JICA Contributes to Quality Education in Ghana

With barely four years left to work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs 2015), Ghana is largely on track to achieving the MDG 2 target for universal primary education (with over 80% of school-age children enrolled and remaining in school). However, disparities between the national figures and those for the northern regions exist. Ghana is also on track to achieving the MDG 3 target for gender parity in education.

Education is the key and foundation of economic growth and social development. It also contributes to stability and peace. Japan has the history to have pursued technological development and industrialization through promoting education. Based on its own experience, JICA regards quality education for all, as one of the prioritized areas of assistance.

JICA’s assistance is custom-made according to the situation of individual countries. The basic principle of our activities is the concept of Capacity Development, which focuses on enhancing the problem-solving abilities of the recipient beneficiaries at all levels, including individual, organisational and societal levels.

Japan’s cooperation programmes in the education sector in Ghana is consistent with the perspective of the Fourth Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD IV), as well as being aligned with the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA); of which the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2010–2020 influenced.

On-going projects include In-Service Training (INSET) project (2009–2013), School Construction Project, Advisor for Decentralised Education Management (2010–2012) and Technical and Vocational Education Training Support (TVETS) project (2007–2011). Currently, 30 JICA volunteers are working in the Education Sector. JICA sent 32 people from Ghana to training programmes in Japan/third countries to help transfer knowledge and technology in 2011.
PROJECT STORY
Strengthening the Capacity of INSET Management

Background

The quality of teachers is an important factor in children’s education. Normally, teachers attend teacher’s training colleges, now renamed as Colleges of Education, to learn the art of teaching. However, once they start teaching, in Ghana at least, there is no official requirement for teachers to continually improve their teaching competencies, as pertains in other countries.

The Teacher Education Division (TED) of the Ghana Education Service (GES), with the support of JICA’s INSET project, is now introducing nationwide, a principal method of continuous teacher professional development for primary public school teachers.

INSET literally means In-Service Training of teachers. It forms part of a teacher’s continuous professional development. INSET can take place at a school (School Based INSET (SBI)) where the teachers within a school come together to learn, or within a cluster; where teachers from 2 to 5 schools come together to form a cluster (Cluster Based INSET (CBI)) for learning. INSET usually consists of a colleague teacher (previously trained on how to conduct INSET), teaching his peers how to develop practical lessons for pupils to understand.

This nationwide rollout of INSET is as a result of a successful piloting of the INSET model from 2000 to 2005 in 3 districts, and from 2006 to 2008 in 10 districts; one from each region. GES on its part recognized the importance of INSET during the piloting and in 2009 agreed on the outline of the next INSET project as follows. The overall goal of the project is for the teaching competencies of primary public school teachers in the area of Mathematics and Science to be improved. The project purpose is for the nationwide management system for a structured and quality INSET of Mathematics and Science to be established and reinforced. Within the project scope, JICA has been supporting the GES through the TED, with a technical cooperation project to expand the INSET model nationwide from June 2009 in phases, 57 districts in the first phase, 41 districts in the second phase, and 62 in the third phase, in terms of capacity building of the management structure at the national and district levels, and quality improvement at the school level.

Progress and Challenges to date

As of December 2011, all districts have set up the INSET implementation structure at the district level. Many of these districts however, could not organize training for the school level personnel such as head teachers (HT) and curriculum leaders (CL) due to budgetary constraints at the district level. Therefore, SBI and CBI are only being conducted in a limited number of districts at present. The TED and JICA Project team continues to support these districts to prioritise INSET activities within their budget plans in order to complete the trainings.

The TED has also made progress in developing the policy backbone for the Nationwide INSET Programme. The teacher policy is intended to ensure that there are clear standards which govern the pre-tertiary teacher education and development in Ghana. A draft Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM) Policy has been shared with wider stakeholders including key Ministry of Education and GES divisional heads, Development Partners and teachers’ unions. The draft policy has already been captured by the revised Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2010–2020.

Training in Japan/ third country and Japanese volunteers

Aside of in-country INSET activities, training programmes in Japan and third countries such as Kenya are also organized to complement the INSET efforts. The Graduate School of Education, Okayama University, Japan, is one such institution receiving INSET related personnel from Ghana for training, with the aim of enhancing the capacity of the participants in conducting quality lessons and in leading quality SBI/CBI (12 in 2010 and 12 in 2011 participated in the trainings). On their return, the personnel become the resource persons aiding in the institutionalization of INSET activities.

In addition, JICA dispatches Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) and Senior Volunteer (SV) to work together with local people at District Education Offices, Schools (Primary, Junior and Senior), and Colleges of Education.

Going forward, future perspective:

The Nationwide INSET programme needs to be continually reinforced. The acceleration of the setting up of the National Teaching Council, the body set up by law (the Education Act 2008) to be in charge of INSET in Ghana will aid in further strengthening INSET activities. As well as the passing of the PTPDM Policy going a long way to institutionalize Teacher Professional Development in general, and INSET in particular.
JICA, since the year 2000, has been supporting the Government’s initiatives targeted at improving the quality of education. From 2000 to 2005, JICA supported the Project for Improvement of Educational Achievement in Science, Technology and Mathematics in Basic Education (STM project). Also, JICA assisted the Project to Support the Operationalization of the In-Service Training Policy which was implemented from 2005 to 2008 in ten pilot districts across the country. The Pilot led to the development of the School-based and Cluster-based In-Service Training (INSET) models.

JICA assisted in the development of the INSET implementation guidelines, teaching manuals, strengthening of an implementation system and capacity development. Building on the achievements of the project, the Government of Ghana requested JICA to assist in implementing the INSET project from the 10-district pilot project to a 170-district nationwide project.

In an exclusive interview conducted for Madam Evelyn Owusu Oduro, the Programme Coordinator of the National INSET Unit and Mr. Tatsuya Nagumo, the Japanese consultant of INSET project, it was revealed that INSET, a demand-driven project piloted in 10 districts, is becoming a nationwide (170 districts) demand-driven project.

Excerpts of the interview are as follows:

**What roles do you play in the INSET programme?**

Madam Oduro: I am the Programme Coordinator for the National INSET Unit and my roles are diversified as a liaison officer between all the implementing government agencies, ministry and other stakeholders such as the Teacher Education Division (TED), Ghana Education Service (GES), Ministry of Education, JICA and other partners. I am also involved in coordinating training activities for INSET, monitoring development, documenting and reporting feedback to stakeholders.

Mr. Nagumo: I am the Deputy Team Leader of the INSET project in charge of Planning, Management and Coordination. I am responsible for developing strategy and comprehensive schedule and managing human resource, as well as to ensure monitoring and evaluation of the project. It is not the first time for me to work in Ghana, I have been involved in Ghana twice, once as a JICA volunteer in Atebubu, Brong Ahafo Region as a science teacher in SHS between 1996 and 1998, and the other occasion was as a deputy team leader of the INSET Project phase I from 2005 to 2008.

**What are the achievements of the INSET project so far and what is the impact of JICA’s assistance on the project?**

Madam Oduro: The INSET project started as a pilot project in 10 selected districts, as phase 1. Now, it is being replicated and implemented in 170 districts nationwide.

Mr. Nagumo: Our target is that about 50% of all Ghanaian public primary schools implement INSET at their school by 2013. In Ghana, teachers keep good companies and relate to one another freely, but they have not developed a culture to share teaching skills and do independent peer review.

So, the concept of INSET at school level encourages teachers to discuss successful teaching styles and improve their teaching skills.
**PROJECT STORY**

### Background / Introduction

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) subsector has faced a number of challenges over the years. Amongst them, are the need for TVET that meets the demands of the industries, the TVET teachers are to work in, and the insufficient practical skills of graduates from TVET Training Institutions. JICA first supported the subsector with the Study for Development of a Master Plan to Strengthen Technical Education in Ghana. In 2007, the findings of which recommended a TVET educational reform using Competency-Based Training (CBT) Methods and the establishment of the Council for TVET amongst others. JICA further responded to the GoG’s request with the TVETS Project.

### Challenges and Progress

The project faced a challenge on the delay in completing the project. Although the project was supposed to be completed by 2012, it faced several delays. However, the project was eventually completed.

### Going forward

JICA is implementing the follow-up cooperation from January to March 2012 to produce and strengthen more experts who can facilitate the Trainer of Trainers for CBT providers. In addition, JICA is now considering the request from the government of Ghana for a policy advisor for strengthening the TVET sector.

### Technical and Vocational Education and Training Support project

- **Mr. Hiroshi SHIBATA, father of Ms. Chika SHIBATA**

My daughter is in Ghana as a JICA volunteer. Luckily, I could visit her for a week with other volunteers’ families last October.

My daughter is working for the prosthetic training centre in Nsawam. Nsawam is located an hour and a half far from Accra by road. The centre is a rehabilitation centre where people have prosthetic training of artificial legs or arms. My daughter promotes informal education for pupils, and a pupil can learn how to use prosthetic apparatus through playing.

One day, I came to see my daughter at the training centre. At the centre, everyone called her ‘Chika’, ‘Chika’ very friendly. I actually found that how she fitted in the local life naturally. As her father, I am proud of her for putting great efforts into her work.

I also visited other volunteers on other days. Some of them were working in more remote areas than my daughter was. They stayed in very small villages alone. I was really impressed and respected them for keeping themselves strong in these environments. I sincerely hope that all volunteers safely complete their duties.
**Rural Women’s Skills and Development Foundation (RWSDF)**

**Purpose of organization**
RWSDF is a school in Nsawam where girls can acquire hands-on skills for their future. The school does craftworks and has been supported by a volunteer from JICA. Some of its craft works are displayed for sale at JICA office and other places.

**Recommended products**
We make sure our products are of good quality for people to buy. Our main products are Batik making and we use the fabric to produce other thing like dresses, book covers, bags, shirts etc. Please come and try the warm and beautiful hand-made crafts that cannot be expressed by machine.

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