

GHANA NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

REPORT ON THE APPLICATION OF THE CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION



March, 2013

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INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

The Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education was enunciated in December 1960 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). State Parties to the Convention are expected to abrogate statutory and administrative provisions and practices that involve discrimination in education and initiate legislative and administrative measures to ensure that there is no discrimination in the admission of pupils to educational institutions.

Ghana has not yet ratified the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. However, Ghana is state party to international conventions with provisions that have the same import as the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. These Conventions include the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, the Dakar Framework for Action (Education for All) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This work is in response to UNESCO's questionnaire on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. It discusses the legislative and administrative measures undertaken by Ghana to proscribe discrimination in education and ensure the right of every child to quality education. Preparation of the document was done with the involvement of the following stakeholders:

1. The Ministry of Education
2. The Non-Formal Education Division of the Ministry of Education
3. The National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE)
4. The Basic and Secondary Education Divisions of the Ghana Education Service
5. The Parliamentary Select Committee on Education

The Report has four sections:

In Section One, a brief overview of the economy of Ghana and the educational system are discussed. Basic educational statistics and statistics on the economy are presented.

Section Two presents information on the status of ratification and implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. The relevant portions of international conventions which Ghana is party to, have been quoted.

Section Three covers the statutory and national educational policies that correspond to the Convention and the Recommendation Rights.

Section Four highlights the major programmes being implemented to ensure the right of every Ghanaian child to education in Ghana.

4th March, 2013

SECTION 1

1.0 GHANA: OVERVIEW OF THE ECONOMY AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

In this section, a brief overview of the economy of Ghana and the educational system are discussed. Additionally, basic educational statistics and statistics on the economy have been presented.

1.1 GHANA: LOCATION AND ECONOMY

Ghana, a West African country, shares borders with Togo on the east, Côte d'Ivoire on the west and Burkina Faso in the north. The Gulf of Guinea washes the shoreline of Ghana in the south as depicted in the map below:

Figure 1: The Map of Ghana



The population of Ghana was estimated at 24.65 million in 2010. Other socio-economic indicators are provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1 : Selected Socio-Economic Indicators

Population	24.66 million
Average inflation	8.7%
GDP per capita	\$1,598
<u>GDP By Sector</u>	
Agric.	25.6 %
Industry	25.9 %
Services	48.5 %
Total	100 %

Bank of Ghana and Ghana Statistical Service, 2012

Ghana's economy is reliant on the export of primary products, such as gold, cocoa and timber. The agricultural sector comprising fishing, forestry and farming (livestock and crops such as cocoa, forestry, maize, pineapple, oil palm, yam, etc), employs the largest proportion of Ghana's most economic active population. In 2011, the sector's contribution to GDP was 25.6 % (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

Industrial production is dominated by quarrying, manufacturing, electricity and mineral extraction (gold, manganese, diamonds and bauxite).The contribution of industry to GDP was 25.9% in 2011.

The service sector dominates the economy of Ghana. Its contribution to GDP was 48.5% in 2012.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GHANA

1.2.1 Supervision and Governance of Education in Ghana

The Ghana Education Act,778(2008) provides the legal basis for governance and decentralization of supervision of education in Ghana.

Act 778 provides that the Minister for Education is expected to “take measures for the effective decentralization of executive responsibility for the provision and management of basic and second cycle schools to the District Assemblies” (section 3). Section four (4) of the Act

maintains that “the Education Service, as provided for by Article 190 of the Constitution and restructured under the Ghana Education Service Act, 1995(506), is responsible for the co-ordination of the approved national policies and programmes relating to pre-tertiary education”.

The Act 778 provides for the establishment of regional education directorates with responsibility for coordinating pre-tertiary education in each of the ten administrative regions of Ghana. The District Assemblies “shall for its area of authority and as far as its functions extend, contribute to the total development of the community by ensuring that efficient education throughout basic education, second cycle and functional and literacy education levels including non-formal education is available to meet the needs of the population of its area”.

District Assemblies are also enjoined by Act 778 to “provide the necessary infrastructural needs and any other facilities for the education of the population in the area of its authority”.

The three supervisory bodies of higher education in Ghana – the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEx), the National Accreditation Board (NAB), the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) – were established in the early 1990s.

NABPTEx is responsible for the formulation and administration of schemes of examinations, evaluation, assessment, certification and standards for skill and syllabus competencies for accredited non-university tertiary institutions, while NAB is responsible for the accreditation of both public and private institutions with regard to the content and standards of their programmes.

The National Council for Tertiary Education is enjoined by Act 454 to advise the Minister responsible for education on the development of institutions of higher education in Ghana. The NCTE as a buffer body interposes between higher education institutions and the government, thereby, insulating the institutions against direct governmental control. The Council is expected to protect the public against duplication and waste of public funds by tertiary education institutions (Effah and Mensah-Bonsu, 2001).

1.2.2 Philosophy and Structure of Education in Ghana

The philosophy of education in Ghana is that, “education should result in the formation of well-balanced individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values, aptitudes and attitudes to become functional and productive citizens. As workers of the country aspiring to great economic ambitions they should be trained to become enterprising and adaptable to the demands of a fast-changing world, driven by modern science and technology. The system of education should support a nation aspiring to build a knowledge-based economy within the next generation”.^{1a}

Additionally, it is provided that, “the education process should lead to the improvement in the quality of life of all Ghanaians by empowering the people themselves to overcome poverty, to raise their living standards to the levels that they can observe through the global interchange of

images, information and ideas. They should be equipped to create through their own endeavours, the wealth that is needed for a radical socio-economic transformation of Ghana”^{1b}.

The system of education is organised in three progressive levels: Basic, Second Cycle and Tertiary. Basic Education comprises:

- 1) 2 years of kindergarten;
- 2) 6 years of primary education; and
- 3) 3 years of Junior High School education.

After Junior High School, pupils may enter, according to their abilities and preferences, Senior High Schools to pursue General Education or Technical Vocational Education or participate in an apprenticeship scheme.

1.3 PRE-TERTIARY EDUCATION

Basic statistics provided by the Ministry of Education in 2012, show that 1,543,314 and 4,451,878 pupils are enrolled in kindergarten and primary schools respectively.

Table 2: Basic Education Indicators, 2011/2012

Educational Level	Enrolment	Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)	Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)
Kindergarten	1,543,314	99.4	64.17
Primary School	4,451,878	96.5	81.7
Junior High School	1,434,211	80.6	46.1
Secondary School	758,468	36.9	23.6

Author's construct with data from Ministry of Education

As presented in Table 2, the completion rate for primary education is 93.7, whilst the completion rate for Junior High School is 66.8. In 2012, 50.2 per cent of the final year pupils of Junior High Schools made the transition to secondary schools.

There is an increasing trend in enrolment in basic, secondary and technical, vocational education and training. For instance, from 2008/09 to 2011/2012 academic years, enrolments in Primary, Junior High and Senior High institutions increased by 19.9%, 11.56% and 54.68%. Details of enrolments in pre-tertiary education in Ghana are provided in Table 3.

^{1a, 1b} White Paper on the Report of the Education Review Committee, MOE (2004) Pages 9 and 10

Table 3: Trends in School Enrolment

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/2012
Kindergarten	896,522	1,016,606	1,338,454	1,440,732	1,491,450	1,543,314
Primary	3,365,762	3,616,023	3,710,647	3,809,258	3,962,779	4,451,878
Junior High School	1,132,318	1,224,010	1,285,577	1,301,940	1,335,400	1,434,211
Senior High School	485,742	454,681	490,334	537,332	728,076	758,468
TVET	68,892	67,360	74,277	64,155	71, 848	73,946

Author's construct with data from Ministry of Education

1.3.1 Gender Parity in Basic Education

Table 4 presents the Gender Parity Index (GPI) at various levels of basic education in Ghana in the 2011/2012 academic year. The GPI for Kindergarten and Primary education are 0.98 and 0.97 respectively. Additionally, the GPI for Junior High Schools is 0.94.

Data from the Ministry of Education indicate that 45% of students enrolled in secondary schools are females whilst females constitute 37.1% students enrolled in TVET institutions.

Table 4: Trends in Gender Parity in Basic Education

GPI	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/2012
Kindergarten	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.98
Primary School	0.96	0.96	0.97	0.97
Junior High School	0.92	0.92	0.93	0.94

Author's construct with data from Ministry of Education

Table 4 presents gender parity trends in basic education.

1.4 SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Persons with Disability Act, 2006, Act 715 mandates the Government of Ghana to provide free education for persons with disability, and establish special schools for persons who by reason of their disability cannot be enrolled in formal schools.

It is estimated that about 5% of the Ghanaian population has some form of disability with sight problems constituting about 50 % (World Bank, quoted by Anamuah-Mensah et al, 2012). There are 13 institutions for the deaf, including a secondary technical and vocational school. Two basic and three secondary schools have been set up for the blind. There are four schools for the mentally challenged two of them are state-owned institutions (Anamuah-Mensah et al, 2012).

Currently, there are 19,775 pupils living with physical and mental challenges (non-severe disability) who are mainstreamed in the regular school system at the basic level.

1.5 HIGHER EDUCATION IN GHANA

Higher education institutions in Ghana are self-governing entities responsible for their own institutional mission and financial policy. ²Constitutional protection of higher education institutions and the buffer role of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) effectively protect the institutions against rigorous state regulation.

The public higher education sector in Ghana comprises six universities, ten polytechnics, three professional institutions and thirty-eight Colleges of Education which operate under the direct oversight of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). There are other professional institutions operating under various ministries and departments. Forty-one private higher education institutions have been accredited by the National Accreditation Board (NAB). Enrolment in public tertiary education institutions and private universities disaggregated by gender are as in Table 5.

Table 5: Enrolments in Tertiary Education

Institution	Enrolment 2010/2011		
	Male	Female	Total
Public Universities	77,005(66.7%)	38,447 (33.3%)	115,452
Polytechnics	29,741(68.6%)	13,672 (31.4%)	43,413
Colleges of Education	15,686 (58.8%)	11,017 (41.2%)	26,703
Specialized Colleges	5,351 (54.8%)	4,420 (45.2%)	9,771
Private Universities	23,926 (82.2%)	5,205 (17.8%)	29,131
Total	151,709 (67.6%)	72,761 (32.4%)	224,470

Source: Computed with data from the National Council for Tertiary Education

² See article 195(3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

SECTION 2

2.0 RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

Ghana has not yet ratified the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. However, she is state party to a number of international conventions which contain provisions that proscribe discrimination in education such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, the Dakar Framework for Action (Education for All) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In this section, information on the status of ratification and implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education is provided. Additionally, the relevant portions of the international conventions which Ghana is party to are quoted.

2.1 RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

The processes for the ratification of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education are underway. The Ghana National Commission for UNESCO has forwarded the Convention to the Ministry of Education for study and subsequent transmission to the Cabinet and the national legislature for the necessary processes.

2.1.1 African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights

Ghana is state party to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights states:

- i. Articles 17(1)
Every individual shall have the right to education.
- ii. Article 18(3)
The State shall ensure the elimination of every discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of the woman and the child as stipulated in international declarations and conventions.
- iii. Article 18(4)
The aged and the disabled shall also have the right to special measures of protection in keeping with their physical or moral needs.

2.1.2 Dakar Framework for Action (Education for All)

Ghana is a signatory to the Dakar Framework for Action. The framework outlines six goals for all Member States of UNESCO to pursue, in order to achieve the Education for All goals in all sectors of society.

These goals are:

- i. *Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.*
- ii. *Ensuring that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.*
- iii. *Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.*
- iv. *Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.*
- v. *Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.*
- vi. *Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all, so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy and numeracy.*

2.1.3 Convention on the Rights of the Child

State-Parties to this Convention are required to respect and ensure the rights of each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. Additionally, State-Parties enjoined to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

SECTION 3

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION AS WELL AS THE PROTOCOL IN THE NATIONAL LEGAL SYSTEM

Ghana has not as yet ratified the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. However, statutory provisions and national educational policies correspond to the Convention and the Recommendation Rights. These statutory provisions and national educational policies are:

3.1 THE 1992 CONSTITUTION OF GHANA

The 1992 Constitution states:

i. Article 25(1)

All persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities and with view of achieving the full realisation of that right:-

- a) Basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all;*
- b) Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education.*
- c) Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular, by progressive introduction of free education;*
- d) Functional literacy shall be encouraged or intensified as far as possible;*
- e) The development of a system of schools with adequate facilities at levels shall be pursued actively.*

ii. Article 25(2)

Every person shall have the right, at his own expense, to establish and maintain a private school or schools at all levels and of such categories and in accordance with such conditions as may be provided by law.

iii. Article 38(1)

The State shall provide the educational facilities at all levels and in all the regions of Ghana and shall, to the greatest extent feasible, make these facilities available to all citizens.

iv. Article 38(2)

The Government shall, within two years after Parliament first meets after the coming into force of this constitution, draw up a programme for implementation within the following ten years, for the provision of free, compulsory and universal basic education.

v. Article 38(3)

The State shall, subject to the availability of resources provide:

- a) *Equal and balanced access to the secondary and other appropriate pre-university education, with emphasis on science and technology.*
- b) *A free adult literacy programme, and a free vocational training, rehabilitation, and resettlement of disabled persons; and*
- c) *Lifelong education.*

3.2 EDUCATION ACT 2008 (ACT 778)

Article 2(1) to (6) of the Education Act, 2008, Act 778 states:

- *A child who has attained school-going age shall, at the basic level, attend a course of instruction as laid down by the Minister in a school recognised for that purpose by the Minister.*
- *Education shall be compulsory and free.*
- *A District Assembly shall provide the necessary infrastructural needs and any other facilities for the education of the population in the area of its authority.*
- *Where a child does not attend a course of instruction in compliance with this act, the parents shall in the first instance appear before the social welfare committee of the District Assembly for appropriate action.*
- *Where a parent cannot genuinely afford to educate the child, the District Assembly may provide the support for the education of the child.*

3.3 CHILDREN'S ACT, 1998

The Children's Act provides as follows:

- a) *Section 3, Non-Discrimination. No person shall discriminate against a child on the grounds of gender, race, age, religion, disability, health status, custom, ethnic origin, rural or urban background, birth or other status, socio-economic status or because the child is a refugee.*

- b) *Section 6(2). Every child has the right to life, dignity, respect, leisure, liberty, health, education and shelter from his parents.*
- c) *Section 8(1), Right to well-being. No person shall deprive a child access to education, immunisation, adequate diet, clothing, shelter, medical attention or anything required for his development.*
- d) *Section 10(2). A disabled child has a right to special care, education and training wherever possible to develop his maximum potential and be self-reliant.*

3.4 PERSONS WITH DISABILITY ACT, 2006, ACT 715

The Persons with Disability Act states:

- a) *Section 18. Free Education and Special Schools. The Government shall:*
 - 1. *Provide free education for a person with disability , and*
 - 2. *Establish special schools for persons with disability who by reason of their disability cannot be enrolled in formal schools.*
- b) *Section 17. Facilities and equipment in educational institutions. The Minister for Education shall by Legislative Instrument designate schools or institutions in each region which shall provide the necessary facilities and equipment that will enable persons with disability to fully benefit from the school or institution.*

3.5 COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE 1993

The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice Act, establishes a Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice to investigate complaints of violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, injustice and corruption; abuse of power and unfair treatment of persons by public officers in the exercise of their duties, with power to seek remedy in respect of such acts or omissions and to provide for other related purposes.

3.6 MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS (MOWAC)

Now known as the Ministry for Gender and Social Protection, the former Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) was established by the Government of Ghana and mandated to initiate/formulate policies to promote gender mainstreaming across all sectors that will lead to the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women and facilitate the survival, development and growth of children.

MOWAC had the responsibility of monitoring policy formulation and programme implementation in the sector areas, coordinating cross-sector issues on women and children and evaluating the impact of sector policies on women and children.

The mission of MOWAC was “to enhance its contribution to the development of Ghana by achieving equal status between men and women; to facilitate enforcement of the rights of women and children; to promote the survival, development, protection of children; and increase the participation of both women and children in the development process through skilled and committed staff”.

3.7 EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGIC PLAN 2010 – 2020

The Education Sector Strategic Plan provides the overall policy framework for the development of education in Ghana. The policy framework, among others, aims at the following: To

- *improve equitable access to and participation in quality education at all levels;*
- *bridge gender gap in access to education; and*
- *improve access to quality education for people with disability.*

SECTION 4

4.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION TO ATTAIN EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) AND PROGRESS MADE WITH RESPECT TO IMPLEMENTING RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Many programmes have been implemented to ensure equal opportunities to attain education for all. This section discusses the major programmes being implemented to ensure the right to education in Ghana. The discussion focuses on all levels of education: basic and secondary education.

4.1 UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

The implementation of the right to education in Ghana is being undertaken within the framework of the Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE). The FCUBE programme was launched in 1996 in fulfilment of the Fourth Republican constitutional mandate, which provides that:

The Government shall, within two years after Parliament first meets after the coming into force of this constitution, draw up a programme for implementation within the following ten years, for the provision of free compulsory and universal basic education (Article 38(2)).

The main policy goal of the FCUBE programme is to provide opportunity for every school-going age child in Ghana to receive quality basic education.

In view of the foregoing constitutional mandate, the Government of Ghana has enunciated and implemented various policies and programmes to promote the right of Ghanaian children to free education. These programmes are:

4.1.1 Capitation Grants

The Capitation Grant Scheme was introduced in the 2004/2005 academic year in fulfilment of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana which mandates the Government of Ghana to provide Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education. In the implementation of the scheme, the Government provides pre-determined amounts of money per capita for pupils attending public basic schools to cover levies imposed by the schools thus effectively making public basic education fee free.

4.1.2 Supply of School Uniforms

In this scheme, needy pupils attending public basic schools are identified and supplied with school uniforms free of charge by the Government to eliminate the risk of dropping-out of school among needy pupils as a result of lack of school uniforms.

4.1.3 Supply of Free Exercise Books

The Government of Ghana supplies free exercise books to all pupils attending public basic schools and private schools run by philanthropics.

4.1.4 Supply of Text Books

In this scheme, the Government of Ghana supplies the full complement of the required text books to pupils in public basic schools free of charge and provides complimentary copies of the text books to private basic schools.

4.1.5 School Feeding Programme

The School feeding programme is aimed at providing children in public primary schools and kindergartens one hot meal on every school day. The programme seeks among others, to improve enrolment, attendance and retention among pupils in deprived communities in Ghana. It is also geared at improving the health and nutritional status of the pupils. The School Feeding programme has resulted in an increase in primary school enrolment by 5.86% from 2005/2006 to 2008/2009 school year.

4.1.6 Basic Education Certificate Examinations Subsidy

The Government of Ghana absorbs two-thirds of the cost of *Basic Education Certificate Examinations* for pupils in both private and public basic schools to ensure a reduction in the cost of the examinations and enhance the chances of basic school pupils progressing to secondary schools.

4.1.7 Supply of Laptops to Basic Schools

The Government of Ghana has initiated basic schools computerization project aimed at facilitating ICT teaching and learning in basic schools as part of broader measures to improve the quality of basic education and knowledge acquisition. A total of 25,751 computers have been distributed to basic schools in Ghana since the commencement of the programme in 2011. An additional 34,249 computers are expected to be supplied to selected basic schools by the end of October, 2012.

4.1.8 Shepherd Schools

The Shepherd School Programme (SSP) has been providing Non-Formal Education (NFE) in seven pastoral communities in northern Ghana since 1996. The programme aims at providing basic education to children from isolated and marginalized communities, to equip them with basic literacy and numeracy skills and to provide a bridge to the formal school system. SSP has given the chance to children who otherwise would have been denied any opportunity to attend school.

SSP has features of the regular school system in terms of curriculum and daily school organisation. Pastoral children follow the same syllabus of regular schools and are graded like other Ghanaian school children. A major difference between shepherd schools and the regular schools is that shepherd schools have flexible schedules to foster greater participation. A review of the programme by stakeholders showed that:

- Parents who were previously worried about the safety of children walking long distances to school are reassured by the physical location of SSP in their communities.
- Collaborative learning among children, parents, teachers and facilitators has been fostered.
- Schooling is child-centred, including teaching and learning of appropriate songs, folk tales and dramas.
- Health, sanitation and environmental protection messages are now being passed on by children to their families – this is evidenced by greater uptake of immunisation and action to drain stagnant water to deter mosquitoes.
- SSP has been a catalyst to promote democratic processes and has enabled women and children to participate in community decision-making.

4.1.9 Free Ride Metro Mass Transit Buses for School Children

In this package, school children in Ghana are allowed free transit on “metro mass transit” buses to eliminate the drudgery of school children walking long distances to school and walking home after school.

4.1.10 Free Food Rations for Girls

In this programme, girls are given take-home food rations every month to ensure their continued enrolment in primary and junior high schools. The programme is supported by the World Food Programme and it is implemented across districts in the 3 northern regions of Ghana.

The programme aims at boosting enrolment of girls in schools in northern Ghana. Beneficiaries take-home specified quantities of maize, cooking oil and iodized salt if they stay in school for at least three quarters of the month. Take-home rations enable the poorest and hungriest families to send their daughters to school and ensure they complete the entire school year³.

4.1.11 Ghana Education Trust Fund ACT 581, 2000

The Ghana Education Trust Fund has been established by the Government of Ghana to provide supplementary funding for education. The Fund has since its establishment in 2000, financed

³ C. Bertini, Executive Director of WFP, at the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995

major infrastructure projects at all levels of education, and provided financial support towards the granting of scholarships to gifted but needy students for studies in second-cycle and accredited tertiary institutions in Ghana as well as the Student Loans Scheme.

The fund also supports the training of brilliant students as members of faculties; and research and other academic programmes of relevance to national development.

4.1.12 Science, Technology and Mathematics Education (STME) Clinic

The Science, Technology and Mathematics Education (STME) Clinic was instituted by the Ghana Education Service in 1987 to help improve enrolment and performance of girls in the study of science and technology-related subjects in secondary and tertiary institutions. The goal of the STME is to help bridge gender gap in the field of science and technology and thereby maximize the potentials of Ghanaian women.

The programme brings together girls from second cycle educational institutions for a short-term intensive intervention programmes to enable them to interact with female scientists who are brought in as role models and through these interactions, give the girls opportunity to change any negative perceptions they might harbour about the woman scientist.

4.1.13 Elimination of Schools under Trees and Abolishing of the Shift System

The siting of schools under trees and the shift system have served as draw-back on the Government of Ghana's effort at providing quality basic education. In this regard, the government has embarked upon a massive infrastructure development to build new classrooms to expand facilities for basic education. The Government of Ghana has reported that about two thousand schools have been eliminated across the country to create conducive atmosphere to deprived communities to have access to quality education.

In highly populated areas in urban centres, classrooms have been constructed to expand capacity to foster the abolishing of the shift system in basic education. In this system (the shift system), two batches of children are rotated regarding the use of the same classrooms such that one batch used the classrooms in the mornings whilst another batch used the classrooms in the afternoons. Thus, educational programmes would have to be hurried by the morning batch to make way for the afternoon batch.

4.2 SECONDARY EDUCATION

In line with article 25(1)(b) of the Constitution of Ghana which provides that,

“Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education”.

The Government of Ghana and parents share the cost of secondary education (regular and technical/vocational). The Government of Ghana provides inputs such as classrooms, furniture, dormitories, toilets/urinals, laboratories, workshops, library, textbooks, tools and laboratory equipment. Additionally, the Government pays the salaries of teaching and non-teaching staff of secondary institutions.

Parents are required to pay the cost of boarding and lodging and examinations as well as science resource centre fees, computer fees, student representative council fees and other related charges.

The Government also subsidizes the fees of all students in secondary schools and offers various scholarships to students. These scholarships include:

- **Northern Scholarship Scheme** exclusively for students from northern Ghana who gain admission as boarders into Government recognized public senior high schools and technical institutes. This intervention dates back to the period of colonial administration and is a deliberate government policy aimed at bridging the gap in educational development between the north and south of the country.
- **Hardship Awards** for brilliant but needy students in Government recognized public senior high schools and technical institutes in regions outside the three northern regions.
- **Merit Awards** for brilliant students who excel in special examinations conducted by respective senior high schools in the southern regions which are covered by the Scholarships Secretariat.
- **His Excellency the President's Special Award** is a merit award scheme and presented to brilliant students from each of the administrative regions of Ghana (1 boy and 1 girl each) as part of activities organized during Ghana's Independence Anniversary Celebrations.

4.3 HIGHER EDUCATION

Article 25(1) and 25(1) (b) of the Constitution of Ghana respectively provides that,

- *"All persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities..."*
- *"Higher education shall be equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular, by progressive introduction of free education".*

Thus, in line with the afore-mentioned constitutional provisions there is no discrimination in tertiary education. The basis for enrolment in a Ghanaian higher education institution is the attainment of the passes required by higher education institutions.

No one is discriminated against, on the basis of race,gender, ethnic group or religion in higher education in Ghana.

4.4 PRIVATE EDUCATION

Private education is permitted in Ghana in line with Article 25 (2) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana which provides that:

“Every person shall have right, at his own expense, to establish and maintain a private school or schools at all levels and of such categories and in accordance with such conditions as may be provided by law”.

In view of the afore-mentioned constitutional provisions, the Ministry of Education has developed administrative guidelines for the establishment and operation of basic and secondary institutions. Additionally, the National Accreditation Board has been established by the National Accreditation Board Act, 2007 to determine the programmes and requirements for the proper operation of tertiary institutions and the maintenance of acceptable levels of academic or professional standards in such institutions in consultation with that institution.

4.5 RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION

The establishment of schools for the purpose of providing religious and moral education is permitted in Ghana. In fact,some Government-assisted institutions are owned and managed by religious missions. Thus, in addition to the curricula provided by theGhana EducationService, Government-assisted mission-owned schools are allowed to teach their religious practicesto their pupils and students.

4.6 THE TEACHING PROFESSION

There is no discrimination regarding training for the teaching profession in Ghana. The processes for enrolment of new entrants in Colleges of Education are as follows:

- i. The entry requirement for recruitment of students are published in the mass media;*
- ii. Candidates who desire to enter the teaching profession fill application forms for admission to Colleges of Education;*
- iii. Examinations and interviews are held for the applicants and qualified candidates accordingly are offered admission.*

The salaries of teachers are comparable to personnel of equivalent grade in the public service. Numerous incentive schemes have been instituted for teachers. They include:

- i. Best Teacher and Best School Award Schemes;*
- ii. Institutionalization of in-service training for teachers;*
- iii. Making salaries and conditions of service comparable to other professions;*
- iv. Provision of bicycles, motor bikes and housing for teachers in deprived areas;*
- v. Accelerated promotion for teachers in such deprived areas; and*
- vi. Special quotas for study leave-with-pay.*

4.7 ADULT EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

The Constitution of Ghana mandates the state to make available facilities for the provision of free adult education and lifelong education (Constitution of Ghana, Article 38(3) (b) (c)). The Non-Formal Education Division (NFED) has been established to facilitate the provision of adult literacy programmes in Ghana as well as Non-formal education.

The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and the Mass Literacy and Social Campaign Policy (MASSLIP) (NFED 1998) provide the policy bases for the operations of the Non-Formal Education Division of the Ministry of Education. In fact, the Education Sector Strategic Plan states that the NFED shall provide educational opportunities outside school for those who missed formal education.

Thus, NFED runs a 21-month adult functional literacy programme for persons from 15 years and above in 15 Ghanaian languages and English. Currently, the 21-month literacy cycle is targeted at 100,000 learners.

Other sectors such as the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ghana Health Service and the Trades Union Congress also provide varied non-formal programmes.

4.8 RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

The school curriculum in Ghana is aimed at the full development of the human personality. For instance, the subject areas covered in the curriculum of Junior High Schools in Ghana are: Mathematics, English, Social Studies, Integrated Science, Agriculture, a Ghanaian Language, Religious and Moral Education, French, ICT and Pre-technical (comprising Basic Design, Home Economics, Visual Arts, Pre-technical).

The syllabi of the subject of social studies taught in both Junior and Senior High Schools include topics like human rights, sustainable development, civics and peace and conflict resolution.

Additionally, the National Commission for Civic Education established under Article 231 of the Constitution of Ghana is mandated to promote and sustain democracy and inculcate in the Ghanaian citizenry, the awareness of their rights and obligations, through civic education.

4.9 RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

As noted earlier, the rights for ethnic minorities for carrying out their own educational activities is guaranteed in the Constitution of Ghana. Every person in Ghana has the right, at his own expense, to establish and maintain a private school or schools at all levels and of such categories and in accordance with such conditions as may be provided by law (Article 25(2)).

Article 26(1) of the Constitution of Ghana provides that: "Every person is entitled to enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, tradition or religion ..."

However, since 2002, the language policy in education in Ghana indicates that English language should be used as the medium of instruction from primary one, with a Ghanaian language studied as a compulsory subject in Junior and Senior High Schools.

4.10 ASSURANCE OF QUALITY EDUCATION

The National Inspectorate Board has been established to set and enforce standards to be observed at the basic and second cycle levels in both private and public educational institutions and undertake periodic inspection of schools.

The Board is mandated by the Education Act 778, 2008 to provide independent external evaluation of the quality and standards in education institutions by focusing on:

- a) The quality of leadership and management of the educational institution;*
- b) The quality of teaching and learning provided by the educational institution;*
- c) The educational standards achieved by the educational institution;*
- d) The levels of scholarship attained by the educational institution ;*
- e) The facilities available in the educational institution;*
- f) The system of external examiners in place at the educational institution;*
- g) The values emphasized and taught in the educational institution including community service by the students and staff, and*
- h) The statistical data of the educational institution or tracer studies tracking the achievement of past students.*

The National Accreditation Board (NAB) (established in 1993 with the enactment of PNDCLaw 317, 1993 and later replaced by the National Accreditation Board Act, 2007, Act 744) is mandated to: accredit both public and private (tertiary) institutions with regard to the contents and standards of their programmes. The Board is also required to determine, in consultation with the appropriate institution or body, the programme and requirements for the proper operation of that institution and the maintenance of acceptable levels of academic or professional standards. The Board accredits all categories of tertiary institutions - universities, university colleges, polytechnics, colleges, schools, institutions, academies, or tutorial colleges.

The Board organises regular visitation to tertiary education institutions to ensure that they comply with the sector's standards and norms.

4.11 OTHER ISSUES

4.11.1 Methods Used to Draw the Attention of the Authorities to the Instruments and to remove the obstacles encountered

The mechanisms used to draw the attention of the educational authorities to the instruments and the removal of obstacles include the following:

Educational Fora: Special educational fora are organised periodically by the Government to enable stakeholders (Government, Donors, Civil Society and Community-Based Organizations) discuss educational policy and topical issues in education. These fora enable stakeholders to bring child rights' issues to bear on education policy in Ghana.

Annual Sector Review: The Ministry of Education organises an annual forum to evaluate its performance in collaboration with stakeholders such as donors, Non-Governmental

Organizations and Community-Based Organizations. This forum enables the donor community and civil society to make input in education policy and discuss the performance of the Ministry of Education during the previous year. The recommendations from the forum are incorporated in the operational plan for the ensuing year.

Education Sector Group: An education sector group comprising the Ministry of Education, the Ghana Education Service, Inter-Governmental Organizations, the Donor Community, Civil Society and Community-Based Organizations meets monthly to assess progress regarding the implementation of educational policy and advises the Government accordingly.

Advocacy Role of Civil Society Organizations: Civil society organizations (Child Rights International, Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC)) regularly engage the government on issues bordering on the rights of the child and the implementation of the Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education programme.

Civil Society Organizations in education have developed a document known as “The Civil Education Manifesto 2012” which captures issues which civil society organizations in education want to bring to bare in the political process in Ghana.

4.11.2 Difficulties Encountered in the Implementation of the Convention

Difficulties and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Convention include:

- Inability of the government to cover all schools in the implementation of its social intervention programmes (School Feeding Programme, supply of school uniforms) as a result of inadequate funding.
- The Gender Parity Index at all levels of education is below the target of 1. There is the need to promote enrolment of females at all levels of education.
- The absence of sustainable source of electricity in rural areas has been an impediment to the use of computers in rural schools and extra learning.
- The allocation of capitation grants on the basis of enrolment puts rural schools with relatively lower enrolment in a disadvantageous position. This perpetuates inequality regarding the development of urban and rural schools.
- There exist large numbers of untrained teachers in basic schools. It is reported that the number of untrained teachers in pre-schools and primary schools are 74% and 38% respectively. Undoubtedly, the lack of trained teachers is a disincentive to Government's attempts to provide quality basic education.
- Completion rates in JHS have stagnated around 66 in recent years. There is significant variation across districts, with much lower completion rates in deprived districts. Many

factors account for this state of affairs, including high incidence of poverty which compels children to contribute to family income in the districts concerned.

- The percentage of females enrolled in SHS remains low, only 45% of pupils enrolled in SHS are females.
- Funding issues remain a problem for the Non-Formal Education Division. Indeed, as a result of limited funds, the programme will not enrol new learners in 2012. This has severely hampered the roll-out of adult literacy programmes in Ghana.

4.11.3 Activities Undertaken by the National Commission to Promote the Convention/Recommendation

The Ghana National Commission for UNESCO has, over the years, assisted to promote equity in education in Ghana. The Commission's efforts at drawing attention to issues within the Instrument have been manifested mainly in advocacy and policy advice, transmitted from decisions arrived at, in UNESCO meetings and Conferences. The following are identifiable, amongst others:

- Advocacy towards establishing the Science, Technology and Mathematics Education (STME) Clinic for girls
- Promotion of the Six (6) EFA goals
- Promotion of campaign to advocate for increased girls' education
- Assistance to enhance awareness on the need to promote women's and girls' participation in education
- Youth programmes
- Activities of the Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet)
- Local launch of the Global Monitoring Report
- Partnership with the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education

Science and Mathematics Education Clinic

The Commission assisted with the institution of the Science, Technology and Mathematics Education Clinic under the Girls Education Unit. The Clinic is currently spearheaded by Action Aid (Ghana) and is observed annually. The objective of the camp is basically to build the confidence of girls to venture into study areas traditionally conceived as male-dominated, such as Science, Mathematics and Technology, while affording them the opportunity of interacting with role models.

The Ghana Education Service (GES) established the Girls' Education Unit in 1997. The Unit has ensured a non-discriminatory enrolment in education, thus ensuring the reduction of gender disparities in the education sector.

Promotion of Girls' Education

With the onset of the EFA Programme, the National Commission has on consistent basis, promoted the six goals identified through advocacy and policy advice. In 2005 for instance, a campaign was launched in support of girls' education together with Child Rights (NGO) and the

Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC). The programme was organized in Accra, Kumasi and Ho on the theme: “Stand up for Girls’ Education”

Contribution to the National Plan of Action on EFA

The National Commission played a significant role in the production of the Education Strategic Plan 2003-2015, by the then Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The Plan was a comprehensive document that covered all levels and aspects of education, from Pre-school, Primary, Junior High School (JHS), Senior High School (SHS), Teacher and Special Education, TVET through to Tertiary.

Youth Programmes

Youth programmes’ implementation constitutes another area through which the Commission advocates the provision of the Instrument. A current example: the National Commission, on 17th November, 2008, created a platform at the Parliament House of Ghana for Senior High School Youth in various UNESCO Clubs, other Secondary Schools and Universities countrywide, to participate in a mock UNESCO Parliament. The forum discussed issues on the theme “Fostering Tolerance and Peace among Nations – the role of the Youth”. Anchored in this broad theme were four sub-themes:

- Promoting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue (a useful tool for eliminating stereotypes and prejudices among people of varied religions and cultures)
- Learning to live together – which way for the youth (education for shared values and social cohesion for peaceful co-existence)
- Empowering the youth for Sustainable Development (building the capacity of the youth towards sustainable development)
- Towards peaceful elections 2008 in Ghana – the role of the youth (avoiding acts of violence and indecency that could lead to chaos during and after the elections in 2008)

Other Issues

Other significant efforts at creating awareness and promoting non-discrimination and equality of educational opportunities include the observation of the **annual EFA week** and the Commission’s focus on and promotion of assistance to increasing women’s participation in Technical, Vocational Education and Training (WITED). Assistance was sought from UNESCO in 2003/2004 to help females in mechanical training, etc. to complete their studies, acquire tools and eventually set up their own businesses.

The Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) in Ghana is another avenue through which the Commission promotes Human Rights, Peace, inter-cultural learning, and tolerance, among others. ASPnet (Ghana) carries out and takes part in programmes, competitions and other activities that centre on these issues. Osu Home Primary and JHS (Accra); Forces Basic School

(Burma Camp); St. John's Preparatory and JHS (Accra); Crown Prince Academy (Accra) and AngloGold Ashanti Basic School (Obuasi) are examples of such ASPnet schools that have participated in programmes on peace, human rights and tolerance, at the international level.

The National Commission has encouraged and assisted many ASPnet schools in Ghana to participate fully in UNESCO flagship programmes aimed at promoting quality education. Examples of such programmes are the Slave Route Project (TST 1 and 2), Mondialogo, etc.

The Commission, in collaboration with the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education, organized a workshop on Integrated Approaches to achieve EFA in Ghana. This was in October, 2011. The objective was to review the status of implementation of EFA goals in the country in terms of the achievements, challenges and way forward. Further, it was expected that the capacity of the Committee (and Parliament, for that matter) would be enhanced towards creating the enabling environment to achieve Ghana's educational goals in the short to long term.

The Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (GMR), published by UNESCO annually, serves to inform, influence and sustain genuine commitment **towards education for all members of society.**

The Report is the prime instrument for assessing global progress towards achieving the Six (6) Dakar Goals. It tracks programmes, identifies effective policy reforms and best practices in education for all. At the same time, it draws attention to emerging challenges and promotes international co-operation in favour of education. The Commission, since 2005, has seen to the annual launch of the report in the country in order to encourage a comparative analysis of the country's educational performance. For 2012, the launch is being effected in partnership with DFID and the UNESCO Cluster Office.

Future Action

The Secretariat envisages continuing with seminars, geared towards drawing increased attention to outstanding UNESCO Conventions for the country, for the necessary education and the subsequent action.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Although, the Government of Ghana has not ratified the *Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education*, she has ratified other international conventions with provisions that have the same import as the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education such as *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*; *Framework for Education for All* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Additionally, the Government of Ghana has through constitutional, legislative, policy and administrative measures applied the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education in Ghana.

These measures are spelt in documents such as:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana;
- Education Act, 778;
- Children's Act, 1998;
- Education Strategic Plan; and the
- Persons with Disability Act, 2006;

These documents have ample provisions that proscribe discrimination in education. Indeed, the constitution mandates the provision of Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education in Ghana (FCUBE). In this regard, the FCUBE programme was launched in 1996 to provide opportunity for every school-age child in Ghana to receive quality basic education.

The Government of Ghana has therefore enunciated and implemented various policies and programmes to promote the right of Ghanaian children to free education. These programmes include *The Capitation Grants Scheme*, *School Feeding Programme*, *Supply of School Uniforms* and *Supply of Free Exercise Books*.

These measures have fostered access to basic education for children of school-going age irrespective of their religious, ethnic, gender or family background.

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