

The FACE and PHASES of GNECC in 2008

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

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List of Acronyms

AGM	Annual General Meeting
ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign on Education For All
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CEF	Commonwealth Education Fund
CSACEFA	Civil Society Action Coalition on Education For All
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DEFATs	District Education for All Teams
EFA	Education for All
GNECC	Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition
ISODEC	Integrated Social Development Centre
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOESS	Ministry of Education Science and Sports
NEC	National Executive Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNED	Northern Network for Education Development
VSO	Voluntary Services Organization
WUSC	World University Service of Canada
GES	Ghana Education Service
GNAT	Ghana National Association of Teachers
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
VSO	Voluntary Services Organization

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Message from the Chair

During the year in review, the Coalition's commitment to working towards the achievement of Universal Primary Enrolment, Completion, Gender Parity and other Education For All Goals reached was sustained and diversified. Sustaining our EFA advocacy agenda in Ghana and the sub region meant advocating for greater accountability and transparency in the utilization of education resources, engaging in sector dialogue with Government and development partners, providing policy alternatives and conducting researches for the purpose of ensuring quality and evidence based engagements. Capacity building interventions for members and partners was also a prominent feature in 2008.

In diversifying our campaign, we extended the focus of our policy dialogue from the traditional exclusive focus on Basic Education to include Secondary, Technical and Vocational Education Training and Tertiary Education. This was more relevant recognizing the crucial role education policy issues played in during the electioneering campaign, and the spaces that were created for Civil Society dialogue and input into Political Party Manifestoes.

We also gave a practical meaning to our objective of complimenting Government's efforts at mobilizing resources to finance education plans by having interface engagements with Ambassadors of G7 countries in Ghana with the aim of lobbying G7 Governments to make good their promises made in Dakar.

At the regional level, the Coalition sustained its commitment to strengthening regional and sub regional networks in Africa as a vital ingredient in achieving Education For All by 2015. Our partnerships with Coalitions in Western and Eastern Africa in the areas of Capacity Building ,experience and information sharing has been tremendously significant.

The sheer number and nature of activities and partnerships in 2008 underlines the magnitude and complexity of the road to Education For All and Millennium Development Goals 2. This annual report encapsulates the major activities that GNECC undertook in 2008 as well as the operational relationship GNECC had with its numerous local and international partners.

Bright K. Appiah
Executive Chair, GNECC

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New Executives Elected at 2006 AGM

February 2008 – The 2006 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at the Eredec Hotel in Koforidua on the theme “Ghana @50: Promoting quality basic education “.The two day event commencing on 28th February 2008 elected Mr. Bright Appiah as the new Executive Council Chair, with Mrs. Theresa Adjei-Mensah and Mr. Nicholas Akyire retaining their positions as Vice Chairperson and National Treasurer respectively. Regional Chairpersons were also elected. The AGM served as a platform for brainstorming on issues concerning the administration of the Coalition. The audited accounts of the Coalition for 2006 was presented by its Auditors and adopted by the Annual General Meeting. Renowned educationist, Prof. J.S. Djangmah made a presentation on the topic “Ghana @ 50 and Quality Basic Education”. Present at the AGM were 50 GNECC members and partners. A position paper on the Annual General Meeting was issued emphasizing the need for increased attention to teacher deployment issues in basic education.

Strengthening GNECC’s engagement with Parliament

March 2008 – Strengthening engagements with the legislature is one of GNECC’s lobbying strategies in the area of legislative/policy advocacy. During the year in review GNECC engaged the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education on the findings of a research commissioned by the Coalition into the Teacher Deployment in quality basic education in Ghana. It was against this background that GNECC held a roundtable discussion with the members of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education on March 5th 2008 at the Airport West Hotel in Accra. It was a platform for civil society and government to share ideas and communicate on issues facing education in Ghana with special attention on teacher deployment. The Coalition also shared the findings of its Research into the Rural -Urban divide and its impact on quality basic education in Ghana with the Select Committee. The Select Committee was also involved in the Global Action Week celebrations in April 2008. Suffice to say, the Coalition in the year in review provided evidence based information to support the work of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education. The Coalition’s successful engagement with parliament contributed tremendously towards the passage of the education bill in November 2008.

Global Action Week 2008

April 2008 – GNECC led a nationwide campaign to pressurize all stakeholders in the education sector especially the government to implement measures that would end exclusion in the sector.

The Global Action Week 2008 campaign was observed worldwide between April 21 – 27 2008 to draw governments’ attention to critical issues facing basic education. Ahead of the campaign GNECC revealed a staggering result of a research into rural-urban divide in the exclusion of basic education in Ghana. It revealed striking disparities between rural and urban schools in the areas of Teacher Deployment, availability of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM’s) and Infrastructure and Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) pass rates among others.

In partnership with the Global Campaign for Education, Oxfam NOVIB, Oxfam GB, ActionAID Ghana, IBIS,PLAN Ghana, World University Services Canada (WUSC) . Ministry of Education, Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), National House of Chiefs, West African Network for Peace (WANEP),

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PAMOJA Ghana, the Ghana Federation for the Disabled and Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, GNECC in collaboration with its partners undertook a series of activities to raise awareness and demand action using the media and interface engagements with duty bearers on rural -urban divide and its impact on quality basic education in Ghana. Activities undertaken include a press launch of campaign, a national durbar to discuss the findings of the research, presentation of resolution to government, a discussion on GTV talking point, development and distribution of posters nationwide and regional level Global Action Week durbars in the Eastern, Brong Ahafo, Central and Ashanti region.

The Global Action Week 2008 celebration was patronized by the President of the National House of Chief, the General Secretary of the Christian Council of Ghana, members of Council of State, the Hon. Minister of Education, the donor community, pupils, teachers, educationists, media personnel and members of the general public.

The weeklong campaign succeeded in prioritizing the rural-urban divide as a factor in education access and quality in Ghana. This was more pronounced in the manifestoes of all political parties during the electioneering campaign, providing a parallel context for development policy planning. The Savanna Development Fund proposed by the new NDC Administration is an outcome.

Strengthening Civil Society Participation in Education Sector dialogue with Government.

July 2008 - The Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition and the Northern Network of Education and Development (NNED) were instrumental at the 2008 Education Sector Annual Review (ESAR). The annual activity is held to assess the performance of the education sector against the annual targets set. GNECC was represented by a delegation of ten, comprising a representative from each of the ten geographical regions in Ghana. The Coalition actively participated in the thematic and plenary sessions. In a position statement that was developed during the Civil Society Education Sector Annual Review parallel session that was held prior to the National Education Sector Annual Review, GNECC among others called on government to among others speed up the processes leading to the passage of the education bill that had been at the cabinet level for over a year. GNECC further reiterated its call for the decentralization of the Capitation Grant, the creation of a threshold for Rural Schools under the Capitation Grant policy to address issues of inequalities, and timely disbursement of the Grant. Also pronounced in GNECC's position paper during NESAR 2008 was the need to improve kindergarten infrastructure and train National Youth Employment Program personnel teaching in basic schools.

“Making Schools Safe for Girls”-The SVAGS project.

August 2008 – Among the highlights for 2008 was the Stop Violence Against Girls in School (SVAGS) project. The five year project is a collaboration between GNECC, ActionAID Ghana and Song Taba with funding from the Big Lottery Fund (UK). It has a goal of stopping violence against girls in and around the school environment and is being implemented in Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique. GNECC is hosting the advocacy platform for the project.

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GNECC joins Ghanaian children to speak out against violence against girls in schools.

On International Children's Day, 31st August, 2008, GNECC created a platform for Ghanaian children to cry out to the Government of Ghana to provide a safe school environment for girls. In a widely publicized press statement released during the press conference, the Children of Ghana made a call to government to ensure that the appropriate policies are enforced to make schools safe for girls as means of ensuring girls access to Basic Education as a right, and achieve gender parity. The coalition for the first time observed the 16 days of activism campaign, a signal of its commitment to the campaign to end gender based violence. A focus Group Discussion was organized for pupils in the GA West District, to share experiences on school based violence against girls. The activity created a platform for building the capacity of pupils in Amasaman to appreciate the existing legal and policy frameworks and remedial actions available in cases of violence against girls in school.

Tracking the Capitation Grant at the Local level

August-September 2008-In the year in review the Coalition tracked the Capitation Grant in 210 schools nationwide. Thirty schools were tracked in each of the seven southern regions in Ghana. The process involved a review of checklists used in previous Capitation Grant tracking exercises and the expansion of the respondents to include Traditional Authorities and women in the community. The Coalition intends to share the lessons of the tracking exercise with key stakeholders in Education sector at the local and National levels.

Coalition assesses donor commitments on education

September 2008-The Coalition marshaled major organizations in the country to deliberate on donor pledges and commitments to education financing in Ghana and its impacts on quality education service delivery. Representatives from the Musicians Association of Ghana, National Union of Ghana Students, Ghana Medical Association, Ghana Bar Association, ActionAid Ghana, Voluntary Services Organization (VSO), Ministry of Education Science and Sports and the Christian Council of Ghana participated in the roundtable discussion to assess donor pledges and commitments to education and its impact on quality education service delivery. One of the key fallouts of the discussion was the fact that a financial gap of about USD\$300 million existed in basic education financing as a result of the lack of full commitment by the G7 countries to support education in Ghana. The session also revealed a reduction in aid commitments to basic education from \$4.4 billion in 2004 to below \$3 billion in 2005. It was further observed that should this situation continue, the attainment of the Education For All and Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3 may be a mirage. The outcomes of the roundtable discussion was presented in a form of a resolution to ambassadors of G7 countries in Ghana for the purpose of lobbying their leaders prior to the UN MDG emergency summit held in New York in September 2008.

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GNECC meets G7 leaders- PROMISES TO CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE BROKEN!!

September 2008 - The Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) was instrumental in calling on the leaders of the G7 countries to be committed to their promises towards education.

GNECC on behalf of over 200 Civil Society organizations presented a resolution to the Ambassadors of the G7 countries in Ghana ahead of the UN Millennium Development Goals emergency summit held on 25th September 2008 in New York. It was highly successful event that was widely publicized in the various media. In the petition presented to G7 Ambassadors in Ghana, GNECC reminded G7 countries that the huge financial gap in education financing which has led to a compromise on quality and access in basic education was partly as a result of the lack of donor commitments to pledges made in Dakar (2000) and urged them to fulfill their pledge of committing 0.3% of their Gross National Income to supporting development plans in less developed Countries.

100,000 Pupils Hoot at Poverty

October 2008 – Over 100, 000 pupils from 100 schools across Ghana joined the rest of the world to Stand Up Against Poverty. The global campaign against poverty: **Stand Up and Take Action 2008**, was observed from Friday 17th October to Sunday 19th October 2008 in Ghana. As the lead agency for the education platform of the Millennium Development Goals in Ghana, GNECC in collaboration with the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana MDG Secretariat, GNECC was at the forefront in organizing a series of events throughout the country to drum home the need to fight poverty at all levels. The 2008 Stand Up Against Poverty campaign took place in churches, workplaces, mosques and in schools nationwide. GNECC used the programme to call on all well meaning people to join the global movement of people who refuse to stay seated or silent in the face of poverty, widening inequality gaps and broken promises by world leaders. The Coalition declared “We can’t fight poverty sitting: Stand up and speak out against poverty”. Over 100,000 people comprising pupils, students and teachers in all ten regions stood up and recited the stand up against poverty calling on world leaders to commit more resources to end poverty.

GNECC trains 140 members in Budget Tracking Skills

October /November 2008- Strengthening the capacity of the membership of the Coalition is crucial in ensuring quality advocacy at the local level. This was the rationale behind the training of 140 Members of GNECC’s District Education For All Teams (DEFATs) in the seven southern regions of the Ghana were trained in education resource monitoring and budget tracking 2008. The objective of this training was to enhance the capacity of District Education for All Teams (DEFATs) to effectively monitor education spending at the local level to ensure judicious use of available scarce resources. The Coalition has over the past two years been involved in tracking the Capitation Grant in schools. Series of tracking activities have been planned for 2009 to afford DEFATs the platform to apply acquired skills in education resource tracking at the district and regional levels.

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Political Parties debate education

November 2008-Political parties are mostly referred to as governments in the waiting. Most often, Civil Society have focused on creating and utilizing spaces for Government-Civil Society dialogue alone, relegating political parties who invariably constitute an alternative government. The focus on governments in power alone had always denied the nation the benefits of considering other laudable policy intents expressed in manifestoes of other political parties and confining the development agenda to that of a particular party in power. IBIS funding to the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition enabled GNECC to organize the first ever live televised political parties debate on education in Ghana. The context for the debate was their respective manifestos and achieving EFA/MDG goals in Ghana. This was more relevant since we were preparing for our general elections.

The Coalition in partnership with ActionAID, Prof. Jerome Djangmah Chair of the West African Exams Council and the National Union of Ghana Students brought all four major political parties (New Patriotic Party, National Democratic Congress, Convention Peoples Party and the Peoples National Convention) one platform to debate education.

Policy alternatives were unearthed and articulated by education experts of the various parties which afforded the big political parties to buy into some fine policies of lesser parties who seem to be far from political power, but have promising education ideas/policies in their manifesto. Since attendance was strictly by invitation, only fifty CSO representatives attended the debate session. There was a huge presence of the electronic and print media as well. Metro TV, CITI FM and Happy FM provided a live broadcast.

Providing a factual basis for effective advocacy

GNECC recognizes the relevance of using evidence based information to initiate changes in policy and practice. It is in this direction that the Coalition commissions its own research for the purpose of enriching its advocacy campaigns with the aim of achieving the desired impact. Two researches were commissioned during the year in review-A research into Rural-Urban divide and its impact on Quality Basic Education in Ghana and a research into why there are out of school children in Ghana inspite of the introduction of the Capitation Grant and the Ghana School Feeding Program. Whereas the former has been successfully disseminated and is currently being used as an advocacy tool to advocate for equity in the distribution of educational resources, the latter will be published in the first quarter of 2009.

Networking to ensure Education for All.

The Coalition has participated in a number of international events all in the quest for quality basic education for Africa. This is in attestation to the Coalitions conviction that attaining education for all and Millennium Development Goal 2 requires a collective effort of all Countries in Africa and the world. To this effect the Coalition participated in international events aimed at strengthening education advocacy at the regional and the sub regional level, building capacity and sustaining the campaign for free quality education. The Coalition participated in the Oxfam Popular Mobilization Capacity Building program in Mbodiene, Senegal, a research planning meeting as part of the SVAGS project in Nairobi, Kenya and also assisted in facilitating

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a budget tracking capacity building workshop organized by ANCEFA for members of CSACEFA in Abuja, Nigeria. Additionally, the Coalition participated in the World Education Assembly Brazil and the IBIS West Africa Regional Meeting on education in Accra. In August 2008 GNECC participated in the Aid Effectiveness Forum held in Accra Ghana. As a member of the Steering Committee for the event the Coalition represented the interest of education on the AID Effectiveness Forum.

Our network with the Nigerian Coalition on Education, otherwise called Civil Society Action Coalition on Education For All (CSACEFA), the Coalition in Kenya, Senegal, Togo, Sierra Leone and Liberia has assisted tremendously in experience sharing and learning at the sub regional and regional level. The relevance of our networking in 2008 was also pronounced in building the capacity of partner Coalitions in education resource tracking and sharing useful information to aid our country level advocacy.

The relevance of our membership with the African Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA) has been enhanced as a model for younger Coalitions to emulate. On regional and sub regional platforms, the Coalition has been instrumental in marketing the successes of Ghana's basic education system, with emphasis on the Ghana School Feeding Program, as a model policy worthy of adoption in countries in the Sub region and beyond. GNECC also deepened its involvement in the campaigns of the Global Campaign for Education and extended it beyond the traditional Global Action Week on Education celebrations to include the Global campaign to lobby G7 and African leaders to commit more funds to education in September 2008.

Funding Partnerships

During the year in review, our funding partnerships contracts with Commonwealth Education Fund (U.K) and OXFAM GB came to a successful end. In its totality, the Coalition benefited from an amount of 102,850 GHC from OXFAM GB and 231,573 GHC from CEF (U.K). As the Coalition appreciates the relationships developed with CEF and OXFAM GB, it is working assiduously to document the outcomes of all their support over the past three years for the purposes of learning and sharing. IBIS West Africa is assisting in this initiative.

GNECC has successfully secured a one year funding package from IBIS West Africa under its Education for Empowerment program. IBIS commitment under the new Memorandum of Understanding amounts to 50,000 GHC. Funding will be provided for the purposes of enhancing GNECC's engagements on Education For All in Ghana.

GNECC's funding partnership with OXFAM NOVIB will end in June 2009. The Coalition is expecting the last tranche of 40,000 Euros, constituting the final installment of OXFAM NOVIB's funding partnership. ActionAID's partnership with the Coalition has been renewed for another year spanning January-December 2009. The Coalition in the year in review benefited from funding of about 50,000 GHC and non funding partnership with Action AID. One of such program partnerships is on the ActionAID initiated Stop Violence Against Girls in School –SVAGS project which the Coalition is playing a lead advocacy role with a funding inflow of about 160,000 GBP within a five year period.

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The Education Agenda

Two editions of the Education Agenda were published in 2008-Whereas the first one focused on Teacher Deployment and its effects on quality and access indicators in attaining Education For All in Ghana with reference to GNECC's Teacher Deployment research, the second was used to disseminate GNECC's research into Rural -Urban divide and its impact on quality Basic Education in Ghana and highlight on issues raised during ESAR 2008.Eight thousand out of the ten thousand copies that were published was circulated nationally. The remaining two thousand (2,000) copies were circulated in Africa, Europe and North America.

Marketing the Coalition to the world

GNECC successfully developed its website to make access to research information readily available to the general public. The website contains a compendium of resources related to the Coalition's advocacy engagements and development practice in general. The Coalition's web address is: www.gnecc.org.

National Secretariat /Regional News

Mr. Kofi Asare was appointed as National Programs Officer in February 2008.

Mr. Enos Siayor was appointed as driver in February 2008.

Mr. Michael Ansa resigned as National Coordinator in June 2008.

Ms. Courtney Strutt, (WUSC Volunteer) completed her one year internship with GNECC in August 2008.

Mr. Leslie Tettey was appointed as the National Coordinator in October 2008.

Mrs. Makafui Awo Aidan was appointed as Gender Programs Officer in December 2008.

Mrs. Judith Sawyer was elected as the New Chairperson of GNECC, Greater Accra Region. She replaces Mr. Gerald Annan-Forson.

ISODEC has been appointed the new lead agency of GNECC Greater Accra. The organization takes over from Muslim Relief Agency – MURAG.

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