

The Public Sector Pay Reforms: Where Exactly Are We?

It is generally agreed that public sector salaries in Ghana are low. In the 2006 Budget Statement it was noted “at the current level of remuneration, the civil service is losing highly productive employees”.

It is a fact that public sector wage has been increasing in both nominal and real terms since 2001. The national minimum wage, for example, almost tripled between 2001 and 2007.

However, as Government admitted in the 2006 Budget Statement, “while civil service wages have increased rapidly in recent years, they have done so from a very low base and they continue to lose ground against those in the private sector”.

Obviously, public sector wages must increase at a faster rate to ensure that the right skills are attracted to and retained in the sector. It was for this and other reasons that Government intro-

duced the on-going public sector pay reforms.

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In the meantime, public sector workers must have their pay adjusted upwards to cushion them from the increased cost of living. Government has assured public sector unions that the necessary mandate will be

given to their employers to start salary negotiation. We are appealing to Government to act quickly. We trust that all the social partners in the public sector will cooperate with one another to ensure that we have a peaceful industrial relations atmosphere this year.

Ghana Trades Union Congress Comments on Government of Ghana Budget Statement & Economic Policies for 2008

Submitted To Government, February 2008

In October 2007, Ghana TUC submitted its perspectives on the economy to Government in a proposal for the 2008 Budget Statement and Economic Policy under the title “*Sustaining the Progress Towards Economic Sovereignty and Social Development*”.

In that paper, we raised a number of issues concerning the management of the economy, poverty and the growing inequality, employment, wages in the public sector, agricultural credit, international trade and the Economic Partnership Agreement, among other issues.

The 2008 Budget Statement and Economic Policy which was presented to Parliament on 15 November 2007 addressed a number of these issues, either directly or indirectly.

This present submission contains our comments on the 2008 Budget Statement. We continue to draw attention to some important social and economic issues concerning the state of the economy, public sector wages, educational reforms, international trade, the growing inequality and food security.

We are making these comments with the hope that Government will take them into consideration in the implementation of the current policies and in the formulation of future policies.

THE STATE OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Despite the energy crisis that was experienced throughout 2007 and the high crude oil prices on the international market, official reports including those contained in the 2008 Budget Statement indicate that the economy remains resilient.



*Bro. Kofi Asamoah
Ag Secretary-General, Ghana TUC*

In October 2007, Ghana TUC submitted its perspectives on the economy to Government. A number of issues concerning the management of the economy, poverty, employment, wages in the public sector and agricultural credit among other issues were raised. The 2008 Budget Statement and Economic Policy addressed a number of these issues, either directly or indirectly.

The GDP growth rate for 2007 was estimated at 6.3%. The year-on-year inflation was 12.7% in December 2007. The exchange rate of the Ghana Cedi against the major international currencies remained quite stable. The national debt stock has reduced to ‘sustainable levels’, thanks to the HIPC and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiatives and the rising prices of the country’s major exports on the international market.

The end period inflation for 2008 is expected to be between 6 and 8 %; domestic primary deficit is projected at 1.7% of GDP; an overall budget deficit equivalent to 4% of GDP and the accumulation of

international reserves is projected at the equivalent of three months of imports. The overall measure of economic activity, the GDP, is projected to grow by 7%.

The prospects for continued economic growth remain high for 2008 and beyond and recent trends indicate that these targets are achievable. But, obviously, the fundamental challenges remain. The weak and unreliable economic and social infrastructure and the rising crude oil prices on the international market are among the major challenges that need to be dealt with by the managers of the economy.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ghana's economy has performed creditably, particularly since 2001. But, the large majority of the population continue to survive on less than two US Dollars a day. The income gap continues to widen and youth unemployment remains high. Thus, only a tiny fraction of the population is benefiting from the relatively high economic growth.

We have warned the managers of the economy that the growing income inequality portends serious danger for the political and social cohesion of the country. In particular, the inequality between North and South and between the rural and urban communities should be a source of worry for policy-makers. The latest Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS V, 2005/06) showed that the incidence of poverty in Ghana was 28.6% compared to 52% in

1991/92. The reduction in poverty was significant by all standards. But the survey also showed a widening gap between urban and rural communities in terms of incidence of poverty. Whereas urban poverty was reported to be 10.8% rural poverty was 39.2%. In other words, four out of every ten people in the rural areas are poor. The situation is worse in the northern part of the country

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where the average incidence of poverty was reported to be 60% compared to the national average of 28.6%. These statistics confirm the growing inequality and the differential impacts of economic growth in the country.

The continuing influx of rural youth to the cities is also a reflection of the growing inequality. The situation in Accra illustrates the phenomenon. The filth that is engulfing the city; the growing squatter settlements; the overcrowded households; the acute shortage of water in many parts of the city; the poor sanitation; the high rents and the high crime rate are all po-

tential sources of social tension in the society that need immediate attention.

While policies such as the Capitation Grant and the School Feeding Programme have improved access to primary education, there are still over 800,000 Ghanaian children who are out of school. The increased enrolment has also brought to the fore some of the shortcomings in the education system. These include the lack of facilities, the high pupil/teacher ratio, and the low morale among teachers all of which have contributed to the falling standards of education in the country.

While welcoming the educational reforms, it is important that we work with relevant stakeholders, particularly the teachers, to overcome these and other challenges. Teachers need to be given the required orientation on the role they are expected to play and, most, importantly teachers need to be appropriately resourced and rewarded for their efforts.

Ghana TUC would also like to remind the public authorities in charge of the implementation of the educational reforms that the quality human resource that is required to propel the country into a middle-income status cannot be achieved if we over-emphasize primary education at the expense of middle and higher level education. Access to primary level of education is critical for social and economic development but that level of knowledge cannot give us the

engineers, scientists, economists, architects, agronomists, social workers, nurses, doctors and other professionals the country so urgently requires to transform the economic growth into social development. We urge Government not only to continue to expand access to secondary and tertiary education but also to improve the quality of education at these levels.

With regard to health, Ghana TUC shares the frustration of many Ghanaians that in spite of the rapid increase in health expenditures over the years, the country is yet to see significant improvements in health care delivery. We note the concern expressed by Government in the 2008 Budget about the high under-five mortality. We continue to grapple with the poor access to portable water, inadequate sanitation and overcrowded households in rural and urban communities across the country. Households are being forced to pay higher tariffs for water yet many households, particularly in Accra, are left without running water for many weeks and months. These are an indication that economic growth will not automatically lead to social development. Conscious effort is needed to share growth.

It is reported in the 2008 Budget Statement that at the end of September 2007 the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing had spent about 13% over its budgetary allocation of GH¢27.70 million and that “sanitation in the big cities and other urban centres received a

big boost during the year”. It was also announced that an amount of GH¢13.7 million, representing 50% of the total human development spending under HIPC, was spent on sanitation. This is laudable but we still have a long way to go as far as sanitation is concerned. According to a World Bank Report published in 2007, it is estimated that half of the Ghanaian population still lacks ac-

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cess to safe water and two-thirds do not have access to adequate sanitation. The report refers to the situation in the sanitation and water sectors as the “silent crisis” which, according to the report, threatens the growth in economic activity and public health.

The housing situation is equally serious. In the 2006 Budget Statement, Government estimated the housing deficit to be between 350,000 and 400,000. We noted Government’s statements in the 2006 Budget Statement about the review of

the National Housing Policy “to make it more realistic and responsive to the needs of the low-income group”. For instance, it was announced that Government would establish a National Housing Authority, which will be responsible for the implementation of the National Housing Policy. We were therefore surprised to know that the National Housing Policy is still in its draft form and is still waiting for Cabinet consideration and approval.

Again, in the 2006 Budget, Government announced its plans “to produce about 125,000 housing units annually, over the medium term, to make up for the backlog”. We are aware of the construction of flats at Borteyman, Kpone, Asokore-Mampong, Wamale, Koforidua and the commencement of the construction of flats at Wa and Bolgatanga as announced in both 2007 and 2008 Budget Statements. But we all know that these are not enough to deal with the acute

shortage of houses in Ghana. More effort is needed to support the private sector to participate in the provision of houses. The difficulties involved in the acquisition of land and the high levels of interest rates are issues that deserve more attention from Government. The necessary steps should be taken to develop the mortgage market as a way of solving the housing problem.

DECENTRALISATION

While welcoming Government’s initiative to increase the

allocations to the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF), we would like to see the reinvigoration of the decentralisation agenda. The local authorities still lack real political power to deal with the social and economic issues at the local level. One way to empower them may be to make the assemblies accountable to the people in the districts but not to the President. Such a measure will enable the assemblies to attract and retain the right calibre of personnel with the requisite skills to manage their resources.

TRANSPORTATION

The traffic situation in our cities needs more attention. Workers spend many hours everyday in traffic to and from their workplaces. The negative effect of the long hours spent in traffic jams on labour productivity is huge. An integrated Transport Policy announced in the 2008 Budget Statement may be the way forward but it needs a big push. We are looking forward to the implementation of this policy in 2008.

“TALK TAX”

Government has announced the introduction of what has become known as the “talk tax” which means the more one talks on his/her mobile phone the more one pays taxes to Government. We share Government’s view that the country needs to raise more revenue to close the infrastructure gap and to support programmes that help alleviate poverty. But

we think the basis of the proposed “talk tax” is doubtful especially when import duties on mobile phones are going to be scrapped because, according to Government, such taxes encourage the smuggling of mobile phones into the country. This is another clear case where the activities of a few ‘bad nuts’ (i.e., smugglers of mobile phones) have determined Government tax policy.

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The proposed ‘talk tax’ amounts to double taxation of the mobile phone user since the current regime of pay-as-you-go has an element of taxation. The

scratch cards we buy already have VAT included in their prices. In our view, the regressive nature of such a consumption-based tax makes it inconsistent with the poverty reduction agenda. Instead, Government could have levied the proposed tax on the service providers so that consumers will bear the tax burden according to their demand elasticities. A tax on the companies may also

encourage competition among the network companies because the more efficient ones may even decide to absorb all the tax and find other more competitive and less harmful ways of running their business. The solution to the low levels of tax revenue does not lie in the introduction of the so-called “talk tax”. Rather, Government should modernise and resource the Internal Revenue Service, VAT Service and CEPS to do what they were set up to do.

AGRICULTURE

Credit

Ghana TUC shares the concern expressed by Government in the 2008 Budget Statement regarding the declining share of agricultural credit in overall bank credit. While we agree with Government on the proposed tax incentives to encourage bank credit to the agricultural sector and the creation of the Agricultural Investment Fund/Farm Credit Corporation, we think there are more fundamental challenges that face agriculture which need urgent attention from Government. Among these is the over-

liberalisation of trade which makes it practically impossible to sell locally-produced agricultural commodities particularly rice, cotton and poultry products. How Government deals with the over-liberalised trade regime in the coming years would be an important factor for agricultural development in the country.

With regard to the lack of credit to farmers, the answer does not lie in the sale of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) to foreign private interests. We will continue to oppose the sale of ADB to foreign interests because we believe that ADB occupies a strategic position in the economy of Ghana. It may be the case that the ADB has not been able to accomplish its mission over the years. But the inability of the Bank to fulfil its mandate needs to be placed in the right context and critically analysed before remedial action is taken. Recapitalization of ADB will be useful but that can be achieved without selling the bank to foreign interests. Again, the argument that ADB needs the infusion of 'superior' managerial capabilities and that this infusion can come about through a merger with foreign commercial interests amounts to a complete denial of faith in Ghanaian entrepreneurship. In any case, the banks that are leading the takeover bid are being managed by Ghanaians.

It has been argued that there could be a conflict of interest because the Bank of Ghana which is the regulator of the banks also holds shares in

ADB. Theoretically, such a situation may arise, but in practice there is no evidence to show that the Bank of Ghana has compromised its standards in its role as a regulator. No one can establish that the Bank of Ghana has at anytime relaxed its regulations in favour of the ADB solely because it holds shares in the bank.

ADB is being accused of paying more attention to money

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transfers and other activities at the expense of agricultural lending which is its core mandate. Given the high level of risks in the agricultural sector, ADB might have collapsed if it had concentrated solely on agricultural lending. The losses ADB incur from lending to the agricultural sector reduce its profit by 65% annually. What it means is that if ADB operates as high-street commercial bank with no obligation to the agricultural sector it can increase its profit by about 65% annually.

ADB might have internal management problems which need to be addressed. However, the

constraints in the agricultural sector go beyond any particular bank be it local or foreign. We see the attack on ADB as an attempt to give the dog a bad name in order to hang it.

In the 2007 Budget Statement it was announced that 1500 eligible farmers would have access to credit under the Food Crop Development Project and another 1000 farmers were to be vetted for credit under the Inland Valley Rice Development. Government announced that an amount of GH¢544,238.92 was set aside to be extended to a number of farmers groups in collaboration with the Agricultural Development Bank. We would like to know which communities and how many farmers benefited from that fund.

Food Security

There are indications in the 2008 Budget Statement that Government is now focusing more attention on food security issues. The establishment of strategic stocks and contingency planning announced in the 2008 Budget Statement are important initiatives.

Government also announced its intention to promote sustainable water harvesting and its efficient management, to procure and distribute 1000 Tractors, 500 Power Tillers, 500 tractor-mounted harvesters and to improve on the operational efficiency of existing and new irrigation schemes to contribute to the achievement of the food security objective. Other measures are to be taken to improve feeder roads and

agricultural credit. In particular, the plan to improve the operational efficiency of existing and new irrigation schemes can promote dry season farming which will not only reduce seasonal unemployment in the beneficiary communities, but equally importantly it will contribute to the reduction of rural-urban migration of the youth.

Cocoa and Sheanut Sectors

The performance of the cocoa sector, in terms of output and export revenue, in the past five years can be attributed mainly to the attention Government has paid to the sector. Increased producer prices, increased bonus payments, pest and disease control and the cocoa farmer's housing scheme are some of the initiatives behind the success story. As announced in the 2008 Budget Statement, Government intends to continue the implementation of these measures. The increase in producer price of cocoa from GH¢915.00 in 2006/07 to GH¢950 per metric tonne in 2007/08 is a step in the right direction because apart the direct and positive effect it will have on farmers' incomes, it will also have positive effect on productivity in the cocoa sector.

In the coming period we expect similar support for other sub-sectors. In particular, we expect more financial and technical support for the sheanut sub-sector. We note that Government has budgeted GH¢550,000.00 for the sector

for 2008 to boost the industry. This is a good beginning but given the state of the sector, much more need to be done in order to reap all the potential benefits in the sector.

One important area that needs further attention is the processing of cocoa beans and the utilization of cocoa by-products. In the 2007 Budget Statement, Government announced its plans to process half of Gha-

On the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), we urged Government to be circumspect and work in partnership with other countries within the ECOWAS sub-region to ensure that national and sub-regional interests are protected. We drew attention to the potential risks of concluding a rushed free trade agreement between a trading giant like the EU and Ghana

na's cocoa beans domestically as a means of increasing the export value of cocoa. We would like to know what happened to this laudable idea.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

In our previous submissions to Government, we cautioned against the unbridled liberalisation of the Ghanaian economy under the false assumption that global integration will improve

productivity and competitiveness of domestic enterprises. We have pointed out many of the constraints that stand in the way of sustainable enterprise development in Ghana and suggested a strategic and gradual approach to liberalisation as we work to remove these constraints. We have urged Government to intervene appropriately in areas where the outcomes of the free market turn out to be sub-optimal or potentially so.

On the specific issue of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), we urged Government to be circumspect and work in partnership with other countries within the ECOWAS sub-region to ensure that national and sub-regional interests are protected. We drew attention to the potential risks of concluding a rushed free trade agreement between a trading giant like the EU and Ghana. At some point we commended the Government and other countries within the ECOWAS region for resisting the pressure from the EU to conclude the EPA. In a letter to the Minister of Trade and Industry, Private Sector Development and President's Special Initiatives, we did not only express concerns about the EPA negotiations but also we proposed some alternatives.

Unsurprisingly, and in a clear demonstration of its selfish intents, the European Commission changed its tactics from regional negotiations to bilateral negotiations with individual countries within the region. We

were surprised to know that the Governments of Ghana and the Ivory Coast have succumbed to the pressures of the European Commission. Nigeria with the biggest economy in the sub-region opted for the more development-friendly enhanced Generalised System of Preferences (GSP+) which we proposed to Ghana Government.

The ECOWAS Commission President is reported to have said that the Commission gave its blessings for countries to have separate bilateral arrangements with the European Commission. It is difficult for us to understand why the ECOWAS Commission should give permission to countries pursuing a customs union project to have separate trade regimes with a trade giant like the EU. The so-called a "Stepping Stone" agreement with the European Commission raises fundamental questions regarding the vulnerability of the Government of Ghana to international pressure. The secrecy that surrounded the processes leading to the signing of this agreement raises questions about transparency and accountability.

We strongly oppose Government's commitment to the removal of export duties on all Ghanaian exports destined for the EU. The imposition of export duty, particularly on unprocessed goods, is and will continue to be an important policy instrument Government can use to ensure that local enterprises add value to raw materials before exporting

them. This way, Ghana can earn more from her resources and also create more jobs locally. In addition, export duties currently constitute an important and a reliable source of government revenue. In 2008

It is difficult for us to understand why the ECOWAS Commission should give permission to countries pursuing a customs union project to have separate trade regimes with a trade giant like the EU. The so-called a "Stepping Stone" agreement with the European Commission raises fundamental questions regarding the vulnerability of the Government of Ghana to international pressure.

Government has projected to earn GH¢73.5 million from export duties and GH¢672.8 million from import duties. What will the removal of export taxes as early as January 2008 and import duties over a 15 year period beginning January 2008 mean for fiscal revenue in 2008 and the subsequent years? These commitments, in our view, defeat the objective of building competitive private sector and increased revenue mobilisation for the provision of social services for the poor.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Government launched the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) in October 2006. So far 108,000 jobs have been created under the programme, according to the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment (MMYE). Currently, the MMYE is preparing a National Employment Policy to serve as a guide for job creation in both the private and public sectors. We have assured Government of our full support for these programmes and initiatives.

We would, however, like to emphasise that those employed under the NYEP should be fully protected in accordance with the Labour Act (Act 651, 2003). In particular, we expect that the youth employed under the scheme will be allowed to exercise their right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. We also expect them to join the social security scheme this year (2008).

We are aware of the delay in the payment of wages and allowances to those employed under the programme. We are also aware that Government is making efforts to pay the arrears and to ensure regular payment of wages and allowances in the future. We expect that Government will resource the implementing agencies adequately within the current and subsequent budgets to achieve the programme objective of employing half a million youths by the end of 2009.

PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES

Under the on-going public sector wage reform, a unified single spine salary structure was expected to be introduced this year (2008). This was subject to the condition that the Consultant working on the public sector job evaluation would complete her work. We are yet to receive the final reports on the job evaluation. The Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FW&SC) has been established but it is yet to start work.

It is becoming clear that the single spine structure cannot be introduced this year. The implication is that public sector wages will continue to be determined as usual through collective bargaining between the various public sector unions and their employers. Government has assured us that the necessary mandate will be given to the various agencies in the public sector to negotiate with unions. We urge Government to give the mandate without delay. As Government prepares to give mandate to the various agencies we suggest that attention should be paid to the rising cost of living in the country and the need to reward public sector adequately to achieve increased productivity. Ghana TUC stands ready to facilitate public sector wage negotiations to ensure that there is peace and harmony at the labour front. In addition, we are ready to assist Government to educate all public sector workers on all the elements of the on-going public sector reforms.

CONCLUSION

Ghana's achievement in the area of macroeconomic management has been remarkable, particularly since 2001. The relatively low rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and the sta-

The 2008 Budget Statement has outlined a number of policies and programmes with the aim of consolidating the gains achieved so far. We trust that Government will commit enough resources to the policies and programmes announced in the Budget Statement. In particular, we urge Government to commit resources to the public sector reforms to achieve the set objectives.

bility of the value of the Ghana Cedi are all commendable. Interest rates remain high but there are indications that they are falling, although not at the desired rate.

We maintain that the economic growth Ghana has recorded in the past two decades has not been "transformational" in the sense that it has not translated into increased living standards for the majority of Ghanaians. Just a tiny fraction of the population has gained from the growth. This explains the widening income gap in the coun-

try. That is one of the reasons why we fully support Government's efforts towards the creation of half a million jobs by the end of 2009. We believe that the NYEP is one programme that will translate the growth of the economy into real gains that will reflect in lives of Ghanaians. We urge Government to provide the necessary resources to the implementing agencies to enable them to deal with the numerous challenges facing the programme.

The 2008 Budget Statement has outlined a number of policies and programmes with the aim of consolidating the gains achieved so far and to push the economy further towards accelerated growth the poverty reduction. We trust that Government will commit enough resources to the policies and programmes announced in the Budget Statement. In particular, we urge Government to commit enough resources to the public sector reforms to achieve the set objectives.

We are satisfied with our engagement with Government on various social, economic and labour market policy issues. We assure Government of our continuous cooperation in the spirit of social partnership and mutual respect provided Government will continue to keep the space for social dialogue.

Strategic Direction For Ghana Trades Union Congress, 2008-2010

by Dr. Yaw Baah, Head, Policy & Research Department,
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The author

The Ghana Trades Union Congress (TUC) was established in 1945. The aim of the Union is to “unite all workers of Ghana into an independent and democratic organisation for improved working and living conditions through collective action, solidarity and social partnership based on the principle of fairness and justice.” The Union promotes democracy, independence, social solidarity, social partnership, fairness and equality. Ghana TUC’s vision is “to be among the best trade unions in Africa”.

The union has, since its inception, played an important role in Ghana’s political, social and economic development. The role of the trade union movement in the political struggle that eventually led the country into political independence is well known. In addition to its traditional role of defending and protecting the rights of workers, the Ghana TUC has been an active civil society organization and has over the years been an advocate of social and economic justice.

The trade union movement in

Ghana, like its counterparts around Africa, is facing several challenges. Today, unions have to operate in a globalising environment which favours and protects capital at the expense of labour. Globalisation is eroding the social and economic gains of the trade union movement at an unprecedented rate. Ghana TUC faces the challenge of securing a living wage. It also faces the challenge of uniting the front of organized labour.

The Ghana TUC has adopted a three-year Strategic Plan to provide a framework for institutional renewal. The Medium Term Strategic Plan (2008-2010) seeks to reposition the Ghana TUC to offer protection and other tangible benefits to the working people of Ghana.

Ghana TUC and its affiliates have to deal with these challenges in an industrial relations atmosphere that has changed considerably since the Labour Act (Act 651) came into force

in 2003. Among other provisions, Act 651 promotes trade union pluralism making it even more difficult to hold its affiliates together under one umbrella.

These challenges provide compelling reasons for the Ghana TUC and its affiliate national unions to re-strategise and reposition themselves. Sixty three years in the life of a membership based organisation like the Ghana TUC is long enough for institutional renewal.

The Ghana TUC has therefore adopted a three-year Strategic Plan to provide a framework for institutional renewal. The Medium Term Strategic Plan (2008-2010) seeks to reposition the Ghana TUC to offer protection and other tangible benefits to the working people of Ghana through policy interventions and

other activities at the national, sector and enterprise levels and through cooperation with the relevant international trade union organisations.

The Plan covers six key Strategic issues or Pillars including Organisational Development, Organising, Education, Policy & Research, Restructuring, and International Relations.

This short article explains these strategic issues. The purpose is to create the awareness of the Plan as the Union prepares to hold its Quadrennial Delegates Conference later in the year.

Strategic Issue 1: ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The aim of this Strategic Issue or Pillar is to increase the membership base of Ghana TUC. Specific objectives of this to build the capacity of Ghana TUC to organize and deliver service which strengthen workers unity and the knowledge required to exercise their rights; to involve young workers to be active in the trade union movement; to raise the awareness of the workforce about the benefits of trade unionism; and to ensure that the trade union leadership is able to interact with union members more regularly. Activities to be undertaken under this Pillar include training of organisers, sensitisation of members at the national, regional, district and workplace levels and to reach out to students particularly those in the secondary and tertiary levels.

Strategic Issue 2: ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The goal of this Pillar is to enhance the organisational capacity of Ghana TUC. Under this Pillar, Ghana TUC seeks to strengthen its capacity to manage the centre professionally. It is expected that by the end of the period, Ghana TUC would have improved the manage-

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ment of its human, financial and material resources in order to provide quality service to its affiliates and their members efficiently and effectively.

Strategic Issue 3: WORKERS EDUCATION

Under this Pillar, Ghana TUC seeks to strengthen worker education and training. It is expected that well-structured education and training programmes will be introduced for all members at all levels. Teach-

ing and learning materials will also be reviewed. Most importantly, the Ghana TUC seeks to reduce its dependence on external funding for education. Among many other activities planned under this Pillar, basic courses will be introduced at the Ghana Labour College; trade union schools will be established in all regions where union members will be provided the opportunity to be trained in basic trade union courses; expand and enrich the Certificate in Labour Studies programme, and organise courses on occupational health and safety, HIV/AIDS and in gender equality.

Strategic Issue 4: RESTRUCTURING & MERGERS

Ghana TUC is encouraging its affiliates operating in the same economic sectors to merge. Ghana TUC believes that merges will strengthen its affiliates to deal with the challenges facing them. The restructuring will involve realignment and re-demarkation of unions. Ghana TUC will facilitate the mergers of its affiliates in areas of common jurisdiction and to redefine the relationship between the Ghana TUC and its affiliates. At the end of the period, it is expected that a new organisational structure of the Ghana TUC would have been developed and the capacity of the affiliates strengthened in terms of human, financial and material resources to provide services to their members efficiently and effectively.

**Strategic Issue 5:
POLICY & RESEARCH**

The goal of this Pillar is to strengthen the policy analysis and research capacity of the Ghana TUC and its affiliates for effective participation in economic, social and labour policy decisions at enterprise, sector and national levels. At the end of the period, it is expected that the Ghana TUC would have established a well-resourced policy analysis and research unit. Ghana TUC has already appointed a five-member board to oversee the establishment of a Labour Research & Policy Institute. The Institute, which is expected to be fully operational this year, will help improve the capacity of the trade union movement to participate effectively in national and enterprise level policies and to engage Government and employers on labour, economic and social policy issues.

**Strategic Issue 6:
INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

The aim of this Pillar is to strengthen Ghana TUC's soli-

arity and unity with regional and international trade union movement and to achieve full understanding of international economic and trade policies.

The Strategic Plan was adopted by the Ghana TUC Executive Board in December 2007. Several initiatives are being taken to ensure a successful implementation of the Plan. The Plan will also be used as basis for the preparation of Ghana TUC's annual budgets during the Plan period. Monitoring and evaluation are key elements in the strategic management process. Activities under the plan will therefore be monitored and reviewed annually.

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The Millennium Development Goals

Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 is a Millennium Development Goal. In addition to broader approaches, the Sachs Report (for the UN Millennium Project) proposes a series of "quick wins", approaches identified by development experts which would cost relatively little but could have a major constructive effect on world poverty. The quick wins are:

- Access to information on sexual and reproductive health.
- Action against domestic violence.
- Appointing government scientific advisors in every country.
- Deworming school children in affected areas.
- Drugs for AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.
- Eliminating school fees.
- Ending user fees for basic health care in developing countries.
- Free school meals for schoolchildren.
- Legislation for women's rights, including rights to property.
- Planting trees.
- Providing soil nutrients to farmers in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Providing mosquito nets.
- Access to electricity, water and sanitation.
- Supporting breast-feeding.
- Training programs for community health in rural areas.
- Upgrading slums, and providing land for public housing.

