Welcome to the November 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: the best volunteer teacher of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) 2010. Hope this newsletter finds you well; enjoy the read, Mama Owusu☺.

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Foreign volunteer teachers play a very important role in Ghana’s education. Especially during the days when Ghanaian teachers were leaving the country for greener pastures. The Government of Ghana in 2000 took the initiative to recognize and appreciate the valuable services the volunteers were rendering to the nation. Since then, foreign volunteers alongside their Ghanaian counterparts have been awarded at the National Best Teacher awards ceremony. For this year, Mr. Daisuke Iwasa assigned to the Akatsi College of Education (CoE) as a science teacher has been adjudged the best volunteer teacher of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) 2010. The following are the strong points of Mr. Iwasa taken into consideration during the selection process, and which ultimately earned him the award: (1) he worked hard to improve the academic performance of his students, facilitated their understanding of his lessons, and enabled students to develop a scientific attitude to problem solving. (2) Through hard work and personal initiative, he organized a science and mathematics workshop for his students, other JICA volunteers and colleague teachers. (3) Due to his excellent skills in scientific practical teaching, he is often invited by
other schools to have demonstration lessons, which always impress not only students but also teachers. (4) He also compiled handouts made up of a great number of activities which are useful to his colleagues and students in other schools. (5) And lastly, he developed excellent human relations with both students and colleagues. On this occasion, JICA Ghana extends the warmest congratulations to Mr. Iwasa and all JOCV teachers working in Ghana. Though the staffing situation in schools have improved over the years, foreign volunteers continue to be an integral and effective part of the teaching force of Ghana, as they come with amongst others, skills and the ability to make science lessons practical and relevant using locally available materials. In addition, they share these skills with their Ghanaian counterparts. JICA Ghana takes this opportunity to express appreciation to the heads and staffs of institutions that continue to accept and work with volunteers; thank you for your cooperation.

The Advisor for Decentralisation Education Management (DEM) arrives
Mr. Daisuke Kanazawa has assumed his duty as an advisor to the Ghana Education Service (GES) on decentralised education management from the beginning of October 2010. His direct counterpart is Mr. Stephen Adu, Director of Basic Education Division (BED) of GES. His assignment period is for two years. Mr. Adu has kindly assigned two GES staff for the advisor to form an advisory team in the BED.

After completing the necessary processes to live in Ghana, Mr. Kanazawa and his team has started the formulation of their work plan by reviewing documents and interviewing stakeholders including school head teachers and directors of district education offices.

Currently several initiatives are ongoing in the Ministry of Education (MoE) to promote decentralization in the education sector. While other projects are focusing on restructuring the management framework of the MoE and strengthening general capacities of school head teachers, the advisory team in the BED is going to focus particularly on the management capacity at all levels for planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (PBME) functions (not to be confused with the PBME division of the MoE). The advisory team will review existing regulations and guidelines on PBME functions of the GES; from the school to headquarters level. As well as review skills of those staff that are involved in PBME functions, available management resources such as management information and other tools, and give recommendations on how to improve the capacity on PBME functions. For the GES to be fully ready to assume new roles and responsibilities when the decentralisation of education structures happens.

Mr. Kanazawa’s last role was in Cambodia where he worked for four years as an education planning advisor to the Department of Planning of the Ministry of Education. He advised the department on various issues such as the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of their Education Strategic Plan and other plans, streamlining the aid management process and improving use of the Education Management Information System. It is expected that his experience and lessons learned could be used to better contribute to the implementation of the initiatives of the GES on decentralisation of the education management system.

Some more interesting thought(s) / fact(s)
Does education in Ghana really pay off? Full report at http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/education/economics-and-education&id=36678&type=Document 'The study examines returns to schooling in Ghana over a seven-year period... Overall the study finds that improvement in school attendance over the seven year
period has been reflected particularly in terms of a more-educated pool of workers. [Also],... the results show that earnings rise with higher levels of schooling. Irrespective of gender and year of analysis, the magnitude of impact rises with higher level of schooling and the statistical significance also becomes stronger’ [Source: www.eldis.org ].

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 August 2010 edition of this newsletter, the project is in the first phase of constructing 16 school facilities, as well as the supply of school furniture in the Assin South and Assin North districts of the Central region.

Although progress is a bit behind schedule, at least three schools (maybe more) can be completed by the end of December 2010 as the images on the left would indicate. The supervising consultants are working very hard to ensure that contractors complete works at all the sites and hand over to the Ministry of Education as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, preparations are also underway to start the second phase of the project, which would initially involve the construction of 16 school facilities, teachers’ accommodation and supply of furniture to four districts in the Northern region of Ghana. The tender opening for phase 2 was held on 1st Nov, at which about 80 tenderers participated. The results are still under evaluation and works are supposed to commence in December 2010, after the awarding of the contract to the successful tenderers.

TVETS project progress report

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Support (TVETS) project outline: JICA has been supporting the Government of Ghana in reforming the TVET subsector through the Competency-Based Training (CBT) approach. The CBT approach aims to realize an industry demand driven TVET. The project has been developing institutional and organizational capacities at Council for TVET (COTVET), and been piloting CBT in three trades at three institutions: electronics at the National Vocational Training Institute – Pilot Training Centre (NVTI-PTC), welding at the Accra Technical Training Centre (ATTC), and plant engineering at the Accra Polytechnic (Accra-Poly).

Capacity Development of COTVET: the harmonization of TVET qualifications and standardisation of curriculum are keys to deliver and ensure quality TVET delivery. Progress has been made on this front especially for the past ten months through the Industrial Training Advisory Committee (ITAC), the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Qualification Committee (NTVETQC), and the Training Quality Assurance Committee (TQAC). These committees between them have identified the harmonized CBT qualifications and credit values, as well as producing essential
statutory documents which stipulate and direct procedures under the said committees for awarding, accrediting, certifying and quality assurance mechanism.

Professional development is also ongoing for the secretariat, standing committees and the board of COTVET so as to enhance their capabilities to accomplish their functions for policy making, linkage to industries, project management, governance, public relations and so on. Also, the first TVET forum was jointly held alongside the launching of the Skills Development Fund (SDF) in September 2010. The forum enhanced the recognition of COTVET and the TVET reforms among diversified public and private stakeholders.

**TVET delivery operationalisation:** the three pilot institutions (NVTI-PTC, ATTC, and Accra-Poly) have been piloting CBT for 69 trainees in total (33 from NVTI, 18 from ATTC and 18 from A-Poly) with the developed training package (which includes the curricula, specified contents’ units, learning materials, lecture plan, assessment instrument, and marking guideline). Among the said trainees, 66 have accomplished CBT workplace experience within 19 companies in and out of Accra. The trainees at ATTC and NVTI will be certified after completing their training in December, whilst trainees at Accra-Poly still have two years (2nd and 3rd years) to go before graduation.

Improving the CBT facilitators (teachers) skill is another overarching component of the TVETS project. As such, a Training of Facilitators (TOT) has been done in various workshops for pilot institutions since 2008, as well as a two-week TOT for non-pilot institutions organized in collaboration with the Department of Education, Culture, Science and Technology of the ECOWAS Commission in November 2010 at the Tema Technical Institute. The capacity building was for TVET teachers, education and training ministry officials, policy makers, providers and curriculum development experts across the country. The training also provided another chance to verify the CBT model created by the TVETS project and a corresponding contribution to other ECOWAS member states.

**The TVETS project terminal evaluation from 18th Nov – 10th Dec 2010:** as the TVETS project is in its terminal stage, JICA and COTVET are in the process of preparing to undertake a joint terminal evaluation of the TVETS project from 18th November to 10th December 2010. The objectives of the evaluation are to review and evaluate inputs, activities and outputs of the project, assess the validity of the project based on the evaluation results, and to make an agreement of measures to be taken after the closing of the project.

The results of the evaluation would be available from 13th Dec 2011. More information about the project can be found at: [www.jica.go.jp/project/english/ghana/0604633/index.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/project/english/ghana/0604633/index.html)

**Nationwide INSET programme progress report**

The In-Service Training (INSET) model for public primary teachers in science and mathematics, which was developed by the Teacher Education Division (TED) of the Ghana Education Service (GES), with the cooperation of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 2008, is now being introduced nationwide as a principal method of continuous teacher professional development. The nationwide expansion is being undertaken in three phases.

The TED with support from JICA introduced the INSET model to 57 first batch districts in 2009, and in the 2010, about 40 second batch districts are now on, making a total of 97 districts. Although budgetary challenges had caused delays to a series of activities at the district level, schools in the first batch districts which completed training for Head Teachers (HT) and Curriculum Leaders (CL) have started their school level INSET activities with their own initiatives. Also, now that the majority of the training budget is directed to the District Education Office (DEOs), the TED is putting more emphasis on raising awareness of investing in INSET related activities among District Directors and personnel of Education offices.

As part of activities of the year 2010 of the Nationwide INSET Programme, the TED also successfully conducted and completed the second year’s Sampling Survey from the 1st to 4th November 2010. For the survey, 24 National Trainers
who received training were deployed in 48 selected schools from 12 districts. The survey is designed to identify impacts and challenges of SBI/CBI; by following up on how and in what degree the School Based INSET and Cluster Based INSET (SBI/CBI) brings changes in teaching and learning, as well as improve collegiality within the school atmosphere through the years. Its analytical focus is placed on management of SBI/CBI by HTs and CLs, teachers’ teaching skills, teachers’ satisfaction with SBI/CBI, and pupils’ satisfaction with teachers’ lessons. The Sampling Survey Report for the second year will be available in February 2011.

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

- **District level trainings currently underway for the INSET project as follows**: 22\(^{nd}\) – 26\(^{th}\) Nov: the newly selected 72 National Trainers (NT) training at Akrokerri College of Education (Ashanti region). 29\(^{th}\) Nov – 3\(^{rd}\) Dec: simultaneous District Teacher Support Team (DTST) training at Sunyani (Brong Ahafo region) and Ho (Volta region). As well as the week of 6\(^{th}\) – 12\(^{th}\) Dec in Takoradi (Western region) and Koforidua (Eastern region).

- **Improvement of Teaching Science and Mathematics Education in Ghana**: after a successful 6 weeks intensive training in Japan, the 12 participants (now ex-training participants) has returned to Ghana. Whilst in Japan, the participants were featured in national newspapers and broadcast on a 10 minute television program which captured the whole training program. As reported in the August 2010 edition of the Edu newsletter, the training program which was organized by the JICA Chugoku International Center and the Graduate School of Education, Okayama University aimed 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.

On the whole, reports from the training centre in Japan indicate that the participants did their best, although there were some points to be improved. On their return to Ghana, a formal reporting session was held in the JICA Ghana office for debriefing, at which the ex-training participants reported finding the training useful (although intensive) in helping them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for learner-centered lessons. The participants also indicated they intended, through their agreed action plans, to introduce some of the methods for learner-centered lesson in their schools, complete the teacher handbook as one of the outputs of the training program, and undertake dissemination to share with colleagues findings from the training program. As the ex-training participants were nominated as groups from districts which had Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCSV) and the INSET project present, the continuous support and involvement of these partners through follow up activities would contribute to create synergy effect, as well as extend the reach and impact of the training.

**Useful website(s)**

- Checkout the JICA Ghana website for information on JICAs activities in Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia: [www.jica.go.jp/ghana/english/index.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/ghana/english/index.html)
- 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_oso_rep@jica.go.jp  Thank you.