

Education Sector Review (ESR)

**Consultancy Area Report on
General Education, Gender and the Disadvantaged**

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ACRONYMS

CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CRRD	Curriculum Review and Research Division
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CRT	Criterion Reference Test
CWIQ	Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire
DEOC	District Education Oversight Committee
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education For All
ESSP	Education Sector Support Programme
FAWE	Foundation for African Women Educationalists
GES	Ghana Education Service
GEU	Girls' Education Unit
GNCC	Ghana National Commission on Children
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GLSS	Ghana Living Standard Survey
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
JSS	Junior Secondary School
MMDE	Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment
MOE	Ministry of Education
NNTTC	National Nursery Teachers Training Centre
PTA	Parent Teacher Associations
PPMED	Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division
SHEP	School Health Education Programme

SMC	School Management Committees
SSS	Senior Secondary School
UCC	University of Cape Coast
UCEW	University College of Education Winneba
WSD	Whole School Development
WUSC	World University Service of Canada

Introduction

The Education Sector Review began in February 2002 and was aimed at assisting the Ministry of Education conduct a comprehensive analysis of the education sector in order to “improve the state of education and provide effective proposals to enhance the quality of education across the sector.” The Education Sector Review (ESR) involved five key consultancy areas including:

- Linkages, Transitions and Educational Outcomes,
- Educational Management,
- Finance,
- Community/school linkages
- General Education, Gender and the Disadvantaged.

The ESR forms part of an integral process of education reform currently underway in Ghana and attempts to provide an up to date analysis for sector wide programming. The ESR team is expected to provide an analysis of the issues, recommend potential solutions, strategic options and practical next steps.

The purpose of this report is to provide a synthesis of the key findings under the consultancy area “General Education, Gender and the Disadvantaged” which forms part of the Education Sector Review (ESR). The consultant was asked specifically to:

- Examine the demand for early childhood education
- Analyse the gender issues in education
- Examine the policy, strategy and improvement of programmes to combat HIV/AIDS
- Assess the measures taken to address the issues of child rights and protection
- Examine the school health education programme
- Examine the effectiveness of the special education programme for children with special needs

This report forms one of the background documents submitted to the Ministry of Education and its development partners as part of the Education Sector Review (ESR). A more detailed review can be found in each of the “Situational Analysis” reports, which were conducted under the General Education, Gender and the Disadvantaged consultancy area.

The following report reviews the issues of inequity from a regional, gender and socio-economic perspective. It also examines the programme needs, challenges and key recommendations for addressing cross cutting issues such as special needs education, health, HIV/AIDS and child rights. The findings are based on interviews, stakeholder meetings and documentation reviews within the various sub sectors. The review was carried out in a participatory manner involving key stakeholders in the analysis, and the process of strategising and developing key recommendations within each educational sub sector.

The report is organised in the following manner: section one examines the issues related to poverty and the disadvantaged and section two considers key gender

issues in education. The next sections examine early child hood education, school health and HIV/AIDS and the final section contains an analysis of child rights and protection within the education sector.

1.0 Poverty and the Disadvantaged

Poverty and parental neglect within communities around the country continue to be major factors in preventing children from access, achievement and transition within the formal education system in Ghana. A large proportion of children at Primary level particularly those from rural deprived areas are not completing primary school (approx 7-8%) (see figure 1 below).

A large proportion of children and families under the poverty line reside in the three northern regions of the country. These children make up the vast majority of those out of school many of who are girls (GSS, 2000). Figure 1 reveals that large educational disparities continue to exist between the northern and southern areas of the country. The latest Ghana Living Standards Survey suggests that:

- Disparities remain between the Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) in the northern and southern regions of the country.
- The Ashanti, Greater Accra and Eastern regions record the highest gross enrolment rates and experience the lowest incidence of poverty (GSS, 2000).
- The three northern regions have the lowest school enrolment rates (below 60%), (Ministry of Education, 1999/2000) and experience the highest incidence of poverty (GSS, 2000). The low GERs in the three northern regions have persisted and account for the modest GER across the country over the last ten years (UNESCO, 2000).
- Data from the GLSS suggest that as the incidence of poverty declines (from regions in the northern sector towards the south), school enrolment increases substantially for both girls and boys.

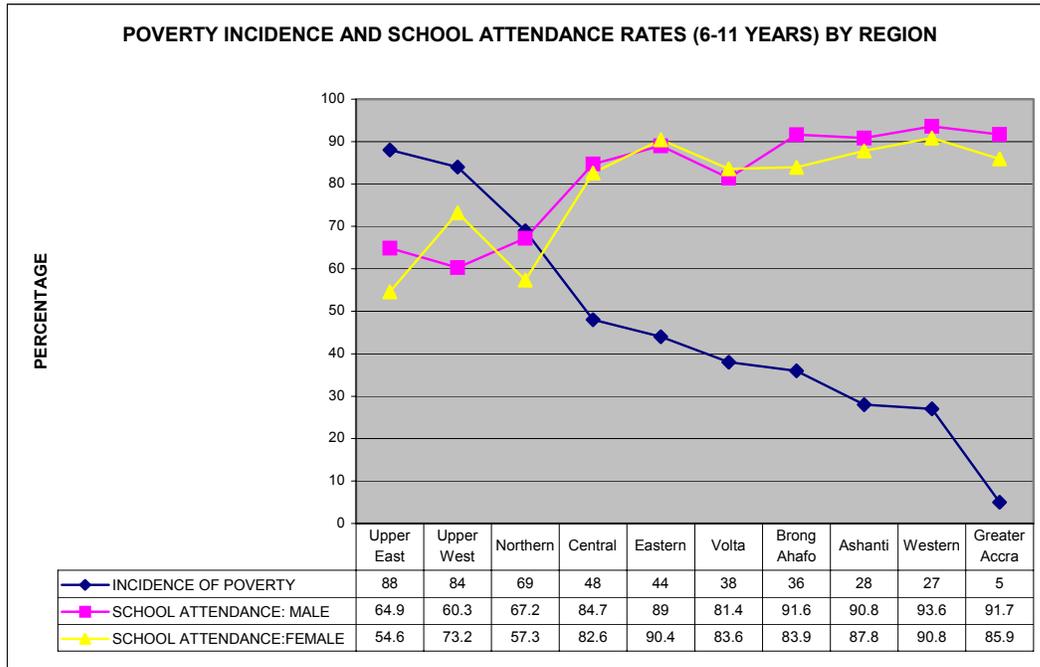
Fig. 1 reveals that the Upper West region has experienced a slight change in girls' participation where attendance rates have increased outstripping that of boys. This region has developed a strong media and public education campaign to promote girl's education and improve educational conditions supported by both civil society and government stakeholders.

The most recent poverty data in Ghana reveals a widespread decline in public primary school enrolment ratios across income groups and localities between 1992 and 1998 particularly for the poor income groups (Canagarajah and Xiao 2001)¹. Canagarajah and Xiao (2001) argue that public primary school enrolment ratios have "not kept pace with the population growth rate, especially for the poor."² Conversely, growth in enrolment for private primary schools, which mainly cater to high-income groups, is increasing by 7% per year.

¹ Based on the Ghana Living Standards Surveys 3 and 4.

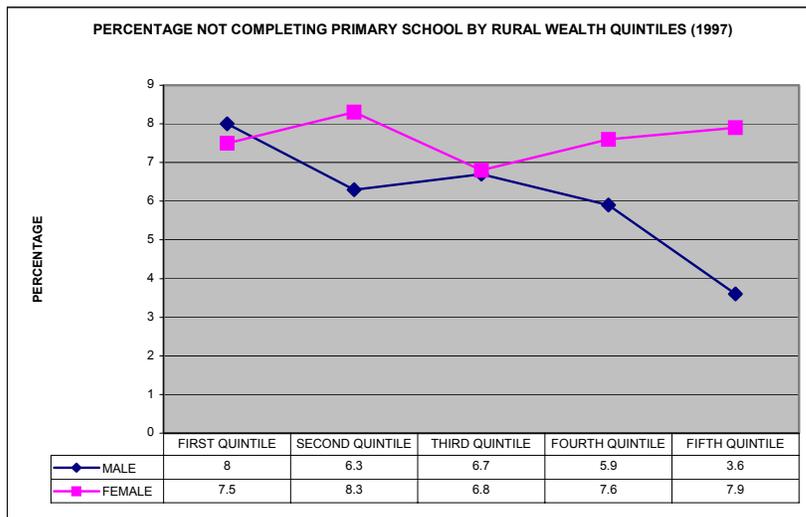
² Population growth was high at between 3.97 (1989/90) to 3.53 in 1998/99. The growth in school enrolment decreased from 6.55% to 3.21% for the same period (Sarpomaa Fiscian, unpublished data). Djangmah, 1998 paper on the impact of Structural Adjustment in the Education sector places the growth in basic schools as low as 1.7% for primary schools and 2% for basic schools between 1990 and 1996. Both base their calculations on PBME data.

Figure 1



1.1 Primary completion rates and wealth

The Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS4) and the core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ, 1998) reveal that children from poor families are far less likely to complete school compared to those from non-poor families. The CWIQ revealed that there were marked differences between drop out rates (0.9%) across rural and urban households (0.5%) in Ghana. Surprisingly the data revealed that boys are less likely to complete school than girls as we move from poor to wealthier rural quintiles. Figure 2 below suggests that as per capita annual household expenditure increases the likelihood of girls completing basic education also increases.



1.2 Regional Analysis

When one considers the share of girls at JSS and SSS by region a similar pattern emerges. Fewer girls are able to attain higher levels of education when considering regions with the highest incidence of poverty. The regions with the lowest participation rates for girls at SSS are the Western Region, followed by the Northern and Upper East Regions. These are the regions with the lowest participation rates of girls. The same patterns are prevalent at the JSS level in which the North (34.2%), Upper East (42.6%) and Upper West (43.5%) have the lowest girls participation rates and experience the highest incidence of poverty (MOE, 2000/2001).

Breaking the poverty cycle is a difficult task since girls' education is both the most effective strategy for reducing poverty but at the same time one of the most complex approaches to sustain in areas of high poverty incidence and where socio-cultural values play a significant role in restricting girls access to education (see section 2 on gender).

1.3 Performance across the regions

Evidence from rural Ghana suggests that formal education systems perform poorly in rural contexts, which are characterised by high levels of poverty. Children and rural households in these high poverty contexts are often found further impoverished and vulnerable by poor quality education systems. These families who invest in children and sacrifice opportunity costs in order to send children to school are not reaping the benefits of basic education particularly when children remain illiterate and unable to cope in harsh environments (Pryor, 2002, Casely-Hayford 2000; Kraft, 1995).

Children from poor rural households often are confronted with several challenges in managing their community and family context and achieving a minimal level of basic education in formal schooling. Social, economic and cultural contexts create inequities between rural and urban children competing for places in higher levels of education. The evidence in Ghana suggests the formal basic education not only does not equalise the playing field but can further expand inequalities between children from low and high socio-economic backgrounds. The contextual issues which often undermine the quality of education --- limit education from acting as a means to poverty reduction. Some of these contextual educational issues include the:

- Lack of a literate environment-- access to books, reading materials and literate parents who read to their children.
- Lack of "social capital" which includes the parents understanding the importance of education, having the linkages and supporting children through the system.
- Poor quality of education in rural deprived areas and the inability and unwillingness of some trained teachers to teach children in harsh rural environments due to lack of basic amenities (i.e. water electricity and housing). This often results in high absenteeism, lack of contact hours, low level of interest and commitment on the part of teachers.
- Harsh environmental context of the school including lack of potable water, food and poor hygienic and health conditions.

- Constant pressure on child labour at the household and on the farm.

Studies in Ghana continue to point out the difficulties teachers' face in teaching in harsh rural environments where water and accommodation, access to electricity and isolation remain a problem. Studies indicate that in most deprived districts in the country less than 10% of the teachers in rural areas are trained and female (Casely-Hayford with Wilson, 2001). Some districts are unable to attract and retain teachers simply because these areas are considered harsh and deprived. Without dedicated teachers willing to make substantive sacrifices, quality of education for poor rural children is unlikely to change.

Table 1 presents the percentage of children reaching the 60% mastery level for English in all regions of Ghana. Most areas have performed poorly with only some regions achieving slightly higher levels of mastery. The CRT scores for 2000 ranged from 5.4% for P6 children reaching English mastery level in the Upper West compared to 32.2% in Greater Accra.

Table 1: Regional Percentage Reaching the Criteria in English over Five-year period

Region	Percentage Reaching Criterion in 1993 (Rural)	1994 ³	1995 ⁴	1996	1997 ⁵	2000
Ashanti	.7	.6	2.9	4.5	1.4	7.1
Brong Ahafo	1.0	1.6	1.7	1.7	3.7	4.1
Central	1.4	.9	1.9	1.1	11.4	5.1
Eastern	.5	1.6	2.0	5.4	3.4	11.4
Greater Accra	.9	13.4	11.1	14.8	18.0	32.2
Northern	1.9	4.4	1.8	5.2	3.1	2.8
Upper East	4.8	4.8	3.9	4.2	6.1	3.0
Upper West	2.3	0.0	3.6	1.0	11.5	5.4
Volta	1.7	3.4	3.1	4.6	4.2	10.8
Western	2.7	1.9	5.8	8.4	3.6	5.5
TOTAL	1.5	3.3	3.6	5.5	6.3	10.0

(Based on CRT reports, Ministry of Education, Accra, Ghana)

The same regions, which experienced a high incidence of poverty also, experienced reductions in child literacy based on their CRT scores. These regions were: Upper East which experienced declines in CRT scores between 1997 and 2000 from 6.1 to 3.0%, Northern region (3.1 to 2.8%) and the Central Region (11.4% to 5.1%). Other regions experiencing improvement in the CRT also experienced reductions in the incidence of poverty.

The percentage of pupils "reaching mastery" levels is extremely low around 10% for English and 4.4% for Mathematics (MOE/CRT, 2000) across the country. The CRT findings reveal the low level of educational quality among public schools in Ghana. It also reveals that the private school results are much more encouraging since pupils have attained much higher levels of mastery. Unfortunately no research is available

³ Only for public schools

⁴ National sample schools which may include public schools only

⁵ Included urban and rural schools combined in public schools only

in Ghana, which indicates the relationship between educational performance and poverty across various socio-economic quintiles.

Families affected by poor educational quality are often further disadvantaged when education is of poor quality and low standard. Children from poor areas are often unable to compete for positions at the higher tertiary levels of education due to their inability to access the best 18 Senior Secondary Schools in the country where the vast majority of University entrants are drawn from (Aday Mensah, 2000).

1.4 Flexible schooling approaches

Flexible school systems are more effective in areas where teachers are unwilling and unable to work and where communities experience a high poverty incidence. Research from Northern Ghana suggests that shorter more intensive periods of schooling particularly when conducted in local language can be more effective in ensuring that the basic literacy and numeracy skills are passed on to children within the minimal amount of time (between one to three years). Parents, communities and government are also found more effective in supporting such systems in order for basic education to be achieved. More flexible approaches to education, which include the engagement of local facilitators as teachers, are becoming more prevalent in the northern regions of the country through efforts of NGOs (i.e. Action Aid and School for Life).

Research by Action Aid (2002) and School For Life (1995) two NGO's with a long history in northern Ghana suggest that flexible schooling is an effective approach to improving educational effectiveness particularly in areas of extreme poverty. Both NGO's have been implementing large-scale programmes for children living in deprived rural areas of the country. The Action Aid approach engages local community members having Senior Secondary School Certificates in the implementation of flexible school programmes for children between P1 to P6. The programme is based on the idea that communities have the right to decide on the education of their children. Parents and community members make decisions concerning the timing of the school, the people who will teach and the curriculum.

The School for Life programme is similar but takes a different approach in ensuring that children between the ages of 10-15 who have not been able to access or remain in the formal system of education, receive basic education during the off farm period. The classes start in the afternoon when children are freed up from farming activities and the curriculum focuses on the basics of reading and numeracy. Within 9 months children are able to read and write in their local language and often enter the formal system of education. The programme has made significant strides in assisting rural children continue their education in spite setbacks due to poverty.

Flexible schooling is being widely recognised as valuable solution to the problems of providing quality education in deprived rural areas across Africa where lack of committed teachers and poor quality education persist. The Governments of Mali, Burkina Faso and Ethiopia have supported efforts by NGOs to implement flexible school systems for children in difficult to reach areas. The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) has earmarked specific funding for supporting out of school programming. NGOs should be targeted to implement educational programmes,

which are more relevant and sustainable within these deprived rural areas where teachers are unlikely to live and provide children with the necessary encouragement they need to perform and achieve basic literacy levels. Flexible schooling models are also able to introduce parents to the positive outcomes of education by ensuring that all children attain a basic level of literacy with the shortest period of time.

The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy also earmarks funding for up to 100,000 children for alternative education within the programme. The MOE should consider scaling up the approaches which have had a proven track record in providing quality education to children in deprived rural areas as an interim measure while conditions for quality basic education delivered through the formal education system improve.

Conclusion

In order to improve the access and retention of children under the poverty line two key strategies will have to be considered:

- Investing in flexible schooling approaches in the northern sector⁶
- Improving the quality of education at primary level in rural deprived areas country-wide (increasing the books, increasing the number/district quota for pupil teachers from the community, providing school libraries and teaching/learning materials, providing in-service training in reading methods for teachers).

The investment in supporting only one quarter of children complete the public school system represents a crisis. Child poverty has much to do with this problem and schooling must be considered within its contextual confines. More realistic approaches to the provision of higher levels of quality education must be found to support education in rural deprived areas of Ghana. This national analysis of poverty trends in educational attainment revealed that:

- The low levels of literacy and numeracy are prevalent in regions with high levels of poverty.
- The vast majority of children out of school are in northern Ghana where there is the highest incidence of poverty.
- This study has found that the number of out of school children and drop out rates are increasing in areas where a high level of poverty persists.
- Closing the enrolment and gender gap in order to ensure equal access and retention of girls will depend on flexible schooling approaches and improved primary school quality.

Improving educational quality at the primary level and introducing flexible school systems will be key to improving the access and educational outcomes of children in rural deprived areas of the country.

⁶ The GPRS has earmarked 100,000 places for children with flexible and alternative schooling approaches. Programmes like School for Life should be scaled up to meet the demand in most of the northern regions of the country.

2.0 Gender Equity Issues and Girls' Education

This section summarises the situational analysis prepared on gender issues in the education sector (Casely-Hayford, 2002). The following section presents the main challenges towards achieving gender equity within the sector, the key priority areas and the best strategies identified for achieving higher levels of gender equity within the education system. The situational analysis was prepared in consultation with gender experts including representatives from the Ministry of Education including the Girls Education Unit and Manpower Division and various NGO's working on gender issues in Ghana.

2.1 Key Gender Issues within the Education Sector:

The education of women is thought to be one of the most "important strategic investments in the development process" (Prah, 2002; UNICEF, 1993; Floro and Wolff, 1990). Despite the evidence concerning the private and social returns of female education the evidence has not been convincing enough to make female education a major thrust in development or educational programming. Gender equity remains as an add on or at best is "mainstreamed" as opposed to being a key policy thrust within poverty reduction programming, and educational policy formulation⁷. Despite the global empirical evidence suggesting that women's education is crucial in order to ensure that a country's development aspirations are achieved, the goals of gender equity are often not achieved and sustained across the education system (UNESCO, 2002).

Evidence from countries around the world suggest that Sub Saharan Africa will fall far short in meeting its developmental commitment to gender equity and will not achieve the sustained growth and poverty reduction that it so desperately needs.

" Whereas only 32 countries were formerly believed to be at risk of not achieving the EFA goal of universal Primary education on the basis of enrolment rates, use of completion rates raises the number to 88 countries, out of the total 155 for which data were established. Some 35 countries are unlikely to meet the goal of eliminating gender disparities at the Primary level by 2005, even when the goal of simply universal Primary enrolment is used and not universal Primary completion." (IMF/ World Bank, April 2002)

Ghana is among the 88 countries, which will not achieve EFA goals by 2005. Educational statistics demonstrate the difficulty in achieving gender equity across the system and ensuring literate girls become educated women. Today:

- 75% of girls access the formal Primary education system --- less than 50% in several districts in the Northern Regions and deprived rural areas of the country (GSS, 2000)
- Less than 60% of girls complete the primary school level with far fewer in the Northern and Upper regions of the country

⁷ See GPRS (2002) very little mention is made of girls' education or women's literacy in the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy.

- Only 30% of these girls complete JSS
- Only 20% of these girls complete SSS and far less access the university system (18% average over the last 10 years).
- One out of every eight women complete 6 years of Primary schooling according to the Core Welfare Indicator Study (GSS, 1998)
- Over 50% of the Ghanaians are illiterate--- 75% of which are women (NFED, 1996)

Most disheartening is not that so few girls complete six years of schooling but far fewer are able to read, write and remain literate into adulthood. International studies suggest that children need at least six years of Primary school of "reasonable quality" to become literate (Goody and Bennett, 2001; Olson and Torrance, 2001). NGO's in Ghana are demonstrating that with the proper teaching and curriculum children can become literate within one year if provided with intensive local language training.

Prah (2002) argues that there are serious gender inequalities in Ghanaian education "the nature of women's education, often is more oriented towards teaching women to become better housewives and mothers than equipping them with the skills and training they need to enable them to hold their own beside men in a rapidly changing world". This is particularly revealing within the vocational and technical streams of education where girls themselves opt for subjects, which reflect traditional roles and socialisation at the home. Table 2 summarises the key indicators of women's status within the workforce and education system.

Table 2: Women's Status in the Workforce and Education System

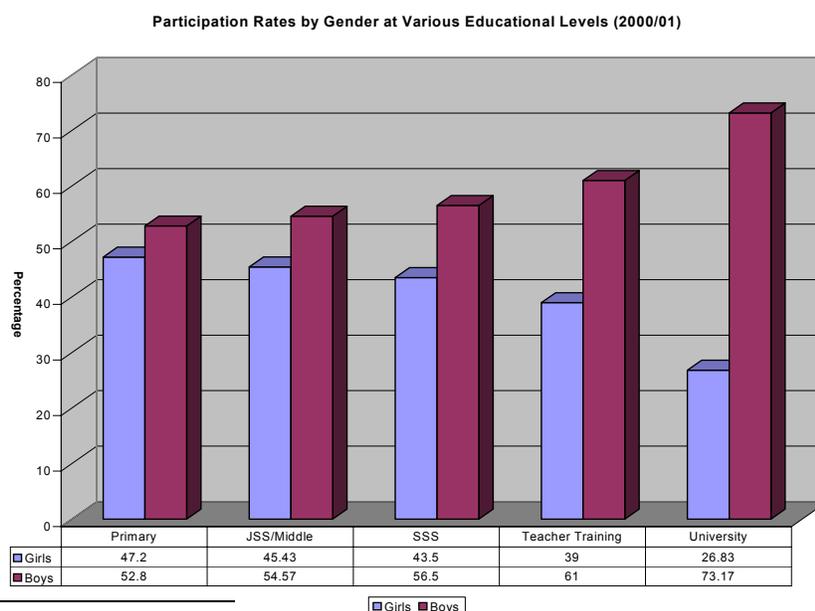
Sector	Evidence
Economic marginalisation of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Poverty studies in Ghana suggest that women make up a larger proportion of those under the poverty line (GSS, 2000; Casely-Hayford, 2001). ➤ Women have been more affected by the impact of structural adjustment programmes (North/South Institute, 1995) and government retrenchment programmes (KPMG, 2002). ➤ Number of female headed households in rural areas rose from 40% in 1984 to 47% in 1995 (Svanikier, 1997)
Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Women make up less than 15% of the proportion engaged in formal employment including large and medium scale enterprises in Ghana (Nikoi, 1993). ➤ The vast majority of women in Ghana are engaged in subsistence rural agriculture (over 76%). Increasing evidence suggests that these women bear the burden of educating their children (GLSS, 2000). ➤ According to GOG only 10% of leadership positions are occupied by women: less than 8% of district assembly members, 8% of parliamentarians are women (Acheampong, 2000; Prah 2002)
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 58% of the male population is literate with only 36% of female population over 15 years of age are literate in Sub Saharan Africa (Svanikier, 1997). ➤ Only 50% of adults in Ghana are literate in English or a local language with substantial differences according to sex and region. For instance 6 out of every 10 men are literate while only 4 out of every 10 women are literate (GLSS 4, 2000). Literacy rates also vary in rural and urban areas. ➤ Over 55% of women in urban areas are literate compared to only 37% in rural areas-- 26% in rural coastal, 36% in rural forested areas and only 13% of women are literate in the rural Savannah (GSS, 2000) See table 1.0 in annex 3 for the breakdown).

Sector	Evidence
Formal Education Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School enrolment rate for girls in Sub Saharan Africa was 42% at basic level, the secondary school level was 14% and the tertiary level 2% (UNDP, HDR, 1993) ➤ Female participation rates in Ghana is 47.2% at Primary level, 45.3% at junior secondary level⁸, 43.5% at secondary level and between 15 to 40.7% at tertiary level (2000/01). ➤ Gender parity has improved slightly over the last 10 years at the Primary Level with some increase at the Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary Level.

The table reveals the low levels of literacy maintain women in subordinate roles in the workforce due to their inability to achieve higher levels of education. The ESR revealed the following key gender issues within the Education Sector:

- There is a high number of out of school children-- the majority of whom are girls which persists particularly in the northern region of the country (where over 50% of girls are out of school)
- High drop out rate for girls at basic level particularly in Northern Region (25%)
- Poor transition rate of girls from JSS to SSS due to low awareness of other educational options and socio-economic constraints
- Low participation rate of girls in technical and vocational training particularly in non traditional areas and science related
- Poor transition rate of girls from SSS to Tertiary Level Institutions --- particularly for girls from rural SSS into the teacher training colleges
- Low participation of women in teaching profession (25%) and higher management positions (20%) particularly in tertiary level institutions (University of Cape Coast having less than 10% female teaching force)

Figure 3 presents the participation rates of girls and boys across the various educational levels in Ghana.



⁸ Source of data for Primary and JSS see Annex 9.

2.2 Factors, which prevent girls from achieving access and transition

The following section reviews some of the reasons why gender inequity persists particularly at the basic and secondary levels of education.

2.2.1 Poverty

Quaisie (1997) has shown that poverty contributes to the low educational attainment of females. Most often parents from low socio-economic groups prefer to send their boys to school instead of their girls. Several research reports point to the lack of parental care as one of the key reasons why girls are unable to access, stay and achieve basic and secondary levels of education (Casely-Hayford with Wilson, 2001). Poverty and lack of parental care can lead to early pregnancy, inability of girls to purchase basic needs (i.e. food, sanitary napkins, panties) often forcing them to engage in “transactional sex”. This is a dangerous social phenomenon in any society attempting to control HIV/AIDS.

2.2.2 School based factors

There are several school based factors which result in gender inequality including:

- Lack of girl friendly learning environments
- Poor quality systems
- Lack of sanitation facilities
- Low levels of awareness concerning appropriate and supportive gender sensitive teaching methods

Studies by WUSC, Ghana suggest that classroom teaching is pivotal to **girls’ self-esteem** and their ability to learn through asking questions and listening. Girls are particularly sensitive to the behaviour and feedback from teachers and their peers (MacKinnon, 2000). This has particular importance for the introduction of gender sensitive teaching strategies at teacher training level.

Making classrooms more child-friendly particularly for girls requires more female role models and teachers who are gender sensitive. Increasing the number of female teachers can have a positive impact on girls' ability to aspire to higher levels of education (Rugh, 2000). Studies on the number of female teachers in the Ghanaian teaching profession indicate a very low level of female participation, particularly in rural deprived areas (Casely-Hayford with Wilson, 2001; Prah, 2002). Prah (2002) points out that 22 of the 233 teachers are women at the University of Cape Coast-constituting 10% of the total.

Prah provides evidence at tertiary level, which suggests that educational institutions have “cultures” which foster gender inequalities. She argues that the attitudes of teachers, the school curriculum, textbooks used and educational policies are mainly modelled on male perspectives and values (Prah 2002). Research in Ghana by Sutherland-Addy (1995) and Adomako (1993) in Ghanaian classrooms identified ways teachers adversely influence the performance of girls. They argue that girls are often:

- Discouraged and intimidated by teachers due to their failure to cultivate a sense of independence and trust in their abilities
- Sexual harassment
- Abuse and exploitation at school level (i.e. sending them on errands during school hours)

2.2.3 Community based factors

The socio-cultural barriers to female education have been well documented. Some of the main barriers include:

- The socialisation of girls at the home and in the community often stresses marriage and motherhood as the primary goals of a girls life--- " A woman's honour is from her husband" (Akan Proverb cited in Prah, 2002)
- Girls receive less encouragement to embark on higher education (Development and Women's Studies Programme, 1995; Avotri et al, 1999)
- Girls are expected to provide labour particularly in the home and in relation to child rearing duties (Casely-Hayford, 2000)
- Parents place lower value on girls' education since, "a woman belongs to the kitchen and that girls will become married dependants of their husbands" (Prah, 2002; The Development and Women Studies, 1995)

2.3 Ministry of Education Gender targets

The Ministry of Education has focused most of its gender equity efforts at the basic level of education in order to improve the access and participation rates of girls at Primary and JSS levels. The 1987 reform ensured that girls and boys receive the same curriculum and access to the same subjects.

In September 2001 the MOE developed a policy document called "Policies and Strategic Plans for the Education Sector 2001". This document outlines all the major policies, strategic plans and programmes for the MOE/GES for the next five years. Gender equity concerns are, addressed within the various strategic objectives of the MOE/GES. Many of the existing policy recommendations and lines of action if implemented would considerably improve the conditions for and reduce the barriers to female education. For instance female education can be improved through:

- The provision of water and sanitation facilities in all schools particularly those in the Northern Region
- Strengthen and improve the guidance and counselling in schools
- The introduction of remedial courses for pupil teachers to gain admission to Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). This will enhance women's access to the teaching field and provide more role models for girls.
- Provide alternative routes to formal education in response to specific local needs
- Remove the barriers to education particularly for the poor and needy

Ghana's track record at ensuring gender equity within the secondary and tertiary level is less promising particularly in the teaching field. Very few of the MOE/GES documents identify action for achieving gender equity within the teaching profession. There is neither a gender policy within the Ministry of Education nor policies articulated within the MOE, 2000 policy document that directly ensure equal

opportunities for women in the teaching profession apart from the introduction of access courses, which may improve the numbers of women applying to TTC's. Global experience suggests that where women have a history of unequal access to education they should be given special support and representation at higher management levels through affirmative action policies (NFED, 1996; Prah, 2002). There is a need to consider a gender policy for the education sector to guide, track and monitor programming.

Even though the Government's White paper on Tertiary Education Reform (1991) states that the target for admission and retention is 50% male and 50% female participation at Universities, very few strategies have been put in place to ensure this objective is achieved (National Council for Tertiary Education, 1998).

There are several promising interventions and programmes, which promote and ensure gender equity at the Primary and JSS level but far fewer at the SSS and none at the Tertiary level (The Development and Women's Studies Programme, 1995). Another gap for consideration appears to be in the linkage between formal and non-formal education systems so that girls remain literate and continue a process of life long learning. This will ensure that the benefits of education are passed on to their families through their improved quality of life.

Several targets have been established to guide educational planning and programming in Ghana. Achieving these various targets will not be easy particularly due to the lack of a sector wide programming. Competing stakeholders involved in the education sector create duplication and limit capacity for interventions at the national and district level. One set of comprehensive targets and a comprehensive approach to programming, which pays particular attention to female education, is necessary for Ghana.⁹ The UN Special Initiative on Girls Education is an excellent example of how UN agencies are working together to focus their programming on girls' education. This promises to improve the outcomes of the various interventions in at least six districts in the country.

The Non-formal Education Division within the Ministry of Education set the most progressive and comprehensive gender targets. The gender policy document is an excellent blueprint for other sub sectors to emulate.

The Girls' Education (Draft) Strategic Framework is a good beginning for outlining the key strategies to assist girls at basic level; more targets and strategies for ensuring equity at the second cycle and tertiary level are needed. Targets must also be set within the teaching and management field as part of a comprehensive gender policy for the MOE/GES. A more progressive gender policy is needed to ensure equity and equality within all educational institutions particularly at the secondary and tertiary levels. Gender equity goals in teaching and educational management are long overdue and must be considered in any comprehensive education policy plans.

⁹ The education sector in Ghana has several agency programmes, which identify with different sets of targets and goals. For instance the Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP) set the following targets in 1997 for achieving gender equity. "Female participation should increase from 46% to 48% at Primary level and 43% to 45% at the JSS level by 2001".

The ESR literature review revealed that several educational plans have focussed on improving girls' participation but do not adequately address quality issues. More emphasis should be placed on targeting the barriers inside the classroom and establishing a supportive environment in order to provide a girl friendly learning environment particularly in rural areas of Ghana. This would involve more emphasis on ensuring female teachers access and remain in the system. Women should be able to reach higher levels of education in order to act as role models for younger girls. Plans laid out in several policy documents must move into implementation through identifying appropriate mechanisms to ensure gender goals are achieved. Data collection and analysis at local, circuit, district and regional levels and advocacy at community levels key lines of action needed to ensure these goals are achieved.

The linkage between access to education, female empowerment, and societal transformation is widely accepted (UNESCO, 2002). The GES/MOE should begin to liaise with other governmental and non-governmental agencies to set up mechanisms, which ensure gender equality in education from a management, quality and literacy perspective. More work is needed to help move the debate from access and participation, to ensure quality, retention and opportunity for all is achieved.¹⁰

2.3.1 Strategic options

There are several strategies and interventions, which are yielding promising results for improving female education in Ghana. The ESR gender task team reviewed the Girls' Education Strategy document and other studies of best practice in Ghana to suggest the following strategic options for improving female education across the education sector. A more detailed review is contained in the Situational Analysis on Gender issues in Education (see Volume 1, Casely-Hayford, 2002).

Global best practice suggests strategies to address gender inequity in Education must address three levels of intervention:

- Policy reform and the policy environment
- School based change
- District, NGO and Community based change such as mobilising parents and communities in support of girls' education

The MOE /GES must consider its role as a facilitator of policy and programmes and leave more of the implementation to the district and regional levels. More emphasis must be placed on decentralising tasks and empowering the region, district and community stakeholders.

- The Private NGO and CBO Sector in Ghana should be encouraged to play a much larger role in gender mainstreaming focussing its programmes on female education.

¹⁰ Massiah presents a model of gender relations, which moves gender issues from level 1 "conceptual or subjective visibility, to level 2--theoretical and statistical visibility (where the issues become information data) to level 3 where gender issues finally become socio-economically and politically visible as well as domestically visible. Gender issues in education in Ghana are somewhere between level 1 and level 2 in visibility.

- The Ghana Education Trust (GET) fund should also be encouraged to allocate at least 20% of its funds directly in support of girls' scholarships at JSS and SSS level.
- The Girls' Education Unit should be expanded and resourced to ensure that issues of child rights and protection are properly addressed (i.e. District girls' officers should be responsible for reporting cases of abuse to DEOC's and other sub committees).
- The Girls' Education Unit should have full control over their financing and budget requirement to ensure the smooth and timely operations of activities.
- Gender Experts/ Officers should be identified and housed in Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Department (PPMED) and Teacher Education to work with the planning, finance and teacher-training colleges in order to ensure gender issues are mainstreamed across the sector.
- Gender officers / task teams should be appointed by all Secondary and Tertiary level institutions to monitor gender objectives and policies. These officers can also listen to complaints of sexual abuse and discrimination, and take appropriate action when necessary.

2.4 Key recommendations for Improving Equity within Education

The following key recommendations are made keeping in mind the issues of targeting and deprivation around the country. Strategic decisions should be made within the following context.

- The Northern Regions should be given the highest priority for situating programming and ensuring that girls equality/equity in education is achieved and women's illiteracy is eradicated (GOG, 2000). The Western and Central Regions should also be considered of high priority based on the problems of gender inequity in the education sector. These regions have the highest poverty rates and the lowest literacy levels in the entire country. Socio-cultural studies in these areas have also found that cultural norms, behaviours and communal practices have resulted in the extremely poor status of women and girls.
- Rural areas of the country (including communities outside the district capitals and circuit centres) should be given highest priority when considering gender equity programmes. The GES/MOE deprivation study should be used as a guide when selecting areas of primary focus at district and regional level.
- Girls between the ages of 10-15 should be considered the target age group since they are highly vulnerable due to early marriage, teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. Rural girls in this category should be targeted for most programmes since they often lack financial resources, have little family support, low self-esteem, lack guidance/counselling, and are often prone to teenage pregnancy and drop out.

- The Girls' Education Unit "National Vision for Girls Education" provides the framework for channelling donor assistance and promoting gender equity at a basic level. A gender strategy/ action plan should be expanded to cover gender concerns at the secondary, tertiary and management levels.
- The UN Special Initiative in Girls' Education should also be seen as a key framework particularly for planning support at district level and in sector wide programming in the sub sector.

2.4.1 Gender Mainstreaming at National Planning Level

The first step is to ensure that all the education sector planning is gender responsive and proactive involve the following gender priorities:

The MOE should recruit or internally appoint at least 2 gender experts to work with PPMED, Human Resource, Manpower Division and Finance Department in order to ensure resources and plans are gender sensitive at all times. These officers should ensure that gender disaggregated data are available in order to monitor gender policies.

Recruit at least one gender expert for Teacher Education Division to ensure gender issues are mainstreamed within the teacher education division's policies and programmes and at all training colleges. Gender officers should also be identified at all the teacher training institutions including the University College of Winneba (UCEW) and University of Cape Coast (UCC) to ensure gender policies are implemented and affirmative action goals are carried out in recruitment and promotion.

Gender experts from MOE/GES in consultation with the Girls' Education Unit should develop a Gender Policy for the Ministry of Education which ensures that many of the gender goals articulated in this and other documents are carried into policy formulation particularly those related to women's career development and improving literacy levels of women.

2.4.2 Girls Access and Performance from Basic to Senior Secondary level

1. Scholarship funds for girls' education should be increased through the GET fund. Districts Education Oversight Committees should be tasked to ensure these funds are properly distributed to deprived areas and girls at the JSS, vocational or technical and SSS levels. At least 400 scholarships in each district should be allocated at the JSS level and approx. 100 at the SSS level. The mode of operation is clearly spelled out in the scholarship scheme for girls (GEU Scholarship Scheme Research, 2001)
2. Science Teaching and, Math Education Clinics (STME clinics) should be supported on a larger scale across the country through the involvement and support by the NGO sector. More funding should be provided in order to ensure larger number of girls' access science and math streams with special emphasis on recruiting rural girls from deprived area schools.

2.4.3 Improving Retention, Transition, and Achievement

3. **Rural Education Counselling Centres** Rural girls should be a special focus of attention by the MOE and development partners. Rural Education Counselling Clinics (REC's) should be set up along the same lines as the STME clinics and focus on rural girls who are at the JSS level.¹¹ These rural education clinics should be set up in selected JSS schools in each district and offer special remedial programmes for girls during the vacation periods (i.e. English and Math remedial work, Moral education and reproductive health and guidance in life choices). The GES Counselling Unit in collaboration with Population and Family Life Programme should execute these REC's in collaboration with the STME unit and GEU. NGO's should be encouraged to scale up their activities in the country to support these rural education-counselling clinics (i.e. Action Aid, CARE, Save the Children Fund, etc)
4. **Support to Guidance and Counselling Officers should be increased** in order to help guide girls at critical junctures in their educational careers (i.e. JSS) Increase the support given to Guidance and Counselling officers particularly at JSS level by providing incentives and providing necessary training. At least one female counsellor should be appointed to assist each JSS in a district. Guidance handbooks should be provided to all counsellors at JSS level. The Guidance and Counselling Unit should be given increased funding to conduct counselling workshops for teachers and community members throughout the country. School Guidance and Counselling Officers should also be appointed from the community (e.g. retired teachers, nurses etc).
5. **Full-Scale Campaign to Empower Parents, Chiefs and Community Leaders:** A Special campaign to support girls education and women's empowerment nation wide should be established with all key stakeholders. The campaign should encourage villages to set up Community Education Funds, community libraries and scholarship schemes in each area of the country. SMCs and PTAs should be given the mandate to help set up scholarship funds and community libraries in order to create a literate environment for children, especially girls. The libraries should have a place for children to study at night.
6. The Government in collaboration with radio stations should also use the radio to educate parents of the need to support and provide for their children. The programme should focus attention on changing negative practices, which impede on children's rights including: early marriage, child labour, kayayoo, streetism etc. The radio programmes should involve issues around child rights and protection and promote a more positive image of the girl child.

¹¹ A full description of the REC approach can be found in Casely-Hayford and Wilson's report on the Needs of Female Teachers in Rural Deprived Areas of Ghana (2001)

2.4.4 Flexible Schooling/Alternative Education for Children Out of School

7. School for Life and the Shepherd School programmes should be scaled up to increase their coverage area and number of deprived rural districts' being targeted countrywide¹². Involvement of more NGOs and CBOs in the out of school programming and training of facilitators will ensure that flexible schools are available for girls during appropriate hours. After completion girls will be expected to enter the regular school system in nearby schools.
8. Provision and construction of all new schools (Primary to SSS) should include simple and technologically appropriate water and sanitation facilities particularly in the Western, Central and Northern Regions of the country. Special funds for construction of water and sanitation facilities should be provided by the GET Fund and channelled through the District Assemblies in collaboration with the District Education Oversight Committee.

2.4.5 Sexual Abuse and Children's Rights

9. MOE/GES to design a special policy, which clearly articulates disciplinary, measures for teachers and educational management staff who commit child abuse at any level in the school system. Girls Education Officers, at the district and regional levels should also be trained in procedures for reporting sexual abuse cases to the national authorities and police agencies. SMCs and PTAs should be trained on strategies for prevention of abuse and Children's Rights violations through PTA/SMC training modules.
10. Secondary and Tertiary level institutions should also appoint joint faculty/student gender committees so that students and faculty can find channels to discuss discrimination and seek redress. By-laws should be drawn up by District Assemblies to sanction parents who neglect their children and prevent them from attending school.

2.4.6 Gender Equity in the Teaching and Education Management Field

11. Teacher Education Division and all teacher-training colleges should ensure that a course on gender issues in the classroom is introduced at all levels in order to promote more gender sensitive teaching/learning environments.
12. Teacher resource books developed by the Curriculum Research and Development Division in collaboration with the GEU and WUSC should be provided to all head teachers in the country. The teachers' resource book is designed to assist teachers improve their performance and improve school quality in a gender sensitive way.
13. Gender training should be integrated into all in service training workshops carried out by the Inspectorate Division and Human Resource Management and

¹² School for Life is in 8 districts in the Northern Region while Shepherd Schools are in at least 2 districts in the Upper East.

Development Division including yearly conferences for Regional and District Girls' Education Teams, District Directors of Education, Regional Directors and Head Teachers. GEU should organise regular seminars to expose female administrators and aspiring female teachers to the need to participate and attain higher levels within educational management.

14. Women at the University level should be given priority for self-development and training by putting them on University committees and ensuring Academic Boards. Affirmative action policies at the University level should also be introduced to increase the number of women in top management positions.
- 15. A Gender policy for the MOE/GES**, Schools and all educational institutions should be developed with assistance from the Girls Education Unit. This gender policy should address issues of career development and promotion of women in the areas of teacher management. The gender policy should have special focus on teacher training colleges and affiliated educational institutions to ensure that women are given opportunities for promotion and development. Affirmative action policies from different countries should be considered when designing the policy (i.e. Canada, India etc).
- 16. Increasing the number of women in the teaching field:** Access courses for women wanting to enter teacher-training colleges should be introduced and supported throughout the country.
17. District offices that are able to recruit pupil/untrained teachers should place emphasis on recruiting female teachers in deprived areas.
18. Media programmes should also be used by MOE/GES at national level to improve the status of teaching and encourage more women into the profession.

2.4.7 Literacy and Non formal Education

19. Campaigns to improve women and girls' education should be launched nation wide to promote literacy among women and girls. The media, particularly radio programmes in local languages should be used to reach women and girls in the rural areas. NFED should be asked to co-ordinate the campaign programme with the assistance of the GEU. More female literacy supervisors should be recruited to serve in rural areas. An evaluation of the NFED gender policy should be carried out to measure the impact on the institution and at an operational level.

2.4.8 Vocational and Technical Training

20. A national workshop for technical and vocational training institutes should be organised to evaluate strategies for addressing gender issues in all the vocational training agencies including non-traditional vocational options.
21. Scholarship Funds should be allocated to increase the number of girls at vocational and technical training institutes

22. Media /IEC programmes should be organised to improve the image of the Vocational Training as an option for girls, particularly in non-traditional trades.

2.4.9 Polytechnics and Universities (Tertiary level)

23. Affirmative Action strategies at tertiary level should include quotas for girls from rural areas to ensure that the 50:50 participation goal is achieved. Boys and girls from deprived rural areas with high marks should be given preference (Prah, 2002).

24. Promising female students with good grades should be offered places as teaching assistants as part of their national service. (Prah, 2002). They should also be considered for grants and bursaries to pursue postgraduate studies.

25. The District Common Fund Scholarships for Girls should focus more on women. At least 10 girls (at tertiary level) should be given scholarships from their district assemblies to access tertiary level institutions.

26. NGOs and CBOs should be provided with social investment funds to undertake projects related to girls' education, literacy and HIV/AIDs. The Ministry should collaborate with the Ghana AIDS Commission to identify viable projects for support.

2.5 Financing Gender Equity

There must be more co-ordination within the education sector to develop collective financial agreements in support of gender programming and girls' education. The MOE and Development partners should adopt the Girls Education Unit framework to guide funding strategies at the Basic Level. The Girls' Education Unit should be provided with its own budget in order to carry out yearly planned activities. More financing should be directed to assisting the GEU implement ongoing programmes and its strategic plan of action.

- The Whole School Development (WSD) mechanism should be used to increase financing for girls' education programming at the district level. The QUIPS district grant scheme may be another channel for supporting girls' education at the district level.

A special fund for decentralised NGO/CBO programming at local level should be supported. NGOs, CBOs and District Assemblies should be encouraged to promote girls' education through a decentralised fund to support projects to improve quality and retention in education. The best practices for Girls Education programming in Ghana should be compiled and used as a guide for these agency programmes. The Social Investment Fund, HIPC financing from the Ministry of Finance and the District Assembly Common Fund should be considered as potential funding mechanisms.

2.6 Practical Next Steps to Ensure Gender equity

A MOE/GES Gender Task Force should be formed. The Task Force should include representatives from the GEU, Teacher Education Division, Human Resource, Management and Development Division, Curriculum Research and Development Division and Inspectorate Divisions. The team should develop a two-year Gender Action Plan and report to the Director General on its proposed implementation.

The action plan should be costed to include the National Vision for Girls Education proposals for basic level and should include other Second Cycle and Tertiary level proposals.

The Gender Task Force should present its recommendations to Development partners as part of the sector wide programme approach in order to ensure coordination in assisting girls education and gender equity programming attain higher levels of impact.

3.0 Early Childhood Education

3.1 Early Childhood Education and Learning

The following section focuses on Early Childhood Education (ECE) and learning since this is one of the Ministry of Education's key area of responsibility with regard to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)¹³. The concept of Early Childhood Care and Development is a much broader concept that involves all aspects of the child's development from 0-8 years of age. This section focuses on assessing the current state of early learning and education for children between 4-6 years of age taking into consideration the need for a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to programming. The section attempts to highlight the most urgent challenges in enhancing the early learning paths of children particularly in rural deprived areas of the country¹⁴.

3.2 Rational for ECCD Services

The MOE policy states "emphasis will be placed on removing the barriers to schooling currently experienced by certain sections of the population including girls, the very poor and children with special needs" (MOE, 2001, page 21). One of the most effective approaches to reducing inequalities, which exist between children due to poverty and socio-cultural background, is the introduction of ECCD in disadvantaged areas.

Early Childhood Education can be an equalising factor for children from poor communities by giving children a stronger head start to learning in relation to their urban counterparts. Studies indicate that Early Childhood Education (ECE) can ensure that children from poor socio-economic backgrounds are able to compete and achieve higher academic levels throughout their schooling life and improve their productivity during working life.

Early Childhood education is also particularly important given the extremely high rates of child malnutrition particularly in the northern regions which have a severe impact on the learning outcomes of children in Ghana (Casely-Hayford, 2000; Nantogma, 1990; Fentiman. A., 1996). Nutrition and health status of children affects the attendance, concentration and performance of children in school. Hungry and ill children cannot learn effectively and can end up developmentally delayed due to poor nutritional intake during their early years. Almost 30% of children below five years of age in Ghana are underweight with 5% severely malnourished, more than 26% stunted and 10% wasted (BUPL, 2001). One out of every two children in Northern Ghana are malnourished. Early childhood education programmes can assist parents, particularly mothers, understand the implications of poor nutritional intake of children during their early years (UNICEF, 2002) and the impact this has on a child's development.

¹³ A more detailed analysis is available in the "Situational Analysis of Early Childhood Education within the Education Sector in Ghana" which forms one of the ESR reports (Casely-Hayford, 2002)

¹⁴ Currently the MOE is focussed on providing services for children between 4-6 years of age through pre-schools, Kindergartens and nurseries most of which are attached to primary schools.

Several government and international agencies have come to recognise the vast importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and have integrated it into all their educational programmes. ECE is of vital importance to low-income countries since:

- Children have a right to get the best possible start to life, since therein lies the foundation and guarantee for human development
 - It assures great economic returns in the future with savings on such services as remedial education, health care and rehabilitation;
 - It reduces social, economic and gender disparities;
 - It offers countries the best opportunity to compete in the global economy by improving the competencies of people;
 - It frees girls and other siblings to go to school
- (MOWAC/GNCC, 2002 p16)

ECCD is one of the most valuable poverty reducing strategies and investments a Government can make along with investing in girls' education. Ghana is in a particularly critical situation since a large majority of its children suffer from mild to severe forms of malnourishment; the human development costs of not providing basic ECCD services particularly in areas of low access are staggering (see Boakye 1999 and Evans, 2000).

3.3 Governmental Targets

Early Childhood Education for children between 4 to 6 is currently not seen as part of basic education. The fCUBE programme did not identify early childhood education within the basic education framework nor does the current policy document "MOE Policy and Programmes". (MOE, 2001). Although ECE is not a compulsory or a free component of the nine basic years of education provided to all Ghanaian children, the costs for operating pre-schools is integrated within the MOE's primary school budget (i.e. teacher and attendant salaries).

There are several international standards related to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), which have been set, of which the Ghana Government is a signatory. These include the Education for All (EFA) global framework, which distinctly states that pre school education is a basic right of all children and should be incorporated into all Governmental programming particularly in regions where there is a high incidence of poverty.

The 'African Declaration and Framework for Education for All' states that all children have the right to pre-school education. The EFA framework for Sub Saharan Africa states that " ECD programmes should be expanded two fold by the year 2006 and should offer safe, secure and stimulating environments. Countries should work towards providing access to ECCD programmes for all children aged between 3-6 by the year 2015" (The Dakar Framework for Action, 2000).

Ghana's own **Accra Declaration** of 1993 also states that "community based Early Childhood Care and Development services will be made available to at least one third of Ghanaian Children below six years of age by the year 2002".¹⁵ The Accra

¹⁵ The National ECCD Seminar was organised by UNICEF, GNAT and the Danish National Federation of Early Childhood and Youth Education (BUPL).

Declaration stressed for the first time the need for a multi-sectoral approach to ECCD moving away from the traditional "pre-school approach".

The **GPRS** has clearly stressed the need to support ECCD since it is the most important stage of a child's development and can act as a key strategy for poverty reduction. The GPRS states that one of the key outputs will be to ensure that the Final Draft ECCD Policy is finalised and adopted by cabinet. The GPRS also states that the roles and responsibilities for pre-schools will be under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and that the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment (MMDE) will have responsibility for day care centres and crèches for children between 0 to 3 years of age.

The ECCD Draft Policy states that the MOE will be responsible for the following:

- Taking a lead role in providing technical input in early intellectual stimulation and development issues in ECCD programmes, both centre based and non-centre based. These would include but not be limited to the development of curriculum, setting of educational standards and monitoring of the same.
- Make provision for ECCD programmes within its budget
- Expand existing ECCD training facilities by ensuring that existing training centres are fully utilised and expanded
- Offer qualitative training to ECCD attendants and caregivers and support all Nursery Training Centres both financially and materially. Existing Training institution could in the meantime, offer their facilities for use in conducting courses for care givers during vacation times.
- Ensure a smooth transition from pre-school programmes to formal schooling. (Ghana National Commission on Children, p.20-21)
- Provide incentives to private sector establishments contributing above a certain minimum level of funding or in-kind support to ECCD programmes

The New Government of Ghana has promised that all primary schools should have a kindergarten-attached in order to ensure that children have access to ECE. Part of the challenge will not be in the provision of infrastructure but in ensuring that quality pre school education is provided to children within this age group particularly those from rural areas.¹⁶ Innovative cost effective approaches will be required to ensure the increased provision for ECCD are available.

3.3.1 Access

There are several analyses related to early child hood educational access depending on how one defines ECCD. The most recent data based on 2000 census suggests that as many as **44%** of children between 3 and 5 (inclusive) are able to access some type of early educational programming such as pre school or kindergarten education (Orivel, 2002). Another study conducted by the GES indicates that the rates are much lower at between 14%-27% (MOE, 2002/ BUPL, 2001). The Presidential Report suggests 60% enrolment rate at ECE. This suggests that there is a large discrepancy between sources of data. Data from the ECD unit is not

¹⁶ The provision of one Pre School per public school is a commitment the President has made to the nation.

comprehensive but suggests that there has been a steady increase in the number of ECE centres¹⁷ around the country.

Table 3: Increases in the Level of services and enrolment over the period

Period	Level of increase	Details
1993 to 1996	3% to 27%	Number of public and private kindergartens
1990 to 1997	10% to 23%	Enrolment rates for 0-6 year old children in pre-school (rural and urban pre school enrolment rates for children in this age group were 21% and 28% respectively in 1997.)

Over 7,000 pre schools will have to be created in order to provide access to all children at pre school level based on figures of 4,739 kindergartens compared to the 12,225 primary schools, which currently exist. According to the population census 1,097,356 children are eligible for pre-school education (Presidential Commission Report, 2002).

Studies suggest that since early childhood development centres are not available in most rural communities it is only through non-formal community based ECCD centres and approaches that children from these areas will be reached. Examples are the Koranic schools in most villages in the north where children aged between 3-6 begin training in the Koran.

3.3.2 Supply and Demand for ECE Services

The MOE operates the vast majority of pre schools except for urban areas of Greater Accra and Ashanti region where private schools take a larger share. According to the CWIQ survey the share of private pre schools in the urban areas of Greater Accra was about 80%, Ashanti had 51% of the share and Brong Ahafo had 42%. Less than 40% of kindergartens are operated by the private sector in other urban areas across the country. The study by BUPL (2001) explains that the increased levels of private provision for kindergarten education can explain the high enrolments in these regions. Table 4 outlines the public and private provision of ECE services.

Table 4: Public and Private ECCD centres supervised by GES

Years	No of public ECCD centres	Enrol. of Boys	Enrol. of Girls	Total	ECCD Trained Teachers	ECCD untrained teachers	Attendants	No. Of private ECCD centres	Enrolment of Private Centres
1995/96	5, 441	195,687	192,072	387,759	5,592	8,099	5,510	2,174	147,422
99/2000	5, 772	N/A	N/A	444,838	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2000/2001	5,977	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,091	N/A	10,718	2,469	N/A

(Source: MOE/GES, 1999; GES 2000/2001)

The MOE had 5,977 public pre-schools and kindergartens with a total pupil population of over 444,838 according to the 1999/2000 latest data (MOE, 2002). There have not been any comprehensive studies available on the demand for early childhood education particularly in comparing rural and urban demand. The closest

¹⁷ ECE centres will be used to include kindergartens and pre-schools for children between the ages of 4-6 years of age.

indicator would be the rise in access and participation rates between 1990 and 1997 mentioned above where increases from 6 to 27% were experienced.

Evidence from the National Nursery Teachers' Training Centres (NNTTC) also suggests that there is increasing demand for early childhood education and training particularly within the major urban centres. The NNTTC often receives over 120 applications for participation and can only select 40 participants for each training programme. There is a long waiting list of people wanting to attend the training sessions. Another indicator of the high demand of pre-school training is the increasing amount of requests being received by the NNTTC for satellite training courses at the district level. Large numbers of pre school teachers pay for the NNTTC training when satellite programmes are organised by the District Education Offices (i.e. Volta and Brong Ahafo region). The NNTTC Director indicated at most training sessions up to 100 teachers apply and pay for their training programmes. One of the reasons for the high training demand is the potential for teachers to start their own private ECCD centres once they are professionally trained.

3.3.3 Equity

Currently, access to ECCD centres is mainly concentrated in urban areas and meets the needs of children from high socio-economic backgrounds (CWIQ, 1998).

Table 5: Percentage of Children in Pre-school from rural and urban households

	Rural	Urban
3year olds	25%	35%
4 Year olds	46%	62%
5 year olds	60%	73%

(Based on CWIQ, 1997)

Rural pre-school enrolment rates are far lower than urban rates. There was also a significant variation depending on which region one considers. For instance 50% of children aged between 2 to 5 and almost 80% of children from 4 to 5 attend pre-schools in urban Accra while only 11% and 21% of children in the same age groups attend preschools in the Northern areas of the country.

A reorientation of public educational services and GOG resources towards the poor would mean that ECCD service providers give priority to the most needy and vulnerable groups. Unfortunately the pace of private pre school development is not as high in rural deprived areas as it is in urban towns and cities. More work is needed to ensure that MOE funds and resources are **targeted** to the needy areas where quality pre school education may not be provided by the private sector and can be used as an equalising factor.

A significant amount of work has been carried out by the MOE/GES on mapping areas of deprivation across the country. The GPRS promises to ensure better targeting of ECCD services to the most needy areas. Two options are considered in this report in order to introduce more pro poor measures and ensure better targeting of ECCD resources. These include introducing community operated pre school programmes with some assistance from government through providing direct subsidies to non profit providers such as community groups, and religious bodies or

providing direct subsidies to parents from rural areas through school feeding programmes for children (See recommendations section).

3.3.4 Teacher Requirements

At the moment there are 4,091 trained teachers representing approx. 11% of KG teachers. The MOE estimates that another 32,498 trained teachers and 25,871 attendants will be required if increases in ECCD services are increased by the MOE. Studies in Ghana suggest that the vast majority of teachers at the kindergarten level are **untrained female teachers** who were transferred from the basic level during the mid 1990's when the pupil teacher policy changed. Only a few KG teachers are "trained" since most female pupil teachers were sent to the KG level when new GES policies were enforced.¹⁸ Boakye (1999) found that less than a quarter of the KG teachers and one-tenth of attendants in public and private pre-schools received any training in nursery education. A more recent study by BUPL (2001) found that most ECE teachers are untrained ---on average 70% of all staff (16,917 in public pre schools) are untrained based on 2000 figures.

The National Nursery Teachers' Training Centre (NNTTC) in Accra has intensified its training programmes to help solve the problem of untrained caregivers as GES continues to encourage "trained teachers" to be posted and remain at the primary school level. The NNTTC is the only Government certified training institute for pre-school teachers in Ghana. It has 5 outreach programmes and the national campus in Accra. The outreach programmes encompasses over 500 teachers (approx. 100 students per session) and about 160 per year at the NNTTC campus in Accra (approx. 40 participants per session). All candidates must have completed Junior Secondary School and pass an entrance examination before being admitted to NNTTC's eight-week programme. Each year approx. 160 teachers pass out of the NNTTC at the central level and about 500 pass out from satellite programmes at the regional and district levels.

Apart from the (NNTTC) there are a growing number of private service providers giving training to teachers for ECE. These include: the Social Welfare Training School at Madina under the MMDE, May Educational Complex in Dansoman, Accra and the Institute for Caregivers in Dome. The MMDE focuses on training ECCD caregivers who will work in day care centres and crèches for the 0-3 age groups.

Research suggests that there is the need to rationalise the location and number of teachers already serving at KG level throughout the country. Research by Casely-Hayford and Wilson (2001) revealed that female teachers working in public schools at the KG level tend to be concentrated in urban and town centres. Very few women were found serving in the rural deprived areas. This pattern creates an inconsistent Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) whereby some urban kindergartens have anywhere from a 10:1 PTR while those KG's in rural areas are almost non existent due to lack of teachers. Rural parents also use kindergartens as "day care centres" where children can be dropped while they are engaged in farming activities.

¹⁸ Head teachers were encouraged to use only " trained teachers at the Primary level" where possible.

There needs to be more community participation in the selection and the involvement of parents in the ECE programmes in the community. Community volunteers could act as ECE attendants on a regular rotational basis in order to free up state resources.

3.4 Relevance and the Curriculum

One important aspect of early childhood development in the Ghanaian context has been the emphasis on spiritual and moral values. Although these values have been eroded by several social and economic factors, there remains a great need to ensure that children in the early years are brought up with strong moral values. Programmes for KG education should help to teach children virtues and values, which they will use to make choices throughout their life.

Studies suggest that there is a need for a more African approach to early childhood education in order to bridge the child's home and school life experience. Curriculum development should attempt to use the important work on "Child Upbringing Practices in Some Communities in Ghana" (UNICEF, 2002). The study suggests the need to ensure harmony between family, work and education particularly in the child's early years so that children can learn to integrate different systems of education. "Communities raise their children with a deep knowledge of their spirituality to be socially conscious good human beings."

Currently approaches to ECE do not provide a holistic approach to expanding the child's capacities embracing the moral, physical, cognitive and psychosocial dimensions in a holistic manner. Boakye (1999) suggests that most teachers are not aware of the need for psychosocial stimulation at the early learning stages of a child's life and place most emphasis on the cognitive development. Learning through play is not a regular part of the pre-school curriculum; teachers rely on the P1 syllabus due to lack of materials and training.¹⁹

One of the greatest challenges for ensuring ECE is relevant to the Ghanaian context will be the ability of the sector to implement a multi-sectoral approach to programming at the school level. School feeding and health programmes will be essential to ensuring effective ECE programmes are implemented. Another important issue is that of language. International research suggests that the child should be taught in local language particularly in the early years where language capacities are beginning to form.

3.4.1 National Curriculum

Unfortunately there is no national curriculum for kindergarten education developed or being widely used in the public school system. There have been several attempts to introduce a curriculum through individual initiatives at the school level and through donor supported projects, which have been started and then discontinued due to the lack of national support in the form of a policy framework.

¹⁹ Assessment by experts from Oslo University College and visits to kindergartens in the Eastern and Greater Accra region reveal that KG schoolteachers often rely on the P1 curriculum to train children at the Pre School and KG level. Reports by MOE officials and parents themselves suggest that some KGs are even examining children before admission (mainly private KGs).

There have been several challenges in ensuring that a comprehensive pre school curriculum is provided for all public schools in Ghana. The Early Childhood Education Unit at the MOE has not had the internal financial support needed to ensure its development and has had to rely on external agency support. Several agencies are pilot testing different materials, and have introduced some books into the system, but these often reach only the district level ECD officers and are not widely distributed to all the schools (i.e. BUPL's and Star of Hope). The MOE Early Childhood Unit has set up a "working group" to examine the curriculum for early childhood development. Developing a national curriculum for ECE should be considered a key priority area for MOE.

3.5 Community School Linkages and relations to MOE

Communities are often expected to provide the buildings, materials and sometimes even support for teachers in order to ensure that the children have access to pre school education. The ESR revealed that community involvement in ECE is critically needed to ensure that a strong relationship is built between parents (mothers) and the ECE centres in each community. Community ownership and support for ECE services will also be essential if expansion takes place particularly in reaching deprived areas of the country.

The ESR also revealed that private or community driven early childhood education may ensure better quality education when compared to the government owned and operated schools. More research is needed to determine the degree of capacity for community-managed ECE models if MOE provides the buildings and payment for teachers. A great deal of community awareness is needed to sustain the financing of community hired teachers and provision of basic materials when communities own and operate their own pre-schools. A revitalisation of community owned and operated approaches to ECE are needed. Some of these options include non-formal community based ECCD centres and the use of existing indigenous schools such as Koranic schools.

3.6 Management/Planning

The Early Childhood Development Unit (ECDU) is under the Basic Education Division. The National ECDU contains one national co-ordinator that is responsible for:

- The co-ordination of the ECCD programme country wide
- The development of a policy framework within GES/MOE
- Development of a national policy framework with other stakeholders such as the GNCC, MMDE and UNICEF

There needs to be a tremendous increase in the capacity of staff at the national ECDU in order to ensure that a regular programme of activities is implemented. This will ensure that the unit focuses on the core business of the MOE along lines relevant to the national needs.

Challenges which remain include a:

- Laxity on the part of trained teachers in their duties since they do not think they can be dismissed
- Lack of effective supervision of most ECCD centres
- Lack of interest on the part of head teachers who are responsible for both primary and KG levels of education

There are currently 110 ECD officers in all the districts across the country. Often these officers have other responsibilities such as SHEP and Girls' Education. According to the National ECD Co-ordinator there are very few effective district ECE organisers. The ECD officers are not given transport in most districts in order to properly supervise and monitor pre-schools in their districts. District officers are also not provided with adequate funds to provide in-service training for ECE teachers in their district.

3.7 Finance

Recent studies by BUPL (2001) found that finance for early childhood education has historically relied on a cost sharing approaches between government and communities. Rural families are frequently required to contribute to efforts to expand education by providing not only the direct costs of children's attendance but also the costs of building school facilities. Given their relatively large numbers the poor and rural dwellers should for equity reasons receive the largest share of education subsidies. However public spending on education is not pro poor and has not targeted the most needy populations or localities (DFID, 2001; Canagarajah and Xiao, 2000; BUPL, 2001). Financing of ECCD centres should be targeted to the most deprived regions and districts of the country²⁰.

3.8 The next steps

- The most critical areas or next steps concern the area of curriculum development. There is tremendous need for the MOE Early Childhood Development Unit to focus on completing a simple yet comprehensive curriculum for KG1 (4 year olds) and KG2 levels (5 year olds).
- The MOE should focus on ensuring that at least 4-6 year old children particularly in rural deprived areas of the country are provided with quality pre-school education.
- Local teachers should be recruited and trained as ECE teachers. Local communities should also ensure that pre school attendants volunteer from the community on a rotational basis. This would ensure that parents actively participate in the ECE process and free up government resources for use in non-salary areas.

²⁰ An extensive mapping exercise was carried out to identify the most deprived rural districts in the country (See MOE, Implementation Co-ordination Unit, MOE, 2001)

3.9 Key Recommendations and Strategic Options

3.9.1 Streamline responsibilities between ministries

There are a large number of stakeholders defining the future of ECCD in Ghana including three ministries: The Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment. There is an urgent need to streamline responsibilities and ensure that the MOE policies and programmes for ECE move forward. The MOE should make it clear that its priorities are on children between 4 to 6 years of age and encourage other stakeholders to look at realistic programming for the 0-3 age group.

3.9.2 Increasing Access for the Poor to ECE services

- Pre-school education should be available for all children in Ghana. Expansion of publicly financed pre-schools should focus on areas that are deprived and under served by private pre-school providers. Deprivation analysis should be used to target public financing as well as mapping of kindergartens in the country.
- Districts with the highest levels of deprivation should be given special funding to enhance pre school quality (i.e. ECE materials, teachers etc) and ensure that the most deprived areas are served first²¹.
- Community Based ECE teachers should be trained and recruited from local communities in order to ensure a pro poor approach to ECCD policy. Local community based teachers should have a minimum qualification of having completed Senior Secondary School. In-service training programmes, which focus on learning through play, should be provided through satellite programmes.

3.9.3 Targeting

- All rural schools should be given access to publicly financed pre-school education. Public kindergartens should be fee free particularly where parents are found under the poverty line (earning less than 700,000 cedis per annum).
- Special subsidies should be offered for low income parents living in rural and urban areas (i.e. pre-school vouchers)
- Options: better targeting of ECCD resources through direct subsidies to children or schools in deprived rural areas. Direct subsidies in the form of school feeding programmes, and school improvement funds for needy areas should all be considered.

²¹ Deprivation studies by the Implementation Co-ordination Unit of MOE should guide selection of districts on a systematic basis. Most deprived regions according to GLSS should be targeted first (i.e. Upper East, Upper West, Northern and Central regions) where the incidence of poverty is highest.

3.9.4 Planning and Policy Formulation

- The MOE/GES should incorporate policy guidelines for pre school education into all existing policy documents.
- These guidelines should help to guide the ECD unit and officers at national, regional and district levels
- A comprehensive research study is needed to assess the demand particularly within rural areas for early childhood education particularly given the demands on rural households.

3.9.5 Inclusion of Pre-school Education into the Basic Education mandate

- Pre-school education should involve a commitment by government to ensure free public pre-school education is available to children particularly from rural deprived areas.
- The MOE should begin by ensuring all primary schools have at least one-KG class attached to their schools beginning with the most deprived rural areas. Teachers should be properly deployed to ensure a 30 to 1 pupil teacher-ratio including one assistant/attendant. This approach should be implemented in a systematic manner providing manpower needs of one region of the country each year (relating to the regions with the highest incidence of poverty).
- Parents should be encouraged to support the establishment of pre-schools through the provision of food at the beginning of the month or other in-kind contributions for children to eat while in the pre-school.
- Private schools should be encouraged to take up the demand for ECE in urban areas of the country.

3.9.6 Multi-sectoral approaches to Early Childhood Education

- A collective and multi-sectoral approach at all ECE centres is needed in Ghana. This would require more collaboration within the MOE, its' divisions and units (i.e. SHEP, GEU, Early Childhood Education unit and social services). It would also require more collaboration between ECD officers at the district levels and their Ministry of Health counterparts, District Social Welfare officers and NGO's in order to ensure a holistic approach to ECE.
- There needs to be basic school feeding programmes introduced and targeted to some communities in the country with a highest incidence of poverty (i.e. Northern regions, Central and possibly the Western region). School feeding particularly for young children could ensure that early learning and development takes place and the negative impact of malnutrition is minimised. The GOG should consider introducing nutritional supplements for children attending KG classes if full feeding programmes are too costly in areas with a high poverty incidence.
- Basic water and sanitation facilities at all schools must also be ensured in order to encourage proper hygiene for children at all levels.

3.9.7 Increasing Parental Education at National and Community Level

- Government IEC campaigns to educate parents on the importance of early learning and care can enhance learning outcomes of children. Early childhood programmes should include parental education particularly around child nutrition and stimulation techniques in order to ensure proper cognitive development and reduce the rates of malnourishment among young children.
- Parents should be encouraged to organise and ensure Volunteer KG attendants assist ECE centres around the country in order to free up state resources for improving quality.

3.9.8 Teacher Training

Much more work is needed to orient caregivers and teachers to the special nature of pre-school education. More emphasis should be placed on using indigenous knowledge, learning through play, and moral education approaches at the pre school level.

Teacher training in early childhood should be introduced as a regular course for all teachers at training colleges. Those wanting to work as kindergarten teachers should be given the option of either entering a special stream in the training college or opting for a specially designated training colleges in order to learn about the special needs of early learners. Three options are proposed for MOE:

Option one: mainstream ECE in selected teacher training colleges in all regions of the country. If funds are available at least one TTC in each region should offer ECE training as an option. The draft policy suggests that ECCD units be attached to all training colleges.

Option two: allocate at least one TTC in the Northern, Middle and Southern belt to the training of ECE teachers.

Option three: Increase the trainers and space allocated to the NNTTC in order to increase enrolment. Increase the number of teacher trainers attached to the NNTTC in order to increase satellite programmes on a regional basis. NNTTC Centres at Ho, Sunyani and Accra should all be updated with better facilities.

3.9.9 Curriculum

A large degree of support is needed to ensure that a comprehensive pre-school curriculum is provided to all public schools currently operating in Ghana.

- The ECE unit should make every effort to ensure that the curriculum is available to a wide range of public schools in the shortest period of time. Full support from the MOE is necessary to ensure that the final materials are field-tested and go to print.

- Any ECE curriculum should focus on both learning through play and develop the psychosocial aspects of the child. The Star of Hope curriculum developed for Ghana and being field-tested should be considered in developing a national curriculum.

3.9.10 Language of instruction

- In keeping with the EFA guidelines in order to ensure that local community based teachers can be recruited to increase access to pre schools in Ghana, local language should be used at the pre school level. This will also help to ensure full participation of parents and families in the pre-school programmes particularly in rural deprived areas.

3.9.11 Management and Capacity Building

- There needs to be a tremendous increase in the capacity and staff at the national ECDU in order to ensure that a regular programme of activities supported by internal MOE funds is ongoing.
- Regular meetings and in-service training sessions should be held with all the ECDU officers and co-ordinators. These funds should be provided by internal sources.
- Some financial resources should be made available to ensure monitoring by the national and regional ECD officers particularly on a regular basis to ensure a high quality of pre school education is being delivered.

Conclusion

The MOE's Early Childhood Education programmes should focus on providing at least one year of pre-school education to children from poor and deprived rural areas of the country particularly in the four most deprived regions. Many children living in towns and cities have access to both public and private sector alternatives. The Ministry of Education should focus its resources on providing public pre schools/kg classes in primary schools in the most deprived areas of the country. This will require a systematic approach over the next ten years on a region by region basis in order to expand the MOE's pre school programme. This will allow the capacity of the national, regional and districts ECCD officers to gradually increase.

The main preparatory steps for implementing such a programme require that the National ECD unit develop a simple but comprehensive national ECE curriculum. The curriculum should emphasise the use of local language, learning through play, and psychosocial aspects of a child's development. The integration of Ghanaian and western themes should be used based on the indigenous knowledge of upbringing practices in the home. JSS and SSS graduates from the local communities should be recruited as ECE teachers and trained in satellite programmes by the NNTTC. The entire pre school programme should also foster a strong relationship between

the child, parent and the school. Parental education programmes and the parental involvement in pre school education should be emphasised in order to ensure their commitment to education throughout the child's life.

4.0 Special Needs Education

The following section examines the effectiveness of Special Needs Education and presents the main challenges, the key priority areas and the strategies for improving the coverage and integration of children with special needs into the mainstream. The section is a synthesis of the situational analysis and workshop report on Special Needs Education carried out as part of the ESR exercise.

4.1 The Incidence

According to Disability Studies conducted by the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment approximately 6% of the Ghanaian population has some type of mild to severe disability (MMDE). The UN suggests that between 10-12 % of populations within the developing world have some type of disability. There are also a number of other agencies, which have conducted surveys on children with disability:

- Society for the Blind (1990's) found that 12,000 to 30,000 children have problems with low vision.
- According to the Special Needs Division between 20-25% of children in regular schools experience some type of impairment which is often not readily discernible but can affect the child's performance resulting in failure or drop out.

Table 6 presents the number of children serviced by special need institutions by type of disability.

Table 6: Number of Children in Special Needs Schools

Type of institution	Male	Female	Total number of students
Schools for the Deaf	1348	839	2187
Schools for the Blind	332	152	484
Mentally Handicapped	432	237	669
Deaf /Blind	22	--	22
Total	2134	1228	3362

(Special Needs Division, Sept., 2001)

4.1.1 Key Challenges within the sub sector

Some of the key access and participation challenges faced by families within the sub sector include:

- Services are unevenly distributed across the country and located mainly in urban centres.
- There is a problem in ensuring only severely handicapped children gain access to special needs schools and others are integrated into the mainstream. Several Special schools are taking care of children with mild to moderate disabilities that could be mainstreamed into the regular system given some support.
- Special Needs education benefits a small proportion of disabled children and rarely leads to employable skills (only 2% of disabled people are serviced through

special institutions according to the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment).

- There is much more opportunity and scope to encourage the private sector and NGO's to take up responsibility for special needs education (i.e. construction of schools, provision of teachers etc)

There are several key challenges related to educational quality facing the sub sector including the:

- High attrition rate of teacher's completing UCEW Special Needs training.
- High proportion of teachers not interested in Special Needs children
- Disagreement within the sub sector concerning the type of sign language (i.e. exact English or Ghanaian Sign")
- Lack of books for the blind and basic special equipment for the Deaf
- Lack of financing to the sector (less than 4 % of the MOE budget goes to special needs children).
- Lack of repair and maintenance of existing buildings

4.2 Access and participation

A very small percentage of children (approx. 2%) with special needs have access to educational support and training through "Special Schools" (MMDE, 2000). Children who gain access to special schools are primarily residing in urban areas. According to the latest MOE data only 3,362 children are provided with special needs services representing less than 2% of the population. Studies suggest that approximately 10% of visually impaired children are being serviced through special needs institutions. Females are under represented in most of the special needs schools.

Special schools provide all the basic needs for children. The main part of the financing to the Special Education Division is used in provision of food for special needs institutions. Most of the Special Needs schools are underresourced and operate with inadequate basic learning materials (i.e. Braille paper and stillos). The schools also lack special equipment for learners (hearing aids, learning materials etc). There is a very high stigma against children with special needs in Ghana making it difficult for special needs children to integrate into the community and work after they complete school. Table 7 reveals the number of special needs schools in the country.

Table 7: Schools for Special Needs Children

Type of School	Number	Location
Public Schools for the Blind (Basic Level)	2	One in Akropong- (Eastern Region) One in Wa (Northern sector)
Private integrated	1	Accra, De Youngsters
Integrated Senior Secondary Schools	3	Wa, Akuapem and Wenchi, Akropong
Vocational		
Public Schools for the Deaf (Basic Level)	12	Wa, Hohoe- Volta, Koforidua, Mampong-Akwapim, Sekondi, Kibi, Cape Coast, Savelugu, Jamasi, Bechem, Gbeogo, Accra
Religious Unit Schools	3	Swedru (Salvation Army)
Senior Secondary (deaf)	1	Secondary /Technical at Mampong Akwapim
Technical Institute	1	Bechem
Public Schools for the Mentally	6	Asylum Down, Dzowulu, Sekondi, Kumasi,

Type of School	Number	Location
Handicapped		Kpando, Battor and Nkoranza
Private school for the Mentally Handicapped	1	New Horizon, Accra
Unit schools	3	3 units attached to the School for the Deaf at Hohoe, Wa and Koforidua Unit School; One inclusive school in Kpando; Kibi
Sheltered Workshops	1	Accra attached to the NGO run School for the Mentally Handicapped
TOTAL Number of special needs schools at Basic level	20	

There are currently 9 Assessment Centres mainly located in Accra with one in Central Region (UCEW), 1 in the Volta and 2 in Ashanti Region. Most of these centres concentrate on the assessment of hearing problems. There is a tremendous need for more assessment centres in each of the regions particularly the Western, and Northern areas.

4.3 Effectiveness of Institutional Special Needs Education

Schools for the Deaf have had mixed results due to the disagreements within the sector over the mode of communication (i.e. which form of sign language). Visually challenged children are performing well; the majority gain entrance to SSS although the numbers are very small. Studies by Gadagbui (2002) indicate that BECE results for deaf children have steadily declined between 1996, 1997 and 1998. The special schools for the Deaf, which are public, scored 100% between 1996 and 1998 in Mathematics (all pupils passing). There was a drastic fall in scores for English and General Science with less than 13% of students passing English and only 25% passing in General Science in 1998. Achievement marks in technical skills were more promising for state schools from 1996 to 1998. Bechem School maintained average profiles for Math, Science and English.

BECE performance for the visually impaired between 1994 and 2000 indicated a steady improvement (Gadagbui, 2002). The student enrolment was encouraging with the majority of candidates qualifying for SSS with aggregates between 12 and 24 on average. Individual performance at the Wa school for the Blind was better than the Akropong School in 1994, 1998 and 2000. Some pupil scores were as high as 09, 09 and 06 respectively, which is remarkable considering that many students do not have access to Braille materials and books.

Educational attainment of the Deaf has remained very low at the basic level due to the communication difficulties (see section on communication and integration below). Programmes for integrating the hearing impaired into basic schools has been suspended due to lack of interpreters. There are less than 10 interpreters for the hearing impaired across the country. The main recommendations are as follows:

- Official recognition of the use of Sign Language as the medium of communication in Schools for the Deaf.
- A review of the special education programme at the UCEW to ensure that the teaching of Sign Language and interpreting plays a larger role in the curriculum.

Blind Students also face significant challenges. Blind children are unable to pursue science and mathematics from the second cycle level. This affects their selection of courses at the tertiary level.

4.4 Inclusive Education Programmes

" The main thrust of the MOE's Special Education Policy is the integration of pupils where possible into the mainstream system. It is also to ensure the provision of adequate resources for special schools. In order to accomplish this, special programmes for teacher training are required. " (MOE, 2001 Page 14)

Despite the MOE policy for inclusive education there are very few children involved in the programme to date. Approximately 87 Children have been successfully integrated through the Sight Saver/MOE programme. There are only three districts throughout the country, which have inclusive education programmes for low vision children and these are supported mainly through the NGO community (i.e. Sight Savers International).

Inclusive education programmes require a minimum of trained teachers who can support children with special needs within the regular classroom setting. Districts, which have successfully integrated special needs children with low to moderate disabilities, have the support of at least two itinerant teachers and one peripatetic officer per district. Currently the MOE supports the work of at least one peripatetic officer in most of the districts in the country. Most of these officers do not have adequate transport and are unable to supervise the schools on a regular basis. Community Based Rehabilitation programmes (CBR) are running in collaboration with the MMDE and help to assist parents raise awareness and mobilise resources to support special needs children at community level. Thirty-six districts in the country are involved in the Community Based Rehabilitation Programme.

There needs to be a systematic programme for implementing inclusive education in order to ensure that resources and support are provided to children who enter main stream education. This will require a minimum of one peripatetic officer and two itinerant teachers in almost all the districts of the country.

4.4.1 Inclusiveness and Communication

Some of the problems facing the special needs sub sector include a disagreement over the most effective approach for educating deaf children. The debate has resulted in the situation that there is no clear consensus on how to effectively teach Deaf Children within the special education institutions in Ghana (i.e. Schools for the Deaf), or at the training college level in order to help them integrate into society. For many years teachers have been using communicative approaches, which encourage deaf children to speak if they have the capacity. This approach was supplemented with an "exact English" approach to sign language. Very few people in the country are able to sign the exact English approach and children have been unable to fully communicate at the basic levels of education.

Some experts from the Special Needs Division and University College of Winneba are advocating for a Ghanaian sign language approach, which is based on the US sign language system and integrates a few special signs, which are more "ghanaianised". Training and workshops have begun to train key resource people in all districts in this method but there is a tremendous amount of work to be done to increase the numbers of interpreters.

The Salamanca Declaration based on the World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994) states that "Educational Policies should take full account of individual differences and situations. The importance of sign language as the medium of communication among the deaf should be recognised and provision made to ensure that all deaf persons have access to education in their national sign language. Owing to the particularly communication needs of deaf and deaf/blind persons, their education may be more suitable provided in special schools or special classes and units in mainstream schools."

4.5 Teacher Education and development

In 2000/2001 ---there were 216 graduates from the diploma programme and 111 from the four-year Bachelor of Education programme at University College of Education at Winneba (UCEW). Unfortunately, the vast majority of these graduates do not want to teach as special needs teachers in special schools. According to the SED and UCEW, the large majority of graduate special needs teachers go back to the mainstream schools or find their way to the SSS level using their second area of concentration or leave the teaching profession all together.

Teacher attrition for Special Needs teachers at basic level is quite high. Teachers pursue diploma or degree courses but often do not go back to serve at the basic level on completion of the UCEW special education programme (Acheampong, 2001). Interviews with experts in the field suggest that most teachers do not want to teach special needs children but simply want the degree or diploma when they enter UCEW.

Dery (1995) found that 77 deaf teachers out of a sample of 223 had resigned between 1965 and 1988. The study revealed that the main reason for the high proportion of special needs teachers resigning was due to:

- Long working hours, poor remuneration,
- New career choices,
- Lack of opportunity for overseas training, pressure from family,
- Lack of job satisfaction
- Frustration by administrators.

An informal investigation carried out by UCEW in 2002 indicated that 90% of the second year students in special needs education (241 in total) admitted that they had joined UCEW only for the degree and were not interested in teaching in the special education field (Gadagbui, 2002).

Table 8: Graduates from UCEW Special Needs Division (1995 to 2001)

Type of course	Male	Female	Total
3 year Diploma	195	83	278
2 year Post Diploma	77	30	107
1 year post Diploma (Regular)	26	18	44
1 year Post Diploma (Sandwich)	52	21	73
Total			502

(Gadagbui, 2001)

4.5.1 Curriculum, Books and Special equipment

Children with mental, hearing and sight challenges are following the same curriculum, which is running in the mainstream schools. Children with hearing impairment are given one extra year at the JSS level to complete their studies. Special schools follow the GES syllabus but lack the equipment needed to carry out a basic quality programme. The Braille machine, which produced schoolbooks for the special schools, has not been functioning for the last few years and children in Schools for the Blind have no reading materials. The Blind Schools do not have enough special braille paper and stylus for the students. This prevents children from taking notes, which are so essential when books are not available.

The institutions and schools catering to the mentally handicapped have had to develop their own curriculum. Special needs public schools, with the assistance of GTZ, are in the process of developing curriculum for mentally handicapped institutions. The assistive equipment is often provided through support by NGO's although this is not regular.

4.5.2 Infrastructure Needs

The main concern for SED and the Heads of Special Schools is the need to complete, upgrade and maintain the existing special school buildings. Table 9 summarises the needs of these schools:

Table 9: Infrastructure Needs at Basic and Secondary level

Type of School	Needs at basic level	Needs at Second Cycle
Blind Schools	3 more schools needed (in Central, Volta and Brong Ahafo). Existing structures need completion	
Deaf	Adequate Facilities	1 more SSS needed for the Deaf (northern sector)
Mentally Handicapped	5 sheltered workshops should be established to serve as vocational training centres and exit points	
Older children with special needs		5 special units should be built on to existing technical and vocational schools. These should be identified in order to increase the integration of post SSS students with Special needs.

Type of School	Needs at basic level	Needs at Second Cycle
Assessment Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need for at least 7 more assessment centres in the regions where there are no public or private centres available. ➤ The new and existing centres need better resourcing and equipment 	

(Special Education Division, 2002)

There are a large number of rehabilitation centres around the country run by the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment. Most of these workshops are not well equipped and should be improved.

- MOE and MMDE should work together to try to improve the conditions of rehabilitation centres in order to increase the chance of youth becoming employed after basic education.
- The National Vocational and Technical Institutes (NVTI) should be asked to set up special units for training youth with special needs.

4.5.3 Financing

One of the greatest challenges facing the sub sector are the limited resources available for the development and improvement of special needs education in Ghana. Resources have been woefully inadequate and funding earmarked for the sub sector is not enough. According to the latest MTEF budget estimates for MOE, the special needs sector receives less than 0.4% to run its entire programme. The majority of this funding is used to provide institutional care in the form of food for children in the special schools. There has been very little funding available for creating and supporting inclusive education programmes for children.

Visits to some of the special needs institutions in the country reveals the poor condition of building, lack of books for students and endemic problems the entire sub sector is experiencing due to lack of basic funding. One of the many cases in point is the inability of the Special Needs Division to maintain and repair the braille press for publishing educational materials for the blind; this is the only machine available to produce basic books for the Blind. The machine has been in disrepair for several years depriving most blind children from reading schoolbooks.

There is an urgent need to ensure that the special needs education receive adequate financing for programming using the 6% basis for calculation in the budget. A much higher proportion of the Education Budget must be earmarked for special needs children commensurate to their numbers. This would make a tremendous difference to special needs educational institutions and ensure that inclusive education is properly implemented. The following are the key recommendations for where this funding could be channelled.

4.6 Key Recommendations and The Way Forward

The Special Needs Division has requested assistance for the development of a strategic plan, which will provide donors and MOE with the key priorities for input.

4.6.1 Increasing the thrust for inclusive education

The Special Needs Division should focus its efforts on implementing inclusive education programmes. The division should be provided with adequate financial support to ensure inclusive education programming are implemented. At least 2-4% of the budget should be allocated to special needs children. One region of the country should be identified for an intensive programme for an inclusive education each year for the next 10 years. This would include the selection of 5-10 schools per district for inclusive education using itinerant teachers based at these schools. This would require:

- Teacher training colleges in all the regions mainstream the UNESCO special education training packs in order to prepare all the teachers before posting are familiar with identification and support for special needs children
- Special in-service programmes using the UNESCO pack upgrade teachers at the cluster level using the Whole School Development programme in service model.
- Each district education office in the selected region should draw up district plans for inclusive education with assistance from the special needs division. These plans would identify (5-10 selected schools) where mainstreaming would be concentrated and ensure that itinerant teachers are posted.
- UCEW graduates from the Special Needs Division should be bonded for a five-year period following the degree programme.
- A large number of UCEW special needs graduates would be posted as itinerant teachers to the region where mainstreaming is intensively being focussed.
- UCEW and selected TTC's need to develop programmes for the training of interpreters to support deaf students after basic education.
- UCEW needs to develop a programme to train speech and language therapists to assist hearing impaired children in the mainstream.

4.6.2 Assessment and equipment

Priority must be given to the establishment of at least 4 fully equipped and staffed assessment centres outside of Accra, and Kumasi. These assessment centres should be placed in all the regions where there are currently no assessment centres. This would ensure that children and adults with special needs are properly assessed before admission to programmes or institutions, which the MOE or the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment are running. The assessment centres require the expertise and equipment for testing hearing, sight and learning disabilities.

A national statement and policy directive should be issued directing all institutions to begin using "Ghanaian Sign language" as the medium of instruction for severely impaired deaf children.

High priority must be given to repairing, maintenance and purchase of equipment for special needs schools. Funding to support the repair of the Braille machine and potential purchase of a standby machine must be forthcoming in order to ensure that blind children are not deprived of the vital books they need for study.

4.6.3 Increasing access of special needs children to education

- Inclusive programmes should be supported by MOE in all the districts in the country. Approaches to inclusive education developed for low vision children in the Eastern region of the country should be used. This model involves itinerant teachers being posted to school clusters or special units attached to some schools where ongoing assessment and monitoring can take place. Children with mild to moderate disability should be mainstreamed in these districts and UCEW graduates should be posted to support the process.
- Children with low vision, mild to moderate hearing and mild disabilities should not be admitted to special needs school/institutions when there is an inclusive education programme running in the district. Special needs schools and institutions should be restricted to children having a moderately severe to profound hearing, learning and sight disability.
- There is also a need to establish more integrated secondary and vocational institutions, which can provide programming for children with special needs. This is particularly important for Deaf children who have been unable to enter higher levels of education due to limited communication skills.

4.6.4 Curriculum

The CRDD should explore ways of incorporating issues of special needs into the mainstream curriculum so that all children in the country will come to appreciate the special value of children with disability. Just as gender and the issues of girls' education have been mainstreamed across the curriculum, there must be an all out curriculum review to incorporate stories and examples of how children can accept and help one another. This will help in the implementation of the inclusive education policy.

4.6.5 Teacher education

Special needs education supplements at all training colleges should include more in-depth knowledge of special needs children particularly in light of the policy on inclusive education. All teachers in the country should be trained in the UNESCO pack, which provides basic approaches to helping children with special needs. A more comprehensive special needs education module should be developed for training colleges.

Teachers enrolled in the special needs programme at UCEW should commit to teaching a minimum of five years in basic schools or at district level as itinerant teachers once they graduate from the UCEW. The MOE should ensure that these teachers are bonded.

4.6.6 Public awareness

A great deal of public awareness is needed to change the negative attitudes towards children with special needs. Financial input should be allocated to NGO's and media practitioners to develop programming on radio and television, which promote positive attitudes towards children and adults with disabilities. This will help with the integration of special needs children into the mainstream of society once they complete schooling.

4.6.7 Entering the world of work and higher education

- More community rehabilitation centres and vocational workshops for special needs youth should be attached to existing vocational/technical institutions. At least five such workshops should be developed across the country in collaboration with NVTI.
- There is also a need to provide special scholarships for students with special needs who are able to enter higher educational institutions.
- More research should be conducted to assess the degree of disability, scope of the problem particularly among children and youth, the best approaches to implementing inclusive education in Ghana and other issues identified by UCEW and SED.

4.6.8 Financing and Capacity building;

A larger proportion of the national education budget should be given to the special needs division in order to implement the inclusive education strategies, which require more resources in the form of teaching equipment, learning materials and in-service training for teachers at the basic level. The special needs division should be better resourced to ensure that basic equipment and assertive devices are provided for needy children to promote effective teaching and learning.

Conclusion

Much more work is needed at the basic education level to ensure that the majority of special needs children receive a basic education in order to become productive citizens. The ESR team found that there is limited access for special needs children through the special schools since they are often urban based. Estimates from the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment suggest that less than 2% of children with special needs and/or disability are serviced through special schools. One problem, is the low numbers of female students enrolled at all levels of the special school system. Average participation rates reveal that girls remain under represented as they make up only 30% of special schools intake.

The schools that do exist are able to assist a few children but there is a critical problem with the deaf education. Teaching and learning has not been effective for the majority of deaf children since appropriate communication modes have not been adequately implemented. Ghanaian Sign Language has only recently been introduced. Teachers are only beginning to adopt this approach to teaching deaf

children and its learning should be intensified in the schools to enhance the level of understanding for most deaf children. The main problem for the Blind has been the inability to access Braille materials at all levels in the system. Blind children continue to simply listen to their teachers. Despite these set backs children who are visually challenged have achieved remarkable scores on their BECE and many gain admittance to the SSS level and a few move into University.

One cost effective approach in reaching larger numbers of children with special needs will be the implementation of a systematic programme for inclusive education. This will involve preparing all teacher trainees in simple approaches to identify, support and assist children with special needs in the mainstream schools. The Salamanca declaration signed by Ghana in 1994 states "the practice of mainstreaming children with disabilities should be an integral part of *all national plans for achieving Education for All (EFA)*. Even in those exceptional cases where children are placed in special schools, their education need not be entirely segregated." We have a long way to go in helping special needs children in Ghana feel like valued citizens. The challenge is for the MOE to ensure that the needs of all children will be seen as an urgent priority. The MOE policy thrust towards inclusive education is clear; the main challenge is for the MOE's strategic planning process to develop cost effective plans, which can be easily implemented within the current context of Ghanaian education²².

²² This has started through the establishment of a Special Education Task Force set up to review the ESR recommendations and help the Special Education Division plan out implementation programmes.

5.0 HIV/AIDS Programming in the Education Sector

This section examines the situation of HIV/AIDS within the Education Sector by providing an examination of the policy, strategy and implementation of programmes to combat HIV/AIDS. The section is based on the "Situational Analysis on HIV/AIDS and School Health" conducted as part of the ESR process. It also relies heavily on two studies conducted for DANIDA and UNAIDS, 2002²³.

5.1 Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education

The situation of School Health and HIV/AIDS is becoming a critical area of MOE and development partner programming and intervention. The total MOE workforce is 188,504 in the public Education sector and with a target group totalling over 3,109,915, which includes teacher training colleges and technical vocational institutes, SSS, JSS, and Primary levels. The formal education sector is catering to the "largest percentage of the population"-- covering over 37.6% of the entire national population (HIV/AIDS Workplan, 2002). While education can be an important vehicle for assisting in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, the disease can also do the most harm in the sector by preventing the delivery of quality education.

UNAIDS (2001) suggests that the education system will be affected in two main ways. Through the:

- Reduction in school enrolment due to child death, decreased fertility (demand) and higher demand on child labour.
- Reduction in educational quality due to numbers of teachers absent and death due to AIDS (number of primary school pupils who have lost teacher to AIDS in 1999) (supply)

The impact on all aspects of child, family and communities life are substantial not to mention the macro and micro impacts on the economy and social life of the nation. Several studies suggest that once HIV/AIDS hits a family the first impact is on the children who are often withdrawn from school due to scarce family resources and in order to cope with household responsibilities. The Box 1 suggests some of these impacts at household level.

Box 1: Impacts of HIV/AIDS at house hold level

Household Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Loss of productive hours ➤ Reduction of household savings and wealth (cost to the family) ➤ Diversion of scarce family resources away from education and food toward care for the sick ➤ Increase in AIDS related expenditures as a percentage of household income (Data is very limited at this level)
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Kelly (1999) argues that HIV/AIDS affects the education sector in 10 broad ways:

- (1) The demand for education
- (2) The supply of education
- (3) The availability of resources for education

²³ A Situational Analysis of HIV/AIDS in Ghana prepared for DANIDA (Casely-Hayford, 2001) and The Impact of HIV/AIDS Across West Africa (UNAIDS, 2001)

- (4) The potential clientele for education
- (5) The process of education
- (6) The content of education
- (7) The role of education
- (8) The organisation of schools
- (9) The planning and management of the education system
- (10) The donor support for education (World Bank, 2000c).

Three main indicators are used to analyse the impact in the education sector based on UNAIDS/ECA (2000) data: the supply and demand impacts on education, and the number of children infected by HIV. Research from southern Africa suggests that the HIV/AIDS epidemic will affect the demand for educational service moderately more than the supply until 2010 (Kelly, 1999). Some examples of the impact on the education system are contained in Table 10.

Table 10: Impacts of HIV/AIDS on the Education Sector

Country in order of HIV/AIDS prevalence	Impact on the Education Sector (based on the number of teachers who may die from HIV/AIDS) (Based on UNAIDS/UNICEF modelling in 2000)
Côte d'Ivoire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In 1996/97 64% and 70% of teachers' deaths were HIV related ➤ Out of a sample of 1.7 million primary school students at least 23000 are estimated to have lost a teacher to AIDS in 1999 (approximately 1.35%)
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Out of 700,000 primary school children 7400 would have lost a teacher to AIDS in 1999 (% 1.06)
Togo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Out of a sample of 830,000 children, 7300 would have lost a teacher to AIDS. (% 0.88)
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Out of 14.8 million primary school children 85000 would have lost a teacher to AIDS in 1999 (% 0.57)
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gains made in enrolment will decline with the HIV/AIDS infection
Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increasing numbers of orphans and children's growing responsibilities as a consequence of AIDS in the household will lead to reduced enrolment and hence lower literacy rates. ➤ A model developed by UNICEF suggests that from a cohort of 420,000 primary school students, 1900 have lost their teacher to AIDS in 1999 (0.45%).

(Based on UNAIDS/ECA, 2000 Country by Country report)

Table 10 reveals that between **0.2% to 1.7%** of primary school pupils have lost a teacher to AIDS based on UNICEF's modelling exercise. The impact is greater in countries with higher rates of infection. Studies in Cote d'Ivoire reveal that children were withdrawn from school due to lack of finances for paying school fees and because children were needed on the farm. Where children were orphaned by HIV/AIDS, they were withdrawn immediately from school (Futures Group, 2001d). Studies in Cote d'Ivoire reveal that by 2003 using the low prevalence scenario, there will be close to 375,000-orphaned children due to HIV/AIDS. The gains made in the Gross Enrolment Ratio in Ghana will be lost due to HIV/AIDS.

5.1.1 Monitoring the impact

Unfortunately, monitoring information within Ghana's education sector (i.e. the rate of teacher infection through tracking the reasons for deaths in the system) is still not available through EMIS or other data systems. There are no statistics specifically documenting the prevalence, epidemiology or determinants of the disease among

teachers, students or education workers (MOE Workplan, 2002). Much more work is needed to ensure that MOE data monitoring systems include HIV/AIDS as a major data need.

5.2 Gender and age disaggregated data

Adult HIV prevalence according to the Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC) and the Ghana National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) is 3%²⁴. The latest prevalence rate is based on the most recent census data carried out in 2000. The actual 2000 census figures are lower than those previously projected resulting in a lower prevalence rate.²⁵

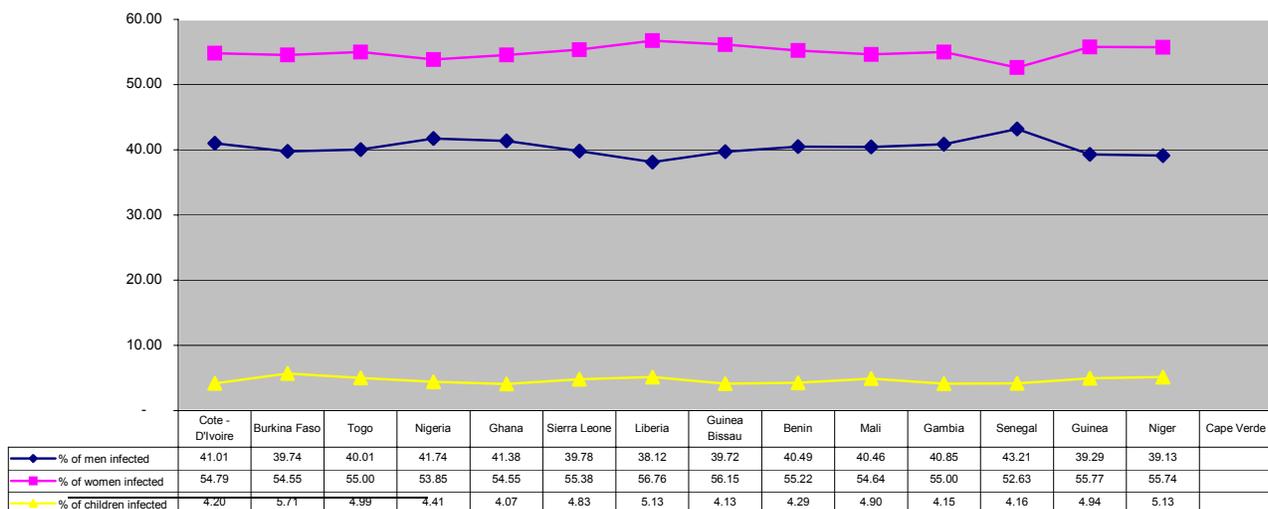
"The number of reported AIDS cases for females in the 15 to 24 age group is much higher than for males in the same group due to the early sexual activity of young girls and the fact that many girls have older male partners (NACP, 2001a)." Children between the ages of 5 to 14 are considered by Government as the "**window of hope**" since this age group can be taught to protect themselves before they become sexually active.

Child mortality rates will increase instead of decline in countries unable to control mother to child transmission. Ghana was set to reduce child mortality from 51/1000 live births by 2010. Child mortality is projected now projected at 75/1000 live births by 2010 (Bollinger, Stover and Antwi, 1999a).

The percentage of HIV infected children range between **4 to 6%** of the total HIV/AIDS population in West African Countries. Mother to child transmission remains high in these countries ranging from 25 to 45% in Africa (UNAIDS, 2000d; GRIA Conference see SAFCO, No.1 2001). Figure 4 reveals the gender-disaggregated data for HIV/AIDS infection across West Africa.

Figure 4: Gender and Age Disaggregated Data Based on Total HIV/AIDS Population

(UNAIDS/ECA, 2000, Country by Country Report)



²⁴ Percentage of all persons between 15 to 49 in the country who are living with HIV/AIDS

²⁵ The population for 2000 projected from 1984 census data was about 1.7 million higher than the actual 2000 census count revealed.

The Ghana National AIDS Control programme estimates that the number of AIDS orphans will increase to 160,000 by the year 2000 and 400,000 by 2010. Enrolment rates in schools are lower for orphans, which further impacts on the economy in the long run (Bollinger, Stover and Antwi, 1999). Growing numbers of HIV/AIDS cases within Ghana will affect the entire education system from a management and outcome perspective.

Prevalence

Prevalence in adult population (NACP, 2001)	3%
Prevalence in young women under 20 (NACP, 2001)	4.6%
Prevalence among STD patients	17%
Prevalence among Blood donors	4%
Prevalence among Commercial Sex Workers	75.8%

Number of People living with HIV/AIDS

Adults and children (MOH/NACP, 2001)	400,000 (at 1999)
Adults (UNAIDS, 2000)	340,000 (at 2000)
Women (UNAIDS, 2000)	180,000 (at 2000)
Children (0-14)	14,000
Daily Infections (based on 3.0% prevalence)	120

Deaths among teachers in Ghana are on the increase. Deaths of teachers in service at the pre-tertiary level revealed a rise in the period between 1995 to 1998 particularly in the Eastern, Western, Central and Volta regions of the country. These are the same regions with the highest rates of HIV infection. The lack of data makes it extremely difficult to estimate or project the impact the epidemic will have on the demand, supply and delivery of educational services in Ghana.

The low projection scenario estimates that HIV prevalence among adults will rise to 3.3% in 2004 and 3.6% in 2009 and 4.0% by 2014. The high prevalence scenario estimates that HIV/AIDS prevalence rates will rise to 4.7% in 2004, **6.9%** in 2009 and **9%** by 2014 (NACP, 2001a). The HIV prevalence varies across the regions since there are several levels of infection in different parts of the country. According to NACP, Eastern region has consistently reported the highest levels of HIV infection followed by the Volta region, Greater Accra, Western, Ashanti and Central regions. The gap is narrowing between the regions as the epidemic progresses (NACP, 2001a).

5.3 Vulnerability

Some identifiable groups within the education sector, who are particularly vulnerable to the disease, include educational directors, learners (particularly the girl child), teachers (particularly those on transfers or first posting), National Service Personnel, non-teaching staff and other educational personnel who are highly mobile. Mobility is one of the key factors in vulnerability since people are away from their regular partners and susceptible to extra marital relationships.

Another characteristic of HIV in Africa is the impact it is having on the youth and the productive age group as well as the growing number of orphans being left behind. Approximately half of the people with HIV are infected under the age of 25 and die before their 35th birthday. Even younger age groups are becoming infected in Sub-Saharan Africa. This has a significant impact on the demographic profile of a country not to mention the labour force and outcomes of the education system (UNAIDS, 2000d).

Studies in Africa reveal that girls aged between 15 to 19 years are five to six times more likely to contract HIV than boys the same age. UNAIDS has found that the infection rate in men eventually catches up but not until after they have reached their late 20's or early 30's (UNAIDS, 2000d). Qualitative research from West Africa reveals that girls from lower socio-economic categories are more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS due to socio-cultural practices including early marriage (UNDP, 2000).

5.4 Education Policy Responses in Ghana

The Ministry of Education has been a leader within the HIV/AIDS sector in responding to the comprehensive HIV/AIDS planning initiatives carried out by the GOG and UNAIDS.²⁶ These policy processes have involved an extensive multi-sectoral approach to planning involving all ministries within Government. The Ghana HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework (2001-2005) and the "Ghana HIV/AIDS Sectoral Action Plans 2001-2005" provide a framework for action outlining the key priorities within each Ministry, Department and Agency.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) supported the development of the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework. The MOE has developed several strategic documents to guide the financing and implementation of a unified response within the sector. Some of the key documents include:

- The MOE's Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS Interventions in the Education Sector (August, 2000)
- The MOE's Operational Plan for HIV/AIDS Interventions in the Education Sector (December, 2000)
- The MOE's Workplan for Addressing HIV/AIDS Prevention (2000 regularly updated)

These documents guide the MOE and provide a comprehensive set of strategies for support to HIV/AIDS within the education sector.

5.5 MOE Strategic Operational Plans

The Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS for the Education Sector identifies the challenges, gaps, opportunities and strategic responses to operationalising the HIV/AIDS framework. The operational plan outlines the intervention activities, institutional arrangements and programme budget. These processes are in accordance with the

²⁶ These include the Sectoral Plans and Strategic Frameworks.

UNAIDS programme planning approach for Africa and demonstrate a high level of commitment on the part of the MOE.

The Ministry of Education's HIV/AIDS Secretariat has used the strategic framework and work-plan to develop a one-year work plan for the unit. The Ghana Aids Fund (GARF) has agreed to finance the one year costed plan for the MOE at 100,000 US\$ per programme. The MOE AIDS Secretariat is assisting other subvented agencies draw up plans for training staff and developing a workplace HIV/AIDS programme. The initial MOE sector wide programme came to 22 million dollars of which 1,6 million was for the first year. The GARF fund has agreed in principle to support the programmes of the different subvented agencies.

The strategy for HIV/AIDS involves reaching out to a workforce of over 180,000 including all MOE agencies and over 7,000,000 learners involved in formal and non-formal educational programmes (HIV/AIDS Secretariat, 2002). This represents over 37% of the population making the education sector one of the most effective channels for reaching a large population. The main strategic interventions involve the following:

- Prevention of new infections
- Care and Support
- Creating an Enabling Environment
- Decentralised Implementation and Institutional Arrangements
- Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

The focus of the MOE's programming is on the "Window of Hope"--- youth between the ages of 5-15 years of age. These are the ages where children are still impressionable. One of the key strategies is to implement training and educational programmes for behaviour change among school pupils and students. The education sector is planning to develop a 20-hour fast track HIV/AIDS programme for implementation in the schools. The main emphasis of the MOE's HIV/AIDS workplan is the focus on awareness creation activities with less emphasis on institutionalising behavioural change processes (i.e. curriculum and guidance and counselling services).

The MOE should carefully consider using existing materials, which have been tested, in other countries around the sub region in order to ensure efficacy in the "fast track approach". Peer education and some curriculum innovations are proving effective for different levels of students. The Ministry should be careful not to try to "reinvent the wheel" and learn from other African countries, which are further along in programming for HIV/AIDS within the School System (UNESCO, 2002)²⁷. The MOE's workplan should place more emphasis on guidance and counselling services and the provision of testing particularly at Second cycle and Tertiary institutions. Guidance counsellors should be trained to cope with issues concerning reproductive health. Peer counselling should also be encouraged within the entire system.

²⁷ UNESCO following the HIV/AIDS and Education Conference in Elmina in 2001 has developed a HIV/AIDS Strategic Resource Guide for African Countries. The Resource Book assists Ministries of Education learn about available curriculum and materials and methods around Africa and across the sub region. The resource book is available from the UNESCO office in Ghana.

5.6 Implementation of the HIV/AIDS Programme

The newly created MOE HIV/AIDS secretariat appears well on its way to full-scale implementation. Their mandate is to co-ordinate all HIV/AIDS programming within the Education sector including the 17 subvented agencies and activities of NGOs working on HIV/AIDS education programmes. Some of the activities include:

- Meeting with sector ministers and Parliamentary caucus
- Meeting with the MOE Agencies on their workplans
- Registration of all school-based NGOs working on HIV/AIDS issues
- Development of a HIV/AIDs manual to be used across the sector

The Secretariat works within the Operational Framework on HIV/AIDS and has begun rallying strategic forces to support its efforts including the Minister and key stakeholders. The secretariat has conducted a very informative advocacy workshop with key stakeholders including the Parliamentary sub committee on Education and all key directors within the MOE and GES.

Apart from the two major implementation strategies-- for securing funding and creating awareness within the highest levels of Government, the HIV/AIDS secretariat has developed a comprehensive approach to implementation which involves regional, and district institutional mechanisms. The institutional arrangements will include 10 regional focal people, 110 district focal people, circuit focal people and schools. The National HIV/AIDS Secretariat is staffed by one co-ordinator and two officers, which relate to the relevant agencies, sectoral ministries and development partners.

5.7 Prevention activities

School based activities:

There are three main interventions on going within the education sector to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. These include:

- School Health Education programme activities
- The Population and Family Life Education (POPFLÉ) of CRD
- The distribution of condoms to students at the Tertiary Level Institutions particularly the Universities

Many of the regional SHEP officers have been involved in HIV/AIDS awareness creation. Several NGOs are also working in the country to ensure that the school-based approaches to HIV/AIDS prevention are implemented.

Curriculum: The MOE has been able to harness its normal channels of communication to increase the level of awareness on HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS issues have been integrated throughout the basic and SSS curriculum through the support of POPFLÉ. HIV/AIDS issues are integrated in some subjects such as Primary Six "Healthy Living", Life skills syllabus and even the science syllabus at JSS and SSS levels. The non-formal education division has also infused HIV/AIDS topics within literacy classes in all the 15 language groups.

Reports from experts indicate that the curriculum is mainly informational and not aimed at behaviour change. More emphasis should be placed on moral education through out the curriculum particularly at the lower primary level, which will help ensure that children make the right choices when they are introduced to the information on HIV/AIDS.

Teacher Education: POPFLE integrates reproductive health issues into the pre tertiary level including the TTC's. A training of trainers' workshop was carried out in collaboration with the MOH and NGO's for schoolteachers, regional and district SHEP officers in three districts in the Central Region (SHEP, 2002).

The MOE is planning an integrated training programme for 3 days in every teacher training college, which will include both a moral and ethical component to HIV/AIDS awareness training. The training is designed to increase the teachers "comfort level" in discussing issues within the classroom particularly relating to the life-skills curriculum and science. The training is also aimed at assisting teachers assess their "positions of power" and recognise that they need to be role models for others.

Monitoring: There is no data available on the level of HIV/AIDS within the different sectors of education including the tertiary, senior secondary and primary levels. Much more work is needed to ensure that early warning signs are developed and programmes can strategically target vulnerable groups. The University's should be asked to start a research programme to ensure that this happens.

5.7.1 Awareness creation

There are several activities, which have taken off within the Ministry; these are mainly concerned with awareness creation programmes for staff at the national head quarters and teachers at the district and regional levels. Funds were released through the Whole School Development (WSD) programme to undertake HIV/AIDS awareness programmes at the District level throughout the country. The SHEP unit has been instrumental in conducting awareness creation activities with staff and implementing programmes at the district level.

Outside the MOE's programmes there are several other agencies, which are, involved in HIV/AIDS programming and awareness creation exercises. These include the NGO sector and the development partners. Table 11 provides a description of these awareness creation programmes and IEC programmes.

There have been several information campaigns over the last two years using radio and television to create awareness of the risk of HIV/AIDS. The most popular has been the "Stop AIDS Love Life Campaign" by John Hopkins University (JHU), which has focussed on youth (15-24) and adults. More recently JHU has launched another campaign called the "Journey of Hope" which is a multi-media kit containing games which help people make choices and think about their future and the risks of HIV/AIDS.

Peer-to-Peer education is proving to be one of the most effective approaches used by NGOs and other agencies in HIV/AIDS prevention across Africa. Interviews with

Family Health international (FHI) revealed that face-to-face peer education is the most effective communication strategy for behavioural change especially among youth. UNICEF has recently initiated a programme called the SARA, which is primarily focussed on girls between the ages of 10-15 years of age. It uses an edu-entertainment approach (i.e. magazines, videos and posters) to convey stories about young girls using reproductive health themes.

Table 11: HIV/AIDS Education Strategies by Age Grouping in Ghana

Target Group	Agency	Approach
Children (0-15) (In school)	Ministry of Education UNESCO/GTZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Training of School Health Officers and Counsellors ➤ Integration of HIV/AIDS in school curriculum using the GES school health education programme (SHEP) ➤ Using school clubs to convey messages. ➤ National theatre drama group on HIV/AIDS awareness
Children (Out of School)	GHANET GSMF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Church leaders, social groups and youth clubs, ➤ Moral Education ➤ Social groupings and identifiable groups to reach out.
Youth (15-25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Red Cross Network ➤ Family Health International ➤ John Hopkins University ➤ Ghana Social Marketing Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Peer Counselling ➤ Peer Counselling Tool which is a kit involves some games and magazines ➤ Radio/T.V adverts using peer role models ➤ "Edu-tainment" (magazines, condom dances, role-models or popular youth figures)
Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ghana Social Marketing Foundation ➤ GHANET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Television, bill boards, easy accessible condom sales ➤ MPs, media personnel and district chief executives as channels for communication. ➤ Existing community and private sector structures. ➤ Workplace based programming is a very effective channel of communication particularly through training of human resource staff, associations, unions and umbrella organisations.
Girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ UNICEF Education sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SARA is an educational media package for youth (10-15), which includes magazines and videos on reproductive health.
High risk groups (sex workers, truckers and market women)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ghana Social Marketing Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promotion of condoms and safe sex.

(Based on Interviews with Key stakeholders in the HIV/AIDS programming sector)

Interviews revealed that the hard to reach populations are the youth out of school who are mobile and highly vulnerable to the infection. The Ghana Social Marketing Foundation (GSMF) attempts to reach this group through edu-entertainment approaches by contacting youth in locations where they often "hang out" (i.e. clubs, discos, beaches etc). They integrate HIV/AIDS awareness into the entertainment programmes where possible and use popular youth figures to promote messages. The main challenge these programmes experience is being able to ensure that the messages they transmit are appropriate to the age specific population and do not reinforce unhealthy behaviours. Several stakeholders expressed the need for censorship in order to ensure that the "wrong messages" are not promoted within the media particularly when the messages are developed by "western development agencies".

According to the Ghana Social Marketing Foundation (GSMF) and the NACP the most effective media for conveying messages is radio; 84% of people obtain HIV/AIDS related information through the radio. Only 50% of the population obtain information through TV. Other sources include newspapers, and informal channels such as peers and faith based organisations.

5.8 Challenges and Priorities

There is an urgent need to conduct more research to assess the current levels of HIV/AIDS prevalence within the Tertiary, Secondary and Basic Levels of education (teachers and pupils). According to experts in Ghana, research studies have not been conducted at University level since they require the voluntary agreement of institutions and participants involved.

Ghana is still at an early stage of the pandemic and all efforts should be focussed on prevention particularly within the early years through moral education, IEC campaigns and peer counselling among the youth. Children between the ages of 10-15 will have a better chance of remaining free from the disease if they make significant strides in adopting safe behaviour and practising abstinence before marriage. Peer education and value-based approaches will become one of the most effective approaches in order to break the promiscuous peer culture, which exists at the SSS and tertiary level institutions. Already some institutions are creating innovative approaches such as starting abstinence clubs at the SSS level.

5.9 Key Recommendations²⁸

Government needs to define both the short-term measures for HIV/AIDS prevention and care at the same time begin investing in longer-term measures such as moral education particularly at basic level. Investing in girls' education is another strategic investment in order to arrest the spread of HIV/AIDS in the long run. Many of the recommendations contained in section two on gender equity have a direct impact on the degree to which HIV/AIDS will be prevented. For instance increasing scholarships for girls may prevent some girls from falling prey to unwanted sexual relations especially with older men.

Key to this process will be the role of information and data collection. Universities and research institutions across Ghana should be at the forefront of providing government with up to date data on the situation. Co-ordination between and within UN and bilateral agencies will continue to be essential in spear heading an effective response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The entire process of creating awareness and changing behaviour within the MOE and its agencies should be considered carefully. The questions of the "awareness creation" and the emphasis on workshops and training should be reassessed to see if there are faster more effective approaches to reaching out to the large numbers of employees and students within the system on a regular and timely basis (i.e. radio,

²⁸ These recommendations are over and above what is already developed within the MOE's current HIV/AIDS workplan.

t.v. or even posters specifically targeting teachers, peer educators etc). More emphasis should be placed on assessing approaches, which encourage behaviour change and not only on exchanging information. Much more innovation is needed to ensure that regular channels of information and consultation can be developed possibly relying on health officers who run clinics for testing and counselling services on a yearly basis in each school and institutions. Experience from southern Africa suggests that approaches which rely on a trickle down effect of training teachers who then pass the message on to their students has some difficulties. More emphasis should be placed on collaborating with Community health nurses and inviting trained people into the schools as opposed to reliance on teachers to transmit these messages.

Different interventions should also be designed for different levels within the system. For instance:

- Moral education particularly at the early child hood and basic level is essential
- Guidance and counselling services from JSS to Tertiary level
- Peer Education from JSS to Tertiary level
- Testing particularly at the University level
- Training and awareness creation through innovative and education specific IEC campaigns at all levels
- Workplace policy should be developed
- Code of Conduct for Schools should also be revisited

Specifically:

- Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) and POPFLE should develop curriculum, which is not only providing information but also helping children assess their own behaviour and make value choices particularly at the younger age grouping where children are most impressionable. A value-based approach should be used particularly at the Basic and Early childhood level to help children develop skills and values which can protect them in later life when they are faced with difficult decisions. International examples of well-developed moral educational curriculum can be found in Canada.
- Moral and religious education at kindergarten, basic and secondary level should be intensified and made examinable at the basic education level. The emphasis should be on the promotion of universal virtues and values, which help children, make choices and cope with change.
- Improve and strengthen the level of **guidance and counselling services** at all levels within the school system particularly at the JSS, secondary and tertiary levels. Counselling will be key to assisting youth reorient their behaviour particularly at the JSS and SSS level. Peer counselling should be introduced at all secondary and tertiary level institutions with the assistance of the NGO sector (i.e. World Education and West Africa AIDS Foundation, Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana etc).
- Improve co-ordination and collaboration between Social Services, Guidance and Counselling, Girls Education and SHEP units by clearly defining roles and responsibilities in relation to HIV/AIDS programming. Strengthen collaboration

between the HIV/AIDS Secretariat and SHEP Unit. Where possible existing structures should be used to ensure that HIV/AIDS programming is sustained and institutional structures are not duplicated at regional and district levels.

- Peer Education Training Programmes should be used to reach out to large numbers of people targeted for workshops within the current MOE HIV/AIDS workplan. Peer educators within the Second Cycle and Tertiary level as well as workplace advocates are needed to reach out to the large numbers and sustain impact. NGOs and religious based agencies involved in HIV/AIDS programming (i.e. World Vision, West Africa AIDS Foundation and PPAG etc) should be used where possible to conduct these workshops. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging abstinence and creating a new peer culture for adolescent health and safety.
- An independent committee set up in the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Communication should censor Media, educational materials and any HIV/AIDS public education programmes aimed at youth and children. The committee should be responsible for analysing the relevancy and appropriateness of messages for various age groupings. Reports should be sent to the media commission.
- Priority should be placed on developing a MOE HIV/AIDS workplace policy in collaboration with the Ghana National Association of Teachers and the Human Resource Development Division. The Code of Conduct and Conditions of Service for GES will also have to be revisited. Training for all manpower divisions within GES should be given on the management of the workplace policy in order to ensure that the division is able to cope with any manpower issues, which occur due to the HIV/AIDS scourge.
- HIV/AIDS initiatives will demand a higher level of vigilance within the MOE related to child rights and protection. The recommendations in section 6 should help to guide this process. There is an urgent need to develop more stringent disciplinary measures for teachers who infringe on child rights and protection.

6.0 School Health Programming (SHEP)

This section examines the School Health Education Programme (SHEP) within the Education Sector. The section provides an examination of the key issues confronting school health, the effectiveness of the programme and the key recommendations in order to strengthen the SHEP programme. The section is based on the findings from documentation review and stakeholder meetings with representatives from the SHEP programme, NGO's and other agencies involved in SHEP programming at district and regional level.

6.1 Status of health issues of children within the education sector

There are several pressing problems which children in Ghana face and which SHEP appears the best placed to address. Among these is the:

- High level of malnourishment among children in Ghana
- Lack of nutritional supplements in some areas of the country (i.e. Vitamin A and Iodine deficiency particularly in the Northern region)
- Extremely poor hygienic conditions at most schools including lack of basic sanitation facilities and lack of potable water (GNCC, 2001;Ackom 2002)
- Early pregnancy and early commencement of sexual activity among youth (MOH, 2000)
- Lack of parental care and high level of parental neglect due to socio-economic factors

Many of these problems cannot be solved by the school alone and require a high level of community school collaboration. The SHEP programme affords an excellent vehicle for helping the school become a model of good health practice within the community. Programmes such as Child Scope and Child to Child are demonstrating the need for communities to become actively involved in school improvement. They also demonstrate that effective school health education can introduce more participatory approaches into the classroom and community setting.

6.2 Effectiveness of the SHEP programme.

The School Health Unit of the Ministry of Education is currently in the process of designing a policy and strategic plan for School Health programming in Ghana. The policy will focus mainly at the basic education level and involve several key agencies involved in SHEP programming including development partners and NGO's.

This strategic planning process places the SHEP Unit in a good position for sector wide support and resourcing. The Unit has had a long history of working with UNICEF along with other NGO's but has suffered from lack of internal financing to carry out programmes effectively at school and district level. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education are given a mandate to jointly collaborate on school health issues. The SHEP programmes often use a campaign approach in order to reach all levels of society. They involve screening of special needs children.

The SHEP programme has a very important and broad ranging programme within the MOE. It tends to focus most of its activities at the basic education level. The Ministry of Education Policy and Programmes identifies the following goals and targets for SHEP programming: To *promote good health and environmental sanitation in schools and communities in order to improve learning outcomes within the policy framework of MOE/GES*; SHEP activities include the following:

- Promote a Healthy Environment in Schools
- Provision of sanitary facilities in schools and colleges
- Provision of water supply facilities in schools and colleges
- Establish linkages between good health and achievement levels
- Establish linkages between good health and environmentally friendly activities.
- Develop strategies to combat epidemics
- Develop an open approach to discussions on health and nutritional issues for children at all levels.

There are eight programming areas, which include:

1. Environmental Health
2. Personal Health including Hygiene and Physical Education
3. Drug and Substance Abuse
4. Adolescent Reproductive Health, STIs and HIV/AIDS inclusive
5. Safety and security
6. Family Life Education
7. School Health Services
8. Food and Nutrition

School based programme

According to the District and Regional SHEP officers most of the SHEP activities, which take place at the school level, do not require extra logistical support. Some of the activities include:

- Environmental health and sanitation education (sweeping, beautification and tree and hedge planting which keeps the compounds from eroding)
- Personal Hygiene promotion (ensuring that children keep themselves clean)
- Food and Hygiene Handling (Ensuring that food vendors are keeping the food they sell under hygienic conditions; medical examination and certification is carried out by the MOH before vendors are allowed to operate).

Reports from SHEP officers around the country reveal that many schools are involved in the formation of health clubs, malaria prevention and control and STD/HIV advocacy, Immunisation and Vitamin A supplementation and de-worming of children, screening, clean up campaigns and adolescent reproductive health education. It is not possible to determine the scope of activities, degree of effectiveness and number of schools involved in these programmes in each district. A more extensive evaluation needs to be carried out to determine the level of SHEP activity throughout the country.

The majority of SHEP activities at the school level form part of most schools daily routine and do not require a great deal of extra effort/finance on the part of SHEP officers. Ackom's (2002) assessment of school health activities in schools in the

Accra and Central region reveals that teachers see School Health Activities as an added burden since they are not part of the syllabus and add extra work to their heavy schedules.

There are no comprehensive evaluations of the SHEP programme. Some studies commissioned by UNICEF suggest that there is little activity within the SHEP programme and very little collaboration with the MOH. Ntow (2000) suggests a number of problems experienced by the SHEP programme:

- Most of the SHEP officers lack funds to carry out SHEP activities
- There is apathy among SHEP officers
- Lack of clear guidelines for intersectoral collaboration
- Lack of institutional capacity

The assessment found that very few districts had developed action plans at regional or district level. The SHEP officers feel that they have not been trained to carry out school health programmes while their MOH colleagues are given constant training.

Curriculum: *School* health is integrated in some of the curriculum including subjects such as integrated Science, English, Moral and Religious Education, Social Studies Life skills at the Basic Level. School health is also integrated in home economics and life skills training at the SSS level. Reports suggest that SHEP issues are not covered in much depth in the curriculum. SHEP, CRDD and Teacher Education are in the process of carrying out a review of the School Health Curriculum.

Teacher training: The SHEP division believes that a review of the teacher education curriculum is necessary to ensure that school health is properly addressed. Currently there is very little mentioned about school health issues in the teacher-training curriculum. Some school health topics are covered such as physical fitness, first aid and nutrition under "physical education" and some reproductive health issues are taught under "environmental health".

Field visits to the district offices revealed that there are a large number of training materials on school health in the system. These include excellent materials developed by Ghanaian experts, which are user friendly. Some of the titles are:

- Focussing Resources on Effective School Health: a Fresh Start to Quality and Equity in Education (UNESCO, WHO)
- Handbook on Health Education for Basic Schools in Ghana (by Dr De Heer, School Health Education Advisor, 1997) Part 1 and Part 2
- WHO Information Series on School Health---Local Action and Creating Health Promoting Schools. (This is a local action planning book excellent for district offices)

District SHEP Officers are able to use these materials for in-service training when provided with adequate resources. Most of the in-service training has focussed on HIV/AIDS awareness creation.

Supervision of activities by District Officers

SHEP has regional, district and school based co-ordinators. This year the SHEP division tried to encourage in-service training for all SHEP officers in the country. Officers complain of their inability to properly carry out activities these activities due to lack of logistical support. Several officers within the programme at regional and district level are not factored into the district budget. According to the SHEP Director there are several inactive SHEP officers in the system. The Director would like to see younger more vibrant officers being selected at regional and district level.

Financing: The SHEP programme was given support through the MTEF budget framework for the first time this year (2001/2002). In the past the SHEP officers were expected to solicit funds through the district assembly or the NGO community. The SHEP programme was therefore dependent on the "good will" of the District Education officers.

Strengths and success

Reports from the regions suggest that the SHEP programmes have been using children as "channels for health education" which have immensely improved the environmental sanitation conditions in the communities. Child-to-Child methods are cost effective and have had a positive impact in some areas (Ackom, 2002)

There are cases of successful SHEP programmes in the Volta and the Western regions of the country. These programmes have demanded strong SHEP officers working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and development partners (Volta Rural Water and Sanitation Project by Danida). One programme in the Volta region was able to facilitate the construction of water and sanitation facilities in several communities in the region. The SHEP programme played a key role in ensuring the health and sanitation education was implemented through using children as agents of behavioural change. Unfortunately this programme was not sustained due to the SHEP programme's dependence on MOH financing to support the programme and lack of MOE support.

Another successful programme, which was highlighted in the ESR assessment, was the partnership between SHEP, Lever Brothers and food vendors in some districts in the country. School health officers also reported that the provision of water canisters and drinking cups provided by DFID was very effective in improving the hygienic conditions of schools and improving child health.

Challenges for SHEP

Reports from officers at the National, Regional and District levels suggest that there is a general lack of commitment to SHEP implementation. The main problem appears to be the lack of resources directly allocated to SHEP officers at the District level in order to implement their programmes. SHEP officers are well aware of the funds allocated and logistical support given to other activities such as Girls' Éducation and feel it necessary to have their own budget.

Regional officers suggest that the challenges are: lack of policy framework, difficulty in monitoring and supervision, lack of interest by some GES officials to the SHEP programme, inactive regional and district SHEP steering committees, lack of funding and lack of sustainability in programming.

Among the challenges that the district SHEP officers face in the implementation of SHEP programming include:

- Lack of transportation to enable them to cover all schools within their districts
- Lack of funds to organise training programmes
- Lack of logistical support.

The national level is still in the process of developing a policy framework and strategic plan for the SHEP programme. This should allow development partners and the MOE to increase their support for this vital area of intervention.

6.3 Key Recommendations

Stronger collaboration is needed between the MOE and MOH in planning and allocating resources to school health activities around the country. Since both Ministries are involved in the provision and implementation of School Health they should have a regular review of activities to plan out yearly activities. A common fund of resources should be used to carry out the programme.

6.3.1 Sustainability of programming

More emphasis should be placed on mobilising locally generated interest, resources and enthusiasm for the transformation, which should take place in the school environment to ensure a safe and adequate learning environment for children. SHEP officers should use more IEC materials and locally produced materials to transmit school health messages.

The SHEP programme should aim at realistic activities within the school setting; They should begin by asking each region and district education offices to present a set of school activities, which falls into three or four of the SHEP programme categories. District officers should use a 'Child friendly school model" as a basis for their activities.

The national SHEP unit should mobilise its large number of regional, district and school based officers to begin initiating activities at the district and school level. Shorter more manageable steps should be taken to effect rapid change within the country.

6.3.2 Priority areas for MOE in ensuring Child health

The MOE should ensure that its policy to ensure that all new school construction activities include a low cost and locally developed water and sanitation facility at each school is implemented. A systematic programme for the provision of potable water in all schools should be ensured (GPRS, 2002; MOE, 2001). Communities should be involved in the construction of latrines for schools.

School feeding programmes should be sustained through collaboration between the MOE and development partners particularly in areas where there are high levels of malnutrition among children. Programmes currently running through the Catholic Relief Programme supported by USAID and the World Food Programme in the northern regions should continue and extend to the primary and KG levels in areas with the highest incidence of poverty.

GOG should ensure that free drugs are available for deworming children on a regular basis and that vitamin A is available for distribution. The MOH and MOE should consult on the most systematic approach for allocating resources and planning their SHEP strategies on a yearly basis.

6.3.4 Priority Areas for SHEP

SHEP should take a stronger role in facilitating action at the school level in connection with water, sanitation (latrines and food security issues for children. SHEP officers should become community development advocates for children within their areas. Priority areas for School Health Education Programming should ensure that:

- Nutrition surveillance programmes are conducted in all schools and where possible supplementary feeding is provided to children with community support
- Sanitation facilities (locally constructed) are available with the support of the PTA and SMC's
- Hygiene education is regularly conducted
- Potable water is available at the school at all times
- Reproductive health education including HIV/AIDS awareness training for both boys and girls is provided
- Immunisation and vitamin A deficiency is monitored
- A school campaign to eradicate malaria infestation within the compound and possibly within the community
- The safety and security of all children particularly girls through child rights education is promoted

The safety and security particularly of girl children should be made a key priority in all schools. SHEP officers should be trained to report cases of child abuse. Use of media campaigns should be encouraged at national, regional and district level with support from the private sector. MOE and MOH should work closely with the media to encourage involvement in the School Health Information delivery, education and communication programmes. TV and FM stations should be encouraged to provide free airtime for public health education particularly at the national, regional and district levels. Students, musicians and artists should be involved in popularising health education messages.

6.3.5 Focus on Developing a Child Friendly School Campaign

- The School health education programme should spear head a campaign to ensure that "a child friendly environment" is developed at the school level, which would include all aspects of their programming including water and sanitation. Child friendly indicators should be used to assess whether a school has reached a basic standard of health and hygiene practice. District SHEP officers should monitor the schools regularly based on these indicators and report to the national and regional (departments) levels concerning progress.
- Teacher training colleges should introduce training on school health issues using the child friendly school model, child rights and well-tested approaches to school health (i.e. child to child and Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques).
- Guidance and counselling services should include school health issues such as girls' reproductive health and HIV/AIDS concerns.

6.3.6 Human Resource Development and Collaboration

MOE should develop a strong and extensive human resource base of teachers who are interested in School health issues. This should begin by integrating the SHEP programmes within the Teacher Training College curriculum and placing emphasis on school health before teachers are posted. In-service and pre service training programmes should equip teachers with co-ordination, advocacy, and project planning and community development skills.

SHEP district and school based officers all over the country should be selected carefully to ensure that they are able to implement SHEP programming and act as key role models within their school/community. A key to their selection should be the relationship with the community and demonstrated level of interest in child rights and community development issues. SHEP should also forge closer links with Whole School Development mechanisms in order to conduct in-service teacher training when necessary. There should be a yearly SHEP conference in order to present district and regional action plans and learn new approaches within the school health field.

SHEP officers at the school level should be encouraged to liaise with the community health workers and other community development officers particularly in the areas of nutrition, surveillance monitoring, immunisation, vector and rodent control.

There should be closer collaboration between the SHEP unit and the HIV/AIDS secretariat at the Ministry. SHEP officers should be encouraged to collaborate with the District Response Initiatives (DRI) to combat HIV/AIDS but also maintain their priority areas in order to become school based advocates working on strategies that ensure that children at basic level are aware of the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS.

6.3.7 Financing and Incentives

A **regular budget allocation** should be provided for the entire SHEP programme. District officers should receive a regular budget allocation on a yearly basis in order to carry out programmes. District allocations should be made once the district action plans are submitted and reviewed.

Improving SHEP programming within the MOE does not require large levels of funding but motivated SHEP officers at the district and school level. The SHEP programme should encourage teachers to take up these extra responsibilities by instituting a:

- SHEP award scheme in each district for teachers who help create the best child friendly environment.
- SHEP officers who demonstrate an interest in school health should be invited to training workshops
- Incentives schemes in the form of bicycles or radio handsets for SHEP officers who develop significant improvements and innovations within their school environments.
- Yearly increment in budget allocations for district SHEP officers should be tied to performance and innovation.

Local durbahs or fundraising activities should be organised to support the implementation of school projects such as low cost water and sanitation facilities, school farms and school feeding programmes. Private and public sector linkages should be encouraged in order to support school health activities (i.e. Lever Brothers experience).

7.0 Child Rights and Protection

This section examines the situation of child rights and protection within the Education Sector. The section outlines the main issues related to child rights and protection, the challenges and strategies for overcoming the problems within the education sector. The section is a synthesis of the situational analysis and workshop report on Child Rights and Protection conducted as part of the ESR process (2002).

The specific objectives of the consultancy area were to assess the measures taken to address issues of child rights and protection. This was done by assessing the measures taken at all levels of the education system including the:

- School level
- Community level
- District Education level
- MOE National level
- Teacher Education level
- Within the Curriculum

7.1 Key Child Rights and Protection Issues within the Sector

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) places a responsibility on the state to take appropriate steps to protect children from all forms of physical, mental and sexual abuse through the establishment of protective, investigative and preventive services. Yet a high incidence of child abuse exists in schools, homes and market places (Fiscian, V.S. and Casely-Hayford, L. 2002).²⁹

Predominate among the various forms of child rights abuses are:

- Defilement and sexual abuse
- Early and forced marriage and other negative cultural practices (female genital mutilation, trikosi etc)
- Harassment
- Harmful corporal punishment (particularly in schools)
- Abandonment, and intentional neglect
- Child abduction
- Child Labour and Commercial exploitation (sexual & domestic) and;
- Outright sale of children

Child Labour and Parental Neglect

Paragraph 32 of the labour decree states that “No person who, in the opinion of the chief labour officer or a labour officer, is under the age of sixteen shall be capable of entering into contract for employment as a worker”. Nevertheless, as the evidence shows, the law has been ineffective and is out of touch with social and economic realities in Ghana today (UNICEF 1990:64). The GLSS-3 in 1995 reported that 7.8% of 7 – 14 year olds and 31.5% of 15 – 19 year olds are economically active.

²⁹ A child is abused, when other people infringe upon his/her rights. ‘Abuse’ is the legal term applied to children who are taken advantage of by an adult (and sometimes by another child) by virtue of his/her own benefit or gratification (Leach, F. Machakanja, P. with Mandoga, J. 2000).

According to UNICEF 2000, child labour is one of the main reasons why some children are not participating effectively in schooling. A study conducted in some schools in the Eastern region by UNICEF, revealed that in Boadua Catholic Junior Secondary School, 10-15% of the pupils drop out of school because of small-scale mining activities. FAWE reported that in Dangbe East District, schoolgirls assist their parents in salt-mining and full-time hawking (FAWE, 1996).

There are several reasons given by children why they work. Some of the reasons include issues of parental neglect or refusal to support them; this is equally a violation of child rights. For example, article 28c of the 1992 constitution states that the child has the right to maintenance and assistance for his or her development from his or her parents. Yet, many children are denied this fundamental human right.

7.1.2 Informal Child Fostering Practices

Evidence from Northern Ghana suggests that one of the main reasons girls are unable to attend school is due to the child fostering practices in many of the northern communities (Wolff and Odonkor, 1998; Casely-Hayford 2000). According to a study conducted by Ghana National Commission on Children, ninety-six out of the two hundred children interviewed in Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem District, in the central region, were living under informal fostering arrangements³⁰. The report further indicated that parents do not remit money to maintain children they are fostered out. As a result, many of these children work to support themselves while they live with their caregivers.

The problem of child maintenance and parental neglect is inter-linked with the child's ability to attend and stay in school (GNCC, 1997:23). The problem of parental neglect and refusal to support children has contributed to the proliferation of children out of school and living on the streets in towns and cities. According to Korboe 1997, the majority of children working on the streets, do so in order to survive. For instance 7.1% of girls selling on the streets in Accra are neglected by their parents (Apt & Grieco, 1997).

7.1.3 Negative Traditional Practices

There are some traditional practices, which influence decisions related to child maintenance. For example, in the Bongo District, if a woman is not "customarily married" and gives birth, the child will be deemed the responsibility of the woman's parents and not the husband's. Other traditional practices such as 'Trokosi, Early marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and barter marriage impede upon the basic rights of the child and often prevent children from fully participating in basic education (GNCC, 1997).

³⁰ A denial of the child to the right of maintenance by their parents constitutes wilful or gross neglect. Within the Ghanaian family system such children are placed with other relatives. The Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC) describes this arrangement as 'Informal Fostering'. In the north of Ghana there are traditional practices that require that female children are fostered to their auntie's.

7.1.4 Sexual Abuse

A growing number of reports suggest that there is sexual abuse taking place in public schools at all levels in the system. Numerous reports in the media suggest that teachers have been engaged in sexual abuse of students particularly at the basic level. Some of the cases involve teachers who have committed sexual abuse numerous times and were transferred to other schools after having committed the offence.

Studies by the Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre (1999) revealed that 49% of adolescent girls experience various forms of sexual abuse. Among the 2,049 girls aged 13 and above, in twenty districts across the country, 20% of the girls reported that their first experience of sexual intercourse was by force. Another disturbing feature was that 6% of those interviewed had been threatened by a teacher or a school principal and told that their schooling would suffer "if they do not have sex with them" (Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre 1999).

Recent research on abuse of girls in Ghanaian basic schools conducted by Fiscian V.S. and Casely-Hayford L. (2002)³¹ revealed that teachers in the four case study schools (Central Region) propositioned 27.1% of girls. The Women and Juvenile Unit (WAJU) of the Ghana Police service between 1999 and November 2001 recorded 496 cases of defilement in the country³². Over half of the cases involve defilement of female children and the failure or refusal of a parent to supply their child with their basic needs (UNICEF, 2000:109).

7.1.5 Physical Abuse

Research on abuse in Ghanaian schools (Fiscian et al. 2002) revealed that physical and verbal abuses were common problems pupils often experienced in school. Bullying of girls by male pupils was the most common form of physical abuse in schools. The Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre 1999 also reported that 78% of adolescents experience physical abuse by a guardian before the age of 13. In most communities some level of physical and verbal discipline of children is considered acceptable. For instance caning of children is one of the common approaches used to discipline pupils in schools. Abuse studies in Ghanaian schools revealed that teachers did not consider caning as a form of abuse against pupils (Fiscian et al, 2002).

³¹ An Investigative study into the Abuse of Girls in Ghanaian Primary and Junior Secondary schools (2002) A University of Sussex/DFID-UK Commissioned study.

³² The January 26 edition of the 'WEEKLY SPECTATOR' page 11.

7.1.6 Right to Education

The Ministry of Education is still in the process of developing and putting into operation a national policy on child rights (Asiegbor and others, 2001:v). The 1992 constitution of Ghana makes basic education free and compulsory to all children. Nevertheless, not all children enjoy their rights to education. According to MOE/GES 2001, about 17% of Ghanaian children are denied their right to basic education.

The enforcement of the compulsory aspect of the right to education is however, enshrined in the general processes created under the CHRAJ mechanisms. The Children's Act has made provision for the enforcement of the rights of the child created under the Act (MOE/GES 2001:45). The national policy on free education states that the government will provide free tuition, textbooks, teaching and learning materials and subsidises the cost of exercise books; the problem still remains concerning school levies. Differences exist between districts and even basic schools dependant on which fees are charged (i.e. sports levies, cultural fees and examinations).

Enforcement of CHRAJ's policy guidelines remains a challenge. District Education Offices require that head-teachers pay these fees on each child that is enrolled in their schools; Children are often sent away for non-payment of levies (MOE/GES 2001:42). This has created ambiguity concerning the "free nature of the policy" and ensuring the right of the child to basic education is upheld; it has also created a challenge to CHRAJ in enforcing its policy guidelines in ensuring basic education for all children.

7.2 Protective Policies and Legal Instruments

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has become an internationally recognised set of principles and standards for laws, policies and practices that protect the rights of the child. Ghana has a responsibility to ensure that the contents of the convention are translated into practice. There is no national child rights and equity policy within the education sector to ensure that the rights and protection of children are ensured within the Education sector³³. The following are some of the existing policy statements and guidelines on child rights:

Under the current constitutional regime, article 25 of the 1992 constitution provides that: "All persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities with a view to achieving the full realisation of that right" (MOE/GES2001: 19)

Several policies' are in place but not the legal instruments to assist children to protect themselves. Ghana has responded positively to various Acts and policies and effected necessary constitutional provisions on the rights to education. Article 25(1) of the 1992 constitution for example is a replica of Article 13(2) of International

³³ See Asiegbor, Fincham, Nanang, Gala and Britwum. November, 2001: V

Types of Abuse and the relevant policy	Policy statement/guidelines for protection
Child Labour	<p>Children’s Act- Act 560 (Part V, Sub-part 1) section 87(1) states that: <i>“No person shall engage a child in exploitative labour” and (2) further states “labour is exploitative of a child if it deprives the child of its health, education or development”.</i></p> <p>There is further provision under this Act in section 94(1) that: <i>“Any person who contravenes the provisions of this sub-part commits an offence and is liable on summary of conviction to a fine not exceeding ₪10 million or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or both.</i></p>
Physical Abuse	<p>Children’s Act-Act 560 section 13(1) states, <i>“No Person shall subject a child to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment including any cultural practice which dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental well being of a child”.</i></p>
Verbal Abuse	No Policy
Child Neglect/ abandonment (i.e. fostering)	<p>Children’s Act- Act 560 section 47(1) states, <i>“ No parent or any other person who is legally liable to maintain a child or contribute towards the maintenance of the child is under a duty to supply the necessaries of health, life, education and reasonable shelter”</i></p> <p>Offences under this part are provided for in Section 59:”any person who – (a) <i>Unlawfully removes a child from another person who has lawful custody of the child contrary to section 46;</i> (b) <i>Fails to supply the necessaries of health, life, education and reasonable shelter for a child when legally liable to do so contrary to section 47; or</i> (c) <i>Brings an action for maintenance under this part while an application for maintenance is pending in matrimonial proceedings,</i></p> <p>Commits an offence and is liable on summary of conviction to a fine not exceeding ₪2 million or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or both.</p>

7.3 Child Protection Measures at the District Level

One key provision of the functions of these legal frameworks is the role of the State and District Assemblies to protect children. For instance, the Children’s Act requires the state to assume the role of a parent for children in need. It also requires the District Assemblies (in section 27), establish and manage child panels. Under section 16 of the children’s Act it is specified that:

- (1) *“A District Assembly shall protect the welfare and promote the rights of children within its area of authority and shall ensure that within the district, governmental agencies liaise with other agencies in matters concerning children”*
- (2) *“The Social Welfare and Community Development Departments of a District Assembly referred to in this Act as ‘the department’ shall investigate cases of contravention of children’s rights”.*

In section 31 of the same Act, it is stated that:

“ A child panel may mediate in any civil matter concerned with the rights of the child and parental duties”.

Unfortunately child panels have not been set up in most districts and therefore there are no effective mechanisms for the enforcement of child rights at the district level. Save the Children Fund; have set up District Child Protection Teams, which contain members of various departments including the Ministry of Education, Social Welfare in 3 districts in the Northern and Brong- Ahafo region. The Ghana National Commission on Children is working on building capacity at district assembly levels on proposed legislation and policies on children³⁵. Under the 1995 GES Act – Act 506 empowers the **District Education Oversight Committees** to ensure the enforcement of the punitive measures as specified in the teachers’ code of conduct.

The GES Council under the 1995 GES Act – ACT506 section 9(4), is empowered to appoint a Disciplinary Committee which when formed, are supposed to ensure the enforcement of the punitive measures as specified in the teachers’ code of conduct, against any teacher who violates the rights of pupils. The fact still remains that the guidelines for punitive action as stated in the Teachers code of conduct are not explicit enough and limited by the provision, which restricts district disciplinary committees to referring serious cases of teacher misconduct to the national level when dismissal may be appropriate.

7.4 Curriculum

The revised social studies syllabus for Junior Secondary School also covers Human Rights abuses and mechanisms for preventing such abuses. Similarly at the senior secondary level, the issue of Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals are featured in the Social Studies syllabus. The implementation of the revised Social Studies syllabus commenced in the 2001/2002 academic year. This means that all those who passed through the basic and senior secondary education before the revision were denied access to human rights education. Another limitation here is that only teachers who teach environmental and social studies are exposed to teaching issues of human rights in school. Table 13 presents’ details of the school curriculum on child rights related topics.

Table 13 Child Rights Related Topics in the School Syllabus

Grade	Details of the Curriculum
KG	Nothing
Primary	Unit 3 of the teaching syllabus for Environmental Studies features a topic on Human Rights . It covers issues such as the fundamental human rights and basic freedoms.
JSS	Unit 4 of the revised Social Studies syllabus now has a topic on Citizenship and Human Rights . It covers issues such as democratic governance at school, home and in the community, human rights abuse and mechanisms for preventing such abuses.

³⁵ See p13 of a report submitted to save the children’s fund by Agyemang-Mensah 1998

Grade	Details of the Curriculum
SSS	Unit 2 of the Teaching syllabus for social studies features a topic on Rights and Responsibility of Individuals . It covers fundamental human rights, which are enshrined in the UN charter and the Constitution of Ghana.

7.5 Teacher Training and Education

The Teacher Education Unit have the following challenges in ensuring effective Human Rights Education are integrated in their work:

- ❖ There is no separate subject at TTC's on child rights issues but they are integrated in some subjects such as Social Studies
- ❖ Gender issues have been integrated in the curriculum to ensure gender equity in teaching and learning
- ❖ Ensuring In-service training for teachers in college is carried out
- ❖ Teachers are not taught alternative forms of discipline apart from corporal punishment such as not allowing the child to have all a break, letting the child write out sentences repetitively and limiting the child's privileges.

UNICEF and MOE are in the process of developing a teacher-training manual on Human Rights called "Promotion and Protection of Children's Human rights". The manual will be used for training teachers at Teacher Training Colleges across the country.

7.6 Legal Points and Mechanisms

Currently there is no functional legal points within the District Education Office, which handle issues concerning Child Rights, and Protection. According to the MOE Policy the School health officers are mandated to assist in issues concerning child rights and protection but in practice more of these cases appear to be handled by the Girls' Education Officers or the District Directors of Education in difficult cases. Reports suggest that many of the District Education Oversight Committees (DEOC's) are weak and in some cases or non-functioning. The district education offices lack clear procedures in reporting child rights abuses making communities and parents wary of reporting such cases at the district offices.

Research conducted in the Cape Coast area suggests that Ministry of Education/GES Staff at the district level are not able to objectively handle cases of school related abuse. Findings suggest that:

- Communities are not aware of the procedures and legal channels for reporting abuse.
- In some cases where they report the cases of abuse to the district education authorities, these officers do not want to get involved, often ignoring or trying to cover up the offence and rarely sanction the teachers.
- Most district education disciplinary committees are not operational

Research on "Abuse of Girls in Basic Schools" also suggests that there are very few transparent systematised mechanisms for children and parents to report cases of abuse and ensure that action is taken. Studies suggest that mechanisms at district level must involve a larger body of stakeholders outside the education system in order to carry out an objective investigation and enforce punitive measures.

7.7 Effectiveness of Child Rights and Protection measures within the Education System

The following section is based on interviews and research conducted by the CRDD on " Rights and Equity in Public and Private Basic Schools" in (CRDD/WUSC, June 2001):

- Child Rights and equity are yet to be operationalised within the education sector. There is no comprehensive policy for the teaching learning and practice of human rights and gender equity in Basic Schools.
- Children in Basic Schools suffer from various forms of human rights abuses and gender discrimination. There is sexual ambivalence that prescribes different levels of sanctions to boys and girls and expects girls to follow higher levels of adherence to sexual standards than boys (i.e. girls who are found pregnant are often dismissed from school).
- Pupils expression of fear of victimisation and silencing is prevalent in Ghanaian schools due to the lack of well-established structures for dealing with rights violations and victimisation (Asiegbor, 2002).
- " Structural violence" is also being transferred from society into the school and the education system. The education system can be a vehicle for change if it has strategies for teaching, learning and practice of rights and gender equity.
- Several studies found that most teachers do not practice human rights or gender equity in the classroom (WUSC, 2002; MacKinnon, 2000).
- Pupils are not knowledgeable about rights and gender equity issues as assessed in the study. Boys and girls segregate in outdoor playtime in schools, which do not have play equipment. Sitting arrangements can also have an impact on girls' participation in the classroom (Asiegbor, 2002).
- The guidance & counselling programmes do not cover child rights issues. The policy only suggests that co-ordinators are trained and placed in Senior Secondary Schools to offer services on vocation, career choices and psychosocial problems of students. There is the need to start guidance and counselling at the basic school –the unit is in the process of drafting a policy to that effect.

Outside the school

- The legal unit, which is to oversee the functions of the disciplinary committees, has not been monitoring their functions over the last few years.
- There is a lack of mechanisms for child victims of abuse to seek redress at the district level.
- PTAs' and SMC's are not fully aware of their responsibilities to protect children at the community level. This includes ensuring that children are not neglected and are given the basic needs to attend school.

There are several reasons for the current situation; these include lack of teacher training on human rights and equity within the classroom, and lack of clear guidelines for teachers, parents and pupils concerning issues of child rights. There is a lack of teaching and learning materials on human rights available in the classroom. The code of discipline for Basic School is at variance with current thinking on human rights and gender equity. Teachers' attitudes in schools inhibit "children's voices" when they are abused or discriminated against. There is also a lack of human rights and equity service points in schools to enable children who suffer abuse to seek redress and inadequate parental support in enforcing human rights in schools (Based on Asiegbor, 2002)

The research conducted on "Constitutional and Legal Framework for the Right to Pre Tertiary Education" (MOE/UNICEF, 2001) provides a comprehensive overview of issues and adjustments, which should be made to the New Legislation on Education from a human rights point of view. This research suggests the need for MOE to institute the "compulsory" aspect of Basic Education and the proper mechanisms to ensure its enforcement. The report also suggests that corporal punishment should be expunged from the system and firmly settled by the legislation. The document clearly states the provisions needed to ensure "Free Compulsory Universal Education". It also makes it clear that girls can be readmitted into school if withdrawn due to pregnancy after child delivery. One of the most important instruments, which can ensure that more rights are protected, are the proper and regular functioning of the District Education Oversight Committee.

7.8 Key Recommendations

7.8.1 Policy Level

MOE in collaboration with its partners should develop a comprehensive policy on rights and equity for the formal and non-formal education systems. The policy should ensure all aspects of human rights with particular focus on children. The policy should consider the introduction of the "compulsory" aspect of education particularly where abusive and traditional practices continue to prevent children from accessing the formal or non-formal education systems. The policy should also include:

- Counselling and legal service points at the district and school level to ensure the practice of child rights and gender equity in all schools. These legal points should be widely publicised to ensure that the public are able to report any forms of abuse. These service points should be established under the district assembly as interim measures (i.e. child protection teams using a multi-sectoral agency approach or as part of the district education oversight duties)
- The policy should clearly state the legal service points to address child abuses particularly at school level.
- The Code of Professional Conduct should be reviewed and provide more detail as to the procedures for dealing with cases of abuse in schools.
- There should be stronger procedures for punishing teachers who have committed a sexual offence against a child (i.e. immediate dismissal).
- The district disciplinary committees should take up cases of child abuse and sexual offences within schools within one month of the offense.

- The Code of Discipline for all schools should be revised to reflect the current needs and concerns to ensure gender equity and child rights are protected. There should be a clear shift away from Corporal punishment in all the MOE's policy and procedural documents.

7.8.2 MOE Headquarters (Legal Unit, GES Disciplinary Council and CRDD)

- Disciplinary Committees at district and regional levels should be strengthened through regular monitoring at all levels.
- Curriculum should integrate issues of child rights. Modifications should be made to the following curriculum and should reflect the child's' felt needs and not solely those outlined in the Articles from the 1992 constitution. A broader set of topics on child rights should be integrated into the following school subjects:
 - Moral & Religious Education curriculum
 - Social Studies
 - History
 - Management in living
- All schools should be provided with a set of child rights books from the educational series developed by WUSC and CRDD
- The Head teachers Handbook should be modified to reflect the contents of the Children's Act.

7.8.3 District Education Offices

- Training School Management Committees and District Education Oversight Committees should be established focussing on child rights and protection in institutions outlining methods for handling cases of child rights abuses.
- District education offices should ask the assemblies to enforce laws on early marriage, child fostering and negative cultural and traditional practices, which prevent children from attending school.
- District offices should take a lenient stance towards head teachers in respect to collecting fees from children who are unable to pay.
- District education offices should have an in-house team of officers able to handle issues of child rights and protection and they should liase with the Department of Social Welfare, School Health Education Programme, Women and Juvenile Unit, Girls' Education Unit, Guidance & Counselling officers.
- Set up emergency fund to assist desperate cases of neglect and child rights violations (i.e. forced marriage etc).

7.8.4 School level

Legal points and services for child rights and protection at school level should involve:

- Guidance & Counselling officers and/or SHEP officers in all basic schools trained in child rights issues
- Community Level: SMC's and PTA's should be trained in child rights and protection
- Establishment of District Child protection committees

7.8.5 Teachers Training

- Include issues of Child Rights and Protection in all teacher training syllabuses
- Teacher training should be intensified (pre service and in-service) to ensure that teachers are able to teach, practice human rights and identify situations which infringe on child rights at the home and school.
- Integrate Child Rights issues in Teacher Training Curriculum (Educational Psychology)
- Teachers should also be trained to use participatory methods in order to promote child rights, equity and democracy within the classroom.
- Teachers should be trained on alternative forms of disciplinary action towards children instead of punishment through caning (i.e. taking away privileges and or asked to perform community service)
- All corporal punishment should be abolished in schools (use of canes and other instruments) and a national campaign should begin through the media and TTC

7.8.6 Parental and Public Awareness creation of child rights and protection

- Sponsor a national media campaign to promote child rights and protection particularly focussed on the right to education and the practices, which violate this right (child labour, early marriage etc).
- The Children's Act should be widely disseminated through the use of information education and communication (IEC) Campaign particularly using the radio and TV.
- Child rights and the legal points should be part of all PTA's and SMC's training programmes

Conclusion

This Consultancy Area Report has presented seven major themes, which were reviewed as part of the Education Sector Review. The seven themes include: poverty and educational attainment, gender, early childhood education, school health, HIV/AIDS and child rights. The report forms part of the Education Sector Review and is a synthesis of the situational analysis, which was carried out under this consultancy area.

Several of the educational sub-sectors including girls education, special needs and schools health are integral components of any education system particularly one in a developing country context such as Ghana. Much more emphasis is needed to support these activities, which are essential to the holistic development of the child particularly at the early years. Particular emphasis should be placed on the role of school feeding programmes particularly in areas where there is a high level of malnourished. The impact of a holistic approach to early childhood education will have a lasting effect on children potential and ensure that the processes of child development are supported by the school system.

More work is needed to ensure the close coordination between these different areas of the MOE's work. School health and HIV programmes should be working much

more closely in order to ensure harmony and support to the often-limited capacity of district and community level institutions. Key to ensuring a better quality of education and a higher level of educational attainment for particularly rural children will be the enhanced cooperation of the Ministry of Education with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and the Ghana Poverty Reduction Secretariat. More strategic interventions in child health and HIV/AIDS programming are needed to arrest the potential onslaught of HIV/AIDS particularly in the sector. Much more work targeted at the teaching profession is needed using media. Investment in moral education by the MOE is essential in assisting children and youth make difficult choices later in their schooling career.

The ESR revealed that ensuring **all** Ghana's Children attain a basic level of literacy will require much more emphasis on **improving quality** particularly in schools located in deprived rural areas. Improving equity is inseparable from improving quality of education in Ghana. A much stronger pro poor emphasis is needed in directing resources within the Education sector towards deprived areas, girls' education, special needs and early childhood education. Improving quality will be fundamental to closing the gender gap and attaining the Education for All goals. The public sector should work harder at ensuring that a minimum standard of quality is attained particularly at primary level in order to ensure that all Ghana's children attain basic literacy, have equitable opportunities for further education and become productive citizens in the long term.

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