



MEABED Africa
P.O. Box 651899
Benmore 2010
Republic of South Africa

Telephone: 27-11-463-7573
Fax: +27-11-463-0959

MEABED US

850 Sligo Avenue, Suite 602
Silver Spring, MD 20910
USA

Tel: 301-578-1601
Fax: 301-578-1604

Africa Education Initiative - Ghana Country Case Study

1.0 History of the Africa Education Initiative in Ghana

The former Presidential Initiative and precursor to the Africa Education Initiative (AEI), the Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI), funded \$2,489,107 to 23 projects in Ghana, including regional projects, between 1998 and 2003. The projects strengthened academic and government institutions and the tourism sector, improved girls' vocational and technical education, increased access to Internet technology and training, and enhanced the quality of teaching. EDDI activities in Ghana focused on higher education partnerships with technology enhancement components, democracy and governance projects, economic entrepreneurial training and girls' education and mentoring programs. The predecessor Ambassadors' Girls' Scholarship Program (AGSP) provided 209 scholarships for secondary school girls. Four workshop sessions were conducted with girls on the school environment/atmosphere, HIV/AIDS, why girls need to go to school, and obstacles girls face that prevent them from going to school. Several higher education partnerships strengthened policy networks between professionals and policymakers such as legislators, civil society leaders, judges, and political associations. This involved exchange programs and local or regional training projects which enhanced policy and operational skills, promoted cooperation across political and government civil society divisions, and assisted in the development of the higher education sector.

Ghana is among 16 countries around the world, which have been selected to benefit from the \$41 billion Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), after it qualified under the criteria set for developing countries. The criteria include a country's ability to rule justly, investing in people and promoting economic growth. The MCA initiative is the first program of its kind in the world and would give the government the free hand to select its priority projects for funding without any conditions. Ghana's principal economic goal is to achieve middle-income status within one generation, driven by private sector led growth. Therefore, the objective is to develop a sustainable advantage as an agro- based industrial economy, supported by a strong services economy and to achieve a leadership position in West Africa. Ghana plans to focus on its under-developed infrastructure, insufficient capital, low productivity and weak institutional framework and management capacity as among the constraints hindering a comprehensive program of economic transformation.

2.0 Education Context of AEI in Ghana

Early in 2002, the President of Ghana requested a committee to review education reforms in Ghana with a focus on reversing educational decline. Despite a commitment to 100% enrollment under the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Act, enrollment within the

6-11 age group rests at 82.3%. In recent years, the active campaign to increase girls' access to education has reduced the gap between girls' and boys' enrollment levels. Boys account for 52.8% of total enrollment at the primary level, while girls account for 47.2%. However, these figures hide significant disparities at the regional level, with girls' and boys' enrollment levels significantly lower in the three northern regions. Girls living in these regions, and rural areas in general, have decreased access to education, and gender disparities increase at the Junior Secondary School (JSS) level.

Overall enrollment rates of 63.3% reveal that nearly 40% of children who should be in school are not. Moreover, available statistics indicate that only 45.4% of girls are in JSS compared to 54.6% of boys. Primary school dropout rates are quite high, while secondary school enrollment rates are low. Almost 50% of school-leavers fail to progress to senior secondary school, and a high proportion of Senior Secondary School (SSS) leavers fail to continue their education. The Presidential Committee's 2003 report identified the financing of education as a central issue. Education expenditures presently consume approximately 35% of the recurrent budget, but the system is unable to respond to the expansion needed to ensure 100% enrollment.

Year 2000 projections show that Ghana's 2.5% population growth rate will result in almost double the population (38 million) by 2028. Currently, more than 60% of the population is under 25 years of age, and 5% is over 65. This high dependency ratio is a development hurdle that is further compounded by the potential impact of HIV/AIDS on the active population. HIV/AIDS prevalence is currently estimated at 3.8% and is expected to seriously affect economic growth unless steps are taken to stop its spread. Its impact is already felt through decreased numbers of teaching staff, the drain on health sector resources, and agricultural production. The Ghana AIDS Commission has recently launched a multi-sectoral approach to deal with the crisis and has moved the country from defining HIV/AIDS as a health issue to a developmental issue.

The government has taken various measures to address educational needs. The Education Strategic Plan (2003-2015) is one of the current tools designed to deal with Ghana's education challenges. The Plan is the product of the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports working in collaboration with the National Commission for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in consultation with Ghana's development partners, such as the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

Donor assistance to Ghana, in the forms of grants and loan concessions, from over 20 multilateral and bilateral donors, is estimated at U.S. \$919 million in 2001. The United States ranks third among bilateral donors and contributes approximately 6% of that amount. Donor assistance focuses on infrastructure, economic growth and poverty alleviation, agriculture, education, health, family planning, and governance. DFID, the World Bank and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (the largest bilateral donor) are some of the major donors of Ghana education programs. As well as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which are funding the Childscope, Assistance for Education of Girls in Ghana's northern savannah areas projects and the Ghana Girl Child Education Project respectively. The African Development Bank has focused its efforts on the Development of Senior Secondary Education Project.

3.0 USAID/Ghana and AEI Program Theory

AEI's goals of increasing access to and improving the quality of education in Ghana correlate well with USAID/Ghana's education strategic objective, which aims at supporting Ghanaian efforts to achieve increased access to quality education and training. The collaborative approach to program design seeks to be practical and learner-focused. AEI and USAID/Ghana work with local NGO providers and through partnerships with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ghana Education Service. This collaboration greatly facilitates the progress of the AEI and USAID/Ghana education projects. AEI is able to utilize the various implementing arrangements of USAID/Ghana's program, with principal contractors, grantees, and agencies to accomplish its goals.

USAID/Ghana's education program, is a starting point for the development of AEI objectives in Ghana. USAID/Ghana's interventions in enhancing quality education in primary schools have been so successful that the government of Ghana has integrated several approaches into the national program. AEI in Ghana will focus on improving and enhancing girls' education, teacher training and other innovative activities.

The Quality Improvements in Primary Schools (QUIPS) is a seven-year program that began in 1997 to support the implementation of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education. To contribute towards providing every child in Ghana quality education, the QUIPS program is empowering all stakeholders, especially communities, parents, and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) to own and participate in the management of primary schools in their communities. The program also provides in-service training to teachers, and contributes to improving the management capacity of officials at the district level. For a third straight year, the performance in mathematics and English of children in USAID-supported schools was by far better than that of students in other schools. Their mathematics score exceeded that of other schools by over 25% and their English and reading achievement was 20% better than that of non-USAID supported schools. The student dropout rate was 4.8% in QUIPS schools as against the national figure of 10%.

AEI stresses innovation and the integration of its cross-cutting themes of HIV/AIDS education and community participation. USAID/Ghana has made significant strides in HIV/AIDS education. The mission supported a baseline study to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices of students, teachers and parents about HIV/AIDS. The study revealed that students in junior secondary schools were much more sexually active than expected. It also showed that there were many misconceptions about HIV/AIDS among the Ghanaian youth. Based on the results of the study, USAID has supported NGOs in developing programs to establish HIV/AIDS clubs in schools and sensitize teachers and parents about HIV/AIDS. AEI thus builds on this foundation of research and knowledge of the existing HIV/AIDS projects in Ghana.

The mission has also expanded its program in girls' education to support activities of Strategies for Advancing Girls Education (SAGE). During the pilot scheme, SAGE mobilized 35 communities around girls' education issues and worked with the Ghana Education Service to develop various tools to enhance girls' education. AEI's AGSP will thus expand these successes further.

Additional support for girls' education is provided by the USAID/Women in Development Safe Schools Program, implemented by DevTech Systems, Inc.

With AEI's support it is anticipated that once implementation is completed in Ghana the quality and access to education will be improved.

4.0 Summary of AEI in Ghana

4.1 Implementation of the AEI Components and Cross-Cutting Themes

Ghana is currently implementing three components of AEI: AGSP, Teacher Training and Innovative Activities (IFESH and Breakthrough to Literacy). Ghana is one of 13 countries eligible to receive one of the anticipated six country programs under the second phase of the TOLM Component (FY2006-2008), and a Marginalized Communities Program activity is also under consideration.

4.1.1 Teacher Training

To date, all allocated funds have been obligated into implementing mechanisms; \$1.15 million for pre-service and \$1.3 million for in-service. All FY2003 and FY2004 funds have been obligated to the Education Quality for All (EQUALL) contract, including \$500,000 for the innovative Breakthrough to Literacy (BTL) program. EQUALL is the main contractor for the USAID/Ghana education program. The Educational Development Center is the prime contractor. Other partners include the Center for Applied Linguistics, GSMF international (previously known as the Ghana Social Marketing Foundation), The Molteno Project, School For Life, and Yale University.

PLANNED ALLOCATIONS FOR AEI TEACHER TRAINING IN GHANA

	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006
In-Service	\$500,000	\$600,000	\$700,000	\$800,000	\$850,000
Pre-Service		\$500,000	\$650,000	\$700,000	\$710,000
TOTAL	\$500,000	\$1,100,000	\$1,350,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,560,000

In-Service: \$1.3 million in FY2003 and FY2004 in-service funds were obligated to EQUALL. These funds will be used to provide technical assistance to support the implementation of training teachers in BTL methodology and for open and distance learning activities that are being developed. Like many AEI teacher training programs, AEI funds are supporting part of a larger teacher training effort funded with mission core education program funds. Thus, teachers trained through AEI will have to be calculated as a portion of the overall number of teachers trained.

Pre-Service: The initial FY02 \$500,000 for in-service training was used to develop and produce the "Window of Hope" HIV/AIDS Curriculum for Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana to be used in the national pre-service teacher training program. All teacher trainees are now trained in this curriculum. The mission will be in contact with the implementing partner, World Education, to ascertain how best to capture the number of teachers ultimately trained with this curriculum. The implementation of the curriculum is being supported primarily by HIV/AIDS funding.

The \$1.15 million FY03 and FY04 pre-service funds will be used for training teachers in complementary education programs (expansion of the school for life model in northern Ghana, training teachers in mother tongue methodologies for literacy and numeracy) and training community support teachers.

4.1.2 Ambassadors' Girls' Scholarship Program

Implementation is in the very early stages for the AGSP. \$400,000 has been allocated to the AGSP. The program is scheduled for the northern and eastern region of Ghana and will be implemented by World Education with assistance from two local partners, School for Life and Isodec. Thus far, 1,000 girls have been selected for scholarships although the scholarships have not yet been disseminated. The above figures were obtained from the Mission.



The IFESH Ghana team (clockwise from bottom right): Alexander Harrison, Anita Tawiah , Joseph Parker and Kwesi Dzidzienyo (Ghana Country Representative)

4.1.3 Innovative Activities

In FY04, USAID/Ghana was given \$500,000 to implement the innovative teaching and learning program Breakthrough To Literacy (BTL). The AEI funding was used to support the production of BTL materials (though it did not fund the total cost of material production). BTL is a cutting edge program which could serve as a national model for teaching reading in Ghana as well as a model for improving reading achievement in West Africa. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has emphasized literacy and numeracy in both English and a Ghanaian language as a key intervention area in its education sector plan. This unique model assists children to learn to read and write in their local language in grade 1 and then gradually develops their English reading skills in grade 2. The program has been implemented successfully in southern Africa. It was implemented in Zambia – funded by DFID – where they found that the younger students were able to read better than older siblings. The pilot in Ghana is BTL's first foray into West Africa.

An evaluation of the of BTL in Ghana was undertaken by the United States based International Reading Association and early results show that BTL pilot schools are performing better than students in the non-pilot schools (using as a measure early literacy since the program is too new to assess more mature literacy skills). It also highlighted some crucial areas of consideration regarding the sustainability of this program in Ghana including the ability of the program to adapt to the local context. The recommendations from the evaluation included: Expanding and elaborating upon the BTL model (using materials developed through the Assistance to Teacher Education Project (ASTEP) program also being implemented in Ghana by Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ); extending mother tongue instruction beyond grade 1; developing a plan for coordinating BTL and ASTEP; need for close monitoring and assessment; possible need to adapt the program over time; and redoubling efforts to build capacity within school districts to implement the program.

AEI is also supporting the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH), which has placed eight qualified and experienced teacher volunteers from the United States in teaching posts determined by the Ministry of Education. As a result of the direct input of IFESH volunteers, 18 teacher training resource centers have been established in 18 teacher training colleges out of a possible 39 teacher training colleges, demonstrating a strong indicator of sustainability. The teacher training resource centers are proving to be a valuable asset to the teacher training colleges providing teacher trainees with skills in developing teacher learning materials

4.2 Impacts and Outcomes

Teacher Training. Window of Hope: HIV/AIDS Curriculum for Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana is now taught in all 39 Teacher Training Colleges and is an examinable subject. 17,143 pre-service teachers and 1,023 in-service teachers received training. In 2005, the IFESH volunteers will benefit 2,400 beneficiaries in two universities and five Teacher Training Colleges.

Innovative Activities. The BTL program is currently being implemented in 50 pilot schools in five districts: Ho, South Tongu, West Gonja, Bole and Suhum. In 2009, the goal is for BTL to operate in 1,400 schools across 20 districts.

4.3 Cost Effectiveness

Below see the chart of Ghana's obligated funds for the two fiscal years of AEI. Specific beneficiary targets are presently being established through consultation of USAID with its contractors, thus projected unit costs cannot be prepared at this time.

GHANA AEI FUNDS OBLIGATED TO DATE

	Teacher Training	AGSP	Innovative Activities	Total
FY02	\$500,000			\$500,000
FY03	\$1,100,000			\$1,100,000
FY04	\$1,350,000	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$2,250,000
Total	\$2,950,000	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$3,850,000

The Monitoring and Evaluation for the Africa Bureau Education Division (MEABED) is presently establishing the analytic model to be used in assessing cost benefit and cost effectiveness of AEI activities. It is envisaged that the model will break down the obligated amount into direct (e.g., unit cost per pre-service teacher) and indirect costs (e.g., administration costs), classify all outputs into benefits (in the short-term) and effects (in the long-term), and calculate the cost-benefit and cost effectiveness ratios, amongst other measures.

4.4 Success Stories

Teacher Training. In Ghana's education sector, HIV infection rates are estimated to be at least double the national rate, dealing a critical blow to the school system as well as teachers, students, and parents to ensure quality education. To address this growing crisis, World Education, in collaboration with the Ghanaian Ministries of Education and Health, developed the "Window of Hope" curriculum. Before the "Window of Hope" curriculum, teacher training did not include HIV/AIDS information. Now, all teacher trainees in Ghana are

educated about HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention, personal risk, stigma, teacher responsibility, and sexual harassment and abuse. They are using this information to protect themselves and their families — particularly their children — and to address HIV/AIDS issues in the classroom, where collectively they will teach the youth of Ghana vital information about the virus. Students are enthusiastic about the curriculum and agree that not only has the curriculum changed how they plan to teach it has also changed their personal behavior and improved their communication skills and confidence.



Teacher Trainee at St. Theresa's Training College during the "Window of Hope" Risk Game, Ghana, February 2005

The IFESH volunteers are working on a continual evolution of an HIV/AIDS awareness project. One volunteer is working with 100 girls and has enlisted the support of male and female faculty at the Agogo Presbyterian Training College and representatives from the Ghana Education Service, as well as health practitioners from the hospital. Another volunteer has changed the focus of her training in HIV/AIDS awareness from training of teachers in reducing stigmas through cultural awareness to directly training people who are living with the HIV virus.



Breakthrough to Literacy learners at St. Phillips Primary School, Ho, Ghana, February 2005

Innovative Activities. BTL is proving to be highly successful in the 50 pilot schools. Grade 1 pupils are learning to read within four months of tuition. This is a true breakthrough and marvel in a country where fewer than 10% of the school children in grade 6 are able to read with grade level mastery. BTL is designed to significantly improve reading instruction for grade 1 students by using the mother-tongue language as the language of instruction. The students become engaged in language and print, learn letter names and sounds, develop the ability to sound out words, and build vocabulary. This makes it easier for children to bridge the

gap to learning English in grade 2. Most importantly, children learn to comprehend what they read—and to enjoy reading. BTL helps teachers guide students to read for comprehension, and not just to decode words. BTL's interactive lessons provide child-centered learning, with instant feedback for the student. The teachers are also motivated by the success of their students. Teaching and learning is made easier with a variety of teaching and learning materials, such as posters, sentence builders and "talking walls".

Short documentary videos will be made available soon online for BTL and "Window of Hope", illustrating the successes of these programs.

5.0 Challenges Facing AEI in Ghana

Innovative Activities. There are over 100 dialects in Ghana thus selecting mother-tongue languages for BTL can be difficult. In West Gonja, the mother-tongue language that BTL has chosen is not used in a number of the schools. It may, therefore, be challenging to reach the target of 1,400 schools by 2009.