



A STUDY INTO THE EXTENT OF DEPRIVATION IN BASIC SCHOOLS IN DEPRIVED AREAS AND ITS IMPACT ON LEARNING OUTCOMES

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CAPCOE	Coalition Against Privatization and Commercialization of Education
DEO	District Education Office
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GES	Ghana Education Service
JHS	Junior High School
KII	Key Informant Interview
MoE	Ministry of Education
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SHS	Senior High School
SMC	School Management Committee
TLM/R	Teaching and Learning Material/Resources
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Africa Education Watch (Eduwatch), in partnership with the Coalition Against Privatization and Commercialization of Education (CAPCOE) with the support of OXFAM International, has initiated advocacy on equitable deployment of resources, to achieve equity in quality learning outcomes among urban and rural deprived school communities in Ghana. Thus, this study was launched to gather evidence to better understand the situation at the basic education level, their complications, and establish the extent of vulnerabilities impacting learning outcomes in deprived schools with the aim of influencing policy to achieve quality basic education in rural Ghana.

A mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches was deployed to generate primary and secondary data for the study. Through analysis of the data, this study examined the educational factors including teacher deployment, school building, furniture, teaching and learning resources, textbooks, access to Junior High School (JHS) as well as institutional support to the schools and its impact on students' learning outcomes at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) after completing eleven years of basic education.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Teacher deployment

Teacher deployment was poor in both districts, as trained teachers were scarce, especially in primary schools. The Zabzugu district had a total of 261 teachers with 233 trained across the 55 primary schools with a Pupil Trained teacher ratio (PTTR) of 53 to 1, while Nkwanta South had a total of 605 primary teachers with 566 trained across all 92 primary schools with PTTR of 35 to 1. Compared with the national PTTR of 28:1, both districts are not only deprived of trained teachers but epitomize an ineffective teacher deployment system that negatively affects rural schools.

Teaching and Learning Materials/Resources

The results revealed the lack of textbooks, desks, water and washrooms in majority of the schools sampled for the study. Out of the 17 schools, only 6 indicated having some English and Mathematics textbooks on the old curriculum. All remaining eleven (11) schools reported not having a single textbook for English and Mathematics, compelling teachers to adapt the practice of writing lessons on the chalkboard for the learners to copy into their books, a practice which slowed the teaching process and led to many mistakes in the copying process.

Availability of Furniture

Thirteen (13) out of the seventeen (17) schools in both Zabzugu and Nkwanta districts lacked furniture for both teachers and learners. While in most of these schools, four (4) to five (5) students had to share a dual desk, some students sat on benches, stools, stones, and floors to study.

School Building

Of the seventeen (17) schools visited in both Districts, thirteen (13) had no standard school building. Teaching and learning in these schools either took place under sheds, pavilions, dilapidated mud buildings or under trees. The remaining four (4), concrete buildings matched up to the standard of GES school buildings. As a result of poor infrastructure coupled with inadequate teachers, 40% of the schools in Zabzugu had to practice multi-grade teaching (i.e. combining two classes for instruction by one teacher) at the primary school level.

Transition to Junior High School

Twelve (12) out of the seventeen (17) primary schools surveyed in both districts did not have JHS available in the community. This situation made it difficult for the students to transit from primary school to the JHS after completion of primary six (6). Zabzugu district has only 17 JHSs serving primary school graduates from 55 public schools. This means 70% of the public primary schools in the district had no JHS. Similarly, in Nkwanta South, there were 62 JHSs serving 92 primary schools, implying some 33% of primary schools in that district did not have access to a JHS in their communities.

Time spent in school

The amount of time spent during teaching and learning in school has a bearing on learning outcomes. Teachers are supposed to spend six hours (8:00AM - 2:00PM) in school. However, interviews with some parents and the School Management Committees (SMCs) in the 17 schools indicate that some teachers spent fewer hours in school by arriving late or closing early. This was partly due to the long distance between where the teachers lived and the schools.

BECE

The study established a link between the level of deprivation and learning outcomes by analyzing the BECE results for 2019 where only 17.19% and 1.97% scored aggregates six (6) to thirty (30) in Nkwanta South and Zabzugu respectively, compared to the national average of 66.5% in that year.

Recommendations

To improve teaching, learning and learning outcome in these districts; the study recommends the adoption of an effective and equitable teacher deployment system where teachers are posted to deprived schools based on the Class Pupil Teacher Ratios, instead of Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) which is misleading, especially for schools with lesser populations, most of which are located in sparsely populated deprived communities. In addition, the study recommends an urgent teacher rationalization exercise to move teachers from districts with surplus teachers to schools without adequate teachers. The study urged government to implement the 10% allowance for teachers who accept posting to deprived communities, while urging the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop an equitable system for distributing teaching and learning materials, strengthen monitoring and supervision of teachers, and construct JHS in all primary schools without a JHS, provide desks for all pupils and fund the agenda to construct schools to replace classrooms that exist under trees and sheds.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

International treaties have recognized free and compulsory basic education as a human right for more than half a century now, and especially during the last decade, the drive for universal basic education has continued to increase across the globe. Evidence has consistently shown that education plays a key role in the development of all nations of the world. However, due to poverty and unequal access, many children face challenges in enrolling in school, retention and the quality of education in terms of learning outcomes remain checkered, particularly in hard-to-reach locations. Studies over the last two decades have shown that Sub-Saharan Africa is far behind regarding access, completion and quality basic education due to some key factors and the recent upsurge of conflicts in the region.

The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring reports from 2016 to 2020 reveal that the exclusion rate is higher in Sub-Saharan Africa compared to any other continent, with about 60 percent of children of school-going age out of school¹ (UNICEF 2015, p.37)². Gender analyses by UNESCO (2019) and UNICEF also reveal that the girl child is more likely not to have access to quality education irrespective of the interventions introduced to provide education to all children of school-going age. The population of girls who may never get the chance to be educated is estimated to be about 15 million compared to their male counterparts of 10 million with the vast majority of these girls (9 million) living in Sub-Saharan Africa.³

In Ghana, although various governments have attempted to promote quality basic education for all children, there are still many challenges that confront basic education delivery, especially in the hard-to-reach areas of the country. The basic facilities to facilitate access to education are either non-existent or in a very deplorable state. These include the lack of school infrastructure such as buildings, inadequate trained teachers, learners having to travel long distances to school daily, and lack of teaching and learning materials including textbooks, libraries, and computers. Other constraints that affect education delivery include extreme poverty, gender inequality and many others. These have become the major challenges for children living in marginalized and deprived rural communities in Ghana.



*Friends of the Earth
Primary and KG,
Zabzugu District.*

The lack of adequate classrooms have forced students to have classes under trees, among other constraints facing education delivery in hard-to-reach areas.

¹ EMIS (2018-2019)

² UNICEF (2016)

³ UNESCO (2019)

The combined effect of the above factors is a rise in the number of out-of-school children, estimated to be over 400,000, and high dropout rates averaging 20% particularly among girls living in hard-to-reach communities. Many of the schools in the rural communities lack basic infrastructure and maintenance culture. Some schools do not have secured spaces to keep Teaching and Learning Materials/Resources (TLM/Rs). School attendance is also poor as children have to walk long distances to school. Younger children aged 4-6 are less likely to walk to school than older children aged 13-15 (81% versus 85%). Ninety percent (90%) of children in rural areas get to school on foot⁴. This eventually reflects in poor academic performance and high school dropout rates.

There is a lack of access or unequal access to education and lifelong learning at all levels of Ghana's education system. The Government of Ghana has since 2009 generally missed its targets in respect of improving equitable access to, and participation in quality education at all levels, despite narrowly defining its policy objectives and key indicators in the ESP (2010-2020)⁵. More disturbing is the falling back trends at the basic education level where about 40% of learners who sit the BECE as a pathway to the Senior High School obtain low scores each year. Substantial evidence shows that many low performing learners come from low-income backgrounds and are those who attend public JHS with low quality inputs, including inadequate trained teachers, inadequate textbooks, uncongenial learning environment and an ineffectively supervised teaching process at the early years.

Study Objectives

The study sought to:

- i. Ascertain the impact of deprivation on basic education learning outcomes in deprived communities.
- ii. Identify the vulnerabilities and bottlenecks affecting teachers and learners at the basic education level in deprived areas of Ghana.
- iii. Provide policy recommendations to address the gaps in education delivery in basic schools located in deprived parts of Ghana.

CHAPTER 2 - METHODOLOGY

Study Methodology

Primary and secondary data collection methods were deployed for the study. The primary data collection instruments included structured questionnaires, Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guides to gather qualitative and quantitative data for analysis. The data collected by the questionnaire was done using computerized methods with the FGDs and KIIs done by using manual notes taken by enumerators. Findings from a desk review of relevant quantitative data served as a basis for deeper triangulation during the data gathering and analysis.

Sampling Process and Data Collection Tools

A simple random sampling approach was used to select eight (8) parents from each school community for engagement. With the KII and the FGD, a purposive sampling strategy was adopted to select key informants/stakeholders, including teachers, learners, staff of the District Education Office (DEO) and SMC/PTAs who were available for interview on the day of the survey and resident in the community/district. Overall, 68 FGDs and 21 KIIs were conducted against a target of 80 FGDs and 24 KIIs, with key stakeholders and beneficiaries at the community and district level. The categories of stakeholders and beneficiaries engaged through KII included: DEO staff and teachers of public basic schools in the community. The FGD focused on learners, SMC/PTA, parents and teachers. The breakdown is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Tools, target and actual number of respondents engaged

SN	Instrument	Target	Actual Number Collected
1	Parents/Caregivers Interview	160	100
2	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with teachers, DEO	24	21
3	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with School Management Committees (SMC), Parents/Caregivers, Teachers	80	68

The study purposively sampled ten schools each from the two districts: five each from rural and peri-urban communities. Both districts had similar socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio political characteristics, therefore, the nuances in terms of vulnerability and deprivation were deemed to be similar.

Challenges

The lack of support from the DEOs made it difficult to enter some schools. While DEOs insisted on a formal letter from the GES Director General before permitting the research team entry into the schools, Eduwatch's request for this letter of introduction which was submitted to the Director-General on 14th September, is yet to receive a response. Data collectors had to use innovative ways to interview teachers at the community level and enter schools using unconventional means, leading to delayed data collection. Poor roads during the rainy season also affected access to some communities. These challenges only permitted the collection of data in seventeen (17) out of the twenty (20) sampled schools.

Table 2: List of schools

Nkwanta South District	Zabzugu District
1. Laboano MA	1. Kpaligigbini DA
2. Pusupu MA	2. Tambihiya Primary
3. Adom Model	3. Nyankpala Primary
4. Nkwanta EP Basic School	4. Gbandi Primary
5. Kechiebi Asuogya MA	5. Mogniegu DA
6. Kenyatta MA	6. Tayondo Primary
7. Odumase Baasere Akura Basic	7. Gor-Kurili DA
	8. Chapulgu Primary
	9. Gor-Kukani DA
	10. Friends of the Earth Primary

District Profiles

Located in the Northern Region of Ghana, the Zabzugu district is a predominantly rural district with an estimated total population of 71,849, out of which 36,602 are females and 35,247 males. About 68 percent of the population live in rural communities, with the majority (86.3%) predominantly farmers. The Zabzugu district has 55 public primary and 17 public junior high schools and only one Senior High School.

Nkwanta South Municipal is in Ghana's newly created Oti region bordered to the north by Nkwanta North District, to the south by the Kadjebi District, to the east by the Republic of Togo and to the west by Krachi East District. The 2010 Population and Housing Census puts the District's population at 147,927, with the majority of the people engaged in farming and fishing activities⁶. Nkwanta South has 92 public primary schools, 62 public JHS and four major second-cycle institutions.

⁶ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ghana/admin/oti/1506__nkwanta_south_municipal/

CHAPTER 3 - KEY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

In assessing the impact of deprivation on basic education delivery, the issues examined in this study related to physical access to school, availability of teachers, adequacy of teaching and learning materials, state of school furniture, management of teaching and learning, institutional support to schools and how they translated into learning outcomes.

Classroom Building

The study observed that, all but four (4) schools had infrastructural issues causing 40% of schools in Zabzugu to adapt multi-grade systems of teaching, where two classes were merged in one room with one teacher. The Kenyatta MA Basic School in Nkwanta has no structure at all, as the school has resorted to the use of a shed put up by the community for primary classes one (1) to three (3), with classes four (4) to six (6) studying under trees. Similar infrastructural challenges have also compelled other schools such as Friends of the Earth in Zabzugu to study under trees. This situation did not only impact negatively on contact hours but constituted a disincentive to teachers and learners. The school had to close anytime it rained.

*Mogniegu DA JHS,
Zabzugu District.*

The dilapidated nature of this school's building with some under trees and sheds, exposes students to bad weather among other conditions during school periods.



"The children in our schools are also humans. If they receive the same support as schools in the cities, they will also do better like the children in the cities. We have been neglected for far too long and it's about time the government addresses our situation"
(Parent, Laboano MA, Nkwanta South District).

Availability of Furniture

Beyond the physical classroom, a school environment requires adequate seating facilities for teaching to take place. Dual desks designed to accommodate two (2) learners are used in public basic schools. According to the Ministry of Education, the ratio of pupils to seats in primary schools is 0.7, with writing spaces ratio being 0.6. This means at the national level, about 30% and 40% of students have no seating and writing spaces respectively in public basic schools⁷.

In Nkwanta South, only 35% of learners had access to a seating place with an average of three to four learners sharing a dual desk meant for two. The remaining learners without access to school desks resorted to the use of improvised stool (25%), stones (11%), sat on the bare floor (13%), or stood (4%) to learn, as depicted in Figure 1. In Zabzugu, the situation was relatively better, with 67% of learners sharing desks in groups of four (4) to five (5), while 25% sat and wrote on the floor and 8% using improvised stools. These challenges, according to the respondents, impacted negatively on the learners' performance in school.

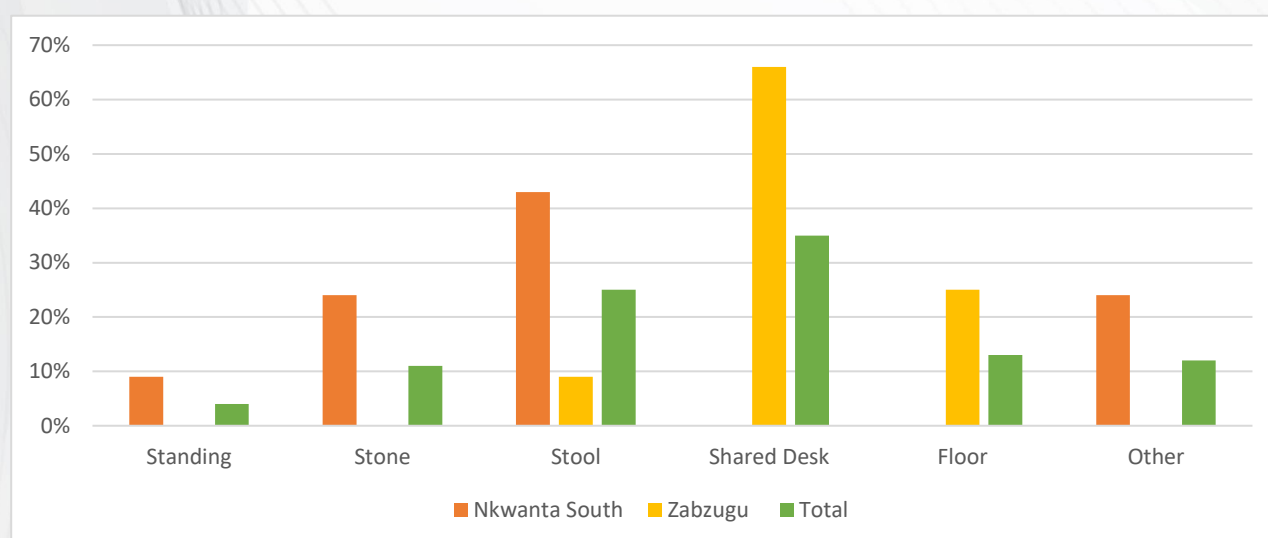
Friends of the Earth Primary and KG, Zabzugu District.



Due to inadequate furniture (limited desks), three to four students had to share one dual desk during lessons.

***"This furniture and infrastructure problem has been a disincentive to our children to attend school. The children in our community see school as a punishment and would rather prefer to farm to make some money for themselves".
(SMC member, Chakpulgu Primary, Zabzugu District)***

Figure 1: Learners' access to desk



Transition to Junior High School

Transitioning from primary school to JHS remains a major national issue with only 79% making it to JHS 1 in deprived communities in the 2018/19 academic year⁸. The major reason adduced for the low transition from primary to JHS is the lack of JHS in many schools, causing students to walk long distances to access the nearest JHS, pay for private JHS (where available) or drop out. Zabzugu district for instance, had 17 JHS catering to 55 primary schools, meaning primary school graduates from 70% of the public schools in the district had no JHS in their communities.

Similarly, in Nkwanta South, there were 62 JHSs serving 92 primary schools, meaning some 33% of primary schools in that district do not have a JHS. This situation affected learners transitioning to JHS as many of them could not continue their education after primary school. The study revealed that, after completing primary six (6), learners bought JHS entrance forms at a cost of five Ghana cedis (GHC 5.00) to compete for limited admission spaces into the few public JHS in the Zabzugu district.

Table 3: Number of schools per district

District	Total Primary	Total JHS
Nkwanta South	92	62
Zabzugu	55	17

"Usually, the primary school graduates of schools without JHS have to apply to other JHS for admission. The learners buy as many forms as they can afford, and then write entrance exams into these schools. When selected, some of these children walk for about 10 kilometers to school each day. A few use bicycles"
(Teacher, Chakpulgu Primary Zabzugu District).

⁸ Education Sector Performance Report 2019: Ministry of Education, Ghana.

Some children in Nkwanta South spent an average of three to four hours daily, walking to and from school at the JHS level. Out of frustration, many children, especially girls, drop out. These dropouts either went into farming, engaged in commercial motorbiking (okada), engaged in petty trading, or travelled to Accra to work as house helps. Also, as learners made efforts to get to school, some teachers were usually absent from school due to varied reasons, including long travel distances to school due to lack of accommodation in the communities and the lack of teaching and learning materials and resources. In view of the challenges, some parents perceived sending their children to school as time-wasting and preferred taking them along to the farm to support their work.

In Nkwanta South, where about 33 percent of primary schools had no JHS, about 40 percent of learners in communities without JHS had bicycles they rode to school courtesy of an initiative by World Vision and the World Bank.

Students of Kalegu D/A JHS in the Zabzugu District commuting to school.

The lack of JHS in some communities leave some students with no option than to ride or walk for averagely 5 kilometers to school each day, which is a demotivating factor for retention and transitioning.



"Many of the teachers do not come to school regularly. The Circuit Supervisor does not come here regularly and whenever we share our concerns with them, we no action is taken" - (PTA member, Kenyatta, Nkwanta South).

Access to Textbooks

There were challenges with textbooks availability in all schools. As a result of the lack of textbooks in primary schools, teachers adopted the practice of writing lessons on the chalkboard for the learners to copy into their books. According to teachers, the practice affected both learners and teachers as it slowed the pace of teaching and learning; many learners made spelling mistakes while copying from the board. The findings of the study revealed the lack of textbooks in schools. Out of the 17 schools visited, only 6 indicated having some English and Mathematics textbooks in the old curriculum. All remaining 11 schools reported not having a single textbook for Mathematics and English, and supplementary reading materials. There were no textbooks or supplementary reading books in the new curriculum which has been in operation for two years.

*Friends of the Earth Primary and KG,
Zabzugu District.*

As a result of inadequate teaching and learning materials including textbooks, all lessons are written on the chalkboard for students to copy.



"Many of the learners make a lot of spelling mistakes when they copy from the chalkboard. We are concerned, and wished we could do something about it, but under the circumstances we cannot do much, as textbooks are not available" - (Teacher, Kpaligibgini DA Zabzugu district).

Time spent in school

The amount of time spent during teaching and learning in school has a bearing on learning outcomes. Teachers are supposed to spend between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM teaching. However, interviews with parents and SMCs revealed that, teachers in some schools spent lesser hours teaching. Engagements with parents, learners and SMCs in 9 out of the 17 communities in Zabzugu and Nkwanta South showed that teachers who did not live in the communities spent less time teaching the children. According to them, because DEO staff did not regularly visit the schools, some teachers reported to school late and left earlier than scheduled without any reprimand. On average, teachers who travelled to school daily reported at 9:00 AM instead of 7:30 AM and closed at midday to travel back to their homes.

Kecheibi Asuogya DA Basic School, Nkwanta South District.



Due to the deplorable nature of the classrooms in this school, classes end when it threatens to rain. Also, the amount of time spent during teaching and learning is reduced since teachers need to commute from long distances to get to school.

Teacher deployment

One of the biggest challenges confronting schools in deprived communities in Ghana is inadequate trained teachers. Teachers were either not posted there, refused postings, or sought transfers after spending a year or two due to low motivation. The study confirmed the lack of trained teachers in many schools, a situation that affected learning and retention. On average, there were five (5) teachers handling KG 1 to primary 6 in over 70% of the schools visited in both districts. The situation was not different at the JHS level where one (1) teacher handled an average of three (3) subjects from JHS 1 to 3. Although data from EMIS provides that 80% and 90% of teachers in Zabzugu and Nkwanta South are trained, they were mainly concentrated in the district capitals and towns, with very few posted to deprived communities, according to teachers and SMC members interviewed.

The Zabzugu district had a total of 261 teachers with 233 trained across the 55 primary schools with a Pupil Trained teacher ratio (PTTR) of 53 to 1, while Nkwanta South had a total of 605 primary school teachers with 566 trained across all 92 primary schools with PTTR of 35 to 1. Compared with the national PTTR of 28:1, both districts were not only deprived of trained teachers but epitomized an ineffective teacher deployment system that negatively affects rural schools.

BECE performance

Analyses of existing data on learners' performance from the two districts showed very low scores in the 2019 BECE compared to the national average of 66.5% scoring between aggregate 6 – 30. Out of the total 1,760 learners that registered for the 2019 BECE in Nkwanta South, only 17.19 percent scored aggregate 6 to 30. The situation was worse in Zabzugu where only 1.97 percent out of the 1,033 students scored aggregate 6 to 30. While the above is the inevitable outcome of the poor resourcing of basic education delivery in the two districts, it also corroborates the view held by the World Bank that, poor quality of school infrastructure, lack of learning resources, lack of qualified and well-supervised teachers negatively impacts on educational outcomes in Ghana⁹.

*Friends of the Earth Primary and KG,
Zabzugu District*

Lack of learning resources in the school and others in the district negatively impacts on educational outcomes including BECE performance. As a result, only 1.97 percent out of the 1,033 students in Zabzugu scored aggregate 6 to 30 in the 2019 BECE.



⁹ World Bank. 2018. Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project (P165557). <http://projects.worldbank.org/P165557/?lang=en&tab=documents&subTab=projectDocument>

CONCLUSION

The study establishes the impact of deprivation on the learning outcome of learners in deprived areas in Ghana. It identifies the vulnerabilities as well as the bottlenecks affecting learners at the basic education level, depriving them of quality education. The similarities in findings in towns and remote communities within these deprived districts confirm the geographical distribution of learning outcomes in Ghana, the result of a deficient and inequitable system for deploying education resources and services, especially teachers, textbooks, infrastructure and supervision of teaching. Systemic reforms are required to end the deepening inequality in quality basic education provision across rural and urban communities, and most importantly, among the poor inhabitants of deprived communities. Quality learning outcome can only be achieved through increased investment and resourcing of basic education. If public basic schools in deprived communities received the same resources available to public basic schools in the cities, especially trained teachers, pupils and students from rural schools would perform much better than the current situation in Zabzugu and Nkwanta South.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve the quality of basic education in deprived communities, the following policy level and operational recommendations are provided:

Teacher Rationalization

The GES must rationalize teacher deployment by re-posting teachers that are surplus to manpower requirement in urban areas to rural communities where they are in short supply. For instance, Adenta Municipality which has only eighteen (18) primary schools with 9,100 students, boasts of 363 teachers, while Zabzugu, which has fifty-five (55) primary schools (over 200% more schools than Adenta) with 11,829 students has only 261 teachers. Ideally, Adenta does not need about 200 teachers currently teaching in its eighteen (18) primary schools.

Teacher Deployment

The deployment of new teachers must prioritize underserved schools. The GES must move from using PTRs to determine the placement of teachers because it discriminates against schools with smaller class numbers below the national PTR norm. For instance, in a primary school of 120 students, averaging twenty (20) per class, while posting (4) teachers should satisfy the PTR, there would remain six (6) empty classrooms, causing class mergers. Class Pupil Teacher Ratios should be adopted by the GES in deploying teachers.

Textbooks and other TLM/Rs

The system for supplying and replacing textbooks and supplementary reading materials requires re-engineering to make it more equitable. Textbooks must not only be supplied to all schools but replaced in line with the existing textbook policy when they experience wear and tear. A one-child-one-textbook policy must be implemented across rural and peri-urban schools.

Furniture

The importance of school furniture is undebatable, as they play a significant role in the effectiveness of any teaching and learning process. There is already available data on the desks needs of schools, as captured by EMIS. While there are many pockets of initiatives to provide desks by corporate and charitable Ghana, such efforts require coordination and harmonization to achieve cost efficiency and wider impact. The GES must set up a Fund to mobilize resources for the construction of desks in underserved schools. The Fund must be chaired by a representative from the private and charitable sectors, including the development community and marketed to gain visibility, acceptance and participation.

Classroom building

The lack of public JHS in about 25% of primary schools nationally is a major contributor to dropouts. According to the MoE, there are also 5,403 schools under trees, sheds, and dilapidated structures across the country, including schools in Zabzugu and Nkwanta South. This is the result of funding periodic deficits in the basic education sub-sector.

The Earmarked Funds Capping and Realignment Act, 2017 (Act 947), which among others, capped the GETFund at 25%, has since left very little for Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) allocation for the MoE. In 2019, only 6.7% of the education sector expenditure went into CAPEX. Consequently, in that year, only 100 primary schools were constructed across 261 districts, limiting the ability of Ghanaian children to access primary education, and exposing them to the economic realities of available private education. The Ministry of Finance must amend the capping of GETFund to at least 50% and free resources for basic education infrastructure provision.

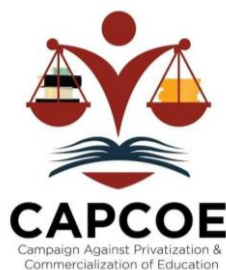
Access to Junior High School

To facilitate transition and retention of learners at the JHS level, it is recommended that support systems are provided to facilitate learners' transfer to JHS to ensure children in communities without JHSs can complete basic school. Government could partner with corporate Ghana to provide bicycles as a short-term measure to promote the learning of the affected learners. The MoE must rollout a plan to construct 1,000 JHSs each year for the next four years. This will ensure that all existing primary schools have access to a JHS. Moving forward, the MoE must enforce a policy not to construct any primary school without a JHS. The Basic School concept, comprising a kindergarten, primary and JHS should guide the construction of schools.

Time spent in school

School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) are expected to provide continuous support to the schools, including monitoring and supervising teaching. The GES must strengthen the supervision of schools by resourcing SISOs to undertake two visits every month to every school under their circuit. The reports of supervision should inform further administrative and operational-decision making at the local level, and essentially, national policy. In addition to the regular, structured monitoring and supervision, the contact numbers of SISOs should be given to all SMC/PTA members to enable them report any instance of teacher lateness or absenteeism for investigation and remedial/punitive action.

This report was commissioned by **Africa Education Watch** with support from **OXFAM** as part of the Education Spike Campaign being implemented in partnership with the **Campaign Against Privatization and Commercialization of Education (CAPCOE)**.



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