



# **2008 ANNUAL REPORT**

A report of the activities of ABANTU-ROWA  
January - December 2008.

# Executive Summary

This report provides information about the programmes implemented during the 2008 calendar year by ABANTU for Development, Regional Office for Western Africa (ROWA) located in Accra, Ghana.

ABANTU remained on the cutting edge of gender and policy advocacy work in areas such as governance, conflict, HIV/AIDS and women's rights generally. Through its training and capacity building initiatives, its strong commitment to networking and coalition building, the quality research, publication and information and the continuing effort towards institutional building and strengthening, ABANTU's relevance in the sub-region has grown and benefited women from grassroots to international levels. It has also succeeded in influencing critical policy issues from a gender perspective.

The year 2008 was particularly relevant for the organisation as it provided leadership for the women's movement through our participation in international conferences such as UNCTAD, Aid Effectiveness High Level Forum 3 and Aid Effectiveness Civil Society Parallel Forum among other high level meeting. ABANTU's relevance in the gender and governance space was heightened through the election campaign embarked upon by ABANTU and the Women's Manifesto Coalition in enhancing women's participation and representation in the 2008 Ghanaian General Elections. Again our engagement with the media and representation on the IEA Presidential Debate Committee ensured that gender and women's rights concerns were present in the election campaigns.

The report chronicles specific activities that have been implemented under each of the four functional areas. Achievements, lessons learnt and gaps identified in our work have also been noted. Also the report provides an outline of ABANTU's strategic plan for 2009-2011.

On the whole, ABANTU is pleased with its output for the year 2008. The deepening of democratic governance in the sub-region and more specifically the outcome of the 2008 Ghanaian general elections have created new entry points which we would utilize to enhance our engagement with policy makers from a gender justice and women's rights perspective.



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# Abbreviations

ABANTU	ABANTU for Development
AE	Aid Effectiveness
AGE	Advocates for Gender Equity
APAN	Advocacy, Public Awareness and Networking
AWDF	African Women Development Fund
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEDEP	Centre for the Development of People
CENSUDI	Centre for Sustainable Development Initiative
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPP	Convention's People's Party
CSO	Civil Society organization
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DFP	Democratic Freedom Party
DPP	Democratic People's Party
GAWU	Ghana Agricultural Worker's Union
GIRD	Global Initiative for Rights and Development
GTUC	Ghana Trades Union Congress
HLF	High Level Forum
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
IDEG	Institute of Democratic Governance
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs
ISODEC	Integrated Social Development Initiative
KMA	Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NETRIGHT	Network for Women's Rights in Ghana
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PNC	People's National Convention
PRIDE	Programme for Rural Integrated Development
RPD	Reform Patriotic Democrat
RPI	Research, Publication and Information
RPM	Regional Programme Manager
TCB	Training and Capacity Building

UNCTAD	United Nations Commission for Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WASCI	West Africa Civil Society Initiative
WEDO	Women, Environment and Development Organisation
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa
WISE	Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment, Accra
WMC	Women's Manifesto Coalition

# About ABANTU

**A**BANTU for Development is an African sub-regional NGO with an objective of increasing the participation of women in decision-making at all levels of public life, to influence policies from a gender perspective and to address inequalities and injustices in social relationships. ABANTU believes that gender disparity is an injustice, which contributes to poverty and ignorance and thereby impairs development. ABANTU works in collaboration with other NGOs, civil society organisations, women's groups, regional agencies and governments within the West Africa sub-region in order to have the desired impact in the promotion of gender equality. Thus, ABANTU has a vision of a world in which empowered women and men work together to address gender inequalities and promote a transformational leadership and development for a just society.

ABANTU, through partnership with strategically placed NGOs in Ghana and around the sub-region designs programmes to address critical issues of governance, poverty, conflict and ICTs. ABANTU's programmes are implemented through these functional areas:

- Training and Capacity Building
- Advocacy, Public Awareness and Networking
- Research, Publications and Information and
- Institutional Development of ABANTU.

The organisation also hosts the Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, a coalition of NGOs and civil society organisations working collaboratively to promote the acceptance and use of the Manifesto by NGOs themselves, the government and its Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) political parties and constitutional law enforcement agencies.

# SECTION ONE

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2008

### 1.0 Introduction:

This report provides information about activities outlined for implementation in ABANTU's Strategic Plan and Annual Workplan for the calendar year 2008. The report is divided into five sections which highlights the following:

- Goals and the specific activities outlined for implementation in the 2008 workplan
- Successes chalked and impacts made
- Discussion on setbacks or gaps encountered in programme implementation
- Outline of 2009 activities
- Concluding remarks

### 1.1 Goal and Objectives Outlined For 2008

As is usual with the practice in ABANTU for Development, a Board of Directors' meeting was held at the end of December 2007 to review issues pertaining to the organisation's programmes, institutional strengthening and extent of realisation of its mandate. As the highest decision-making body of ABANTU, the Board saw the year 2008 as very strategic for ABANTU for two key reasons:

The first being that 2008 would be an election year and also that the year marked the end of the organisation's strategic plan of 2006-2008.

The board therefore decided that it was important for ABANTU to set the goal of finishing up the remaining activities outlined in the strategic plan while taking advantage of the electioneering environment to actively advance its mandate. This will serve as a way of utilising the lessons learnt for the development of the next 3 year strategic plan January 2009-2011. These strategic decisions of the Board were factored into the end of year review programme of ABANTU which was held from December 19-20, 2007. This is a platform where staff have a chance to contribute to a process of reviewing and assessing the performance of the organisation in the previous year and plan for the coming year. It is actually a culmination of all performance review processes undertaken during the year which borders around programme issues, staff development and institutional strengthening. During the review and planning meeting, the Regional Programme Manager (RPM) also had the opportunity to share the decisions of the Board with staff members in order to create a common understanding about the direction of the

organisation. There was therefore agreement about the need to complete the strategic plan and also take advantage of the election year to deepen work around ABANTU's mandate and goal of effective responsiveness to gender equality issues.

Thus in the workplan of January - December 2008, the goal of ABANTU was to implement actions that would enhance women's participation in Elections 2008. The completion of 2006-2008 strategic plan would also create opportunities for learning which would enable ABANTU evolve innovative ideas for the next strategic plan. An outline of the specific objectives for January-December 2008 as follows:

### **1.1.1 Training and Capacity-Building**

- To develop training and advocacy materials to support ABANTU's programmes on governance and peace building.
- To organise a number of sensitisation programmes targeting the media so they can support women's candidature in the 2008 elections.
- To organise an orientation programme for a new batch of Mentors for their active participation as monitors in Elections 2008.
- To continue supporting women in the refugee camp at Budumburam through strengthening their capacities around UN Resolution 1325.
- To organise a series of training programmes to strengthen the capacities of women aspirants in Elections 2008.
- To work collaboratively with networks and coalitions to sensitize voters and enhance women's representation in politics and decision-making
- To monitor the impact of programmes on target groups to serve as learning points for deepening ABANTU's work.

### **1.1.2 Advocacy, Public Awareness and Networking (APAN)**

Under our Advocacy, Public Awareness and Networking Programme, the following objectives were set:

- To organise consultation meetings on conflict and militarisation in the West-Africa Sub-region.
- To work collaboratively with international NGOs on advocacy issues of gender and governance within the context of Ghana's Elections 2008.
- To work collaboratively with existing networks and coalitions to strengthen advocacy Work around ABANTU's thematic areas such as governance and peace-building.

- To recruit one staff to coordinate all ABANTU's programmes on Advocacy, Public Awareness and Networking (APAN).
- To continue with the implementation of ABANTU's youth advocacy programme through the Schools Outreach Programme (SOP) and the Mentoring Programme for Young Women (MEP).
- Initiate processes towards the production of a policy paper on affirmative action that serves as a basis for engaging with different actors to draw in their views and perspectives.
- Participate actively in networks and coalitions meetings on a regular basis and support them with the needed resources.

### **1.1.3 Publications, Research and Information (PRI)**

The objectives under this functional area during the period were twofold:

- To ensure that existing initiatives around research, publication and information were consolidated and developed into specific products for use by the organisation and the wider public.
- To develop new research, publication and information materials to add on to existing ones.

### **1.1.4 Institutional Development of ABANTU (IDA)**

During the period January - June 2008, the objectives under the IDA programme were to consolidate ABANTU's achievements as a strong gender and policy advocacy organisation. This was similar to other functional areas in terms of how we continue with existing initiatives while exploring other new opportunities for institutional strengthening.

To a large extent these objectives set for the period have been achieved as outlined by the activities carried out during the period.

## SECTION TWO

### PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

#### 2.0 Introduction

This section of the report highlights the main activities implemented during the year under the governance, poverty, peace building and ICT themes. Being an election year, work around the governance theme dominated our programmes with the overall goal of enhancing women's participation and representation in the general elections.

#### 2.1. TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

ABANTU has succeeded in implementing activities towards achieving the objectives set under its 2008 training and capacity building programme. The implementation of activities has been facilitated through funds secured from the Global Fund for Women (GFW), the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), the Olof Palme International Centre, ActionAid Ghana and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Additional opportunities for implementing the programme have become possible through technical cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) and the Canadian Crossroads International (CCI). Specific training activities implemented during the year are as follows:

##### 2.1.1 Leadership Training for Women in Political Parties January - April 2008

During the period, the second modular course established through the collaborative relationship between Friedrich Ebert Foundation, ABANTU for Development and Women in Broadcasting (WIB) continued. The 7-month course started in October 2007 and was conducted one weekend within each month up to April, 2008. The specific topics covered during the period were:

Date	Topic	Resource Person
January 26-27, 2008	Presentation Skills	Allotey Pappoe
February 15-16, 2008	Women and the Economy	Osei-Wusu
March 15-16, 2008	Media Skills	Sarah-Akrofi-Quarcoo
April 26-27, 2008	Negotiation Skills	Gloria Ofori-Boadu

Earlier topics had been on the following:

- Fundamentals of the Democratic System.

- Gender and Development.
- Leadership Skills

A total of 15 women from all the seven political parties in Ghana benefited and an important outcome of the training was the formation of an inter-party caucus by the group to advocate on women's political participation. All sessions took place in the Conference Room of FES in Accra. A manual containing processes and presentations of the programme has been produced.

### 2.1.2 Training for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs), February 2008

An interesting relationship that has developed out of ABANTU's technical cooperation with the Canadian Crossroads International (CCI) is the Collaboration with the West African Aids Foundation (WAAF). This organisation provides services for People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHAs) and during the period, it became necessary to organise sensitization programmes with the patients, majority being women. Two sessions were organised on the theme: "Living with HIV/AIDs and its Associated Social Stigma", On February 5, 2008 and February 15, 2008. The sessions revealed the extent of trauma experienced by the PLWHAs through negative attitudes of family members, ladies/landlords and the society in general. While they are living meaningful lives through access to treatment at WAAF, their continued rejection by their significant others affect their confidence and well-being. The sensitization workshops therefore offered them an opportunity to express themselves and to learn about legal provisions that supported their rights in society. It was decided to follow up with this initiative towards the second half of the year. The programme took place in the offices of WAAF through the initiative of ABANTU's Research, Publications and Information (PRI) Officer.

### 2.1.3 Inception Workshop on Elections 2008, March 25, 2008

As a major player within the gender and governance space in Ghana, ABANTU positioned itself to play an active role in the 2008 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections. As part of the preparatory processes, an inception workshop on the theme, "**Preparations towards Enhancing Women's Participation in Politics in Elections 2008**" was held on March 25, 2008 at Hotel Adodo, Accra. A total of twelve organisations represented by 18 individuals participated in the programme. A review of the key issues for 2008 national elections was examined. These included the nature of women's participation, strategies for enhancing

women's voice, issues and challenges, electoral effectiveness and the need for peace. The aim was to examine the gains, losses and gaps in ABANTU's advocacy work on women's political participation. The review ensured that we had the relevant proposals for greater effectiveness in our approaches. A report of the meeting has been produced to serve as background material for follow-up actions.

#### **2.1.4 Follow-up Workshop on Elections 2008, 22nd August 2008**

As a follow-up to the Inception workshop on Elections 2008 held in March 2008, ABANTU convened a second workshop on Friday 22nd August 2008 at Ellking Hotel, Accra to consolidate the outcomes of the preparatory processes for the general elections. Twenty (20) participants representing thirteen organizations participated in the workshop.

The workshop created a platform for the partners to deepen their understanding of the earlier strategies outlined to enhance women's participation and representation in the 2008 general election. The election campaign specifically targeted women aspirants, the electorate, and the media. The timelines for the activities and the reporting guidelines were reviewed to reflect the commencement of the project. The selection of the various organisations for the project was guided by the institutional capacity, geographical location and previous experience in conducting such project.

#### **2.1.5 Consultative Workshop for Women Parliamentary Aspirants, 8th September 2008**

Promoting women aspirants was a key component of the 2008 election project. To ensure that the strategies developed for the 2008 elections were relevant and responsive to the needs of the parliamentary aspirants, a consultative workshop was organized for women aspirants on Monday 8th September 2008 at Crystal Palm Hotel in Accra.

Thirty Two (32) women aspirants drawn from five political parties attended the meeting. Hon. Agnes Chigabatia, then Member of Parliament for Builsa North and Deputy Upper East Regional Minister represented her colleagues in Parliament who were unable to be present due to other campaign engagements. In addition to the discussions on the support needed by the aspirants, the meeting also created a platform for the aspirants to share experience on the strategies that helped them win their party primaries. The meeting attracted a total of fifty-two (52) participants made up of the Women's Manifesto Coalition members, parliamentary aspirants and some campaign managers of the aspirants.

### **2.1.6 Observing the 2008 Elections**

Another election related activity carried out during the year was the observation of the electoral process and specifically the 7th December Presidential and Parliamentary Elections by ABANTU mentors. The exercise sought to provide the mentors with first hand experience on women's participation in the electoral process, to analyse the elections day event from a gender perspective and also contribute towards ensuring free, fair and violence-free elections

On Thursday 11th September 2008, twenty-seven (27) mentors and five (5) ABANTU staff were taken through an orientation on Observing Elections at the Institute of African Studies Chalets, University of Ghana, Legon. The orientation was facilitated by Mr Sulley Amadu, Director of Research at the Electoral Commission of Ghana. The participants were taken through these topics:

- The Ghanaian Electoral process
- Role of an Election Observer
- Indicators for successful elections
- Challenges of observing election 2008
- Gender issues in Election Observing

Having secured accreditation from the Electoral Commission of Ghana for all the twenty-seven Mentors and nine (9) ABANTU staff, a final orientation was held on Monday 1st December 2008 to discuss the logistical arrangements made by ABANTU and the deliverables expected from the mentors. Twenty-four (24) mentors were finally deployed to observe the election in thirteen constituencies covering four regions. ABANTU staff also participated as Election Observers. Using their accreditation, some of the Mentors on their own went ahead to observe the 28th December run-off election in their localities.

### **2.1.7 Capacity Building Workshops for Women Parliamentary Candidates October - November 2008**

A total of ten (10) capacity building workshops, one in each region were organized for women parliamentary candidates from all the seven political parties. Held under the theme "Strengthening the capacity of women parliamentary candidates in Election 2008", the 2-day capacity building workshops was attended by women parliamentary candidates, their campaign managers and district assemblywomen.

Professionals from the health, education, agriculture and water and sanitation sectors were also invited to enable them outline some of the critical issues in their sectors for the women candidates to incorporate them in their campaign messages. This strategy was adopted knowing that most of the challenges women face emanate from these sectors. It was also aimed at ensuring that women focused their campaigns around critical issues of concern to Ghanaian citizen as indeed has been captured within *The Women's Manifesto for Ghana*. The topics treated were carefully selected to equip the participants with knowledge and skills for their effective participation in electioneering process. The topics included:

1. The basis for promoting women participation in decision making”,
2. The Ghanaian electoral process,
3. Critical national issues to be addressed in campaign messages
4. Media relation and campaign strategies and
5. Lobbying and advocacy skills,

All the workshops were well patronized with an overall attendance of two hundred and sixty-three (263) participants. The publicity of the programme was enhanced through the print and electronic media (TV and radio). The Women's Manifesto Coalition was the main organisers of the workshop with ABANTU providing logistical support. The poor participation of incumbent parliamentarians in these programmes remains a gap to be addressed.

### **2.1.8 Sensitization Workshops for Media Personnel to Promote Women's Leadership**

Women's rights issues are increasingly gaining attention in the public space through variety of engagement with the media. ABANTU collaborated with Women, Media and Change (WOMEC) a member of the Women's Manifesto Coalition (WMC) to organize two media sensitization workshops for selected media personnel. The two day workshop held on the theme “**Strengthening the Capacity of Journalists for Election 2008**” brought together sixty (60) media practitioners (29 females and 31 males) from both private and public media houses throughout Ghana. The southern sector workshop took place at GNAT Hall, Accra on 23rd and 24th October 2008 whilst the Northern sector one was held at Mckeown Hotel, Kumasi on 30 and 31st October 2008. The workshops which aimed at sensitizing media personnel to promote women's leadership took the participants through topics such as: *Gender concepts and terminologies, Basis for promoting women's participation in governance, Barriers to women's participation in governance and the Role of the media in*

*promoting women's participation in governance.*

Mrs Joana Opare, a Gender and Development consultant, Ms Ruby Amable and Ms Charity Binka both Journalists and Media consultants were the resource persons. The participants expressed their appreciation for the programme and recommended that the sensitization programmes are carried out on continuous basis. They also indicated the need to include Programme heads, Directors and senior editors to ensure greater gender sensitivity within the media landscape.

### **2.1.9 Capacity-building for Actionaid Partners in the Northern Region:**

Absence of equality, a balanced social order and equal social well being of all, find expression in areas such as the unequal access to and control of resources, marginalisation of women as well as undemocratic cultural, social, economic and political practices. There are many global protocols, conventions and agreements as well as national laws to promote women as equal citizens towards the elimination of poverty.

Through ABANTU's collaboration with Actionaid Ghana, a two-day capacity building workshop on the theme “**Strengthening Advocacy for Women's Rights**” was organized for ten (10) members of **Songtaba**, a network of affiliates and partners of AAG from the Northern Sector. The workshop took place at the Institute of African Studies Chalets, University of Ghana, Legon on October 4-5, 2008. The group is expected to make use of the skills learnt at the workshop in their programmes as well as to transfer these skills to other members of their teams.

### **2.1.10 Workshops for District Assembly women**

Two (2) two-day capacity building workshops on: “Strengthening Advocacy for Good Governance and Gender Equality within District Assemblies” were organised during the year for Assemblywomen members:

a. A two-day capacity building workshop on the above theme was organised at Hotel Adodo, on November 25-26, 2008. A total of twenty-five (25) Assemblywomen from Western Region, Eastern, Region and Greater Accra Region participated in the workshop.

b. Another two-day capacity building workshop on the above theme for twenty-four (24) Assemblywomen from Hohoe, Municipal Assembly, Kpando and Jesikan District

Assemblies, in the Volta Region, was held at the Matvin Hotel, Hohoe on December 17-18, 2008.

These workshops were intended to build on the various interrelated efforts done in previous years at ensuring that Assemblywomen increase their understanding of good governance as well as play an active and effective role in the promotion of gender as a cross-cutting issue in all their contributions in decision-making processes within these structures. Again, the programmes emphasised the need for a strategic approach that links survivalist concerns with existing laws, conventions and agreements for specific initiatives to advance the course of gender equality and women's rights in the Assemblies.

### 2.1.11 Reflection Workshops

Two end-of-year concluding seminars to reflect, review and assess practices and approaches used by ABANTU in addressing gender inequalities in decision-making processes and give account of experiences, challenges and the way forward were held. The seminars were organised to provide a forum to reflect and critically evaluate the extent to which the strategies and interventions used are contributing to making a difference in the output of governance. It is also important to assess the extent to which our own initiatives being deployed to promote increased participation are making a difference. Therefore the two seminars were organised for the participants to reflect on what they have learnt from the programmes and identify gaps that require future interventions.

1. Work around the 2008 general elections ended with a review workshop on 11th December 2008 at Sunlodge Hotel, Accra. All the partners involved in the Election programmes were present at the workshop. The participants reviewed the entire election in the light of the various strategies and approaches adopted. Critical issues such as timely funding and reduction in the number of women parliamentarians from 25 in 2004 to 20 in 2008 were discussed. Amongst the recommendations from the workshop was the need to hold a women's movement conference early 2009 to devise new strategies for addressing women's participation in decision making.

2. Another Reflection Seminar was organised at Sun Lodge Hotel, Tesano, December 19-20, 2008 on: ***“Promoting Women in Decision-making Structures: A Critical Look”*** brought together District Assemblywomen from Eastern, Central, Volta and Greater Accra Regions. These participants are beneficiaries of programmes that ABANTU

for Development organised with the support of ActionAid-Ghana in their effort to enhance women's capacities for effective participation in decision-making processes.

## **2.2.0 ADVOCACY, PUBLIC AWARENESS AND NETWORKING (APAN)**

The objectives set under the Advocacy, Public Awareness and Networking Programme for the period has been achieved and this is evident in the activities carried out during the year.

### **2.2.1 New Year School**

The New Year School is organised by the Institute of Adult Education to discuss critical issues of concern to the nation and to make relevant recommendations for addressing them. This year's programme, organised around the theme of Democratic Governance took into account the fact that 2008 is an election year. The Regional Programme Manager facilitated a session on Wednesday January 9, 2008 in recognition of the important contribution ABANTU is making in governance processes especially in relation to the promotion of gender equality.

### **2.2.2 Meeting with Political Parties on Affirmative Action.**

As an organisation that has positioned itself to support women in politics and decision-making, ABANTU for Development is working collaboratively with Women In Broadcasting (WIB) and with support from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation organised a Luncheon with representatives of all the seven (7) main political parties on the need to incorporate issues of the Women's Manifesto for Ghana into their political party Manifestoes. The encounter was also an opportunity to discuss with them perspectives on affirmative action and the specific measures they could utilize to enhance the participation of women in Election 2008. The parties were represented by their own Manifesto Drafting Committee members as well as others from the Women's Wings. At the end of the interaction, the representatives were given copies of the Women's Manifesto as well as abridged versions of the document. It was facilitated by Audrey Gadzekpo and the resource person was Esther Ofei-Aboagye of the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS). The political parties found the encounter useful and agreed that it was important to engage further on the issue of affirmative action. It was decided that there was the need to monitor and assess the extent of the parties' incorporation of The Women's Manifesto issues in their own political party documents.

### 2.2.3 Representation on Presidential Encounter

In recognition of the work undertaken by ABANTU and the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT), women's groups were invited to participate in the Presidential Encounter organised by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) in June and November 2008 as part of the processes towards Election 2008. Aspirants had to respond to a range of questions posed to them by an audience made up of representatives and critical actors in civil society and a wide range of institutions and organisations. The aspirants were:

- Prof. John Ata Mills (NDC)
- Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom (CPP)
- Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo (NPP)
- Mr. Edward Mahama (PNC)

The RPM had the opportunity to ask critical questions around the national economy, social development, gender equality and access to water. The active participation of women's groups in this process has facilitated awareness about gender issues and concerns and the need for policy makers to address them. It also points to the fact that, even if gender equality is far from being achieved in Ghana, the landscape seems to be changing with reference to awareness creation and interest in the issues. Mainstream civil society organisations are also increasingly calling on women's rights organisations to work with them to integrate gender concerns in their policy advocacy work.

The RPM was also part of the IEA 2008 Elections review programme held on December 11, 2008.

### 2.2.4 Voter Education

Public forums have proven effective in advocating on critical issues of women's rights by mobilising wider public opinion. To continue awareness creation and sensitization on women's participation in decision-making, eleven (11) public forums were organized nationwide on the theme "Mobilising voter support for women parliamentary candidates". The forums were held with the following objectives:

- To educate the electorate on the electoral process and the need to ensure a violence-free election,
- Sensitize the electorate to participate in the general elections,
- Campaign for votes for women parliamentary candidates
- Create visibility for women voters about their vision for the country.

The forums brought together women parliamentary candidates, district assemblywomen, opinion leaders and representatives of the following groups - political parties, traditional authorities, trade associations, religious groups and women's groups. Recognising the influence these leaders wield in the society, they were carefully selected to sustain the campaign for women's participation in decision-making.

The Forums also used the opportunity to call for constitutional and legislative interventions such as Affirmative Action that will recognise the necessity to introduce gender-sensitive measures to address gender disparities that have been entrenched by historical, cultural, religious, political, economic and social circumstances.

The public forums, which took place between 22nd October and 2nd December 2008, were organized at the district capitals in the respective regions. A strategy adopted to bring the Women's Manifesto Coalition's work much closer to constituencies where such programmes were often not organised. Attendance at the forums was very impressive especially in the three Northern regions that recorded, 258 for Upper East, 250 for Upper West and over 500 in the Northern region.

The forums were organized in collaboration with the following Women's Manifesto Coalition members

- Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT)
- Global Initiative for Rights and Development (GIRD),
- National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE),
- Centre for Sustainable Development Initiative (CENSUDI),
- Programme for Rural Integrated Development (PRIDE)
- Ghana Agriculture Workers Union (GAWU/GTUC) and
- Women in Law and Development in Africa, WILDAF- Ghana.
- Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP)

### **2.2.5 Campaign Support to Women Candidates in Election 2008**

The main purpose of this programme was to support the campaigns of all women aspirants who have indicated their willingness and desire to enter into competitive politics. Elections provide a great opportunity for mobilisation and maximisation of voices especially those of the marginalised. Therefore, women have a good chance of having their voices heard during these times.

The biggest hindrance however to women's ability to be competitive in elections, is their lack

of financial resources to mount sustained campaigns and advertise their messages extensively and adequately to the electorate. It is in this regard that ABANTU with support from Actionaid-Ghana extended this campaign support to women candidates in Election 2008. Each aspirant was provided with fifty (50) copies of posters printed specifically for each aspirant together with one (1) CD featuring a number of lessons, topics and messages which were captured during capacity-building workshops which were intended for home learning to equip them in making effective campaigns.

The programme was organised in two sectors - the Southern and Northern sectors to facilitate easy access. Women aspirants from the various political parties within the Southern Sector met at Hotel Adodo, North Kaneshie, Accra, on Monday, September 29, 2008 while those in the Northern Sector were organised on Tuesday, September 30, 2008, at Hotel Lasab in Kumasi.

### **2.2.6 Media Campaign in the 2008 Elections**

ABANTU collaborated with *Women in Broadcasting (WiB)* and *Enigma Images* to embark upon a nationwide media campaign aimed at enhancing voter support for the women candidates in the 2008 election. The radio campaign used jingles, public service announcements, radio magazine programmes as well as the appearances of female candidates on radio programmes. The message of the jingle drew voter's attention to the impending elections, the strengths of women as parliamentarians and the need to vote for women in the interest of national development and progress. Akan, Ga, Ewe, Dagbani, Hausa, Guruni, Nzema and Dagaare were the local languages used.

The jingles were broadcast for three weeks on Radio Ghana because of its nationwide reach and a high audience population across the country. In addition to the jingles, a number of promotional/advocacy programmes of 30-60minutes duration aimed at raising the profile of female candidates and garnering voter support were produced in the various regions. Some women parliamentary candidates and Coalition members appeared on programmes on both public and private radio stations across the country to discuss women's participation in decision making. The women were featured on traditionally male dominated political oriented panel discussions and talk show programmes such as Focus, Front Page and Breakfast shows. Ms Zalia Seidu, Ms Thelma Lamptey and Ms Samia Nkrumah, the new Member of Parliament for Jomoro were some of the candidates featured in the radio programmes.

Men were also engaged as resource persons for some of the programmes and as voice-over in the jingles to galvanize support from the male populace and also demonstrate that women's rights issues were the concern of all.

Similar to the radio campaign, messages on the need to vote for women were telecast on Ghana Television, the national television during prime times like the "Breakfast show" and before the News bulletin. Women parliamentary candidates and Members of the Women's Manifesto Coalition were also featured on television programmes such as "Breakfast Show" and "Adult Education" programmes on Ghana Television. All these shows were conducted in English and three different Ghanaian languages: Ewe, Akan, Ga.

### **2.2.7 WMC Press Conference ahead of Presidential Run-off**

The declining numbers of women parliamentarians from twenty (25) in the 2004 general elections to twenty (20) in the 7th December 2008 general elections clearly demonstrates that unless prudent measures are put in place, the 30% minimum representation of women in politics and decision making as stated in the Beijing Platform for Action may never be realized. Taking advantage of the 7th December presidential election which went into a run-off, the *Women's Manifesto Coalition* engaged with the media as part of the overall sensitization programme to demand from the two presidential candidates and the political parties (NDC and NPP) measures their governments would put in place to address women's under-representation in the national governance processes.

The political parties were reminded of The Women's Manifesto for Ghana's demands contained under the section on Women in Politics and Decision-making as a minimum set of measures that could be implemented. As a long term measure, the next government was called upon to implement an affirmative action policy whereby forty percent (40%) of all decision making bodies would be represented by women. As an immediate action, the Coalition demanded the appointment of more women into key positions such as ministers, cabinet members, chief executives of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies and members of public boards amongst others government appointments. The coalition also indicated their readiness to continuously engage with the next government on critical demands made in the Women's Manifesto for Ghana.

### **2.2.8 NETRIGHT (STRENGTHENING NETWORKING)**

ABANTU's commitment to building movements and networking continued with the RPM

extending her tenure of office at NETRIGHT. The tenure of office of the Convener of NETRIGHT by ABANTU ended on December 31, 2008. However, it was agreed by the Steering Committee this role should continue for a second term. Consequently, the RPM agreed to continue in this role for the period January 2008 to December 2009. Processes of facilitating the work of NETRIGHT for the period January to December 2008 therefore started with meetings to plan for the year's programmes. The workplan was developed around three key thematic areas namely: Institutional strengthening, Economic Justice and land Rights.

On Institutional strengthening the RPM worked to ensure that the following activities were accomplished during the period:

- Steering Committee meetings
- Membership meetings
- Weekly review meetings
- End of Year review meeting
- Annual General meeting

In the area of land rights, NETRIGHT participated in the activities of the Ghana Land Coalition to enhance NETRIGHT's interest in bringing a gender perspective to bear on the issues of the Coalition.

On economic justice, NETRIGHT played a fundamental role in key economic policy-making areas during the period. These include the following:

- *Participation in UNCTAD XII*

This was an international event organised in Ghana by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) from April 17-19, 2008, under the theme: “**Addressing the Opportunities and Challenges of Globalisation on for Development**”. NETRIGHT also used the occasion to organise a side event on the theme, “Women and Globalisation: Challenges and Advocacy for Promoting Women's Rights Today”. Many of the organisational members attended the event which was held on April 18, 2008. It was obvious from the Parallel Civil Society forum that strong lobbying and advocacy was needed to ensure that the worsening conditions of citizens under globalisation were addressed. The informalisation of work and the loss of entitlement particularly hurt women. The presentations during the side event advocated for greater commitment to gender equality issue.

- *53rd Session on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).*

Here there was the need to facilitate the participation of NETRIGHT members given the relevance of the theme for the work of the network. In all, four (4) women represented NETRIGHT at CSW and they were supported by African Women Development Fund (AWDF) and Green Grants.

- *Participation in Aid Effectiveness and the High Level Forum 3 processes.*

NETRIGHT decided to take advantage of Ghana's hosting of the Paris Declaration and Aid Effectiveness High Level Forum 3 (HLF3) in Accra to facilitate the participation of women's groups. The meeting itself was to be held in late August and early September 2008. However the period of January 1-30 June, 2008 was used to undertake preparatory activities towards the actual event. Among the activities of the period for which the RPM had some leadership responsibility were the following:

- Information Sharing on Aid Effectiveness with ISODEC.
  - National Consultation on Aid Effectiveness (AE), organised by the SEND Foundation which was the host of civil society input into the AE Processes.
  - Interaction on Civil Society Perspectives on Aid Effectiveness.
  - UNIFEM consultation on Aid Effectiveness where NETRIGHT had to participated actively on issues of gender equality.
- *Launch of NETRIGHT Oil and Gas research*

### **2.2.9 UNDP Retreat on Gender Equality, Kigali, Rwanda April 23-28, 2008**

During the period, ABANTU participated in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) headquarters in New York to participate in a Retreat organised on the promotion of Gender Equality and Climate Change. On recommendation from the Women Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) the Regional Programme Manager participated actively in the meeting and provided relevant gender equality perspectives into the strategic plans being prepared by UNDP. This expertise was derived from earlier work undertaken within the framework of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in 2006 as well as a technical paper produced for WEDO in 2007 on Gender and Climate. It is expected that this initiative will enhance the opportunity for ABANTU to develop a gender and climate change programme over time.

### 2.2.10 Support to Networks and Partners

ABANTU continues to strengthen its network within the civil society space. Notable among the programmes the organization participated in are as follows:

- The Institute for Democratic Governance's (IDEG) Peace and Anti-violence Forums for Election 2008.
- Stakeholders consultation forum for Christian Aid Country Policy and Strategy Paper 2009-2013 on 7th August 2008
- National Dissemination workshop on the Trokosi practice by Stratcomm Africa. 23 July 2008
- Launch of AWDF new office building November 2008
- Chairing of WASCI programme organized on 2-3 December 2008
- Institute of Economic Affairs review meeting on the 2008 Election

#### International networks

ABANTU continues to remain relevant in the international civil society space and more especially within the Women's Movement. During the year, the RPM and SPO played critical roles during the UNCTAD XII conference, the International Women's Forum the Civil Society Parallel Forum ahead of the Aid Effectiveness and High Level forums (HLF3) and the HLF3 Ministerial Dinner all held in Accra.

As part of our contribution towards movement building, four staff participated in the 11th Association of Women in Development (AWID) International Forum in Cape Town, South Africa. The RPM served as a panelist during the session on Climate Change in Africa: Why women's leadership is critical. Her contribution during the *Great Debate* "We have wasted our time pushing for more women in decision making positions - they have not made a difference" was the high point of ABANTU's participation in the Conference.

### **2.3.0 PUBLICATIONS, RESEARCH AND INFORMATION (PRI)**

The objectives under this functional area during the period were twofold:

- To ensure that existing initiatives around research, publication and information were consolidated and developed into specific products for use by the organisation and the wider public.
- To develop new research, publication and information materials to add on to existing literature.

To a large extent the organisation succeeded in achieving the objectives set as the activities outlined below indicates.

#### **2.3.1 Sub-regional workshop on research methodologies to promote gender equality in governance systems**

The movement to social equality for women has been slow inspite of the many commitments that governments have made to international conventions and agreements. United Nations has recommended a minimum of 30 per cent women's participation for effective and democratic governance. Ghana's immediate past parliament has only 8.6 percent representation for women. The situation is not different at the local governance level (district assembly) where statistics show current elected assemblywomen stand at 10.8%. Concerned about the abysmal progress in achieving the 30% minimum representation for women in governance processes, ABANTU with support from the Olof Palme Centre organised a workshop in Accra to develop a conceptual Framework and Research Instruments for Assessing Governance systems and Gender Equality. The workshop was organised on 29th May 2008 with the aim of undertaking research to identify the main obstacles and barriers in different socio-economic contexts to women's effective participation in political processes. Additionally, the research will build on existing knowledge to assess elective systems and governance practices to identify challenges and best practices for effective policy influencing initiatives to promote gender responsiveness.

As a follow-up to the first workshop, a sub regional workshop was organised for partners from Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Ghana, on 5th December 2008 to share country perspectives and also contribute to the development of a regional conceptual framework for the research. Both workshops attracted sixty participants altogether.

### **2.3.2 Technical Paper on Gender and Climate Change and Dakar Conference on Climate Change.**

During the period of February - June, 2008, the RPM developed a technical paper on Gender and Climate Change as part of the development of a partnership relationship with the Women, Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) which is an international non-governmental organisation based in New York, the US. The paper focused on the critical gender issues of climate change in Ghana, mitigation and adaptation measures being implemented by the country, and the lessons learnt. Following the submission of the paper, the RPM was invited to participate in an international conference on Gender and Climate Change in Dakar, Senegal. The paper was presented at the conference and was to form part of a technical paper being developed on Human Security with WEDO as one of the participating organisations.

This initiative should place ABANTU in a strategic position as a women's rights organisation to develop a programme around Gender and Climate Change in West Africa.

### **2.3.3 Aid Effectiveness Discussion Paper.**

The RPM also prepared a discussion paper on research that had been conducted by UNIFEM in partnership with the European Union (EU) on: "Gender Responsiveness and Aid Effectiveness in Ghana". "The paper was presented on March 12, 2008 during a consultation meeting on the research.

### **2.3.4 Social Watch Report 2008**

A paper on the Food Crisis and its Implications for Women was produced by the RPM as part of her responsibilities as Convener of NETRIGHT. The report which was sent is expected to form part of the 2008 Social Watch Report.

### **2.3.5 Research Methodologies Meetings on Land and Conflict/Militarisation**

There were two critical meetings that occurred during the period. The first was on Gender Land and Labour organised by Dr. Dzodzi Tsikata from June 25-28 at Ellking Hotel, East Legon, Accra. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the key research themes around the subject of Gender, Land and Labour in Africa as well as the relevant methodologies needed to carry out such research. ABANTU agreed to participate in one of the thematic areas identified, which is related to natural resource development.

The second research initiative is around the theme of Gender, Conflict and Militarism. It has been the idea of Prof. Amina Mama, one of the founding members of ABANTU to investigate this issue within the context of the West Africa sub-region.

The meeting was organised on June 30, 2008 at the offices of West Africa Civil Society Initiative (WACSI) with about 20 participants discussing contextual issues around the subject, identifying key themes and agreeing on criteria for participating in the research. Following on from the meeting a report was written which has formed the basis of developing a research idea on the subject by Prof. Amina Mama for possible funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). ABANTU is expected to host and coordinate this research once support is obtained.

### **2.3.6 Publications on women's participation in the 2008 Election**

Twenty thousand (20,000) copies of full card A3 posters captioned **“Vote Wisely!!! Vote Women in Election 2008** were produced and disseminated throughout the country to campaign for women candidates. Additionally, one thousand (1000) copies of A4 size full colour brochure on ABANTU's Elections programme was produced and disseminated.

An article **“Enhancing women's active participation and representation in Election 2008”** was published in four (4) renowned Ghanaian newspapers namely the Public Agenda, Ghanaian Times, Spectator and Mirror. Almost all the public forums and capacity building workshops carried out during the electioneering period were reported in the print media and on the internet through Ghanaweb. All these publication informed the general public about the elections and more specifically added to the range of messages on the campaign for women's participation in politics and decision making

As part of our documentation processes, reports, video recordings and templates of all the programmes were produced to serve as reference for future programmes.

### **2.3.1 Strategy Paper on Quotas**

The use of Quotas as an Affirmative Action strategy to address women's participation in decision making has proven effective in achieving the 30% minimum representation for women in governance in a number of countries. Dr Rudith King was commissioned to produce a strategy paper on Quotas. The document would serve as a reference for ABANTU's advocacy work on the Affirmative Action Policy campaign in 2009.

### **2.3.2 Newsletter**

The production of “ABANTU NEWS” the quarterly publication of ABANTU suffered some organizational challenges during the year but is back on track.

## **2.4.0 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ABANTU (IDA)**

During the period January to December 2008 the objectives under the IDA programme were to consolidate ABANTU's achievements as a strong gender and policy advocacy organisation. This was similar to other functional areas in terms of how the organisation continues with existing initiatives while exploring other new opportunities for institutional strengthening.

### **2.4.1 Staff Renewal and Development**

All staff continued to be encouraged to actively participate in all activities of the organisation including staff meetings and programmes. Staffs were constantly briefed about processes being embarked upon to secure funding and other emerging programmes especially in relation to coalition building and networking.

### **2.4.2 Proposals for Funding**

During the period, ABANTU continued to seek funding from its traditional funders as well as new ones to support its expanding programmes and newly introduced themes.

ABANTU also collaborated with other women's partner organisations to submit joint proposals for support of women's rights and gender work. ABANTU also provided endorsements in support of proposals from other women's organisations that sought its assistance.

### **2.4.3 Recognition of ABANTU**

An important indicator of the effectiveness of ABANTU has been its recognition and acceptance in mainstream circles about the organisation as a critical voice in civil society and on women's rights issues. Specifically critical actors and policy makers are either referred to ABANTU or ABANTU is called upon to share its perspectives on democracy, governance, public participation and gender equality. Notable among these during the period are the following:

- Participation in a roundtable with members of the Swedish Parliament on May 29, 2008 where ABANTU gave information about women's rights issues in Ghana.
- Meeting with West Africa Regional Coordinator of Christian Aid April 14, 2008.
- Sharing Perspectives on Friedrich Ebert Foundation's Agenda 2012 on the eve of the Paris Declaration and Aid Effectiveness High Level Forum 3 May 22, 2008.
- Meeting with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) of Washington U.S on

Perspectives on women's participation in Election 2008, May 23, 2008

#### **2.4.4 Collaborations/Initiatives**

The period also found ABANTU benefiting from new initiatives and collaborations with relevant funders, civil society organisations and institutions. The key ones are:

- Olof Palme International Centre Collaboration and funding support
- Canadian Crossroads International (CCI)
- Participation in AWDF meeting with funders in Ghana.
- Pentecost University College.
- Meetings with DFID officials on Visit to Ghana on Governance Issues.
- French Embassy on the Small Grants Programme.
- CCI and YWCA visit in Ghana as part of the NorthSouth Exchange.
- Rutgers University, U.S.A. Under the WOLLEEM Initiative

#### **2.4.5 New Partnerships**

During the period, ABANTU continued with its discussions with Womankind (UK) on possible collaboration around peace building issues. The meetings took place April - June, 2008.

A similar process was also started in June, 2008 with IBIS. Though an agreement has been signed, actual implementation has not started.

#### **2.4.6 Internships**

A number of local and foreign students and graduates had their internship with ABANTU. During the period, ABANTU's internship programme was strengthened with the continued institutional strengthening activities of volunteers from Canadian Crossroads International (CCI). Some of the activities they undertook include:

- training on Marratech
- Production of a manual and fact sheet
- Newspaper analysis on gender equality

Other interns from Tertiary Institutions in Ghana, Canada and the United States also carried out studies on women in decision making using the 2008 elections as a study area. The reports of the studies and policy brief would be published in the ABANTU Newsletter.

### **2.4.7 New Staff**

During the period, two new staff were recruited to strengthen the capacity of ABANTU to deliver its programmes. They are:

- Mr. Kwame Marfo, Driver
- Mrs. Ellen Dzah-Advocacy, Public Awareness and Networking Officer

Ms. Barika Jesiwuni who served as a national service personnel, was also engaged after the service to support with programme implementation. Her role was to track gender issues in the media. Ms. Jeiwuni's engagement also forms part of ABANTU's mentoring programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of young women to promote women's rights and gender equality.

### **2.4.8 Review of Organisational Policies**

During the period, ABANTU reviewed some of its organisational policies and incorporated new ideas. These policies include:

- Gender Policy
- Internship Policy
- Collaboration Policy

They are available for sharing with other organizations.

#### **2.4.8.1 ABANTU Moves Into New Premises**

ABANTU took a decision to move from its old premises at North Kaneshie to Spintex Road, Baatsona. Staff organised themselves and managed to move all documents and furniture to the new site in March 2008. Information about the new location was shared with all partners. The new location is H/No. A3/30 Baatsona, Spintex Road, Accra

#### **2.4.8.2 Board Meeting**

ABANTU's Annual Board meeting was held on January 28, 2008 at The IAS Chalets, South Legon, University of Ghana. The meeting afforded members the opportunity to review activities of the previous year and plan for 2002 programmes. The half year board meeting was held in August 2008.

### **2.4.11 Staff Training**

Members of staff had the opportunity of enhancing their learning and skills through their

participation in relevant training programmes, workshops and conferences. In addition to the programmes organized by ABANTU, staff members participated in the under listed programmes.

- The RPM and SPO participated in the 52nd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. March 2009
- The RPM, SPO, APAN and Team Secretary took part in the International Women's Forum and Civil Society forums organized ahead of the Aid Effectiveness High Level(III) Forum held in Accra. The RPM and SPO were nominated to represent CSOs at the Ministerial Dinner during the High Level Forum. 30th August 2nd September 2009
- Four staff members supported by CCI and AWDF had the opportunity to participate in the 11th Triennial AWID conference held in Cape Town on the theme "Movement Building". The conference provided an orientation for the newly recruited APAN officer and the Team Secretary on the feminist movement. ABANTU was represented by the RPM during a panel discussion on Women and Climate Change. The high point of ABANTU's participation in the AWID conference was during the "Great Debate on women's political participation"
- Following the AWID Conference, the RPM and SPO were part of a sub-regional workshop on Women Political Participation organized by AWDF in South Africa on 11-12th November 2009.
- The RPI officer was among a delegation supported by NETRIGHT to participate in the Aid Effectiveness processes in Doha, Quarta. November 2008
- A 3-day Strategic planning workshop was organised for ABANTU staff and Board members on 12-14th December 2008 at Sunlodge Hotel. The workshop with an objective of developing a strategic plan for 2009-2011 programme years also served as a learning process for the staff to acquire the skills of facilitating the strategic planning process.
- Orientation on ABANTU's policies and office procedures was carried out for interns and volunteers.

#### **2.4.12 Strategic Planning Workshop**

With the 2005-2008 strategic plans coming to an end, ABANTU Board members and staff held a three-day workshop to develop a new 3-year strategic plan for the organization. The workshop held on 12-14th December 2008 at Sunlodge Hotel was facilitated by Mr Daniel Yirenya an Organisational Development Specialist. Seven staff members and three Board

Members participated in the entire process. The key outcomes of the workshop were the strategic plan for 2009-2011, 2009 work plan and the process report. In consonance with ABANTU's institutional development objectives, the strategic planning process also provided staff members the opportunity to acquire some organisational development skills.

## SECTION THREE

### GAPS, LESSON LEARNT AND WAY FORWARD

#### 2.0 Gaps Lessons Learnt and Way Forward

ABANTU's work in 2008 witnessed some successes as well as challenges. There were a number of lessons and gaps identified which can help us improve upon future programmes.

The main gaps identified during the period include the following:

- The continued relevance of ABANTU within the public policy space and the need for high level calibre of staff to represent the organisation in such critical spaces.
- Many of the networking and advocacy initiatives require continuous engagement with high level decision-makers. This means that the RPM and the SPO (to a lesser degree) are constantly involved in meetings and discussions outside the office. This affects levels of supervision and time spent on ensuring actual delivery of ABANTU's programme.

As a result of the impact of the work of the organisation, new opportunities are emerging for which it is important to take note of and re-position ourselves to derive maximum benefit. It is therefore obvious that programmes are expanding requiring new recruitment to strengthen staff numbers and capacity. This requires that organisational learning continues to ensure that the organisation's vision is shared by all staff to ensure teambuilding which is needed for gender equality work.

With specific reference to our governance work during the 2008 elections, the following gaps were identified:

- Four years into the lifespan of the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, some of the demands under the section on Women's Participation in Politics and Decision-making which had 2008 as the timeline are still outstanding without any policy direction from the government. The gap identified in our work raises concerns as to whether our government considers women's rights issues as a priority area.
- It was evident that many of the women who put themselves up for Election lacked the requisite knowledge of gender issues for articulation in their campaign messages. They were deficient in skills that were necessary to carry them through the highly competitive process of electioneering and campaigning. They required a Longer period of training and political initiation.

- Many of the women candidates stood for political parties that had very little chance of getting their candidates elected and had therefore left them to their own fate with very little support.
- Also the numerous uncertainties around some of the political parties contributed to women declaring their intentions quite late making their competitiveness much more difficult.
- Limited and infrequent engagement of incumbent women parliamentarian and women's groups
- Failure of incumbent women parliamentarian to take part in programmes organised by women's groups
- Late approval of funds by donors

Inspite of above gaps there some successes which are worth mentioning:

- Working collaboratively with the Women's Manifesto Coalitions has contributed immensely in reducing the duplication of efforts by the various women's groups. The strategies adopted also brought ABANTU and Coalition's work much closer to the Grassroots.
- Gender consideration in the selection of presidential running mates
- Political parties and their candidates campaigning on women's rights issues
- Increased women's participation in entire electoral process observers, electoral officials, polling agents, media reporters.
- Enhanced media coverage of gender issues.
- Enhanced capacity of women candidates
- Representation of the Women's Manifesto Coalition on the highest level of civil Society engagement with the electoral process
- Enhanced capacity of women's coalitions and networks on gender and governance Issues
- Acceptance by policy makers, politicians, the media and the general public as credible contributors to urgent development issues in our governance system

Projections and Activities for 2009

Following the strategic planning meeting held in December 2008, a three year strategic plan (2009-2011) has been developed for ABANTU with an overall objective of positioning ABANTU as a relevant and effective gender and policy advocacy organisation in the changing socio-economic environment in the West Africa sub-region. The new strategic plan presents five strategic directions that define where ABANTU will focus its efforts and resources in the next three years. It envisages that these strategic directions will enhance the organisation's objectives and activities in its core thematic areas of operations: Governance, Poverty, Peace building, ICTs and Climate Change.

The key outputs of the strategic plan which include the vision, mission and the strategic objectives are summarised below:

**Vision** - Promoting women's rights and gender justice for transformational change and a just society in Africa

**Mission** - To strengthen women's capacities in decision-making in collaboration with others to influence policies from a gender justice perspective

**Values** - The core values of ABANTU are as follows:

- Openness
- Transformative, political yet non-partisan commitment
- Respect for Difference
- Sharing
- Equality (justice and fairness)
- Innovative

Strategic Objectives

The 5 core Strategic Objectives with which ABANTU will operate are:

- Contribute to the movement building efforts of women in claiming their rights in their societies
- Influence policies from a women's right and gender justice perspective
- Strengthen collaboration, networking and coalition-building efforts on women's rights and justice issues
- Deepen knowledge creation on gender and policy issues for learning and sharing with other constituencies
- Enhance the organisational and institutional capacities of ABANTU in remaining

relevant and effective in influencing policies from a women's right and gender justice perspective

#### Projections for 2009

The following is an outline of tasks for 2009

- Implementation of Phase II activities of CIDA funded project on “Promoting women's participation in the 2008 Elections”.
- Implementation of Olof Palme research programme on women in peace building.
- Publication of relevant materials.
- Initiate new collaborations and strengthen existing networks, coalitions and partnerships.
- Initiate action towards 2010 District Assembly Elections
- In-house activities to strengthen ABANTU as an organisation.

It is hoped that ABANTU will continue to work hard towards the achievement of its set objectives for 2009.

## SECTION FOUR

### FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2008

#### 4.0 Financial Report

The total income for the year 2008 amounted to \$578,699 (including miscellaneous income and interest on short term deposits). Expenditure for the same period amounted to \$469,272. The table below gives information on the income and expenditure for 2008.

S/N	Source	Amount(\$)	Percentage (%)
1	African Women Dev't Fund (AWDF)	54,681	9.4
2	ActionAid Ghana	49,910	8.6
3	CIDA	196,408	33.9
4	Global Fund for Women	34,182	5.9
5	G_RAP	117,500	20.3
6	Olof Palme	49,724	8.6
7.	US Embassy	10,227	1.8
8.	Other Income	66,066	11.5
		<b>578,699</b>	<b>100%</b>
S/N	Expenditure		
1	Resource costs	63,079	13.4
2	Programme cost	322,384	68.7
3	Management/ Admin	83,809	17.9
		<b>469,272</b>	<b>100%</b>

