



**COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION FUND GHANA
SECOND NATIONAL STRATEGY
(2005 – 2007)**

April 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGES
ACRONYMS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
INTRODUCTION	7
CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS	9
NATIONAL LEVEL CEF PROCESS	15
CEF GHANA STRATEGY	15
LINKAGES	21
GENDER ISSUES	22
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	22
RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS	28

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAIG	ActionAid International Ghana
AESOP	Annual Education Sector Operational Plan
ANCEFA	African Network Campaign on Education For All
APEM	Association for People's Empowerment
ARE	Action For Rural Education
CBA	Centre for Budget Advocacy
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CEF	Commonwealth Education Fund
CEFCOSUS	Centre for Community Support Services
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
CS	Civil Society
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CRT	Criterion Reference Test
DEFATs	District Education for All Teams
DFID	Department for International Development
EFA	Education For All
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
ESAR	Education Sector Annual Review
ESTAC	Education Sector Technical Advisory Committee
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FBOs	Faith Based Organisations
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratios
GETFUND	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GES	Ghana Education Service
GoG	Government of Ghana
GMR	Global Mid-Term Review
GNECC	Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition
GPRS	Ghana poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
JSS	Junior Secondary School
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NER	Net Enrolment Ratios
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NGND	Northern Ghana Network for Development
NNED	Northern Network for Education Development
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
POSDEV	Pan African Organisation for Sustainable Development
PRONET	Professional Network

RAINS	Regional Advisory and Information Network Systems
RCC	Regional Coordinating Committees
RWS	Real World Strategies
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
SFL	School for Life
SMC	School management Committee
SSS	Senior Secondary School
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPC	Universal primary Completion
VSO	Volunteer Service Overseas

CEF GHANA STRATEGIC PLAN 2005 – MARCH 2007

Executive Summary

The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) Ghana strategy (2005 – March 2007) is focused on adding impetus to civil society's (CS) contribution to the realisation of the Education For All (EFA) goals and the education goals of the Government of Ghana (GoG). The education sector remains very important and continues to be allocated significant proportion of government recurrent budget, receiving as much as 40% of the budget at various times. The sector has also received large injections of donor funding in the last fifteen years. Yet, a significant proportion of school aged children are out of school and may not realise their right to enroll and complete good quality basic education in Ghana.

Underpinning this situation are structural factors that continue to pose the following challenges to the education sector:

- Ensuring equitable access to education by all children including girls, disables, children in conflict areas and hard-to-reach communities, etc
- Improving quality of teaching and learning
- Enhancing participation and efficiency in the management of education.
- Increased funding for education.

The CEF will execute a programme that empowers CS and communities to help government address the fundamental causes of the education situation, and claim their rights and entitlements to quality basic education, through the attainment of the following strategic objectives in the next two years:

- Strengthen civil society participation in the design and implementation of national and local education plans and frameworks.
- Build the capacity of local communities to monitor government pending on education, both at the national and local level.
- Support innovative initiatives for civil society to ensure that all children especially the excluded (girls, children in hard-to-reach areas and the most disadvantaged) have access to good quality education.

The CEF will continue to work with the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC), Northern Network for Education development (NNED) and potential new partners to achieve the objectives. And through support for enhanced CS coalition/alliance building (especially of grassroots groups as a process towards strengthening national coalitions), networking, communication, institutional and skills development, gender mainstreaming, the CEF will pursue the following key activities:

- Monitor developments in education and participate in education governance processes, debates and forums (at the local and national levels) including the Education Sector Annual Review (ESAR), Annual Education Sector Operational plans (AESOP), school mapping.

- Carry out budget training, monitoring and advocacy, ensuring that outcomes at the local effectively inform national level budget work, in ways that influence national policy.
- Engage with education policy and practice through research, documentation and advocacy on key education issues and innovative approaches that have impact on the education of poor and excluded children. These will include teacher recruitment and deployment, quality of education, achievement of the gender parity goal, the rights of the disabled to education etc.

The CEF will, in the next two years, build a strong national CS coalition and local level alliances, with the capacity to sustainably contribute to education policy formulation and implementation, in ways that addresses the education needs of all children, especially the poor and excluded. In achieving this, the CEF and partners will contribute to address current policies and practices that will ensure equity in access, education quality, and efficient management of schools and the education sector as a whole.

1.0 Introduction

1.1. Overview of Progress

Operations of Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) Ghana, has since March 2003, been guided by its first country strategy 2003 – 2005. The goal of the first strategy was to strengthen CS to support Government of Ghana (GoG) ensure that: all children in Ghana enroll and complete basic education by 2015; and that gender parity is achieved in school completion by 2005. Three broad objectives were set in the strategy: to strengthen CS participation in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national and local education plans; to enable communities to monitor education spending at the national and local levels; and to support innovative approaches to educating the most marginalised children (especially girls and children in remote rural areas) in a way that influences a wider policy and practice. CEF support was targeted at CS capacity building, networking, research, documentation, communication, and direct engagements with education policy and practice.

To deliver these objectives, CEF supported the activities of five major education-focused CS partners. The work of CEF Ghana and its partners since the inception of the fund in Ghana was evaluated as part of the Global Mid-Term Review of CEF, with data collection, analysis and report writing taking place from December 2004 to January 2005. The review found that, over the period, CS partners demonstrated growing commitment and modest capacity to provide voice to the voiceless, advocating and securing the rights and entitlements of poor and underserved segments of the Ghanaian society to quality basic education. With this commitment and capacity, CS gained increasing visibility, representation and effectiveness in government education policy circles and debates, and planning processes at the community, district and national levels. CS had also effectively engaged customary rites and practices that have excluded children of some socio-ethnic groups and localities from basic education, through engagement with the structures of customary authority: These led to some significant results:

- Reactivated community and district level education structures (including the school management committees) through local level advocacy initiatives.
- Helped citizens and communities to solve educational problems through demand for better quality education services.
- Increased accountability and transparency in education/school management through improved information flow between communities and education authorities;
- Increased responsiveness of government and donors to the basic education needs of local communities through the increased capacity of citizens to lobby for allocation of resources;
- Improved teaching and learning in the classrooms.
- Increased enrolment and improved performance of pupils in some deprived areas.

The funding to support the implementation of the strategy came solely from CEF Ghana's allocation of GBP 600,000 out of the initial British Government Grant of GBP 10,000,000 for CEF globally.

1.2 Major Changes in First Strategy

The implementation of the first strategy witnessed changes. The few changes made were informed by practical experiences on the ground and/or feedback from the CEF UK management committee. These changes were: the CEF management committee was reconstituted but maintained its character of additional membership from organisations (DFID, UNESCO and MOES) other than the CEF managing organisations – ActionAid Ghana, Oxfam and Save the Children; the CEF regional co-ordinating committees (RCCs), which were formed to coordinate CEF supported activities were abolished, because they appeared as parallel coalitions to the existing education coalitions; the strategy to streamline the operations of the two CS education coalitions (GNECC and NNED) by encouraging joint planning and implementation of common programme activities, gave way to support for individual coalition activities.

Another significant development during the strategy period was that CEF Ghana, with the support of CEF UK secured corporate partnership grant of GBP 30,000 from CADBURYS Sweppes, in October 2004. A matching fund from the British treasury would yield a total of about GBP 60,000 to support CS education advocacy and campaigns in Ghana. The additional funds will solely be devoted to support CS work in cocoa growing areas of Ghana.

1.3 Response to Questions Raised by the Management Committee on First Strategy

The management committee raised issues about: Relationships between Regional Coordinating Committees (RCCs) and GNECC; roles of GNECC and NNED; and the setting of clear change indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the fund in Ghana.

Changes made during implementation of the strategy as shown in 1.2 above addressed the first two concerns. The need to equip partners with the requisite knowledge and skills in advocacy planning, monitoring and evaluation, was established and carried out as a first important step towards developing a monitoring and evaluation plan, and setting of clear change indicators. Subsequently, it was agreed that partners would involve all stakeholders including parents, teachers, community members, children and members of implementing partner organisations, to agree on clear performance and outcome indicators, as part of proposals to the CEF. As a follow up, implementing partner organisations were required to develop clear change indicators and participatory M&E plans, spelling out how they monitor both the implementation and effects of their programme activities. The indicators as well as the plans for monitoring will be consolidated into the national CEF Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

1.4 Learning from the Country Level Mid-Term Review

The mid-term review of CEF Ghana revealed some important lessons:

- The strengthening of networks and umbrella organisations particularly those, which are not strongly directed by a constitutional mandate in their operations, is better achieved with the CEF Secretariat supporting the process from an arms length.
- Strong and durable networks/coalitions are formed from the grassroots upwards and are supported by a mandate, which directs their operations, structures and process of decision-making.
- Focusing support on the strengthening CS alliance and activism at the local level, to demand accountability and fulfill the rights and entitlements of children to education is more effective, particularly in a relatively good policy regime. The work of such local level alliances (such as the DEFATs) will be very effective if they are well organized, focused on clear objectives and well resourced to embark on community visits and engage local level stakeholders.
- The use of lead agencies at the regional level and focal organisations at the district level to facilitate activities of local level alliances helps infant groups to cohere, sustain and be effective.
- A proactive approach to identifying advocacy issues and setting the agenda for engagement with government and other stakeholders, gives coalitions (especially those with relatively less experience and competence in advocacy) a bigger leverage to influence policy and practice changes.
- The use of simple participatory methods (like the district community score card) promotes community interests in budget tracking and is effective in helping communities hold district authorities accountable and realise their rights to quality educational services.
- Budget tracking and analysis is significantly enhanced if there exist freedom of access to public information, especially on budgets and expenditures.
- Focussing advocacy work at socio-cultural contexts, especially the traditional ones, will address endemic issues of exclusion, that prevent many children (particularly girls) from accessing and completing basic education.
- Achievements made by CEF interventions in most cases were complemented by the initiatives of other NGOs and other development partners, especially in Northern Ghana. A strong collaboration between these agencies provides a firm bases for optimizing outcomes of interventions and sustaining gains made.

2.0 Contextual Analysis:

Successive Governments of Ghana have placed faith in education as a major instrument for rapid social and economic development. In line with this, the sector has over the years been allocated a large proportion of government recurrent expenditure. At various times, the education sector has been allocated as much as 40% of government recurrent expenditure. Beginning with the *Accelerated Development Plan for Education of 1951*, access and participation increased at all levels of education

until the economic decline of the 1970s. Consequently, the educational reforms of 1987 were initiated to revamp the educational sector following the economic recovery programme started in 1983. In addition, the *Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education* (FCUBE) was launched in 1996 to address access, participation, quality and equity at the basic education level, which covers 6 years of Primary and 3 years of Junior Secondary School education. As a result of the 1987 reforms and the introduction of the FCUBE, access and participation increased in absolute numbers. Physical access to primary schooling for instance, had increased as the number of primary schools increased from 9,569 in 1997/98 to 13,965 in 2000/2001.

Nonetheless, the attainment of Education for All (EFA) continues to be a major challenge for educational stakeholders within Ghana. The indicators of quality, access, and accountability within the education sector have had modest and slow gains despite the large injection of donor funding over the last 15 years (MOEYS, 2004). Between 1997 to 2002, the primary Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) increased to 79.5%, which accounted for a 3.5% increase over the period; female GER grew at a faster rate of 5.3% over the same period. Unfortunately, the Millennium Development Goal of achieving gender parity by 2005 will not be achieved in Ghana¹ (MOEYS, 2004)².

Ghana's primary education completion rate as of 2002 was 65.9% suggesting that a large proportion of children never complete primary education³. Reaching the target of universal primary completion (UPC) by 2015 will therefore require a substantial effort to ensure that 34.1% of children who drop out of school are retained and complete the full six years of primary schooling. Achieving Universal Primary Completion (UPC) in Ghana will also require a much greater focus on Net Enrolment Rates (NER) in educational planning and targeting⁴. The NER data for 2002/2003 suggests that between 40-55% of children across the three northern regions of Ghana remain out of school. The largest proportion of these children are girls living in the north whom due to poverty, parental neglect and socio-cultural practices fail to enter and stay in the formal education system (Casely-Hayford, 2004)⁵. Other factors that continue to exclude children from school are Inadequate and poor infrastructure, inadequate number of teachers and logistics supply, low community involvement in education management, inefficiency in education management, etc.

According to Ghana's yearly National Criteria Reference Test (CRT), less than 10% of Ghanaian children are able to read and write after completing six years of primary schooling. These low levels of achievements are due to a number of factors, including low teacher morale, high rates of teacher absenteeism and indiscipline, and

¹ Female GER increased from 70.5% in 1994 to 75.8% in 2002.

² Based on Proposal for Inclusion into Education for All Fast Track Initiative.

³ The Primary completion rate is calculated as non-repeaters in P6 as a proportion of the population aged 11.

⁴ The net enrolment rate is calculated as the correct age enrolments as a proportion of the population aged 6-11 years; the number of out of school children in Ghana is closer to 1,300,000 based on current NER data.

⁵ The latest Ghana Statistical Service data suggests that the national NER is 69.9% which varies widely between regions;

inadequate number of teachers in rural areas in particular, owing to the refusal of teachers to accept postings to these areas.

Closing the primary gross enrolment, completion and gender gap particularly among poor children and girls will therefore depend largely on improving educational quality particularly at primary level. It will also involve monitoring equitable resource distribution and ensuring that there are no reasons for poor parents to restrict their children from educational access, which includes the complete removal of all school fees and payments, and making educational provision more flexible.

2.1 Current National Position in Relation to EFA / CEF goals

The GoG has demonstrated commitment to achieve the EFA/CEF goals. In its development blue print - *Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2003 – 2005*, the GOG identified a number of factors as “disturbing facts” about the poverty situation in Ghana. Key among these are that: about a quarter of children in Ghana do not enroll at all in primary schools and this, according to the 2004 Education Sector Performance report translates into over 500,000 children; fewer girls are retained in school; and that the number of street children increases daily, with poverty in rural areas being a major reason for these disturbing facts. The GoG has therefore committed itself to pro-poor public spending in ways that will enhance the opportunity for all children to enroll and complete school, especially children from rural and poor communities. At the basic education level, government is committed to, among other things, build and repair schools, provide textbooks and other teaching and learning materials, make it attractive for teachers to accept postings to rural areas and provide facilities that cater for the schooling of physically disabled children.

The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2003 - 2015 was specifically developed to provide strategic framework for sector wide education development in Ghana. Accordingly, the ESP incorporates policies, targets and indicators for Universal Primary Education (UPE), Gender Parity and the rest of the EFA goals. It provides clear linkages between its focal areas and the policy goals of the other sectoral and national development plans and instruments. These include the Policy Goals of the Education Sector, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), the priorities of the GPRS and the EFA goals. The ESP is also designed to target some of the most vulnerable groups including children with special needs, children living in extreme poverty⁶, out of school children and girls. It suggests that children living in hard to reach areas be supported through more innovative programmes including those run by civil society organisations such as Action Aid’s Shepherd School and School for Life’s child literacy programme⁷.

⁶ The Ghana Living Standards Survey as living in “extreme poverty” defines families earning less than 700,000 cedis per year.

⁷ A more flexible more accelerated educational programmes for children between 8 and 15 years of age run during non-farming periods.

In 2004 the government issued a white paper on the report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana. The white paper reaffirmed government's resolve to address problems plaguing the education sector as whole. At the basic level, government will strictly adhere to the policy of FCUBE as provided for in the constitution. This means not just paying teachers, but making sure that all the essential requirements for quality teaching for eleven years of schooling, i.e. from age 4 to 15 are adequately provided. To expand access and improve quality, government has decided to introduce a new universal and continuous basic educational programme from age 4 to 15, and thereafter in a re-defined four-year Senior High School system to replace the present **Primary - J.S.S. – S.S.S.** structure. The new structure of basic education will therefore create a universal and compulsory basic education system comprising:

- 2 years of kindergarten (which is a new addition to the basic education system).
- 6 years of primary school
- First 3 years of High school (i.e. Junior High school).

The white paper suggests that the new arrangement will far exceed the standards required under the UN Millennium Development Goals and other international conventions.

Furthermore, as part of measures to address problems facing basic education in poor communities, government instituted capitation grants for basic schools in 40 deprived districts in Ghana, starting from the 2004/5 academic. In the government's 2005 budget statement, the capitation grant scheme has been extended to cover the rest of basic schools in the country, putting into effect the government's obligation to fully implement the FCUBE in 2005, as a constitutional requirement.

The challenge now is for civil society and other actors to hold government accountable for its promises and ensure that quality education reaches all Ghanaian children. In order for the poor to increasingly get a fair share of the national educational budget, civil society and government will need to increase the level of transparency in educational resource targeting and provision; this includes joint discussions on developing deprivation criteria designed to target the poor and most needy groups with educational investment (e.g. GETFUND). More work is also needed to hold district education stakeholders accountable and to involve civil society in transparent processes of resource mobilisation, performance review and quality control; this would involve districts adopting similar approaches to setting criteria, identifying needy areas through school mapping and targeting educational resource allocations in their district educational plans. Most importantly it will involve civil society finding innovative ways to hold teachers and other educational providers accountable for the quality of their services as reflected in the outcomes of child literacy and educational performance in a given area.

Recent assessment of donor assistance to Ghana suggests that much more support is needed to ensure that Government partners deliver and civil society acts as a monitor to ensure that vulnerable groups are reached under the ESP; civil society has been

leading the way in working on innovative approaches to educational delivery, especially to excluded children⁸. In this direction, more work is also needed to ensure that all excluded children and girls in particular remain the primary focus of government education schemes in order to reduce the intergenerational poverty trends and support a critical mass of children and girls attain higher levels of education⁹.

2.2 The State of Collaboration in Civil Society on Education

Civil society has played a consistently growing role in the provision of educational services in Ghana. Civil society's role in education is evidenced by the high numbers of NGOs, CBOs and FBO's providing various educational services. According to a more recent NGO survey by the Ghana Education Service, there are over 200 CSOs working in the education sector in all regions, with some of the regions having between 10 to 20 organisations. Approximately 10 of these organisations are working across the country on an interregional basis within the education sector. Collectively, the CSOs in Ghana have over the years gained hands on experience and expertise in supporting children realize their right to quality basic education. Indeed CSOs have gained recognition for innovations that reach children in hard to reach areas.

Recent developments in CS contributions to education show a slow but significant shift from direct service delivery to advocacy. Resulting from this shift is a growing civil society movement, mobilised mainly around the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) and the Northern Network for Education Development (NNED), to campaign for the realisation of the rights of the Ghanaian child to Education. These coalitions are providing voice for the voiceless. They have begun appreciating and identifying the inequities within the system and are advocating to secure equitable educational services for the poor and excluded. There are yet many LNGOs, INGOs, FBOs, (like Plan International, VSO, CRS) who do not belong to the existing education coalitions but have a great deal of potential to collaborate with and strengthen the coalitions to engage with education policies and plans in favour of the poor.

Civil society's participation in education in recent government education planning programmes provide an increasing space for educational critique of Government policy and ensuring accountability by Government. Interactions with some key Government stakeholders at the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) suggests that MOEYS is ready and willing to work with civil society in order to reach the goals identified the ESP. In this regard the MOES has reserved slots for CS representation on the Education Sector Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC) and on the various education thematic groups of: equitable access; quality of education; Science,

⁸ There is need for more GES partnerships with the civil society sector, which is currently leading educational innovation within the most deprived areas of the country.

⁹ The most pressing challenge for girls' education in Ghana remains issues of retention and transition from primary to junior secondary and senior secondary levels of education. Gender disparities are much wider at the upper levels of education where girls must attain in order to ensure that poverty is prevented for the next generation of children.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET); and education management. Government has also instituted the Education Sector Annual Review (ESAR) processes at the national level, with the extensive participation of CS and other stakeholders in the maiden meeting. There are plans to replicate the ESAR processes at the district level. The ESAR processes offer space for CS to make inputs into possible reviews of the education sector policy goals and the Annual Education Sector Operational Plan (AESOP).

The challenge now is for CS to make the best use of the space available to campaign for access to quality education for all children. This can be realised through an increased mobilisation and capacity strengthening for CS. In spite of the modest gains made in skills transfer and the building of a strong CS platform to campaign for education, there still remains some challenges: Coordination and accountability between CSOs themselves is weak, thus calling for improved governance among CSOs working under the coalition. There also exists a large group of CSOs who present a great potential to enlarge the support base of the CS in education, but operate individually. Capacity to engage in good policy analysis, research and policy advocacy also remains relatively weak. There is still need for many members of CS to be informed about government education policy, plans and programmes, especially as the CS networks and campaign activities are taking hold at the local level.

In view of the above and informed by its experiences, the review findings and recommendations, and current developments in the wider education sector, CEF Ghana will but not limit, its focus on the following:

- Deepen grassroots advocacy and influencing through the DEFATs. Support for CS coalition/alliance building will be directed at the community and local level as a process towards strengthening national coalition/networks.
- Continue Capacity building in areas such as policy analysis, communication, research, documentation, advocacy and lobbying on prioritised education issues.
- Support learning and sharing of Knowledge and information on education policy, plans, on-going processes, data on basic education, etc.
- Deepen support for CS participation in education governance in ways that promote transparency, accountability, efficiency and effective targeting of the poor.
- Establish and strengthen linkages between local and national level budget work in ways that influence national policy.
- Support a more vigorous approach to identifying and documenting innovative approaches to educating the excluded that have made demonstrable impact for district and national level advocacy.
- Deepen support for research and direct engagement with education policy and practices at the local and national level, including teacher recruitment and deployment, MDG on gender parity, quality of education, etc
- Continue support to mainstream gender.
- Support the Real World Strategies Initiative in Ghana.
- Expand support to other CS groups to engage with education in Cocoa Growing Areas.

3.0 National Level CEF Process:

ActionAid International Ghana (AAIG) and Oxfam GB are managing CEF in Ghana, with AAIG playing the lead role. Save the Children, which was supposed to be the third managing organisation, has wound up its operations in Ghana. In order to give strategic directions to the fund, promote transparency in its management and foster strategic collaboration with other organisations, a management committee comprising two representatives each of the managing organisations, and one representative each from the DFID, UNESCO and MOES is in place. The CEF will seek to expand the management committee with representations from the private sector, the media and eminent persons. The roles of the management committee are:

- Help define policy and operational guidelines for the management of CEF.
- Approve strategic plans and provide other strategic guidance for the CEF country secretariat.
- Review and approve proposals based on clear guidelines.
- Help with in-country fundraising and profile-raising of CEF programmes.
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation systems are in place for CEF projects
- Review progress reports on CEF activities.

The CEF Secretariat, located in the AAIG Office, runs the day-to-day activities of the CEF. A Co-ordinator and an accountant man the Secretariat and report to the ActionAid Education/REFLECT Coordinator.

Funding to partners is disbursed based on approved proposals and agreed MOUs between CEF and implementing CS partners. These MOUs spell out the respective obligations of both CEF and the partner; plans for implementation, monitoring and reporting; cash flows; etc.

So far, CEF has supported the activities of six main partners. They are GNECC, NNED, NGND, POSDEV, RAINS and APEM. CEF will expand take on new partners, more especially to advance its objectives under budget and innovative work and to support its campaign work in cocoa growing areas.

4.0 CEF Ghana Strategy

CEF Goal

To enhance the capacity of civil society in Ghana to effectively engage government education policy and practice to ensure that all children in Ghana enroll and complete good quality basic education by 2015.

CEF Objectives

The CEF will seek to achieve the following broad objectives:

- Strengthen civil society participation in the design and implementation of national and local education plans and frameworks (including the education components of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy).
- Build the capacity of local communities to monitor government pending on education, both at the national and local level.
- Support innovative initiatives for civil society to ensure that all children especially girls, children in hard-to-reach areas and the most disadvantaged have access to good quality education.

CEF Activities by Objective - 2005 to 2007

The outcome of the CEF mid-term review and subsequent discussions of the outcomes with the CEF management committee and other stakeholders resulted in outlining broad areas of activity for each of the CEF Objectives. The agreed broad areas of activity will provide the framework of CEF supported initiatives for the period up to 2007. Some activities of our current partners have been accepted under the broad activities. The proposals of potential new partners will also be reviewed primarily on the basis of the broad activities:

Objective 1: *Strengthen civil society participation in the design and implementation of national and local education plans and frameworks (including the education components of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy).*

CEF seeks to achieve this objective mainly through its support to the existing Education Coalition and Network. However the opportunity to support other CSOs that present credible proposals is open. Though largely the same in focus as in the first CEF Ghana Strategy, the broad activities here are fewer and are emphasising support for active community, district and regional level structures of the coalition/network, as way of strengthening the coalitions from the bottom up, while at the same time realising the objective of civil society's direct engagement with education issues at those levels:

Activity 1: Continue to support the growth and strengthening of the operations of existing education campaign coalitions/networks, paying particular attention to the strengthening of networks/alliances at the local, district and regional levels, and ensuring that there is effective linkage between local, national, sub-regional and global networks.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC	Strengthen national secretariat as platform for coordinating coalition activities.	2005 – 7

	Hold annual coalition meetings: annual general meetings, and quarterly national, regional and DEFAT meetings	2005 – 7
	Participate in campaign, and learning and sharing activities with ANCEFA, GCE, and other national, regional and global networks.	2005 – 7
NNED	Strengthen the secretariat as a platform for coordinating the network's campaign activities.	2005 – 7
	Hold quarterly National, regional & 24 DEFAT sessions for to review progress, and sharing and learning.	2005 – 7

Activity 2: Build the capacities of child-education-focused coalitions/CSOs, especially of structures at the local and district levels, aimed at providing them with skills in areas such as rights-based advocacy, research, policy analysis, communication, fund-raising etc.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC	Train at least 24 DEFATS in rights-based advocacy, lobbying, report writing, fund raising	2005 – 7
NNED	Train at least 24 DEFATS in rights-based advocacy, lobbying, report writing, fund raising	2005 – 6

Activity 3: Support civil society organisations and networks to monitor education developments and make collaborative input into the Education Sector Annual Review (ESAR) processes, Annual Education Sector Operational plans (AESOP), school mapping exercises and other education planning activities at the district and national levels.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC & NNED	Build capacity of DEFATS and SMCs and support them to participate in school governance and district education planning processes – school mapping, etc	2005 – 6
GNECC & NNED	Collect information on basic and make inputs into ESAR processes at the national level.	2005 – 6
ARE	Train SMCs in at least 20 cocoa producing communities in PLA, and educational planning and management, and support them to develop and implement community advocacy plans on equitable access, quality of education, etc.	2005 – 6

Activity 4: Support the capacity building of CSOs, especially of community based organisations (CBOs), to consolidate the gains made in using participatory techniques to promote enrolment and retention of children and shift away from pure awareness creation to eliciting action, demanding accountability and addressing education development challenges identified.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC	Carryout survey on the effectiveness of SMCs and PTAs in school governance in excluded areas as a basis for campaign to address the weaknesses of SMCs.	2005 – 6
	Support to reactivate and train SMCs in at least 12 districts to improve upon school governance and downward accountability.	2005 – 6
NNED	Support DEFATs and SMCs to participate in school governance	2005 – 6

Activity 5: Support direct CS engagement with specific education policies/issues at district and national levels

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC	Assess the GPRS II and annual government budgets against the EFA/MDGs.	2005 – 6
	Carry out CS understanding and critique of the Government White Paper on Education reforms in Ghana.	2005
	Research into teacher recruitment and deployment and other inputs to education as basis for engaging quality of education at the basic education level.	
NNED	Follow up on MOU on alternative approaches to staffing of deprived short-staffed schools.	2005 – 6

Activity 6: Support awareness creation and publicity on issues affecting access, equity, quality and management of education as well as the role and perspectives of CS and other stakeholders in education.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
NNED	Support the quarterly publication of newsletter “NNED NEWS” and awareness creation on education issues through the public forums, media, etc.	2005 – 6

Objective 2: ***Building the capacity of local communities to monitor government spending on education, both at the national and local level.***

Activity 1: Build the capacity of local community education structures, including SMCs/PTAs, DEFATS and other CBOs in the use of simple participatory budget monitoring and assessment tools to improve upon school governance and ensure

efficiency in the utilization of school resources and also serve as basis for national level budget advocacy.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC	Train at least 24 DEFATS in budget tracking	2005 – 6
NNED	Train at least 15 DEFATS in budget tracking	2005 – 6
NGND	Train SMCs and CBOs in 32 communities on budget tracking and support them to analyse education spending	2005 – 6
ARE	Train SMCs and CBOs in 32 communities on budget tracking and support them to analyse education spending	2005 – 6
PAMOJA Ghana/CEFCOSUS	Train SMCs and Assembly Persons in the use of REFLECT to track education budgets and improve upon accountability	2005 - 6

Activity 2: Support the tracking of education resources from the national to district level and promote effective linkages between budget analysis at the national and local levels.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC	Support at least 24 DEFATS to monitor/analyse education spending in their districts	2005 - 6
NNED	Support at least 15 DEFATS to monitor education spending in their districts	2005 - 6
ISODEC	Support the development of simple participatory tools for collection and analysis of budget information at the community level and analyse the information collected for national level budget advocacy.	2005 - 6

Activity 3: Support research into resource and costs-related issues affecting the education of children at the basic school level.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC	Research into the status of user fees and levies at the basic level to support campaign for genuine and complete removal of fees.	2005 - 7
	Campaign for increased allocation of funds to support the achievement of EFA and education MDGs.	2005 - 7

Objective 3: *Supporting innovative initiatives for civil society to ensure that all children especially girls and the most disadvantaged have access to good quality education.*

A number of civil society organizations, especially NGOs have gained recognition for innovations that address the education needs of excluded and disadvantaged children, notably girls, street children and children in remote deprived areas. A national competition, conference or other such mechanisms will be explored to identify and document innovations that have made demonstrable impact for the purposes of district and national level advocacy. The organizations so identified will be supported to engage key policy makers on their innovations. The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Ghana chapter, The School for Life Programme (SFL) and other such organizations will be targeted for this initiative.

While pursuing the above initiative, CEF will continue to give support to scale-up and start new creative and innovative activities proposed by CSOs and other players that have the objective of increasing access to quality basic education for excluded children: girls, children with disability, rural and deprived children, and children excluded as a result of customs/traditions, etc. It is anticipated that the proposals would focus on (but not exclusively to) the following areas:

1. Promote sensitisation of the public on the characteristics and plight of excluded children, drawing out likely policy, practice and attitudinal gaps in addressing their needs.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
GNECC & NNED	Carry out campaigns on the issues affecting the excluded children through the Global Action Week Celebrations on Education.	2005 - 6
NNED	Campaign for the rights of the disabled to education in the Northern region	2005 – 6
JILL	Support girls in basic schools to document their experiences on the status on their rights in school and publish in a quarterly magazine	2005 - 6
ARE	Pilot and document successes of the volunteer teacher scheme in 20 cocoa growing communities as a basis to advocate for district assembly investment in teacher recruitment, training and deployment	2005 - 7

2. Support innovative community-based methods and programmes that would contribute directly to removing obstacles to full enrolment and retention for all children, especially the excluded.

Partner	Activity	Time Scale
----------------	-----------------	-------------------

GNECC	Research into the teacher situation in the country and the needs of basic schools especially those in deprived rural areas.	2005 - 6
NNED	Carry out action research on gender parity in the three Northern of Ghana	2005
	Establish and strengthen enrolment committees in Traditional Areas	2005 – 6
RAINS	Document success stories on innovations and advocacy on girls education.	
Pro-Net North	Support enrolment and retention in 6 communities	2005 – 6

5.0 Links Between National, Regional and International Work

A programme of this nature requires effective collaboration and networking between a broad range of stakeholders at different levels. In pursuit of this, CEF has facilitated the establishment and strengthening of linkages at the local and international levels.

Locally, significant but modest gains were made in promoting linkages between local and national level structures of the CS education networks. With the support of CEF, GNECC broadened its structures from the national level through to the district level, through the establishment of District Education For All Teams (DEFATS). The purpose for this broadening is to increase CS campaign work at the district level as well as ensure that national level advocacy work of the coalition is informed by and indeed representative of, experiences and opinions from the grassroots. A relatively more effective broadening and linkage between, district, regional and national structures took place within the NNED. Collaboration between GNECC and NNED also chalked modest gains. Similar linkages were established and/or strengthened between community groups and GES structures on the one hand and NGND and POSDEV respectively.

On the International front, the membership and participation of GNECC in ANCEFA and GCE was stepped up, resulting in increased and a more effective networking between the national coalition, and the regional and global networks. The CEF has also linked up with other CEF Country programmes to learn and share experiences that bear on improving programme quality and management. Corporate partnership was also established with (a grant from) CADBURYs Sweppes to support education campaign work in cocoa growing areas in Ghana.

Efforts will be made to consolidate and improve upon linkages and collaboration between: GNECC, NNED and other CS groups towards a more effective and unified representation of CS in education policy debates and fora; the DEFATS and government education structures such as DEOCS, SMCs and DEPTs; and CEF Ghana and other CEF Country Programmes for Learning and Sharing in order to

continue to improve upon programme quality and management; and between CEF and the ANCEFA/GCE RWS initiative.

CEF will also support the establishment of collaborations and linkages between: partners engaged in budget work at the local level and other organisations engaged in budget work at the national level such as the Centre for Budget Analysis (CBA) of ISODEC; GNECC and the other national coalitions in the ECOWAS region to engage the sub-regional body on issues affecting education; and CEF and the private sector in Ghana.

6.0 Gender issues

It is unlikely that Ghana will achieve the gender equity goal by 2005. More work is needed to ensure that girls remain the primary focus of government education plans. The CEF will therefore prioritise support for gender focused programmes. These should address the rights of girls to and in education. Already CEF's support to RAINS is solely geared towards promoting girls education in very deprived districts of Ghana. This initiative is targeted at: influencing district development and education plans for increased support to girls' education; removing socio-cultural barriers to girls' education; and influencing the enactment of bye-laws to address some of the socio-cultural practices. The coalition partners (NNED and GNECC) have also implemented similar programmes.

CEF will seek to consolidate the modest gains made in this direction by giving support to these and other similar initiatives to increase their scope and coverage. CEF will particularly support capacity building of partners in areas that will enable them mainstream gender in their work and carry out monitoring and evaluation of schemes meant to support the education of the excluded, in ways that is gender sensitive. Partners who propose to engage in advocacy work that aims to eliminate hindrances to girls' access to, and effective participation in friendly school environments will be supported by CEF. Organisations that have best practices in promoting girls education will be supported to influence the approaches of other organisations and government, through effective learning and sharing. CEF will also facilitate effective linkages between partners working on girls' education and the appropriate government structures and schemes. This includes the Girl's Education Unit of the GES, District Girls' Scholarship Schemes, etc.

7.0 Monitoring and Evaluation:

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) will be participatory. The M&E framework for the Global Mid-Term Review (GMR) is being adapted as the national CEF M&E framework. It will involve all stakeholders at the implementing partner level as well as at the national CEF Level.

At the Implementing partners' level, it will be a requirement that partners develop M&E frameworks in line with the Global M&E framework, and M&E plans as part of their proposals. Partners who have developed M&E frameworks already will be encouraged to review these in line with the Global M&E framework. The process will involve all of their stakeholders: their staff; member organisations; partner communities, groups and individuals; and other stakeholders in the design of their M&E approaches, identification of indicators for inputs, activities and outputs and indicators for long term change at the end of the project. They will also include plans for continuous collection and analysis of data on the agreed indicators, and quarterly sharing of findings and review of programmes. Partners will also be required to document their activities by way of baseline data collected, quarterly reports on achievements, immediate outcomes, lessons learned, case studies etc. The monitoring data gathered over a period of about one year and data from other appropriate sources, such as focus group discussions and interviews, will be systematically analysed at annual review and reflection meetings, to assess progress made and lessons learned, among others.

At the national CEF level, the partner M&E frameworks and the GMR framework will be synthesised. The CEF Secretariat will develop an M&E plan based on the framework. Staff of the CEF Secretariat will conduct field visits to monitor the progress of planned activities and offer support to partners where necessary.

Based on monitoring information collected from the field and reports from partners, the CEF Co-ordinator will produce and share field, situational and analytical reports. Reports on aggregate quarterly findings will also be produced. These reports will be reviewed quarterly by the CEF Management Committee.

An end of project evaluation will be undertaken before the end of March 2007. This will entail an in-depth analysis of (expected and unexpected) changes that have occurred as a result of CEF's work and lessons learned.

Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) Ghana – M&E Framework

Objective	Impact indicators	Outcome indicators	Quantitative information	Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 • To strengthen civil society participation in the design and implementation of national and local education plans, especially through the support for broad based national alliances and coalitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a stronger civil society perspectives influencing education plans in favour of poor and marginalised children, especially girls and the most vulnerable (facilitated by CEF partners/coalitions & alliances) • Evidence of changes in educational policies, plans and budgets in favour of poor and marginalised children (facilitated by CEF partners/coalitions and alliances) • The development of national consensus around a clear Education for All Plan which addresses gender inequality and its capacity to attract coordinated donor response • Significance of national policy changes on poor children's access to education and quality of education received (where possible, from the perspectives of those children, especially girls and most vulnerable). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of CEFs involvement in & activities for building, broadening and development of strategies for strengthening civil society alliances in favour of Education for All • Evidence of building alliances with organisations of poor and excluded groups themselves • Examples of increased & stronger South-South/South-North links including inter-regional S-S/N links on Education for All issues. • Examples of CEF's support to partners resulting in more effective advocacy and influencing on education policies and budget spending • Significance of CEF's involvement/support (from key stakeholders' perspective) of networks, coalitions, and alliance building • Examples of increased representation and engagement with government of civil society representatives in education policy forums, debates, and PRS processes and level and relevance of that engagement • Examples of increased responsiveness of Government policies and practices to the needs of excluded groups • Examples of increased capacity of Government to address constraints to achieving Education for All that lie outside the education system (eg. Macro-economic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of coalitions, networks, alliances supported and the nature of CEF's involvement. • Number and type of coalitions, networks, alliances supported and working specifically on addressing gender equity in education • Amount spent on supporting anti-poverty coalitions, networks and movements. • Learner rates, especially amongst vulnerable groups: • Enrolled • Attending/drop out • Repeating • Completing • Number of passes at BECE, and CRT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEF performance measures • CEF finance/ monitoring data • Annual review and reflection process with key stakeholders (see Self Assessment framework above) • Quarterly reports • Situational reports • Case study collections – stories of significant change • UN reporting on MDGs, National Education statistics, Global EFA monitoring reports • Stakeholder surveys • Media analysis/press cuttings • CEF Partner reports. • Media reports

	Impact indicators	Outcome indicators	Quantitative information	Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 2: To enable local communities to monitor spending on education both at national and local levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased investment in education and the accountability of government (at local and national level) with regard to spending on education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of CEF's support leading to increased community participation in school management committees and education monitoring Examples of increased levels of understanding of the government education budget and of mechanisms used for financing education Examples of participatory budgeting techniques and processes taking place at the local and national level. Examples of CEF's support for local level monitoring on education budgets and type of support eg training, resource materials etc Examples of this work influencing government decisions on education plans at local and national level Examples of how communities' evolved understanding of education budgets have impacted the delivery of education at the local level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of active participation in school decision making by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children Parents Teachers Communities Numbers of people /communities trained in budget tracking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEF performance measures Ongoing monitoring data Annual review and reflection process with key stakeholders (see Appendix 1 Self Assessment framework) Case studies/oral testimonies CEF Quarterly reports. Media reports Publications

	Impact indicators	Outcome indicators	Quantitative information	Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 3: To support the development of innovative approaches to educating the most marginalised children (especially girls and the most vulnerable) in a way that influences a wider policy and practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of innovations influencing education policies and practices in addressing factors that have caused exclusion to different communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of CEF's support to collating, documenting and learning from innovative approaches to educating marginalised & excluded children Examples of types of innovation/approaches being identified and supported by CEF Evidence of building CS alliances to support advocacy on innovative practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Specific budget expenditure on research & documentation Numbers of reports produced and published Numbers of recommendations implemented by policy makers from reports on innovation in education for marginalized groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publications Quarterly updates Annual review and reflection processes. Case studies. Situational reports. Media reports.

	Impact indicators	Outcome indicators	Quantitative information	Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 4: Strengthening inter-agency collaboration & internal functioning of the CEF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased quality and effectiveness of CEF's work as a result of innovation, sharing & learning Increased effectiveness of CEF's work as a result of a more responsive and empowering working culture Poor people and partner organisations benefit as a result of devolved and flexible decision making at local level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of M&E Systems developed to encourage and facilitate learning and innovation Evidence of better inter-agency collaborations leading to CSOs management coordination of funds for other sectors. Examples of learning linked to these changes in practice Evidence of implementation of processes to ensure cost-effectiveness analysis and reporting Evidence of more effective working relationships between CEF implementing countries, region and Global CEF secretariat & management committee Evidence of increased transparency and accountability to communities, partners and donors (including financial) Evidence of previously marginalised children receiving high quality education as a result of the policy recommendations from the documentations that were implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nos of national and Intl NGOs and donors engaged in education that CEF is actively involved with Nos of national, Intl NGOs and donors in other sectors that are adopting this mode of funds coordination. Nos of representatives on the CEF management committee (by gender/constituency) Amounts of funds leveraged by the CEF from other international or national donors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEF quarterly reports. Reports from collaborating agencies. Annual review and reflection processes.

8.0 Risks and Assumptions:

This CEF strategy is developed based on the following risks and assumptions:

- Government and its officials at all levels will keep to its commitment to openness and meaningful public (CS) participation.
- The national education campaign coalition (GNECC) will be committed to improve upon its internal governance processes, its representativeness of CS voices on education and implementation of agreed planned activities.
- The CEF and other donors' commitment to support CS advocacy maintained.
- CS will have easy access to public information, especially with regards to information on education budgets and expenditure.
- There will be co-operation and collaboration between CS education networks and other CS organisations.
- There will be a more effective collaboration between the managing organisations of the CEF.
- There is sincere commitment on the part of CSOs to build broad, strong and enduring alliances.
- CSOs have the minimum required capacity to design and implement programmes related to research, advocacy, budget tracking, etc.
- The relative political stability and peace will endure.
- Macro and Micro economic development will be enhanced.
- Government's commitment to education will be maintained.