exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights. For sustainability, GES staff (Training Officers, Guidance & Counsellors and Girl Child Officers, SHEP coordinators and NGO desk officers as well as some teachers) are now Trainers of Trainers to CSE implementation and training. Alongside this work, the project use already developed materials to test out and implement CSE in two Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) (Tamale and Bagabaga Colleges of Education) in the Northern Region. The project is supported by AXIS in Denmark with funding support from CISU.

Strengthening Health Outcome of Women and Children (SHOW)

This project is implemented in the Karaga and Mamprugu Moadugri Districts of the Northern Region with a gender transformative approach using various models at the community level to achieve its objectives. It is community owned with effective collaboration with the GHS and the DAs. PLAN International Ghana and Global Affair Canada support the project. For sustainability measures, the project involves community groups in the planning, and implementation of activities they include; Community Health Committee, Community Health Volunteers, Daddies/Fathers club, Mother support group/mothers club, Grannies groups, Gender Equality Champions, Drama club, Transport Owners group, Village Savings and Loans Association and Adolescent boys and girls clubs. The flagship VSLA, one of the models under SHOW has been strategic in enhancing access to health care services at the community and district levels through pulling of economic resources together. There are currently 120 functional VSLA groups across 120 communities in the two operational districts.
Get Up, Speak Out (GUSO)

The Get Up, Speak Out (GUSO) project is a five-year partnership project with SIMAVI (Netherlands) implemented in the Sagnerigu and Gushegu Districts of the Northern Region. The project ensures that young people in operational districts fully enjoy their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in productive, equal and healthy societies. The project makes use of peer educators who play key roles in educating their colleagues and referring them to health centres to seek reproductive healthcare. Thus, peer education and networking among young people is encouraged to support their empowerment. The project places greater premium on meaningful youth participation at all levels of decision making. The GUSO project, which is implemented by NORSAAC alongside other five partners have committed themselves to respect the following principles; Inclusiveness, Gender Transformative Programming (GTP), Multi-component Approach, Young People’s structural and meaningful engagement and Positive Rights Based Approach.

Preventing Unwanted Maternal Death Project (PUMDP)

Preventing Unwanted Maternal Death Project creates awareness on family planning, comprehensive abortion care and other sexual reproductive health issues that threaten the health of women and girls. Innovative strategies such as the market storm are used to facilitate these sessions. Currently, eight districts/municipalities (Bole, East Gonja, East Mamprusi, Gushegu, Kpandai, Sagnerigu, Tamale and Yendi) are beneficiaries in the Northern Region. These districts have reported an appreciation of the number of facility reported sexual reproductive cases, which this project is proud to be associated. The project is supported by IPAS with collaboration from the Ghana Health Service.
**Strengthening Advocacy for Enhanced SRHR Service (SEASS)**

The Strengthening Advocacy for Enhanced SRHR Service (SEASS) project has contributed to improved SRHR education of young people in the Northern Region with a medium term objective to improve advocacy engagement with duty bearers for increased access to quality SRHR information and services for young people (10-24) in selected districts of the Northern Region. The project implementing districts are Central Gonja, Tamale, Kumbungu and Mion Districts of the Northern Region. The project has succeeded in bringing policy makers together to deliberate on policy issues that impede access to young people’s SRHR. Policy briefs were developed after engagement with policy makers. This project has also assisted health facilities with materials to assist in quality delivery of SRHR services to young people. The project was funded by RFSU, a Swedish based donor.

**Qualitative Feedback**

**Right Information to Young People Empowers Them**

*It is important to note that as young people get to know their rights it brings some level of empowerment to them. Since the training we had in February including sexuality issues in guidance and counselling, I feel it has brought lots of changes in my districts. Sexuality education and rights as taught in schools give the children the opportunity to open up. In my district two young girls were rescued from child marriage due to their knowledge on their sexual rights. Our continuous engagement with them has made them to open up more and we now discuss freely with many of them especially the young girls* (Mohammed Ben Ibrahim- Guidance and Counselling Coordinator, Nanumba South).
ISEP III Improves Monitoring Activities of Ghana Education Service

ISEP III has improved our monitoring and we are getting impact at the district levels. The technical team after returning from the training did a step down training for some teachers from selected schools from each circuit. It is interesting to note that, the technical team in their routine visit to some of the schools has revealed how common child betrothal and elopement is prevalent in the Bunkpurugu/Yunyoo District leading to high incidence of school dropout which was never brought to our notice till this intervention started. The most interesting revelation is the fact that, the highest educational attainment of females in the district has been Junior High School level one (1). This is very common with a particular tribe who always come to replace their daughters with another child when the daughter is in primary six or JHS 1.

We feel the sexuality education concept needs to be pursued further to become a national issue so that everyone will be mandated to act on that—Vincent Kwasi-District Director of Education, Bunkpurugu Yonyo, November, 2017)
Gender and Governance Programme Area

The Gender and Governance programme area focuses on promoting transparent and accountable governance as well as promoting female leadership in key decision-making at all levels in society. The programme area works effectively with MMDAs to ensure that social protection structures are effective and functioning for the wellbeing of vulnerable groups in the communities.

Snap Shot of 2017 Results

Objective 1: Increased demand and assertion of the rights of women and girls through participation of empowered women and girls in decision making at homes, in schools, in communities and district decision making structures

105 Young Female Parliamentarians hold leadership positions including; senior prefect, dining hall prefect, Class prefects, entertainment prefects, health Prefects etc. This creates room for voice of females in senior high school leadership, decision making and management, and prepares them for future leadership opportunities

Objective 2: Increased Response from Government and its Agencies to Demand of Citizens on Accountable Governance

210 community Advocacy Groups (CAG) of 436 males and 422 females gained capacity on the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) program and engaged the Mion District LEAP Implementation Committee (DLIC) on issues affecting their communities

3 public senior high schools have rolled-out the implementation of gender sensitive student leadership structure through NORSAAC’s intervention

District LEAP Implementation Committee revitalized in Mion District through trainings and engagements to ensure existence of an effective structure that can response to the issues of LEAP beneficiaries
Increased avenues for citizens’ voices on assemblies’ capital projects implementation through 12 town hall meetings participated by 360 citizens and 60 district stakeholders

2,518 males and 2,083 females received information on details of assemblies’ capital projects including contract sum, duration, contractors’ details and project specifications through community meetings, sensitizations and dissemination of citizens’ generated project performance reports

Objective 3: Enhanced Allocation of Economic and Natural Resources to Men and Women Equitably

NORSAAC led members of the Democratic Consolidated and Accountable Governance (DCAG) cluster to input into the National Gender Policy Implementation plan to ensure equity in resource allocations and benefits in Ghana

10 advocacy issues from educational resource tracking researches identified with members of the Northern Network on Educational Development for stakeholder engagements to ultimately improve educational resource allocations and utilization.

15 women chiefs capacity built on dehumanizing practices surrounding witch craft allegation as a human rights issues with their inputs recorded into bye-laws to protect women against banishment and dehumanizing treatments from witch craft allegations.
Gender and Governance Projects for 2017

Young Urban Women: Life Choices and Livelihood Project (YUWP)

The YUWP started in 2013 focusing on building young urban women capacity on their rights with clear linkages between economic empowerment and the sexual reproductive health of young women in peri-urban areas. The project evolved into an advocacy phase resulting in the Young Urban Women Movement. The third phase of the project has the ultimate outcome “Governments (national and local) in three countries implement policy actions that respond to the demands of young urban women regarding their economic security and bodily integrity”. The project thus focus on building a cadre of strong young women movement across the country with regional satellite groups in Greater Accra, Northern and Upper West Regions. NORSAAC holds implementation responsibility for the Northern Region where young urban women are increasing in membership (currently over 2000), capacities as well as sustainable strategies for young women to advocate for gender responsive public services. The project is funded by ActionAid Ghana.

Ghana Strengthening Accountability Mechanism (GSAM)

GSAM is a national program implemented by a consortium of Care international, ISODEC and Oxfam Ghana with funding from USAID. The project has a goal “to strengthen citizens’ oversight on Capital Development Projects in order to improve local government transparency, accountability and performance”. While this is implemented in 100 districts in Ghana, NORSAAC is responsible for 4 districts; Karaga, Gushegu, Zabzugu and Tatale/Sanguile Districts. GSAM through the District Steering Committee platforms in the districts aid citizens with information on capital projects execution in their communities. This aid communities monitor such projects to ensure quality and stakeholder support. Through the community score card tool, citizens score districts projects in the initiation, contracting, execution and monitoring stages of capital projects execution and use community fora and town halls for engagement on issues arising from monitoring capital projects.
Grassroots Rising for Enhanced LEAP (GREL)

GREL was developed in October 2016 to aid the Mion district assembly improve its implementation of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) program through increased citizens engagements and involvement in the LEAP. The project employed the score card tool which aided citizens to document issues surrounding beneficiaries experience in the LEAP program and the gaps in structural management as well as linkages to other social protection programs. This aided the district to revise the District LEAP Implementation Committee (DLIC) which further created district and community level platforms for the DLIC to engage LEAP beneficiaries and citizens on issues challenging their full enjoyment of the LEAP program. The project moved into its second phase in October 2017 to increase its coverage of districts (Mion, Zabzugu, Mamprugu Moadugri, Tatale/Sanguili and Gushegu) and social protection programs (LEAP, Free Senior High School, Labour Intensive Public Works and NHIS exemptions). While the second phase focuses on strengthening the implementation structures of the above social protection programs, the project maintains its focus on citizens’ ability to gather information and engage stakeholders on social protection programs in Ghana. The GREL project is funded by ChristianAid Ghana.
Young Female Parliament (YFP)

The YFP project, developed since 2010 has a goal “to empower women and girls to challenge and reject gender based violence that would deny them control over their bodies and support them to participate in decision making at all levels”. The project is implemented in 18 public Senior High Schools and 2 Tertiary institutions in the Northern Region with funding from ActionAid Ghana. The project works closely with the Ghana Education Service who have designated teacher mentors for the project. These mentors aid the empowerment of the young females, support them engage each other and stakeholders on issues affecting them in schools. The project also utilises speed mentorship as a critical strategy in exposing the girls to young female change makers who mentors them towards their career and leadership interest. Unique to the project is the utilization of the parliamentary system where each school has its parliament with Speaker, minority and majority leaders with their chief whips, clerks and all structures that exist at the National Parliament. This arrangement prepares the young females on formal engagements and debating among colleagues on issues as Young Female Leaders in their schools and across other schools in the mock parliamentary debate sessions.

Inclusive-Governance to Sustaining Marginalized Livelihoods (ISMAL)

The ISMAL project was designed by NORSAAC to contribute to the Democratic Consolidated Accountable Governance (DCAG) program of Ibis Ghana now Oxfam Ghana. The DCAG program has an overall goal of “Civil society, women and the youth are actively demanding democratic governance reforms and their right to equitable economic redistribution; accountable and transparent management of public resources as well as influencing pro-poor policies and programmes for poverty reduction in Ghana”. The program started in the latter part of 2013 to which NORSAAC has been contributing especially in areas of women participation in assembly decision making structures, climate change issues, resource tracking, election observation, national policy spaces related to gender issues as well as traditional governance (women chiefs in Northern Region). ISMAL provides information to citizens to aid them engage local government actors on issues of representation, climate change as well as resources utilisation. Unique to the program is the work
with women chiefs in Dagbon Traditional Council with the innovative picture diary strategy and capacity for women chiefs.

**Change Stories**

**Senior High School Leadership becoming open: Chereponi SHS gets second Female Senior Prefect**

Chereponi Senior High School set the pace with the first ever female Senior High school prefect in the Northern Region. Alhassan Nafisah reigned for a whole academic year; 2015/2016 academic year and was noted for her ability to relate with the opposite sex in a very coordinated and fair manner. The following year saw a shift back to electing a boy to become senior prefect.

However, in 2017, another female was elected as Senior Prefect. Alhassan Alajor Nasira, 16 years, was elected the Senior Prefect for the 2017/2018 academic year in the same school. Nasira recounts, “Alhassan Nafisah set a pace when she was elected. It was all because of the training she got from NORSAACs young female parliament. I also joined the young female parliament when I came to school and took part in all their activities. Because of what Nafisah did in the past, I was also given the nod this year. Everyone believes a girl can equally do the work of a senior prefect in our school now. I will also make sure I leave a mark behind for other girls. I am very passionate about initiating SRC week celebration in my school as well as other things that are not happening currently”

NORSAAC and Action Aid are so excited about this success. We believe change is gradual, and the young female Parliament will continue to propel the change of gender sensitive leadership in our society.

**Freed From Child Marriage; Free To Reach My Dreams.**
In 2015 NORSAAC with funding support from UNICEF Ghana rescued a 13 year old girl from Sapki Yekazia, a Konkonba community in the Mion district of the Northern Region from child marriage. She was a victim of exchange marriage, a cultural practice where families exchange their daughters as a form of dowry settlement. Yaawa’s case was discovered when her headmaster chose her as a member of the Children against Child Marriage (CCMs) club and revealed her situation to the team. After numerous engagements, Yaawa’s parents agreed to free Yaawa. Yaawa’s parents and community after been sensitized on the importance of girl child education and the effects of child marriage, have gone the extra mile to ensure Yaawa has access to quality education. Now in 2017, Yawa is in Junior High School, enjoying her childhood and pursuing her dream of becoming a nurse. She has also been registered as a member of the young urban women’s movement, a space that would build her capacity on bodily integrity.
Livelihood and Entrepreneurial Development Programme Area

The livelihood programme area has successfully improved the income of women and young people through financial literacy education and access to a revolving fund. The programme area has for the past years broken gender-job stereotype and influenced best practices to sustain businesses among young people.

Snap shot of 2017 Results

Objective 1: Improved Income for Young Women and Young men through engagement in income generation activities

39 young people received and successfully completed vocational training with an improved skills under 5 vocational skills- namely; welding, electrical, mobile phone repairs and satellite installation, sewing machine repairs and motorbike repairs.

162 young women and 38 young men were financially supported for business set ups and expansion through access to a revolving micro- finance scheme. This effort has contributed to growth of businesses of young women

Objective 2: Enhanced management of financial resources by young people

19 functional businesses have been established by beneficiaries since graduation and 20 existing businesses upgraded by past beneficiaries due to the skills and support provided.

2,472 young women developed good savings habit resulting from the introduction of alternative savings plans by NORSAAC
Livelihood Projects for 2017

Youth Livelihood Empowerment Project (YLEP)

YLEP is a well-designed project that targets the youth to inculcate employable skills in them. The project recruited 15 young people from 7 communities in the Mion District of Northern Region. They underwent a one-year intensive skills training in welding, electrical and electronics (phone repairs, satellite installation). The project could be described as a multi-component project as it integrates financial and business trainings and SRHR/life skills training for participants to protect and take charge of their bodies as well as planning their families. At the end of the project, participants improved their means of livelihoods and gained the capacity to scan for job opportunities in their communities and district at large. This project is supported by Tools for Self-Reliance—a UK-based charity organization.
EMpower Sustainability Grant

EMpower, a US based organisation rewarded NORSAAC a two-year program grant to help sustain the operations of the organization. The grant has strengthened the organization significantly in documentation, reporting and resource mobilization. Full time resource mobilization officer was recruited and tasked to lead fundraising for the organization. The sustainability grant has also helped NORSAAC in the consolidation of vocational skills models used in the past years (models include; revolving loan system for young people, young people in motorbike and bicycle repairs, financial literacy model for young people out of school and sewing machine repairers). The grant helped NORSAAC engage a business consultant to build capacity of field staff on local business opportunities and entrepreneurship especially in rural communities. An entrepreneurship manual to engage the young people has been developed and the young people provided with training on first two modules.

Education Program Area

The education programme places emphasis on the use of complementary basic education to promote access to formal education and empower teachers to use participatory methods in teaching sexuality education in schools. The programme area has promoted gender friendly leadership structures in schools in the Northern Region.

Snapshot of 2017 Results

Objective 1: Increased access to empowering quality, basic education for children of school going age

NORSAAC has made 1084 out-of-school children literate in their mother tongue through its Complementary Basic Education (CBE) program in the Gushegu District.

NORSAAC supported the GES to monitor the CBE classes
Objective 2: Enhanced School Governance and Management

NORSAAC Supplied of 350 dual desks, 13 teachers’ tables, chairs, and 26 chalkboards to 50 CBE communities.

NORSAAC recruited of 122 facilitators (males 87 and 35 females) for the CBE programme.

Education Projects for 2017

Complementary Basic Education (CBE)

The CBE program is community owned and demand driven one. The global goals; universal primary education and Sustainable Development Goals (SGD 4) drive the interest of civil society in the education of out of schoolchildren. This is the basis for the implementation of the Complementary Basic Education program by a number of Non-Governmental Organizations including ActionAid and Its partner NORSAAC in some selected deprived communities in the Gushegu District since 2016. The 2016/2017 year is the fourth cycle of CBE but the first for NORSAAC in the Gushegu District. The cycle started in October 2016 and ended in July 2017, with a number of activities implemented within the cycle. Notable among the activities implemented within the cycle included; animation of communities, recruitment of facilitators and learners, training of facilitators and local committee members/ school management committees, supply of teaching and learning materials, registration of facilitators for WASSCE and support to GES for monitoring of classes.
INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT-key progress

Data Management

The year 2017 witnessed huge restructuring of the M&E unit of the organisation. There is currently a complete monitoring and evaluation system for the organization that tracks the performance of programmes. The unit has developed key performance indicators for all programme areas and keeps programme managers on their toes.

Review of Strategic Document:

The NORSAAC strategic document (2015-2019) has been reviewed. The objectives of the review was to assess the performance of NORSAAC against the Strategic Plan 2015-2019 and the attendant NORSAAC results framework. The review analyzed and reported on the aspects of NORSAAC’S outcome areas that did not work well but should be revised as well as analyzed and reported on the aspects of NORSAAC’S outcome areas that did not work at all and should be eliminated.

Financial Training on Audit Reports

As part of improving organizational capacity, there was a budget allocation for the training of financial unit. The training was conducted in financial management and grants reporting. The training enhanced the capacity of the finance unit. The result has improved the unit’s efficiency in resource management, accountability & transparency in dealing with multi donor budgets.

Media Engagement:

NORSAAC has enhanced its capacity in discussing issues in the media. This has made NORSAAC one of the organizations being called by the media to respond to critical development issues. The media has also published more news about the organization more than it witnessed in the immediate past years.

Networking and Collaborations:

NORSAAC has witnessed impressive networking and collaborations within and with other organisations. The visibility of the organisation at the national level has improved as invitation to participate at national events have increased. From January to December 2017, NORSAAC has jointly written proposals with the Institute of Interdisciplinary Research and Consultancy Services (IIRaCS) of the University for Development Studies (UDS), RAINS, Basic Needs, Christian Aid, Action Aid, Rise Ghana and Songtaaba
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

The 2017 has been a great year for the organization as it recorded significant growth both in financial strength and in human resource base. There was a reduction in the number of partners we worked with compared to 2016 but that did not result in any financial reduction. The fifteen funding partnership we had in 2016 was reduced to 12 due to ending of some projects.

Income for the Year

Even though we recorded a reduction in the number of donors, this did not affect our inflows but rather an increase in funding was recorded. There was an overall increase of GHC858, 445 representing 23% in total inflows. Income distribution for the various programme units is detailed below.

The SRHR unit recorded the highest income of GHC2, 909,557 representing 78% of the annual inflow; the second was the Gender and Governance unit with a total inflow of GHC424, 808.75 representing 11% of the total income, the livelihood programme that has the least projects after education recorded a total inflow of GHC137, 900 with a percentage of 4. The education programme area, which currently runs only the CBE project had a total income of GHC103, 310.25 making up 3% of total income. Aside the specific projects, there was also income from other local donations amounting to GHC111, 147 forming 3% of the income.

The organization operates interest-bearing accounts to reduce or avoid transaction charges on bank accounts. Total bank interest together with profit from disposal of some assets amounted to GHC31,014 described as other income also formed 1% of total income for the period. Below is a graphical presentation of the income distribution.
Expenditure Summary

The organization categorizes its expenses into direct operational cost and administrative overheads. The direct expenses relate to project activity cost as agreed in the various project documents. Administrative cost relates to support expenditure, which makes the project delivery possible. Direct expenses just like the income are also grouped on programme areas whiles administrative cost takes care of the logistical support cost including staff salaries.

Total direct expenses for the period was GHC2,752,071 segregated as follows:

Sexual Reproductive Health Rights unit (SRHR) had the highest expenditure of GHC2,338,226 representing 61% of total expenditure, the Gender and Governance area recorded GHC328,186 which forms 9% of total expenditure, livelihood area also recorded a total of GHC83,659 making 2% of the expenditure. The education programme which expenditure is mainly for salaries of project supervisors was included in staff salaries as expenditure.

Administrative expenses which is made up of salaries, vehicle maintenance, utilities, communication, insurance, publications, depreciation of equipment, staff travels etc had recorded a total of GHC1,050,511 which represented 28% of annual expenditure. Below is graphical explanation summarizing the expense allocations:

![Expenditure Summary Graph](image-url)
Administrative Updates

The administrative issues were not left out during the 2017 fiscal year. There were a number of issues that challenged the administrative unit; critical among them was one of the vehicles involving in an accident during activity implementation of the SHOW project. This resulted in serious damage to the vehicle posing a serious challenge to the fleet of the organization. However, the organization has an effective risk management plan that made it possible to procure a new vehicle with support from AXIS in Denmark.

Another issue of concern to the administrative unit is the instable power supply, which possess a serious threat to our equipment. Management is considering ways of resolving the issue; including getting a separate transformer since the current one has been overloaded resulting in the low voltage. Another option is to upgrade the small solar system that has been installed to manage the situation

Staffing and Internal Learning

The number of staff as at the end of December was 29 with a number of them completing distance or short courses. We painfully had to send some staff away due to the elapse of some projects. We generally agreed to improve our internal learning, as it remains one of our success story.
2017 Gallery

A drama group in Karaga District educating community members

Village Savings and Loans Association Meeting in session (Mamprugu Moadugri District)

Supporting Women Chiefs to fight discriminatory practices against women

Young Female Parliamentarians and their mentors