

## Annual Review

<b>Title: STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS PHASE II</b>		
<b>Programme Value £ (full life): £23.13 million</b> (DFID contribution is £15 million, EU £2.92 million, and DANIDA £5.21 million).  (Additional DFID Funds from DDGP Programme: £897,976.65 and £240,399 earmarked funds from DANIDA).  Currently, CA contract value is £21.13 million based on Contract Amendment No. 5 this year.		<b>Review Date: November 2019</b>
<b>Programme Code:</b> 204657 <b>Start Date:</b> 19/02/2015		<b>End Date:</b> 18/10/2020

### Summary of Programme Performance

Year	2016	Feb 2017	Nov 2017	Nov 2018	Nov 2019			
Programme Score	A	A	A+	A	A			
Risk Rating	Medium	Major	Major	Major	Major			

DevTracker Link to Business Case:	<a href="https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-204657/documents">https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-204657/documents</a>
DevTracker Link to Log frame:	<a href="https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-204657/documents">https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-204657/documents</a>

## A. Summary and Overview

### Description of programme

STAR-Ghana is a £23.13 million multi-donor funding arrangement consisting of funds from DFID, DANIDA<sup>1</sup> and the EU. The programme's goal is to further develop a vibrant, well-informed and assertive civil society that can contribute to national development and foster inclusive access to high quality and accountable public services for Ghanaian citizens. STAR-Ghana therefore has a dual focus to:

- Catalyse the efforts of citizens towards systemic change on specific issues; and
- Work towards the creation of a Ghanaian run corporate body to sustain support beyond the programme.

Civil Society in Ghana enjoys a wide range of civil liberties including freedom of expression and association and rule of law. Civil society is quite diverse in Ghana with a clear dichotomy between urban-based Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and rural-based ones. Ghana also has a vibrant media that promote domestic accountability. Generally, however, CSOs in Ghana face critical challenges including financial sustainability to support long term strategy to strengthen domestic accountability. CSO in Ghana also have limited set of skilled expertise at their disposal. With Ghana's middle-income status and national vision to move Ghana Beyond Aid, the civil society space will need to reorient itself so that it continues to remain vibrant, influence policies and hold the government to account.

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<sup>1</sup> DANIDA ceased development funding to Ghana end of 2018 and therefore its funding to the programme was exhausted by 2018.

Over the past decade, STAR-Ghana has been catalysing citizens' collective actions towards systemic change through grant making. STAR-Ghana II has channelled grants to CSOs for work on (a) Local Governance (b) Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) (c) Anti-corruption (d) Elections. In addition to grant making, it is brokering spaces for CSOs to engage duty bearers on salient issues at both national and local levels.

Three outcomes are expected:

- Support citizens' ability to influence change;
- Support the creation, utilisation and institutionalisation of spaces for collective civil society engagement in order to increase responsiveness of the executive and key state institutions at both local and national levels – in other words catalytic transformative spaces identified and used;
- Set up a credible national organisation with clear governance structures, financial and strategic management capacity.

The programme is centred around five key outputs:

1. STAR-Ghana providing effective convener, coordinator and catalyst (CCC) role
2. Effective strategic partnerships in place with policy level organisations (MDAs, Sector Ministries and Political Parties) and Parliament
3. STAR-Ghana funding mechanisms effectively managed, helping projects to address locally salient issues (expected outcomes)
4. STAR-Ghana established as a Ghanaian-owned, strategic and sustainable institution
5. Communities of Practice and Learning (CoPL) established, functioning effectively and learning for change

DFID Ghana, as the lead donor, has contracted Christian Aid (CA) to implement the programme. CA leads a consortium comprising: MANGO (now Humentum), Social Development Direct (SDD), On Our Radar, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and Nkum Associates. The programme is implemented by a Programme Management Team (PMT) and, since the launch of the STAR Ghana Foundation in November 2018, overseen by a Governing Council (GC), comprised of 12 eminent Ghanaians. DFID chairs the Funders' Committee and sits on the GC's Transition and Grants Committees. In accordance with its contract, over the past year CA has been delivering the programme activities through the PMT, alongside establishing the Foundation in collaboration with the GC. A tri-lateral MoU has been agreed setting out the respective roles and responsibilities of the Funders' Committee, the Foundation and CA. It is supported by a bilateral decision-making framework between the Foundation and CA.

## **Summary supporting narrative for the overall score in this review**

The past year has been an important year of transition for STAR, with the Foundation established and a process of gradual upskilling to enable it to take over from the programme. This process has required changes in how the programme operates, including a contract amendment with Christian Aid to spell out more clearly how CA would use 2019 and 2020 to build capacity and work towards their planned exit in October 2020.

Overall, the programme has made good progress since the last annual review. Milestones at the outcome level have been met, while ten (10) out of the 13 output level milestones have been met or exceeded. Good progress has been made on all but one of the recommendations from the 2018 Annual Review, with most completed.

During the year under review, the programme reached an estimated 400,000 Ghanaians (directly and indirectly) by strengthening civil society actions and facilitating constructive dialogue between citizens and duty bearers. These interventions influenced policy changes including the passage of the Right to Information Act and the setting up of Scrutiny Office by Parliament<sup>2</sup>. The Affirmative Action Bill was finally sent to Cabinet after ten years of its proposal while women rights organisations supported by STAR-Ghana made significant inputs into the Land Bill. STAR-Ghana also supported actions that advanced the rights of the vulnerable groups in society. For instance, actions supported by the Local Governance Call contributed to increased access of Persons with Disability (PWDs) to their three percent share of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF). The programme's sustainability initiative saw 20 CSOs and targeted middle-level managers receiving capacity support to promote the sustainability of their respective organisations.

The 87 grant partners supported by the programme directly engaged approximately 113,000 citizens to undertake actions to advance good governance. These actions supported policy changes, advanced the rights of women and PWDs, promoted the fight against corruption and increased citizens participation in local governance across all three levels of governance – national, regional and district. For instance, with STAR-Ghana support, League Afrique in collaboration with the Ghana Education Service (GES), the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) and the Arts Education Department of University of Cape Coast developed a curriculum and animation series for **anti-corruption education** for Junior and Senior High Schools in Ghana.

Apart from its direct grant support, STAR-Ghana has played a significant role in seeking to coordinate the efforts of different actors, to help build consensus and enhance impact. The programme's 3 Cs & L approach has seen an increasingly strategic focus on a few critical issues over the past year, an issue highlighted in last year's Annual Review. National convenings were held on issues such as the Ghana Beyond Aid agenda, political vigilantism, Constitutional review and free SHS among others. In line with the 2018 Annual Review recommendation, the programme ensured recommendations from some the convenings were followed through. For instance, through its support to the five Regional Coordinating Councils in Northern Ghana to revive the Mole series (now called Northern Ghana Development Summit), which took place in May 2019, it has been at the forefront of the high-level government and donor engagement on development for Northern Ghana and the implications of Ghana Beyond Aid. To address issues of vigilantism in the upcoming 2020 national elections, the Election Call has vigilantism among its key focus. However, there is still further work to be done in this area to ensure convenings are systematically followed through, have impact and that STAR can measure this change. At the same time, STAR-Ghana Foundation during 2019 has taken an important step towards establishing its credibility as an independent organisation and important resource to Ghanaian civil society through its launch and oversight of the Elections Call.

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<sup>2</sup> Scrutiny Office as a mechanism to enhance its effectiveness in reviewing contracts, agreements and bills brought before it for consideration

The key questions, however, centre around STAR-Ghana's ability to leverage on its equity as an honest broker between stakeholders and its capability in managing grants to be a sustainable and effective independent organisation. The recommendations for the year ahead reflect a number of concerns that have been raised in previous annual reviews. Although some progress has been made, on areas such as the strategic use of convenings, there needs to be a substantial push in the last year of the programme to address these concerns before the Foundation takes over.

## Recommendations for the year ahead

### Transition to a Foundation - Process

- The focus for 2020 is clearly around building the capacity of the Foundation so that it can successfully function without support from CA. CA should continue to help strengthen the Foundation's **governance and financial structures** and policies. The Foundation should continue to build an organisational identity and to clearly **articulate its unique selling points** to both other CSOs as well as potential funders, and to set out what it will and will not support. Progress in both areas is needed for the Foundation to pass a DFID due diligence assessment by **May 2020** and for DFID to agree an Accountable Grant.
- A key focus area for STAR Ghana going forward should be to implement a coherent and feasible **fundraising strategy** that leverages the core competencies of the organisation and puts it on a steady path towards sustainability. STAR Foundation needs to look beyond DFID and beyond traditional donors to seek support from other sources, including Foundations (e.g. Mastercard, Gates etc), individual philanthropists, the private sector (through CSR funds) and diaspora. This would also require the Foundation to assess potential risk associated with each of these sources and putting in place mitigation strategies. By **March 2020**, CA should submit to DFID, a **detailed implementation plan for STAR Ghana Foundation's fundraising strategy**.
- By **May 2020**, the Foundation will need to submit to DFID a **request for funds alongside a strategic plan including a results framework**. DFID will then need to assess these when considering an accountable grant. In addition to the requirements of the due diligence assessment, DFID should assess how much the Foundation can manage and over what period based on its capabilities and limitations as a new Foundation. If an AG is agreed, a new logframe and VFM strategy will need to be agreed.
- As STAR's moves towards the leaner structure, there is a need to ensure that the foundation still has the robust technical skills required, including around PEA and monitoring and evaluation. With more streamlined staffing, this may require thinking through **how to access the right skills** outside of the organisation as and when required – rather than on a full-time basis which may not be affordable. DFID should however ensure that the Foundation has the **requisite skills** to manage its funds when an accountable grant is agreed on. This should be part of the due diligence assessment due in **May 2020**.

### Transition to a Foundation - Strategy

- STAR-Ghana could further enhance its honest broker image to enable effective and meaningful engagement between various stakeholders, both at the national and sub-national level – bringing together national NGOs with greater policy influence with local community groups with greater understanding of how central policies affect communities. This will also enable it to be a partner of choice for key stakeholders who may want to reach out to other stakeholders on policy issues on gender equality, inclusion, governance, anti-corruption etc.
- As STAR-Ghana evolves into a fully-fledged foundation, it will need to balance policy influencing and engagement; and grant management. A **smaller but more strategic grant portfolio** could be a better option. Working with fewer partners would allow STAR to engage in more depth on technical aspects of individual projects, supporting a politically informed process and ensuring that the engagement with grant partners is more closely linked in with its work on 3Cs and L.
- Going forward, STAR-Ghana needs to evolve a more systematic approach to engaging on policy issues to ensure it has maximum influence. This might be achieved through **providing longer-**

**term and more flexible grants** to allow grantees to engage over longer time periods in a way that is more responsive to changes in the context. This will require sourcing funds that allows this flexibility.

- As it transitions into an independent foundation, STAR-Ghana should strengthen its learning role and emerge as a knowledge repository for CSOs at large. By **August 2020**, CA should document learnings and disseminate knowledge products more actively, and this could benefit many CSOs and other stakeholders.

### **Strategic Convenings in 2020**

- 2020 is election year. STAR Ghana (both the programme and the Foundation) are sensitive to risks and the need to be politically neutral. But there are also opportunities. STAR-Ghana could **focus on engaging with political parties** around the focus areas (GESI, manifestos and vigilantism/electoral violence) of the Elections Grant Call and other important issues such as anti-corruption. These convenings should linked in with the different actions of the Elections Call GPs to ensure greater impact.
- There has been some progress made on more strategic use of convenings through both criteria for choosing issues and use of the convening tracker to follow progress. But more work is needed to **ensure convenings are systematically followed through and have impact** and this process is being measured. STAR-Ghana should differentiate between issues arising from convenings that have begun to be taken forward as actions points and those that have been systematically followed through and addressed. This is particularly important as the process of policy influencing can take a long time and is not a linear process. For instance, STAR-Ghana support for the RTI law started in 2011 and was passed in 2019.
- STAR Ghana has placed PEA at the heart of its work to ensure it addresses underlying causes, not just the symptom. This could be taken even further by **embedding PEA into STAR's work with grant partners and the 3C&L**. Grant partners should be supported to think through project design and implementation in a politically informed way to ensure there is a more informed approach to issue identification, root causes and the context that is needed for change to occur. PEA at the national level has been a strong component of design of the grant calls, but this has not necessarily filtered down to how grant partners are implementing their projects and STAR are beginning to think this through at a late stage in the programme. It is also worth considering for the future how the foundation hires, onboards and supports staff capacity around PEA to ensure that there are enough technical skills available to be able to support grant partners in this area.
- There is still a risk of STAR, STAR's convenings, being regarded as a competitor by other large CSOs (especially Think Tanks) who also hold large events on issues of the day. This could be mitigated through joint initiatives. For instance, STAR-Ghana could pursue joint fundraising with some CSOs and provide match funding where required.
- DFID to better link STAR-Ghana up with its other programmes to ensure they are more than the sum of their parts. For instance, joint events (e.g., learning event) held on anti-corruption with the DFID-funded Strengthening Action Against Corruption (STAAC) programme and the EU-funded Accountability, Rule of Law and Anti-corruption (ARAP) programmes could be replicated with other programmes on issues also supported by STAR-Ghana. DFID LNOB programme has a specific focus on disability and there is much the new supplier can learn from STAR's existing work on disability.

## B: DETAILED OUTPUT SCORING

<b>Output Title</b>	<b>STAR-Ghana providing effective convener, coordinator and catalyst (CCC) role</b>		
Output number per LF	1	<b>Output Score</b>	<b>A</b>
Impact weighting (%):	25 %	Impact weighting % revised since last AR?	N

<b>Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Milestone(s) for this review</b>	<b>Progress</b>
1.1. Number of convenings (spaces created or facilitated) by STAR-Ghana and its partners for dialogue with duty bearers on strategic and locally salient issues (including GESI/Anti-Corruption/Local Governance)	22	<b>Exceeded.</b> 40
1.2. Number of actions/issues arising from convenings by STAR-Ghana and its Partners being addressed by relevant stakeholders.	51	<b>Not Met</b> 45 issues are being addressed by relevant stakeholders.
1.3. % of stakeholders stating STAR-Ghana is playing a strong/very strong a) convener, b) coordinator and c) catalyst role	a) 85 b) 85 c) 85	<b>Met</b> a) 86.9 b) 87.8 c) 92

STAR-Ghana's 3C role (Convening, Catalysing, Coordinating and Learning) involves (i) *convening* a broad range of stakeholders for dialogues and to support identification of opportunities and critical entry points for action and engagement; (ii) *catalysing* change through joint working with new and innovative strategic partners; (iii) *coordinating* with a broad cross-section of actors, promoting joint influencing actions amongst partners, to ensure effective use of resources available.

The Independent Review (commissioned by DFID with the objective of assessing the changes achieved by STAR-Ghana programme to date) called the 3Cs& L '*a unique approach to supporting civil society within the ecosystem*' and one of the three unique selling points for the Foundation. However, there is need to ensure that the convenings are used to drill down to root causes and systematically followed through to address issues, rather than being spread thinly across a wide number of issues. This can be supported by a more mainstreamed approach to PEA across the work of the grant partners.

**Indicator 1.1:** During the year, 40 convenings were held against a target of 22; making a cumulative total of 82 against a milestone target of 64. 27 national convenings were held by STAR-Ghana, the focus of which included constitutional review, healthcare, free Senior High School (SHS), Right to Information (RTI), corruption, civil society sustainability and vigilantism. 13 convenings were held by its grant partners on issues which included mental healthcare, PWDs, anti-corruption, administration of the District Common Fund etc. This means that in 2019, STAR held almost the same number of convenings held in the previous three years in contrast with 2018 AR recommendation to focus on strategic issues and drill down. As observed in previous years and by the independent review, the heavy focus on convening affect the PMT's availability to implement the other components of the 3C& L (e.g. coordinating, catalysing and learning).

**Indicator 1.2: Despite the large number of convenings (significant increase from previous years), this indicator 1.2 was not met**, with 45 actions identified against a target of 51 for 2019. Some of the salient issues being addressed were:

- GIBA has begun a fully-fledged citizen-based advocacy campaign to sensitise citizens on the repercussions of the implementation of the Digital Broadcasting issues
- Actions of the 5 regional ministers in Northern Ghana and the Northern Development Authority in taking forward recommendations of the Northern Ghana Development Conference.

**Indicator 1.3:** The annual stakeholder perception survey shows that the programme is strongly identified as a convenor, catalyst and coordinator of spaces (the percentage of stakeholders who stated that STAR is playing a strong/very strong coordinator and catalyst role has increased since 2018. However, those stating that it is playing a strong/very strong convenor role has reduced slightly from 89.4% to 86.9%). It is however not clear to what extent grant partners understand the different roles. The survey also found that existing spaces created by STAR-Ghana and partners have promoted collaboration and dialogue among civil society and duty bearers. The media, CSO platforms and forums have been especially effective in bringing stakeholders together to address issues of interest. However, as the Independent Review highlights the Convening, Coordination and Learning roles should be strategies for Catalysing action and that in practice they are not all at the same level.

#### **Lessons identified this year, and recommendations for the year ahead linked to this output**

- **PEA:** The importance of political economy analysis (PEA) in STAR-Ghana's work cannot be overstated. In the case, for example, of the Northern Ghana Development Summit, a broad-based committee and technical experts undertook thorough analysis, planning and preparation, which helped to elicit greater buy-in by partners at the beginning and greater commitment to follow-up. PEA approaches could be further embedded into STAR's work with grant partners to ensure there is a more informed approach to issue identification, root causes and the context that is needed for change to occur. STAR has started this process through its six pilots with grant partners on embedded PEA, which should be scaled up and mainstreamed across the elections call. It is also worth considering for the future how the foundation hires, onboards and supports staff capacity around PEA.
- **Convenings:** Convenings are more beneficial when they are strategic and not one-off events. It is important for the convenings to be planned and implemented as a series which feed into or feed off each other, given the complexities of the policy advocacy process. One-off convenings leading to catalysing of actions and other steps may miss further consultations or dialogues and therefore compromise the effectiveness of the action(s). While STAR-Ghana made some progress with this approach on few convenings (e.g. Northern Development Summit), many of the convenings held over the period under review were one-offs. This calls for further reflection on the strategy to ensure effective delivery. More work is needed to ensure convenings are systematically followed through and have impact and this process is being measured through the convening tracker.
- **3 Cs and L:** There is need for the programme to consciously work at linking the four components. The 3Cs&L approach has four interlinked components. The experience at both programme and partner levels has been to focus mostly on the convenings and, even when actions arise out of the convenings, they tend not to be highlighted as much. Given that the logic of the approach depends on the linkages between the components, the PMT and GPs will have to consciously focus on indicating the interlinkages even at the concept or planning stages of any intervention. The logframe indicators are only monitoring progress on the convening role, with limited information on catalysing. STAR should be collecting further qualitative data to understand in more depth how it is using its proven convening power, as well as coordination role, to catalyse change. As noted in the Independent Review, the programme needs to use its proven Convening power, along with learning and collaboration/ coordination roles to catalyse change by improving the quality of convenings.

<b>Output Title</b>	<i>Effective strategic partnerships in place with policy level organisations (MDAs, Sector Ministries and Political Parties) and Parliament</i>		
Output number per LF	2	<b>Output Score</b>	<b>A</b>
Impact weighting (%):	15 %	Impact weighting % revised since last AR?	N

<b>Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Milestone(s) for this review</b>		<b>Progress</b>
2.1. Number (total) and percentage of quality strategic partnerships between STAR-Ghana and Duty bearers (Sector ministries, Parliament, MDAs and political parties) that have resulted in commitments towards or addressed systemic issues (including GESI)	15 (75%)	<b>Not Met</b>  12 strategic partnerships have been forged between STAR-Ghana and sector ministries and Parliament Committees – 10 of which are long term and 2 are short-term.	
2.2. Number of Grant partners (total) and percentage of grant' partnerships with MDAs and political parties that are influencing policies and practices on systemic issues (including GESI)	89 (70%)	<b>Exceeded</b>  91% - 81 partners (of the 89 grant partners) are collaborating with MDAs to influence policies on systemic issues. 64% of partners are undertaking initiatives, while 24% are sustaining initiatives to address them.	
2.3. Number of collaborations between Parliament (including Committees of Parliament, the Leadership of the House and the Parliamentary service) and CSOs towards enhancing the effectiveness of its oversight, legislative and representative functions	24	<b>Met</b>  27. This represents partners' collaborations with 10 select committees - Trade, Subsidiary Legislation, Poverty Reduction, Health, Education, Lands and Forestry, Parliamentary Service and Leadership, Constitutional and Legal, Local government and Rural Development, Youth and Sports and African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption (APNAC).	

#### Provide supporting narrative for the score

The programme has forged strategic partnerships with key service delivery ministries and influential select committees, although this workstream has progressed much more slowly than others given numerous challenges of engaging with parliament (resulting in significant underspend in this workstream). However, 2019 has begun to see results emerging after sustained STAR-Ghana support. With programme support since 2012, Parliament has finally established the Scrutiny Office as a mechanism to enhance its effectiveness in reviewing contracts, agreements and Bills brought before it for consideration.

A valuable partnership has also been forged with the Northern Development Authority (NDA) which is charged with taking forward the recommendations from the Northern Ghana Development Summit. While strategic partnership with Parliament progressed slowly, others have resulted in commitments, including:

1. The Ministry of Inner Cities and Zongo Development commissioned deliberate actions in consulting dwellers of inner cities and Zongo on the legislative instrument for the Zongo Development Fund.
2. The National Youth Policy has been validated and is being prepared for Cabinet's approval. With STAR-Ghana support, the National Youth Authority (NYA) organised consultations with all sections of youth.

- Following the recommendations of a STAR-Ghana national convening, to mark International Women's Day (IWD), the MoGCSP has committed to holding a national annual summit on issues affecting women, children and vulnerable people.

Indicators 2.2 and 2.3 assess STAR-Ghana's ability to facilitate strategic partnerships between CSOs and relevant state actors, including Parliament to influence policy changes. Achieving policy transformation means holistically addressing legal, institutional and social barriers to change. Consequently, STAR-Ghana's partnerships with State Actors are geared towards influencing institutional buy-in to respond to civil society's demands for policy changes. This is expected to complement support to CSOs in order to influence the desired changes.

Some of the successes include the promulgation of district by-laws to protect those accused of witchcraft; TV3's engagement with five districts to bring about practical improvements in service delivery, such as the construction of a classroom block and an accessible public toilet; AGI's partnership with the Ministry of Works and Housing which has led to the adoption of the construction price index for policy development.

#### **Lessons identified this year, and recommendations for the year ahead linked to this output**

- The non-partisan and neutral approach of STAR-Ghana has helped build greater credibility and legitimacy among key stakeholders, including Parliamentary Committees. This is one of the key factors that makes STAR-Ghana "an honest broker of relationships among actors within civil society, with the media and the government" (Independent Review). STAR-Ghana should further enhance its honest broker image to enable effective and meaningful engagement between various stakeholders, both at the national and sub-national level. This will also enable it to be a partner of choice for key stakeholders who may want to reach out to other stakeholders on policy issues on gender equality, inclusion, governance, anti-corruption etc.
- Working on policy issues require a longer term and systematic approach. Many of the policy issues that STAR-Ghana and GPs seek to address require strong engagement with duty bearers and periodic consultation with other relevant stakeholders. Short-term grants may not be ideal for such engagement. Going forward, STAR-Ghana needs to evolve a more systematic approach to engaging on policy issues. It could consider longer-term and more flexible grants to incentivise grantees to engage more effectively on policy issues.
- Pursuing policy influencing objectives is difficult while simultaneously managing a large and diverse set of grants and grantees. The wide portfolio of grants managed by STAR-Ghana used up a significant amount of time and resources in grant-management thereby curtailing efforts to monitor progress on policy issues. As STAR-Ghana evolves into a full-fledged foundation, it will need to consider achieving a better balance between policy influencing and engagement and grant management and ensuring that these are working together and not dividing focus of the organisation. A smaller but more strategic portfolio could be a better option.
- The current partnership with state actors sits with the programme under the supplier contract agreement with CA. With the Foundation transitioning into an independent entity, it will be important for it to sustain these partnerships even if it may not be able to support the state actors at the same scale. This could also be an opportunity to review or consider new forms of partnership. The advantage is that some key members of the PMT are transitioning and therefore could leverage on the interpersonal relationships built over the years to build new forms of partnerships.

<b>Output Title</b>	<b>STAR-Ghana funding mechanisms effectively managed, helping projects to address locally salient issues (Expected outcomes)</b>		
Output number per LF	3	<b>Output Score</b>	<b>A</b>
Impact weighting (%):	20 %	Impact weighting % revised since last AR?	N

<b>Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Milestone(s) for this review</b>	<b>Progress</b>
3.1. % of projects evaluated as meeting expected outcomes (including mainstreaming GESI at a minimum)	80	<b>Not Met</b> 76%
3.2. % of partners with systems (Institutional and Operational) in place to ensure sustainability	80	<b>Exceeded</b> 98% (87 out of 89 partners)

#### **Provide supporting narrative for the score**

STAR-Ghana has supported its partners in delivering on their project outcomes and growing their organisational capacity. The Independent Review identified a Unique Selling Point for the Foundation as '*a capable fund management institution*', utilising more than eight years of learning in grant making processes.

**Indicator 3.1:** During the year under review, 76% of partners met their respective milestones against a target of 80 %. Of those remaining, 14% achieved 50 – 75% of their project milestones. The programme commissioned an evaluation for the anti-corruption and local governance small grant partner calls. Key amongst the findings were:

- Projects have addressed the inadequate access to the 3% DACF by PWDs and enhanced their understanding of the disbursement processes.
- Projects have supported marginalised populations – women, youth and PWDs - to express their willingness, readiness and confidence to contest and actively participate in the forthcoming district-level elections.

**Indicator 3.2:** 98% of partners report have worked towards improvement on their systems (institutional or operational), although in practice this can vary from participation in a training to substantive change to policies and processes that is followed through. The programme has achieved this through a series of trainings on financial management, leadership development, safeguarding and policy development, sustainability training and operational manuals. Specific examples of change include:

- 87 out of 89 implementing partners have safeguarding policies and are implementing them, ensuring that there are mechanisms to inform and protect staff and beneficiaries from being harmed.
- 18 partners now have sustainability plans beyond the training. These partners have also acquired the requisite capacity to consolidate and upscale projects outcomes.

#### **Lessons identified this year, and recommendations for the year ahead linked to this output**

- The support and training have provided partners with a range of tools to strengthen implementation of programmes and sustainability of their organisations. Feedback from partners emphasised that this has put them in a better position in relation to both implementation of future projects and strengthening other donors' confidence in their capacity to deliver. Monitoring of discrete capacity building activities is reflected in changes in risk rating and STAR's feedback on reports and performance. The aggregate impact is dependent on the will of individual organisations to implement the training, which is very varied. This is an area of M&E to strengthen, particularly if the Foundation is working with a smaller and more strategic portfolio.

- STAR support to strengthen systems has been greatly valued by partners, but the expectations are also regarded as challenging and time consuming. Whilst it is a positive that STAR continue to push partners to strengthen their systems, policies and procedures, they should also factor in the time that this takes and work closely with partners to make sure that this does not impact negatively on delivery of projects.
- STAR needs to balance the number of partners with which it is working with the depth of engagement on individual projects to ensure impact across projects. Working with fewer partners, would allow STAR to engage in more depth on technical aspects of individual projects, supporting a politically informed process and ensuring that the engagement with grant partners is more closely linked in with STAR's work on 3Cs and L. However, this must still be balanced with the scale of the projects and actions necessary to gain traction or influence policy.

<b>Output Title</b>	<b>STAR-Ghana established as a Ghanaian owned, strategic and sustainable Institution</b>		
Output number per LF	4	<b>Output Score</b>	A
Impact weighting (%):	25 %	Impact weighting % revised since last AR?	N

<b>Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Milestone(s) for this review</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Level of readiness for institution (including transitional plan and exit strategy and readiness)	STAR 2 national institution functional (lessons on the journey documented)	<b>Met</b> Following the launch, significant progress has been made, as captured in the Transition Plan update.
Capacity of STAR-Ghana Institution, as measured by - GC set-up (establishment of the GC council and its sub-committees) - Staff in Place (personnel recruited or seconded to the Foundation) - Funding (30%) (broken down into stages - Stage 1 (5%) - Identification of funding sources, proposals and funds) - Governance (policies and practices that regulate the foundation and its work) - Road Map (Transition Plan agreed upon by GC, CA and DFID)	60	<b>Met</b> <b>61</b> GC set up (15%) - completed Staff in place (8%) – PMT staff seconded to the programme and a draft organogram and staff salary scale designed. Funding (30%) - 8% - representing the mapping and identification of funding sources (Columbia Center for Sustainable Development (CCSD), USAID, GIZ and Stanchart) and 1 proposal submitted to CCSD has been approved Structure (5%) – Draft Organogram designed. Governance (15%) - completed Transition plan – (10%) - completed

### Provide supporting narrative for the score

The past year has been significant in the establishment of the independent national entity. After many months of considerable effort, the STAR Ghana Foundation was launched in November 2018. Since that time, the Foundation's Governing Council (GC), PMT and consortium partners have been collaborating to deliver on the broad range of activities captured in the two-year Transition Plan (TP), and considerable progress has been made, although some areas have progressed much more rapidly than others. The key achievements have been:

- Establishment and effective functioning of the Foundation's governance structures
- Agreement reached on division of roles and responsibilities between the Funders' Committee, GC and CA
- The Foundation operational systems (e.g. Finance) set up
- Positioning of the Foundation as a key and credible partner in national development efforts
- Launch of the Foundation's first grants call, with a strategic focus on the 2020 elections
- The Foundation determining its staffing and salary structure
- Scoping of contacts, networking and identification of fundraising opportunities
- Publicity of the STAR Ghana Foundation, including a website refresh

Except for fundraising and structure (e.g. Staffing), which are still in early stages, it is already a healthy and well-functioning organisation. Fundraising needs to be prioritised over the next year, while a full complement of the Foundation's secretariat should be in place by September 2020. The GC has since

September agreed on an organogram and recruited two (namely Executive Director and Grants Manager) out of three key staff (Finance/Administrative Manager outstanding) for the Foundation.

### **Lessons identified this year, and recommendations for the year ahead linked to this output Transition to Foundation – process**

- STAR will need to prioritise fund-raising over the next year. There should be a strong push on this over the next year, based on solid market research on feasible approaches. STAR should leverage the credibility and rich networks built by its eminent GC members and subscribers and relationships with the private sector; as well as technical assistance within the consortium to fundraise. By **March 2020**, CA should submit to DFID, a **detailed implementation plan for STAR Ghana Foundation's fundraising strategy**.
- As STAR moves towards a much leaner structure, there is a need to ensure that the foundation still has the robust technical skills required, including around PEA and monitoring and evaluation. With more streamlined staffing, this may require thinking through how to access the right skills outside of the organisation as and when required. DFID should ensure that the Foundation has the **requisite skills** to manage its funds when an accountable grant is agreed on.
- The GC has met as per its planned schedule, but it is faced with a weight of tasks which are considerably greater than any local Board would normally have to deal with. Since members are unpaid volunteers with significant professional commitments, the GC members have not always been able to make time for committee meetings or for online decision-making. Though cognisant of the time pressures to deliver the Transition Plan, it is critical that relationships are managed well at this stage of development. Discussions have taken place on remunerating GC members for their support on *technical work* for the Foundation, which is permissible under its Regulations. Attendance at GC meetings will not be paid. But the cost of technical inputs by GC members has been factored into the grant which is being made from the programme to the Foundation.
- The proposed salary structure creates significant disparities in pay amongst the individuals within the organisation, which risks undermining STAR's fundamental commitment to equality. This should be reviewed by **June 2020**.
- By **May 2020**, the Foundation will need to submit to DFID a **request for funds alongside a strategic plan including a results framework**. DFID will then need to assess these when considering an accountable grant. In addition to the requirements of the due diligence assessment, DFID should assess how much the Foundation can manage and over what period based on its capabilities and limitations as a new Foundation. If an AG is agreed, a new logframe and VFM strategy will need to be agreed.

### **Transition to Foundation - strategy**

- The Foundation needs to continue to build a clear organisational identity, in order to: distinguish the Foundation from the STAR-Ghana Programme (while also highlighting elements of continuity); clearly articulate the unique selling points of the Foundation; differentiate the Foundation from CSOs, including emphasising that it will not compete with CSOs for funding; and establish a clear remit and boundaries for what it will and will not support, to keep expectations realistic.
- However, this remit is still very broad, and STAR will need to continue refining their offer. The Foundation will need to clearly articulate how its role as a grant management organisation is a means of facilitating the 3Cs and L, and work to ensure that these two strands are more closely linked and drawing on each other. Partner organisations see the grant giving function as important in maintaining STAR's credibility with civil society and robust grant management procedures provide a strong offer to potential donors. STAR also has a strong offer, particularly for medium and smaller CSOs, around: providing a channel to bring their issues into national level dialogues and benefitting from exposure to experienced CSOs more familiar with how to influence policy; providing opportunity to talk to one another; and giving credibility to advocacy issues via the STAR brand.
- There is still a risk of STAR being regarded as a competitor by other large CSOs (especially Think Tanks). This could be mitigated through agreeing and signing MoUs with main counterparts (such

as CDD and IDEG) around specific projects or workstreams, setting out respective offers and how STAR can complement and work with them.

- The team has been developing a range of products setting out the Foundation's offer, particularly around: its role as a fund manager with the added value of the 3Cs and L approach; its offer on GESI and how to integrate this into the heart of other work; offer on governance and inclusive democracy; and offer on anti-corruption and transparency. An offer is also being developed around STAR's role in strengthening the enabling environment for active citizenship and philanthropy. There is scope to continue refining these and tailoring them for different audiences. This could involve reaching out to potential donors to offer collaboration and co-creation of a specific offer.

<b>Output Title</b>	<i>Communities of Practice and Learning (COPL) established, functioning effectively and learning for change</i>		
Output number per LF	5	<b>Output Score</b>	<b>B</b>
Impact weighting (%):	15 %	Impact weighting % revised since last AR?	N

<b>Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Milestone(s) for this review</b>	<b>Progress</b>
% of stakeholders stating STAR-Ghana is playing an effective learning role	85	<b>Not met</b> <b>80</b>
No. of strategic learnings documented and shared annually to stakeholders	6	<b>Not Met</b> 3 - Abridged Annual Report (2018/19), GESI Toolkit & Strategic Learning Event, 2019
% of GPs demonstrating application of learning from COPLs	70	<b>Exceeded</b> <b>94</b>

#### Provide supporting narrative for the score

Learning is an intrinsic element of STAR-Ghana's 3Cs&L approach and fundamental to its role as a resource to both Ghanaian civil society and government. STAR's unique position to facilitate learning processes between grant partners, with the goal of fostering social movements around common causes, has not been as strong as its 3 Cs role. The last year has seen a recalibration of the cluster model which has begun to address this. Learning should be prioritised in the final year of the programme. With a whole set of learning products and research pieces in the pipeline, STAR should ensure they are maximising the potential for these to both support grant partners and non-partners alike in the implementation of projects and to more strategically influence decision making processes.

**Indicator 5.1:** This is the only output indicator which respondents to the Annual Stakeholder Perception Survey scored the programme below its target. (However, on average across the whole of the 3Cs & L, the programme was scored 86.7% above target.)

**Indicator 5.2:** STAR-Ghana has continued to publish learning products which capture key elements of the programme implementation and can inform and enable the wider sector. Notable among these over the reporting period is the Strategic Learning Event Report (February 2019), which sets out the case for and nature of social justice philanthropy in Ghana, an understanding of the power dynamics at play in engaging with Parliament, and an exploration of the challenges around depth versus breadth.

**Indicator 5.3:** Feedback from partners on their experience of participating in COPLs was very positive, using a number of different platforms to share experiences and providing a forum to reach out to others when faced with challenges in project implementation. A number of COPL learnings were documented and shared, including a working paper on addressing corruption in Ghana and an analysis of the constitutional review process, among others. 94% of grant partners report having applied COPL learnings in their activities in 2019, which is significantly higher than that last year (69%). However, only 45% of grant partners indicated that they are members of a COPL (with little change from 43% in 2018). Those not involved in COPLs are not benefitting to the same extent from STAR's learning role and the documented learnings from the COPLs had not been shared with them. It is unclear the extent to which learning from these projects is being picked up by STAR.

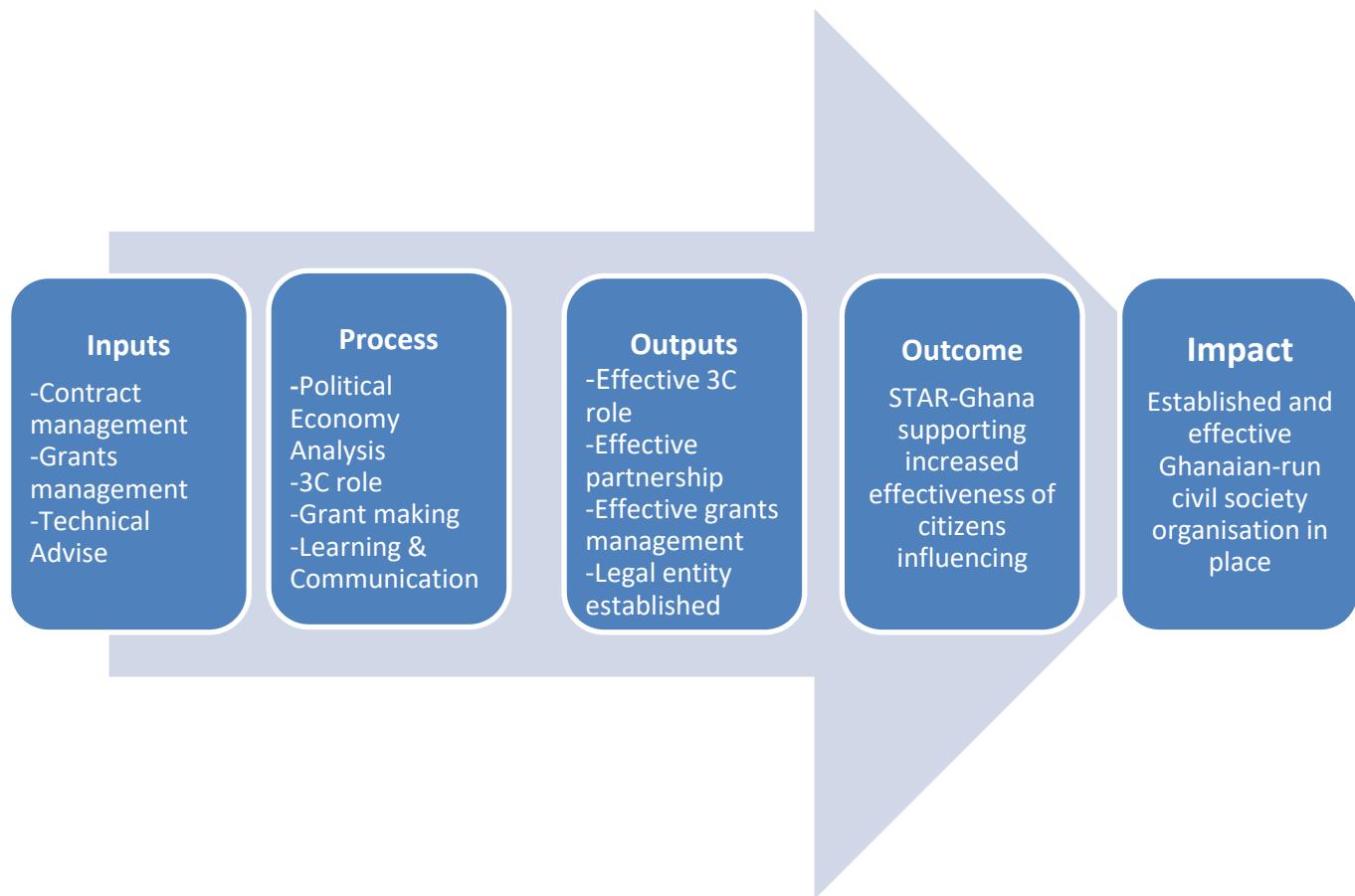
#### Lessons identified this year, and recommendations for the year ahead linked to this output

- STAR-Ghana has adopted the Cluster approach and COPLs as models for fostering collaboration among civil society actors for both learning and advocacy. In the year under review, the cluster model was recalibrated to enable better coordination among the cluster members; deepen mobilisation based across thematic areas and coordinate a stronger voice on governance issues that address multisectoral linkages. This recalibration resulted in a reduction from the original 11

clusters to a more convenient four. Over the year, cluster members were supported to develop action plans and internal structures and implement these plans with a minuscule budget. The clusters have seen some success in taking up joined-up action such as the advocacy for the Affirmative Action Bill, the re-introduction of the Land Bill to Parliament, advocacy for the Constitutional Review Committee's implementation of recommendations for the constitutional review process. Currently the costs of physical meetings and events are covered under grants to the organisations. As these clusters expand and non-GPs are brought in, sustainability will become an issue, particularly with the ending of the programme. The programme/Foundation will need to engage clusters to develop mechanisms for sustainability beyond programme funding.

- The Strategic Learning Event (SLE) was a valuable addition, bringing together all programme stakeholders (the Governing Council, funders, consortium partners, PMT, GPs and technical advisors) to review programme implementation and identify learning. By bringing different perspectives to the table and holding the discussions outside the context of a programme review or evaluation, the SLE enables frank and constructive discussions which have over the past two years contributed significantly to programme effectiveness.
- STAR should continue working in synergy with 'sister' Programmes. The anti-corruption learning event was organised by STAR-Ghana in partnership with programmes working on similar issues, namely the DFID-funded Strengthening Action Against Corruption (STAAC) programme and the EU-funded Accountability, Rule of Law and Anti-corruption (ARAP) programme. This ensured a diverse group of participants as each programme brought on board its partners and this greatly enriched the discussions. Synergy can be achieved through joint proposal development, co-hosting of events and sharing of lessons learnt and methodologies. DFID should facilitate learning between and among its programmes where necessary. For instance, DFID LNOB programme has a specific focus on disability and there is much the new supplier can learn from STAR's existing work on disability.
- Continue a strong push on learning in the last year and strengthen knowledge management and dissemination processes. With a set of learning pieces and research products planned in the next year, it is important to ensure that the documents are reaching the right people. STAR should more systematically ensure that learning products are reaching all partners, but also think through strategically how these products can be used to influence decision making at a higher level.

## C: THEORY OF CHANGE AND PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTCOMES



The overall ToC remains relevant to the programme and its stakeholders and the assumptions and risks highlighted in the Business Case continue to be true. As highlighted in the Independent Review, STAR-Ghana is being increasingly perceived as an honest broker between key stakeholders. This, however, comes with the risk of competition with other national level CSOs/think tanks. To mitigate this risk, STAR-Ghana will need to work alongside such CSOs/think tanks in a complementary manner or forge strategic partnerships with them.

As highlighted earlier, there is a tension between STAR-Ghana's efforts aimed at policy influencing and those on grants management, and this potentially hinders achievement of the desired outcome of increasing effectiveness of citizens' influencing. Good grants management is a necessary requirement for the credibility and legitimacy needed by the programme to be effective and grants, in the current context of civil society in Ghana, are essential to support civil society policy influencing options. A more strategic approach and a reduced but better targeted grants portfolio will help STAR-Ghana to mitigate the risk of tensions between the two and, rather, ensure that they are reinforcing each other.

Overall, STAR-Ghana has made good progress towards being an effective Ghanaian-run CSO. A key factor that will determine to what extent this impact is achieved will be its ability to raise funds through innovative partnerships with a wider set of institutions.

**Describe where the programme is on track to contribute to the expected outcomes and impact, and where it is off track and so what action is planned as a result in the year ahead**

The programme's impact is a "well informed and active civil society, able to contribute to transformational change around key challenges of poverty, inequality and inclusion for all citizens".

The programme's outcome is to achieve "Increased effectiveness of citizen influencing change that advances democracy, accountability and social inclusion through Civil Society Organisations". The Outcome statement focuses on three pillars: changes in policies and practices as a result of collective citizens' actions; the responsiveness of state and non-state actors to citizens' demands; and the development of a credible independent national entity. Measured against these indicators, progress during the period under review has been significant.

**Changes in Policies and Practices 1**

At the local level

- Teams have been established in the Obuasi and Prestea Huni Valley Municipal districts to track, monitor and report on the districts' receipts and utilisation of Mineral Development Fund (MDF) projects;
- Court User Committees (CUCs) have been set up in 11 districts across the country for effective tracking of citizens' complaints and issues regarding access to justice.
- District Disability Caucuses (DDCs) have been established and institutionalised by seven district assemblies (DA) in the Volta region.
- The Tamale Teaching Hospital has established a Customer Care Unit to enable patients to report and follow up on cases of extortion or other wrongful acts.

**Responsiveness of state and non-state actors to citizens' demands**

There is evidence of duty bearers engaged by the programme responding positively to citizens' demands. This increased responsiveness has manifested in changes in policies and increased capacity and willingness to engage constructively with citizens and social groups on salient issues. 91% of the issues identified in the STAR Ghana projects are being addressed, with 64% taking initiatives on the issues and 27 % sustaining initiatives on the issues.

**Development of a credible independent national entity**

STAR-Ghana Foundation was registered and launched in November 2018 as a credible independent national entity. Robust governance structures are in place and functioning, including six sub-committees of the Governing Council (GC) which oversaw the launch of the Elections Call. Policies and procedures have been put in place including on corruption and fraud, financial management, safeguarding, risk management. By the end of the year under review, PMT staff had been seconded to the Foundation and an HR consultant engaged to support design of staff organogram and salary structure had submitted report to the GC for consideration. Two out of the three core staff of the Foundation have been recruited while the finalisation of the human resource (HR) manual is at an advanced stage. A framework to guide the relationships between the Foundation, DFID and Christian Aid has also been agreed. A transition plan has been developed to enable the smooth transition of the programme into a foundation.

**Explain major changes to the logframe in the past year**

The logframe has gone through various iterations, ranging from providing definitions to the logframe terminologies, increasing milestone targets. In accordance with the recommendations of the last annual review, the programme logframe and GP reporting templates have been revised with a view to provide better clarity to the logframe and linking partners' work directly to the outputs and outcome of the programme.

**Describe any planned changes to the logframe as a result of this review**

No further changes to the logframe are foreseen under the programme as implemented by CA. However, the logframe will need to be updated, or even a new one developed, as part of the signing of the accountable grant with the Foundation, taking into account the Foundation's strategic proposal to DFID.

## D: VALUE FOR MONEY

### Assess VfM compared to the proposition in the Business Case, based on the past year

The VfM strategy for the programme was revised in the course of the year to provide a clearer assessment of performance. It was approved by the GC's Programme Quality and the Gender and Social Inclusion Committees. The delivery of the strategy has been assessed (as below) both at the programme level and through the annual stakeholder perception survey. Key programme cost drivers however remain the same as those identified in the Business Case: management fees/expenses for the CA-led consortium, the Programme Management Team (PMT) in-country, grants to CSOs/Partners, and overhead costs associated with programme administration and grant making.

The main recommendations from last year's annual review were:

- Disaggregate financial data to enable assessment of efficiency of some milestones (e.g. SMS Platform and Convenings).
- Conduct VFM assessment of SMS Platform to determine its efficiency.

On the first recommendation, the VfM Strategy has been revised to enable the programme and partners better engage with it in a meaningful way, providing a clearer assessment of performance. On the latter, the programme reviewed the tool through a learning event on the use of mobile technology bringing together programme partners, state actors with experiences in social accountability processes and CSOs implementing projects using mobile telephony for social accountability. It also reviewed the implementation of the SMS platform, led by On Our Radar (OOR), the consortium partner leading on this workstream.

The experiences, lessons and recommendations from these two activities have informed the revision of the SMS platform to make it a more effective tool to:

- Expand the scope of participation of citizens by means of a short code to enhance effectiveness of the platform.
- Support prospective GPs to utilize the platform under the forth-coming Election Call. The platform has proven to be used more widely under the Elections and Anti-corruption calls.
- Explore the possibility of integrating audio-visual technology into the technology to make it a more inclusive tool, particularly for non-literate citizens, improve on efficiency and effectiveness through the submission of audio-visual evidence.
- Train PMT to localise the technical maintenance of the platform.
- Facilitate a smooth handover of the technology from OOR to a local developer.

#### Recommendations:

- Establish a clearer benchmarking of VfM indicators for the final year of the programme, to be measured against programme costs which should be updated in the VfM strategy as well by **March 2020**.

### Explain whether and why the programme should continue from a VfM perspective, based on its own merits and in the context of the wider portfolio

Despite the slow implementation experienced on mainly the parliamentary workstream (due to the tight schedule of the Parliamentary calendar and competing demands on Parliamentarians), progress in delivering the outputs of the logframe has been sturdy and commensurate with the costs incurred. Grant partners are engaging with citizens and influencing public officials to act on issues raised. Therefore, the progress made towards the achievement of the outcome while meeting indicators for efficiency and economy demonstrate that STAR Ghana is achieving value for money. This has been managed regardless of the need for the PMT to focus much of their time on the establishment of the STAR Ghana Foundation. The 4Es are detailed in the Table below:

<b>Economy:</b> getting the best value inputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Spend closely managed to ensure it stayed within budget and complied with STAR Ghana's rules and procedures, i.e.,</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- service contracts including procurement of HR consultants, call evaluations, and purchase of accounting and grant management software were subjected to competitive tendering to ensure competitive rates within programme budget.</li> <li>- consultants were effectively engaged and only when service adds value.</li> <li>- travel and subsistence followed STAR Ghana rules on rates.</li> <li>- utilisation of Christian Aid's framework contract to secure corporate charity rates with hotels and airlines.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the management cost recorded for the year is 20% of the total cost while the management cost as a percentage of intervention/delivery cost is 33%. These compare reasonably/fairly with best practice and are expected to reduce in the last year of the programme as some staff contract will be coming to an end by May 2020. Also, there was savings of GHS 33,491 (49% less) resulting from holding APNAC meeting in Accra (GHS 34,104) as against a similar APNAC meeting for the same number of participants outside of Accra (GHS 67,595), which participant preferred.</p>
<b>Efficiency:</b> maximising outputs for a given level of inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>% of overall programme burn rate:</b> focus is on minimising slippage in order to keep costs down and maximise outputs. There has been a marked improvement in burn rates – overall programme spend is at 76% compared to 48% last year. For the year under review, the programme earmarked GBP 6.1 million and spent GBP 5.4 million which represents 89% of the annual budget. The overall burn rate as at September 2019 is however 76% compared to 80% programme implementation. This is equivalent to GBP 16.1 million of spend out of a total budget of GBP 21.1 million. With all programme activities (with exception of the Foundation's Election Call) due to close by May 2020, there is the risk of high overall programme underspend.</li> <li>▪ <b>% of Grant Partners where burn rate and delivery of outputs is on track against milestones.</b> 84% of partners (75 out of 89 partners) have achieved a burn rate of 75% or better. This is commensurate with the partner project progress, as all calls are to end by the close of first quarter of 2020.</li> </ul> <p>Cost per direct beneficiary reached through Anti corruption (45,028 beneficiaries), Local Governance (22,748 beneficiaries), GESI (26,428) and Strategic Opportunity (12,554) Calls are GHS215, GHS 344, GHS 396 and GHS 263 respectively but these would be better analysed if benchmarked against similar programmes. Benchmark data to do this analysis is currently unavailble but STAR Ghana is encouraged to consider searching and establishing some clear benchmarks for the final year of the programme to enable useful interpretation and appreciation of the programme's efficiency.</p>
<b>Effectiveness:</b> ensuring outputs deliver the desired outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>The % of stakeholders reporting evidence of consequent influence:</b> 86% of respondents from the annual perception survey are of the opinion that the engagement of stakeholders has been 'very high' or 'fairly high'. The programme contributed to changes to or progress on 18 policies and practices (9 at national level and 9 at local level) against a target of 15 for the year under review. STAR Ghana and its partners have also meaningfully engaged state and non-state duty bearers such as the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies at varying levels on effective healthcare and education service delivery and the provision of infrastructure. 35% of the duty bearers engaged on salient issues are aware and interested, 45% are taking initiatives, and 10% sustaining initiatives- representing 5%, 12% and 3% increase from last year respectively.</li> <li>▪ As a result of such initiatives, 97% (compared to 92% last year) of respondents of the 2019 annual perception survey perceived that citizens were satisfied STAR Ghana and partner's engagement had influenced public officials to act.</li> </ul>

<b>Equity:</b> ensuring benefits are distributed fairly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>% of stakeholders reporting that GESI issues are being addressed:</b> 78% of respondents to the 2019 annual perception survey revealed that the extent to which marginalised or vulnerable citizens have been able to voice their issues over the past 12 months has been ‘very high’ or ‘fairly high’. The results indicate a slight increase of 5.7 percentage points between 2018 and 2019.</li> <li>▪ <b>% of partners achieving GESI markers and safeguarding policies:</b> 97% of partners (87 out of 89) have developed a comprehensive safeguarding policy and code of conduct and are implementing the policy to address GESI issues. Progress on GESI markers are evaluated annually in December hence this evaluation will be streamlined to fall in line with the Annual Review timeline to make available data for analysis in the final year.</li> </ul> <p>Cost per direct female beneficiary (53,956) is GHS 428 and is 51% of total direct beneficiaries reached which is favourable and indicates the programmes efforts in targeting females. However, this also will be useful to compare with some benchmark hence the need for STAR Ghana to have a clear benchmark for the final year of the programme.</p>
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## E: RISK

The overall risk remains **major** with almost all the Business Case risks still relevant, although the mitigation strategies in place have minimised their impact on programme implementation. A detailed programme risk register which serves as a monitoring tool is used to track all six risks categories (context, delivery, operational, safeguarding, fiduciary and reputational). All risks were monitored at the programme and partner level (Call Risk Registers) with a new risk register being developed for the STAR Ghana Foundation. The period under review has recorded gradual reduction in risk levels from major to moderate for some internal risks, such as around successful transitions in leadership and clarity in roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.

However, contextual changes have meant that external risks remain at a major level. This includes the risk of rapid changes in the political and security context in Ghana. For instance, the violence against journalists and freedom of speech (the closing down of six pro-minority radio stations) in the light of the passage of the RTI Bill was a worrying paradox. Concerns around risks relating to electoral violence and vigilantism around the DA Elections and upcoming 2020 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections still hold. The programme foresees that in the build-up towards Elections 2020, these risks will have to be closely monitored through its planned Elections Call. Also, the emergence of a draft NGO Regulatory Bill likely to be passed latest by December 2020 may also reduce the space available for CSO involvement in advocacy. The Programme will work with IDEG as host of the Interim Working Group set up in July 2017 to agree on civil society involvement in the review of the draft Bill.

In respect of the specific Call Risk Registers:

- Under the Parliament Call, the key risks identified around funds management are being mitigated through the set-up of a dedicated three-person team within the PMT to support this work.
- On anti-corruption, the programme brought together a range of stakeholders including STAAC, ARAP, GOGIG for a learning event that enabled useful lesson learning.
- The Local Government Call is closely monitoring the progress towards the planned referendum for the election of MMDCEs as well as the District level elections scheduled for December 2019.
- The GESI Call continues to build strong linkages with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection as evidenced in the collaboration for IWD Celebrations. The strategic collaboration with the National Youth Authority and the Ministry of Inner Cities and Zongo Development ensures that the programme is influencing policies affecting identified social groups.

The Governing Council is currently working with the PMT and Humentum in the development of a Risk Register for the Foundation. It incorporates the risks identified under the Elections Call. It was presented at the GC meeting in November 2019 for discussion and approval. The most significant risks identified in

the draft document include CSOs in Ghana seeing the Foundation as a competitor, the Government seeing it as adversarial, its failure to pass the DFID DDA, and fundraising opportunities. It is anticipated that following mitigation there will be no risks rated above major.

In terms of fiduciary risk, STAR Ghana needs to intensify monitoring of high risks partners with financial issues highlighted from the DDAs/expenditure verifications. In doing so, the programme recognises efforts of Grant Partners with low risk profiles and advances funds to them on a 6-monthly basis instead of the standard quarterly disbursement. This allows PMT more time to support partners with weak systems but also rewards high performers and encourages other low performing partners to improve.

## F: DELIVERY, COMMERCIAL & FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The programme is in its fourth year of implementation and the service provider has worked collaboratively with DFID and its GPs to ensure effective programme delivery. The quality of programme delivery has been acceptable with a few issues (contractual, invoicing, parliamentary component underspend, other financial processes, etc.) as would be expected on a programme managing 89 GPs. To mitigate issues, DFID agreed a simpler invoice submission process to reduce the turnaround time with invoice preparation and review, and to allow annual audits to do the in-depth review. Narrative and financial reports were usually submitted by agreed timelines and at an acceptable standard. The service provider continues to maintain good working relationship with consortium partners (CP) leading to a valuable contribution to the programme, especially in the set-up of the Foundation. However, lower burn rates than expected at the CP level was recorded largely due to deferral of some activities.

At the end of year four, £16.1m out of the total contract sum of £21.1m has been expended. Overall expenditure translates to 76% of total budget and compares favourably to 80% of programme implementation. The Programme has seen progressive uptake in expenditure over the years. The current year spend of £5.4m (against the £6.1m earmarked for the period) represents 89% of the annual budget and a decent improvement from 82% achieved last year. Also, the year's forecast accuracy, which is the cumulative month by month forecasts to actuals, is coincidentally at 89% (variance of +/- 11%) and a percentage point lower than last year. Again, this year spend is 17% and 41% higher than year 3 and year 2 spend of £4.5m and £3.2m respectively. This can be mainly attributed to the 20% increase in budget realisation on direct grants to partners (£2.8m distributed this year against £2m distributed last year) and 10% increase in budget utilisation on grant support compared to last year. The remaining budget for the final year stands at £5m and is more than enough to cover required activities by the end of the programme. The challenge is that some budget lines are showing excess (e.g., office and equipment) while others have limited funds available to spend (e.g., communication and learning and capacity building). The highest budget/spend accuracy was realised on management fees (98%) and Governing Council (103%) lines. Hence the main cost drivers for the year have been these two areas, grants and grant support to partners, learning and capacity building, and payment by results (PBR). Slow burn rates on the other lines (details provided in the Figure below) are related to some delays in the set up on the Foundation systems but also savings in their procurement. Discussion is ongoing to resolve this by shifting some activities to be delivered under the incorporated new legal entity, Star Ghana Foundation, where the rules allow. However, looking at grant underspends in previous years, it may not resolve all budget constraints on specific budget lines. Thus, the programme is likely to end with more than 10% underspend. DFID has agreed with PMT to conduct a detailed analysis of the budget to know the actual underspend anticipated per budget lines to inform present and future decision on its use/management.

Budget & Forecast Performance						
GBP	Inception To Date Performance			Year's Budget & Forecast Performance (Year 4)		
	ITD		Oct 18-Sep19			
	5 Year Ammended Budget	ITD spend	% Spend	Total Year 4 Budget	Total Year 4 Spend	% Spend
Management Fee	4,701,329	3,767,126	80%	1,112,218	1,094,859	98%
Travel /Daily living	294,569	223,249	76%	76,487	69,700	91%
Equipment	341,025	191,307	56%	58,038	40,162	69%
Office	1,113,070	670,423	60%	299,662	163,036	54%
Professional fees/ others	118,564	44,972	38%	40,089	30,803	77%
<b>Sub total -Mgmt Fees &amp; Expenses</b>	<b>6,568,557</b>	<b>4,897,077</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>1,586,493</b>	<b>1,398,560</b>	<b>88%</b>
Deduction for PBR	-	584,814	(584,818)	100%	-	-
PBR		584,814	557,244	95%	101,912	94,342
<b>Total -Mgmt Fees &amp; Expenses</b>	<b>6,568,557</b>	<b>4,869,503</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>1,688,405</b>	<b>1,492,902</b>	<b>88%</b>
Grant & Programme Expenses						
Grant -Direct to Partners	10,210,983	7,555,894	74%	3,078,133	2,776,201	90%
Support to Grant making process	1,922,641	1,664,775	87%	632,551	521,405	82%
<b>Sub -Grants &amp; other related costs</b>	<b>12,133,624</b>	<b>9,220,669</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>3,710,684</b>	<b>3,297,606</b>	<b>89%</b>
Communication	132,370	121,578	92%	77,010	62,448	81%
Learning, capacity building	814,825	805,466	99%	299,994	278,261	93%
Governing Council	294,400	259,920	88%	75,975	78,119	103%
Technical advisors	1,194,595	811,970	68%	250,935	207,554	83%
<b>Total Grant &amp; Programme Expenses</b>	<b>14,569,814</b>	<b>11,219,603</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>4,414,597</b>	<b>3,923,987</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21,138,371</b>	<b>16,089,106</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>6,103,002</b>	<b>5,416,889</b>	<b>89%</b>

In terms of commercial performance, the major activities that took place were contract amendment (No.5) and Independent Review (IR) of the STAR Ghana programme covering the first and current phases. The amendment No. 5 related to a reduction of £2m (from £23,138,370 to £21,138,370) to the overall contract value; updates to the ToR to reflect current activity, scope and the transition plan for the final two years of the programme; virement of funds across budget lines within existing budget with no effect on contract value; alignment of remaining PbR milestones to revised activity and scope; inclusion of new positions and a change in named personnel; and a revision to the Special Conditions of Contract to reflect the transfer from the Steering Committee to the STAR Ghana Foundation. Irrespective of some challenges with the amendment (e.g., responding to queries from PCD on issues like retrospective approvals), DFID Ghana responded accordingly liaising with Christian Aid where necessary. The contract was finally signed on August 01, 2019 after a year of correspondences between PCD, DFID Ghana and Christian Aid (service provider).

On the IR, the objective was to independently review STAR-Ghana's contribution to the emergence of a well-informed and active Ghanaian citizenry and to generate key messages that would strengthen articulation of STAR Ghana Foundation's potential to sustain accountability and social inclusion gains and support Civil Societies efforts at promoting transformational change. The procurement was a call down contract through the DFID Expert Advisory Call Down Service (EACDS) framework agreement with Oxford Policy Management (OPM) as lead supplier, working with a national and an international consultant. Although the final deliverables (Independent Review Report and STAR-Ghana Foundation Strategic

Messaging Paper) were improved following some reviews, the quality of the Independent Review Report could have captured deeper analysis if consultants had spent enough time on the literature review and worked collaboratively. It was discovered that issues of supplier leadership and communication existed between consultants under the HEART/OPM sub-framework, creating risk to delivery. DFID framework management and OPM are working to agree a clearer approach on working with consultants to deliver better results to ensure better VfM.

All assets procured under the programme are recorded in an asset register maintained by DFID and the STAR Ghana team. The assets register is updated regularly (where practicable) and submitted as an annex to quarterly, bi-annual and annual reports. A comprehensive assets verification exercise which was conducted by DFID in February 2019 revealed that all assets were in either 'good' or 'fairly good' condition. No major issues were raised. The recommendations highlighted from the asset verification exercise, including branding non-branded assets, have been actioned. The next assets verification exercise is expected to happen in February 2020.

The 2018/19 financial year programme audit was commissioned by DFID and conducted by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC). The audit was completed in October 2019 and covered the period April 2018-March 2019, reviewing financial transactions across 98 grant partners and at the PMT level. This audit acknowledged that there have been an improvement in particularly grant partners' financial performance, but questioned costs related mainly to ineligible and unsupported expenditures, and issues of non-compliance with tax laws and procurement processes. Key findings and recommendations have been extracted into an audit implementation plan which will be used as a monitoring tool to track progress on addressing the issues. PMT followed up with partners and as at November 2019 has implemented 55% of audit recommendations. PMT should continue rigorous monitoring working with partners to apply best practice to ensure that compliance is sustained and embedded throughout partner project life. DFID will equally monitor progress for both PMT and grantees.

Date of last narrative financial report(s)	16/11/2019
Date of last audited annual statement (s)	18/10/2019

## G: MONITORING, EVIDENCE & LEARNING

### Monitoring

The team led by the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team members and including programmes, finance and grants staff, monitor programme progress/results using the logframe, M&E framework and financial templates. It has enhanced its monitoring, evidence and learning over the past year. Three monitoring visits (both onsite and off-site) were made to the 89 grant partners across parliamentary targets, strategic opportunity, anti-Corruption, GESI, and local governance calls. The team adopted a risk-based monitoring approach which classified projects as either low, medium or high risk in order to manage the large number of projects effectively and efficiently on quarterly basis. Partners with consistent high/medium risk are monitored comparatively more thoroughly. In these monitoring visits, the team assesses progress of GPs' implementation against set deliverables, the robustness of partners' systems and help partners document project's achievements and change stories. Debrief sessions held after each visit enable both M&E team and the partner team to discuss findings, recommendations and harvest key lessons. These lessons usually inform partner capacity building needs. The team also engaged selected GPs (six) in a PEA-integrated monitoring with support from ODI, a consortium member, to better think through the interest, incentives and ideas that help shape the behaviour of the stakeholders engaged. As a result, GPs have been able to map out various stakeholders with varying power (to influence) and have formulated diverse strategies.

The team has delivered several online webinars to complement the on-site visits to GPs. The team facilitated sessions across calls to address issues identified in the compilation of project reports and other pending M&E related issues that needed immediate attention. There was an outcome harvesting workshop

to trace partner's contribution to the project successes and how it also contributed to the programme's approach and objectives. Through these supports, partners improved their report-writing (such as better analysis of project performance towards milestones, attachment of required supporting documentation of successes and a clear indication of adoption of lessons learnt).

During the year under review, the programme has submitted two quarterly progress reports, a nine-month progress report and an annual report demonstrating progress towards outputs. DFID Ghana held three quarterly programme update meetings (fourth planned for 17 December 2019) following submission and review of narrative and financial reports to inform useful discussions with the STAR-Ghana team on programme performance and wider issues. There has also been ad-hoc meetings (face-to-face) between DFID and STAR-Ghana/CA (Programme Director and Head of Service Contract) including frequent exchanges (emails and telephone). In accordance with the agreed governance arrangements for the programme, there have been separate quarterly meetings with the Governing Council (GC) and the Funders Committee (FC). DFID also participated in some of the programme monitoring visits with the STAR Ghana team to ensure a more holistic approach to supporting partners and reduce partners' time in hosting such visits.

In terms of evaluations, the programme supported four external evaluations: the EU ARAP Mid-term Evaluation, DFID ICAI Country Portfolio Review, DFID Independent Review and Small Grant Project Evaluation. The evaluation of the small grant projects for the anti-corruption and local governance calls which ended in September and August 2019 respectively, is the programme-led review and was necessary to ascertain results and potential upscale or consolidation.

This Annual Review process was conducted by two Advisers (Governance Adviser and Social Development Adviser) and a Programme Officer from DFID Ghana. The team conducted the review in four stages: (i) desk review of key documents including the Independent Review report, STAR Ghana Strategic Messaging Paper, previous Annual Review reports, 2019 Annual Report, Business Case, current contract and Transition Plan, Logframe, Audit reports, and STAR Ghana self-assessment of progress report, (ii) annual review meetings in Accra (with EU, STAR Ghana PMT, CA, Consortium Members, Parliamentary Targets, GC and GPs like SEND Ghana, TV3, Penplusbytes and Chamber of Pharmacy), (iii) annual review field visits to Sunyani (interact with staff and beneficiaries of SMAID<sup>3</sup> and GSPD<sup>4</sup>) and Kumasi (interact with staff and beneficiaries of CEDEP<sup>5</sup>), and (iv) annual review write-up by review team including validation of information with the STAR Ghana team and GC.

## Evidence

Evidence produced during the year includes piloting of two approaches (i.e., PEA and Outcome Harvesting) and the Independent Review. The two approaches have supported partners to provide required evidence in the form of stakeholder mapping and contributions to policies and practices influenced by the programme. The Independent Review identified STAR Ghana as having a distinctive track record that positions it as (a) an honest broker of relationships among actors within civil society, with the media and the government, (b) a unique approach to supporting civil society within the ecosystem through the 3Cs and L at a big scale, which is clearly not a niche for other organisations, and (c) a capable grant making body.

The STAR Ghana programme has also set up a performance tracker to monitor and assess salient indicators (i.e., convenings, duty bearer responsiveness, milestone performance and beneficiary reached amongst others). The beneficiary reach tracker is disaggregated by sex, disability and age. In addition, the logframe tracker updated quarterly provides evidence of programme results. An annual stakeholder perception survey is undertaken to further provide feedback on programme performance which also helps in updating the logframe. Partners are provided with activity report templates and trackers that can collate first-hand information from beneficiaries, authenticated during onsite visits.

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<sup>3</sup> Sustainable Mission Aid

<sup>4</sup> Ghana Society of the Physically Disabled

<sup>5</sup> Centre for the Development of People

## **Learning**

The Communities of Practice and Learning (CoPL), a cluster-based approach to learning, provides a major platform for knowledge sharing/learning among GPs and other stakeholders. It is focused on bringing together GPs working on similar issues into a cluster to learn and share good practices on an ongoing basis, and where relevant, undertake joint advocacy initiatives.

Primarily the programme team captured and shared learning through learning events. Over the year, four main learning events have taken place and includes:

- The Strategic Learning Event (SLE): a high-level, multi-stakeholder annual forum that brought together all STAR-Ghana stakeholders for strategic reflection, application of lessons and future planning.
- The use of new media to promote social accountability: SMS voices learning event explored the use of mobile technologies in social accountability projects. Good practices and lessons were highlighted which could enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of STAR-Ghana's SMS Voices Platform. These included adoption of diversified platforms for inclusion and complementarity aimed at effectiveness of technology platforms.
- Civil society and the fight against corruption: lessons learned to date: an anti-corruption learning event jointly planned and organised with two 'sister' programmes, i.e., the DFID-funded Strengthening Action Against Corruption (STAAC) programme and the EU-funded Accountability, Rule of Law and Anti-corruption (ARAP) programme. Participants recognised that strides have been made in fighting corruption, including the setting up of the Office of the Special Prosecutor, the work of the Auditor General and stronger oversight by Parliament on contracts and procurement.
- Local Governance Learning Event: brought together STAR-Ghana's local governance Call GPs, relevant state actors and other stakeholders to reflect on the implementation of the Call and developments within the external context likely to affect the achievement of Call objectives. Key issues highlighted included lack of clarity among practitioners on the status and timelines for the Referendum for the elections of MMDCEs and subsequent election of MMDCEs.

Additionally, key learnings over the year include the understanding that addressing systemic changes in society, be it cultural, economic or political, is a complex process that requires investment of resources beyond short-term interventions and connecting actors within identified spaces to create synergies for joined up work. However, the process of relationship-building and negotiating alliances must be carefully navigated. Also, advocacy actions require sustained long-term engagements and within that, there should be space for an iterative process that enables flexibility to accommodate change such as in the campaign for the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill. There should be a consolidation of learning and a focus on the unique selling points highlighted by the Independent Review in the next and final year of the programme while the STAR Ghana Foundation (as it moves towards full autonomy) continues to build its profile and capability.

This year, the programme documented these learnings in the form of brochures, flyers, FAQs and reports. The programme should continue to capture and share learning in the coming year through its traditional learning events and bespoke communication materials.

## **Progress on recommendations from previous reviews**

Progress has been made on all the recommendations from the 2018 annual review detailed in Annex B (with most completed) except the one on limiting the term of STAR Ghana Foundation Subscribers to strengthen the credibility of the Foundation. This was meant to be proposed to the Subscribers through the GC at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM) but has not yet happened. Once discussion takes place, the 2018 annual review recommendation tracker will be updated accordingly. The key actions/progress recorded are:

- The logframe to be revised to capture the qualitative aspects of the results particularly for outputs 1 and 2, where numerical indicators do not effectively measure what progress has been made.

This will require either splitting up the qualitative and quantitative indicators or putting a weighting on each of them. Moreover, with the Foundation duly launched, employing additional indicators will help to track progress towards ensuring its sustainability.

Progress: The logframe has been revised to take account of the annual review recommendations and learning from programme implementation.

- STAR Ghana to balance the need to take on topical issues ensuring it does not spread the convenings too thinly and lose strategic impact. The convening, catalysing and coordinating role should be used to open spaces for civil society to influence policy actions on issues of key strategic importance. This may mean focusing on a smaller number of key issues and holding numerous events around them across a variety of stakeholders rather than multiple one-offs. A review of STAR-Ghana's performance on the 3Cs role would be useful to document key strategies that worked or did not work, as well as its impact to inform the scope and approach for future events. Following this, STAR-Ghana should set out criteria for selecting issues to convene on and revise the logframe indicators to reflect the changes.

Progress: The 3C&L strategy has been revised and approved by the Governing Council and DFID. The Strategy includes criteria for selection of convening issues, more effectively linking the convening to larger programme and Foundation's work, clarification of roles and responsibilities of STAR Ghana GPs and other Stakeholders.

- It was recommended that for the Foundation to attract funding and sustain CSOs buy-in, it must be able to demonstrate its Unique Selling Points (USP) and its ability to deliver transformational change. This will require the PMT to better articulate the programme's strengths and weaknesses; and to harvest outcome level results and aggregate them to show impact. This will allow the Foundation to be clear about its offer and bring in new streams of funding including philanthropy. To achieve this, the entity would benefit from an independent review of STAR-Ghana's impact to date. This would provide useful information to shape the strategic thinking on what the entity should focus on and provide evidence of change to strengthen strategic communication, including to donors.

Progress: DFID commissioned an Independent Review of the STAR Ghana programme. The final Independent Review Report and a Strategic Messaging Paper has been produced and shared with STAR Ghana and includes details of USP.

- DFID and CA to work together to amend contract to make clearer how CA will support the Foundation build its capacity over the next two years. This should include clear benchmarking of progress towards handing over to the Foundation and building its capacity to deliver. Key areas to prioritise include strategic planning, building fundraising and fund management capacity, setting up operational and financial management systems, recruiting competent staff and supporting the foundation to earn grant-making experience.

Progress: DFID in agreement re-aligned the PBR indicators to focus on key areas such as fundraising, setting up of the Foundation's structure, rolling out of the Foundation's first grant Call and the Foundation's readiness for the DDA. In addition, six benchmarks under output 4 were weighted and reflected in the revised logframe. These are GC set up- 15%, Staff in place - 15%, Funding - 30%, Structure - 15%, Governance- 15% and Road map - 10%

- Conduct VFM assessment of SMS Platform to determine its efficiency.

Progress: Two reviews have been conducted to ascertain the efficiency of the SMS platform. The first review involved a learning event on the use of mobile technology, bringing together programme partners, state actors with experiences in social accountability processes and CSOs implementing projects using mobile telephony. The second review involved a review led by On Our Radar. The lessons and recommendations from these two reviews will be used to revise the SMS platform to

make it a more effective tool. Currently, the team has developed a concept note to include all these experiences, lessons and recommendations to inform subsequent calls.