



EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN THE GHANAIAN CONTEXT

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According to the Ghana Shared growth and Development Agenda, (GSGDA 2014-2017), the ultimate beneficiaries of national development efforts are the people. Hence the concept of human development has emerged as the central theme in most national development plans in the past few decades.

Therefore the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills in solving problems in society have remained essential to achieving growth and equity, as well as enlarging peoples choices, including the choice to live a long and healthy life, and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living.

Without a well-educated, skilled, healthy and informed population, the transformation of the key sectors of the economy, and the effort to raise living standards and productivity, as the basis for wealth creation and the optimization of the potential of the economy will continue to stagnate.

Sadly, efforts by various policy frameworks such as GSGDA 2010-2013 has not to some extent yielded the expected results. This is reflected in the poor performance by pupils in the recently results of our second cycle institutions.

The recent 2015 WASSCE results released by WAEC revealed alarming figures of mass failure, cheating and exam malpractices.

The results indicate that 29.75% of students who sat for this years WASSCE had D7-E8 and 37.17% had F9 in Core Mathematics while that of Integrated Science also revealed that 39.19% got D7-E8 and 37.17% had F9, thus making their progression to the tertiary level difficult.

ADP Head of Programs **Charles Othniel Abbey**, in a discussion with **Joy News PM Express** host **Nana Ansah Kwao IV** and **Anis Haffar** on the Education Development Plan in the context of the 40 year Development Plan argued that the children who have failed (WASSCE) need not to be written off entirely. He emphasized on brain power building and heavy investment in education, driven by science and technology as a key strategy towards holistic education development in Ghana.

He made references to Singapore where there have been huge investment in Educational Institutions driven by Science and Technology in all their training



From left to right: **Nana Ansah Kwao IV** (Host of Show), **Charles Othniel Abbey** (Head of Programs, African Development Programme) and **Anis Haffer**(Educationist) in a discussion on the Education Development Plan. Follow the link to access the video file <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OG2FyrXmUyk&index=3&list=PL806E0108960E607A>

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Competency based and skills training coupled with science and technology needed in Education .**
- **300,000 graduates searching for jobs.**
- **Extreme poverty highest in rural Savannah and an estimated 8.4 percent of Ghanaians considered extremely poor .**

programs.

In his introductory remarks he said "I have some regrets that the kind of country that the older generation, especially those entrusted with public policy responsibility is leaving for us is nothing to write home about".

He stressed that the nature of the examination is not working for the country and that changes need to be effected.

He said "The template that we are working with is not working for us...yet persons entrusted with public responsibility do not see that enough is enough...lets reinvent the wheel and look at what others have done to propel them to the point where they want to be and lets get the results we are expecting"

He said "Even for the failures happening at the secondary level, they dovetail to the tertiary level as well... because the students end up not undertaking training programs that will help us solve the problems we are facing as now as a country". Looking at the bigger picture, he expressed worry about the fact that most tertiary institutions in the country are now doing liberal arts courses and shifting

away from their core mandate.

He stated that for a developing country endowed with the natural resources, more needs to be done to train the minds of young people to tap into the raw materials of the country to become productive.

He argues that education must be oriented towards competency based and skills training such that the country moves away from the 'fill in the gap' and 'blank space' .

To him when this is done it will provide opportunity to engage young people to use their heads, hands and hearts and the problem of cheating will be curtailed.

He highlighted the breakdown in the value system which pushes the child to cheat as contributing to the problem.

In his final submission he remarked that the perspective of young people must also be oriented towards seeing the importance of nation building, working for the growth of the country and building a livelihood that others can benefit from.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN GHANA - A CRITICAL PROBLEM



One of the most critical problems facing the country currently is high unemployment rate.

Currently about 300,000 graduates from the country's universities, polytechnics and other tertiary institutions are presently searching for jobs in the formal market, Policy Think-Tank, Center for Policy Analysis (CEPA,) GhanaWeb,27/08/2015. It says the unemployment troubles will not improve anytime soon since existing government policies are unfavorable for job creation, particularly the manufacturing sector which is the engine for job creation.

This year alone, about 64,277 graduates from the various tertiary institutions have been posted to institutions by the National Service Secretariat. Majority of these graduates will later hunt for jobs after completion of their service.

Presently, there are no vacancies in the public sector due to the International Monetary Funds bailout programme while the private sectors capacity to employ has reduced due to the erratic power situation and other economic challenges.

It is for this reason that a lot of Ghanaians including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have called on Government to as a matter of urgency institute policy reforms that will speed up the rate of transmission of growth impulses into improved living conditions so that they could be realized by the masses, especially with respect to employment.

Recent survey conducted by the Ghana Statistical

Service also known as the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS-6) which is a nation-wide household survey, provides information in assessing the living conditions of Ghanaian households.

Findings from GLSS-6 indicate that about 5.2 percent of Ghanaians are unemployed; the rate is higher among females (5.5%) as compared to the males (4.8%). Therefore, the overall females in both localities, that is urban and rural are more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts. The unemployment is much higher in urban areas (6.5%) than in rural areas (3.9%).

The survey conducted also stated that youth unemployment rate was 5.5 percent of which females represent 5.7 percent and males, 5.2 percent. It said unemployment rate is very high in the Upper East Region and lowest in Brong Ahafo, adding that in Central and Upper West regions, unemployment rates are higher for males than females.

In terms of age, the unemployment rate is highest among the 15-24 age groups (10.9%) and lowest among those aged 65 years and older (2.5%); this is true for both males and females. The unemployment rate is very high for the youth (15-24 years) in urban areas (16.3%) compared to the other age groups.

The report also revealed that one-quarter (25.2%) of the employed population have no education and 57.2 percent had up to Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). This implies that the working population is dominated by people with little (up to BECE) or no education (82.4%), indicating that that most of the working population work under poor conditions with no written contract with employer and low earnings.

The unemployment rate is higher for persons with secondary education (11.7%) and those with post-secondary diploma education

(9.1%). The rates of unemployment are however lower for persons with post graduate degrees (2.7%) and teacher training, agriculture and nursing training (2.8%). Unemployment rates in urban areas are generally higher than those recorded in rural areas in all the educational attainment categories except those who have never been to school and persons with teacher training, agricultural and nursing training education.

The report said about 75 percent of the population, 15 years and older are employed, majority of whom are engaged in agriculture (44.7%) and services (40.9%).

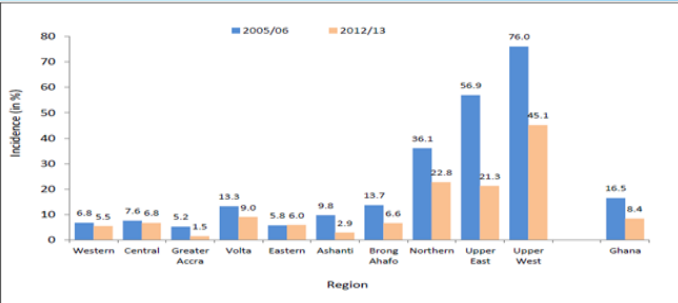
It mentions that even though the unemployment rate is at 5.2%, more than one-third of the working population is underemployed. It states that two-thirds, representing 68.7 percent of the working population, are in vulnerable employment, and one-third (33.3%) of the employed persons are underemployed.

The report said the underemployed persons, 50.6 percent are self-employed and more than one-third (35.0%) are contributing family workers. Persons engaged in agricultural activities (61.5%) are more likely than those in non-agricultural activities (38.5%) to be underemployed. They are not entitled to paid leave and social security, among others.

It said the composite measure of labour underutilization is 47.0 percent, stating that compared to males, females are disadvantaged for most of the indicators.

The report said about 3.2 million (20.5%) persons 15 years and older are economically not active, explaining that education/training (54.5%) is the main reason for inactivity.

GHANA POISED TO ACHIEVE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL TARGET



Extreme Poverty Incidence by Region (Poverty line=GH¢792.05), Source: Ghana Statistical Service, GLSS 6

The results from the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS5) and GLSS6 surveys indicate that given a poverty line of GH¢1,314, poverty reduced by 7.7 percentage points over the seven-year period (2005/2006 to 2012/13).

Similarly, the 2005/06 report on poverty trends in Ghana indicates that in 1991/92, the poverty rate was 51.7 percent.

Given that the rate for 1991/92 is not any different from the rate in 1990, then unless the unexpected happens in the next few months in the Ghanaian economy which may result in a slippage, the MDG 1 target, which seeks to halve poverty by 2015 from the rate in 1991/92 (51.7%) will inevitably be met by 2015, since the current (2013) poverty rate (24.2%) is even slightly less

than half the rate recorded in 1991/92.

Ghana's growth has been quite robust despite the economic and financial crisis which started in the developed countries of America and Europe in 2008 which slowed down global economic growth. The country's growth which averaging at least 6.5 per cent between 2007 and 2010 was encouraging.

However, from 2010 to 2013, the country experienced an annual average GDP growth rate of 9.7 percent, with per capita income rising above GH¢1000.00 in 2007, making Ghana a low-middle income country.

Currently, Ghana is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and the progress is strong enough to sustain the progress towards the

national poverty reduction target. Sadly, the increasing growth has not reflected in bridging the inequality gaps among the populations.

The contribution to poverty incidence varied across various demographic groupings.

In 2012/13, the rural population comprised 50 percent of the population of Ghana, yet it accounted for 78 percent of those in poverty. This agrees with previous poverty profile reports (GSS 1998/99 and 2005/06) where above 80 percent of the total population living below the poverty line in Ghana was living in the rural areas. Among rural localities where poverty is prominent, the poverty incidence is much higher among those living in rural savannah than in rural coastal and forest combined. Notably, rural savannah contributes more than 40 percent to the overall poverty in Ghana. This phenomenon confirms previous poverty reports which indicate that the poverty decline in Ghana (from 1998/99 to 2005/06) has not been evenly distributed geographically. This requires far-reaching measures aimed at tackling this development challenge confronting the rural savannah. Importantly, the Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) initiative is yet to make an impact in addressing this challenge.

An estimated 8.4 percent of Ghanaians are considered to be

extremely poor for the country as a whole using the extreme poverty line of GH¢792.05 per adult equivalent per year. This rate indicates that fewer Ghanaians are extremely poor compared to 2005/06 based on the revised basket of food consumed by Ghanaians. This is because in 2005/06, 16.5 percent of the population was extremely poor. More than 2.2 million Ghanaians (based on 2010 PHC projections) cannot afford to feed themselves with 2,900 calories per adult equivalent of food per day, even if they were to spend all their expenditures on food. Although the absolute number living in extreme poverty has reduced over time, it is still quite high given the fact that Ghana is considered to be a lower middle income country.

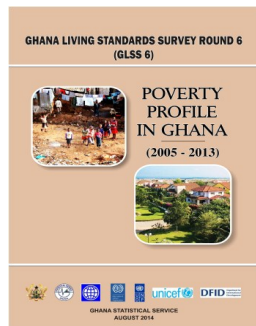
The incidence of extreme poverty is highest in rural Savannah at 27.3 percent and this locality accounts for nearly three-fifths of those living in extreme poverty in Ghana. There exist sharp variations across the country. This presents human security challenges for a developing country practicing multi-party democracy.

Extreme poverty is also a rural phenomenon, with as many as over 1.8 million persons living in extreme poverty in rural areas (2010 PHC projections). The incidence of extreme poverty is virtually non-existence in urban localities, with Accra (GAMA) contributing only 0.9 percent to the incidence of extreme poverty.

RESOURCES:



Please Visit: <http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/publications.html>



Please Visit

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/ndpc-static/publication/GSGDA+II+2014-2017.pdf>

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