**Project Completion Summary for SAVE-Ghana**

**PTF partner**: Sustainable Aid Through Voluntary Establishment-Ghana,

 also called Save-Ghana

**Location**: Upper West Region, Ghana

**Date of Project:** December 2011 to December 2012

**Name of Project:** Promoting Accountability and Responsiveness for

 Improved Basic Education in Ghana

**Total Cost of the project**: $30,583.00

**PTF’s Contribution**: $26,500

**Sector:** Education

**PTA Advisors:** William Friar and Willem Struben

***Background, project activities and approach****:*

This was SAVE-Ghana’s second project with PTF, and this project targeted corruption at 7 schools in rural Ghana. Specifically, SAVE-Ghana targeted chronic teacher absenteeism, the practice of having “ghost teachers” on the payroll, schools collecting school fees from parents which the central government already pays, and the practice of teachers taking their students to the teacher’s farms and making the students work on the farms for the teachers. The proposal called for mobilizing stakeholders at the 7 schools by engaging, organizing, educating, local authorities, parent, and teachers, and by forming or strengthening parent teacher associations and school management committees. One aspect of the plan was to include the monitoring of teacher absenteeism. The project was carried out through training workshops and meetings, as well as publicity generated through radio appearances organized by SAVE-Ghana.

***Discussion of the Project***

This project was generally completed within budget, within schedule and largely according to the proposal, and it was a pleasure to work with the SAVE-Ghana team, who were responsive to our requests and suggestions. It seems that SAVE-Ghana’s strengths are its passion for effective social change that manifests itself in energetic field work, and a very effective ability to mobilize the people who it is trying to help. While SAVE-Ghana did provide PTF with all requested information, it seems that back-office operations are not where its passions lie.

This project was subject to an onsite visit and review by PTF’s Colby Pacheco in August 2012. Colby wrote a comprehensive report of his visit which should be reviewed by anyone interested in this project. It showed a positive picture of both the project and SAVE-Ghana.

***Results of the Project***

SAVE-Ghana engaged, organized, educated, energized and focused local authorities, parent-teacher associations, school management committees on teacher absenteeism and corruption through meetings and workshops, and worked with the local officials of the Ghana Education Service. It also generated interest through radio programs to the point that stakeholders in schools not part of the project were inquiring why they were not chosen. The report does include some quantifiable information. Examples of quantifiable results are that the project has assisted the government in eliminating 7 “ghost” teachers, and that will save the government about Ghc 84,000 per annum, about 44,000 U.S. dollars. Other results are that during this academic year, at 3 schools, authorities could not account for Ghc 1,200 (about $636.00) and that those school authorities have refunded that amount to the schools. With respect to teacher absenteeism, which in one of the primary focuses of the project, SAVE-Ghana projects that for the targeted schools, teacher absenteeism has or will be reduced from 57% to about 25%.

One of the objectives of this project was to reduce the practice of a teacher taking students to that teacher’s farm and having the students perform basic farm work for the teacher. SAVE-Ghana believes that the project has managed to reduce the incidences of teachers abusing their authority this way and says that they believe that it has been reduced from 70% to less than 10%. Armed with this photographic evidence, SAVE-Ghana relayed their findings to the communities where anecdotal evidence suggests that villages have then rallied behind eliminating the practice. Additionally, as word has spread that this tactic has been employed, the hope is that knowing a person could be documenting abuse can help to curb corrupt practices.

***“Lessons Learned” or in hindsight, what would have been better***

 Colby’s report states that, and SAVE-Ghana agrees, that the project was overly ambitious, and that the amount funded was not adequate to properly tackle the ambitious goals. Similarly, Colby suggests, and SAVE-Ghana agrees, that in retrospect it would have been better to separate this project into 2 separate facets, one being teacher absenteeism and the second being the practice of teachers taking their students out of school and making them work on their own farms. In retrospect, this analysis of the project seems logical.

 This was a one year project. In retrospect, SAVE-Ghana has suggested that for sustainability of the improvements it might have been better to plan this as a 2 year project, and this seems like a good suggestion. Presumably most of the cost, if this was for a 2 year project, would be incurred in the first year and minimal costs in the second for monitoring to help sustain the results generated in the first years.

 As Colby mentioned in his report, more effort should have been made to encourage SAVE-Ghana to track their results. This would have helped all parties know what had or had not been successful, and it would have helped SAVE-Ghana in being able to tell its story more effectively.

***Final Thoughts***

The proposed project by SAVE-Ghana met all of PTF’s criteria. SAVE-Ghana executed this project with enthusiasm and reasonable effectiveness, and PTF could consider partnering with SAVE-Ghana again in any future project that met PTF’s criteria.

As far as the design, implementation and monitoring, and outcome go, this should be rated as satisfactory or, on a scale of 5, at 3.5.

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*This report was drafted by William Friar and reviewed by Willem Struben.*