Welcome to the August edition of the ‘Edu’ newsletter; full of the latest information from the Education programme - progress reports from the projects, interesting thoughts, upcoming events, and of course the hot topic: Reviews and critical reflection: avenues for radical proposals? Hope this newsletter finds you well, enjoy the read, Mama☺.

**Hot topic:** Reviews and critical reflection: avenues for radical proposals?

Throughout this year’s National Education Sector Annual Review (NESAR) 2010, many views on the purposes of education were shared. I remember one participant stating the purpose of education as being to learn to do; to be, to learn and to live together. This is in line with my fundamental understanding that the purpose of education is to develop each individual to self actualize, in order for them to contribute to the development of the community, society and the world within which they live. The question is, are we delivering education to meet these purposes? Or do economic considerations sometimes overshadow the social and public good of education?

As education managers, to deliver education for social change would be to manage education in the interest of the learners, the community, society and the world within which they (the learners) live. This would mean going the extra mile to take emancipatory action to overcome imbalances in the education system. Imbalances such as limited opportunity for all citizens (both children and adults) to have access to and benefit from good education, not meeting the learning needs of children in school due to the unavailability of trained teachers in deprived areas, and so on.

So as we end another review and the critical reflection process, do we have any radical proposals for change for the years ahead? Of course radical would mean moving away from the “business as usual” / “this is how it is usually done” mode to doing things differently. I for one would propose that as educators, doing education differently would mean a move away from just the implementation of organisation oriented programmes without considerations to the wider effects to society, rather our work would be, as Kemmis and Smith (2008: 288) propose, ‘the work of enabling [our] students’ praxis in right living inside and outside the classroom..., ways of acting constructively and well ... to others’. In essence, our work would develop a ‘praxis – stance’ Kemmis and Smith (2008: 288) in learners so they also go on to live morally and ethically within, and with their communities and society at large; fulfilling the fundamental purpose of education in the process too. However, much
as these alternative ways of doing things are different from established norms in public administration and non-state organisations, they should not be that new or radical for schools or traditional education institutions to practice. Pockets of examples of best practices exist already. Examples of volunteers, philanthropist, Non Governmental Organizations (NGO), et cetera working ‘to model a way of being and living that is rationally, socially, materially sustainable and thus to bring to the world a way of living that might also inform’ Kemmis and Smith (2008: 294) the life of others to also take the praxis stance. For example the work of CAMFED in supporting girls through school to employment; who in turn become sponsors for other younger girls through school, is quite laudable.

Thus for me, much as I agree that these radical proposals are needed, I would say they are needed more so in the public administration bodies and non-state organisations who together steer education development in country; to enable these bodies to take the praxis stance in their respective practices, in order to continually live and act in the interest of others, not themselves. What are your radical proposals for education? Have your say. P.S. Selected recommendations and highlights of the NESAR 2010 are shared on page 3 of this newsletter.


School Construction project progress report

Official project name: The Project for Improvement of Access to Basic Education in Deprived Areas in the Republic of Ghana. As explained in the May 2010 edition of this newsletter, the project is in the first phase of constructing 16 school facilities and supply of school furniture in the Central Region, having already started excavation works three months earlier. The second phase would then follow on with the construction of 21 schools and supply of school furniture in the Northern Region.

Within the Central region, most of the sites are very remote and far from the main road. And during the ongoing rainy season, works had to be stopped at these sites because the roads were badly damaged by the rains. Nonetheless, the teams are still working hard to catch up with the schedule.

Just to introduce one of the active sites in the Central Region. Adiembra is the site name, and is under the management of Suretracg Contract Services Limited. Works at Adiembra are progressing steadily. The concrete slab for the classrooms has already been cast at the site and block-laying for the wall is in progress. And most probably, the roof works will be completed by the end of September 2010.

Activities at the other sites are also on-going and we are pleased to say that almost all the sites are finishing with the foundation works and are catching up with the schedule. The target is to complete the classroom concrete slab before the first week of September, 2010.

In the next edition of this newsletter, another site being managed by Ziggurat Investment Limited will be introduced.

Some more interesting thought(s) / fact(s)

- School road marking spelled wrongly? Story at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-10936604](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-10936604)
Selected highlights from the National Education Sector Annual Review (NESAR) 2010

Access: education is a right for all Ghanaian children, yet all are not served or served equitably. Education must be provided to these children who may be out of school, disabled, deprived or a girl. Quality: the schools must provide an environment conducive to learning and achievement. This includes infrastructure as well as pedagogy. Develop a professional, well motivated Basic Education teaching cadre. The Teacher Professional Development policy should be adopted and implemented.

Management: the decentralization of education management is dependent on the collaborative efforts of several different Ministries. The system also requires guidance and regulation, and currently there are conflicts in the laws and guiding regulations. (1) A Memorandum of Understanding must be developed and signed by the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP) and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MOLGRD). (2) The National Inspectorate Board, the National Teaching Council and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment will address issues on a National level. These organizations must be operationalized.

TVET: a demand driven and well funded TVET program is essential for the growth of the Ghanaian economy. The MoE is to provide clarity on the roles of COTVET and all other TVET training providers for example Polytechnics and universities. Finance: discrepancies and unpredictability in education financing affecting planning and implementation. (1) Establish a fully costed plan for Public Financial Management for the education sector including budgeting, disbursement, sourcing of funds and reporting. (2) The Financial Management system of the MoE and Ghana Education Service (GES) will be fully professional meeting all international standards. This will be achieved by training, infrastructure upgrades and the implementation of the Ghana Integrated Financial Management System (GIFMIS), as well as tying the budget to the Monitoring and Evaluation plan and the Education Sector Plan. (3) Ensure equitable, regular and adequate resource allocation. [Source: draft 2010 aide memoire]

TVETS project progress report

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Support (TVETS) project is supporting the Government of Ghana to create new and quality TVET system in Ghana through applying the Competency-Based Training (CBT) approach.

Capacity development of COTVET: the harmonization of TVET qualifications and the standardization of curriculum are some of the major keys to deliver and ensure quality TVET. The project has been assisting COTVET and its implementing bodies to put the system in place. The said implementing bodies, such as the Industrial Training Advisory Committee (ITAC), National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Qualification Committee (NTVETQC) and Training Quality Assurance Committee (TQAC) were formally established by the Government of Ghana (GoG) this year. These committees have been keenly working on the finalization of new qualification framework, the standards for training package, awarding procedures, quality assurance system and so on. A ‘Human resource Development and Training Plan for COTVET’ has also been prepared by the project, and professional development is ongoing for COTVET Secretariat staff, Standing Committees, and Board members to enhance their capacity to accomplish their responsibilities in terms of project management, governance, supervision and public relation or sensitization.

TVET delivery operationalisation: the three pilot institutions have been piloting the training programmes for 73 trainees in total (36 from NVTI, 18 from ATTC and 19 from A-Poly) with new training packages (with curricula and its specified units and learning materials) by the CBT methodology. The said trainees are currently undergoing the practical training at 18 companies in and out of Accra, under the Workplace experience learning (conventionally Industrial attachment) module, based on an agreement between COTVET and the companies. The said learning includes the mechanism of new assessment of training achievement. Monitoring of this activity is ongoing at present. More information about the project can be found at: www.jica.go.jp/project/english/ghana/0604633/index.html
**JOCV activity: Ms. Kitamura strengthens industry linkages (Sunyani Polytechnic/JICA/Golden Tulip collaboration)**

Strengthening linkages between educational theory and industry practice remains a core component of training employable graduates. So when Ms. Yuki Kitamura (a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) at Sunyani Polytechnic) proposed a plan for personnel from top hotels to train her co-lecturers on the management of a hotel, so that the lecturers in turn could train students on up to date industry skills, the proposal was welcomed.

So between 5\(^{th}\) and 7\(^{th}\) July 2010, the Golden Tulip Kumasi played host to 15 lecturers from the hotel catering and institutional management department of the Sunyani Polytechnic. The goals of the training was to (1) learn the latest situation of the hotel industry, (2) observe a real hotel’s environment, and (3) make good relationship with Golden Tulip Kumasi with the idea of promoting the possibility of student internship. During the training, Golden Tulip Kumasi staff took the lecturers around the hotel facilities; from the front desk to the kitchen, different bedrooms, and laundry room, as well as housekeeping staff demonstrating how to make beds.

The lecturers were surprised at the check list of items that needed to be undertaken at each service point. Even more surprising, it was the first time for most of the lecturers to see the various equipments in use at the hotel: big washing and drying machines, iron and steam machines, and so on. So the Golden Tulip Kumasi staff took the time to explain the various uses of the machines. The lecturers were also interested in how the hotel managed cost and performance, their techniques to make customers satisfied, dealing with rare foods, and so on. A hotel manager also explained how he used his day-off effectively by making visits to restaurants and hotels to find new services and ideas to introduce to the hotel.

Overall, the lecturers were impressed with Golden Tulip Kumasi facilities, and in looking ahead, discussed how to incorporate the innovative ideas from the training into their lectures. Including engaging students in role play so as to learn practically, the new Golden Tulip standard of making a bed (not found in their books), and encouraging students to go on industrial attachment. Ms Kitamura deemed the training successful, and has recommended amongst other things that the Polytechnic partly sponsor (at least transportation) lecturers to supervise students during their attachment; to get the best for students.

**Nationwide INSET programme progress report**

The Teacher Education Division (TED) has been introducing the structured School Based / Cluster Based In-Service Training (INSET) model nationwide with support from JICA since 2009, amidst budgetary challenges both at central and district levels. As of July 2010, only 413 District INSET Committee (DIC) members and 521 District Teacher Support Team (DTST) members were trained in 69 districts. With the initiative of these DIC and DTST members, an orientation for Head teachers (HT) / Circuit Supervisor (CS) and training for Curriculum Leader (CL) were also conducted in 33 districts and 19 districts respectively to date. This achievement allows at least schools in the 19 districts to start School-based INSET (SBI) and Cluster-based INSET (CBI) on a regular basis. The TED and JICA Project Team continues to support the other districts to complete the training, as well as start to induct 25 new districts into the Nationwide INSET Programme from September 2010.
The TED has also made progress in developing the policy backbone (draft Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM) policy) for the Nationwide INSET Programme. In addition, the incorporation of INSET-related practices into existing handbooks and forms began with the revision of the Head teachers’ Handbook. The establishment of such supporting environment in policy and the education system will be the driving force for active and spontaneous commitment into INSET activities at the district and school levels. The Nationwide INSET Programme’s annual progress report for 2009 was also developed by the National INSET Unit (NIU) and distributed to the National INSET Committee (NIC) members.

News / what’s happening in the Education programme of JICA Ghana

- **Improvement of Teaching Science and Mathematics Education in Ghana:** Training and Dialogue Programs (TDPS) are a core component of developing capacity, the underlying concept in JICA’s operations. The Education sector of Ghana has been in receipt of numerous TDPS, and August 6th 2010 was no different as 12 nominated participants got into the final stages of preparation before departure to Japan. These primary school teachers, circuit supervisors and instructors from colleges of education in Tamale Metro, Adansi North and Akuapem North districts; in charge of assuring quality of science and mathematics education for school children had been nominated by the Ghana Education Service for the maiden country focused training program titled Improvement of Teaching Science and Mathematics Education in Ghana. The program which is being organized by JICA Chugoku International Center and the Graduate School of Education, Okayama University aims to enhance the capacity of the participants in conducting quality lessons in the field of science and mathematics through acquiring the techniques for preparation of effective lesson plan and teaching material. The participant’s expectations before departure included seeking to learn practical skills to improve their teaching method, how to use locally available materials to learn, the Japanese teaching way, as well as aiming to share and disseminate knowledge and experiences with colleagues once they return from Japan. The participants were nominated as groups from districts which had Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) and INSET project present in order to create synergy effect and have more reach and impact. JICA wishes them well and looks forward to working further with them on return to Ghana.

- **Expert for Decentralisation Education Management:** Finally, an expert has been identified for the proposed Advisor to build the capacity of the Ghana Education Service for decentralisation education management. The tentative commencement date is late Sept 2010, for an expected 2 years dispatch period.

Useful website(s)


- Don’t forget we are online, old/new copies of this newsletter are available via the JICA Ghana English website: [www.jica.go.jp/ghana/english/office/others/newsletter.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/ghana/english/office/others/newsletter.html)

Have your say: and finally, thank you for your reports, views and comments which make up this newsletter. Keep them coming including your feedback on the *hot topic* in this issue, the address to use is: *gn_osu_rep@jica.go.jp* Thank you.