

**ActionAid International:
From a British Charity to a Major International NGO
(1972-2009)**

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*About 20 women from the Kashmiri village of Penyali come running towards us. It's almost a year since a devastating earthquake turned their lives upside down. But on this late September afternoon, a couple of weeks ahead of the first anniversary of the earthquake, ActionAid has invited the women of the village to tell their stories to a group of journalists from Italy, Pakistan and the UK. In the cool of the community centre these women - all immaculately dressed in colourful Salwar-kameez - don't need much encouragement. Shahdia Kahn, 53, a widow and mother of four is first up. **"There are a lot of problems in this village. Most people are still waiting for compensation. There is also no control of prices (of labour or building materials). Before the disaster we were comfortable. But now we have no home."** One-by-one the women, young and old, explain that twelve months after the earthquake they are still living in the tents and temporary shelters that were only meant to be a stop gap to see them through last year's winter.*

A very confusing compensation system has left many survivors still waiting for the cash they need to start rebuilding. And while they wait in endless queues outside government offices or by the remains of their homes for an inspector to officially record their rubble, the men are not working, the women are stuck all day in sweaty shelters and their children are catching diseases from the unsanitary conditions. Rising costs of labor, transport and materials and delays in the rebuilding of infrastructure compound the problem (most villages still have no roads, schools or water). Extreme weather also continues to hamper reconstruction (July monsoon rains and winter snows). Almost everywhere the story is the same. Hundreds of thousands of people are struggling to rebuild their lives, but at least with the help of charities, like ActionAid, they are starting to get back on their feet. ActionAid is spending an average of £200,000 a month on providing cash grants, helping reopen businesses, and vocational training (masonry, carpentry and electronics, livestock and health care).

Standing in a small wood and iron hut in the village of Marveneer, Sayma Khan is showing us her electronics workshop. She has completed an ActionAid electricians training course and now works in a small shop that also doubles as a grocery. "There was no other electrician in the area. So in March I started the course. They taught us to mend household appliances such as irons, fans and household wiring. I can now mend all of those easily. I finished top of my class and now I can earn 200 to 300 Rupees a day. I

go from house to house doing repairs and spending three hours a day in the workshop. I am also now training other women.”

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

This case study describes the transformation of ActionAid from a small British charity focused on educational service delivery in Kenya and India to a major, truly international, NGO operating in over 40 countries and addressing symptoms and root causes of poverty at the local, national and international levels through a combination of service delivery, community mobilization, capacity-building, and advocacy activities.

ActionAid started in 1972 as Action in Distress, a British charity educating children in India and Kenya through child sponsorship support from 88 UK supporters. By the mid-1980s, ActionAid was serving over 40,000 children in around 20 countries in Asia and Africa, with an expanded focus on food security, water and health and the agency, besides education. However, the focus was still on service delivery and the agency was not involved in any advocacy activities. The agency had successfully expanded its funding base by establishing fund-raising and advocacy offices in Ireland, Italy, France and Spain under the ActionAid name. Its organizational structure was still traditional, with a head office in London managing country programs directly.

Beginning at the early 1990s a shift in focus emerged and emphasized tackling the root causes of poverty rather than just meeting people's immediate needs given the intractable nature of the problems and the limitations of exclusive attention to service delivery. By this time, ActionAid had expanded its presence to 30 countries but was still focused on healthcare, education, water and livelihoods to the poor. During 1993 -1995, after the success of pilot projects in Bangladesh, El Salvador and Uganda, ActionAid launched REFLECT, the pioneering adult literacy tool based on the Brazilian philosopher Paulo Friere's social mobilization approach to educating people. This tool emphasized the importance of social mobilization and empowerment along with the delivery of services as the key to eradicating poverty. During the 1990s, the agency expanded its work to include peace building and conflict resolution in Africa and lobbying financial institutions such as the World Trade Organization and the World Bank. ActionAid formally adopted the rights-based approach to development in 1999 by challenging inequities and injustices at all levels.

By the late 1990s, the agency had also realized that its traditional organizational structure was not compatible with a the rights-based approach as it perpetuated unequal power dynamics with a UK-based head office collecting money and dictating the strategy to country offices in the south. The agency realized that to increase the credibility of its advocacy work with governments and donors for greater empowerment of communities, it had to first “practice what it was preaching”. This realization led to the development of a truly international and decentralized organizational structure.

This long process of transformation from a British charity to a truly international rights-based organization culminated in 2003 as ActionAid International was launched. ActionAid International's structure broke the mould of traditional development NGOs where fund-raising affiliates in the North made the decisions and country offices in the South simply implemented them as largely passive recipients. Under the new structure, over a ten year period, all country programs in the South become full-fledged affiliates (nationally registered NGOs with their own national boards) of ActionAid International on the same footing as the northern fund-raising affiliates, including ActionAid UK. Each affiliate appoints two members to an International Assembly, which in turn elects an International Board of Trustees for overall governance, which, in turn, recruits the CEO and an International Board of Directors for day-to-day management. As a far-reaching transformation, it helps to further strengthen ActionAid's accountability to the people, communities and countries it works with and makes it more effective in fighting and eradicating poverty. The first Assembly was convened in June 2009 to elect a new Board of Trustees, more than half of whose members were from the South. The same pattern is also reflected among its International Directors, about half of whom are from southern countries. The agency is currently the only major international NGO with its headquarters in Africa (Johannesburg). In the meantime, the agency has continued to grow financially and geographically and now reaches over 25 million people in over 40 countries worldwide and had a total budget of approximately 250 million dollars in 2009.

PROGRAMS AND STRATEGY

ActionAid believes that in a world of material plenty, poverty and injustice are not inevitable, and its decades of grassroots experience with poor and disadvantaged communities has led it to conclude that the answer lies in unequal and unjust power relations. In both rich and poor countries, unequal power relationships are systematically imposed on the basis of gender, age, caste, class, ethnicity, HIV status, race and disability. Powerful vested interests – including states, institutions, corporations, nations and communities– fail to address their obligations to the broader society by denying rights, resources and opportunities to the less fortunate.

Consequently, all its work revolves around supporting the efforts of poor people to reclaim their rights, transform their lives and make their voices heard in partnership with the growing citizens' movements for justice and dignity, equality and inclusion. The goal is to ensure a redistribution of wealth, resources, knowledge and information and a re-balancing of power relations within and between communities and nations. This has led to ActionAid's unique people-centered approach, with the following vision, mission and goals:

VISION: A world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity

MISSION: to work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice

GOALS: 1) poor and excluded people and communities will exercise power to secure their rights, 2) women and girls will gain power to secure their rights, 3) citizens and civil society across the world will fight for rights and justice, and 4) states and their institutions will be accountable and democratic and will promote, protect and fulfill human rights for all.

These goals serve as the guiding principles for a five-year implementation plan that spell-out the areas of program focus and the organizational development plan, based on an external and internal environment analysis. For its five year strategy from 2005-2010, called the Rights to End Poverty (R2EP) Strategy, ActionAid is focusing on six priority themes – each representing a human rights areas whose urgency is great and where its distinctive approach and experience can make the most difference. The strategy was formulated through a twelve month consultation period, starting at the community level in all countries to identify the most important problems and then gradually working its way up through the national and international structure. The approach consists of implementing community-level service delivery programs in each area through local NGOs and then developing local, national and international level advocacy based on the problems identified through the community level programs.

Women's rights

ActionAid places women and girls at the heart of all its work around the world and works with women's organizations to transform gender relations and the injustice of discrimination that women and girls living in poverty experience most cruelly. Under its current strategy, the agency's main programs on women's rights consist of: 1) women's mobilization through community-based organizations to strengthen the ability of women and girls to claim their rights and meet their basic needs, 2) protection of women against violence through legal, economic and psychological support, 3) leadership development to strengthen women's leadership and participation in governance and decision-making through training and capacity-building, 4) women's organizations' development by building and strengthening women's organizations and movements and supporting them in connecting with broader alliances, 5) advocacy and campaigning for laws, policies and practices that advance and protect women's rights, and 6) public awareness raising to raise consciousness and change attitudes so that men and women relate to each other as equals, and men and boys support the cause of gender equality.

The right to education

Over one billion people, mostly women, lack a basic education where illiteracy and poverty are closely linked. ActionAid's work is driven by the belief that every child has the right to a free, quality education from the state. The key programs in this area are: 1) educational programs focused on curricula development and support to state schools to support excluded and disadvantaged groups, especially girls, in gaining access to the quality education, 2) citizens' participation in education governance through initiatives such as budget tracking and involvement of communities in reform of policies and systems, 3) promotion of women's rights within education curricula and systems to ensure that both boys and girls understand women's rights and discrimination and violence are eliminated, and 4) advocacy and campaigning for constitutional change in order to guarantee the legal right to education in countries where it does not yet exist,

influence resource allocation by national governments and international donors in line with agreements at the Dakar Education Forum and other summits.

The right to food

Hunger afflicts 800 million people. ActionAid believes its root cause lies in the denial of rights and in unequal control over natural resources such as land, water and seeds. It is working to reverse this inequitable distribution of power and resources with the following programs: 1) food security programs that provide financial support, technical training and access to markets to support poor communities in developing long-term livelihoods and purchasing power support 2) support civil society networks in which organisations representing farmers, women and landless people work together to secure the right to food by advocating and campaigning for the rights of farmers – especially women – to access agricultural land, water, pasture, forest and seeds, and 3) international advocacy and campaigning for the reversal of unfair trade rules that reduce the access to food for poor people.

The right to human security in conflict and emergencies

Every year about 300 million people are affected by conflict or natural disasters. ActionAid works to improve the security of people caught up in these situations so they can live free of fear and want. The key actions identified in this area are to: 1) emergency response programs, mainly in the areas of non-food relief, psychosocial support, livelihoods rehabilitation and water and sanitation to support poor and excluded people affected by an emergency or conflict to receive appropriate assistance for relief and longer term recovery, 2) disaster risk reduction programs to build up the preparedness of communities before a disaster, and 3) advocacy and campaigning in the areas of humanitarian sector reform, climate change and conflict resolution.

The right to life and dignity in the face of HIV and AIDS

In 2004, nearly 40 million people were living with HIV and AIDS. Seven in ten were in Africa and six in ten were women. ActionAid uses successful, innovative approaches to place those affected at the centre of program, policy and campaign efforts.

The key programs in this area are: 1) community outreach programs to provide information on legal rights and medical options, provide protection against violence, and provide reduction in the burden of care and the power to make choices for safer-sex practices, 2) social services programs for people living with HIV/AIDS focused on livelihood, education, shelter, care and property inheritance, and 3) advocacy and campaigning to hold governments and other institutions accountable to their commitments, especially for funding.

The right to just and democratic governance

The theme of governance permeates through ActionAid's work, whether it is engaging with local communities or international institutions. It is based on a belief that governance needs to emphasize citizen participation, enabling poor and excluded people to ask questions, claim rights, make decisions and hold institutions to account. The key programs in this area are: 1) capacity-building to strengthen the capacity of women and

poor and excluded people to organize themselves to claim their rights, take part in decision-making and influence public policy, 2) support for civil society organizations and social movements that seek accountable government, democratic international institutions and effective regulation of transnational corporations, 3) monitoring the performance of governments related to the delivery of social and economic rights through budget tracking, public hearings, citizens' tribunals and right to information laws, and 4) advocacy and campaigning for fair trade, cancellation of the debt of poor countries, aid policies that benefit the poor and the promotion of the UN millennium development goals.

GOVERNANCE

The International Assembly is the overall governing body of the agency and consists of two members nominated by each affiliate and one member nominated by each associate (defined as country programs in the process of becoming affiliates) and meets once a year to review and approve the annual report and plans. It also approves all new five-year strategies. The Assembly elects a nine-member International Board of Trustees, that meets four times a year to undertake governance-related decision-making. The Trustees appoint the CEO and other international directors. The major operational units in ActionAid International are: 1) ten fund-raising and advocacy affiliates in the North (UK, USA, Australia, Ireland, Greece, Italy, France, Sweden, Denmark and Netherlands), 2) A total of 35 implementing country programs in Asia (10), Africa (21) and Americas (4), and 3) an International Secretariat, consisting of the CEO, twelve Directors, international teams for each of the six programs mentioned above, and international administrative teams for finance, human resources, internal audit, impact assessment, communications, and marketing. The country programs are managed by four regional directors (for Asia, Americas, West-Central Africa and South-East Africa), while the affiliates report to both the regional director and their national boards under a matrix management structure, with the boards possessing greater authority.

Accountability and Transparency Mechanisms

ActionAid has one of the most well-developed accountability and transparency mechanisms among international NGOs. It recognizes multiple stakeholders who include the poor and excluded people and groups with whom they work as well as supporters, volunteers, partners, donors, governments, staff and trustees. The main tool for ensuring accountability is the Accountability, Learning and Planning System (ALPS) that emphasizes accountability to all stakeholders (but most of all to poor and excluded people, especially women and girls). ALPS is a framework that sets out the key accountability requirements, guidelines, and processes in ActionAid International in terms of organizational processes (for planning, monitoring, strategy formulation, learning, reviews and audit) as well as personal attitudes and behaviors. ALPS is designed to: 1) deepen accountability to all stakeholders, particularly to the poor and excluded people, 2) ensure that all agency processes create the space for innovation, learning and critical reflection, and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, and 3) ensure that agency planning is participatory and puts analysis of power relations and a commitment to addressing rights – particularly women's rights – at the heart of all its processes. ALPs

requires that poor and excluded people take part directly in all processes of local program appraisal, analysis, research planning, monitoring, implementation, research and reviews, including recruiting and appraising frontline staff . It means that the priorities and perspectives of poor people must inform the decisions made at all levels by ActionAid and its partners.

The ALPS processes provides opportunities for poor and excluded people to challenge and hold the agency, as well as others, accountable. ALPS encourages the use of creative media and alternate forms of communication other than lengthy written reports. The art, oral traditions, theatre and song of people are part of the ways in which people engage their full creative talents and develop insights that surprise, inspire and generate new ways of doing their work. ALPS requires all ActionAid information, including appraisals, strategies, plans, budgets, reviews and reports to be open to all stakeholders, especially poor and excluded people. It promotes such openness in an active way by requiring translations of key documents into local languages and promoting visible public sharing of information as a right.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

In order to deliver these goals and priorities, ActionAid has identified a number of major challenges for the immediate future, based on an external and internal review.

Strengthen governance and deepen accountability

To promote equitable power sharing between the north and the south in order to strengthen accountability to poor and excluded people, it will develop current country programs as affiliates of ActionAid International wherever legally and practically possible; develop boards of high quality in all affiliates (poor and excluded people must be well represented in southern countries, and volunteers or supporters in northern countries); clarify the roles and accountabilities of affiliates, associates and the international secretariat to ensure a balanced system of governance, power sharing and decision-making; strengthen a dual identity – both national and international – in all national affiliates; strengthen the systems, skills and practices that ensure accountability to poor and excluded people and their organizations, and to its supporters and donors; and improve the quality of feedback given to and received from partners.

Strengthen staff capacity

The agency recognizes that achieving these goals requires strong leadership and is investing time and money to ensure that employees acquire the skills, attitudes, values and motivating capacities to drive the organization and bring about societal change by: 1) strengthening leadership development (especially women's leadership), 2) striving to achieve and retain equal male-female balance and appropriate diversity among staff at all levels, 3) training staff, trustees and partners on the key concepts, tools, approaches and practical techniques used by ActionAid, (especially rights-based approaches, women's rights and working with partners and social movements), and 4) creating an empowering and motivating work culture and environment.

Become a more flexible organization

In order to deliver on its mission and respond to rapid changes throughout the world, the agency is organizing itself to provide space and opportunity for innovative thinking and action, and staff mobility. The agency feels that power (including financial resources) must shift within the organization to match its strategic priorities by: 1) improving how it manages team work that cuts across countries, regions, job functions or campaign or program themes, 2) investing in technology that will help staff work more efficiently, including effective management of distant and virtual team working, 3) developing channels for more effective internal communication and more knowledge input from people outside the agency, 4) introducing structures and systems to enable the organization to generate and promote innovations and alternatives in the outside world, 5) strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems and the impact assessment capability, and 6) improving cost effectiveness and developing indicators to measure progress.

Strengthen communications and campaigns

The agency recognizes that effective communications and campaigns provide the bridge between it and the world. In particular, they can create a powerful platform for poor and excluded people to transmit their needs and aspirations to citizens, decision-makers and supporters worldwide. The agency is working to: 1) ensure that the voices of poor and excluded people are part of its advocacy and campaigns and receive first-hand public and media exposure, 2) establish a clear mechanism for prioritizing and implementing international campaigns, 3) improve design and delivery of effective and consistent national and international campaigns, 4) build a communications team in key global media hubs in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe, and 5) develop campaign and media liaison skills among staff and partners.

Strengthening relationships with its supporter base

The agency views giving money and time as powerful forms of activism and recognizes that one of its greatest assets is its strong community of child sponsorship supporters (300,000) and their growing willingness, particularly among young people, to join its campaign efforts. To maximize their contribution, the agency is: 1) offering supporters more and new opportunities to get involved beyond making donations, 2) internationalizing the supporter base by connecting people from the north and south, particularly the young, and actively involving them in its campaigns, 3) forging stronger links between supporters and the communities in which it works, 4) investing in and using new media and technology to widen its constituency, and 5) developing joint actions and campaigns with partners and wider networks and movements.

Increase and diversify income

The agency's income must continue to grow to support its mission. Therefore, the agency is building on its successful child and community sponsorship model while seeking more income from official donors and to tap into emerging fundraising opportunities in the south. The agency seeks to: 1) increase non-emergency related, long-term income from individuals and institutions, north and south, 2) diversify income sources, products and donors, 3) diversify fundraising methods and materials to maximize its appeal to long-

term supporters, and 4) expand relationships with official donors and use this opportunity to influence government policy.

The impact of these far-reaching changes in approach and structure on program quality at the grassroots level can best be understood through a description of the program strategy of one of its country programs. For this purpose, the following section provides information about the program strategy of ActionAid Ghana, one of the largest and oldest country programs in West Africa. It has the distinction of being the first country program in Africa to become an international affiliate.

ActionAid GHANA

ActionAid Ghana (AAG) was established in May 1990 with a small program that focused on one region within the country. Today, AAG is one of the largest ActionAid programs, with an annual budget of approximately \$9 million dollars. AAG works directly on five of the six international program areas under its current country strategy for 2005-2010. These choices have emerged from in-depth community needs assessments in order to prioritize the international programs.

Education

AAG's approach within the education sector is based on extensive experience of working on education issues in Ghana using ActionAid International's approach to education. AAG seeks to: 1) increase community participation in governance in the education sector through the promotion of participation, transparency and accountability among government agencies, 2) promote access to education as a right and ensure that sufficient resources are allocated by the government to the education sector, especially the provision of quality, committed and capable teachers in remote areas, 3) increase access to education and retention in school for vulnerable children and secure the rights of children while in school through financial support and 4) strengthen School Management Committees (SMC's) in order to hold governments accountable and assist communities in claiming their right to free and equitable access to relevant and quality basic education for all children.

Food Rights

Largely focused on small scale farmers who constitute the largest group of poor in Ghana, AAG's programs in this area seek to: 1) promote access and control of productive resources among the poor and support them in developing a strong and effective farmers' groups to increase their power and voice, 2) conduct high quality policy research to highlight structural constraints within the agricultural sector for poor farmers, 3) facilitate linkages of grassroots activism to national and international action on issues such as trade, and 4) provide the skills, contacts and resources that poor farmers, particularly women, can use to empower themselves to increase their productivity and take advantage of existing market opportunities.

Gender and Women's Rights

AAG focuses on specific issues of women's rights that include: 1) women in leadership training programs at the grass-roots and national levels, 2) service delivery programs on controlling violence against women by providing legal, economic and social support, 3) campaign work for inclusion of women's rights as a priority issue within key development policies such as the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, 4) strengthening of strong networks of women in peace building to nurture their confidence to engage in conflict resolution, and 5) influencing the reform of laws, norms and practices that affect the advancement of women, leading to the passage of the Domestic Violence Act in 2007.

HIV/AIDS

Even though HIV/AIDS awareness has increased significantly in Ghana, it has not been translated into desirable behavioural change and HIV/AIDS is still a highly stigmatised disease. AAG focuses its work on HIV/AIDS by: 1) reducing stigma and discrimination through awareness-raising at community and national levels, 2) strengthening organisations of people living with HIV/AIDS to claim their rights for care and support, 3) working for equitable and increased domestic resources allocation for HIV/AIDS by government and donors, and 4) facilitating, lobbying and supporting the establishment of voluntary counselling and testing to promote behaviour change among the youth in particular.

Peace and Emergencies

AAG's approach to peace and emergencies is pro-active rather than reactive. AAG works to: 1) promote innovative approaches to conflict prevention particularly with the youth, who often become unwitting instruments of conflict, 2) facilitate and strengthen the involvement of women in peace building, 3) collaborate with local governments and communities to enhance the preparedness and reduce the vulnerability of poor people to natural and man-made disasters through trainings and setting up of systems, and 4) undertake relief activities in the aftermath of an emergency or conflict.

Internal and external challenges

AAG has faced a number of challenges in transforming itself from an agency focusing solely on service delivery to one implementing comprehensive programs covering both service delivery and advocacy and campaigning. The first challenge is related to getting partners and communities on-board who had grown accustomed to the immediate benefits of service delivery and did not immediately see the long-term, more fundamental benefits that could accrue from changes in government and donor policy brought about by a rights-based advocacy. The agency has dealt with this issue by undertaking extensive awareness-raising programs about the benefits of the rights-based approach, and ensuring that service delivery continues hand-in-hand with advocacy activities. The second challenge relates to finding partners with adequate capacity (especially in the remote areas) who could implement a blend of service delivery and advocacy work. While the agency has undertaken extensive training programs for partner staff to promote the agenda, some of the benefits of the training efforts have been lost due to staff turnover and the impact of the global economic recession. The agency is dealing with this

challenge by strengthening the capacity of the fundraising team in order to develop funding sources in the Ghanaian diaspora, particularly in the U.K. and the United States.

In addition, the new matrix management structure with a dual reporting to the national board and the ActionAid regional office has resulted in multiple challenges related to decision-making and has required additional efforts to define different levels of accountability. For example, the national board members suggest program sectors that are not part of the international strategy. However, the agency is committed to the process of internationalization that is designed to produce positive results in the long-run as more countries from Africa join the international board and share their perspectives as part of an international organization.

AAG has also invested significant resources to ensure that it is accountable to communities, sponsors, donors and other stakeholders through a monitoring and evaluation system based on ALPS. It has set up systems and processes that involve communities in assessing AAG and partner performance, developed indicators that measure both tangible and intangible results of all units (programmes and support services) of AAG and partners, and established guidelines and frameworks to measure outcomes, especially the impact on women. Finally, retaining its own staff has been a challenge due to the intense competition for qualified staff from other international organizations like the UN agencies. The agency has dealt with this issue by maintaining a wide range of training and development programmes, creating opportunities for staff participation in organisational governance, developing a leadership programme for women within the organisation to ensure equal representation at senior management levels and by constantly reviewing terms and conditions of service to ensure that AAG is competitive in the labour market.

CONCLUSION

This case study reflects the unique set of changes that ActionAid has experienced in transforming itself from a charity organization to a global, decentralized international NGO. The most unique aspects of the change have been the emphasis on blending service delivery with community mobilization and capacity building as well as increasing advocacy and campaigning to develop a rights-based approach. The agency has also adopted a decentralized organizational structure to match its rights-based work and emphasized the importance of recruiting people from the south for high level positions within the agency. This change has led to many challenges that include: 1) communicating the new approach to communities and partners in order to gain their support, 2) finding high calibre staff and partners in capacity-deficit countries and remote areas, 3) finding adequate funding for the intangible nature of capacity-building and advocacy, and 4) resolving the conflicts inherent in a matrix management structure. The agency has dealt with these challenges by strengthening its linkages with its supporters, increasing their awareness of the realities in the field and developing a flexible organizational structure that decentralizes decision-making.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between a service delivery and rights-based approach to development work?
2. Why did ActionAid International change its organizational structure and what are its unique aspects?
3. What are the main challenges faced by ActionAid International in making these changes?
4. What are the main challenges faced by ActionAid Ghana in implementing these changes at the field level?
5. What is the unique accountability approach used by ActionAid International?

SOURCES

ActionAid International Website

ActionAid Ghana Website

ActionAid International five-year strategy

ActionAid International annual report 2008

ActionAid Ghana country strategy document

Interview with Head of Programs, ActionAid Ghana