

**IMPROVING
THE EDUCATION SECTOR
IN
GHANA'S DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

**PAPER PRESENTED BY
THE HON. DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND SPORTS
(HON. MRS ANGELINA BAIDEN-AMISSAH)
AT THE STUDY TOUR OF ASIA
BY
AFRICAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION**

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1.0 Background

The improvement of the Education Sector is one of the key issues on Ghana's development agenda. Over the years, in pursuit of restoring the standards of the education system, governments have made various efforts with the view to ensuring that the education service fulfills the expectations of the individual as well as making available, the requisite human resource capital for national development. In view of this, Ghana has initiated a number of reforms in the past, the latest being the 2002 Educational Reforms and the 1996 Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) which have led to the present structure

1.1 Present Structure

Ghana currently operates a structure consisting of 6-years primary, 3-years Junior Secondary School (JSS), 3-years Senior Secondary School and generally 4-years University Degree Education. There are other specialized institutions such as nursing, agriculture, teacher training and polytechnics, with certificate and Diploma programmes of between 2 and 3-years duration.

The major defects of the existing structure are:

- ❖ It over-emphasises grammar/general type of education
- ❖ Very little attention is given to technical and vocational education and the large informal sector so that most school leavers are not well – prepared for the world of work
- ❖ It provides limited opportunities for transfer within the various streams

1.2 Proposed Structure of Reforms

To remedy these defects, the Government has proposed to establish in 2007/8 academic year:

- a new basic education structure made up of 2 years Kindergarten, 6 years Primary and 3 years Junior High School. The new basic Education will therefore be 11 years. After basic education, the government proposes the following streams:
- 4-year Senior High School, leading to post Secondary and tertiary education
- Parallel technical/vocational education leading to Polytechnics or the World of Work; and
- Apprenticeship system leading to the World of Work
- 3-4 year tertiary education (Polytechnic & University)

The Government also recommends the creation of Open Community Colleges and an Open University to provide for work-study programmes and life-long education. The specialized institutions (post secondary institutions which are currently non-tertiary) under the new structure would be upgraded to award diploma and would be affiliated to relevant Universities and Polytechnics.

Distance Education, ICT, Special Education and Guidance and Counselling would be critical components of the new structure.

1.3 Education Strategic Plan (ESP)

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MOESS) has developed the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2003-2015, which is a long term plan designed to provide the strategic framework that will guide the development of the education sector over the period up to 2015.

The preparation of the ESP was informed by the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS), Education For All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other sectoral and national reports.

The ESP lays the foundation for a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) to education sector development in Ghana ensuring joint responsibility and partnership between government and all stakeholders, with the MOESS taking the lead role in guiding the implementation of the ESP.

The ESP is organized along four main areas of focus as follows:

- ❖ Equitable Access to Education
- ❖ Quality of Education
- ❖ Educational Planning and Management
- ❖ Science and Technology , Technical and Vocational Education and Training

1.4 Funding Of Education Sector

A key issue to the implementation of the Education Strategic Plan is the ability of the education sector to optimize the management of available financial resources.

The Government has a constitutional mandate to provide Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) to all Ghanaians and this has placed a major financial responsibility on Government.

For the last five years, about 64.2 % out of Government budget to education has been allocated to basic education as illustrated in Table 1 for 2004.

Table 1: Expenditure by level of education 2004

GOG Expenditure by level of education (¢ millions)

SUB-SECTOR	PERSONAL EMOLUMENT (Item 1)	ADMINIS-TRATION (Item 2)	SERVICE (Item 3)	INVESTMENT (Item 4)	TOTAL	% ALLOCATION
PRE-SCHOOL	204,262	3,907	4,192	-	212,361	5.4%
PRIMARY	1,474,810	23,254	37,452	-	1,535,516	39.2%
JSS	740,321	13,279	15,702	-	769,301	19.6%
SSS	470,161	12,895	11,420	14,694	509,170	13.0%
NON FORMAL EDUCATION	18,336	464	6,629	-	25,428	0.6%
SPECIAL EDUCATION	18,017	1,794	664	1,260	21,735	0.6%
TEACHER EDUCATION	189,548	5,026	4,451	583	199,607	5.1%
TVET	44,157	1,751	2,750	1,535	50,192	1.3%
TERTIARY	540,375	24,483	12,129	2,582	579,570	14.8%
SUBVENTED AGENC IES (INVESTMENT ONLY)	-	-	-	706	706	0.0%
MANAGEMENT (INVESTMENT ONLY)	-	-	-	14,866	14,866	0.4%
TOTAL	3,699,985	86,853	95,388	36,225	3,918,452	100.0%

Source: *MOESS Preliminary Education Sector Performance Report 2005*

The cost of implementing education sector development exceeds the resources available to the Ministry and there is a financing gap faced by the Ministry which it needs to overcome to enable it to achieve development goals as targeted.

Additional resources would be required to close the financing gap through other sources such as the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund), the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF), the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Fund and contributions from Donor Countries.

2.0 KEY CHALLENGES AND HOW GHANA HAS ADDRESSED THEM

2.1 INCREASING ACCESS AT BASIC EDUCATION IN LINE WITH EFA AND MDGS

The focus of Government has been the reduction of barriers to entry to primary education and the creation of awareness among parents and pupils of the benefits of receiving primary education.

In furtherance of this, direct action in the form of capitation grants to basic schools and the abolition of all forms of levies which would prevent any pupil from going to school have been introduced nationwide. In addition, a World Food Programme (WFP) initiative to promote girls enrolment and the NEPAD School Feeding Programme have been introduced in some underserved Districts to promote access.

The result of these initiatives has been a sharp increase in basic school enrolment as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Enrolment Figures

PROGRAMME	2004/2005	2005/2006	INCREASE NO.	PERCENTAGE
Pre-School	547,950	748,411	200,461	36.58
Primary	2,328,373	2,659,506	331,133	14.22
JSS	822,125	906,970	84,845	10.32
Total	3,698,448	4,314,887	616,439	16.67

Gender

Boys	1,943,909	2,239,023	295,114	15.18
Girls	1,754,539	2,075,864	321,325	18.31
Total	3,698,448	4,314,887	616,439	16.67

Source: *Ghana Education Service Report on Capitation Grant 2006*

2.2 COMPUTERIZED SCHOOL SELECTION PLACEMENT SYSTEM (CSSPS)

A number of problems characterized the manual system of selection and placement of Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) graduates to Senior Secondary Schools/ Technical Institutions (SSS/TI) on annual basis. These included parents and guardians travelling from school to school in search of placement for their wards, harassment of heads of schools for limited vacancies, heads going into hiding to avoid seeing parents, under enrolment and over enrolment in the community and urban schools respectively.

Lack of transparency and perceived unfairness in the selection of JSS graduates into SSS all warranted the need to centralize the selection process to ensure fairness.

To address these problems, the government introduced the CSSPS which places students in the schools according to merit and based on their raw scores.

The result is a generally accepted system that has also increased the number of qualified students enrolled in the Secondary Schools and Technical Institutions throughout the country by 16% irrespective of where the school is located and whether or not it is a community type.

2.3 TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) POLICY FRAMEWORK

The present TVET system is mostly institution-based and fragmented under different Ministries, Agencies and the Private sector, each developing and offering its programme under their parochial policies without any coordination. Linkages with industry in terms of input for curricula development are weak resulting in mismatches of supply and demand of skills. There is also the poor public perception of TVET affecting recruitment, funding and unsatisfactory quality of delivery due to inadequate instructor preparation and provision of instructional resources.

To address these, Government in collaboration with industry has developed a TVET Policy Framework to guide policy makers and to sensitize the public on the Government's focus on a new vision for Technical, Agricultural and Vocational Education and Training.

This policy provides for the establishment of a National Council for TVET to regulate and give direction for the effective management and the development of competency-based curricula for Polytechnics and Technical Institutions.

The TVET Bill is currently before Parliament awaiting ratification.

2.4.0 TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

2.4.1 Upgrading of Teacher Training Colleges to Diploma Awarding Institutions

A key and critical Government policy is the production and recruitment of competent and dedicated teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the basic education level. This has led to the upgrading of Teacher Training Colleges to Diploma Awarding Institutions leading to production of better qualified teachers for basic schools.

2.4.2 Female Enrolment in Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs)

To increase female enrolment at TTC, access courses are provided annually prior to the commencement of the general course. This way, the quota of 40% female intake can be maintained, helping to train female teachers to serve as role models for girls in basic schools.

2.4.3 Continuous Teacher Development

With access to tertiary education constrained by inadequate infrastructure in institutions of higher learning and the quota system of study leave policy limiting the number of teachers leaving the classroom the need for open and distance learning facilities assumes prime importance.

The education reforms highlight the importance of continuous teacher development to upgrade and update the competencies and skills of serving teachers to enable them offer quality teaching and learning in our schools. The Distance Education and Sandwich Programmes initiated by the teaching Universities have given several opportunities for teachers to upgrade themselves to the Diploma and Degree levels. As an incentive the government will from 2006/2007 academic year subsidize the Distance Education Programmes offered by the teaching Universities by about 50%. This will reduce considerably the financial burden being borne by teachers on distance education programmes.

2.4.4 Untrained Teachers Training (UTT) Programme

To meet the goals of Education For All, there should be enough qualified teachers in the country. Presently, there are 24,000 untrained teachers (about 10% of the total number of teachers) serving in rural and underserved areas where quality teaching and learning is lacking.

The Government Education reforms state that: Distance education courses should be organized for non-professional teachers to enable them qualify as professional teachers. Such a programme would help enhance their present low esteem and serve as a public mark of appreciation by the government to teachers who have continued to work in difficult conditions for many years. Significantly, the UTT Programme focuses on the needs of poor untrained teachers and as such represents a strong pro-poor government intervention. About 14,300 untrained teachers in the northern and middle parts of the country have been registered and enrolled on the programme since 2004. The whole nation will be covered by 2007. This programme will strengthen the link between pre-

service and in-service modes of preparing teachers, as well as enhancing the knowledge and delivery skills of the untrained teachers.

2.4.5 Teacher Deployment

Teacher deployment is another critical challenge facing the MOESS. Equitable deployment of teachers in terms of numbers, experience and qualifications is vital to the achievement of quality education for all at the basic level. The Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in rural and underserved districts PTRs are high while there is a comparative surplus of teachers in urban areas. Following the introduction of capitation grants and other initiatives the PTR will continue to increase. It is therefore important to deploy sufficient numbers of teachers to meet expanded enrolment rates.

The District Sponsorship scheme is another strategy for improving teacher deployment. It is a scheme where teacher trainees are sponsored by Districts and the students are contracted to teach in these districts for at least three years upon completion of their training.

Another challenge in deploying teachers is that many students entered teacher training colleges with the intention of accessing the study leave programme in order to get into tertiary education and then leave the education service. As well as incurring significant administrative and management costs, this is a highly cost ineffective means of producing graduates.

The institution of quota system of paid study leave to teachers is another bold strategy to improve teacher deployment. Quotas are determined for particular subject areas where there are inadequate numbers of teachers and study leave candidates are therefore selected on this basis. This has significantly reduced the number of teachers leaving the classroom to pursue further studies.

2.5 EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The capacity for educational planning, and management of the education sector is fundamental both for making more effective use of resources and for enabling other stakeholders including civil society and community to contribute to education provision. Of all the systematic approaches being pursued, the most important is decentralization. Decentralization is key to improving the efficiency of education management and services. It will enable planning, prioritization and implementation to be directly influenced by and be responsive to, the local needs and priorities of students, parents and communities. Increased decentralization of education service delivery through the development of District Performance Reports and District Operational Plans has been introduced to feed into the budget process for the Ministry.

An Educational Management Information System (EMIS) has been introduced to strengthen evidenced - based Management. EMIS is a data collection, storage, retrieval, processing and dissemination system specifically designed for use by decision makers and administrators to plan and administer the education system more efficiently and effectively.

2.6 GHANA EDUCATION TRUST FUND

The Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) was established by an act of Parliament Act 589 CA 2000. Its main objective is to provide supplementary funding to support the provision of education by the government throughout the country. The fund is

managed by a board of trustees whose powers and functions are clearly spelt out in the act which established it .

3.0 GHANA'S EXPECTATION FROM STUDY TOUR

It is the expectation of the Ghanaian Team to learn from the experiences of other countries in the under listed areas:

3.1 Basic and Secondary Education

- Achieving universal primary education
- Achieving gender parity
- Expanding SSS in a cost effective manner

3.2 Technical and Vocational Education and Training

- Curriculum reform in TVET
- Assessment and certification of TVET
- Integration of formal and informal systems
- Linking TVET with industry, industrial attachment, tracer studies, etc.
- Advocacy to address the negative stigma on TVET
- Entrepreneurial Training for TVET Trainees

3.3 Teacher Education

- Teacher supply and teacher deployment especially to deprived areas
- Integrating in-service training as part of teacher development system at school level
- Use of distance learning as a cost - effective strategy for teacher upgrading

3.4 Science and Technology

- Integrating ICT at all levels of education
- Promoting Science and Technology education

3.5 Cross Cutting Issues

- Using Education Management Systems as a decision making tool at all levels.
- Decentralizing the management of schools including fiscal decentralization.
- Capacity building for school management.
- Achieving balance in resource allocation between sub - sectors

3.6 2004 data on GER by Participating Countries

	Ghana	Singapore	Vietnam	Cameroon	Ethiopia	Madagascar	Mozambique	Zambia
Primary	83.3%							
JSS	70.2%							
SSS*	361,500							
TVET*	21,424							
Tertiary*	98,393							

Note * Actual number of students enrolled.

4.0 Conclusion

The education sector is facing an exciting and challenging period in its development. The reforms proposed by Government affect all levels of education and will require innovation and inventiveness in the mobilization of all resources both human and financial as well as participation of all stakeholders in order to realize the objectives of our education reform programme. Improvements in access and quality of education at all the levels of education will provide the needed impetus to the reform programme as well as to the development agenda of creating wealth and reducing poverty in Ghana.

The proposed reforms will contribute to an increased funding gap for the entire education sector. There will be the need therefore as already indicated to attract increased levels of external funding, including increasing levels of support from the private sector, adopt cost-recovery strategies and also look to improve efficiencies in education delivery in order to meet the increasing resource needed.

Co-operation and dialogue between government, the private sector, development partners and all stakeholders will drive forward the reform process and ensure that the education sector achieves the derived impact on the growth of the national economy.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION