

**INFRASTRUCTURAL CHALLENGES
AND FINANCING OF
PUBLIC BASIC EDUCATION IN
ACCRA METRO**



Report by
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INTRODUCTION

The Greater Accra Branch of the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) has been part of the GNECC coalition since its founding in 1999. As a member of the coalition, it supports quality free compulsory universal basic education as a right of all Ghanaian children regardless of ethnic background, geographic location, religion, gender or socio-economic status. To this end, Greater Accra GNECC has carried out a number of studies and advocacy programmes in several of the districts of Greater Accra over the past six years. The impetus to write this report was the 2010 Global Action Week on Education (GAW) held at the end of April whose theme was “Education for All: Fund It Now”.

From general observation and interaction with education stakeholders, Greater Accra GNECC has identified the following as major challenges in delivery of quality public basic education in schools in Accra Metro, one of ten, and the largest district, in the region:

1. Dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure
2. Overcrowded classrooms
3. Shift system

The aim of this report is to provide the evidence gathered through research to substantiate this claim, as well as to look at issues of financing public basic education in the metro.

METHODOLOGY

1. Quantitative Data: Survey

A simple survey instrument was prepared to collect data on school infrastructure, school history, enrolment, use of the shift system, among other information. This was administered in randomly selected public basic schools by Greater Accra GNECC’s District Education for All Teams (DEFATs). A copy of the survey instrument is attached at the end of this report. Analysis was done using SPSS software.

2. Qualitative Data

Qualitative information was obtained through discussions with head teachers during the data collection exercise, as well as through observations during the school visits. This was enhanced during a stakeholders’ meeting held on Thursday, 27 May 2010, in connection with GNECC Greater Accra’s Global Action Week on Education (GAW) Celebrations, where a preliminary presentation of the report was made.

3. Primary Sources and Documentation

Data on financial allocations by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) to Accra's public basic schools was obtained from the Financial Controller, AMA. Similarly, the Office of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) provided figures for releases from the Fund to the AMA.

Other information was obtained from the Acting Head, Ghana Education Service, school administrators and reports in the local media, available on the Internet.

APPRECIATION

Greater Accra GNECC funded the survey carried out by the Greater Accra DEFATs for which I am grateful. In this connection, I must also thank the DEFATs who did the foot work. I am also appreciative of the officials at the AMA and the DACF who, quite willingly did the search to provide the figures needed to compile this report. The new Ghana Education Service Acting Metro Director for Education furnished relevant data on the metro schools as well as support for the project, as did the GES Circuit Supervisor of Nima and the Nima 1 Head Teacher. Finally, sincere thanks go to Leo Shang-Quartey, GNECC Greater Accra Regional Coordinator, for his assistance in interpreting the survey data.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY

The survey was designed to obtain information on Accra metro's basic public schools relating to the following topics: General Information, Use of Shift System, Water and Toilet Facilities, Sanitation, Buildings, Furniture, Availability of Library Science and ICT Facilities, amongst others. The survey was administered to either the head or deputy head teacher of the selected schools between November and December 2009 by Greater Accra GNECC's DEFATs. In addition, information was obtained by observation on site. At least five schools in six of the seven sub-metros (a total of 33 schools, with a pupil enrolment in excess of 12,000) were captured in the survey as follows:

- **Ayawaso Wogon:** La Bawaleshie Presbyterian Cluster of Basic Schools, University Staff Village Basic School, Dzorwulu A & B Primary, Dzorwulu JHS.
- **Okai-Koi South:** Kaneshie 8 Primary (Kingsway), Kaneshie Bishop 2 JHS, Bubuashi 1 & 2 Primary, Cable & Wireless Basic School, Kaneshie North 1 JHS.
- **Ablekuma North:** Mataheko 3 JHS, Abossey Okai United Primary, Dansoman 2 Basic School, Odorkor 4 Primary, Odorkor 7 JHS, Odorkor 2 (Sallaria) Primary, Kwashieman Anglican B JHS.
- **Ayawaso East:** Accra New Town 5 & 12 Primary Schools, Pig Farm Primary and JHS, Kotobabi 13 JHS, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial JHS, Abavanna JHS.

- **Osu-Klottey:** Osu Salem 5 & 6 Primary, Edie Laryea Primary, St. Thomas Primary, Osu Presbyterian Girls' Primary, Osu Presbyterian Boys' Primary.
- **Ashiedu Keteke:** Independence Avenue 1 & 2 Basic Schools, Bishop Girls' Basic School, PTE Odartey 1 & 2 JHS, Ayololo 2 & 6 Primary Schools, Ayololo 1 & 2 JHS, Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School.

The 33 schools surveyed comprised 10 primary schools, 9 junior high schools and 14 combined primary and junior high schools.

General Information

Information obtained in this section of the survey covered enrolment, number of boys, number of girls, average class size, use of shift system and the date the school was built.

Average/median class size:

- ✓ Ayawaso Wogon: 45 pupils per class
- ✓ Okai-Koi South: 47 pupils per class
- ✓ Ablekuma North: 52 pupils per class
- ✓ Ayawaso East: 37 pupils per class
- ✓ Osu-Klottey : 50 pupils per class
- ✓ Ashiedu Keteke: 48 pupils per class

Average class sizes were generally higher than the recommended 25 for junior high schools and 35-40 for primary schools. In Osu Klottey and Ablekuma North, in particular, some classes had over 60 pupils, making teaching and learning very difficult. Many of the classrooms were too small to contain large classes, contributing to serious physical overcrowding.

Use of shift system

- ✓ Ayawaso Wuogon: 1 out of 5 schools
- ✓ Okai-Koi South: 3 out of 5 schools
- ✓ Ayawaso East: all 5 schools
- ✓ Ablekuma North: all 4 schools
- ✓ Osu-Klottey : 0 out of 5 schools
- ✓ Ashiedu Keteke: 2 out of 6 schools

The shift system is an urban phenomenon employed to overcome the shortage of classrooms due to the rise in enrolment. Out of 30 schools responding to the survey, 15 used the shift system. Ablekuma North and Ayawaso East sub-metros had the highest use of the shift system.

Overall Results of Survey on Infrastructure in 33 Selected Accra Metro Public Basic Schools, November-December 2009¹

Infrastructure Item	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	Not available (%)
Water supply	9.1	15.2	12.1	63.6
Urinals	9.1	24.2	39.4	27.3
Separate toilets for girls	15.2	12.1	39.3	42.4
Hand washing basins	21.2	36.4	15.2	27.3
Provision of soap	39.4	18.2	27.3	15.2
Provision of rubbish bins	33.3	33.3	33.3	3.0
Regular removal of rubbish	24.2	15.2	33.3	27.3
Cleaning of gutters	6.1	21.2	15.2	57.6
Provision of disinfectant	36.4	27.3	24.2	12.1
Adequate dislodging of septic tanks	3.0	12.1	15.2	69.7
Condition of classrooms	15.2	36.3	45.5	3.0
Provision of electricity	39.4	15.2	18.2	27.3
Ventilation in classrooms	32.4	27.3	30.3	0
Lighting in classrooms	18.2	36.4	21.2	24.2
Condition of classroom furniture	12.1	51.5	36.4	0
Availability of classroom furniture	30.3	36.4	33.3	0
Facilities for ICT	6.1	9.1	18.1	66.7
Facilities for library	3.0	15.2	3.0	78.8
Facilities for science	3.0	3.0	0	93.9
Condition of periphery wall	12.1	21/2	33.3	33.3
Condition of sports courts ²	3.0	6.1	12.1	78.8
Condition of Canteen facilities	6.1	21.2	42.4	30.3
Condition of Playing fields	6.1	6.1	18.2	69.7

¹ The choice of categories *good*, *fair*, *poor* and *not available* were left to the discretion of the Head Teacher and the District For all Teams (DEFATs), who visited the schools.

² These are courts for basketball, volleyball, netball, etc,

Analysis of some of the most relevant findings

1. Water Supply

Out of the schools surveyed, 63.6% did not have water supply, while supply was poor in an additional 12.1%. This meant that schools had to buy water from vendors, at a high cost, or do without. For those that had pipe-borne water, payment of water bills posed a problem since there was no clear guideline as to which body was responsible for this. Based on the notion that the AMA is the authority entrusted with basic school maintenance, it should be liable, although information available indicated that it often shirked this responsibility because of 'absence of funds'. The lack of clean, regular water poses a serious threat to the health of the pupils in a city where typhoid, cholera and other gastro-intestinal diseases are reported to be endemic.

2. Urinals and Separate Toilets for Girls

The availability of urinals was heavily weighted towards poor (39.4%) or unavailable (27.3%). Many of the urinals were merely make-shift structures, since water did not flow. As to separate toilets for girls, again it was weighted heavily towards poor (30.3%) or not available (42.4%). It is not uncommon to see pupils, including girls, openly urinating on school compounds. Since studies have shown that girls' attendance at school, particularly at the junior high school level, is directly related to the availability of proper, decent toilets, it is not surprising that absenteeism increases for teenage girls during their monthly periods.³ From site observation, even where toilets existed, they were unsanitary, not properly maintained and often lacked toilet roll.



A typical Accra school urinal used by girls, boys and staff

3. Hand Washing Basins and Provision of Soap

Hand washing with soap is one of the most basic elements of hygiene and key in prevention of disease. Although the availability of hand washing basins and soap was more favourable

³ Case study developed by IRC under the SSHE Global Sharing project financed by UNICEF, December 2006.

than that of toilets, 27.3% and 15% of schools surveyed had no hand basins or soap, respectively. This deficiency poses a serious health risk given the incidence of infectious and communicable diseases in Ghana. Most schools were expected to buy these items with their Capitation Grant, based on the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP). If such items were not considered a priority and captured in a school's SPIP, they were not purchased.

4. Sanitation: Regularity of Removal of Rubbish, cleaning of gutters, provision of disinfectant, etc.

Sanitation in and around the schools is the responsibility of the school's management. If schools are unwilling or unable to pay for these services, they do not get done. Some schools claimed they burned rubbish, which is against the AMA's by-laws, while others allowed pupils to carry rubbish to nearby dump sites. This was clearly inimical to the health of the pupils. Most schools simply could not pay waste management companies, or engage cleaners and sanitation employees. The small size of the capitation grant could not accommodate these items.

5. Buildings: Condition of Classrooms, Provision of Electricity, Ventilation in Classrooms, Lighting in Classrooms and Condition of Classroom Furniture

While most schools had classrooms (only 3% of respondents listed this as not available), almost half (45.5%) were in poor condition, while just over a third (36.4%) were in fair condition. Those buildings in poor condition had leaking or collapsing roofs, cracks in the walls, poor drainage, broken windows and doors, amongst others. Those in fair condition were at the very least in need of painting and plastering.

Ventilation and lighting were serious issues because most Accra metro public schools were built with honeycomb walls instead of windows. This left the classrooms hot and dark, especially during the afternoon shift when lessons went on till 5.00pm. Electricity was lacking in 27.3% of schools, while poor in 18.2% of schools surveyed, suggesting that electric lighting would not be available in classrooms. Furthermore, such schools would be challenged by the lack of reliable power, should they wish to introduce ICT and science labs.

Although all school indicated that they had furniture, only 18.2% of respondents indicated that this was in good condition. The 36.4% of schools with poor supply had more than two pupils sitting at the dual desks. In some cases the rooms were so overcrowded that there was hardly space for additional desks.

6. Facilities for ICT, Library and Science

Most public basic schools in the survey did not have facilities for libraries, ICT or science. This situation is particularly discouraging for a country that sees science and ICT as its engine of growth for development.⁴ Science is taught by theory and rote, in the absence of

⁴The Ghana ICT for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD) Policy, 2006, Ghana ICT in Education Policy, 2006

laboratories for practical work. While ICT is a compulsory subject at all levels in the curriculum, most pupils from public schools will sit the first BECE in this subject in 2011, never having handled a computer. The lack of school libraries is one of the factors contributing to the poor command of and performance in English language. Very few pupils have the opportunity to read good material in English outside their prescribed textbooks.

Conclusion based on Survey

Based on our survey, infrastructure in Accra's public basic schools is in a sorry state. Most schools lacked proper amenities and were in need of renovation. The greatest deficiencies were in the number and condition of classrooms and the provision of water, toilets, science labs, library, ICT facilities, sport courts and playing fields. Heads of schools complained that the Accra Metropolitan Assembly rarely or never did any inspections of their buildings, even in Ashiedu Keteke sub-metro in which the AMA headquarters were located. Requests for major repairs fell on deaf ears, the usual response being, 'no money'.



One of the structures of the Achimota Anglian Primary School

FINANCING OF ACCRA METRO'S PUBLIC BASIC SCHOOLS

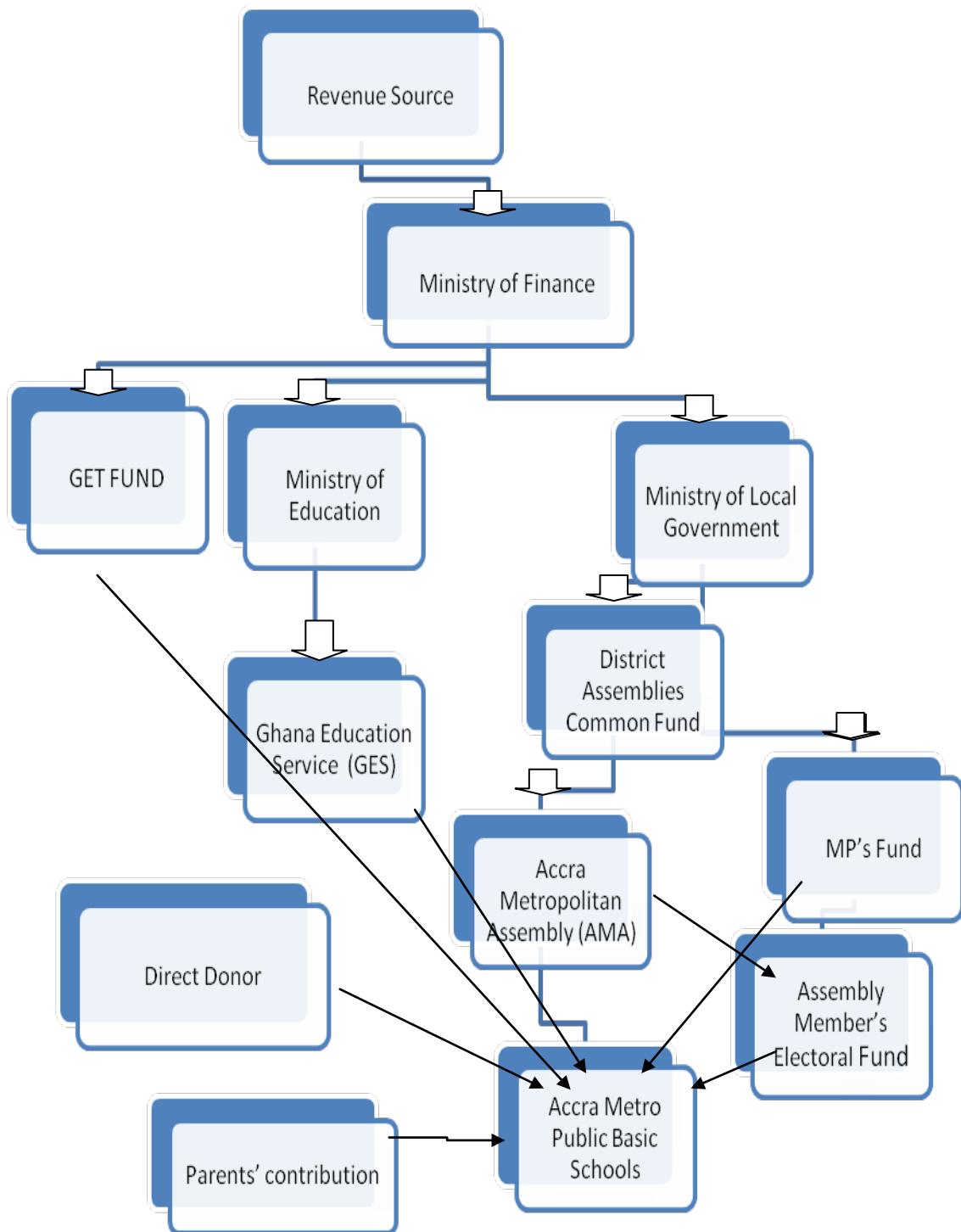
Ghana Education Service (GES), Capitation Grant, MP's and Assembly Member's Fund, Get Fund and Donors

As can be seen in the diagram below, Accra's public basic schools are funded from a number of sources. The main component, salaries, which takes the lion's share of the education sector recurrent budget (90% +), comes from Ghana Education Service (GES), which also supplies basic textbooks (English, mathematics and science), exercise books, some teaching and learning materials and some furniture.

The Capitation Grant, introduced to cover all public basic schools from 2005, increased from GH¢3.00 per pupil per year to GH¢4.50 in 2009, is also paid through GES. This grant was initiated to enable schools cover incidental expenses formerly charged to parents as fees and levies. It covers teaching and learning materials (TLMs), school-community relations, sports & culture, school management and school facilities. Deductions for sports and culture are often taken at source at the district level. Tracking studies carried out by GNECC have shown that instalments often varied widely, fell short of expected amounts and were persistently late in arrival, some coming after the end of the school year.⁵

Despite the Capitation Grant's noble objective to abolish fees and levies charged to parents to make public basic education free, this has not been the practice, particularly in urban areas. Most schools continue to charge parents on a voluntary basis, through their PTAs, for items not covered under the Capitation Grant. These include examination printing and stationery, security, sanitation, major repairs, utilities, emergencies, amongst others.

⁵ National Coordinator of GNECC, launching 2010 GNECC Tracking Survey on Educational Resources in Accra, said eight deprived districts out of 53 were selected for the survey, and Centre for Democratic Development's Public Expenditure Tracking Survey by E. Ampratwum and D Armah-Attah, July 2010.



Limited funds are availed to support basic schools through the Member of Parliament's (MP's) and Assembly Member's (Electoral Area) funds received through the District Assemblies Common Fund. Since there are no clear guidelines as to how much must be allocated to schools, this decision is left to the discretion of these elected officials.

The Get Fund, financed through 2½% of VAT tax, was established in September 2000 with the mandate of funding educational infrastructural development mainly at the tertiary level. However, some funds are allocated to construct public basic schools, in consultation with the Ministry of Education's Funds Procurement Management Unit (MFPU), which provides technical support such as prototype designs and inspection of ongoing projects for payment verification. A small number of Accra's public basic schools have benefited from GET Fund projects in recent years.

Individuals, international aid agencies, faith-based organisations and corporations make donations to public basic schools in cash and kind, but these constitute a very small percent of receivables.

The Accra Metropolitan Assembly and the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF)

Under the Ghana Government's 1993 Local Government Act, the decentralization programme was mandated to be carried out through the District and Metropolitan Assemblies, funded by the District Assemblies Common Fund. Under the 2008, Education Reform Act, Assemblies have been given even greater authority in basic school oversight. For the AMA this translates into being responsible for the erection, furnishing and maintenance of public basic schools in Accra metro.

The above notwithstanding, the AMA has a huge task. Apart from its oversight of basic schools, it is responsible for markets, sanitation, decongestion and demolition, hygiene, city guards, amongst other things. Its revenue sources include the District Assembly Common Fund, of which it is a major recipient along with Kumasi, other grants, as well as income generation from rates, property taxes and levies. In 2009, the AMA had a budget of GH¢42.4 million, receiving only GH¢3.2 million from the DACF. Based on AMA's 2009 budget, the highest amounts were spent on personal emoluments (20%), capital expenditure (36%), of which less than 1% was spent on basic schools, and miscellaneous (37%). Clearly, the maintenance and construction of public basic schools was not a priority.

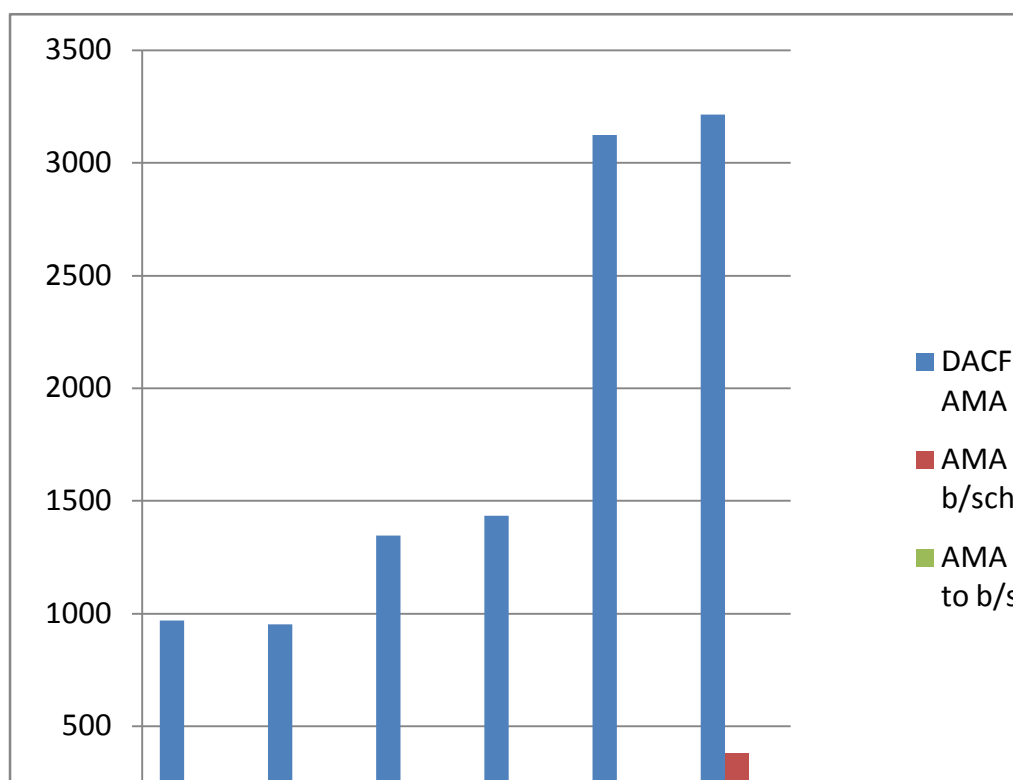
The table and graph below show how funds were disbursed through the District Assemblies Common Fund to AMA, which in turn allocated amounts for basic schools. The figures suggest that while the DACF allocations to AMA rose steadily from 2004-2009, the amounts allocated by AMA to schools varied widely, and were small, ranging from less than 1% to 20% of the allocation.

TRACKING AMA'S FUNDS FOR PUBLIC BASIC SCHOOLS (2004-2009)*

Year	Allocation to AMA by DACF (GH¢)	Allocation made by AMA to basic schools (GH¢)	Disbursement to basic schools by AMA (GH¢)
2004	969,714.33	90,095.00	15,091.44
2005	952,310.61	47,114.00	206,193.85
2006	1,345,823.59	25,312.59	89,732.92
2007	1,433,999.75	135,000.00	100,273.56
2008	3,124,546.43	176,000.00	102,488.61
2009	3,215,379.02	384,172.45	29,105.43

*Data supplied by Director of Finance, AMA, and Office of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF), Accra

AMA Funding for Public Basic Schools (GH¢ '000)



Accra's Public Basic Schools

Accra metro currently has 736 public basic schools.⁶ These schools play an important role in social mobility because they enrol children from the bottom 60% of the income bracket. The other 40% are enrolled in private basic schools that charge a wide range of fees with varying standards.⁷

Based on this survey, almost half (45.5%) of the 33 schools had classrooms in poor condition requiring renovation, amongst other challenges. In October 2008, the former Ghana Education Service (GES) Metro Director of Education stated that 78 public schools in Accra Metro were in need of urgent rehabilitation, which constituted about 10% of schools.⁸ In light of this survey, that was a very conservative estimate. To illustrate the point about underfunding, suppose each of the 78 schools required at least GH¢50,000 (a very modest amount by current costs) for repairs, the total required would be GH¢3.9 million - about seven times the amount that the AMA has spent on schools in the past five years. Furthermore, this does not include erection of new buildings. The cost of a six-classroom story block with offices, toilets and stores is not less than GH¢180,000 at current prices. To construct a proper toilet block with separate toilets for girls, boys and staff would cost about GH¢20,000. If we use our sample as representative, then about 42% of the 736 metro schools require toilets. At GH¢20,000 per toilet block, the amount needed to erect 310 facilities comes to GH¢6.2 million.

It is rather unfortunate that despite the need for school renovation, AMA has allocated virtually no funds to revive dilapidated buildings, or to erect proper toilets for the use of staff and pupils. Even when projects start, they may not be completed. A case in point is the Nima Cluster of Schools, where an AMA Urban Sanitation Project using donor funds to build a toilet block that started in December 2008, has remained at lintel level up to now.

The Shift System

The shift system is the bane of urban public schools because it deprives pupils of their full entitlement of contact hours with teachers. Under that system, pupils spend at least one-third less time in school than those in normal programmes. It also leaves pupils with long stretches of time each day when they are not in school. This is particularly serious at the junior high school stage where pupils are preparing for the competitive Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), held at the end of the final year, for admission into senior high schools. It is probably one of the main factors for the huge disparity between pupils' performance in public schools as compared to private ones.

⁶ Ag. GES Metro Director of Education, Accra

⁷ SRIMPR Division, Ministry of Education, as quoted from Sawyerr, Judith, *Failures in the Provision of Free Compulsory Basic Education in Ghana*, Tinabantu, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2006

⁸ Daily Graphic, 08 Oct 2008

The rise in the use of the shift system can be traced to 1987 when government introduced a series of educational reforms, ostensibly to increase access and reduce the number of years spent in pre-tertiary education. It did this by replacing the primary-middle school system with the primary-junior secondary (now junior high) school structure, thus establishing the nine-year compulsory basic education system. Although enrolment increased following these reforms, in Accra metro there was no concerted development plan for additional classrooms and schools. From the schools in our survey, the oldest Metro primary school, located in Osu Klottey, dates back to 1846, while only two were erected in Okai-Koi South and Ashiedu Keteke in 1987. According to the Chief Financial Officer, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) built only one new school between 2004 and 2009, and that was in 2008, an election year.

Since most schools in Accra metro are organised on the cluster concept, additions are normally added to existing schools as opposed to building entirely new ones. This is largely due to the lack of available space in most parts of Accra. Given that the population in Accra is growing at 3.4% per annum, the number of new basic schools and /or additions to existing ones has not been commensurate with population trends.

Recent pronouncements by Hon. Dr Alfred Vanderpuije, the Mayor of Accra, to abolish shifts in all schools under the AMA's jurisdiction by September 2010 are commendable.⁹ However, the implementation of such a scheme has serious financial implications. According to the Mayor, 71,000 pupils in Accra's public basic schools attend classes in shifts.¹⁰ This translates into a shortage of 888 classrooms, assuming that each class holds 40 pupils. If a six-classroom story block with amenities such as toilets, stores and offices, costs GH¢180,000 (at current pricing), the AMA will have to erect 148 blocks at a total cost of GH¢26.6 million.

In February 2010 the Mayor launched a GH¢6 million endowment fund to seek support from development agencies and the private sector for his initiative to abolish the shift system.¹¹ As of May 2010, the fund had realized \$9155.00, although some companies and agencies have agreed to donate in kind.¹² As a stop-gap measure, the AMA informed a number of school heads that every available space, such as libraries, computer labs, playgrounds, would be used for classrooms.¹³ Because of funding challenges, the AMA is considering the erection of 84 pavilions for junior high schools and 43 for primary schools.¹⁴ Such structures have foundation platforms and roofs but lack walls, ceilings, windows and doors. It was not clear

⁹www.Ghana.com, Saturday , 12 December 2009

¹⁰ Ghanaian Times, 13 February 2010

¹¹ Ghanaian Times, 13 February 2010

¹² www.Ghanadistricts.com

¹³ The New Town Experimental and Achimota Anglican Primary Schools, Accra, are examples.

¹⁴ www.Business.com 12 February 2010

who would be responsible for completion of the structures. Since pavilions are open structures, they are targets for theft and subject pupils to the vagaries of the weather.

The AMA requires huge financial allocations if it is, at the very least, going to renovate dilapidated classrooms and erect toilet blocks, even before it takes on the herculean task of erecting new structures to overcome the shift system. Looking at its track record and haphazard approach to the challenge, the AMA is unlikely to succeed.

A CASE STUDY: THE NIMA 1 BASIC SCHOOL, ACCRA



The original Nima 1 School Block built in 1964

Background information on the school

Nima 1 Basic School is part of a cluster of public schools comprising Nima 1 Basic School, Nima 2 Basic School and St. Kizito's Roman Catholic Junior High School, with an overall enrolment of 1160 pupils. The school, which falls under the authority of the AMA and serves a disadvantaged community in a very crowded part of Accra, was first built in 1964. Since then, the original block has seen no renovation. Classrooms are dark and overcrowded, with a leaking roof, no ceilings, and poor ventilation. Class sizes are between 50 and 60. Through the generosity of donors, the toilets were refurbished in 2008, while a new kindergarten was opened in March 2010. A six classroom block financed by the GET Fund

is under construction to alleviate the primary school shift system. Under the auspices of the Member of Parliament for the constituency, a new library/computer block is also being built.

At present, a shift system operates for both the primary and junior high school sections. The school is, however, lucky to have water and electricity most of the time, and is a beneficiary of the school feeding programme for the kindergarten and primary sections.

Enrolment: Nima 1 Basic School *

	<u>Enrolment Term 3,</u> <u>2008-09</u>	<u>Enrolment, Term, 1</u> <u>2009-10</u>
<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Primary</u>	<u>330</u>	<u>201</u>
<u>Junior High</u>	<u>242</u>	<u>178</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>636</u>	<u>413</u>

*Source: Head Teacher, Nima 1 Basic School

As is evident from the Table, the school's enrolment has actually declined since last year. This was largely due to the decision of the head teacher to take in fewer pupils to reduce class sizes. In addition, some parents withdrew their children because of the class sizes and, in the case of the kindergarten, the poor infrastructure prior to the opening of the new building.

The Capitation Grant

Nima 1 Basic School received the first tranche of the 2009-10 Capitation Grant, pegged at GH¢ 1.50 per pupil per term, at the bank on 15 February 2010, five months after the opening of the school year. The school actually received **GH¢752**, as opposed to the **GH¢620** projection based on enrolment. This was because Ghana Education Service (GES) used enrolment figures from March 2009, which were higher than the prevailing ones at September 2009, for its calculation.

Nima 1 Basic School's School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP), Sept.-Dec. 2009*

ITEM	KG (GH¢)	Primary (GH¢)	J.H.S. (GH¢)	Total (GH¢)
TLMs	20	40	20	80
School-Community Relations	-	55	60	115
Sports & Culture	-	90	102	192
School Management	36	87	69	192
School Facilities	6	25	60	91
Total	62	297	311	670

*Source: Head Teacher, Nima 1 Basic School

The School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) is a precondition for accessing the Capitation Grant. It is divided into five main headings: Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs), School-Community Relations, Sports and Culture, School Management and School Facilities. Based on this SPIP, the Nima 1 School spent the least amount on Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) listed as GH¢80, and the most on sports and culture and school management. School Management normally involves paying for teachers to attend meetings and workshops. The whole budget for School Facilities, mainly repairs and utilities, was the second smallest budgeted item on the plan, and pegged at GH¢91 for the term. Replacement of even one door, if needed, would cost more than the entire School Facilities budget. It could not cover the payment for water for the term, which at Nima 1 Basic School alone would cost about GH¢100.

Although the school had a budget of GH¢670 for the term, it actually had additional expenses that were not factored into the SPIP.

Nima 1 Basic School's Additional Budget: September – December 2009

Item	Amount (GH¢)	Break down	Source
Security	80	Nima 1's share	Churches, keep fit club, private classes
KG attendant	200	Nima 1 only	PTA levy
Toilet attendant	73	Nima 1's share	PTA levy
Examination fee (printing)	296	Nima 1 primary & JHS	PTA levy
Rubbish collection	50	Nima 1's share	Not available
Electricity	20	Nima 1's share	Churches (through AMA)
Water	100*	Nima 1's share	AMA (unpaid)
Total	819		

*The unpaid water bill for the Nima Cluster of Basic Schools was GH¢2,750 as at December 2009.

The table above shows the additional costs the Nima 1 School incurred and how these were covered during the period September –December 2009. The extra amount needed to actually run the school came to GH¢819, 51% more than budgeted in the SPIP. Printing termly examinations including stationery for primary and junior high school pupils was the most expensive item. Only security and electricity were funded by other agencies or individuals. This notwithstanding, security guards have complained about their low level of remuneration and late payment of wages. Since there was no funding for collection of rubbish, it piled up on the compound and was burnt or carted away from time to time. In the case of water, there was an outstanding bill for GH¢2,750 as at December 2009, covering the previous two years. Because of these arrears, the school faced intermittent shut-downs from the Ghana Water Company. If the school decided that it did not want outsiders such as churches and keep fit clubs to use the school premises, it would be saddled with even higher bills. While the outsiders complained about the increase in charges they were facing and could withdraw at

any time, some staff and parents were concerned about the disregard for school property exhibited by the outsiders.

Levy to Parents

The School Management Committee (SMC), in consultation with the PTA, imposes a levy on parents each term based on the shortfall in revenue. The levy is steadily rising and will reach GH¢4.50 per pupil per term from September 2010. The charging of such levies, while permitted by GES, defeats the whole purpose of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE). Despite these levies to parents and charges to outside users, however, the school remains in poor condition because it still cannot afford to complete the major renovations needed to make the old buildings habitable, neither can it offer much in the way of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) to improve quality. It can barely cover its basic costs.

As the Nima Cluster of Basic Schools develops and expands, costs for ICT, TLMs, maintenance, repairs, cleaning, security, water and electricity will increase significantly. These cannot be covered by the Capitation Grant in its present form, nor can the schools keep increasing the PTA levies to make up for the shortfall. This poses a serious challenge as to how the schools will be funded in future if they are to provide quality education and avoid disrepair and collapse.



New Nima 1 School building opened in September 2010 under the auspices of the Ministry of Education financed by the GET Fund

CONCLUSIONS

1. Based on our survey of 33 schools, infrastructure in Accra metro's public basic schools was weighted towards poor or unavailable for water, toilets, urinals, condition of classrooms, and provision of library, ICT and science facilities. The majority of basic schools do not offer a conducive atmosphere for children to learn and develop.
2. Arrangements for financing infrastructure construction and maintenance in Accra's public basic schools through the AMA are totally inadequate. Historically, the AMA has paid little attention to schools. Its share of the District Assemblies Common Fund is insufficient to cover its real needs, and it has failed to allocate any of its self-generated funds to schools.
3. The shift system poses serious challenges to quality education and needs to be abolished as quickly as possible. The Mayor's intentions, while admirable, do not address the financial implications realistically enough for a favourable outcome.
4. Most metro public basic schools rely on a Capitation Grant that has no relation to real costs. PTAs are forced to levy parents to make up for the shortfall, thereby defeating the idea of FCUBE.
5. Accra metro's public basic schools need a serious plan with a massive injection of funding to refurbish dilapidated infrastructure and build new classrooms to sustain the abolition of the shift system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The AMA needs realistic funding and more focus if it is to carry out its mandate to erect and maintain basic school infrastructure. It also needs to allocate much higher amounts to schools.
2. Since the AMA has the capacity to generate its own funds through rents, levies and rates, it needs to explore all possible avenues for revenue collection and to do so in a more rational and transparent manner so that individuals and companies pay their fair share.
3. A more pragmatic budgeting process for basic schools needs to be introduced and funded, either through the Capitation Grant or a better scheme.
4. As a matter of policy, at least 10% of expected national oil revenues due from the end of 2010 should go towards infrastructural development of public basic schools.

11/2009

APPENDIX: COPY OF SURVEY DOCUMENT

GHANA NATIONAL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN COALITION (GNECC)
GREATER ACCRA BRANCH

SURVEY ON INFRASTRUCTURE AT SELECTED PUBLIC BASIC SCHOOLS IN ACCRA METRO

1. General Information

Name of School _____ Primary___ JHS___ Both___ (tick one).
Location (sub-metro) _____ Total School Enrolment_____ No. boys___ No. girls_____.
Average no. pupils per class _____. Use of shift system: yes___ no___ (tick one). Date School
built_____. Name of Head Teacher_____.

2. Toilet/Hand Washing Facilities for Staff and Pupils

Toilet Facilities	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Available	Any Remarks
Water Supply					
Urinals					
Water Closets (WCs)					
Provision of Separate Toilets for Girls					
Basins for hand washing					
Provision of soap					

3. Sanitation:

Sanitation	Good	Fair	Poor	Not available	Any Remarks
Provision of rubbish bins					
Regularity of removal of rubbish					
Cleaning of gutters					
Provision of soap and disinfectants					
Regularity in dislodging of septic tank					

4. Buildings

Buildings	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Available	Any Remarks
Condition of classrooms					
Provision of electricity					
Ventilation in classrooms					
Lighting in classrooms					
Condition of Classroom furniture					
Availability of classroom furniture					
Facilities for ICT					
Facilities for library					
Facilities for science					

5. Recreational Facilities and Compound

Recreational Facilities/ compound	Good	Fair	Poor	Not available	Any Remarks
Condition of periphery wall					
Condition of playing field(s)					
Condition of sports courts					
Canteen facility					

Name of DEFAT_____

Signature_____

Date_____