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Preface

In the past it was assumed that the so-called developing countries would be able to directly assimilate the prototype of an educational system as found in industrial countries as a model of their own. Educational experts from the metropolitan areas were supposed to act as kinds of assemblers and help set up and optimize the implantation of these imported educational subsystems.

Unfortunately, the 'mounting' and 'adjusting' of these imported educational systems after the period of colonialisation proved to be more than difficult. Basic structures such as traditions as well as historical developments in the southern countries are hardly comparable among each other let alone with those structures of the developed industrial nations. The regional conditions and traditions have proven effective against the imported 'rationality'. Due to political and economical conditions the increasing poverty of the post-colonial nations has made taking over any imported models of education and the development of indigenous education models difficult at best.

The result of diverse attempts at importing these tested prototypes has led to some contradictory successes, especially in the African countries. For example, although a well-educated intelligentsia was created for the world market, it left a large portion of the population hopelessly unprovided for in terms of education. The extreme expenditures and great efforts afforded by personnel in the education sector did not bear satisfactory results concerning economic and democratic aspects.

Responsible politicians have been making various efforts to develop appropriate concepts to solve this dilemma. Assistance in self-help is what was expected from development aid in developing and implanting an educational system culturally compatible with the particular region and its special requirements and demands. For example, the Ghanaian government under Rawlings tried to combine vocational competency with formal schooling. This approach was supposed to provide a complete differentiation of the school system, that is to say, an 'Africanisation' of education and an increase of performance at all levels of the educational system was to be attained. In the end, the ambitiously planned educational reform which had begun with much enthusiasm, did not meet all the expectations placed upon it. The following work by Ralf Streicher examines the course and problematic nature of this reform.

International educational research is now confronted with a whole new set of tasks. It will be quickly noted that the attempt made by the government of Ghana to establish an African educational system was not very successful.

It is inadequate to use traditional methods of comparative educational research in order to come up with answers as to why this failed. Was it due to the concept and the manner in which it was enacted or 'simply' because of a lack of motivation by the participants? Were the regional traditions supportive of or detrimental to initiating the reforms? Was it a matter of insufficient resources? Why did incorporating the local responsible functionaries into the educational reform process fail?

Ralf Streicher seeks to answer these and other questions in a totally new approach. He understands the Ghanaian school reform to have been an effort in pursuing to change a traditional system by systematically intervening in the system. By doing so, he raises the question as to what impact a collaboration of the people responsible and the people who actually executed the concepts had on the reform. Upon his observations he has come to the conclusion that the acceptance, success and the dynamics of a reform in education can only be guaranteed when all the involved participants (political leaders, administration, teachers, parents and of course, pupils) are supportive of and co-operative in each other's course of action. It must be the objective of any intervention or reaction made by respective persons to act rationally within the system and to serve the goals of the system. It is only logical to ask which factors, summary of evidence and conditions are sufficient in terms of being in a position to adequately describe and examine the complicated process as has been depicted in the educational reform.

This is not the proper place to discuss the possibilities or limitations faced by such an investigative study. Such a study however, could be instrumental in creating an interaction in terms of willingness and course of action among those involved in educational measures and the reform thereof and in analyzing their independence of each other. This study primarily illustrates the problems, making them transparent and thereby making it possible to conclude discursively. By reading the interviews and their categorization, the reader is able to reconstruct the tension between traditional thought, attitudes, the art of survival and understand the conditions responsible for individual actions. The focal discussion on how this multiplicity could be purposefully integrated into a meaningful system compatible with the goals of the reform is one the exciting results found in the following study.

Prof. Dr. Gottfried Mergner, February 1998

SECTION I: CONTEXT

1. Introduction and Premises

1.1 The Need for Change

In the 20s, Sir GORDON GUGGISBERG, Governor of the Gold Coast Colony (1919-1927) argued for more quality instead of more quantity in education. His *Education Ordinances* (1925 and 1929), which held the principles that character-building and industrial and professional training are more important ingredients in any educational system than literacy alone, were still in force when Ghana gained independence in 1957 and became a republic in 1960. One of his often quoted passages describes GUGGISBERG'S attitude towards the particular type of education that made him so well known to Ghanaians for his respect for the traditional society:

> "... we want to give the best men and women the opportunity of be-
> coming leaders of their own countrymen in thought, industries and pro-
> fessions. Throughout all this our aim must not be to denationalise them,
> but to graft skillfully onto their national characteristics the best attributes
> of modern civilisation. For without preserving his national characteristics
> and his sympathy and touch with the great illiterate masses of his own
> people, no man can ever become a leader in progress whatever sort of
> leader he may become." (MacWilliam/Kwamena-Poh 1978, 54)

Contrary to this ANTWI (1992, 34) claims that GUGGISBERG envisaged that schools organized on the lines of the prefectorial system would inculcate in students those 'highest virtues of civic responsibility, respect for law, order and traditional institutions' which in the long term would be most advantageous to colonial administration. In his view the motives for demanding quality education despite expansion look quite biased to suit the colonial power, and today one can hardly say that the structure and content of colonial education prepared Africans for successful independent and self-reliant economic and social development. Still and despite all, GUGGISBERG remains one of the outstanding persons in the history of Ghanaian education, respected for establishing a functioning educational system, making it manageable and meaningful.

Remarkable developments in introducing indigenous aspects in educational materials were achieved during the 30s: The writing of textbooks

with local background material for schools such as "An Elementary Geography of the Gold Coast" in 1931 or "A Short History of the Gold Coast" in 1935. Apart from that Twi, Fanti, Ewe and Ga, as Ghanaian languages, were introduced in the curricula of the secondary schools by 1935 and added to the list of examinable subjects of the *Overseas School Certificate Examination*. In 1937 a committee was appointed by the colonial government to make recommendations for the evolution of a system of education that would suit the social, economic and political aspirations of the Ghanaian people (Antwi 1992, 36).
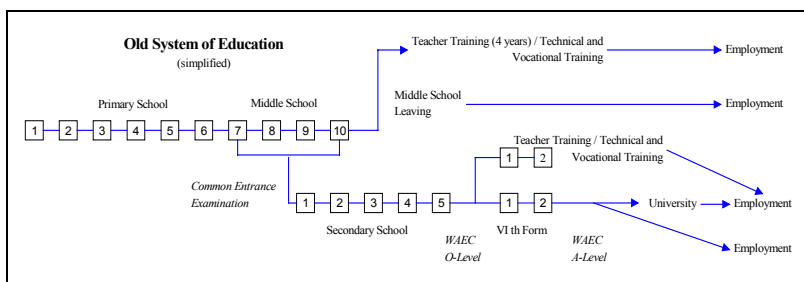
figure 1: draft of the old education structure, based on, British Council 1979, 8

The British colonial education system which consisted mainly of 6 years of elementary, 4 years of middle school, 5 years of secondary and 2 years of upper secondary education (VIth Form) remained mostly unchanged in post-colonial times (British Council 1979, 7f). Primary schools in the rural areas were few and often located far away from the smaller villages. Standard 7 (class seven) marked the theoretical possibility for pupils to move on towards secondary-, teacher- or technical/vocational education. Most students who wanted to enter secondary school had to finish middle school before taking the *Common Entrance Examination*. This was not a systemic 'must' but pupils could hardly make it at an earlier stage because facilities were of a comparably low level in most primary and middle schools. In fact only very few students reached higher standards of education under the colonial system, whose syllabus was mainly based on teaching the three Rs; *Reading, wRiting and aRithmetics* (Graham 1971, 123-124; Antwi 1992, 37).

During colonial days the number of schools had increased to 2,904 primary schools (271,954 students), 57 secondary schools and 19 teacher training colleges (1800 students) in 1950, but still the actual percentage of people who had some schooling remained low (Antwi 1992, 37, 38). Throughout colonial times enrollment ratios raised only slowly and officially

reached roughly 38% during Ghana's early independence (UNESCO 1971, 102).

Within four years, from 1948 to 1952, three university colleges were established, which are fully recognized universities today. Altogether the number of students enrolled at Ghanaian universities was at roughly 1300 in the early years of independence which indicates that only a small number of African elites were given access to a more differentiated higher education (figure for 1961, Antwi 1992, 151). Even 30 years after independence secondary school enrollment of the particular age groups stood at 7% at secondary school, 1.1% at VIth Form and 0.8% at the tertiary level (Antwi 1992, 87).

As the number of schools kept increasing world-wide, particularly after the Second World War, so did the number of students and teachers in Ghana. After the implementation of the *Accelerated Development Plan for Education* (ADPE) in 1951/52, elementary education became free. One of the most important aspects was the institution in 1953 of the *Middle School Leaving Certificate Examinations* organized by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), based on national level assessment, in order to enhance both the examination itself and its certificates. In general the implementation of the ADPE produced quantitative progress by tripling the number of primary and middle schools within the period of 1952-57 (Antwi 1992, 38, 39).

This was at the same time the beginning of an apparent fall in the standard of education owing to the tremendous expansion in education; the lack of facilities at the elementary level and the acute shortage of qualified teachers in primary and secondary schools (Antwi 1992, 39). Despite these developments Ghana was still well known for its high standard of education in its early independent period. Free and compulsory primary and middle school education[1] for all children of school age were features that contributed to this progressive image. When the quantitative expansion of education reached its peak in the 70s, the objective to provide quality education on a nation-wide level became even more difficult.

Apart from the infrastructural problems that emerged, the type of education Ghanaians gained during colonial and early post-colonial times was criticized for not being properly adjusted to the needs of a politically and economically self-reliant and modernizing society. Already in 1967, the need to change the system of education became evident when the *Education Reform Committee* recommended changes; addressing the wastefulness and

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[1] Primary and middle school education became compulsory under the Education Act of October 1961.

lack of relevance of the inherited system (MoI 1967, 64). Due to political instability[2] and a generally deteriorating economic situation during the early period of independence, the general standard of education further declined during the 1970s and early 80s. One indicative aspect for the decline in educational standards, among others, is that almost half of the primary school teachers employed were not professionally trained during that time (Yeboah 1992, 19). By 1983 the country lacked even the minimum teaching facilities, the management and supervision of schools had virtually collapsed, and education failed to attain its objective of improving the individual's life and became almost meaningless to pupils at the basic education level (Manu 1994b, 3; MoE&C 1994a, 8, 13).

In the early years of independence, it had become clear that a different educational content and more qualified people were needed to suit the young nation and to man the economic and administrative sector. In addition to this, it became apparent that over the course of early years of independence the previously high standard of education had deteriorated. Through changing and adapting the educational structure and content the government sought to meet these challenges (ISD 1977 and MoE&C 1987).

> *First Observation:* Already during colonial times the demand for a new structure and content of education was realized. This demand became even clearer in the early years of independence.
>
> The need for change which was previously underlined by laying emphasis on cultural aspects dissolved into the demands of a modern society. The demands of the young nation were characterized by education for all and by the establishment of a meaningful educational system addressing modern developments in economics and natural sciences in conjunction with the society's tradition and cultural heritage.
>
> When policy makers decided to establish a new educational system to meet the challenges of the independent nation, the existing system had already deteriorated.

1.2   A New Concept

The demarcation of the abolishment of the British oriented education system was the approval of *The New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana* (RoG, 1974) as a government policy, which goes back to the report of

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[2]   When Jerry Rawlings took over Ghana in 1981, he was the 8th President within 24 years of independence.

the DZOBO COMMITTEE [3] in 1973. As a first step the *Junior Secondary School Programme* was introduced at nine experimental junior secondary schools (JSS) in 1976. The JSS were to replace the existing middle schools and expose pupils to a wide variety of ideas, skills and abilities, academic as well as practical (MoE&C 1987, 2, 7). Approximately 115 JSS were operating on a trial basis until the full-scale implementation of the JSS system took place in 1987 (Antwi 1992, 96, 97).

The development of the new educational structure cannot be seen as a pure Ghanaian invention; it must be looked at in its formative context. The *Dzobo Committee's* initial report (RoG 1974) made obvious contributions to various contemporary findings. A selection of the major changes, based on the reviewed version of the program in 1987 are listed in the table below.

- Restructuring pre-university education by the introduction of 9 years of compulsory and free basic education for all children from the age of 6, which means an addition of three years of further education for the majority, making access to secondary school easier and reducing the time up to university level from 17 to 12 years,
- increasing secondary and tertiary intake,
- adapting school education to the world of work by introducing pre-vocational and pre-technical programs,
- stressing Ghanaian and African culture as an integral part of school education; adjusting the educational system by reviewing and relating subject curricula to the Ghanaian environment, and encouraging Ghanaian academics to write adapted schoolbooks,
- restructuring the vocational and technical institutes and upgrading the polytechnics and the teacher training colleges to the tertiary level.

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table 1: education policy objectives: cf, MoE&C 1987

In general the new type of education was expected to be more attuned to the needs of individuals, society and economy, and more democratic in order to contribute to the development of the country more than the previous education system had been able to do. Another important issue was to integrate aspects of Ghanaian and African culture into education to help Ghanaians establish a new identity (MoE&C 1987, 1). This is seen as an indicative aspect of the PNDC government policy in reorganizing the role of education and culture in national development planning (Novicki 1987, 15).

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[3] The committee was named after its chairman, Rev. Dr. N. K. Dzobo, then lecturer at Cape Coast University

Considering all these aspects that obviously were accompanied by such changes as raising enrollment capacities in the basic education cycle and furnishing workshops for the practical subjects, writing new curricula and school books, adjusting teachers' pre-service training and organizing suitable in-service training, adapting new administrative procedures etc., the reform must be considered a revolution, turning the inherited system inside out, rather than a mere reform.

The vocational aspect which becomes evident in the new educational concept can be traced back to the adaptation theory which had exerted a strong influence on the development of education in many African countries since the 1920s. One of the most striking aspects for the rejection of the adaptation concept was probably its incapability to prepare the people for political and social change (Bude 1983, 341). But the introduction of vocational aspects to Ghana's formal education system was intended to *pre*-dispose the students to the world of work besides academics and does not leave out political and social education which takes place in subjects like 'social studies' (MoE&C 1987).

Other ideas seem to have influenced the concept through approaches which consider social application or individual freedom as important values. Altogether *The New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana* combines various aspects of conventional reform concepts by trying to adjust the most promising aspects to the Ghanaian situation. The reform of the system is closely linked with the World Bank's structural adjustment program which influences the educational reforms by providing financial aid and consultation in theoretical and in practical terms[4]. Generally speaking, it looks as if the government intended to meet four major challenges which emerge from:

1. An increasing number of people who are migrating to the more attractive urban centers in search of a better standard of living and better job opportunities, which in turn leads to high unemployment rates, also among secondary school leavers;

2. a population with a low quality of education which faces the problems of acquiring the basic skills needed in the professional and sub-professional occupations;

3. an educational system that is neither geared to the needs of the majority of individuals nor to the needs of the society that it is situated in;

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[4] The World Bank's Structural Adjustment Program also has a number of disastrous side-effects. See i.e. Jonah 1987, Green 1988, Gould 1990.

4. the needs of a young and independent nation to develop a national identity and understanding among the different ethnic groups. (Bude 1974; ISD 1977, 339f; MoE&C 1987)

These few aspects indicate that educational development can not be understood to be the sole force propelling socio-economic development, but that it must play an integral role among other policies in national development planning. FOSTER argues that

> "simply increasing the supply of educated people would not, in itself, lead to economic growth without correlative changes occurring in local economies, and these changes should be based on market-oriented - not manpower-based - strategies". (Foster 1992, 151)

As we can see, in Ghana the answer to this problem was the introduction of a diversified curriculum to prepare students for such difficulties in their immediate environment.

After 30 years of post-colonial experience with the British oriented education system the decisive step to break away from it was made in 1987 with the nationwide introduction of the *Junior Secondary School Programme* (JSS program). Since the introduction of the JSS program critics have emerged among Ghanaian intellectuals addressing the inevitable adjustments that have to be made in related sectors. One of the most popular critics of the new system is A. SAWYERR, who held the post of vice-chancellor of the University of Ghana during that time.

> "... Dr. Sawyerr denied any 'scientific basis' for the notion that one can 'predispose' junior and senior secondary students to agricultural and technical work. He contended that unless appropriate developments in the national economy together with a programme of political education and organisation made up for the lack of material incentives with regard to productive work, secondary school leavers would drift into trading, and youth unemployment would persist." (Antwi 1992, 49)

This criticism aimed at the heart of the new program by questioning the theory of predisposition in general and by pointing at the government's neglect to meet its engagement both in educational politics and, particularly, in the development of the economical sector. SAWYERR'S argument that the new system was not adequately prepared and did not have the necessary financial backing was further supported by a) the absence of a sufficient number of adequately and motivated cadre of teachers for the new type of schools and b) government's intention to raise comparably high fees for the use of textbooks, etc. relating to the cost-recovery policy (Antwi 1992, 49, 50).

In 1990 the senior secondary school course was launched after the students who had started the countrywide JSS course in 1987 had finished their 3 year course. With the first generation of senior secondary school students sitting the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE) which replaced the former A-level exams, the introduction of *The New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana* ended at full-scale implementation in 1993.

> *Second Observation:* The new system was shaped completely differently in terms of structure and content, from the bottom to the top. Therefore all related bodies and aspects of the educational system were subject to change.
>
> Ghana's educational reform took place at times of political and economic transition. A problematic implementation and operation of the program was foreseeable from the very beginning because problems emerged from an inadequate financial background, inadequate facilities, and lack of adequately trained teachers. Educational planning was further handicapped by an incomplete structural preparation (no SSS) and an inadequate evaluation of the experimental junior secondary schools.
>
> With reference to the critics of the previous system, the new system seems to be meeting the needs of the individuals, society and economy in terms of both content and structure.

1.3 Difficult Start

When the results of the first *Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations* (SSSCE) conducted in 1993 were released by the *West African Examination Council* (WAEC), students, parents and especially the responsible political class were alerted because of the disappointing results. The results were publicly understood to be disastrous because only 4% of the students who sat the exams were able to pass all nine subjects (WAEC 1994). It must be taken into consideration that the structure and content of the new examinations cannot be compared with the previous A-level exams at all, which were mostly taken in only four subjects.

It is likely that the raw and real figures were used by the new educational administration to make clear that others besides themselves were to blame for this disaster. With a positive attitude towards the quality of the new SSSCE exams the number of students who had succeeded in four or more subjects could have been taken as the official reference group for measuring success.

SSSCE examination figures: Of all candidates (42,105) who took the 1993 SSSCE examination, only 4% passed in all 9 subjects but 35% passed

in 4 or more subjects (table 14). According to government's official policy it was the objective to admit 25% of secondary school leavers to tertiary institutions (MoE&C 1987, 3; ISD 1991, 93) and should the government have intended to admit a quarter of the 35% who successfully sat 4 or more subjects, the number of admittable students (3,728) would have outmatched the vacancies at Ghanaian universities and other tertiary institutions. In the end 1,354 SSS graduates were admitted to the country's three universities; which is 3.2 per cent of the students who took the SSS examination (Adedze 1994, 10).

Tertiary level enrollment: The total enrollment at Ghanaian universities stood at 9,432 students in 1989/90 (ISD 1991, 96). There are no specific figures available for first term entrances but it should be less than 3,728 (see above, number of admittable students). Therefore it looks as if the government was not in the position to admit any more students than the 1,656 candidates who successfully passed all 9 subjects. Even if some had planned for other options there might still have been more than enough successful candidates to fill the vacancies. Had all registered candidates successfully passed exams, 10,526 (which is ¼) would have been eligible to be admitted to Ghanaian tertiary institutions. The question arises whether a more successful SSS Certificate Examination than this would not have been a bigger political disaster in the end.

Based on the above calculation, the government probably intended to distract public attention from the fact that it had not been possible to make the necessary provisions at the tertiary institutions for the promised intake of students. Despite government promises, the economic sector was also not developed or encouraged adequately to absorb enough qualified secondary school leavers as had previously been stipulated by government policy (ISD 1991, 44 ff, 93 ff).

The decline in educational standards was perpetuated by the quantity of students which the new educational policy allowed into junior and senior secondary schools. According to government policy, all (!) pupils at primary school should continue to junior secondary school (JSS) with the introduction of the new program (ISD 1991, 94). These 9 years of free and compulsory basic education were undoubtedly an honorable improvement but remain an empty gesture as long as they are not backed by the necessary input in terms of finance, infrastructure, manpower etc. In addition to this 50% of students leaving JSS are expected to continue their education at senior secondary school (ibid., 95). This massive expansion, although not fully achieved, will probably foster the decline at higher levels.

Some weeks after the 1993 results were released in 1994 a *National Open Forum* was organized by the Ministry of Education at the Accra Conference Center to explore and investigate the frustrating experiences the senior secondary school students had made during their courses. In the following weeks and months many Ghanaian intellectuals published their views and possible solutions to the SSS debacle, mostly in the independent weeklies, but also in the 'government' newspapers. The independent press took the opportunity to criticize the government for its omissions in the past and present. Some of the problems that became evident when the new program (JSS-SSS Express) took off are illustrated as 'Technical Hiccups', 'Financial Coughs' and the 'SSSCE (Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination) Bomb Shell' in the cartoon. The minister of education (riding the train) and the educational administration (GES) were held responsible for political and administrative problems which had often been caused by their predecessors.

figure 2: JSS-SSS Express, The Chronicle, May 1994

The public disappointment and anger can also be understood more in terms of a reaction to the generally declining standard of education, which became apparent at the *National Open Forum* after the public had been made to believe that everything would work out fine. Many Ghanaian newspapers came up with headlines like:

Education Policy - A National Disaster, (Free Press, 20. May 1994),
SSS Disaster - Who is to Blame, (UHURU 1994/6, Accra),
The SSS Scandal, (The Statesman, 24. July 1994)

Even though the press campaign often lacked a deeper detailed understanding of how policy measures are interrelated, the highlighting of quite a number of mistakes and omissions contributed to the government's openness in taking a critical and detailed look at the reform program. Apart from the government's later decision to set-up a reform committee, an immediate reaction to the press campaign was to offer senior secondary school students the opportunity to resit their examination in order to improve

their grades. Remedial centers were instituted in which students were to be prepared free of charge (MoE 1994b, 9-12).

> *Third Observation:* Despite the long preparation period the government was not prepared to meet the problems and implications of the new system adequately.
>
> Abandoning the new system and returning to the old one, despite its substantial flaws, was not publicly discussed. Criticism was raised addressing the system's poor implementation. These complaints (matters of content excluded) resemble the criticism which addressed the post-colonial system.

1.4 Crucial Challenges

The implementation of *The New Structure and Content for Education in Ghana* will face significant challenges meeting the expectations to make educational content more relevant and raising the quality of its transmission. Referring to the question of emphasis in basic education, the relation between traditional - i.e. indigenous - knowledge and modern technological content, and work-orientation in the sense of predisposition, is of great importance (MoE & C, 1987). To provide a country with quality education involves, among other things an infrastructure which is adequately developed, trained teachers and financial supply. Additionally, there are aspects to be considered such as the commitment of teachers and the ability or willingness of government to meet its obligation to make provisions for school leavers to either learn a trade in the informal sector or to improve their skills (ISD, 1991, 94).

As an aspect indicative of government's policy, transmitting and preserving Ghana's cultural heritage has influenced the reforms and entered the subject level, but it looks as if policy makers have taken note of the fact that culture evolves and is subject to change (MoE&C 1987, 1). The number of subjects taught at the primary school (which partly reflected the significance of cultural aspects) has recently been reduced from 9 (!) subjects to 4 subjects. Greater emphasis is now placed on English, mother tongue, mathematics and 'the child and its environment' (MoE, 1994, 19). These changes are due to contemporary findings stressing the necessity to improve pupils' knowledge in English and mathematics (Lavy 1992, 29 and MoE 1994a, 49-51). The quality of education in primary education, which is already low, has become another factor being given consideration. According to government's own findings

> "... it is evident that a large proportion of children who reach the end of primary school are not literate nor numerate. The great majority are not

able to read a newspaper, to write a letter, and use mathematical concepts to solve life problems. The Ghana Living Standards Survey of 1989 reports that only 11 percent of the children of age 9 to 14 were able to write a letter." (MoE 1994a, 8)

The provision of quality education is strongly linked with the growing enrollment rates in the primary school sector, the fresh introduction of the junior secondary schools (JSS) and the problem of maintaining the former standard in the restructured senior secondary schools (SSS). Based on the assumption that 30.4% of the population is between 6-17 years old, and an average annual population growth rate of 3.4% up to the year 2000 (UN 1991, 2), it will become necessary to make massive infrastructural and manpower investments (see chapter 5.4c). Considering the fact that Ghana has not yet benefited enough from the *Economic Recovery Program* (ERP), the allocation of funds for these investments bears the risk of becoming an insurmountable financial burden without middle or even long term support from foreign donors (Antwi 1992, 252).

The junior secondary school which has become a compulsory extension for all primary school leavers now tends to be the 'bottleneck' of the system. There are extreme problems resulting from an overloaded curriculum in the junior secondary school, due to the practical subjects which are meant to prepare students for the world of work. These problems are mainly caused by the lack of infrastructure and lack of trained teachers. The government itself sees the vocational focus for the junior secondary school as not being implemented effectively (MoE 1994a, 20). Previously, many primary school leavers became drop-outs and did not or could not further their education at the middle school level (Antwi 1992, 87, 97; MoE 1994a, 7). By extending the compulsory basic education cycle by 3 years (6 years primary + 3 years junior secondary school) the basic level of education can be upgraded, but this also entails the challenge of providing quality mass-education. In structural terms the JSS has completely replaced the former middle school, and partly taken over the lower courses of the former secondary school, and this has involved taking over the content taught at these particular levels as well.

Considering that the JSS should prepare the students for the world of work and at the same time prepare them to be able to continue at the SSS on a 50:50 basis according to the government policy (MoE&C 1987, 2, 3), the obligation to operate in a very highly diversified manner during the 3 year course becomes evident. In turn, this reveals the need to enable the pupils at primary schools to acquire a sound foundation in the basic skills.

Fourth Observation: Cultural content in education has lost emphasis owing to a shortened curriculum stressing universal basic learning content and skills. The growing enrollment rates and quantitative expansion of education poses an increasing burden on financing, managing, and manning the system which could lead to a further decline in educational standards.

The initial intention to predispose students to the world of work might be realized because neither the school itself is prepared to provide such facilities nor have the educational foundations been laid efficiently for any such provision.

2. Research Design

2.1 Conceptional Framework

a) *Research History*

My initial intention was to examine the influence of the educational reform on theories of schooling, instructional learning and education in general. The assumption was that those who participate in the planning or implementation of the new educational concept would either do this on the basis of a pedagogical concept or draw up one to justify their actions. This assumption was backed by the fact that

> "the integration of culture into education is indicative of the political desire within PNDC for a reorientation of the role of education and of culture in national development objectives" (Gould 1990, 219).

It should have been possible to discover characteristics of this 'reorientation' observing instructional learning at schools or interviewing teachers and other government officials. I stayed in Ghana for about one year in 1994/95 to visit schools, observe classroom teaching and conduct interviews.

While visiting the Presbyterian Teacher Training College in Akropong and Cape Coast University in 1987 and 1989 I was able to get a general view of the manifold problems encountered in the implementation of *The New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana*, which was started in 1987 with the introduction of the *Junior Secondary School Programme* on a countrywide basis. Through Education International's (EI) helpful offices I received an invitation from the All Africa Teacher Organisation (AATO) which is located in Accra. AATO offered to assist with logistics. Another favorable circumstance was that AATO is located at Teacher's Hall, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) building. This enabled me to carry out many clarifying discussions, and to establish contacts with Ghanaian teachers, headmasters and educationists.

Researchers evaluating how policies are being implemented were not very welcome in Ghana's 'revolutionary' past. To gather useful information from officials was often a problem in times of military rule (at least until 1987). A new government policy under RAWLINGS which aims at democratizing the country has led to a favorable change. When asking for materials and conducting interviews at the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES), I found most people quite cooperative.

As a (long-time) guest of AATO I was received simply as a person known to have interest in the process of the present educational reform. I always had the impression that I met self-reliant colleagues who ably reflected their own role in the given situation.

With reference to the initial idea to evaluate the influence of the educational reform on theories of schooling, instructional learning, education and pedagogic conceptions, I conducted a series of interviews on trial and classroom observations in several urban and rural schools. After a series of 7 school visits and 15 short interviews I realized that teachers and headmasters regarded performance in classroom teaching and the development of theories of schooling and education as being predominantly affected by the deteriorating conditions at their schools.

Problems of how to survive in the system and how to ensure instruction even on a minimum level dominated the setting. Most teachers and headmasters mentioned items such as the structural shortcomings of school-buildings, lack of teaching materials, overenrollment, low salaries, lack of transport facilities, and lack of adequate accommodation as the major problems. These problems seem to hinder effective teaching, making it impossible, in certain cases, to provide professional instruction. Therefore the interviews on trial basis made once clear: The more difficult working and living conditions become, the more they dominate everyday life to such an extent that professional performance is in danger and teaching is no longer a means of earning sufficient income.

Conducting interviews alone is probably not a very adequate instrument to explore theories about education and schooling, so I continued with a combination of observing classroom interactions and discussing these 'real' situations with the teachers afterwards. After 10 more trials I considered the situations to be too specific to verify any hypothesis on a broader basis. The teachers were talking about *their* way of classroom teaching or handling the subject-method relationship, based on their very personal or on common sense wisdom about 'how children should be educated'. My intention is not to play down their ability to teach, which was sometimes considerably good, but to emphasize that their individual approaches were not based much on 'conventional' theories about classroom instruction which they had learned during their pre-service training.

When asked about what was recently 'reoriented' in terms of content or education in general, most teachers mentioned the structural changes and the related changes in the syllabus. Certain cultural aspects have entered the syllabus on the content level as can be easily seen in the change of textbooks, but theories of schooling, instructional learning, methods or the role of

education did not seem to be influenced or generated through the 'integration of culture and the reorientation of education' of the government's new educational policy.

It must also be considered in this context that teachers have not necessarily developed impressive or elaborated definitions of teaching methods. Teaching practice is often not based on a solid theoretical framework, but is influenced by the development of subjective theoretical frameworks. (Meyer 1994, 40f) In general the interviews conducted, observations made, and discussions held did not look promising enough to justify continuing research on how or whether the educational reform has influenced or triggered off indigenous theories about schooling or classroom instruction.

Implementation: After discussing this problem with colleagues at AATO and GNAT I decided to concentrate my research more on the problems of the educational system encountered which may or may not have been caused by the implementation of the recent educational reform. Considering the statements students and teachers made about the reasons for the 'mass-failure' of the SSS examinations, the first rough framework was set up to explore the causes for the decline of the educational system. One of the most challenging tasks was to discover the interaction of various factors that contributed to the worsening of the situation.

In general two possible methods of exploring the situation were seen: 1. gathering information available in books, official and internal reports and 2. conducting interviews with people involved in planning and implementing the educational reform on different levels.

Whereas it was possible to buy some books which partially reflect the development of the Ghanaian educational system, searching for official or internal reports was more difficult. The most obvious problem is that much of the official materials are not available in sufficient numbers resulting from poor distribution. Another problem resulted from collecting reports at offices and conducting interviews with the responsible persons at the same time. Sometimes things became clearer after reading particular reports, but the interview had already been conducted. These rather unfortunate situations were hardly avoidable because it is quite normal that a particular person wants to know first why and for what he or she is being interviewed before documents are given out. I regard this behavior not as manipulative but a result of communication conventions.

b)   The Case Study and Cross-Site Aspect

The nature of case studies: According to conventional findings, the case study as such is an approach complemented by applying different methods and techniques. These methods and techniques are an inherent part of to the case study approach which LAMNEK (Vol. II 1993, 4,5) considers to be neither a technique to explore data nor an independent methodological paradigm but situated between both. In his view, the case study is more an approach which aims at gaining a deeper understanding of how certain factors are interrelated by taking into account different sources of information and making use of different research methods. The main purpose of using the case study approach is to identify and delineate characteristic processes, patterns and events in order to derive characteristics which can enhance or build upon structures of general validity. Generalization and its transferability, not singularity, is the final objective. Furthermore, the case study can be used to bind together all distinguishing features of a given scientific problem in order to take/define them as one unit. (Ibid., 7, 16)

LAMNEK'S view about the purpose of applying case studies i.e. generalization as the predominant final objective is probably a bit narrow. STAKE (1994, 237f) has a much broader view and distinguishes between three different interests in studying cases; intrinsic, instrumental and collective ones. Whereas intrinsic case studies are primarily undertaken because the case in all its particularity and ordinariness is itself of interest, instrumental case studies aim to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory. In the latter the case plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of a more general matter. Collective case studies may assemble a number of cases in order to inquire into the phenomenon. In the submitted study aspects of all three types are brought together.

Case versus site study: In the present research *the education system reform in Ghana* was chosen to be studied *in its systemic context*. Both aspects, the education system reform and its systemic context, form the case (figure 7). Traditionally speaking, the realm of case studies refers to individuals, more or less small groups or communities, organizations and social settings (e.g. Chicago School). Boundaries defining the selected case are most carefully described in many studies. This becomes necessary especially when taking the case study to be an exploratory foray into a previously un- or less explored territory (i.e. field). The excursion must then possess useful means of defining and mapping the terrain to understand its concept which conventionally falls under the case study methods (Hamel 1993, Yin 1993).

In the present context the question arose whether 'the study about the education system reform in its systemic context' can be described as a case, a field, or a site and whether using case study methods is a promising approach. Writing up the study I followed MILES' & HUBERMAN'S (1984, 28, 151) proposal to use the terminus 'site'. They argue that a case always occurs in a specified setting, but we cannot study individual 'cases' devoid of their context, which attributes a proper meaning to the terminus 'site'. In this study such argument allows to refer in concrete terms to the 'bounded context' and actually uses 'cross-site' methods in the study of several individual people, each seen as a case. The advantage becomes evident when considering that the views presented by the selected interviewees (figure 5) drive at a coherent interpretation from different angles of the educational structure. The cross-site aspect refers to interviews conducted with particular people each holding a different position within the educational system.

Defining 'the education system reform in Ghana' as the site to be studied implies taking into account the related factors; reasons for change and related expectations, the objectives of the new system, underlying policy patterns, the economic conditions and its related aspects like the availability of the required infrastructure. In short - the systemic context. The 'site' becomes a setting characterized by a variety of components, its relations and mutual dependencies, which resembles the network approach (see chapter 2.3a). However, the site study approach coincides with SMITH'S view who sees the case as a 'bounded system' (quoted in Stake 1994, 236).

c) The Relationship of Theory, Methodology and Research

Any research has an intention or objective which is commonly described in research questions and hypotheses. As explained above, studying a case can be subject to intrinsic, instrumental and collective interests. The outset of the present study was motivated by an intrinsic interest - to describe the course of the education system reform in Ghana and the objectives achieved by the change. When it became evident that a number of flaws had become a hindrance for the successful the implementation of the education system reform, the site study became instrumental. Now, the quest was guided by the intention to take stock of and explore the factors crucial to a successful implementation of the education system reform (figure 3).

Telling the story of the case is a common technique in qualitative research. *In Tales of the Field* VAN MAANEN (1988) presents a variety of styles presenting examples of how best to lay emphasis on what the researcher considers to be important. Even though competent research will be guided 'almost naturally' by what is most important, STAKE critically

contends that it remains the researcher's choice as to what and how things are presented:

> "It may be the case's own story, but it is the researcher's dressing of the case's own story. This is not to dismiss the aim of finding the story that best represents the case, but to remind that the criteria of representation ultimately are decided by the researcher." (Stake 1994, 240)

The course of research: The illustration below (figure 3) is intended to retell the various stages of research that lead to dressing the case's story, assembling the data, and drawing the final conclusions. It illustrates the research strategy, the use of methods and the relation of theory and research.
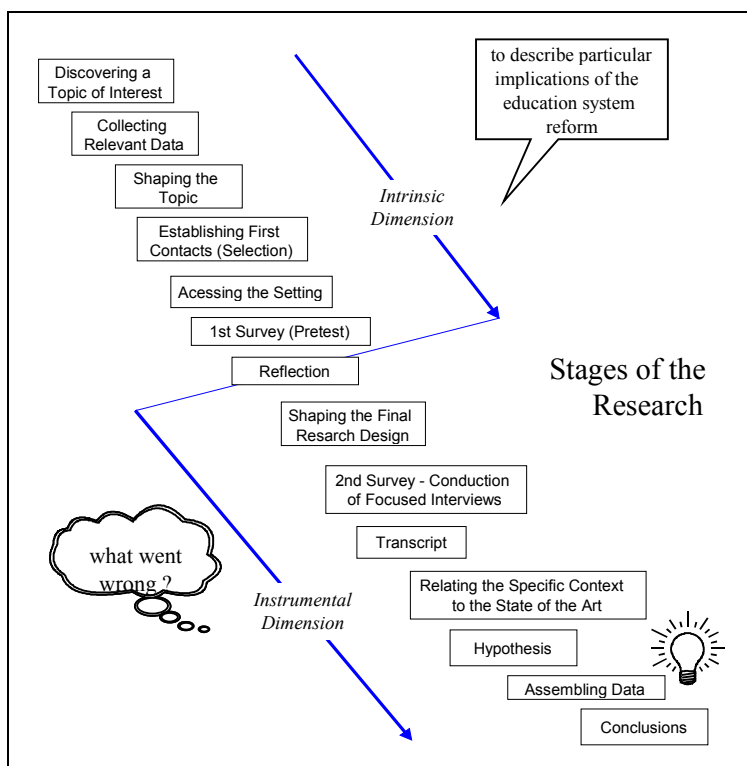
figure 3: stages of the research

Generally speaking, the story told in this research is the story about the introduction and implementation of the educational reform in Ghana. It was approached in its systemic context to reveal its possibilities and limits. The start was marked by the interest to simply explore and narrate on the education system in general and in particular on the recent reform undertaken to make formal school education more relevant and meaningful. As described above, the first attempt to inquire into the influences of the educational reform on classroom teaching (i.e. didactics) did not turn out to be promising. Considering the reasons why and reflecting on people's statements about their (i.e. the schools') problems, the decision was made to reshape the line of inquiry.

From the illustration above it should become evident that the design was becoming instrumental after the aforementioned reflection. Inquiring into the problems of implementing the reform and whether its objectives can be achieved became the guideline of further research (i.e. conducting interviews). Still seeking to understand the case but not to generalize was the first order of business. Nevertheless, in the end I arrived at a point where issues of general interest could be derived from the case's findings; conclusions were drawn through a process of assembling data and relating this data to conventional findings.

Although the dimension changed from an intrinsic to an instrumental one, developing the case's issues, contexts and interpretations remained the prominent interest of this site study. Despite STAKE'S view (1994, 242f) that there is a distinction between intrinsic and instrumental design, the present study developed its instrumental orientation out of an intrinsic interest. This certainly reflects upon the relationship of theory and research.

In the figure below SANDERS & PINHEY (1974, 22) present their view which aims at an optimum relationship - i.e. mutual stimulation - of theory and research. After a number of revisions of initial theoretical suggestions one finally arrives at a hypothesis which will guide the further process of research. As explained above, an explicit theory - i.e. hypothesis - entered the field of research rather late, which is due to the type of case study approach chosen.

Testing theory during the initial research was not done; rather, research was guided by research questions. The described course of 'theory directs research' and 'research tests theory' was postponed until the final stage of writing up the study. If explicitly put into practice at any earlier stage the 'theory directs research - research tests theory' procedure would have been counterproductive. Researchers in qualitative case study should remain open to all views as much and as long as possible, so that his or her standpoint

may be enriched by the input of new facts and arguments arising during the course of research. This is not to ignore that the qualitative researcher needs means and ways of safeguarding the trip which is usually left to research questions piloting the researcher through the site.
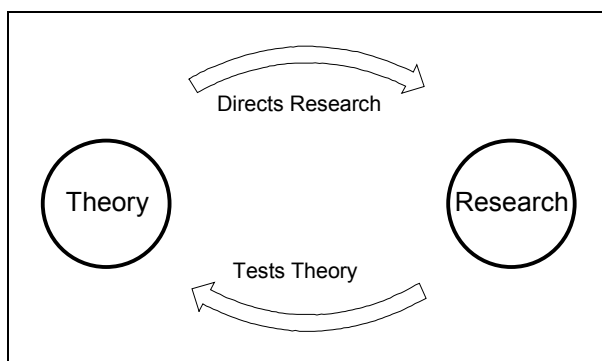
figure 4: theory-research relationship, Sanders & Pinhey 1974, 22

Considering the type of research conducted (focused, problem centered and largely unstructured interviews) it was possible to test theory, and arrive at generalizing valid data by building a system revealing the inherent plausibility of its conclusions. (Chapter 6 & section III)

Methodology: Over the course of the whole study the main methodological instrument was observing the field and conducting interviews, although it was not the only one. To approach the site and *tell the story of the case* different methods and material sources were used:

1. Inquiring into the state of related research findings in order to specify the position of the educational system in Ghana within this context.
2. Participant observation to explore the present state of the educational system and related factors in the site (living and working conditions of teachers, parents and children, the relation of income to expenditures, etc.)
3. Conducting focused cross-site interviews to explore a variety of opinions from different points of view about the problems which occurred during the development and implementation of the educational reform.
4. Writing up a discourse derived from interpreting the interviews conducted in relation to each other and to stated findings.

In the following I will briefly elaborate on the selection of interviewees, the conduction of interviews, and the analysis of findings.

2.2 Information Sources and Database

a) *Interviews*

Selection of interviewees: The initial list of possible interview partners was drawn from a conversation with DAVID HARDING (ODA, Education Field Office). With reference to the cross-site aspect of the study, possible interviewees were selected according to their involvement on different levels in the planning and implementation process of the reform of the education system. Many other interviews were initiated by the interviewed colleagues involved. A series of focused interviews were then conducted over a period of 9 months. The interviews conducted range from approximately 30 minutes to 1 ½ hours. The final list of 27 interviews ranges from classroom teachers and lecturers to policy makers and planers (figure 5). To verify certain impressions additional field visits were undertaken at various schools, three of which were also transcribed. They are intended to give some immediate impressions about some 'real' situations inside the schools. These particular transcripts are documented in a separate booklet (Annex 1, Interview Transcripts) and referred to in the discourse (chapter 6).

It was not possible to conduct these interviews in a certain order, starting for instance with persons who are directly affected by the implementation of the reform (e.g. teachers) to persons who are highly involved like planers; but less affected by its immediate outcome. However helpful a particular order would have been, the problems of communication - i.e. of announcing a visit or fixing a date by phone - were an insurmountable handicap. Not all people had adequate access to a telephone, which was also quite unreliable. The best (i.e. the only manageable) way to establish contacts was to visit people (often several times) and to fix a date. Some people had problems keeping a date which in turn caused considerable delays, further visits and conflicts with other arrangements. Most of the difficulties were due to communication and transport problems and somehow counterproductive to a systematic arrangement of interviews.

The interviews were not very structured because detailed background information for instance about 'what the World Bank Planer does' was hardly accessible and seldom went beyond a very general level. Generally speaking there was a threefold focus on the interviews: i.) to find out exactly in what way the particular interviewee was affected by the education system reform; ii.) to discover the problems either connected to and interrelated with the reform or triggered off by its introduction and implementation; iii.) to inquire

into the prospects of the education system from the interviewee's view in general and particularly in his or her specific field.
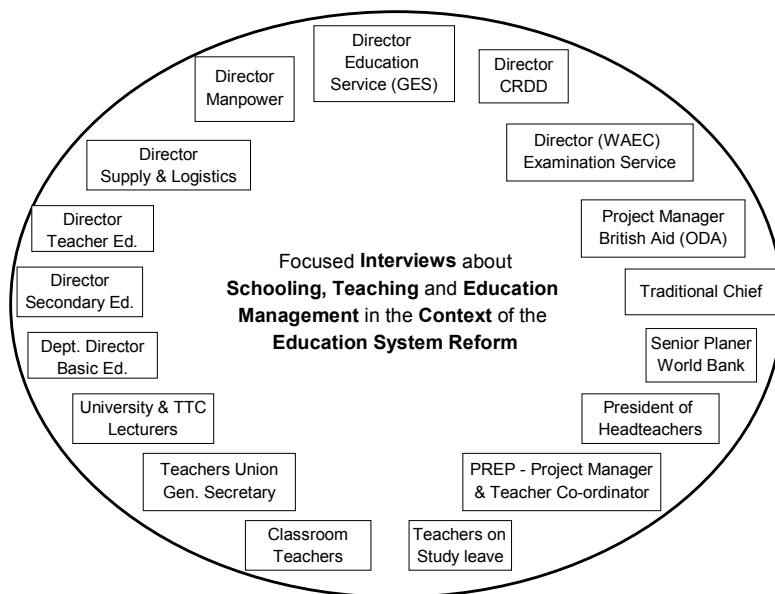
figure 5: list of interviewees

Some remarks on questioning techniques: In concordance with conventional findings (Lamnek 1993 Vol. II, 57f) the style of asking questions was soft or neutral. With reference to the chosen research design I used the problem-focused or information seeking method of conducting interviews. Considering the tight time-table of a number of interviewees, conducting short problem-focused interviews became a must in many situations. Especially when interviewing people holding official posts, the time factor was prohibitive to longer narrative passages.

In the beginning I had problems relating certain answers to their appropriate context which tempted me to give information input in order to verify the background of that answers. In such situations I certainly influenced the course of the interviews and some passages are conversations rather than conventional question - answer (Q-A) relations. In time I became

more conversant with the topic, which enabled me to give short question or statement inputs to trigger-off narrative passages.

Generally, I tend to believe that the researcher - respondent relation is often idealized. This applies especially for the asymmetric situation in which the interviewer gives neutral question input and the interviewee responds freely. In several cases I found myself in situations where interviewees expected interviewer feedback. Certainly this is rather unfortunate and should be avoided as much as possible; but what is to be done when the interviewee seeks to inquire about the views or knowledge of the interviewer about the particular topic? In situations like this I found myself in the dilemma of deciding whether to acquiesce to the interviewee's demand by giving some amount of information input and thereby demonstrate my knowledge about the topic, or not. In situations where I decided to avoid giving input in terms of letting the interviewee know my view or at least demonstrating some competence, almost all interviewees decided to stop providing me with particular information by politely changing the topic and finishing the conversation.

In some few cases, giving up the neutral situation was the only way to be taken serious so as to ensure that the interview could be continued. By giving up the neutral situation I certainly influenced the course of the interview and became a creative factor. This had to be considered when interpreting certain passages. According to my experiences the interviewees in Ghana were highly motivated to find out whom they were talking to. My personal experience was that those interviewee selected for this research had no problem disagreeing with the (sometimes intentionally provoking) views of the interviewer.

Transcripts: Initially we produced a 'word by word' transcript taking into account everything that was spoken. With regards to problem centered conduction of interviews, which lays emphasis predominantly on matters of content, slang and pauses were not included. On the basis of this first version a second was produced which a) corrected grammar, b) condensed redundancy, c) excluded narrative passages which were not related to the topic and d) interpreted specific passages and phrases. (Annex I)

At step a) There are several reasons why we decided to correct the grammar of the interviews: First of all, we saw that sometimes fluent conversations turned out to be almost unreadable when transcribed. This is partially due to the fact that almost all interviewees (with the exception of two) learnt English as second or third language. This was probably the cause for some awkward, complicated, and long-winded formulations. Another aspect is that colloquial conversation naturally differs from written language.

Sentences are begun with a specific idea in mind, but then the speaker switches to something else and the sentence turns out to become grammatically incorrect.

At step b) Answers were sometimes spread over two or more passages interrupted by the interviewer agreeing (i.e. I see!; aha, etc.) or ensuring correct understanding (i.e. Do you mean ...?). In certain situations a new question input had already been given when the interviewee decided to return to a previous question in order to complete or verify a certain viewpoint.

At step c) Intimate narrative passages elaborating on e.g. a particular interviewee's personal relation to others such as the headmaster, the colleague, or a particular person holding an official post were eliminated. The same applies to passages explaining how the interviewee got appointed, etc.

At step d) Sometimes interviewees shortened the conversation by using e.g. 'this', 'that' or, 'these' for specific things or a particular group of persons. Over the course of the interview, or because of the specific situation, it became obvious whom or what the interviewee was talking about. Another factor was that certain interviewees fell into the habit of using 'in-group termini'; lecturers and tutors were called teachers, teachers on study leave were called students too, and pupils/students at school were referred to as students as well.

Due to the difficulties that certainly go with clearing transcripts, the text had to be revised several times. An initial revision was done by a skilled Ghanaian linguist, the second by a Ghanaian postgraduate who was involved in organizing the conduction of some of the interviews and field visits. The third revision was done by the author. The second and third revision were based on the previous revised versions and at the same time checked against the initial 'word by word' transcript.

After the transcription all transcripts were sent to the particular interviewees to be checked. Almost all interviewees agreed to be quoted, but because only 1/3rd returned the transcripts it was decided to anonymize all quoted passages used in chapter 6. Most corrections made by the interviewees referred almost exclusively to grammar and style which reveals that the quality of the transcripts was generally accepted.

Data management: According to the model below (figure 6) the researcher steadily moves between four 'nodes': data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion i.e. verifying data for the remainder of the study (Miles & Huberman 1994, p 428).

Ideally it should have been possible to start conducting the interviews either from the point of the classroom teachers and then continue on to higher administrative levels (from the bottom up), or the other way round. Both ways would have served to systematically draw up a matrix for building upon knowledge and structuring later interviews. As explained before this was not possible.
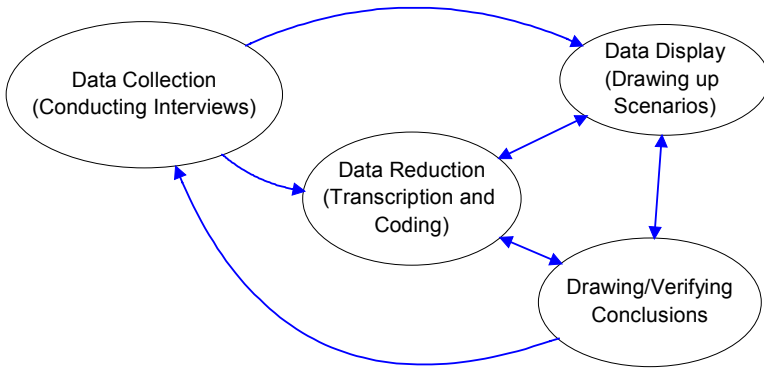
figure 6: modified interactive model, cf: Miles & Huberman 1994, 428

The initial Interactive Model had to be altered or adjusted slightly to provide better access to the process of data analysis in the present study. As outlined by MILES & HUBERMAN (1984, 21f), data analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

Deciding to approach a specific field (i.e. the education system in Ghana) is in itself a first step of data reduction, as is the decision to ask specific questions in focused interviews. Data reduction is then not something separate from analysis: it becomes a part of analysis, especially when considering that the transcription of interviews or field notes implies a certain degree of interpretation.

Displaying data is an organized and structured assembly of information derived from data reduction to help in the understanding of what has happened in the field, and in order to do something on the basis of this understanding; further analysis or action. Data displays can appear in a variety of forms, matrices, graphs, charts or as networks, as presented in the course of this study. They should be designed to assemble information in a more accessible, structured and compact form which facilitates conclusion

drawing much better than conventional, poorly structured and extremely bulky narrative text are able to do. In the present study, interview data is finally presented in a discourse derived from the interviews conducted, and explanatory text derived from stated findings. Therewith the reader is provided with a focused, and thereby selective view. To follow, test, or comprehend the development of a particular discourse, the reader may check the context of particular quotations in Annex I or refer to the comprehensive context of quotations in Annex II.

Over the course of the study the author upheld the inductive principle of not jumping into conclusion, withholding judgments until the final analysis, but as MILES & HUBERMAN (1985, 22) state, conclusions are always there, inchoate and vague at first, then becoming increasingly explicit and founded. Certainly, theories and intermediate conclusions have influenced the course of the present study from the very beginning. They prefigured the research design in the selection of the field, and the choice of particular interviewees.

Computer-assistance in the data management: An early overview about the use of computer software in qualitative data analysis was provided by TESCH (1991). In their subsequent book on *Qualitative Data Analysis,* WEIZMAN & MILES (1995) give a detailed description of the functions of available programs. The program used in this study, ATLAS/ti, is one of the *Code-Based Theory-Builders and Conceptual Network-Builders*.

With reference to its function, ATLAS/ti can be used for coding and retrieving text data as well as for linking codes. By linking codes the user can build code-networks. Furthermore, a network can consist of codes linked to text-passages from all the documents used in the study by assigning them to one hermeneutic unit. MUHR, the developer of ATLAS/ti, sees the advantage of this software in supporting inductive research and generating hypotheses. The focus lies on generating plausibility through coding and linking text passages and revealing how conclusions were drawn from the data. Thereby the program becomes applicable and attractive for researchers using inductive methods or Grounded Theory. (Muhr 1993 and 1996, 246)

In the meantime, certain developers of methods have raised strong objections against the utilization of their methods. So as STRAUSS & CORBIN (1994, 277) who fear that grounded theory becomes diluted for example when it is approached through by using computer software like ATLAS/ti or NUDIST. The problem that STRAUSS & CORBIN reveal is, among others, that most critically minded persons think that some social researchers take software advertisement at face value and believe in the 'theory-building' capability of computer software. However, the problem does not derive from the set of tools any researcher is using, but from his or her capability and

experience in using these tools. Here a warning given by WEIZMAN & MILES:

> "It is important to remember ... that no program will actually build theory for you, nor would you want one to. Computers don't think, and they can't *understand* the meaning of your qualitative data." (sic, Weizman & Miles 1995, 18)

In the present study ATLAS/ti was mainly used for coding interview transcripts to generate code listings (Annex II) which were finally used for structuring the discourse in chapter 6. Because it was aimed at presenting and discussing the views of interviewees on certain topics the codes are more detailed headers and sub-headers for assembling the particular quotations than expressive codes. Thus any reader can retrieve statements or conclusions made in the discourse in either Annex II (code listings) or in Annex I (the con-text), testing and developing theory is then not done by developing code schemes for already existing hypotheses (see e.g. Hesse-Biber & Dupuis 1995) but in a hermeneutic discourse to reveal its plausibility.

b)   Books, Articles and Reports

The materials available about the educational system in Ghana are few and do nor adequately explain the present situation. ANTWI'S book 'Education, Society and Development in Ghana' represents probably the most complex and up to date research about recent developments in the educational sector, but it does not contain much information explaining the problems and their systemic interdependencies which have occurred in the process of planning and implementing the recent reform.[1] There have been only a few essays published in the 'Journal of the Institute of Education, Cape Coast' referring to specific aspects of the reforms and a few other essays which sometimes give contradictory information even about the structure and duration of the new educational system.[2]

Often as a recognized habit, 'teething problems' are excluded in official documents. The 'real' problems are evaluated in papers which are hardly accessible because they are either *confidential* or *internal*, mostly meant to inform individuals or working groups about specific developments. Many other reports are not available because they are only 'intermediate', and thus

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[1]   According to M. K. Antwi, research for this book was done mainly during the 80s.

[2]   The structure and duration varies from one report to the other. See Morna 1989, 37; Scadding 1989, 44; Brookman-Amissah 1991, 11; Folson 1994, 93f, appendix 9.

produced in small numbers and not distributed to all parties involved such as the Teachers Union (GNAT), the universities or training colleges - whose libraries are devoid of any up-to-date reports or other data and information. All this is quite 'normal' in an underresourced country like Ghana, but it aggravates circumstances for research.

Besides their limited accessibility, the official reports pose a problem because their content is in part inconsistent and contradictory. To all appearance, this inconsistency is not intentional nor policy driven nowadays, but rather due to the awkward assembling of facts or misinterpretation of statistical data. One possible explanation could be the lack of professional routine in communication between government departments and outside sources when writing educational sector reports. According to some people's view this seems to be a temporary problem, because genuine communication between the government departments themselves and the outside sources (World Bank, ODA, USAID, etc.) is more or less a new feature in the cooperation between local and foreign experts.

In general EISEMON'S complaints that the neglect of African educational research on the one hand and its limited accessibility and uneven quality on the other is still accounting for some of the problems of the limited validity of educational reports in Ghana are justifies. In his view, recommendations in educational research about Africa largely ignore 'what Africans have learned about their own educational systems' and are too narrowly based on World Bank-sponsored and developed country research (Eisemon 1989, 110f).

Many of the questions arising, for instance why Ghana is statistically adequately staffed with teachers on the one hand, while on the other hand there is overenrollment in the classrooms, cannot be explained adequately by interpreting the various reports. I decided to conduct a series of interviews with people who are involved on different levels in the planning and implementation of the educational reform in order to explore these inconsistencies and to break down some of the complex problems into their related components (that teachers are not teaching is, for instance, not a simple thing although often handled in a simplistic manner). The resulting cross-site discourse shall ensure that the various and sometimes differing opinions and view-points are given due consideration.

2.3 Educational Systems Approach

a) *Outlining General System Theory (GST)*

Premises: Many scientists complain about the omission of interrelated aspects in conventional educational sector reports. These reports usually refer to certain specific aspects like vocationalism and generalism, basic education and higher education, expansion and selection. Some of these aspects are dualistic, others complement each other. Referring to the 1988 World Bank report 'Education in Sub-Saharan Africa ...' FOSTER complains:

> "I fear that the cursory reader may still emerge with the impression that educational development, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, is the number one priority in contemporary Africa. The problem with educational-sector reports is that they are obliged to pay scant attention to the more general economic and political context within which educational development must take place." (Foster 1989, 105f)

This applies probably not only to the *cursory* reader but also to those who are closely concerned with educational reforms and the development of educational systems in general. The neglect of relating economic policy planning to the dependence of work-orientation in education on labor market conditions may serve as one striking example (see chapter 3.3).

In Ghana the deficiencies of the colonial and post-colonial educational system were addressed by a change in structure and content. The out put results in terms of examinations and the state of the system is still rather poor despite the change in content and structure and the general support it enjoys from the public and international assistance. Unfortunately, the education debate has focused on considering single aspects as the main causes for failure again. What one could hear in interviews or find in newspapers reads as below: *If only* teachers would teach, the standard of learning would rise considerably (the donors and government). *If only* there was adequate supply of facilities, we (the teachers) could teach. *If only* the salaries were adequate, we (the teachers) could concentrate on teaching. *If only* the government had listened to us (the teachers' union) things wouldn't have turned out so badly. *If only* primary education was improved (the JSS teachers in common with the donors) ... . *If only* there was one year added to senior secondary school (the SSS teachers and lecturers) ... . In many cases the formulation was really *if only*. Although the quasi-quotations above, derived from interviews, conversations and newspapers, are intentionally somewhat exaggerated, the slant of the argumentation is, generally speaking, one-sided.

These 'if onlys' do alarmingly resemble the previous ones that led to reforming the system; not with regards to the content as such but with

regards to the impression that if the 'if only-list' had been referred to seriously things would have changed for the better. - *If only* more Ghanaians had better access to basic education. *If only* the curriculum was more relevant for economic and social development. This is just to mention two of the significant 'if onlys' that *have* undergone the change demanded - there is more equal access to basic education, furthermore basic education *has* become free and compulsory, and at the present time covers a period of nine (!) years; education *was* made more relevant by introducing vocation-oriented electives in basic and secondary education. - What evidence do we have that the quality of the educational system will improve generally when the most pressing 'if onlys' are adequately addressed?

The conventional findings outlined in chapter 3 do contribute to the clarification of each aspect but they do not offer an explanation for the phenomenon as a whole. A theoretical approach is necessary that goes beyond the 'if only' demands by interrelating the various views, their impacts and consequences within one systemic display.

History and definition: The theory of systems goes back to the ancient Greek philosophers who distinguished between physically existing and man-made systems. A physical system, is for instance, the system of planets whereas 'the state' is a man-made system. After the Enlightenment systems were described not so much in a concrete way, but more abstractly, referring to the way they are interrelated. LAMBERT defines three different types of systems: 1. systems that are bound together by the power of the mind, 2. systems that are bound together by the power of will and, 3. systems that are bound together by mechanical powers (Seiffert 1991/Vol. 3, 99). Generally speaking, a system is an image (Gebilde) that constitutes an entirety and in which connected components embody a certain order (von der Stein quoted in, ibid., 98). This order is much later described by HENDERSON as a state seeking to achieve a 'healthy' balance between the components of the system. He derives his example from the biological organism which possesses

> "a self-regulating mechanism whose goal is the maintenance of equilibrium (health); a condition of disequilibrium defines illness." (Lilienfeld 1978, 13)

In the beginning and mid twentieth century VON BERTALANFFY (1950) developed 'the theory of open systems in physics and biology' which was later extended to other sciences. Sociologists saw various advantages in applying the achievements of GST in the natural sciences to social structures:

> "In another sense entirely, general systems theory offers a vocabulary of both terms and concepts drawn from many different substantive disciplines (i.e., biology, engineering, economics, quantum physics)." (Sutherland 1973 p.19)

Meanwhile the work of a great number of scientists has proven that the general system theory works as an applied approach (e.g. Parsons 1970; Buckley 1967); others like WELLMAN & BERKOWITZ (1988)[3] have approached the 'field of related components in social structures' through 'networking'. They analyze and map the ordered arrangements of relations that are contingent upon exchanges among members of social systems, describe their patterns, and seek to uncover the effects of these patterns on the behavior of the individual members of these structures - whether people, groups, or organizations. (Wellman/Berkowitz 1988, 3) Despite obvious similarities, this approach places less emphasizes upon systemic coherence and steady state or 'equilibrium', concentrating more on the relations between and properties of connected units in social structures. Referring to the development of building theory in sociology, the authors claim that although the concept of social structure has long played a role in sociology, systematic methods for analyzing concrete social structures were less developed.

> "Instead of looking at the world in terms of *structures*, mainstream sociologists have tended to think in terms of *categories* of social actors who share similar characteristics ..." (sic, Wellman/Berkowitz 1988, 15)

The authors conclude that conventional research questions, an exaggerated example would be 'do blondes have more fun?' (Marylin Monroe!), and their corresponding answers, mislead the sociologist into studying the attributes of aggregated sets of individuals rather than the structural nature of social systems. In their view, a better way of looking at things is to view relations as the basic units of social structure and groupings of similarly situated actors as the result. (Wellman/Berkowitz 1988, 15) Accordingly, the crux of sociological practice is that rather than working *from* social structure, sociologists often work *toward* it (ibid., 2). Consequently WELLMAN & BERKOWITZ argue for a 'network approach' in analyzing social structures.

The advantage of the network approach, which in my view can be related closely to GST, lies probably in its 'softer' applicability to social

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3 Wellman & Berkowitz have assembled a wide range of research (from 'understanding social structures in kinship units of the Kalaharian !Kung' to 'form and substance of world economy analysis') exposing the reader to 'think structurally' in social sciences.

structures. First of all, networks are much more open to mapping or assembling connected components or units than systems because here components do not have to be connected in a way that guarantees 'the survival' or 'equilibrium' of the structure. Secondly, using the term *network* instead of *system* establishes a certain distance towards specific terms and definitions used in system theory language which are not generally applicable to social structures. One point at issue is for instance the definition of 'equilibrium' in social systems. Referring to the 'nature' of open systems HOMANS for instance rejects the structure-function model based on biology arguing that:

> "A social system does not impose control, it is the control. Systems do not seek equilibrium and do not have problems; they do not give rise to structures because they are 'needed' by the system." (Lilienfeld 1978, 204)

The system in sociology is a construction, the system of a biological organism is a being. Equilibrium, if denoted as 'the healthy state' of social systems, is then a definition made by human beings. Correspondingly, what is considered to be 'healthy' can be borne of both (so-called) objective and subjective impressions according to people's attitudes and views. Consequently different interventions with different impacts are possible to achieve a certain 'equilibrium' in social systems. Equilibrium is therefore not an immanent and independent feature of the social system as it is in living organisms but subject to people's attitudes, views, ideologies or policies. The use of general system theory in applied models is subject to this limitation.

> "General system theory, then, will be a discipline that develops, tests, and demonstrates laws that apply equally to a variety of fields." (Lilienfeld 1978, 25)

b) *Applying GST to Educational Systems*

The case or field to be explored in this research is the network of components related within the context of the educational system in Ghana. The researched system exceeds the boundary of the educational system insofar as certain components such as the role of the community in educational policy implementation, the influence of teachers' living conditions as related to posting practice, and environmental conditions are included. Applying general systems theory obliges the researcher to connect, interrelate and complement the formerly separated views (cf, chapter 3) when approaching the arrangements of the system. The model applied follows BERRIEN'S general definition of a system as a *set of components* interacting with each other and furnished with a boundary, filtering both the

kind and rate of flow of *input* and *output* into and out of the system (Berrien 1968, 14f).

Applied system theory in education has mostly referred to pedagogical issues, exploring the role of education in the social context and whether structural and functional models can be applied to pedagogy (Schäfer 1983); researching school as a systemic institution and its consequences on organization and pedagogy (v. Saldern 1991). In the given context GST shall be applied to the systemic context of education which includes all contributing components that make an educational system work.
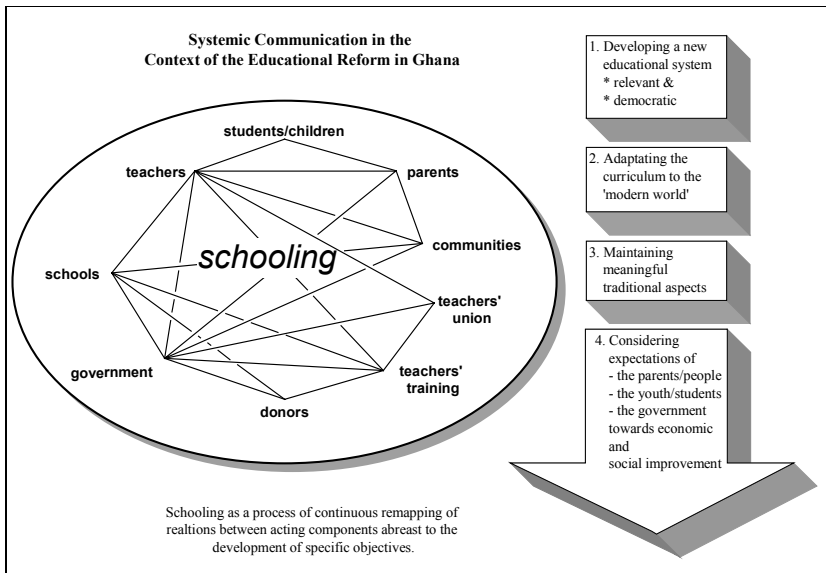
figure 7: systemic communication and schooling

The systemic display above arranges various components gravitating around an abstract - almost virtual - center 'schooling in the context of the educational system'. In reality this center consists of the relations between various components. Indeniably there is a certain hierarchy among them. From one point of view government's educational policy that defines 'rules' and provides 'structures' can be more important than the type of training that teachers receive and this will surely influence instructional learning. Others might see it the other way round; but, generally speaking, an educational system would neither work without rules and structures nor without people who know how to teach. The number of components arranged in the system

is related to the minimum number of components that is required to make it work. Decisive for the appearance of a certain component in a system is then a components ability to influence the system or its obligation to act as part of the system, not its value or rating within a given hierarchy judged from one particular viewpoint or another.

Some aspects of change, content, and expectations are illustrated in the arrow-symbol. These aspects do not necessarily reflect the correct course of socio-political development, but are to illustrate that the relations within the system are subject to change insofar as they are dependent on decisions made on a higher level. The system which had existed for a longer period of time had always been subject to change. Some components were recently added, like the role of communities in financing schools in the basic education cycle; other components like teachers' training underwent alterations, for instance the switch from promoting a lecture-method to giving preference to child-centered teaching.

The rapid change of socio-political and economic conditions is another influencing factor for changes, developments and adaptations in the educational system. With reference to the continuous change and adaptation to new environments in open systems LILIENFELD maintains:

> "Structure is never self-maintaining; a perpetual expenditure of energy is required to maintain its 'steady state;' discrepancies and pressures lead to continual remapping and reorganization." (Lilienfeld 1978, 208)

Limitations: As is clear from the above quotation, the state of the system is related to a certain 'expenditure of energy', which in this case is resources in terms of money for infrastructure and manpower. Providing energy, then, is a mixture of governments', local communities' and individuals' inputs. Discrepancies in classroom teaching can for instance derive from varying qualities of teachers' training and teachers' commitment (which are most often related to their salaries), the financial ability of communities to furnish school buildings for basic education and so on. Remapping and reorganization can always transform a given educational system within more or less preferable parameters. The results may be good or bad, desirable or unfortunate, predictable or unforeseeable. Using or applying a systemic approach will not enable us to qualify these developments, but rather force us to take sides with positions based on personal political or 'world' views. These views are the underlying axiomatic patterns which define the desired state of the system.

Axiomatic patterns: It should be considered that any educational system is based on such fundamental or basic convictions (axioms), normally

defined or prescribed by education policies. Defining such axioms (e.g. basic education must be universal, free, and compulsory) lies within the responsibility of educators, social scientists and policy makers. These axiomatic patterns are the underlying parameters of applying GST to the education system approach. Their development, and finally their nature, is surely a result of the socio-political environment and the historical context of a certain education system. In the case of Ghana these axiomatic patterns are, for instance, related to the objectives formulated in the particular education policies (table 1-3). Certainly their validity and nature shall become more transparent in a systemic context. It is not the task of an education system approach to examine their justification, but to make transparent their nature and impact on the educational system.

Probability: Another critical factor is the probabilistic nature of systems. A given probability would make system developments predictable. The example below shall demonstrate the probabilistic nature in simple mechanical systems in order to make clear that the principle of probability is not appropriate when describing social systems:

> "The path of a billiard ball struck by another with a given force, rebounding from a cushion of given elasticity, and rolling over a table having a known coefficient of friction, can be determined with high, but nor perfect, precision." (Berrien 1968, 49)

Certainly, aspects of probability can be found in many social systems, but when considering the in and out puts to systems, some of which are more rigidly determined by their inputs and components than others, social systems are quite complex, based as they are upon human beings' attitudes which do not have to be logical and predictable as for instance is the 'cushion of given elasticity' in the above example.

To change social systems through inputs, as 'the path of the billiard ball' can be influenced through a 'given force' and the 'known coefficient of friction' is theoretically possible but interventions within social systems cannot be calculated in such a predictable way as is possible in mechanistic systems. Not any intervention which could possibly make the system work differently or better can be made. There could be favorable or unfavorable side effects on related components (e.g. groups and individuals) which have to be considered. Therefore the kind or quality of the decision which a certain individual or group has to make becomes the point at issue and this decision can be favorably or unfavorably related to the axiomatic parameters defined on a different level. Related 'decision theory', which is a helpful instrument in examining adequate solutions in mechanical, physical or even

in biological models (Berrien, 93ff), has then to consider the extended context of social systems.

c) Research Questions

In general, the research was guided by three sets of questions. The first set of country-specific questions was derived from the introductory observations and country-specific aspects, which were a guideline for conducting interviews, collecting reports, articles, data or equivalent materials. The second set was derived from the contextual findings to complement (and enrich) the present state of research. Both sets of questions guided the assembling of interpreted interviews in the discourse by relating them to country-specific aspects and the state of research. Finally the question as to what extent we can speak of an educational 'system' shall be approached. It is likely that not all components are systemically related, which then makes systemic intervention unpredictable (if not useless) because foreseeable feedback is lacking. The 'system' then is more a network in which components are related but not mutually dependent so as to maintain or aspire to a prescribed 'equilibrium'.

1) Country-specific research questions:

- In what ways were different levels of educational planning and implementation (schools, teachers training, the educational administration, etc.) affected by the reform?
- What are the problems and challenges related to basic and secondary education? What are peoples' attitude towards the new system? What are their explanations for problems and what solutions do they think of?
- What are the prospects of pre-vocational education in basic education and secondary schools? How can problems which are arising be met?
- What are the reasons for the disappointing results of the 1993 Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination and how are these reasons interrelated?
- What are the reasons for so many problems of implementation after almost 20 years of preparation and planning? What are the implications for future educational planning?

2) Questions derived from findings:

- What universal achievements have influenced Ghana's new educational system in terms of structure and content? Do indigenous aspects (in terms of content, instruction, or organization management) in turn enrich the universal system? Is there systemic communication in both directions? (Chapter 3.1)

- Do the World Bank proposals (1988 & 1991) offer manageable i.e. realistic educational policies in general (decentralization, reducing teachers' salary, extending class sizes, etc.)? In what way does Ghana have to adjust these new policy guidelines to foster equity and expansion while improving quality and relevance? (Chapter 3.2)
- Is there a shift from vocational preparation to general education? What are the reasons? (Chapter 3.3)
- How is the primary/basic education sector addressed in Ghana's reform and new system? What are the problem areas? (Chapter 3.4)

3) Questions derived from the education system approach:

- To what extent is the educational system in Ghana developing in accordance with systemic feedback, where do systemic 'dead ends' indicate simpler network structures?
- Which are the components that are not mutually related within the system's 'equilibrium'. Which ones are these related to on a one way basis, thus tending to represent more non-repercussive network relations?
- How can the system be reframed and which interventions would be suitable to achieve meaningful and sustainable development and on what patterns must this reconfiguration be based?

2.4 Hypotheses

Axiomatic patterns i.e. basic convictions that induced the change of the education system lost their importance during the course of the implementation of the reform. This is due to a number of practical problems which emerged while executing the particular reform policies were being executed.

Generally speaking, the structure and content of the reform implemented has hardly been questioned by the parties involved. However, divergent perceptions and different motives in attempting to solve the problems arising have had a negative influence on addressing them adequately; some of which have been caused by the recent reform while others have existed for a long time. Whereas government planers, for example tended to value the reform based upon a more ideological basis; teachers, students, parents, and communities valued success in terms of its real and immediate effects; foreign planers have probably emphasized the practical and financial aspects of implementing the reform.

Conventional approaches (vocationalism, universalism, rate of return, etc.) in 'third world' educational research have for the most part been related to single or small groups of problems. The scope of problems in the educational system exceeds the boundary of conventional research and is

comprised of other aspects, such as the involvement of communities in local education policies, the living and working conditions of teachers and students, and divergent views in general terms and in terms of educational policies. Further developments in the educational system will have to consider the interrelation of these aspects.

The course of the education system reform in Ghana reveals that the implementation of the reform suffered from the fact that a number of components and systemic nodes were not addressed by adequate educational policies. Certain components and nodes did not respond in concordance with the defined 'equilibrium' of the system and they were not reconfigured, due to that fact that criticism raised for instance by NGOs and a number of skilled academics was not considered. But a system must respond correctly to feedback, otherwise developments which influence the system's equilibrium are neglected and the whole configuration becomes faulty - the country's prescribed educational goal is not achieved. Only if communication within an open system, as an education system certainly is, works, and if feedback and responses are dealt with appropriately can the system be monitored and controlled by the right kind of interventions. These interventions could be a general reform but also specific educational policies and administrative regulations that induce changes.

> **First Hypothesis:** The course of the reform reveals that a number of components and relations of the education system were not adequately addressed by educational policies; some systemic nodes were completely ignored.
>
> Despite its objective, the education system reform was implemented only on the school level; and only to a very limited extent. Applying systemic communication techniques and appropriate feedback controls to its education management strategies will enable the government to achieve the goals of the education system reform and thus avoid further misleading developments.

In what follows three development trends shall be considered: 1. Due to a major change in vocational education policies and a lack of skilled teachers and facilities, the government will increasingly have to play a leading role in encouraging profit and non-profit organizations to take on the responsibility of fostering out-of-school technical and vocational education and training. Administrative assistance and incentives will have to be ensured by the government; 2. Cultural and national (tribal) emphasis will loose its importance as the 'modern universal world' is explored and identified partly

as a heritage of the indigenous people's immediate environment and as a component decisive for further development. Distinguishing and preserving the meaningful components of the traditional heritage so that people can develop and maintain their cultural and national characteristics and identities will be a point at issue; 3. Formal schooling will be considered as an interface to 'the world of work', but preparing pupils for vocations will take place out of formal school. Continuous feedback from the informal sector will be necessary to relate formal schooling content to the future needs of students.

Quality education is dependent on an adequate infrastructure and enough skilled teachers. When these investments cannot keep pace with the fast growing enrollment rates universal primary or basic education (UPE) will be in danger of becoming a fiction because: 1. The majority of students will attend public schools but apparently not learn effectively because of lack of materials and inadequately trained teachers. 2. A high quality system will be established within the new system, consisting of a few select government schools and an increasing number of private institutions supplying privileged groups with 'adequate' basic and secondary schools to maintain international standards of schooling.

> **Second Hypothesis:** Due to the lack of adequately trained teachers and lack of facilities, in-school education will increasingly (and again) emphasize general education, exposing students mainly to general academics and to a less (but practicable) extent to vocational and technical practice.

Some of the World Bank's policies (World Bank 1988) for adjustment, revitalization and (selective) expansion e.g. increasing class-size, not providing teachers with more than general secondary education, appear inappropriate under the given circumstances. It will be imperative to carefully adjust and revise these policies in the given context.

Another important aspect is that decentralization policies have immediate affects on the educational sector. Despite the policy guideline, many local communities, especially in deprived areas, will not be able to cater for their basic education schools. Until local communities are in a position to generate sufficient income for expenditures in the educational and other sectors, the central government will have to continue to provide basic facilities. Better organization and management will be needed at the district and local level to implement educational policies. Therefore skilled administrative staff, politicians, and intellectuals will have to move out from

the center to the periphery- a movement which is certainly related to developing adequate living conditions in the presently deprived rural areas. This, in addition to policy measures designed to meet both the challenges caused by demographic pressure and economic strains adequately and also to enable local communities to cater for their basic education institutions, presents one of the most important challenges to be met in the educational sector.

Third Hypothesis: Despite government's effort to provide universal access to schooling, democratic quality education is in danger of becoming an opportunity for only a selected few. The long term success of the reform will then depend on increasing the financial abilities of the communities to provide the basic facilities for their children, changing local policy structures in order to make parents and the community an integrated part of school development and school supervision, and fostering the change of impeding attitudes and views.

Such developments can only be achieved when the decentralization policy is supported by programs assisting the local communities to become functional and distinguished bodies. Only then can a meaningful and sustainable apportionment of responsibilities and competences between the central government and the district authorities be effected.

3. State of the Art and Context

3.1 Universal and Indigenous Aspects in Education

The meaning of the term universal is ambiguous in itself. In this context it brings up first the question as to whether formal education was a universal achievement or an European heritage to certain developing countries and to Ghana in particular. Secondly, there is the question of whether certain determinants of formal education such as schools, the division into classes and levels, teaching according to a prearranged curriculum, a systematic differentiation between teaching and learning, a state-controlled, public, legal regulation of educational practices can be universal achievements (Adick 1992, 244). Furthermore curricula, especially in primary schools, seem to develop towards a universal concordance (Meyer et al. 1992)[1] which supports the thesis that the parameters of the modern school are similar worldwide.

a) *Premises, Determinants and Prospects*

Premises: Claiming that the development of the modern school is a 'universal' achievement presumes the existence of autochthonous or indigenous phenomena in education. Otherwise we can hardly speak of universal but rather of adopted developments. With regards to the case of Ghana ADICK has made clear that the Fanti confederation had established an 'autochthonous' educational system without copying from European models in the 19th century (Adick 1991, 656).

By taking her example from the Fanti-Confederation, ADICK proved that the indigenous people took up the idea to establish a formal public education system without being encouraged by or consulting the European powers. Referring to the Fanti-Constitution passed in 1871 she outlines that:

- Schools with skilled teachers were to be established for all children of the confederation (§ 8, 4);
- Schools under state control were to be established in the particular districts (§ 21), which were to be complemented by "normal schools" for vocational training (§22);
- Girls' schools were to be opened with specially recruited female teachers (§ 23);

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[1] The study of Meyer et. al. refers especially to primary school curricula and certain subjects like mathematics.

- The financing of the schools should be done by public means and under assistance of local initiatives (§ 24);
- Where there were community schools, the local authorities were to ensure the daily attendance of all children between the ages of 8 to 14 (§ 25);
- In the government schools school supervision should be in the hands of regional supervisors (§ 36, 6); (Adick 1991, 644f).

The crucial point in ADICK'S argument is that the development of such an educational system was linked to the Fantis' own attempt to establish a new political structure among their various clans as a reaction to the surrounding political and economic pressures. This reaction had become necessary because the Fanti had to consolidate their own rule in the face of two pressure-groups, the British who were seeking economic expansion on the one and the Ashantis who were trying to gain regional supremacy to maintain their political and cultural independence on the other hand. The adaptation of the contemporary system of education in the sense of modernizing through formalization was regarded as an essential and integral part of the reaction. (Adick 1991, 656)

The reinterpretation of this historical event supports the thesis that establishing formal education is not solely a European invention, but that it is likely to take place under certain circumstances. It is an autochthonous i.e. indigenous development in the sense of meeting a particular challenge in concordance to peoples' own convictions. ADICK'S thesis is therefore in line with the findings of other authors who consider the ontology of education - its structure and legitimacy - not to be a European or national-cultural, but a global, transnational phenomenon, which needs to be analyzed on the basis of world cultural developments (Boli/Ramirez/Meyer 1985; Boli/Ramirez 1987). They claim that there are certain characteristics of modern mass education which have appeared globally within approximately the past two centuries. Their viewpoint is receiving increased acceptance nowadays:

> " ... the striking thing about modern mass education is that almost everywhere in the world the same interpretive scheme underlies the observed reality. Even in the most remote peasant villages, administrators, teachers, pupils and parents invoke these institutional rules and struggle to construct schools that conform to them." (Boli/Ramirez/Meyer 1985, 147)

Determinants: Based on these findings certain determinants of the modern universal school can be defined according to its type of organization, structure and content. With particular reference to the modern school ADICK has outlined the characteristics as:

" 1. a more or less differentiated school system to provide a general education, with corresponding subdivisions into school classes, levels, types and graduation degrees;

2. teaching according to a more or less intensively planned, state-sanctioned curriculum, the content of which is an intentional, legitimized and prearranged selection from the universe of possible knowledge;

3. a systematic differentiation between teaching and learning, so that a professional staff of teachers appears before a school class -i. e. a number of pupils - at scheduled time intervals - i. e. school periods or lessons;

4. a state-controlled, public, legally regulated educational practice, which reflects the respective state of the social balances of power." (Adick 1989, 45 and 1992, 244)

If the attempts at "Explaining the Origins and Expansion of Mass Education" (Boli et. al. 1985) have led to the acceptance that the modern school is a universal achievement (Adick 1992), the point of issue might be, in the end, to what extent this implementation can be achieved in terms of effective instructional learning taking place at school and quality out-put of education.

As stated above, the existence of indigenous or universal aspects are essential parts of developing a universal approach, but somehow *indigenisation of education* remains a nebulous and dubious term. It also suggests that there are autochthonous methods of instruction or ways of organizing schools besides the internationally known ones. MOCK (1979, 286), for instance, attempted to prove the Meiotic or Socratic method as a specific African dialogue and the same time he assumes that this methodological approach is rooted in the African world-view and oral history . From this point of view one could be tempted to regard for instance story-telling and learning by imitation as indigenous methods of transferring content as well; but this of course runs contrary to MOCK'S intention. With reference to the traditional relation between elderly persons, as teachers usually are, and children/students, critical reflection about matters of content are likely to become suppressed when teacher-student interactions are influenced negatively by this setting.

"It is true that some of our proverbs seem to suggest that 'the curious child does not grow into a fool'. ... But in practice, our people generally stick to the philosophy behind saying that 'the child who can bite large mouthful of food is not entitled to big talk' ... Children are shut down if they ask 'too many' questions. ... Is it true, then, that enquiry has not been part of our traditional heritage?

> Our schools have also been frowning upon child talk. There is a traditional belief among teachers that if the children talk then discipline will break down." (Blege 1986, 81)

Another criticism is that indigenisation could mean neglecting the extended context of people's political and cultural milieu. AGYEMAN therefore argues that:

> "Africanisation of formal education ... should take the form of cultural fusion of the various cultures experienced in Africa and the modernization of both formal and informal education to meet the present and future needs of the individual African states." (Agyeman 1993, 24)

Following the argument, indigenisation, as the attempt to adjust the content of what is taught at school to the demands of society, was nothing other than the development of an educational system and particularly of curricula with special attention to a country's needs. Further on in this context the debate on the question of cultural relativism and universalism will play a role. Here, the point at issue is the danger of adjusting the learning content to the indigenous environment without considering the global or universal context on the one hand.

> "If cultural relativism is used in extreme forms what results is the denial of the existence of common characteristics between communities at the level of cognitive functioning. This would justify and legitimize forms of cultural isolation." (Vedder 1994, 13)

On the other hand the introduction of global curricula may hamper learning when the indigenous learning context is not taken into sufficient consideration and as a consequence will not contribute to a binding of cultures but to isolation and feelings of inferiority (Vedder 1994, 5-15).

Prospects: The emphasis in the above lies on how or whether the structures and content of learning are manifestations of a universal perspective. Another important point is whether this goal can be achieved. In times of continuing population growth, especially in the sub-Saharan countries, the infrastructural and financial capability to implement strategies to achieve even universal primary education (UPE) will play a major role. The question of universal or global learning is not only a question of how and what in the sense of structure and content, but also a question of practical feasibility. In fact most scientists do not regard universal literacy for all or even primary schooling for all children by the year 2000, as for instance proclaimed at the Teheran conference in 1965 and reiterated as a feasible target at the Jomtien conference (although more cautiously) as a goal which can realistically be achieved (Thiam, Cárceles, Mayor, all 1990).

b)   *Aspects of Implementation in Ghana*

General Education Policy: In Ghana, policy makers and educational planners have emphasized the aspect of culture in formal education in order to stabilize and shape the Ghanaian society. One obvious sign was the amalgamation of the two ministries responsible when the educational reform took off countrywide in 1987.

> "Thus, we decided to bring together the ministries of education and culture, because first and foremost, we look at education as not just a development tool, but also as a stabilizer of culture. Sometimes societies are described as cultures, therefore our educational process must have an objective to stabilize your culture and transmit it from one generation to another." (Novicki, 1987, 14)

According to the government's objectives (MoE&C 1987, 1f) the new educational policy should provide Ghanaians with a cultural identity 'to make the nation stronger and more unified in order to be confident both at home and abroad about themselves and their society'. Referring to the general content of education universal objectives were mentioned as well:

- Today's world is a scientific and technological one, and the barest minimum education for every Ghanaian child must tune his or her mind to this fact so that the child can understand and live competently in today's world.
- Ghana is a developing country and her people need to be able to adopt scientific and technological skills to help her use her rich, untapped resources to provide for her needs.
- Every Ghanaian must also be taught to know his or her environment. Problems such as deforestation, low agricultural productivity and widespread disease will be very much minimised if Ghanaians are taught about how to prevent these as part of basic education.

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table 2: objectives related to universal findings, taken from: MoE&C 1987, 1, 2

At the initial stages it was a major obstacle to raise people's level of perception, particularly that of students with regard to their own cultural heritage. The integration of culture into education was generally seen as an feature indicative of the reorientation of national development objectives within the PNDC government in the early 80s (Gould 1990, 219 and Novicki 1987). Under headlines like 'Education for Cultural Development' the underlying goals for the curricula at all levels of education were:

- to ensure a curriculum which will enhance the common heritage of Ghanaians as citizens with a common destiny,
- to inculcate in every child an awareness of history and traditional customs,
- to make the content of education relevant to the problems, goals and aspirations of the Ghanaian and African societies,
- to encourage the participation of pupils and students in vocational and leadership training programs which will prepare them for positions of responsibility in society, etc.

table 3: objectives linked to the indigenous environment, cf: RoG 1994, 15f

Another objective was to link the schools providing basic education closer to the local communities. The school should no longer be an alien factor but a real part of Ghanaian community life (MoE&C 1987, 6).

Expansion and equity: Since FOSTER (1963) argued that secondary school will be more open than closed in the years to come, his assumption has prompted a lively discussion among various scientists as to whether the expansion of the educational system will lead to an increased input of students from lower classes into secondary schools or not. When WEIS picked up this issue again in the 1970s, he argued that:

> "What is important in light of the original question is that recruitment in 1974 is noticeably less than it was in 1961, despite large-scale expansion that theoretically allows for increased democratization of access. Rather than serving to broaden the base of recruitment, expansion has made it comparatively less likely that children from rural and/or low socioeconomic backgrounds would receive places in the nation's secondary schools." (Weis 1979, 50f).

He herewith tries to disprove the 'most cherished belief' among Westerners, which is that what begins as a small selective educational system must necessarily 'open' and become less selective as enrollment increases. In his view the provision of greater equality with regard to access to education does not necessarily lead to increased opportunities for individual and/or group social mobility (Weis 1979, 42).

Both FOSTER and WEIS were referring to Ghana in their statements. Today's system of education in Ghana is considerably different from the previous one but nevertheless expansion, especially in the basic education sector, plays a central role in the educational policy. Due to the general economic strains in the country, which are interrelated with the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Program, the question of systemic expansion and equality of opportunity gains new relevance. GOULD (1990, 211) claims

that in Ghana the structural adjustment policy, which seeks to reduce the direct expenditures of the state "has meant 'cost-sharing', i.e. passing some of the costs from the public purse to the individual consumer". The crux of the World Bank adjustment policies seems to be that under the structural adjustment program the education sector has been treated as a sector of public spending and not as an activity in human capital that raises productivity. As a sector of public spending education has become subject to cost reduction instead of becoming a sector in which investment should be increased (Tilak 1992, 415). Implications of such a development, i.e. private schools, will invariably favor the rich and put students with economically poor backgrounds at a disadvantage.

If it is not possible to provide quality education in the primary and junior secondary schools on a country-wide level, and only few selected government or private schools are able to serve students with the necessary teaching aids and qualified and committed teaching staff to prepare students successfully for the junior and senior secondary school, the system will run into the danger of becoming selective again. The World Bank's policy is indirectly favoring that selection because as the public budget for education shrinks, privatization will increase, with all its ill effects (Tilak 1991 and 1992). It is to be assumed that 'selective expansion' as proclaimed by the World Bank (1988, 3f) is likely to foster inequity even though solicitous studies as to the implication of equitable access to schooling and its impact at the household level have not yet done as should have been particularly by those who are responsible for these recommendations. This lack of evaluation should be considered and EISEMON (1989, 115) lays emphasis on the fact that already quite a number of selected examples look rather discouraging although they are not representative of the situation in its entirety.

3.2 The Role of School in Educational Planning and Administration

a) From Colonial Rule to Post-Independence

The type of education provided by the colonial power and the type of education taking place in mission schools was subliminally interrelated. Missionary education laid emphasis on the instruction of Christian doctrine and the Christian way of life. Obedience to authority, an attitude of servility, discipline, readiness to serve, etc. were the underlying principles, which look quite similar to the colonial way of educating students to be obedient to authority, to remain uncritical and to believe that one can explain the

environment and its problems with the help of religion and that therefore there is no need to question social, economic and political issues (Asiedu-Akrofi 1978, 29, 33). Although it was the missionaries who took an interest in the welfare of the people, by founding training colleges for example, it seems likely that the similarities of colonial and missionary education resulted in an unfortunate alliance which became prohibitive to the development of an authentic African or self-reliant style of education in the long run.

No matter how unfortunately the colonial times reflected on the development of the African society, its particular type of education became more and more desirable. FOSTER describes the dilemma as follows:

> "Education for him [the African] symbolizes power, for it was seen as the door to the Europeans' technological mysteries. Education became identified with the escape from manual work and from the old tribal discipline. The white-collar job mentality entered the mind of the educated African child. His masters, the white teacher and their countrymen, did not set a better example as they appeared only in supervisory roles. Thus, authority and privilege were associated with education." (Foster 1965, 134)

Western influence: In ASIEDU-AKROFI'S view Western education also opened the doors for new opportunities for those who would have never had a chance to upgrade their social status in the traditional African society. Hierarchy in today's society is characterized to a far lesser extent by deference to age and descent, a fact which is obviously welcomed by a Western influenced youth. Attitudes towards authority have changed due to the fact that people of traditionally low status who successfully passed exams can be found in higher positions dealing with matters that were previously reserved for the traditional 'upper class' (Asiedu-Akrofi 1978, 5-8). From this point of view, social parity through education is a positive side-effect of the Western influence; but on the other hand one hierarchy - the traditional one including its norms and values - was only replaced by a new so-called modern one, also with specific norms and values. The type of stratification that was mainly based on descent during the past was replaced by a modern stratification which takes for instance the status of the professional occupation as a reference. Often both systems exist simultaneously. With preference to the one or the other, members of society find themselves in the fix of praising the advantages of one system while at the same time admiring the achievements of the other. A meaningful amalgamation of both systems is yet to be achieved. This is what ASIEDU-AKROFI has called the African dilemma. He is highlighting that:

"If one of the functions of the school is to act as an agent for the transmission of the culture of the society in which it is situated, then the school has failed in Africa. It disparaged our customs, norms and beliefs and could not prepare nor allocate children to their places in our society." (Asiedu-Akrofi 1978, 29)

Culture, education and development: Closely related to the functions of school and culture, two of MAZRUI'S most popular thesis attempt to clarify the importance of education. In connection with remarks of HAGAN the task for school education becomes clear.

"First, '*culture provides lenses for perception, a way of looking at reality a world view.*' However, western education has tended to give Africans western lenses to view the world and themselves. ...

Second, 'culture provides standards of evaluation. What is good and what is evil, what is beautiful and what is ugly, what is legitimate and what is illegitimate are all rooted criteria provided by culture.' Through the overwhelming force of western media, the youth of Africa have lost touch with their cultural values." (sic, Hagan 1990, 11)

This of course brings up the question of whether the indigenous tradition could have been built upon to provide a pattern of education which would serve modern purposes, whilst retaining an organic relationship with its cultural matrix. But TOMPSON, who raises this question, finally concludes that after all the experiments to vitalize traditional institutions have failed to meet today's challenges this "is not so much a matter of structures and methodologies as of purpose and the perception of their function held by those who use them" (Tompson 1983, 25). The inappropriate emphasis was laid on conformity, obedience, etc., rather than on developing the unique talents of the individual, encouraging intellectual development, etc. According to TOMPSON members of such societies normally do not actively seek change, since change might again threaten the security and stability of the society. Their educational process is therefore not concerned with preparing individuals to initiate or adapt to change but rather with reinforcing the existing social framework (ibid., 25). Does this mean that the traditional system aims at maintaining imitation learning as the method of instruction and the elders' (or the teachers') attitudes as the ultimate model to be achieved by the youth whereas the modern system intends to utilize methods to encourage the ability to criticize (also the existing socio-economic framework) and promote the self-determination of the individual?

Bringing education and school into line with development or demands for social and economical improvement requires a minimum framework defining the desired functions or aims and objectives. Unfortunately these

aims and objectives are for the most part stated in the preambles of the given educational policy or particular action plans and they often seem to be too unspecified or diffuse to be of any real use for distinctive educational management and planning. And yet this relatively open definition of educational objectives also affords the opportunity for flexible adjustment to situations at hand. Within the broad policy perspective on education, *The New Structure and Content of Education* is supposed to encourage Ghanaians to 'improve their lives and develop the nation' through quality education. The contribution is an indirect one:

> "The policy aims to provide nine years of compulsory basic formal education to every Ghanaian from the age of 6 to 15, when he/she is exposed to a wide variety of ideas and skills, and build in them the attitudes that will make them ready to cope creatively with their own environment as well make them great assets to their country." (ISD 1991, 93)

The above quotation could tempt us to believe in the school as an institution that *can* provide its students with attitudes, knowledge and skills to enable them to cope with any environment and change it for the better. The preparative aspect of school becomes less important and the input-output aspect becomes emphasized, which easily permits one to blame the school for its inefficiency if the 'products' don't cope well, for instance on the labor market. As pointed out earlier, this is probably not the fault of the school but of an inappropriate labor market policy and leads to the question of whether, and under what circumstances, it is permissible to expect school, i.e. formal education, to perform under in-put and out-put variables.

b) World Bank Policies

Background: Different economic theories have influenced educational planning since the science of economy of education gained popularity when economists presented systematic studies to interrelate the previously separate disciplines in the 60s. Conventional neoclassical economic analysis was applied to many aspects of education and development, most notably the human capital theory. Through the human capital theory two methodologies were derived, the rate of return and the manpower forecast/needs approach. Although they are different, one complements the other. While the *returns-to-education approach* is a methodology that serves the educational planner by guiding him to achieve the optimal economic productivity in relation to investment, the *manpower needs approach* converts estimated labor productivity in order to derive the necessary manpower needs (Kraft & Nakib 1991, 300-308).

The World Bank's policy was initially influenced "by a small group of Western 'development economists' who contended that the tenets of conventional neo-classical economies were inapplicable to the problems of Third World" (Foster 1992, 150). This thinking could be found for instance in the human resources approach which, according to FOSTER, bore no relation to conventional conceptions of effective market demand but rested upon dubious long-term manpower calculations.

> "In practice, the human resources' school tended to emphasize the expansion of higher and secondary education over primary schooling and the desirability of providing more vocational and technical training in the schools to enhance directly the stock of appropriately trained individuals". (Foster 1992, 150)

Over the course of the last 25 years (from the 60s up to the 80s) it became clear that simplistic sets of extrapolations of assumed market trends were inappropriate for educational development planning. This resulted in the bank's policy shift towards a market-oriented perspective, (Foster 1992 151f) further emphasized by the preference of demand-driven over supply-driven vocational, technical, and general education (Adams et al. 1992 and de Moura Castro 1992). This general shift in policies also affected World Bank-sponsored educational research which had previously been characterized by measuring the rate-of-returns. In recent years research has shifted from an emphasis on school outputs to a concern for how instructional inputs influence learning outcomes (Eisemon 1989, 112).

The 1988 report: In 1988 the World Bank came out with the policy study 'Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization, and Expansion' (World Bank 1988). This report is a major reassessment of the bank's educational policy in sub-Saharan Africa. In ALTBACH'S view a great deal of pessimism about the accomplishments not only of education in Africa but also of the economic and social development of African nations was expressed by this study. Of particular interest were the reasons why progress had fallen short of expectations, particularly when Africa was compared to many Asian nations and some Latin American countries (CER 1989, 93).

The stagnation of enrollment and the erosion of quality were identified as the major problems, which are closely linked with the countries' abilities to finance further inputs into the educational sector. In brief the World Bank sought to outline different ways of reducing costs and finding new resources for financing education and suggested ways and means for restoring quality and possibly expanding the system further. The report offers a policy framework that involves policies of adjustment, revitalization and selective

expansion. Within the range of options recommended by the Bank the particular governments are called upon to formulate and implement country specific policies to achieve these goals (World Bank 1988, 2-4).

Critics: EISEMON criticizes that the World Bank's recommendations were based too narrowly on World Bank-sponsored and developed-country educational research about Africa. According to his view these recommendations largely ignore what Africans have learned about their own educational systems (Eisemon 1989, 110f). Consequently, the report frequently does not respond to how African educational researchers think, for example when teacher absenteeism was identified by North American researchers as a quality-of-instruction problem to be remedied by more frequent supervision, whereas Kenyan researchers drew attention to the importance to its causes rooted in low salaries and poor housing (ibid., 112).

In this context different perceptions lead to different ways of attempting to solve problems, as can be seen in the fields of cost sharing and cost recovery. Here, the bank's intentions seem to be very controversial. According to ESHIWANI the bank underplays the relationship between financial difficulties and the declining quality of education. As a result of heavy interest debts African countries do not have adequate funding to meet the needs of improving their educational systems. In his view recurrent costs like teachers' salaries and the provision of instructional materials which are the 'major barriers' to educational development in the educational sector should be supported by the World Bank, rather inputs attempted to be reduced. Probably the bank does not take into account the fact that in a number of countries salaries have recently decreased dramatically in real terms and that they are often paid with great delay. Increased absenteeism was therefore simply a reaction to governments' inability to care sufficiently and regularly for teachers (and their families). That teachers tend to take on a second or third job 'in order to make up for the losses', which often then leads to increased absenteeism, is a viable, but not officially accepted explanation for the same phenomenon (Caillods 1989, 128).

ESHIWANI believes neither that teachers can teach classes with 50 and sometimes 80 pupils a fact which is dictated by the demographic pressure, nor does he support the idea of *not* providing teachers with more than secondary education (World Bank 1988, 40). He thinks that *having had secondary education* is a more imperative demand because, especially in the lower classes, teachers are expected to be able to switch from one subject to another (Eshiwani 1989, 114-118).

Similar criticism can be found in CAILLODS statements. He draws attention to the interdependence of providing sufficient salaries and

attracting qualified personnel. More qualified personnel is especially demanded by decentralization policies, which inevitably call for additional training expenses, for instance for headmasters whose positions will have to be strengthened or for the central administration now responsible for monitoring such operations (Caillods 1989, 132).

Decentralization is a point for FOSTER as well. He makes clear that the Bank's views concerning the decentralization of primary school financing are presently incompatible with the goal of achieving universal primary education (Foster 1989, 107). The point is that if local communities are expected to take over financing parts of the educational system, it must be guaranteed that they are in a position to raise the necessary funds. The funds raised through tax collection are not sufficient in most African countries as a general rule and it is even worse at the regional level where the system is even less developed. EISEMON, poking fun at present governments, maintains that:

> "In comparison to the way many African governments generate revenue today, colonial hut and poll taxes seem quite enlightened". (Eisemon 1989, 115)

It is further concluded that the costs related to schooling already exceed the disposable income of Kenyan households (Eisemon 1989, 115; Eshiwani 1989, 119f). According to EISEMON and ESHIWANI, the recommended privatization of secondary education and increased cost sharing will foster the existing inequity. This will undoubtedly put the most deprived groups at a disadvantage, who often regard the benefits promised by education to be too low.

> "Declining enrollments and high drop-out rates indicate a certain lack of demand for education that is due to a number of factors. Among these may be the fact that the cost of education is considered too high, and the benefits too low." (Caillods 1989, 129)

A consensus of all critics is that the report is more of a consultative paper that calls on African countries "to define which development strategy they want to promote in the future, and education will be an important part of this strategy". (Caillods 1989, 133) This "will be especially useful if African educational researchers and policymakers will tailor strategies to their own needs and circumstances". (Eisemon 1989, 116) And furthermore that the World Bank will continue this fruitful dialogue between its staff and scholars in sub-Saharan Africa at the problem-conceptualization stage and at the stage of providing tentative answers (Eshiwani 1989, 121) "but it remains to be seen whether African states are prepared to make some of the hard choices that the study sets forth."(Foster 1989, 110)

c) *Effects on Ghana*

In the past, educational planning was mostly organized by central governments which were criticized for acting from a position far removed from the needs and problems the local people were facing. At the beginning of the 80s 'participatory planning' was expected to solve some of the problems involved. Regional and local bodies were to be involved in the planning process in order to make planning more realistic and locally relevant. Through the participation of the community (teachers, parents, students) in the decision-making process and implementing planning decisions peoples' attitude towards changes and their commitment to making these changes sustain was to be strengthened (Tompson 1983, 147).

In Ghana 110 elected district assemblies were inaugurated during 1989 and these were expected to serve as a preparatory and facilitating stage in the evolution of a representative system of government at the sub-national level. The political power was decentralized by the institution of 22 locally based departments which included the Ghana Education Service (GES). The GES is responsible for the implementation of certain educational policies, directed by the Ministry of Education on a national level. Decentralizing the GES follows the major objective of fostering more efficiency and cooperation geared towards improving the system. To achieve these goals the district offices were strengthened with the appointment and training of District Directors of Education but also charged with the responsibility of managing, supervising and counseling schools and their staff (RoG 1994, 9).

Apart from these educational issues the decentralization policy in the educational sector also affects the newly established District Councils and local communities by burdening them with costs related to the basic education schools for the maintenance of structures and supply of facilities.

> "Current Government policy makes the District Councils and the local communities responsible for the provision of classroom facilities and furniture for all primary schools in the country except in the Northern, Upper East, Upper West Regions and the northern parts of the Brong Ahafo Region." (quoted in Holtkamp 1993, 223)

According to government's idea and law (Education Act 1996 enforced by PNDC Law 207) the newly operating district assemblies and communities will be responsible for the facilities in the basic education cycle.

> "The main sources of financing costs for basic schools are the District Assemblies, the local communities, the religious organisations and foreign donors. ... Under the District Assemblies Common Fund, the District Assemblies receive about 5 percent of the total National

> Revenue for development and provision of facilities for the districts."
> GoG, 1994, 18

Undoubtedly the district councils have gained power and responsibilities in Ghana but whether the instruments to generate income through taxation are adequate to build, furnish and maintain primary and junior secondary schools is a tricky issue. AYEE states that the financial package given to the District Assemblies looks comprehensive:

> "In addition to traditional revenue sources of general rates, comprising basic and property rates and rates on possessions, special rates, fees, licenses and others, the PNDC has transferred or ceded seven revenue areas to the DAs." (Ayee 1992, 51)

Now it is up to the local administration assisted by the central government to introduce a reasonable system of taxation and to install effective revenue offices. The charging of fees and taxes will be new to most of the rural people and only time will tell whether the income will cover the expenditures in the districts in general and whether this is an effective instrument to address the financial dilemma in general and in the basic education sector in particular.

When the World Bank started supporting Ghana with a Structural Adjustment Program in the mid 80s, planners were keen to find out the economic returns of the interrelated education sector investments. Recent findings indicate that the 'reform' policy which placed more emphasis on local languages as part of the decentralization policy seems to have worsened the returns from the investment in primary and basic education, and this is particularly important as many jobs are related to an adequate command of the English language (Glewwe, 1991, 33, 35, 36). Lavy (1992, 29) maintains that investments must be increased and quality improved in the primary education sector. According to his findings, returns to primary schooling in Ghana are almost nil, they are highest for post-primary schooling levels. Consequently the market treats this level of schooling as no schooling. This is obviously a trend which runs contrary to general findings which state that returns are the highest at the primary education level and decline with subsequent years (Psacharopoulos 1985).

From whatever side this problem is approached - as an efficiency (i.e. language) problem or as a educational planning and implementation problem - the discussion might arrive at two questions: 1. Can adequate financial inputs be allocated for the improvement of the educational sector in rural or deprived areas, especially for basic education schools and 2. Can qualified personnel be attracted to work in de-centralized offices in order to improve the present standard of basic education.

Decentralization policies should consciously take into account the specific living, working, and economic conditions in a country's rural regions. Improving educational planning and administration demanded by the critics of the 1988 World Bank paper (Eshiwani, Eisemon, Caillods, Foster, all 1989) will also include consideration of the complexity and interrelation of such aspects; the above mentioned aspect of decentralization is just one striking point.

3.3 Work Orientation and Vocationalism

a) History and Mainstream

The concept later known as the adaptation theory in Africa was created after the American civil war. In that era, an education concept was developed to provide the ex-slaves with practical skills which were supposed to meet the needs of rural black communities in the southern states of America. The idea of transferring educational objectives and methods from one social and cultural environment to another is of course questionable because conditions change, as do structure and content. The link that was possibly seen could have been that both target groups showed similar problems of coping in their environment and were of the same origin. The naivety of the argument is obvious and what is more, the attitude is dubious. BUDE is attaching significance to KING'S view (King 1971) that the political motive behind the adaptation theory is rooted in an anti-liberal attitude:

> "Kenneth King has shown that Jesse Jones, the spiritual father of the adaptation theory, feared nothing more than the political activation of the black population which he hoped to 'immunise' by means of his education concept." (Bude 1983, 351)

The idea of adding pre-technical or pre-vocational aspects to the school curriculum is therefore not new. The first attempts go back to the 1920s when the *Phelps-Stokes Fund* financed two commissions under the jurisdiction of JESSE JONES, who outlined the deficiencies of early colonial education by pointing at:

"• the neglect of school organisation and inspection;
- neglect of a balanced education policy ensuring an education for both the broad masses and an elite;
- insufficient cooperation between the different colonial institutions and their representatives; and
- the lack of opportunities for Africans to participate in decision making in educational institutions." (Bude 1983, 341)

Solutions to the problems mentioned in the *Phelps-Stokes Report* consisted mainly of maintaining the acceptable, good elements of traditional society and at the same time preparing the population for social and economic change (Bude 1983, 342). Propagating this concept, education placed emphasis on practice and environmental-oriented concepts. But although "The report stressed adaptation to native life, study of the vernaculars, recruitment of native teaching staff, and technical training", ASIEDU-AKROFI (1978, 38) claims that this marriage of school education with the values of African societies failed miserably because the adaptation theory became a method instead of an educational theory. It was furthermore overlooked that 'the use of the hand' had always been a vital part of education in the traditional context and was therefore nothing new to be introduced by Europeans (ibid., 41).

The compensation of non-existent material and teaching-aids by the creative use of locally available material was inevitable and had a positive effect on reducing expenditures as well. BUDE sees the description of Uganda as typical of the rest of the British colonies in Africa, and also of the French and Portuguese colonies in the 1930s:

> "Long hours were spent out of doors cleaning the compound, sweeping paths, planting flowers, cash and subsistence crops, scrubbing floors and doing a number of odd jobs that today constitute a charge upon the school budget. Produce from school gardens went towards the feeding of schools or the purchase of equipment. Most boarding schools of size kept such gardens, ostensibly for lessons in practical agriculture or the virtues of manual labour. In reality, by design or accident, they provided much needed relief to school finances." (Wandira quoted in, Bude 1983, 342f)

The implementation of the adaptation theory introduced, among others, the so called *Jeanes Schools* in Kenya with their strong emphasis on techniques and traditional methods needed to develop the rural areas. But folk stories, proverbs and music failed as a pedagogical instrument to prepare the students sufficiently for the exercising of their political rights and for modern challenges in general (Bude 1983, 343). Many Africans began to dislike the idea of their countries being restricted to a more practical type of education, and agricultural, industrial or vocational education in general because they regarded this type of education as inferior to the academic/scientific education that European countries have benefited so much from. Many wanted to revert to the Western system:

> "Reading and writing were seen as the keys to success, not gardening, or to use its later euphemistic name, 'rural science', and still less 'educating the African along his own lines'." (Anderson quoted in, Bude 1983, 349)

The colonialists, when taken to be a reference group, did not show positive attitudes towards manual labor either. White men were hardly ever to be seen doing physical or manual labor. In the end this led to the rejection of the adaptation theory. BUDE summarizes a number of causes for the unsuccessful attempt to orient Western educational models to Black African conditions, of which at least two look applicable today:

"• Reforms were introduced only in parts of the education systems, without solving structural problems (e.g. the various parallel systems for various parts of the population were trained).
• There were no curriculum development techniques to transpose reform concepts and their implications into learning goals, in particular for realising active pupil-centred learning." (Bude 1983, 347f)

Although the concepts of adapting education to work have evolved over the years the belief in social and economic progress through the integration of technical and pre-vocational training into the formal education system has remained. It is worth noting that the early anti-liberal aspect of the adaptation theory has vanished in post-colonial times and the concept has now been changed and renamed 'Education and Productive Work'. Education through 'productive work' was mainly understood as a solution to the problem of school leaver unemployment and was expected to fulfill the developmental needs of both the individual and the society (NEIDA 1982, 5-13).

> "Educational policymakers seem to take it as axiomatic that if individuals of a society have the 'appropriate' skills, they will be more productive than those without such skills. Following this line of argument they have made what seems to be a reasonable conclusion-that if students at school were provided with some useful, practical or vocational skills relevant to the needs of that society, they would be better equipped to contribute to its economic development." (Bacchus 1988, 36)

In the above quotation BACCHUS describes the popular understanding of redefining the goals of school education in the early 70s. Schools were designed to provide students with useful skills other than solely academics so as to widen their range of occupational choices. Students' aspirations were to become more 'realistic', to increase the possibility of reducing manpower shortages in the society.

b)   *Failures and Problems in Implementation*

Already in the late 70s and early 80s various reports described the failures of vocationalizing or orienting education towards productive work, despite initial high expectations (Lillis 1984). LILLIS regarded the problems of vocational/technical/agricultural education, paradoxically, not as primarily educational but closely connected to intricate economic, technical and social variables (Lillis 1984, 179). He is therefore concluding that educational reforms are unlikely to have a major influence on occupational aspirations unless certain functional changes accompany these in the educational systems. These include structural changes and reforms in labour market practices, the introduction of specific employment-generating strategies and changes in the social and political framework as well (Lillis 1984, 181; Bacchus 1988, 43).

His findings and conclusions are largely consonant with BACCHUS' reflection, which also describes a less promising perspective for school systems which integrate pre-technical and pre-vocational subjects. His findings are derived from an international perspective, taking into account experiences of different economically less developed countries.

> "Despite the logic of the argument and the continuing efforts by educational policymakers to implement such policies the available research evidence has indicated that, in the real life of most developing countries, the outcomes have not matched expectations. First, the cost of providing vocational education is substantially higher than that of traditional literary instruction and, in economic terms, these higher costs do not seem to be compensated for a high return." (Bacchus 1988, 37)

The concept of orienting school education towards 'the world of work' has entered the curricula on different levels. In primary school the emphasis was laid on ruralizing the curriculum by combining education with productive work, introducing manual labor and especially by exposing pupils to agriculture. PSACHAROPOULOS criticizes that although rigorous evaluations of such programs hardly exist conventional knowledge runs against introducing vocationalism at the primary level (cf Psacharopoulos 1987, 192). Nevertheless, vocationalizing the curriculum of primary schools was regarded to be an important contribution towards stopping and reversing the rural urban migration in some countries, for instance in India and China (Zachariah & Hoffman 1985).

Attempts to link basic education with the world of work are also described by SIFUNA. According to his study, which lays emphasis on the Kenyan 8-4-4 model, results from primary school interviews indicate that curricula diversification is unlikely to arrest rural-urban migration as had

erroneously been believed by policy makers. According to his random sample, pupils still overwhelmingly aspire towards white-collar employment despite their exposure to vocational subjects (Sifuna 1992a, 143).

Students were also exposed to technical/vocational subjects at the secondary level. There is evidence from various research that the cost of these programs is much higher than general education, while their benefits are neligible (Psacharopoulos 1987; Hinchliffe 1983). This prompts the question: do the benefits outweigh the costs? Under this headline MCMAHON (1988) is attempting to develop the optimum mix of school and on-the-job training. His concern is not whether 'to vocationalize the curriculum or not' but to lay down the conditions for the degree of vocationalism (McMahon 1988, 177). In his view a vocational bias is most suitable at the secondary level because over 90% of the students will not continue their education beyond that point. Introducing vocational subjects at an earlier level is not appropriate because basic literacy and numeracy has to be attained first. He is questioning the standard measurement of returns of vocational and technical education by pointing at the meager earnings due to depressed agricultural prices on the one hand and at the overestimation of returns in the civil service where precisely general education is often *the* appropriate vocational preparation on the other (ibid., 180). According to his findings there is no clear winner or loser. The higher costs of vocation-specific curricula do merit the returns under certain conditions. His conclusion is that if vocational/technical courses are expanded in an efficient balance with general education, on-the-job training and primary education, then the benefits do exceed the costs, but the salient point is to define their balance.

The reasons many developing countries have for investing more in pre-technical or vocational education are based on the common belief that introducing vocational/technical elements in the secondary curriculum is conducive to economic development. PSACHAROPOULOS' findings run contrary to this belief. Those students with vocational expertise do not face significantly less unemployment after school, and they also do not prefer to enter the professional sector, but rather tend to compete with those from the academic stream for the few places offered at the tertiary level. He is therefore suggesting placing greater emphasis on out-of-formal school or employment based training, rather than following the school-based model (Psacharopoulos 1987, 197-203).

Summarizing the most popular examples of diversifying secondary curricula, SIFUNA concludes that diversification programs have not met the intended objectives because of a number of different reasons: the costs were substantially higher, students from diversified secondary schools are found

continuing in completely different areas, vocational subjects had a lower status than academics, the introduction of such programs neither stopped the rural-urban migration nor increased the employment ratio in general (Sifuna 1992b). His general conclusion regarding the introduction of pre-technical/vocational subjects on both levels primary and secondary is that:

> "Primary and secondary schools cannot therefore be charged with the task of imparting useful occupational skills to school leavers ... A future policy implication is that the most realistic justification for these subjects is their merits on general educational grounds, rather that their potential for employment or self-employment." (Sifuna 1992a, 144)

The popular angle from which vocationalizing education was looked at needs to be explained and complemented on one important aspect. It is argued that the vocational sector offers great job potential and if students were exposed to that sector they would find jobs, which would also boost the national economy. But academic education was also a form of vocational education during colonial and early post-colonial times. The administrative sector expanded and the white collar jobs were professions for which a sound academic qualification was needed.

> "Thus students (and their parents) were acting perfectly sensibly in response to market incentives. Far from being irrational, the preference for white collar employment was entirely rational: in effect, 'academic' education was essentially a form of 'vocational' training." (Foster 1992, 150)

Consequently the vocational school experiment, in its initial sense of exposure to agriculture etc., turned out to be a failure (Foster 1965; Lillis 1984).

c) A Shift in Policies

The year 1991 demarcated a shift in the World Bank's educational policies. The mixed results of vocational education and technical training which had played an important role in the world Bank's educational and training strategies in many developing countries did not seem to justify continuing such policies (Adams et al. 1992). The World Bank's policy paper on Vocational and Technical Training (World Bank 1991) is the central paper that describes the new directions in educational policy. The following describes briefly the debate on this issue, taking into account FOSTER'S and

de MOURA CASTRO'S comments on the initial report and on ADAMS' summary.[2]

Contrary to the Bank's initial educational policy which was based largely on the assumptions of the early human resources approach, favoring vocational and technical training at the expense of the quantitative and qualitative improvement of general education, particularly on the primary level, FOSTER states that the Bank proposes to massively reduce its assistance to vocational and technical education, in order to increase its support for improving the quality of general education at the primary and secondary level (Foster 1992, 152). According to his view these changes "are not the results of some educational 'fad' or 'fancy' ... but are rather the consequences of a long-term sea-change in the Bank's whole orientation on development issues" (ibid., 153). These changes are due to the World Bank's own evaluations and those of many others who proved the links between school based technical and vocational education and subsequent jobs and economic improvement to be very loose and therefore the 'diversified curricula program' to be a failure (ibid., 152; Psacharopoulos & Loxley 1985).

In his comments on the World Bank's new educational policy FOSTER (1992) concludes that initially, governments will be encouraged to increase their support for the qualitative improvement of primary and secondary general education.

> "In practice, this means that schools will now be able to concentrate on the job they do best, i. e. the provision of literacy and numeracy along with a background of general knowledge and science ..." (Foster 1992, 153).

Secondly, specific skills training for employment should be handled entirely by the private sector through a variety of programs under ideal market economy conditions. But because there is still, more often than not, market imperfection, market failures, lack of private training capacity and dissatisfaction with the equity of market outcomes in many developing countries, the governments are expected to play a very constructive role in the provision of skills training in a variety of pre-employment and post-employment settings. These interventions are to be carried out in close association with private employment and aim to strengthen for example traditional apprenticeship programs, just as vocational training is complementary to and not a substitute for general education (ibid., 154).

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2 For a detailed discussion of the World Bank's policy paper by Adams and al., Foster and de Moura Castro, see, Prospects 1992, 22/2.

Thirdly, general economic reforms, especially in the operation of labor markets, are necessary in addition with the new skills-training types of policy. A more market-oriented and decentralized economy is an essential pre-condition for the success of the Bank's new educational program as well as a conjunction of the 'skills training initiative' with other structural economic reforms (ibid.).

DE MOURA CASTRO'S comments (1992) are mostly consonant with FOSTER'S (1992), who also comments positively on the Bank's shift in educational policy and places emphasis on the fact that training must be motivated those who will use the skills imparted. In his view the underlying hypothesis is that employers know what they need and that they are interested in increasing productivity, lowering costs and improving quality. But this simple conclusion is not everything because it somehow relegates 'technical culture' to a mere footnote. Here there is a minor disagreement between de DE MURA CASTRO'S opinion and the World Bank paper. The indirect effects of training deserve to be more than just a footnote because "sharing, reinforcing and developing the corporate culture is almost always one of the most important targets. There are no cost/benefit ratios that can be estimated for that or for the improvements in worker loyalty or motivation." (Moura Castro, 1992, 145) Although he is supporting the Bank's view that training requires good basic education from a broad macro-social point of view, he states that this view is a bit simplistic because much of the training that is being offered to low-literacy societies has been conceived in ways that require little literacy if any.

> "In fact, literacy, to be found of any functionality, requires many years of schooling of reasonable quality. By contrast, workers can be taught useful and productive skills in a few weeks, even if they are illiterate" (ibid., 147).

This argument is not addressing properly the heart of the new educational policy but rather draws attention to the general and specific postulate of demand-driven training. DE MOURA CASTRO asks: "However, how far can we go? In economies undergoing serious difficulties, where is the demand for training to be found?" (ibid., 147).

Also FOSTER'S comments have left some questions open. The most crucial question is whether there will be trust for this 'new' initiative. Now that some specific countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have made great efforts to implement educational policies along the World Bank's line, they are told that after three decades the 'intuitive' but somehow misleading common-sense planning to vocationalize their curricula will inevitably lead to failure.

FOSTER points out that the almost total reversal of the Bank's early prescriptions must lead to the question:

> "If you say your earlier policies were misguided then why should we believe you now?" (Foster, 1992, 154)

Another crucial point will be whether the countries will have the financial capacity to change their policies and whether their élites and local bureaucracies will be able to implement this change (ibid., 154).

3.4 Primary and Basic(s' in) Education

a) Context

The significance of primary education lies in its potential to increase the present enrollment rates. Roughly 52,7% of the 15 year and older population in SSA countries were illiterate in 1993. Optimistic estimates see this decreasing to 40,3% by the year 2000 (UNESCO 1993, World Report, 10). Others stress the immense financial burden of even maintaining the existing percentage of children attending school (Lassibille/Gómez 1992, 520).

At the 'Education For All' conference, basic learning needs as the focus of basic education for every person - child, youth and adult - were said to comprise essential learning tools such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving, and basic learning context such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning (UNDP et al. 1990, Article 1,1, 3).

It is true on the one hand that problem solving, knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes do not necessarily require literacy and numeracy; but on the other hand, much information about how to solve problems, what to know, how to acquire skills, etc. is transmitted literally for instance in manuals and handbooks. And because especially literacy is most successfully achieved at the primary school level, this school remains the most important delivery system for basics in the education of children outside the family (UNDP et al. 1990, 6). This is not to diminish the importance of out-of-school basic education, a diverse and fundamental part of a child's development (UNDP et al., ibid.), but to stress the priority of basic education within a government's education policy.

In Ghana basic education is defined structurally and programmatically. In structural terms it describes 6 years of primary education plus 3 years of further junior secondary education as the 'basic education cycle'. Education became free and compulsory from class 1 to 9 under the Education Act of

1961 (class 1-6) and with the introduction of the JSS Program in 1987 (Antwi 1992, 40 & MoE&C 1987, 2,4,7). In terms of content the challenge was seen in teaching the internationally acknowledged basic learning tools (see above), introducing students to the modern scientific world, raising their awareness of African and Ghanaian culture and exposing them to practical aspects of work, especially in JSS 1-3 (MoE&C 1987). The program was fully implemented in 1987 even though results in primary school achievements looked quite discouraging in the late 80s (Lavy 1992, 29). This has resulted in pupils entering the JSS - which is automatically linked to the primary school - with low standards in basic learning skills such as reading and numeracy (MoE 1994a, 8).

b)   Relevance and Content Matter

Any education must be of relevance to the learner. The relevance of content shall be discussed prior to its efficiency because no matter how efficient a given content is transferred, if it is of no use to the learner, learning will be meaningless. It is asserted that there is no single body of material, no single group of problems and no set of needs which is relevant to all learners (Ranaweera 1990, 9). A sharp distinction will be made between relevance and efficiency

To whom: First of all, education addresses the learner and must be considered from the consumer's point of view. It is important that a given curriculum is not just exam oriented and relevant only up to a certain level, because then the purpose is ultimately not the satisfying of real interest or education, but merely the collecting of certificates. With reference to Ghana, exam orientation in the early 80s seemed to be such that students and teachers were covering just as much of the syllabus to ensure a pass.

> "The pupils were said to be so cavalier about homework that few teachers set any." (Oxenham 1984, 219)

Another major group involved are the parents. Their attitudes are important as well. If parents do not desire modern jobs for their children, or if schooling does not lead to salaried jobs, the demand for formal schooling could fall away. Various examples have shown, however, that schooling in African countries has become a value in itself:

> "Reading, writing, counting, knowing something of their country and the world beyond, having a little idea of science, all this is valued simply as being good for the child and sufficient justification in itself." (Oxenham 1984, 212)

With reference to the case of Ghana OXENHAM discovers certain contradictiory attitudes. On the one hand getting a salaried job with the Middle School Leavers Certificate had become virtually impossible in the late 60s, leading to an increased competition for secondary school attendance; and on the other hand there was strong evidence from certain field studies that most parents and children (girls as well as boys) see intrinsic value in the skills of literacy and numeracy. Resulting salaried jobs are a bonus happily taken. But, even if they do not actually get a job, 10 years of schooling will not be regarded as wasted effort because of the access to a wider world of knowledge, experience, and the socially disciplining effect of school.

> "On the contrary, failure to afford schooling for one's children would be regarded as a social disgrace" (Oxenham 1984, 212f).

Considering the comparably high additional costs of schooling like textbook user fees, writing materials and school uniforms, it is more and more the financial situation of parents and to a lesser extent their general attitude which must be considered as a limiting factor to schooling.

Placing emphasis on basic education investment usually involves a shift in expenditure from the secondary or tertiary sector, and this is likely to be met with resistance from established parts of society and therefore often from people in higher administrative positions who represent this group. BROOKMAN-AMISSAH outlines that despite the urgent need for the injection of dynamism into Ghana's educational system the development of education in Ghana has been characterized by conservatism and resistance to change. A remarkable series of education reviews and attempts at the reform of education was undermined by this conservatism. Its roots go back to the early 19th century at which time the academic type of education became entrenched. Despite the experience that the fast growing elite of clerks, administrators, and lawyers outstripped the country's demand during colonial times, even in the 1950s all schools at whatever level had proved remarkably resistant to change and innovation (Brookman-Amissah 1992, 15; Foster 1965, 171).

Besides this basic underlying conservatism in education matters in Ghana BUDE complains about the neglect to initiate adequate training programs for teachers and to adapt schoolbooks and instructional material to meet the needs of the educational reform program even after it was already started (Bude 1974, 380). BENNETT remarks critically:

> "without pressure, it is unrealistic to assume that resources will be shifted from the schools serving more affluent groups to those serving the poor." (Bennett 1993, 44)

In his view it only became possible to convince leaders to promote reforms providing a more meaningful and less wasteful education for the poor because the present systems are blatantly inefficient and much too burdened with problems (ibid.).

Taking into account that schools are engulfed by a confusion of ideas, both old and new, as to what they should be doing, it would seem quite difficult to design a system that serves the rich as well as the poor. Probably this confusion largely accounts for inefficiencies in schooling and for discrepancies between theory and practice (Tompson 1983, 30), but in the end the question remains: what type of education is functional for whom?

The functionality of schooling is often assessed by its contribution towards achievements in terms of either social or economic improvement. Its success is therefore determined by the expectations of the individual or a certain group. Whereas the 'Western type' of education can be functional for those who aspire to Western middle-class value orientation, the same type will appear dysfunctional to those who define their values and aspirations closer to traditional society. Whereas school education should not alienate children from their roots either through style or design (Bennett 1993, 41), this has unfortunately become the rule over the course of time:

> "If one of the functions of the school is to act as an agent for the transmission of the culture of the society in which it is situated, then the school has failed in Africa. It disparaged our customs, norms and beliefs and could not prepare nor allocate children to their places in our society." (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1978, 29)

We can see that the question of functionality is linked with the previous discussion of universal versus indigenous objectives of education and one could end up demanding two different types of education. This could result in an extreme dualism in which one group lives according to traditional values while the other promotes Western achievements, and this entails the risk of splitting up a society into socio-economic winners and losers. Finding a common indigenous identity will then be another difficult aspect.

A factor bringing together both positions could be the 'environment as a radical factor'. From the eco-centric approach the structure and content of learning could be determined by putting the individual in a position where he or she has to actively expose him or herself to the political and socio-economic system, which has to ensure ecological sustainability (Hickling-Hudson 1994, 19-36). HICKLING-HUDSON'S argument could become more and more an expressive demand to introduce the eco-centric approach into school education since not only the capability of the individual, but also the

condition of his or her immediate environment will gain increasing relevance in future life-planning.

To what: Generally speaking, there is little debate about the global validity of basic learning skills such as literacy, numeracy, oral expression and problem solving. These skills seem commonly accepted. With reference to certain subjects, studies about curricular emphasis show a surprising consistency world-wide:

> "In primary schools, over 50 percent of available time is used for acquisition of language skills and mathematics. Science, 'social studies', and aesthetics are given equal weight, about half of mathematics and one-fourth that of language; other areas receive less attention." (Lockheed 1993, 21)

A study on primary education in Tanzania indicates that there also, despite party and government insistence on political topics, the main goal was that primary school pupils should a) be prepared for life in their communities and b) develop literacy and numeracy skills which would enable them to be selected for secondary schools (Mosha 1988, 26, 37).

The question arises whether basic education can take up the task of qualifying students for further learning at higher levels of schooling while at the same time preparing them for a professional, probably immediate, income generating purpose. If so, there must be techniques and skills valuable for both directions, otherwise the curriculum becomes too overloaded by emphasizing too many divergent aspects. In this context facts have their place, but in an age of ever-faster data accumulation, skills like reasoning, problem solving, analyzing, assessing options and information will be most relevant for learners (Manzoor 1991, 73-75). In a certain sense this is taking education back to placing the emphasis on the 3 Rs and basic science as the general education curriculum at the primary school level, which may ultimately be the most vocationally relevant type of education in certain areas (Psacharopoulos 1987, 192).

It is likely that the specific basic learning content as a composition of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills could pose a potential for various debates because the definitions do not coincide globally. In Ghana's pamphlet for the JSS program we find demands for considering Ghana's cultural heritage and indigenous way of life, etc. (MoE&C 1987, 1-3); but in the end these goals must be implemented through textbooks and classroom instruction. Surprisingly, we rarely find statements that differ from the content of universal findings in the particular textbooks (Social Studies or Cultural Studies for JSS. Pupil's Book 1-3, for example). There is evidence that the method of transmitting content consisting of an elderly person

advising the younger one or telling them a story to learn from by a preconceived schedule of correct answers is too narrow; but this criticism addresses methodology more than the matter of content.

c) *Efficiency*

In their research about the characteristics of effective schools in developing countries LOCKHEED and LEVIN point out that schools often fail to meet the requirements in terms of sufficient participation, regular and complete attendance, as well as an adequate supply of basic resources. They remark that,

> "To some degree their lack of effectiveness is not a mystery, for resources sufficient to provide even the most rudimentary conditions for success are often lacking" (Lockheed/Levin 1993, 2).

According to their findings solutions include factors such as:

1. improving necessary inputs; curriculum adjustments, instructional material, time for learning, teaching practice.
2. facilitating conditions; increased community involvement, school-based professionalism, flexibility, and
3. will to act; vision, decentralized solutions. (Lockheed/Levin 1993, 8-16)

Summarizing results from various reports, they concluded that the most effective schools were characterized by a central philosophy providing a guiding spirit to the design and implementation of results. Further on they point out the importance of a number of aspects contributing to better performance such as active learning, high teacher expectations, etc.

MOSHA'S study from Tanzania shows corresponding evidence. According to his findings quality schools are distinguished by possessing more secondary school qualified teachers, having experienced headteachers who are strict and fair and well acquainted with school and teaching matters, being frequently supervised and having good relations to the community in which they are situated (Mosha 1988, 14, 36, 37).

In Ghana the lack of efficiency can easily be illustrated by referring to a study undertaken by PREP/USAID which states that roughly 90% of the pupils at primary class 6 do not match the requirements of the syllabus (MoE 1994a, 8, 49-51). Also only 4% of the senior secondary school students were able to pass in all nine subjects in the 1993 Secondary School Certificate Examination (WAEC 1994).

Various projects can be found in Ghana which correspond to LOCKHEED'S and LEVIN'S characteristics of effective schools. These aim to meet the challenges by improving teacher education, increasing availability

of textbooks etc. The most important project is the Primary Education Program (PREP) heavily supported by United States International Development Administration (USAID). Since the PREP was signed in July 1990 several projects have been undertaken, giving incentives to communities to increase pupils' access to textbooks and instructional materials and provide classrooms and teachers' quarters, organize in-service-training, etc. (Kraft 1994, 22 & Manu 1994a, 19, 20).

Conditions at primary schools in developing countries are generally poor. Most complaints address the deplorable state of buildings, lack of textbooks and other instructional materials. Particularly a serious lack of textbooks can be found almost everywhere and teacher guides for these textbooks are also seldom available. This, together with very little time for learning, contributes to poor quality. Whereas the average time for learning was measured at about 900 hours in industrialized countries, primary school pupils in Ghana had only 600 hours of instruction in the mid 80s. The short time for learning is often due to unscheduled school closings, teacher and student absences and the long distances both parties have to travel to reach school (Lockheed 1993, 22-26).

Another important factor is the teachers' ability to teach, which seems to be more professional in general when teachers have attended secondary school themselves. Actual teaching practice unfortunately does not reflect modern techniques but rather is characterized by methods that are not conducive to student learning-methods which predominantly include teacher lectures and student copying from the blackboard. This results in less than 60 % of the initially enrolled children reaching the final year of the primary cycle in low income countries and only about 70% of those in middle income countries. Those who complete their education have typically learned very little, failing to reach either national or international standards of cognitive performance in mathematics, science and reading comprehension. (Lockheed 1993; Mosha 1988; Obanya 1995, 330-333)

The growing population in developing countries produces increasing enrollment rates and this in turn requires massive investments to maintain the present enrollment ratios, if the number of out-of school children is not to shoot up. According to UNESCO estimates, the number of primary-school pupils in Sub-Saharan countries is expected to increase by 90% between 1985 and the year 2000 to achieve a gross enrollment rate of 88%, and scenarios for Ghana look similar (Lassibille/Gómez, 1990, 514; GoG 1994, Annex 1). This increase in enrollment will necessitate an adequate supply of teachers which is then connected with the obligation to pay salaries. But teachers' salaries already constitute the most important single cost item in

recurrent public expenditures. According to UNESCO findings the heavy burden of financing the educational expansion is very much felt by an increasing number of developing countries, especially among the Arab States and in Africa. Considering that the economic structure in developing countries is such that a large proportion of the labor force is engaged in subsistence agriculture, there are not many possibilities for raising public income through taxes (UNESCO 1987, 85, 86). In their study about forecasts of primary-education expenditure LASSIBILLE and GÓMEZ conclude that:

> "... in the most conservative and most minimalist scenario as far as the economic estimates are concerned, spending must rise by some 4 per cent annually in Africa ... Universal schooling, meanwhile, would call for a 6 per cent increase in spending per annum. ... In Africa, where the prospects for growth appear to be poor, the necessary increase in outlay is such that it is impossible to imagine the countries of the region meeting their demand. Let alone providing universal education, unless they profoundly alter the workings of their education system."
> (Lassibille/Gómez 1990, 523)

From a different point of view three question arise: 1. What are the decisions (i.e. the right policies) to be made to make the systems work? 2. How can they be implemented? 3. Is there sufficient/adequate interaction and consensus between the parties responsible for educational policy planning and implementation?

Generally speaking there are four factors which should be considered: the politicians, the educational administrators/planners, the teachers as implementers and the representatives of certain groups within the society. This fairly simple hierarchy becomes more complex when it is considered that these groups are not homogenous in themselves and do not always produce consensus. Local policy makers' and planners' opinions could be different from those of foreign donors'; the local administration could support different decisions because they are sympathizing with different local politicians or acting according to different local policies, etc. According to STEPHENS' findings decision making must be improved at all levels because policy makers often have little contact with those who are to implement the decisions. This produces unsatisfactory results on the implementation level, which in turn gives rise to inadequate policy making. With reference to the issue of raising quality in primary education, he concludes that preconceived ideas about 'who defines and who decides' (i.e. each one keeps his or her role) lead to both wasteful duplication of effort and to a misuse of existing scarce resources (Stephens 1991, 226f, 231f).

SECTION II: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE NEW STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF EDUCATION FOR GHANA

The following outlines the recent developments in education, emphasizing aspects related to the drawing up of a systemic diagram of the educational system in Ghana. For a detailed and chronological documentation of the development of the educational system in Ghana from colonial times up to the end of the 1980s see Foster 1965b, Graham 1971, Agyeman 1974, McWilliam & Kwamena-Po 1978 and Antwi 1992.

4. The Educational System in Transition

4.1 Critics and Change Over

Long before 1974, the need for educational reforms was detected. The exploitative education of the early colonialists which attempted to keep people away from their roots by educating them according to a very limited syllabus serving the needs of an expatriate, social and economical environment had already become obvious. The need for western education to enter professions designed for and defined by the westernized society was hardly questioned in Ghana during colonial and early independent times; but western education has always produced a surplus of western educated people, individuals who could find jobs neither in the modern nor in the traditional sector. Already in the 60s FOSTER claimed that western education has never been a guarantee for employment:

> "Attention has already been drawn to the existence of a number of unemployed literates in the coastal towns during the nineteenth century; this remained a chronic feature during colonial times." (Foster, 1965b, 137)

Although the educational system hardly changed in the early post-colonial period and job opportunities were few, enrollment rates rose consid-

erably. Alarming statements can be found in the report of the 1967 Education Reform Committee:

> "Already 50.000 children leave middle school every year ... These leavers are presenting a very serious employment problem. The education they have received is not orientated towards productive employment ... These young people drift to the towns in search of the kind of work they think they are suited for, and create social and employment problems ... it is being said the pupils are being 'educated for frustration'." (MoI, 1967, 64)

One possible solution was seen in developing the rural areas in order to reduce the migration from rural to urban areas, but this would not have solved the problem of high unemployment rates in general. The job opportunities that had to be created in the rural as well as in the urban areas were to be linked with economic development. To make education more relevant, the government decided to predispose pupils to skills and professions related to their immediate environment in order to make them cope more successfully on the labor market (Bude 1974, 381f). The concept of relating education to productive work was nothing new in the African context of reorganizing education and quite a number of African countries decided to more or less integrate and link this concept to the existing education system (NEIDA 1982). Vocational and practical activities or work-orientation in general seem to be understood as a reorientation towards 'useful practices of African traditional education'. The acquisition of practical skills (animal husbandry, agriculture, dyeing, weaving, carving, fishing etc.) relevant to the child and its immediate environment is rooted in traditional African education (ibid., 7). It was not only the intention to integrate useful aspects of productive work into the conventional education practice, by relating productive work to education. Social scientists were also seeking to cultivate other objectives like devotion to, enthusiasm for, and appreciation of (hard) work, honesty, respect, self-reliance, curiosity etc. (Quansah 1980; NEIDA 1982, 12).

The marriage of these traditionally biased aspects with the idea of making education more relevant in terms of vocational orientation has fostered the introduction of vocational courses of which the most popular are agricultural science, woodworking, masonry, plumbing, tailoring etc. in Ghana's new junior secondary schools (NEIDA 1982, 21). The positive feedback of QUANSAH'S and ANIM'S studies about the better employability of predisposed pupils from continuation schools as compared to conventional primary schools (ibid., 66 ff) encouraged the linkage of education with productive work in the further development of the Ghanaian system. The fact that the more successful graduates of continuation schools were considerably

older than their younger reference group from primary schools should have been a noteworthy factor and would first of all have called for an extension of conventional basic education.

Through the introduction of a 9 year free and compulsory basic education cycle which included a 3 year pre-technical/pre-vocational oriented junior secondary school course (figure 10), the government intended to meet these challenges. In particular, the changes in the educational system were the reaction to a number of criticisms of the post-colonial (conventional) system of education.

In short, the whole system of education bore traits of the colonial heritage during early independence and did not reflect the needs and challenges an independent developing nation had to face, but served the needs of a foreign power. The governments approval of the Dzobo Committee Report in the year 1973/74 (ISD 1977, 339) demarcated the change in educational policies which in future would refer to these findings (RoG 1974).

Primary and Middle School Education	(i)	Inadequate places compared to the school-going population.
	(ii)	Lack of adequate facilities in existing schools.
	(iii)	Inability of school leavers to find suitable employment easily
	(iv)	Too much emphasis on the academic aspects of education.
	(v)	Disparities in the distribution of educational facilities.
	(vi)	Unwieldy class sizes, reducing teaching impact.
Secondary School Education	(i)	Poor physical facilities, especially for science teaching
	(ii)	Only a small proportion of pupils from Middle School gain admission to Secondary Schools (i.e. only 17.9 per cent).
	(iii)	Inequalities in educational facilities between regions and schools.
	(iv)	Undue emphasis on grammar school type of teaching.
Teacher Training	(i)	Low quality of teachers.
	(ii)	Difficulty in finding specialist teachers.
	(iii)	Reluctance to work in rural areas.
Technical and Vocational Education	(i)	Death of qualified and trained teachers.
	(ii)	Poor 'shop-floor' facilities for practical training.
	(iii)	Training not closely geared to the needs of industry.

table 4: criticism on the old system, as appeared in: ISD 1977, 339

Consequently, the old system that was broadly criticized for placing too much emphasis on academic work, for being far removed from local situa-

tions and national manpower requirements, was to be replaced by a system that was more closely related to the requirements of a developing country. Later, the needs to reform the education system were summarized under four major programmatic aspects:[1]

1. The educational system as it is now organized makes it difficult for every Ghanaian to enjoy the basic right to be able to read, write and function usefully in society.

2. Illiteracy prevents the majority of Ghanaians from participating in the country's development and labor market.

3. A new type of Ghanaian culture should make the nation stronger and more unified and provide Ghanaians with a sense of cultural dignity and identity so that they can present themselves better to the outside and free their minds from dependency on the cultures of other people.

4. Ghana has inherited an educational system designed to run an administration and economy reliant on foreign demands, despite the fact that the country needs education that would help it to develop its own independent administration and economy. (MoE & C 1987, 1f; more detailed in, ISD 1977, 339f)

4.2 Towards the Final Structure

Variations: The mainstream reforms were sidelined by other concurrent models: the two-year (vocational) continuation classes (post middle school) that have been operating since 1969/70 (ISD 1977, 338); the 6 years primary +3 years junior secondary +2 years lower secondary +2 years upper secondary school structure (as a mixture of the below described and the conventional model); the 6 years preparatory primary school +5 years conventional secondary +2 years 6th form (Antwi 1992, 91, 95f).

In the end none of these models gained widespread popularity; although the 6 years preparatory primary +5 years conventional secondary school +2 years 6th form model became the popular model for privileged groups. In these preparatory primary schools pupils were 'prepared' to sit the common entrance examination to enter secondary school directly after primary school. Because most of these schools were run privately and under assistance of the church, additional fees were charged, which were beyond the means of the average (daily-rated) worker (Antwi 1992, 95). It was somehow only a

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[1] These demands were subliminally apparent over the course of time and finally formulated in the 1987 pamphlet 'Things You Need to Know About the Junior Secondary School Programme'.

shortened course within the conventional post-colonial system, but which reduced the time within the system by 4 years from 17 to 13 ! (figure 1 and figure 10).

Initial draft: According to the initial concept of the *New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana*, (figure 8) based on the proposals of the Dzobo Committee of 1973, the junior secondary school (JSS) would replace the middle school completely and also some years of the conventional secondary school. In the post-colonial system students had to attend middle school for 4 years plus 5 years secondary school to obtain their O-levels. Now there would remain only two years of lower secondary school after JSS to reach the required standard for O-level exams (ISD 1977, 337, 342). The attempt to tighten the educational system is very obvious, yet the possibilities to attend teacher, technical, and vocational training without O-levels remained.

New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana
Proposal, Dzobo Committee, 1973
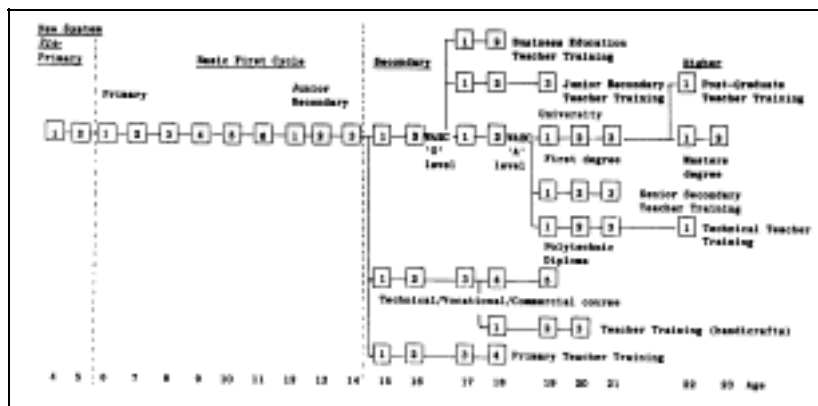
figure 8: proposal, British Council, 8

With the exception of a shortened secondary course, the structure of second and third cycle education remained the same. The internationally acknowledged O and A-levels were retained; but the minimum time to achieve O-levels was 11 years followed by the established two years 6th form course after which A-levels were attained. Altogether, the proposed system aimed at shortening the educational system to 13 years.

Elusive aspects: There are subtle similarities between the proposed 'new' system and the previously described 'preparatory school model' (6 years primary +5 years secondary +2 years 6th form). The five years secondary school cycle was broken down into 3 years junior secondary (JSS) +2 years 'lower' secondary school. The proposal of the 'new' system looks a bit confusing, when considering that the conventional 5 years secondary course will be replaced by two new courses, namely JSS and lower secondary, which together make up 5 years of secondary schooling too. Although the change in content at JSS-level must be considered, disadvantaged pupils have been put at even more of a disadvantage because the 4 years middle school which had previously served as a 'buffer-course' to improve pupils' knowledge so that they are able to attend secondary school was canceled. Under the proposed system the two years lower secondary school course was supposed to serve as a competitive selection examination (ISD 1977, 347) that could have become extremely selective.

The JSS - a bottleneck: Already, in this first draft, it is evident that the major burden to maintain students' academic standard would have to be borne by the junior secondary school (JSS). The most drastic changes in the curriculum, teaching methods, textbooks and teacher training could be expected to take place at this level and the quantity and nature of the technical and vocational courses introduced in the JSS was likely to pose implementation problems. The curriculum for JSS comprised listed academically oriented and additional vocational/technical (V/T) subjects (table 5).

According to the Ghana Education Service paper quoted above, the subjects were devided into 4 groups. Students had to take all subjects of group 1 (core or basic compulsory subjects) with the exception of ggric./home economics at examinations. In addition to these 4 subjects, students had to choose 2 subjects from either group 2 or 3 plus 2 subjects from group 4. Each student took a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 10 subjects (GES 1985, 4). The list of subjects varies in different papers. This affects in particular the vocational/technical/commercial (V/T/C) subjects. As the most popular V/T/C subjects are mentioned woodwork, masonry, metal work, technical drawing and dressmaking.

Apart from the students' point of view the teacher's point of view should be considered as well. Would there be adequate materials for teaching all these subjects and how would these teachers be trained? Besides these specific aspects, the general conditions were not favorable either. In his critiques, MENKA refers to the missing links between related market aspects. In 1979, he identified three major limitations to the rapid process in linking formal education to productive work in Ghana.

"These are: Shortage of funds for the purchase of appropriate equipment and the construction of school workshops; lack of closer contact with workshops and the absence of an apprenticeship system which takes on school leavers aged 15-16, in order to 'turn them into qualified craftsmen old enough to enter the labour market'." (NEIDA 1982, 66)

Group 1 (core subjects)	**Group 3** (vocational/commercial subjects)
1. English	1. tailoring/dressmaking
2. social studies	2. economics
3. mathematics	3. commerce
4. (general) sciences	4. book-keeping
5. (agricultural sciences & home economics)	5. catering/pre-nursing
	6. marine science (fishing)
	7. beauty culture (including hairdressing)
Group 2 (technical subjects)	8. crafts: leather-work, ceramics, pottery, Textiles, basketry
1. technical drawing	
2. masonry (blockwork and concreting)	**Group 4** (languages and cultural studies)
3. plumbing	1. Ghanaian languages
4. electrical installation	2. modern languages: French, etc.
5. woodwork	3. cultural studies: (religion, music, drama, arts)
6. metalwork	
7. automobile practice	

table 5: initial JSS curriculum, modified, cf: RoG 1974, 5; GES 1985, 3, 4

Lack of clarity: Soon it became obvious that the initial timetable for the transition to the new system could not be kept. The countrywide implementation of the junior secondary school program did not take place in 1980/81 as initially expected (ISD 1977, 344) but in 1987 (Antwi 1992, 46). Up to 1986, the structure of the first draft of the Dzobo Committee as mentioned above seemed to remain valid but what changes were made left many people uninformed about the structure of the program to be implemented.[2] It looks as if the real structure (figure 10) has become only clear since ABDALLAH'S (PNDC Secretary for Education and Culture) 'Statement on the state of the Educational System' on October 1986, in which he announced the final structure consisted of 9 years of basic education (6 years primary +3 years junior secondary) followed by 3 years of senior secondary education.[3]

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[2] Still in the beginning 1980s Ghanaian scientists referred to the DZOBO COMMITTEE model as the 'to be implemented' one; Asiedu-Akrofi 1982

[3] Antwi 1992, 44, footnote 36.

Resistance: Attempts to introduce this reform to face resistance from different groups and from a wide-spread conservatism which had previously undermined a series of attempts to reform education (Brookman-Amissah 1992, 15). BUDE mentioned three major obstacles that had a negative influence on the successful implementation of the reforms from the very beginning:

1. Lack of financial means;
2. A negative attitude towards changes in the educational structure on the part of certain groups of the educational administration;
3. A negative attitude towards changes on the part of certain groups of the Ghanaian society who were interested in maintaining the status quo. (Bude, 1974, 380)

These hindrances contributed to an inadequate supply of trained teachers and teaching materials. Besides this, the demand for "equal and fair educational opportunities for children both in urban and rural areas and in all Regions of Ghana" as stated in the initial report (EAC, 1973, 2) was subtly rejected by the ruling elite who had successfully mastered the old system and had become unable to cooperate with nor even imagine what problems of the ordinary people were like (Bude, 1974, 378). Especially the latter argument might have influenced the Advisory Committee from the very beginning to maintain the conventional educational structure from the JSS onwards, with the internationally known and accepted O and A-levels.

4.3 The Introduction of the New System

Annotation: It might be advisable to have a look at the finally implemented structure (figure 10) while reading this chapter. For chronological reasons the structure of the new education system was placed in chapter 6.

a) Preliminary Remarks

Since the time at which the World Bank came in to Ghana through its Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1984 the reform program was increasingly influenced by other ideas. Finally, substantial changes affected the second and tertiary cycle. (Compare, figure 4 to figure 6) Notably, a criticism on the state of the educational system was raised by the government during the countrywide implementation of the JSS system. This criticism (Yeboah, 1992, 19) referred mainly to infrastructural shortcomings which were related to developments during the 1970s and early 1980s and pointed at the problems caused by:

- A mass exodus of well trained teachers which raised the number of untrained personnel to 50%;
- Declining enrollment rates;
- An apparent fall in government expenditure on education from 6% in 1976 to 1% in 1983;
- Most schoolchildren being without textbooks, paper and pencils;
- School buildings and furniture being completely deteriorated, resources for maintenance and replacement being scarce;
- The sector being devoid of data for future educational planning. (Yeboah 1992, p. 19)

Generally speaking, the criticisms mentioned above refer to the contextual deficiencies under which the old system was operating and should be considered in connection with the previous criticism (table 4). The symptoms of decline referred to are not primarily a criticism aimed at achieving educational reforms in terms of content, but are more a structural criticism of arising out of political and socio-economic factors, which would require corresponding changes to improve the system.

The implementation of the educational reform program was likely to run into difficulties from the very beginning if the two lines of argumentation: a) changes demanded by the socio-economic and political conditions and b) changes in terms of content because of relevance, were not clearly distinguished. If, for instance, one of the major reasons for Ghanaian teachers - like other professions - to leave the country was because of the political and economic situation, the government should have felt impelled to change these conditions. But instead of being listened to, peoples' efforts to call the nation to order were increasingly met with wanton police and military brutality. At the same time, teacher salaries in Nigeria were much more attractive; teacher's salary in Ghana could hardly feed the family. In terms of the social and political spheres, especially young teachers developed a feeling of not belonging to their country which was in their view 'going downhill' (Antwi 1992, 122f). This obviously affected the pursuit of their profession:

> "Moreover, instead of staying in his classroom the teacher often found himself spending his working time chasing after the barest necessities of Life. Accordingly, many had no other alternative but to seek their fortunes elsewhere." (Ibid., p.123)

b) Transition and Implementation

The New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana was introduced in different steps (figure 9). The first attempts reach as far back as 1974, after the Dzobo committee had presented their first proposal. At this early

stage, roughly 118 experimental junior secondary schools (JSS) were established. Until the JSS program was introduced countrywide in 1987, the number of experimental JSS varied (Antwi 1992, 97, 96).

In September 1987, JSS form 1 replaced middle school form 1 (Antwi 1992, 46) and middle school form 4 had been phased out completely by the end of the 1989/90 academic year. Correspondingly, the full-scale implementation of the JSS program, form 1-3, was completed in the 1989/90 academic year. In 1990 pupils took the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) for the first time. The BECE is the formal leaving certificate examination that demarcates the end of the basic education cycle (6 years primary school plus 3 years JSS).

From the illustration below (figure 9), it becomes clear that the conventional and new secondary school system were running concurrently up to 1996/97 although the latter continued to be gradually phased out. When the senior secondary school (SSS) program was launched in 1990/91 for the first batch of JSS leavers, the last batch of middle school leavers still had the opportunity to enter the conventional secondary school and to sit O-level exams after 5 years and A-level exams after two years of conventional 6th form.

A complete phasing out of the old secondary system was to have taken place by the end of the 1996/97 academic year. Consequently, full scale implementation of the new senior secondary school program was to be achieved at the beginning of the 1996/97 academic year. This will result in the 1997/98 SSSCE being the first 'full-scale' examination, which will include the total student-population at (senior) secondary level. It looks as if A and O-levels as the internationally acknowledged examination will then be retained by private institutions only.

This description of this transition-table differs by one year from the World Bank draft (World Bank 1993, Annex 2-2). According to the World Bank table leavers from middle school form 4 were to enter the conventional secondary school in 1990/91 but not in 1991/92 which thus results in a full-scale implementation from the academic year 1996/97 onwards. In the World Bank draft, the completion of the New Structure of Education will be one year earlier than described in figure 5. Which transition table is correct still has to be cleared.

	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98

Conventional Middle School
2
3
4 — *Middle School phased out*

Junior Secondary School
1
1 2
1 2 3 — *first BECE (Basic Education Certificate Examination)*
introduction | full-scale implementation since 1990/91

Conventional Secondary School 'O-Level' (5 years)
fully operating 'til 1994/95 | 1
2
3
4
5 — *last O-level exams* — *last A-level exams*

Conventional 6 th Form 'A-Level' (2 years)
fully operating until 1996/97 | 1
2

Senior Secondary School
1
1 2
1 2 3 — *first SSSCE (Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination)*
introduction | both systems concurrently running | X
full-scale implementation from 1997/98 onwards

figure 9: personal draft, transition-table: World Bank 1993, Annex 2-2

Supporting activities: The transition was supported by various national activities to improve basic education, identify and give incentives to problem areas (buildings, furniture, equipment), project approximate costs, reorganize curricula, adjust teachers' training and organize in-service training, develop new learning and teaching materials (especially textbooks), intensify the school library project, etc. For the management and implementation of the school reform, a National Planning Committee had to be set up. It was comprised personnel from the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ghana Education Service (GES), the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), the universities, the National Services Scheme, and few other institutions. In addition, District Implementation Committees were formed and various local communities were invited to assist with the implementation of the reforms. (RoG 1990)

Supports and Projects (ending 80s/early 90s): Quite a number of substantial projects were launched. Since the end of the 80s and since the educational reform program was launched in 1986, there have been heavy investments in the educational sector. The World Bank states that six loans have been approved for a total of almost USD 170.0 million (World Bank 1993, 3). The International Development Association (ISD) has so far provided the biggest part of financial assistance. Another heavy foreign investor is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The total external funding since 1986 can be estimated at about USD 270 million (Manu 1994b, 4).

Four of the most popular projects shall be outlined below. The most powerful projects was probably the Primary School Development Project (PSDP), which was carried out with the assistance of the World Bank. Other joint projects were for instance the Primary Education Program (PREP) supported by USAID, the Junior Secondary School Teacher Education Project (JuSSTEP) which was supported by Overseas Development Administration (ODA/British Council) and the writing of the Headteacher's Handbook.

1. PSDP emphasized increasing instructional time, reducing student fees and levies, selecting and training headmasters as supervisors, putting up school buildings, classrooms, and housing for headmasters, etc. Notably, the selection of headmasters was based on the applicant's agreement to be posted to remote areas and stay there for at least 4 years. The PSDP had a financial volume of USD 65.1 million. The grant was spread over 4 years from 1994 to 1998. (World Bank 1993)

The project addressed roughly 30% of the existing primary schools in Ghana (3,532 primary schools out of the 11,064 existing public primary schools). In cooperation with the District Education Officers those 1,983 schools were systematically identified for core project support which activities were most seriously hampered due to lack of adequate structures.

2. The intention of PREP was to strengthen the policy and institutional framework required to assure a quality, effective, equitable and financially sustainable primary education system. Therefore the financial assistance of USD 32 million was disbursed in five tranches supplemental to Ghana's normal operational budget for primary education within 1991-94 (World Bank 1993, Annex 2-4; Manu 1994b, 13f)

The disbursement of the grant was due to three related conditions: 1. The Ministry of Education (MoE) was expected to assess student's achievement continuously in 3 key subjects i.e. English, mathematics, and social studies. A Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT) was to be developed; 2. An in-service

training program was to be developed to train 25,000 untrained teachers and provide professional development opportunities to all 63,000 primary school teachers at a minimum level of one in-service every two years; 3. The Project Management Unit (PMU) was to be fully integrated into the existing MoE structure to function effectively as an integral part of MoE's planning, budgeting, monitoring, and evaluation directorate (PBME). (World Bank 1993, Annex 2-4) Manu mentions other key conditions like 3.5% of the total GNP to education and 38% of this to basic education, increasing the MoE budgetary commitment to instructional material from 2% in 1989 to 6% in 1994, etc. (Manu 1994b, 16).

Through PREP, other contributions to the educational system such as the purchasing of textbooks and other instructional materials were supported, teachers in- and pre-service training was supported, and teachers' housing was improved in certain remote areas. A number of in-service training courses in management and educational administration were organized between 1991 and 1993 for 10,915 heads of primary schools; orientation courses were organized for 233 newly appointed circuit supervisors and for 18 (out of 110) district directors of education. In the field of pre-service training PREP has provided funding for the establishment of the primary education department at University of Cape Coast. Other pilot activities were launched providing training colleges with instructional materials, scholarships for girls in deprived areas, and giving incentives to communities who cooperate in putting up school buildings and teachers' housing. (Manu 1994b, 20 ff).

3. JuSSTEP was a project within the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service (GES) in collaboration with the Overseas Development Administration (ODA/The British Council). The project had a duration of 4 years (1989-1993) and was finally assessed by an impact monitoring team. JuSSTEP aimed to support the education reforms with particular regard to the creation of over 5000 new junior secondary schools with a new curriculum designed to create a more cost-effective and relevant basic education.

Emphasis was laid on up-grading the professional competence of tutors at training colleges. Besides the workshops organized in Ghana, 32 teacher educators received training towards an Advanced Diploma, B.Ed. or Masters, with an emphasis on instructional methods, in five subject areas in UK. The five subject areas JuSSTEP concentrated on were English, science, mathematics, technical skills and education.

Through 63 In-Service Education and Training (INSET) workshops JuSSTEP addressed the five above mentioned subject areas by covering

methodology, content, production of teaching and learning materials and continuous assessment. The bulk of INSET participants were teachers attending courses at training colleges. In addition to training programs, the setting-up of resource preparation centers for the use of subject panels, materials writers and local teachers was encouraged at Cape Coast, Accra, Tamale and Akropong. (GES/ODA 1993)

4. In the headteacher's handbook, two major sections are emphasized: 1. managing the school (managing people, instructional time, extra-curricular activities, learning resources, and financial matters) and 2. improving the quality of teaching (increasing school intakes and attendance, assessing pupils' performance, assessing teachers' performance, developing staff, improving the relationship between the school and the community). The handbook is highly attractive and offers very practicable guidance in how to deal with everyday affairs. (GES 1994)

c) Criticism

Transition and implementation: One of the most crucial shortcomings of the experimental phase (from 1974 to 1987) was that the project was abandoned half way. No experimental senior secondary schools (SSS) were established. This led to the problem of having to admit JSS students into the old type of secondary schools which were not prepared for such an intake. And, it was not possible to foresee the standard of the SSS Certificate Examination.

JSS graduates had problems coping with the conventional secondary schools. In some secondary schools, the JSS graduates were put into class 4, in others they were paralleled because of the different JSS syllabus. In the end, JSS graduates had substantial problems to attain O-levels in the conventional secondary schools (GES 1985, 4f).

Another notable aspect is the uncertainty of knowing the real infrastructural and manpower demand for these new type of secondary courses. Connected with this, the type of pre-service and in-service training the teachers would need to function adequately in the new senior secondary school courses could not be evaluated as well (interfaces primary-JSS and JSS-SSS and SSS-university).

Infrastructure: Another aspect was that materials needed for the implementation of the new system were not available in the schools when the program started in 1987. There were many complaints about the inadequate preparation for the new system take-off, despite its long planning period:

> "It is now no secret that like many other new ventures, the Junior Secondary School Programme which took off on September 29, 1987, did not

sail off as smoothly as many of us expected. According to a G. B. C.[4] report, many schools were without the right teachers or the equipment for a smooth take off. ... All over the regions, organisers of fund-raising activities in support of the JSS Programme have come face to face with problems. For one reason or the other, people did not see any reason why they should be asked to give financial support to a programme they did not understand ..." (Duodu 1987)

In 1985, two years before the countrywide implementation of the JSS program, a number of problems were foreseeable from MoE/GES reports:

- Most middle schools were old and had only 4 classrooms. On the other hand most JSS have two streams and six classes (2x3). The old middle schools which were transformed into JSS therefore faced the problems of accommodating 2 more JSS classes.
- The workshops were inappropriate. Middle schools did not have science laboratories and science had to be taught in the classroom.
- Lack of equipment hampered the progress of the vocational and technical aspect of the program.
- The schools found it difficult to get access to the prescribed textbooks since most of the books were not on the market.
- There was general lack of libraries and staffrooms in almost all schools.
- The problem of staffing in the technical/vocational subjects was acute. Apart from the fact that there were not enough of them, those trained in the 3-year post secondary institutes had no vocational/industrial experiences and their standard of craftsmanship was very low.
- Adequate financial means were the basic problem. Grants were not available for renovation and the building of additional classrooms, laboratories and workshops. (GES 1985, 5-6)

Another aspect was that people were complaining in general about certain administrative procedures. When materials were available, they could often not be supplied to schools because the new headmasters were not yet elected to take over responsibility for the materials. On the other hand the ministry was also not able to supply the newly opened schools with teaching syllabi. This left many people uncertain about either the ability or the willingness of the government to really implement the JSS program in 1987.

Evaluation: Evaluation, or more accurately the lack of adequate evaluation, especially during the initial phase (1974-1987), is another point at issue. There are rumors about the existence of an evaluation report about the experimental junior secondary schools done by Robert Mbong (?). Fact is that

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[4] G.B.C. = Ghana Broad Casting Co-operation

neither this report nor any other is practically available at libraries; nor at universities and teacher training colleges, nor at the Ghana National Association of Teachers GNAT and the World Bank regional office in Accra, nor at the Ministry (MoE) and Education Service (GES) offices. Should any evaluation report have been written, it is practically useless because none of the involved groups can make use of it.

Noteworthy is that the World Bank, which invested USD 85 million in the form of education sector adjustment loans in 1987 and 1990 (Glewwe/Jacoby, 1992, 19, footnote 13), did not adapt their evaluation properly to the situation in the country. Despite the 1985 'Education Sector Review and Proposed Investment Strategy' report (Keith 1985) and despite the 1992 report on 'Adjusting Educational Policies' (Fuller/Habte 1992) which explicitly refer to Ghana's educational reform, no adequate evaluation report is accessible which refers to the reform and its recent development since 1987. This is due to the fact that such reports are either confidential or simply non-existent.

The fact that the World Bank Living Standard Measurement Series (LSMS) reports in 1992 made no reference to any report supports the supposition that they are non-existent. LSMS reports like the 1992 report on 'Investment in Human Capital. Schooling Constraints in Rural Ghana' (Lavy, 1992) either do not mention the introduction of the JSS program at all, or devote only a simple footnote to the introduction of the new system (Glewwe/Jacoby 1992, 19).

Probably the actual educational system was not considered in such studies. This thesis is confirmed in reports such as GLEWWE and JACOBY'S, which mention the fact that at the time the data used were collected Ghana had already converted the first two grades of middle school (7 and 8) into junior secondary grades (ibid., 19). The objective of papers such as Glewwe/Jacoby's (1992) were, then, not primarily directed at an evaluation of the educational system but aimed at 'developing a methodology for estimating the determinants of student achievement' and a demonstration of 'the need for and usefulness of household data collection' (Hamilton's introductory note in, Glewwe/Jacoby 1992).

Just to demonstrate the inadequacy of a number of studies, or to demonstrate the lack of cooperation between planning, implementing executing and evaluating departments or organizations, conclusions of GLEWWE'S and JACOBY'S study shall be referred to again:

> "Investments in schooling in developing countries are one of the most important ways of raising productivity and, ultimately, the standard if living in those countries. ...

First, we find support for the hypothesis that, in Ghana, many families are credit constrained in that their income levels and to a lesser extent, their composition, affect the timing of human capital investment.

Second, we find clear evidence that school quality affects both school attainment and the tendency to start school at a late age. ...

Finally turning to specific schooling investments, we find that blackboards have a positive impact and classrooms that are unusable when it rains have a strong negative impact on the acquisition of both reading and mathematics skills.

Reading skills also suffer in the absence of textbooks, and both skills (reading and mathematics) benefit from reduced travel time and higher teacher experience." (Glewwe/Jacoby 1992, 51)

Who could be so bold as to question these findings - even without having an empirical basis? The authors' findings sound too popular, if not cynical, and the question may be raised: Do we need quantitative empirical studies of such caliber to arrive at such findings at times when a country's educational system is at stake?

In the end there was not 'business as usual' in Ghana. The country was totally reforming the educational sector and this aggravates the question of what type of studies were needed from the donor's side. After all it becomes evident that the people affected by their governments and the Bank's policy expected a different information policy, which obviously had to be based on studies monitoring the educational reform. In the face of the disastrous first senior secondary school examination (chapter 5.2c) a Ghanaian newspaper raised the following question:

"The Bank was the chief prop for the JSS/SSS scheme with a resident specialist to supervise the scheme. This World Bank official has been here for almost 7 years to supervise the scheme. What has the World Bank to say now in the face of total failure of their guinea-pig educational experience for Ghana?" (The Independence, Editorial, May 18th 1994)

Fair enough that this question is raised. Although it overlooks the fact that the World Bank is not the official policy maker, it makes clear that nowadays the public is expecting the international organizations which cooperate with their government to inform the people affected by their projects about what is going on.

Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT): During the initial introduction period (up to 1987) the political climate was not in favor of inviting for instance academics at universities or the GNAT for consultation. Alone with other omissions and external influences, this resulted in a lack of adequately trained teachers and an inadequate pre-service and in-service

training system (chapter 5.5). As an example for the political climate in which the implementation of the reform took place, the national debate on 14th January 1987 shall be mentioned. On the eve of the reform critical statements were silenced by the government and instead of listening to critics the government decided to stress only what they considered to be the positive aspects of the program. Adedze reports:

> "Dissenting views on the mode of implementation of the reforms from GNAT, NUGS and other contributors were drowned by Dr. Abdallah who chaired the function when he made it clear that the debate was not a debate but a forum to announce the government's programme. ... If we postpone it, it will amount to postpone our responsibility." (Adedze 1994, 12)

Of course evaluation and monitoring conducted by others than the MoE was seriously affected, if not made impossible, in such a climate. There are also no known government studies monitoring and evaluating the reform. Doesn't this run counter to ABDALLAH'S claim to demonstrate 'responsibility'? What do accountable persons of the former administration have to say today in response to the SSSCE results? ADEDZE reports that Dr. ABDALLAH, former Minister of Education and Culture, stated in an interview: "Please let this cup (SSSCE) pass by me" (ibid.). This is of course a blow to GNAT, but times are changing for the better and it looks as if GNAT is back on the scene to consult and cooperate with government on current educational affairs.

5. The New Structure and Content of Education

Compared to the previous conventional post-colonial system (figure 1), major changes affected all three levels of education (primary/basic education schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions). Related to these structural changes corresponding modifications in matters of educational content, teachers' training and educational administration were instituted.
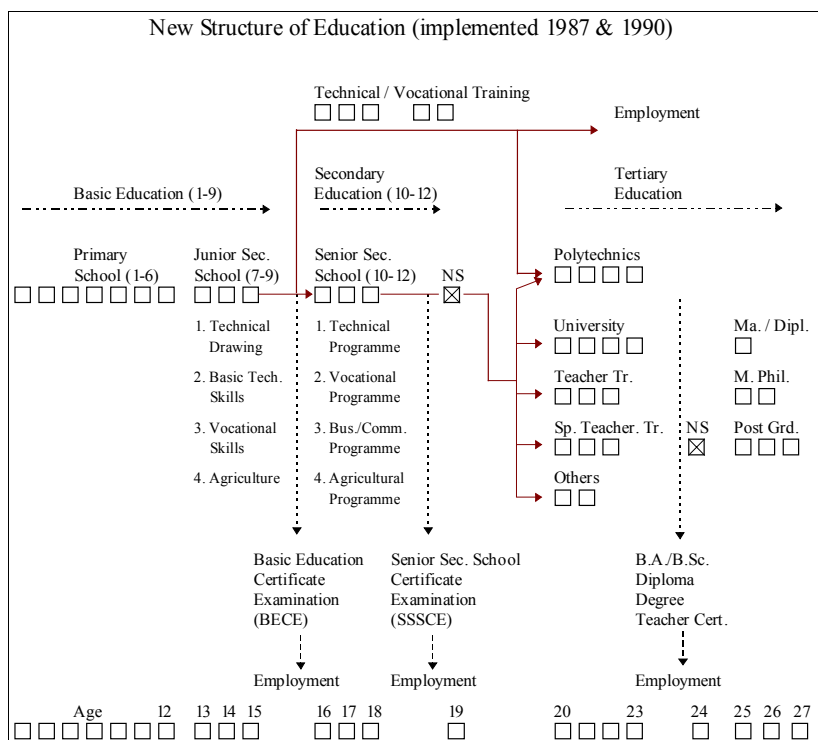
figure 10: the new structure of the education system

5.1 Basic Education

In structural terms 'basic education' consists of 6 years of primary education plus 3 years of free and compulsory junior secondary education (JSS). No selective certificate examination limits access to JSS. There is automatic

promotion through to the end of JSS whether internal assessments show that the child has learnt anything or not. Basic education is compulsory for all those children living within 5 km of a school, but few attempts are made to enforce this policy. Government has taken over the running of the primary schools established by religious organizations and local authorities since 1955. Although the managing and financing of all schools is really controlled by the educational units of the Ghana Education Service (GES), the religious organizations still have a certain influence which is officially welcomed for the most part. (World Bank 1993, 6) After a time period of 9 years of basic education students take the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). There are no other external examinations until the end of junior secondary school form 3.

a) *Objectives and Curricula*

Primary Schools Objectives:	Initial Curriculum:	Reformed Curriculum:
i. numeracy and literacy i.e. the ability to count, use numbers, read, write and communicate effectively; ii. laying the foundation for inquiry and creativity; iii. development of sound moral attitudes and a healthy appreciation of our cultural heritage and identity; iv. development of the ability to adapt constructively to a changing environment; v. laying the foundation for the development of manual and life skills that will prepare the individual pupils to function effectively to their own advantage as well as that of their community; vi. inculcating good citizenship as a basis for effective participation in national development; vii. laying the foundation for national unity and cohesion (especially through sports and cultural activities ...).	1. English 2. mathematics 3. Ghanaian languages 4. science 5. social studies 6. cultural studies 7. agriculture/ gardening 8. life skills 9. physical education	subjects in P1- P4 1. English 2. mathematics 3. Ghanaian language 4. the child and the environment subjects in P5 and P6 1. English 2. mathematics 3. Ghanaian language 4. science 5. arts

table 6 : primary school curriculum, cf: RoG 1994, 31; MoE 1994a, 19

At primary school: Generally speaking, the syllabus and content of primary school subjects remained unchanged during the JSS testing period (1974-1987). Only recently, efforts have been undertaken to reduce the

number of subjects and adjust the content of the remaining subject areas in terms of upward compatibility towards JSS.

In the early stage of the reform the primary school curriculum had 9 subjects. The political goals were to be implemented in 4 subjects predominantly: 1. Ghanaian languages, 2. social studies, 3. cultural studies, 4. agriculture and gardening and 5. life skills. The other core subjects were 6. English, 7. mathematics, 8. science and 9. physical education.

A major shift can be seen in government's approach and related educational policies in the early 1990s. The number of subjects was reduced according to a reform plan of the MoE in 1994 because the curriculum was found to be overloaded (Kraft 1994, 21). Infrastructural problems and poor student achievements at primary 6 gave way to the weeding out of the primary school curriculum and it was reduced to 4 subject areas only: 1. Ghanaian Language, 2. English, 3. Mathematics, and 4. The Child and the Environment.

At Junior Secondary School: The JSS consists of a 3 year-post primary course which completes the mandatory nine years of basic education. It is compulsory for all entrants beginning from primary form one. In addition to the general and specific objectives in primary schools, the JSS curriculum was designed to provide opportunities for pupils to acquire basic pre-technical, pre-vocational and scientific knowledge and skills. The pre-technical and pre-vocational programs can be followed up at senior secondary school (SSS) level. The pre-technical/vocational programs at the JSS level are related to the region's environment. Marine science (fishing) for example is offered at the seaside, whereas 'cattle keeping' is a subject offered predominantly in the northern areas.

In the mid 1990s, the MoE reported that as at the primary level, the number of subjects would be reduced at the JSS. "Vocational Skills, Technical Drawing, Technical Skills and Life Skills could be integrated into a single program. Likewise, Agriculture and Science could be integrated, as could Social and Cultural Studies." (MoE 1994a, 25f).

Official sources maintained that in 1987 syllabuses for JSS and adequate textbooks had already been written and distributed, and basic equipment and tools for all the subject areas had been supplied to all the schools. It was also claimed that in-service training for JSS head teachers and orientation courses for over 15,000 class-room teachers had been offered in the related areas. The increased need for teachers training in technical subjects as well as the general lack of skilled teachers was noticed. In order to raise the quality of student achievement a ban was placed on middle-school leavers teaching as

pupil teachers. As a consequence of the intention to strengthen supervision at basic education schools, 50 training centers were established to serve as in-service training centers for ongoing teacher training. (MoE 1987, 4f)

Junior Secondary Schools Objectives:	Initial Curriculum	Proposed Curriculum
i. make pupils discover their aptitudes and potential so as to induce in them the desire for self-improvement; ii. make pupils appreciate the use of the hand as well as the mind and make them creative, pro-duction oriented (self-employable); ii. inculcate in pupils the value of hard work; iv. make children understand their environment and make them eager to contribute towards its survival and development; v. prepare pupils for continuing education in senior secondary schools or technical and voca-tional institutions.	general subjects: 1. English language 2. Ghanaian languages 3. mathematics 4. integrated science 5. social studies 6. cultural studies 7. life skills 8. physical education 9. French (optional) pre-vocational & pre-technical subjects: 1. agriculture 2. technical drawing 3. pre-technical skills 4. pre-vocational skills	general subjects: 1. English language 2. Ghanaian languages 3. mathematics 4. integrated sciences 5. social & cultural studies 6. physical education 7. French (optional) pre-vocational & pre-technical subjects: 1. pre-vocational & pre-technical program: 2. integrated technical/ vocational and life skills

table 7: JSS curriculum, cf: RoG 1994, 32; MoE 1994a, 25f

b)   *Curricular Developments & Learning Achievements*

Number of subjects: As indicated in table 6 subjects were drastically re-duced at primary school. It is likely that a reevaluation of the curricula will also also lead to a reduction of the number of subjects at junior secondary school. (MoE 1994a, 19f, 25f)

Infrastructure and materials: The majority of schools in Ghana were facing desperate conditions. This was one of the reasons the World Bank launched the primary school development project (PSDP).

> "In 1990/91, 2,466 or 23.2% of all public primary schools, though hav-ing some makeshift facilities, had no classroom sufficient to protect chil-dren and teachers from the rain. A very large number of primary schools are in appalling condition. For in example, in 14 of the 110 districts in the country more than 50% of schools have no classroom facilities. In addition to these schools there are an almost equal number with leaking roofs, and cracked and dangerous walls." (World Bank 1993, p.7)

In addition to the maintenance problems of school buildings, reviews of textbook provision have revealed serious underutilization. The MoE states that textbooks are only provided in English and the evidence is that 'the language level is far too difficult for the pupils'. Therefore appropriate readers in Ghanaian languages have to be developed and material in English has to be graded to reflect the educational objectives properly (MoE 1994a, 20). Textbook development in Ghanaian languages seem to be an urgent problem, especially as far as learning English as a second language is concerned.

Language question: It is quite clear that any student must understand the language he/she is taught in. In Ghana, as well as in many other countries, the language of instruction differs from the student's mother tongue. Despite the official policy to teach in Ghanaian languages during the first three years of primary school, no official textbooks exist, either for the students to read in or for the teacher to instruct from.

MoE's findings that "the great majority of pupils in primary grades are not able to comprehend, read or write either a Ghanaian language or English well enough so that it can be a tool for learning" (MoE 19994a, 20) are consonant with KRAFT'S studies (Kraft et al. 1994), and they are quite a logical consequence of not supplying textbooks in Ghanaian languages and supplying improperly graded textbooks in English.

KRAFT maintains that according to international findings, the mastery of the child's native language is crucial for learning any second language and furthermore, for the transmission of knowledge through a second language (Kraft et al. 1994, 27). In the case of Ghana, the problem is further perpetrated by the comparably low access of children with poor background to spoken and written English. According to a rough estimate, a poor Ghanaian child, with illiterate, non-English speaking parents, and no access to television, might hear, speak, read or write in English a total of only 760 hours by the average age of 12 years. As compared to some 60,665 hours access which an average child in the U.S./Canada/Australia or Great Britain has to the English language, the Ghanaian child has 100 times less access to the language which serves predominantly as the medium of transmitting knowledge at school. (ibid. 28)

Based on the fact that all subjects are taught in English from P3 (and often from the very beginning), KRAFT considers the mastery of the English language as THE critical issue that Ghanaian primary education faces:

> "It is my opinion that all other issues affecting the achievements of Ghanaian children are directly or indirectly affected by this one critical factor, and until it is confronted and 'solved', most other interventions will

> be not necessarily useless, but not terribly effective." (Kraft et al. 1994, 27)

Primary education at Ghanaian schools is in danger of becoming a massive failure in itself and as a preparation for junior secondary school. The foundation for all subjects is laid at this level and further learning cannot be based on an inadequate mastery of the medium of instruction.

Technical/vocational bias: According to the Ghanaian point of view the curriculum "is still driven by an elitist model of education in which the possession of knowledge is elevated above its utilization". (MoE 1994a, 19) It is therefore an important goal to further reduce the gap between learning in school and productive work and to make students learning more relevant by focusing on the newly introduced subjects; life skills, vocational studies and practical agriculture (ibid.)

The 1992 English - mathematics CRT: In order to measure what pupils actually know a Criterion Reference Test (CRT) was conducted by the Primary Education Project (PREP). (MoE 1994a, Annex 2) The CRT was designed to measure student achievement of P6 mathematics and English. Schools were selected on a proportional basis from each region and by different sizes. Within these categories 461 schools were randomly picked. No private schools were included in the sample. All P6 pupils were tested within the selected schools.

Subtests for mathematics included: basic number concepts, number operations, story problems, and geometry. 100 instructional objectives were designed based on these dominants, related to the curriculum syllabi. Subtests for English were: listening comprehension, grammatical structure, vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing. 116 instructional objectives were designed in these dominants.

Results: Two quite frustrating statements can be made when assessing the overall results in brief: First, the result for the majority of items showed little difference from 25% scoring one would obtain from randomly guessing the right answers. Although it should be considered that many test administrators noticed that most pupils had no experience in taking this kind of test and made many errors in filling the forms and following directions, 25% is just too low.

Secondly, the test on mathematical operations test showed that pupils scored lowest on word problems when still 'over 50% responded correctly to items on adding two digits, subtracting two digits, and on finding the perimeter of a geometric shape'. This is not surprising at all when considering that the results of the English test were disastrous.

"A picture is emerging from the results of the criterion referenced tests, and from other evidence: a large number of primary school pupils cannot read, nor can they understand simple English that is spoken to them." (MoE 1994a, Annex 2, 51)

c) *Enrollment Ratios and Teacher Supply*

At primary schools there was stagnation in gross enrollment rates from 1976 to 1986. With the introduction of the educational reform in 1987 enrollments have again begun to accelerate by 23% since 1986/87. The proportion of trained teachers has also leapt from below 50% in 1986/87 to over 72% on a national level in 1991/92. (World Bank 1993, 6)

Public Primary Schools	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93
number of students	1,598,443	1,703,074	1,803,148	1,807,223	2,047,293
- " - schools	9,368	9,831	11,165	11,142	12,010
average size of school	170.6	173.2	169.7	162.2	
number of classrooms				52,781	
- " - classes (streams)				65,499	
number of all teaching staff	62,670	62,859	62,823	66,378	67,760
- " - teachers at classes				59,350	
- " - detached teachers				7,028	
% of trained & certified teachers	60.3	66.4	66.1	73.8	68.5
% of trained but not certified				9.9	
% of untrained teaching staff				16.2	
number of pupils per teachers	25.5	27.1	28.7	27.2	
number of teachers per class	1.10	1.02	0.99	1.01	
% of female pupils	44.5	44.9	45.0	45.5	
% of repeaters	3.8	3.8	3.0	3.2	

table 8: primary school parameters, cf: MoE 1993a, 1, 132; GoG 1994, 8

In 1991/92 there was a total enrollment of 1,807,223 students in 11,064 public schools and 204,379 students in 570 private schools. Generally, there was a rising trend in the gross primary intake to almost 90%, whereas no figures for net enrollment rates were available. The average size of schools was around 162 pupils per school. Girls enrollment has increased continu-

ously and the percentage of female students has recently reached a notable 45.5%. It is only in the northern regions of Ghana that girls enrollment is significantly low. (Figures for 1991/92, MoE 1993a).

The percentage of trained teachers in primary schools has increased by 7.7 % from 66.1% to 73.80% since the academic year 1991/92. There seems to be little fluctuation in the number of pupils per teacher at around 27 and the number of teachers per class seems to have stabilized at one teacher per class. The percentage of repeaters is practically irrelevant because Ghana is running a policy of automatic promotion. There is a considerably high proportion of teachers (7,028=10.5%) no longer actually teaching at their assigned post; they are detached from schools. (Ibid.)

Adaptations: It should be noted that all tables in this research were redrawn based on the original figures and that certain categories were renamed. Particularly the category of 'teachers' was renamed to 'all teaching staff'. The MoE preferred to use the simple category of 'teachers' in their statistical reports which, according to the author's view, gives a very wrong impression because also the non-graduates were put under this category. The same applies to the following tables on JSS and SSS parameters.

Faulty calculations ?: The above table is probably based on wrong calculations because either the 'number of classroom teachers' devided by 'number of classes' (59,350/65,499) is 0.90 teachers per class or the number of teachers detached from schools were included (66,378/65,499) which would end up at (the above mentioned) 1.01 teachers per class. But this calculation was obviously not correct because detached teachers cannot teach at classes and can therefore not be included in such a calculation.

The same calculation refers to the number of students per teacher. The correct calculation was 'number of students' devided by 'number of classroom teachers' (1,807,233/59,350) which is 30.45 students per teacher. The above probably faulty calculation was 'number of students' devided by 'number of all teaching staff' (1,807,223/66,378) which is 27.2 students per teacher.

Comparing public to private primary schools - selected aspects: There are at least two points worth mentioning: Firstly, enrollments at private schools are generally two times higher (358 pupils) than at public schools (162 pupils). The share of enrollment in private schools as related to total enrollment was 10.2 per cent whereas the private sector held only 4.9 per cent of the schools (11,064 public to 570 private schools). (Figures for 1991/92, MoE 1993a, 1, 132, 263)
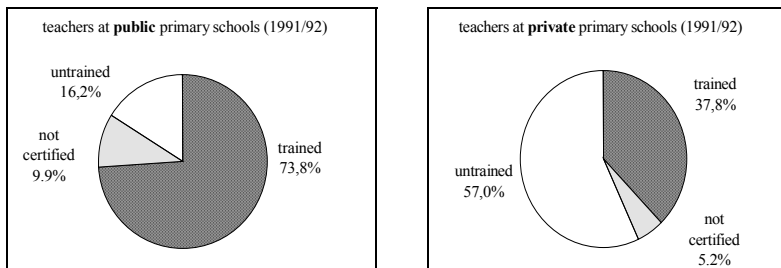
figure 11: teachers' supply at public and private primary schools

Secondly, the most striking aspect when comparing public to private primary schools is that at private schools the majority of teachers (57%) seem to be completely untrained. Only 37.8% of teachers employed at private schools were trained and certified teachers. 73.8% of the teachers at public schools were trained and another 9.9% had at least some kind of teachers training although they did not successfully pass the exams. (Figures for 1991/91, MoE 1993a, 1, 132, 263)

Private schools preferred: Roughly 10% of pupils are sent to 5% of the schools which are private schools although these schools are bigger and there are fewer trained teachers. There seems to be a rising trend of parents preferring to enroll their children at private schools despite high school fees and the high proportion of untrained teaching staff at these schools, probably because they expect their children to receive a better education.

People are probably also encouraged to send their children to a private primary school because the predecessor, the private preparatory school, had always 'prepared' pupils for a direct route to secondary schools. A higher quality of primary education was guaranteed through direct feedback by pupils sitting the 'Common Entrance Examination' into secondary schools and this tradition seems to continue at private primary schools also under the new system, as also has been recognized in official reports. The MoE itself maintains that:

> "... although the private schools in Accra and Kumasi have both higher pupil-teacher ratios (averaging over 40:1), and only 25 percent trained staff, pupils in these private schools perform far better than their counterparts in the public schools." (MoE 1994a, 17)

Referring to the before established preparatory school, ANTWI-DANSO (1994) called this 6+5+2 structure 'the ingenuous way' of reducing school-

ing time long before the inception of the new system. It had become the norm and practice for such 'private' and 'experimental' schools whose teaching was effective and facilities better to offer a shortened conventional course. He challenges the government policy 'to do away with the imbalance (unequal opportunities) in pre-tertiary education' by maintaining:

> "If the old Common Entrance system [Examination] was thought to favour the elite 'Preparatory', 'Private', 'Experimental' etc. schools then today this same trend continues." (Antwi-Danso 1994)

Reliability of figures: The figures mentioned in the quoted MoE report (table 8) are calculated correctly but seem to be somehow constructed and do not (cannot ?) reflect 'reality' in certain cases. According to various observations, class sizes are considerably larger than officially stated. In the 12 schools KRAFT visited during 1994, he found average class sizes between 34-37 at three schools, 42-49 at five schools, 59-64 at two schools and in only one school class sizes of around 22 pupils. He also refers to YAKUBU'S study from 1993, which presented similar results (Kraft et al. 1994, 40).

> "The range of class sizes in the Kraft (1994) study was from 7 students in P3 in a small rural, three grade primary to 69 in a large urban school with 18 classes in P1-P6. The mean or average class size was 48 and a median size of 48. These two studies appear to coincide with MoE claims of an average class size in the range of forty-five students." (Kraft et al. 1994, 7)

Differing class sizes, as mentioned above, could be due to regional disparities throughout Ghana and it is likely that classes are generally much larger that the stated 27 pupils per teacher except in rural and remote areas. According to KRAFT the MoE itself claims an average size in the range of 45 students per class (ibid.).

Based on a countrywide study conducted by GNAT (Ghana National Association of Teachers) on 360 basic education teachers, 42% had class sizes between 21-40 pupils and another considerable 42.6% were teaching in classes ranging from 41-60 pupils. Only 6.6% of the class sizes were below 20 and 5.1% were above 60. (Nyoagbe 1993, 7, 10)

At junior secondary schools the gross-enrollment rate in the age group 12-14 was 56.3% in 1991/92. The percentage of girl-students stabilized around 41%, which is only 4.5% less than at the primary school level. Class sizes seem to find their level at around 18 students per teacher and at the same time there is a rising trend of up to 1.8 teachers per class. (MoE 1993b, 1, 132)

Public Junior Secondary Schools	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93
number of students				592,867	
schools				5,135	
average size of school (enrollment)	117.8	121.7	110.9	115.5	
number of classes (streams)				18,179	
number of all teaching staff				33,395	
trained and certified				22,378	
trained but not certified				1,686	
untrained teaching staff				9,313	
(+ or inclusive) N.S.S. as teachers				7,440	
+ craft and farm instructors				403	
% of trained and certified teachers	(?) 71.8	(?) 64.9	(?) 75.9	67.0	
% of trained but not certified				5.0	
% of untrained teaching staff				27.8	
number of students per teachers	17.6	17.7	18.5	17.8	
number of teachers per class	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.8	
% of female students	41.3	41.3	40.8	41.1	
percentage of repeaters	0.7	0.7	1.3	1.2	

table 9: JSS parameters, cf: MoE 1993b, 1, 132

Trained-untrained teachers: In the MoE report it is preferred to add 'trained but not certified teachers' to the category of 'trained teachers'. (MoE 1993b 1 and 132) The initial practice of subsuming the non-graduates under the category of 'teachers' gives a bit of a wrong impression. It should be considered that those listed in the category of 'trained but not certified teachers' are likely to register for further in-service training and to take their teachers examination in future, and they will be encouraged to do so especially because salaries are paid in Ghana according to teachers' academic qualifications. Many of the 'trained but not certified teachers' could take the chance to upgrade their qualifications by registering for in-service training courses and are therefore likely to become detached from schools.

For the year 1991/92 the cumulative calculation of the MoE was broken down into the 'real' percentages (65% trained + 5% without certificates). The MoE had originally stated 72%. This is likely to have happened in the

statistics of previous years which are therefore indicated by question marks in table 9.

According to MoE's own findings the high proportion of untrained staff at the basic education level is posing a serious problem for the successful implementation of the reforms:

> "Approximately 28 percent, or 18,000 of the teachers in primary and 9,300 teachers in junior secondary schools have not had pre-service training. Many of these teachers, particularly those in the primary schools, are middle school leavers who are not able to effectively teach with English as a medium of instruction." (MoE 1994a, 16)

N.S.S. Personnel: From the MoE statistic for JSS (1993b) it is not clear whether the National Service Students (category 'N.S.S. as teachers') are included as they are in the MoE statistic for SSS (MoE SSS statistic, 1993c 11). If the NSS were not included within the 'number of all teachers' there would be another 7,440 persons (or 22.2%) who could serve as additional teaching staff; but it is more likely that the N.S.S. personnel is included among the others as clearly indicated in the statistics for secondary schools (MoE 1993c, 1). If the N.S.S. personnel is included in the statistics quoted it means on the other hand that the running of the junior secondary schools is very much dependent on the recruitment of these students.

Programmatically, all students graduating from secondary schools who are 18 years and older are called upon to do a two year national service by law. (ISD 1991, 97f) In practice, only those who want to further their education at the tertiary level or who seek employment at state-run companies will need to participate in the National Service (NS) scheme. Generally, there are two popular possibilities; either to do a one-year NS either directly after SSS and another one-year NS before registering for the masters program at university, or to do the two-year NS after the bachelor/degree/etc. and before continuing on with a masters program at university (figure 6).

> "In the areas of mathematics, science and technical skills the national service scheme is the main source of teachers especially in the rural areas." (ISD 1991, 98)

Professional instructors and teachers for practical subjects: A crucial aspect for the implementation of the JSS program is the absolutely inadequate supply of craft and farm instructors in pre-technical/vocational subjects. Less than ten schools, statistically, share one (!) craft and/or farm instructor. Or practically speaking, less than one school out of ten will have employed either a craft or farm instructor. Although 'exposing children to a wide variety of ideas and skills' (MoE&C 1987, p.2) and preparing them 'to

go confidently into the world of work to begin learning a trade or improving on skills' was a major issue (ISD 1991, 94), the educational policy did not succeed in attracting 'members of the community to provide information and skills from the traditional culture as well as technical and vocational know-how' (MoE&C 1987, 6).

In most junior secondary schools (JSS) the teaching of technical and vocational subjects by trained teachers suffers both from a lack of workshops and a lack of trained teachers in pre-vocational/pre-technical subjects (MoE 1994a, 20).

> "Despite the numerous in-service training programmes, teachers are not able to use their own initiative to tackle the problems of working through the new practical courses. Moreover, the number of teachers actually trained to teach vocational subjects at JSS level since 1990 is only 21 percent of the total needed." (MoE 1994a, 17)

Today's situation looks completely different from official projections in 1987 when the JSS program was launched countrywide. At that time the ministry responsible published a pamphlet maintaining that especially the pre-technical/pre-vocational dimension had been given adequate consideration:

> "These courses will be backed by a carefully integrated programme of using the practical experience of community experts." (MoE&C 1987, 3)

After 7 years of implementation it has become evident that 'community experts' could not be encouraged to instruct practical subjects in junior secondary schools. The hard economic constrains have surely contributed to this fact, but probably in addition to this estimation of the willingness of communities to contributing to the implementation of the education reforms was far too optimistic.

Generally speaking, in the mid 1990s a picture emerges revealing that "the vocational focus for the junior secondary schools has not been effectively implemented." (MoE 1994a 20) Is officially contended that the great majority of junior secondary schools either lack a workshop or a trained prevocational teacher, particularly in rural areas. No special tools have been provided to the schools for the technical skills subjects (woodwork, metalwork and technical drawing), apart from a few hand-tools which serve as a basic minimum. The prevocational teachers, already not specialists, were also not adequately trained to use simple local tools, technologies and resources. Besides this, these problems are compounded by the fact that supervisors lack skills in vocational subjects, and there is little or no effective supervision. (Ibid.)

Comparing public to private JSS: Where junior secondary schools are concerned, the public sector is equipped with more trained teachers than the private sector. 72% at public JSS were trained teachers whereas at private JSS there were only 56% trained teachers. Girls enrollment is slightly higher (44.9%) than at public JSS (44.1%). Apart from this there are no significant differences between public and private JSS.

d) Other Selected Problem-Areas

Instructional time: As has been mentioned, there is very little instructional time dedicated to primary school teaching in Ghana. Whereas the official time for learning is about 900 hours per year worldwide in those countries running a 6-year primary school system, the official instructional time in Ghana is about 600 h per year. (Lockheed 1993, p.26) The World Bank (1993, 7) refers to Ghana's attempt to compensate for the short instructional time by lengthening the school year from 36 to 40 weeks. This would result in 720 instructional hours annually but because of days spent for instance for rehearsals for Independence Day (6. March) celebrations, another 3 days for sports contests, and a further 1-2 days lost every month whilst teachers collect his/her salary, this leaves 600 hours. The report further maintains:

> "All this is before any unauthorized absences are taken into consideration. In double shift schools, the afternoon shift has 2-1/2 hours less instructional time per week which would bring its maximum likely total to 540 hours. Unauthorized school closing, and closures due to weather, especially in more remote schools, can easily lead to a further 50% loss, reducing actual instructional time to as low as 300 hours a year." (World Bank 1993, 7)

Although absenteeism of teachers from classes is also mentioned in the Government of Ghana (GoG 1994) paper, the problems caused by inflexible organisation of school hours (8:00-12:35 a.m. in single shift schools and 7:30-12:00 a.m. and 12:30-4:30 p.m. in double shift schools[1]) are not addressed. The long distances both children and teachers have to cover to reach school and certain farming/harvesting/fishing practices and weather influences in rural areas are often hindrances to effective tuition according to the official schedule. It would therefore make more sense to adjust school hours locally in order to run schools more conveniently, which would mean organizing schooling more effectively in the end. The World Bank's observa-

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[1] From an international perspective Lockheed (1993, 28) maintains that instructional time is typically affected in double shift situations.

tions are largely consonant with KRAFT'S study (Kraft et al. 1994). According to KRAFT, whose study was guided by a number of well-known Ghanaian researchers, the amount of 'academic learning and engaged time' is likely to be in the range of 1-2 hours per day, meaning that children are receiving only 200-400 hours of actual academic instruction each year (ibid. 75).

Reasons for non-attendance and poor achievement: Especially at the basic education level, a number of hindrances pose problems for pupils entitled to enjoy free, compulsory and universal basic education. Table 10 provides information about the most common factors which hinder the implementation of basic education, from the official point of view.

Reasons for Non-Attendance:

- inability of some parents to pay fees for their children
- inadequate and poor infrastructure provided in the schools
- absenteeism of teachers from classes
- opportunity cost of education (income foregone by attending school)
- gender discrimination against girls by parents/guardians
- child labour
- poor health, nutritional deficiencies, recurrent infectious diseases
- early marriage for girls
- low population densities, particularly in the North, and lack of roads and other services which make it difficult to establish schools within walking distance for scattered communities
- Quranic school system favoured by some Muslim families and which does not make provision for the regular courses offered in the formal system of education

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table 10: reasons for non-attendance, taken from: GoG 1994, 3

Among the most common factors are i.) the inability of some parents to pay fees for their children. As outlined earlier, education at the basic education level is free in Ghana and what is mentioned under i.) can only refer to the textbook user fees introduced, the purchasing of school uniforms and other levies charged by the school. On the other hand we cannot find the extremely short duration of instructional time in this official list at all, which is one of the most striking problems together with inadequate infrastructure (ii.) and poor teaching (not mentioned) that might also compel parents to finance education that doesn't pay. This aspect is furthermore worsened by the inability of most schools to run the promised workshops i.e. the practical subjects. A youth provided with a more relevant education was expected to have a promising impact on the development of rural and remote areas. Unfortunately this run contrary to peoples' present observations.

KRAFT elaborated on 17 reasons for educational disparities and poor achievement based on his and other's observations and interviews (Kraft et al. 1994, 23ff). Aspects related to obvious and general economic hardships aside, there seem to be a number of reasons that are connected with low morale on both sides: the teachers' reluctance to teach and the communities' reluctance to maintain school buildings. Undoubtedly the fact remains that 'teachers are severely underpaid' and that 'people in the remote settings are too poor to provide facilities for schooling', This, however is not to diminish the fact that an increasing number of parents do not see any purpose in sending their children to school since 'boring and repetitive rote memorization and copying off the blackboard', makes both students reluctant to attend school and unlikely to benefit much from the kind of teaching taking place there (ibid.).

Official recognition: Among the 18 problems and future prospects encountered by the government in the implementation of the country's educational program (RoG 1994 50-55), we find general acceptance of the afore mentioned view-points with reference to:

- lack of incentives for teachers in the rural areas where the amenities of the urban centers are lacking and remuneration is also inadequate (No 3);
- the overloaded curriculum (No 4) together with the inability to cover the syllabus (No 14) results in the poor achievement of pupils as for instance the CRT in English and mathematics has proved;
- ineffective teaching which calls for intensive in-service training to improve the quality of basic education (No 6);
- the ineffective link between primary and JSS especially in communication and quantitative skills development (No 7);
- poor communication in English which results in requests for extra time to teach the language in senior secondary schools (No 13);
- ineffective supervision which has to be strengthened by headmasters (No 15);
- the inadequate facilities in schools like classrooms, laboratories, workshops, etc. (No 17).

Just for the record, many of the most pressing issues are officially recognized although the hierarchy of some of the problems listed may be questioned as being biased (insufficient office and residential accommodation for the 110 District Education Officers is ranked No 2, whereas inadequate facilities in schools is ranked next to the last place No 17 !).

Practical transitory aspects: Besides the aspects previously mentioned, there are also some practical problems. If the 3-year JSS course is compulsory for all primary school leavers, there is the need to build more than the

existing middle schools which were transferred into new JSS. This has posed an obvious problem for those areas where no middle schools existed (mostly remote areas) as well as in those areas where preparatory primary schools had prepared students for direct entrance to secondary schools (mostly urban areas).

> "It is unrealistic to ask all these thousands of pupils to add to the bursting classrooms in the public system. Take Legon. The University Primary School has no middle school to be turned into a JSS ... And the story is similar where ever there are private schools." (Forson 1987)

Where preparatory primary schools had existed within the old system, the implementation of the reform was very likely to face resistance. The preparatory primary schools had always successfully prepared pupils for direct entrance into secondary school, leaving out middle school. Parents who had the possibility to send their children to such preparatory schools had always been privileged and they had gained from sending their children to a shortened secondary course. Starting from a preparatory primary school, a child was able to reach the internationally accepted O-level after 11 years and the A-level after 13 years. These groups hardly see any advantage in the new system promoting the JSS as an entrance to the world of work, because they had always wanted their children to enter secondary school, aiming at A-levels and tertiary education. Additionally, they are now forced to support the post-primary JSS course which prepares their children for purposes (vocational/technical orientation) they might not support.

Altogether it becomes clear that the tightening up of the educational system with the aim of introducing free and compulsory universal basic education with the inclusion of a 3-years JSS course, has become much more than a mere reform. It looks much more like a revolution, where structure and content are given a totally new shape; a fundamental alteration that demands the contribution and willingness for a change of all participating institutions and individuals.

High expectations: In a certain sense, programmatic promises in combination with the shortened structure made people expect more from pupils than having 'only' a well grounded basic education and some exposure to pre-technical and pre-vocational skills. Pupils and parents were encouraged to have higher expectations, as is clearly indicated by the pamphlet 'Things you Need to Know about the JSS ...' (MoE&C 1987). Indirectly, parents were made to belive that their children would easily find work or even be able to start any kind of business on their own after graduating from junior secondary school:

"At the end of a 9 year Basic Education Period, students who will be of age 15-16 should be sufficiently exposed to functional education to allow them to function in our national socio-economic context since the curriculum for Basic Education has been designed to include Cultural, Manual, Pre-technical and Pre-vocational orientation to pre-dispose the child at an early age to be self-reliant, creative, productive and self-confident." (MoE&C 1987, 7; ISD 1991, 94)

Although it is clearly stated in the context of the above quotation that 'basic education is not to train children for specific vocations or jobs' (ibid. 2; ibid. 94) formulations like 'to cope creatively with their own environment and problems and to be great assets to their country' (ibid.) encourage more expectations than what had always been expected of schooling. What else could be the meaning of 'to cope creatively with their own environment and problems' than a child's ability to handle its own life problems, which are mostly related to making money?

But the official sources provide more than just that one example: On one hand it is maintained that 'pupils will not be given professional courses at that level' and on the other it is maintained that 'by familiarizing them with technology, science and various vocations, they will also be imbued with the confidence to begin to adapt what they learn to their environment' (MoE&C 1987, 3). Also, in the ISD hand book it is stated that:

"While the young person can continue at a higher education at Senior Secondary School, he or she can also confidently go into the world of work to begin learning a trade or improving on skills. There is provision being made in the system for informal education ... " (ISD 1991, 94)

The problem seems to be twofold: Firstly, it becomes evident from various newspaper articles and spoken statements that a great number of Ghanaians have taken the JSS program to be a form of preparation for direct entrance into the world of work, with an immediate or at least a short-time possibility of generating income. JSS leavers 'selling dog-chains' in the streets of Ghana's capital, Accra (as reported in some newspapers and apparent to anybody traveling in bigger cities) indicated that despite other statements and hopes the professional market did not offer an attractive nor a sufficient number of training facilities. It looks as if just a few have become successfully self-employed.

Another aspect is that the government sought to open opportunities for students to enjoy 'upper secondary education' now provided in the newly established senior secondary schools. According to government policy 50% of the students leaving junior secondary school should further their education at the senior secondary school level (MoE&C 1987, 3; ISD 1991, 95).

Teachers supply: There is evidence that the figures used in the MoE statistics (MoE 1993a-c) do not completely reflect reality. For instance, the question arises of whether the figures standing for the total number of all teachers (at the different levels) refers to the total number of teachers actually present at the schools. According to the author's information, the total number of teachers does include the teachers who are detached, on study-leave etc. because they remain on the school's payroll and the statistics (official figures) are based on the number of teachers registered on a school's payroll. As can be seen in table 8, 'detached teachers' are included in the total number. Teachers on study-leave were not detached and therefore fall under the category 'teaching staff at classes' although they are often physically absent while remaining on a schools' payroll.

In the ministry's own report we find statements reporting that there is 'a large number of staff swelling the payroll and yet not contributing to the objective of the reform' (MoE 1994a, 16). It is further maintained that there are 10,000 untrained attendants and 9,000 teachers who are actually teaching at pre-school institutions while being paid as primary school teachers. Another 15,000 teachers are officially on study leave and 5,000 are detached from schools (ibid.).

Should the above assumptions be valid, certain official calculations and recommendations have been based on questionable findings. As an example two significant calculations and recommendations shall be referred to:

> "Currently the overall pupil-teacher ratio for primary schools is 28:1 (this figure includes the 39,000 persons not teaching in primary schools) and 18:1 in junior secondary schools. Current policy is that pupil-teacher-ratios should rise to 45:1 in primary and 30:1 in JSS. ... The Ministry of Education however, considers a targeted ratio of 40:1 to be much more realistic for primary schools. The achievement of this target would require that i) the Ghana Education Service dramatically reduce the number of persons paid as teachers who are not, in fact, teaching in primary of junior secondary schools, and ii) that teachers are trained to handle multi-grade classes in remote area schools, so that small classes can be consolidated ..." (Ibid. 17)

The report quoted above was based on the official figures for 1991/92. It is very likely that '39,000 persons' are a cumulative figure consisting of the mentioned 10,00 untrained attendants and 9,000 teachers teaching at pre-schools, the 15,000 teachers on study leave plus the 5,000 teachers detached from schools.

In the case of primary schools there are 66,378 registered teachers and the number of teachers who are not teaching at these primary schools should

be subtracted from the total number of teachers to calculate the real pupil-teacher ratio. The ratio would then be 1,807,223 pupils:(66,378-39,000) 27378 teachers = 66:1. Even if the teachers on study leave were considered 1,807,223 pupils:(66,378-24,000) 42,379 teachers, the ratio would be 42,6:1. With reference to various other reports (Yakubu 1993; Kraft 1994) 66:1 or 42,6:1 are much more realistic ratios than the officially stated 28:1.

Recommendations drawn from the findings quoted are therefore questionable: The 'targeted ratio of 40:1' is probably already the real or almost real ratio. A dramatic reduction in 'the number of persons not teaching at the primary school level' does not necessarily have to be made; but teachers have to be placed in the right category to be calculated correctly. As a result the officially propagated ratio of 28:1 is based on an artificial calculation which has unfortunately even entered international reports like the 'World Education Report 1993' (UNESCO 1993, 140). Policy measures to raise the pupil-teacher ratio to 45:1 could become more harmful than helpful because they are based on unsound data.

Wastage?: Now certainly the question arises as to what is to be done with those who can not make it from JSS to SSS and from SSS to university. It is popular to call this group 'wastage'. This expression either declassifies great number of students as not being able to do anything and indicates that the government was unable to develop training programs which are designed for the needs of this group in order to improve upon these student's abilities and skills.

ANTWI-DANSO, a university lecturer at University of Ghana, maintains that the 15-16 year old JSS leavers are not very self-sufficient which is certainly right, but they are not just 'minors' and they are not 'unemployable' (Antwi-Danso 1994). To provide further training for JSS leavers and to introduce them to the 'world of work' is a job to be done by other than the formal schooling sector and this is something new in Ghana.

Linkages to the 'world of work': There was a very early criticism pointing at the weak linkage between the role of the school within the new program and the 'world of work'. SAWYERR, then Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, states that there is no scientific basis for the 'simplistic notion' that the persons leaving school after junior or even after senior secondary school will have developed a positive attitude towards 'productive work', through having been predisposed to agricultural, vocational and technical work (Sawyerr 1987, 9). Additionally, he also claims that the economic framework is not developed so as to prevent young people from drifting into any other than the 'traditional' kind of side-jobs.

"It does not seem to be appreciated that as long as selling dog chains or imported apples along the streets of Accra, or opening a kiosk anywhere, proves more lucrative and requires less capital outlay than farming or tool-making, the graduates of junior and senior secondary schools will continue to be attracted to the former 'occupations'." (Ibid.)

SAWYERR contended that unless appropriate developments in the national economy together with a program of political education and organization to make up for the lack of material incentives with regard to productive work, young people will continue to drift into trading and the situation of youth unemployment will persist.

e) *Output and transition*

After the JSS, students may enter senior secondary school (SSS), other post-basic training institutions (technical/vocational) in both the public and private sectors, or start an apprenticeship and prepare for employment. According to the government's initial proposal, 50% of the total number of JSS leavers were expected to enter SSS (MoE&C 1978, 2f).

Year	No. of B.E.C.E. candidates-passed	No. of candidates qualified for SSS	No. of students admitted into SSS	University Entries
1992/93	121,255	79,277	54,618 (54.6%)	
1993/94	138,527	89,022	58,537 (58.5%)	
1994/95	153,275	102,642	74,545 (74.5%)	1,232 (2,9%)
1995/96	198,764	123,841	(80,000 - proxy)	

table 11: BECE transfer rates, cf: Tettey-Enyo 1995, 3, 5

From the table above we can see that more than the demanded 50% of those candidates who qualified for SSS were finally admitted into SSS. In the year 1994 the number of admitted students outmatched the projected 50% by more than 20,000 students from public JSS.

These students had to be distributed among 452 public senior secondary schools (439 existing plus 13 newly established SSS). Such policy will surely gain public approval but will obviously perpetuate the existing problems at SSS which are now facing with almost uncontrolled quantitative expansion. (Chapter 5.2b)

5.2 Senior Secondary School Education

In order to meet the government policy guideline of absorbing 50% of the JSS leavers, Ghana was forced to open new Senior Secondary Schools (SSS). Previously the majority of students did not enter secondary school because of the selective entrance examinations after middle school and after

secondary school form 5 (O-level). Under the new policy all students (universal free and compulsory basic education) should complete basic education (JSS) and 50% of these basic education students (the JSS leavers) are supposed to further their education at SSS level.[2] Previously secondary enrollment had been less than 7 per cent of the age group despite the attempts to develop a mass education system. Increasing enrollment ratios reflected predominantly on the primary schools but higher education remained the privilege of only a few (Antwi 1992, 87).

A new policy started to apply the trend of mass education to the secondary level. The first step was the extension of the compulsory 6-years primary education course to a compulsory 9-years' basic education course. As a second step access to (upper) secondary education was extended to 50 percent of the basic education leavers (i.e. JSS leavers). This resulted in a tremendous expansion of the secondary school sector. When the introduction of the JSS program was completed and the SSS program was launched on a countrywide scale in 1990 there were only 253 senior secondary schools. This number was increased to 452 secondary schools in 1994 (Tettey-Enyo 1995, 6).

Due to the increasing demand it was decided to suspend the opening of new senior secondary schools in 1994 in order to consolidate and adequately equip the existing ones. It was also observed that enrollment in most of the new schools, particularly in the rural areas, was low while a lot of JSS leavers demanded admission into older schools where facilities are limited (Tettey-Enyo 1995, 7). The decision to consolidate and properly equip the existing senior secondary schools was backed up by the low results achieved in the first SSS exams in 1993. (Table 14 & 15)

In his 'Forward Look on SSS', ACHEAMPONG presents a view not officially accepted but backed by a number of secondary school teachers and university lecturers. He maintains that:

> " ... it has not been easy to understand the need for the reduction of the number of years of pre-University education, except for financial reasons. For nothing has changed to warrant a reduction of the duration of the pre-Secondary education. At the time of change there was an acute shortage of qualified teachers and of recommended textbooks; textbooks for some new courses had not even been written ... all over the country

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2 The meaning of enrolling 50% of the JSS population into SSS implies under the most positive circumstances that 50% of the country's total student population (age 12-16) shall be enrolled into senior secondary schools!

neither human nor material resources were ready." (Acheampong 1994, 3)

Even if this view sounds conservative, because there are a number of programmatic reasons apart from the financial ones to reduce the previous 17 to the current 12 years, ACHEAMPONG hits the nail on the head by pointing at the obvious implications of the desolate conditions especially at the newly established senior secondary schools.

a) *Objectives and curriculum at SSS*

At SSS level students have to study 6 core subjects. Physical education cannot be considered to be a real core subject because it is not part of the examination. Additionally SSS students they are supposed to add 2 out of the five optional subjects (electives). Unfortunately not all electives could be offered i.e. selected by the students at any senior secondary school.

> "Quite often facilities for teaching the various programmes approved for a school differ and school authorities would have for example, more vacancies for Arts or Business than for Science, while the majority of candidates who select these schools as first choice would like to read Science." (Tettey-Enyo 1995, 8)

The reason for this disparity is probably the good reputation of certain well established schools in contrast to the newly and sometimes hastily established ones with no reputation. Certain schools were so popular among parents and students that in some cases the numbers of qualified applicants outmatched the number of vacancies. Parents and guardians are asked to be prepared to accept admission to their second or third choice schools or any other school where there are vacancies (Tettey-Enyo 1995, 9).

Senior Secondary Schools		
Objectives:	Core Subjects:	Electives:
i. to reinforce and build upon knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired at the junior secondary school level; ii. to provide well developed and productive individuals equipped with the qualities of responsible leadership capable of fitting into a scientific and technological world and to contribute to the socio-economic development of their own areas and the country as a whole; iii. to increase the relevance of the content of the curriculum to the culture and socio-economic problems of the country ...;	1. English language 2. mathematics 3. science 4. agricultural and environmental studies 5. life skills 6. Ghanaian languages 7. (physical education, not an examination subject)	1. agriculture 2. technical studies 3. general (arts and sciences) 4. vocational studies 5. business studies

table 12: SSS objectives, cf: RoG 1994, 33f

Proposal: Generally speaking the curriculum (table 12) does not look well structured. There is no reason why 'agriculture and environmental studies' should appear under the core subjects while being part of the technical and vocational (T/V) program as well. The intention is probably to emphasize the compulsory aspect; but there is also the question as whether this is the appropriate subject to be made compulsory.

Another question arises from the teaching of 'Ghanaian languages' as a separate subject. In order to tighten up the curriculum it should be considered to teach certain subjects in a particular Ghanaian language. 'Life skills' could be such a subject. This is not to underrate the value of the native language - studying the native language is obviously necessary and also part of the university curriculum - but to consider that the previous curriculum was taught at a five year secondary course leading to O-levels and additionally at a 2-year 6th form course leading to A-levels.

By applying such a measure the curriculum could be reduced to four major subjects only, 1. English, 2. mathematics, 3. science and 4. life skills taught in a particular Ghanaian language. This core-course would be complemented by two or three electives as a school's facilities permit (i.e. teachers and availability of materials/workshops).

b) Enrollment Ratios and Teacher Supply

There was a tremendous increase from 253 public senior secondary schools in 1989/90 when the program was started to 452 schools in 1993/94 .

Additionally there are 40 private senior secondary schools which constitute 4,5 per cent of the total student population at SSS level. The share of girls is considerably lower at public SSS (33.1%) as compared to the public JSS (41.1%). This is different at private SSS, where the share of girls is still 43.1%. (Table 13)

Senior Secondary Schools	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94
number of students				225,277		
schools		253	406	413	439	452
classes (streams)				5,643		
all teaching staff				10,016		
trained: graduates, dipl., & others				6,864		
untrained: graduates, dipl., & others				2,320		
other untrained				832		
% of trained teachers	70.2	74.8	71.9	68.5		
% certified but not trained as teachers				23.1		
% not certified & untrained				8,3		
number of students per teachers	18.1	20.8	21.7	22.5		
number of teachers per class	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.8		
average size of school (enrollment)	630.5	672.0	493.2	545.5		
% of female students	32.7	33.0	33.0	33.1		
percentage of repeaters	2.7	3.2	2.7	0.8		
percentage of boarders	54.1	54.2	47.0	43.1		
% on governmentship	31.9	25.4	0.0	24.8		

table 13: SSS parameters, cf: MoE 1993c; 1, 12; Tettey-Enyo 1995, 5, 6

Trained teachers at public SSS include 68.5 percent of all teaching staff plus another 23.1 percent being certified but not trained as teachers. The percentage of those teachers without any certificates and no teacher training is at 8.3 in the public sector. Also at the SSS level the private sector operates with considerably fewer trained teachers (44.4%) and a high percentage of teaching staff without teacher training and no other certificates (29.9%). (Figures for 1991/92, MoE 1993c, 1, 12, 23)

Generally speaking, the teaching staff at the SSS level is much better qualified than that at primary schools. Compared to the JSS level, the differ-ence lies in the proportion of trained teachers as compared to those who have certificates but no specific training as teachers. This category of certified but

not trained teachers is higher at the JSS level. Trends are similar in the public and the private sector as to the level of schooling of the teaching staff, although on the whole the public sector is much better equipped with qualified staff at all levels.

Upon examination of the table above at least two points deserve attention. First of all, the percentage of repeaters was drastically reduced from 3.2% in 1990/91 when the new courses were introduced in the SSS to 0.8% in 1992/93 when the first SSS examination was administered. This is especially surprising considering the conditions under which most schools where operating; (i.) the duration of secondary school was drastically reduced, (ii.) many teachers were not prepared for the new syllabus, (iii.) many workshops and laboratories were not adequately equipped. Furthermore there was a quantitative increase in the number of schools of about 180%, as compared to 1989/90 when the program was started, which implied that many senior secondary schools had to start the course with little or no foundation.

Secondly, the government uses 43.1% as the numerical basis for its discussion on the reduction of the number of SSS boarding students (which is the so-called deboardinization policy). This discussion goes back to 1982 and is once again on the agenda under government's general decision to reduce expenditures on senior secondary school since the implementation of the new course in 1989/90.

Under the new policy all senior secondary schools should be converted into day schools. Previously, 'boarders' were students living too far away to make up the daily journey to the next secondary school. These students have to pay extra boarding fees for living on the school's campus. As stated in , the percentage of boarders is fairly high and about 1/4th of the students are refunded by the government for their boarding costs (category governmentship). The school is responsible for lodging and feeding the boarding students. Especially the latter seems to pose a permanent if not increasingly difficult problem. According to the CHASS delegation of the Western Region, the low input of 400 Cedis (USD 0.50) paid per day per student is not stopping the deterioration of boarding quality (CHASS 1994, 109).

> "We are now more than convinced that the only permanent solution to the feeding problem is to either take our hands completely off the business of feeding students or to press for complete deboardinization of secondary schools." (Ibid.)

Following the policy of deboardinization means to limit access to senior secondary schools to those students who live nearby or to those students whose parents can either provide transportation to cover the distances or can afford private accommodation for their wards. How will such policy affect

the 43.1 percent boarders of which more than half are on government sponsorship? Deboardinization is clearly not a decision to foster equal access to education.

c)   *The First SSS Examination and its Implications*

When the first classes of students sat the newly introduced Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE) in 1993, which replaced the old A-level examination, the results were, generally speaking, disastrous. Only 4 per cent were able to pass all nine subjects while 34 percent passed 4 or more than 4 subjects. The nine subjects conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) consisted of the before mentioned 6 core subjects plus 3 electives.

	9 passes	8 passes & more	7 passes & more	6 passes & more	5 passes & more	4 passes & more	3 passes & more	2 passes & more	1 pass & more	no passes
students	1,656	3,375	5,411	7,846	10,966	14,914	19,581	25,008	33,230	8,875
in %	3.99%	8.02%	12.85%	18.63%	26.04%	35.42%	46.51%	59.39%	78.92%	21.08%

table 14: cumulative figures; 1993 SSS exams, WAEC 1994

It is important to note that the new Senior Secondary School Exams (SSSCE) cannot be compared with the familiar A-levels. Previously A-level examinations were taken in only 4 subjects and mostly teachers' instruction followed a specific examination syllabus preparing students for the subjects in which they were to be examined. The new SSS course is structured differently. The number of compulsory core subjects was significantly extended and complemented by electives of which a certain number was also compulsory.

Obviously, learning time was affected; there was less time which could be spent on the 4 subjects in comparison to the former system. Furthermore, all subjects were to be taken at once, whereas previously the subjects could be taken one by one, and spread over years if necessary. Another aspect is that there no longer an examination syllabus. The WAEC prepares examination questions based on the syllabus that is designed by the ministry (MoE) and it simply trusts the syllabus will be taught at all schools. Previously, schools were screened and it was decided whether students from a particular school could be admitted to take certain examinations. Today, the case is completely different and it is no wonder that this first examination was not entirely successful.

Face lifting: Upon taking a look at the table above, a certain concordance of the large number of students who could not pass even one subject and those few students who passed all nine subjects emerges. It should be

considered that the above table which is based on the WAEC result slip is referring to a cumulative breakdown of passes.

	9 passes	8 passes	7 passes	6 passes	5 passes	4 passes	3 passes	2 passes	1 pass	0 passes
students	1,656	1,719	2,036	2,435	3,120	3,948	4,667	5,427	8,222	9,746
in %	3.93%	4.08%	4.84%	5.78%	7.41%	9.38%	11.08%	12.89%	19.53%	21.07%

table 15: breakdown per subject; CHASS 1994, 73; Adedze 1994, 10

Table 15 presents a totally different picture. To finally arrive at the passes per subject, a 'per subject breakdown' was calculated. (The below calculation slightly differs in the number of total students taking the 1993 SSSCE examination which is probably due to a discrepancy between the number of candidates who registered and the number of those who took the examination in the end.).

It becomes evident that a great proportion of the candidates (44%) only succeeded in 1 to 3 subjects and that of all candidates, roughly 20% did not pass any subject at all. This is obviously a different picture than the one presented by the WAEC who intended to distract peoples' attention from the dubious aspects of the examination by laying emphasis on the aspect that roughly 35% had passed in 4 or more subjects. Such an interpretation resembles peoples' knowledge about the previous A-level examination conducted in only 4 subjects. The WAEC's illustration reveals political and psychological competence; but is biased for all that.
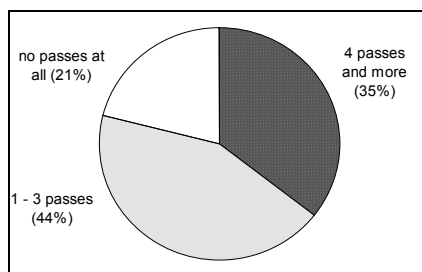
figure 12: SSS examination results

It should be considered that by 'to pass a subject' we are merely talking about a candidate's required minimum of knowledge in a certain area. More than half of the registered students (21.07%, no passes + 19.53%, 1 pass + 12.89%, 2 passes = 53.49%) possessed this minimum amount of knowledge in just two or even fewer subjects.

Popular complaints: Student's complaints expressed at the one-day national forum at the Accra Conference Centre on the first SSSCE results focused on a variety of problem areas encountered during the first SSS course. The following list summarizes the most commonly voiced complaints:

• inadequately trained teachers,

- lack of textbooks,
- ill-equipped laboratories,
- poor preparation at the JSS for SSS,
- short duration of the system (3 years were not enough to cover the syllabus),
- the continuous assessment was left out of in final grading,
- certificates were not prepared in time to be given to the students by the end of the course to enable them to apply for jobs,
- low public response to the system. (Ghanaian Times, 21/06/94; Daily Graphic, 21/06/94)

Probably the poor examination results and the inadequate preparation are only the tip of the iceberg. And indeed, the first SSS course seems to have been built on the illusion that the extended basic education course could prepare students for the secondary upper course, now SSS, as well as the previous 'traditional' 5-year secondary school course had done. Soon SSS headmasters found that the Basic Education Leavers Examination (BECE) did not reflect students' true abilities.

ACHEAMPONG, Professor at University of Ghana, refers to the following inconsistency: Despite the fact that the 1992 Criterion Reference Test (CRT) had established that the academic standard of pupils leaving the JSS was extremely poor three years later, these pupils had turned out to be 'magicians' collecting 6 - 11 'ones' (Acheampong 1994, 4). Although we are speaking of slightly different age group, this remains the most important one.

But the miracle did not sustain. Various newspaper articles reported on observations people made during the BECE examinations the students had taken. One reason for the good results could be that students did not take the examinations under correct conditions:

> "... when some of the students were confronted they confessed that they were assisted to pass the examinations." (Ghanaian Times 15/10/94)

But to ensure that an examination is taken correctly is of course the responsibility of the teaching staff, not the matter of students.

Assessment: Unfortunately there are no studies available about how the Basic Education Examinations (BECE) wre actually conducted. According to an official statement issued by the Secretary of Education, assessment at the end of the basic education course shall be based 40% on continuous assessment and 60% on external examinations (MoE quoted in: Akwesi 1993, 76). The BECE is therefore based on internal assessments combined with an external examination conducted by the WAEC (ibid., 82).

Although different in design and purpose, the empirical studies of AKWESI (1993) and AIDOO-TAYLOR (1993) on problems of practical assess-

ment in the Ghanaian school system reveal that 1. teacher assessment as it is currently practiced needs to be further investigated and a common approach adopted to ensure the validity and reliability of assessment results (Akwesi, 75, 86) and that 2. teachers need more knowledge about assessment as such and about how to identify the appropriate skills and standards to work towards (Aidoo-Taylor 1993, 72f).

Basic education teachers' attitudes toward the use of continuous assessment are, according to AMEDAHE (1994), generally positive. His study, conducted in 81 primary and 71 junior secondary schools in three education districts, reveal that teachers at the JSS have a more positive attitude toward continuous assessment than those at primary school. He accounted this to the fact that JSS teachers are better trained and supervised; and that the work load, in terms of the number of subjects to be taught and class sizes is generally greater at primary schools. AMEDAHE concludes:

> "The process of continuos assessment could be exacting, frustrating and time-consuming if the class size is large and therefore affecting attitudes of such teachers." (Ibid., 17)

The MoE itself contents that although the continuous assessment scheme is educationally sound, its implementation in the schools has been detrimental. It has burdened the teacher and school management with an unrealistic load of marking and reporting. In the MoE's view this resulted in teachers' filling the elaborate continuous assessment forms with numbers which inadvertently encouraged dishonesty. (MoE 1994a, 21)

This is partially corresponds with AMEDAHE'S study which states that teachers who stayed in the system longer appeared to have a more positive attitude towards continuous assessment than those who joined the service after its implementation. He therefore suggests that regular in-service-training programs should be organized in assessment techniques and skills. Besides, supervision should be intensified to ensure that teachers complete their duties conscientiously (ibid., 18).

Academic standards: The aforementioned malpractice when conducting exams partly explains the splendid results with which many JSS leavers entered the SSS course. It may also serve as an explanation for the widespread complaints of SSS teachers who felt like they were having to begin their teching at the primary school level. They had assumed their standard would be comparable to the old system Form 3 students (third year conventional secondary school). Expressing his teacher colleagues' disappointment ANIM-ADDO states:

> "Frankly speaking, generally the academic standard of those SSS students was between Primary 3-4. The majority of them could not read at all, and a few had still not mastered the letters! They could not concentrate and generally did not understand instructions in English." (Anim-Addo, 1994)

This view is backed by official sources which also stated that the criterion for admission to SSS has been too liberal; many who entered SSS1 in 1991 could hardly read or write good English (Adedze 1994, 10).

Another source for the problems students faced taking the new SSS examinations was the questions asked were taken from throughout the syllabuses. Previously, teachers and students could rely on an examination syllabus which offered teachers the possibility to construct a teaching syllabus preparing students reliably for the examination to be taken. The new system goes the other way round: the WAEC draws its questions from the existing syllabuses of the various subjects. This was certainly a new experience for the WAEC examiners. In the case of the SSS mathematics examination lecturers reported:

> "Some of the questions in the examination papers were on topics not mentioned in the syllabus. Others were only indirectly referred to in the syllabus." (Asiedu-Addo et al. 1994)

Supporting measures: Altogether the desperate circumstances which contributed to the disappointing results encouraged the MoE in taking measures to improve the desolate situation. Three important steps were taken to meet the challenges:

1. By allowing students to register as day-students in their former schools, the SSS students who had failed were afforded the opportunity to retrain so as to resit the examinaions. (Daily Graphic, 28/05/94)

2. The opening of new SSS was suspended until the existing ones were consolidated. (Ibid.)

3. A committee was set up under the chairmanship of Prof. DE HEER-AMISSAH to review the system. The report suggested i) Putting technical schools under SSS so that JSS students could have easier access; ii) reduciong subjects at the SSS to 7 and at the JSS to 10. (Unfortunately no detailed information can be presented here because only four ! reports were presented to the MoE and were not accessible for immediate scientific research; i.e. also the government did not come out with the committees proposals.)

Despite the sub-headline 'Who is to blame' ADEDZE ends his article quoted above with the question: 'What's to be done?' Indeed this is the chal-

lenging question and as far as any assumptions are legitimate at present, the government seems to emphasize the maintenance and consolidation of the secondary sector before improving on basic education.

5.3 Further Educational Options

a) *Technical/Vocational Training*

Initially, students who successfully took the Middle School Leaving Certificate Examination or, at a higher level, those who completed secondary school form 5 could further their education at technical, vocational, and commercial schools (figure 1). These 12 secondary technical institutes offered various 2-year pre-apprenticeship courses up to City and Guilds level (intermediate). Commercial secondary schools provided 5-year courses in secretarial and accounting practice leading to the Ghana Business Certificate conducted by the WAEC. (BC 1979, 9; RoG 1981, 17)

Three polytechnics at Accra, Takoradi and Kumasi offered advanced craft, technical and commercial courses for the secondary school form 5 leavers as well as to graduates from the technical and commercial schools. Courses at these institutes are offered on a full-time or part-time basis. Basically, requirements for entry to these courses were O-level for the technician and business courses and A-levels for the courses at the Institute of Chartered Accountants and at Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, and the courses leading to City and Guilds Certificate for Advanced Crafts. (RoG, 1981, 17)

New responsibilities and guidelines: With the upgrading of the polytechnic to the tertiary level, technical institutes are now offering technician courses in addition to the craft courses. Graduates are now being introduced to entrepreneurial studies as an alternative to paid-employment. This action is taking into consideration the growing importance of self-employment. The syllabus of the technical school and the knowledge of their graduates should also be applicable at the polytechnic which some of them may attend later on. (RoG 1994, 20)

Generally speaking, Ghana's technical and vocational education and training is designed along the following lines:

• universities are tasked to educate and train technologists, industrial scientists and high level professionals;
• the polytechnics prepare middle-level and sub-professional technicians;
• technical institutes and the vocational centers train craftsmen and skilled operators, and

- the technical teacher education colleges prepare technical teachers, workshop instructors and industrial personnel. (GoG 1994, 37)

As before, the new system offers admission to technical/vocational training institutes for those who either do not enter directly into vocations or do not further their education at the SSS level. Among them are:

- 21 technical institutes throughout the country offering admission to about 5,000 students every year since 1991,
- vocational training centers of the N.V.T.I.,
- girls vocational schools under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development,
- the Integrated Community Centers for Employable Skills (ICCES) under the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare,
- women training centers under Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare,
- four youth training centers under the Ministry of Youth and Sports,
- farm institutes under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture,
- the government technical training Center, Accra, under the Ministry of Transport and Communication,
- private secondary schools and commercial, technical and vocational institutes. (Tettey-Enyo 1995, 3f)

Technical and vocational institutes offer a basic course ending after three years and a two years advanced course ending with the Crafts Advanced Certificate. Since the system is still in transition, changes are likely to occur. A significant aspect of the reform program is to start the integration of general and technical/vocational education from the very early level. To inculcate in the individual an understanding of the important role of science and technology and the world of work in socio-economic development is the cardinal objective that guides the individual from the basic to the tertiary levels of education. (GoG 1994, 7)

b) *Tertiary Level Education*

Between 1948 and 1952 three university colleges, which have been fully recognized universities today, were established. These universities offered specialized in different subject areas until recently and now competition in certain fields has developed.

The syllabus at University of Ghana (Legon) was originally covered by 7 faculties (Agriculture, Arts, Medicine, Science, Social Studies and Administration) and 4 institutes (African Studies, Adult Education, Statistical,

Social and Economic Research and the School of Journalism and Communication Studies). The University of Cape-Coast was mainly responsible for training teachers for second cycle education and teacher training institutes. The university had 4 faculties (Education, Arts, Science and Social and Economic Studies) and two departments (Dept. of Agriculture and Dept. of Science Education). At Kumasi there is the University of Science and Technology (UST) which mainly taught the sciences and technological subjects. UST's departments are distributed over 8 faculties (Agriculture, Architecture, Art, Engineering, Pharmacy, Science, Social Sciences and Medical Sciences), Additionally there were two centers, Land Administration Research and Technology Consultancy. (BC 1979, 10)

Altogether the number of students enrolled at Ghanaian universities stood at roughly 1300 in the early years of independence (figure for 1961, Antwi 1992, 151) which indicates that only a small number of African elites were given access to a more differentiated higher education intended to consolidate colonial rule.

Under the new directions of the University Rationalization Committee tertiary education has undergone a thorough change. The quality of the polytechnics and other similar institutions have come under the same umbrella as the universities. Presently, tertiary education is comprised of all post-secondary institutions such as universities, polytechnics, training colleges and other diploma awarding institutions. The capacity of the three universities combined was about 10,000 students in 1989/90 plus an unknown number of places at other tertiary institutions (ISD 1991, 96).

Today's tertiary education system is made up of three categories of institutions which provide education beyond the senior secondary school level:

1. universities and university colleges;
2. polytechnics and polytechnic-like institutions; and
3. a number of pre-service training institutions which are primarily career or work-oriented. (GoG 1994, 21)

The pre-service institutions seem to be different from the technical/vocational training institutions. The paper quoted maintains that they are spread over the country and will be managed regionally under the Regional Colleges of Applied Arts, Science and Technology (RECAAST) whereas colleges shall be upgraded and categorized as tertiary institutions (ibid., 34).

Newly established tertiary institutions: Two new tertiary institutions were established recently. The University College of Winneba (UCEW) was founded and began operating in 1992. Here the focus is on the training of

teachers for first and second cycle institutions. It will mainly admit trained teachers at the initial stage, who will take a two-year diploma program.

The second institution is the University for Development Studies (UDS) at Tamale which started operating in 1993. UDS started with the Faculty of Agriculture and the Faculty of Integrated Studies. The School of Medicine and Health Science was expected to start admission in 1996. (GoG 1994, 23)

Examinations: Upgrading the polytechnics to the tertiary level meant two important changes: a) practical aspects of their training were shifted to technical training institutions and b) the University of Science and Technology is in turn shifting some of its practical oriented subjects to the polytechnics. In order to make the polytechnic a 'real' tertiary institute it was accredited to certify the Higher National Diploma (HND) and Higher National Certificate (HNC) (GoG 1994, 22).

At university, first degrees (BA etc.) can be taken after a three year course which, lay the foundation for further studies at the post-graduate master level.

Intentions and implications: In pursuing the overall national education program government's objectives in the tertiary sector are:

- Making tertiary education more cost-effective. Schemes to increase efficiency in the utilization of space, resources and personnel will be instituted.
- Adjusting the institutions to better accommodate working persons and provide viable links between different types of programs within the sub-sector, to imbue students with orientation tools and methodology, and to provide greater relevance in course content.
- In view of the expansion of basic and secondary level programs the tertiary level must be diversified and:
  - the tertiary education level must be in a position to admit an increasing number of qualified SSS graduates;
  - this has definite implications for the quality of teacher training which in short term requires O-levels for entrance as a basic qualification (and which will drive at SSSCE in the long run);
  - it also implies improving facilities, resources, and staff development;
  - programs for cost-sharing will have to be developed to give the government financial relief. (GoG 1994, 35)

c) Remarks

There are at least two aspects worth mentioning: Firstly, The closure of universities due to non academic problems is a menacing hindrance to serious studies in Ghana. This serves to point out that government historically and probably up to now has never learnt to let the university solve its own

problems[3]; Secondly, Such government interference can only lead to the reproduction of the existing elite and to the increased disparity between students from privileged and those from non-privileged backgrounds. This is certainly contrary to the programmatic objective. Students from a privileged background will be in a position to afford the intended 'cost-sharing'. They can even afford to leave the country and study abroad with the additional advantage that foreign degrees often receive more recognition.

Another aspect worth mentioning is that few people know that a Ghanaian professor, senior-staff, registrar, or research officer has no pension scheme at retirement. The amount of retirement benefits is in the range of a few months' salary. University jobs are thus unattractive and this fact has prompted the slogan, 'quit before you are forty'. ANTWI reveals that if the present trend continues, it will affect the manpower resources and accelerate the downward trend of the already weakened national economy. (Antwi 1992, 168f).

Poor recognition of Ghanaian scientists: Contrary to the common notion that the country's scientists do not carry out research on the country's problems, universities have actively engaged themselves in this field with substantial results. These results are kept in the files of the various ministries awaiting their utilization (ibid., 169). Based on this observation the fashionable practice of 'inviting foreign experts from abroad to spend a few days or months in the country to conduct research into problems already studied by qualified local people' is more than questionable (ibid., 159) This probably does not hold true for all fields, in primary and basic education there are only a few Ghanaian experts - but ANTWI soberly highlights an unfortunate trend. From this point of view it would be beneficial for the government, business and industrialists to make better use of the results of research undertaken by the universities (ibid.). It must be added that this would also encourage people to place more belief the country's indigenous intellectual problem-solving capacities.

5.4 Selected Programmatic Aspects

a) *Community Mobilization*

The role of the community: It has been stated that Ghana has a long tradition of community involvement in the construction of micro projects at the village and local community level. Ghana's community development was

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[3] There is no logical reason why the president of Ghana should be the chancellor of the university while the true 'head' of the university is the vice-chancellor.

one of the most successful on the continent in the early 1960s. Schools, health centers, public toilets, markets and drainage systems were constructed through labor mobilized by town and village committees (World Bank 1993, 13).

It is no wonder, then, that the government intended to integrate the communities in the implementation of the educational reform. According to the government's initial intention the communities were supposed to play a vital role in improving the relevance of basic education. The participation of the community was expected to change the character of schooling and make it much more a real part of Ghanaian community life (MoE&C, 1987, 5) Correspondingly, the communities were expected to take on the responsibility for the newly established junior secondary schools (ibid., 6). In the ministry's pamphlet 'Things you need to know about the junior secondary school program' it was publicly announced that:

> "Communities will be expected to take a keen interest and play an active role in the establishment and running of the schools which their children will be attending. (Ibid.)

The first attempts to revitalize the community development movements were made under the Program of Actions to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment (PAMSCAD) in 1988. Various small construction projects such as schools, health centers, public latrines and markets fell under these actions. An evaluation stated that only very limited cash involvement could be expected from most communities. (World Bank 1993, 14)

It should be noted that the term 'Mitigate' (see above) was designed to deal with something different than expansive village development. It was meant to ease or relieve the population from strains related to the World Bank initiated Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in common with Ghana's Economic Recovery Programs (ERP) I and II.

Government assistance: The expansion of existing school buildings as well as the construction of new ones would, however, require financial and practical support from both sides the government and the communities. It was decided to execute a school mapping exercise and areas found to be deficient in their infrastructures were to be helped to put up the Junior Secondary School buildings from resources at the government's disposal. The government stated:

> "The Ministry of Education and culture will provide the roof and the pillars of such classrooms while the affected communities will be expected to fill in the walls." (MoE&C 1987, 5)

It was also planned to provide support for essential renovation of existing structures and each school was to be equipped with a basic set of tools and equipment. This exercise was to be supported by the government as well as bilateral and multilateral donor sources. It was expected that equipment would be acquired through contributions from local sources depending on the vocational/technical specialization of the areas where the schools are sited. Support from the communities themselves as well as from parents was also expected. (Ibid.) This idea was later taken up by the Primary Education Project (PREP) when community involvement was needed in school pavilion cladding and school supervision. (World Bank 1993; Manu 1994b)

Abilities to participate: As the project study of PREP has proved, only very few public primary schools in Ghana have entirely adequate physical facilities (World Bank 1993, 7, 15) and there is no big difference between public primary and the junior secondary schools. Generally speaking, the task of taking responsibility for the basic education sector was economically overwhelming for the local communities. On the other hand the government was reluctant to meet its commitment to provide pillars and the roofing for all schools. Certainly, many village schools had problems in taking care of the technical equipment officially provided to them for use in their schools. Because they feared to be held responsible for possible losses, many headmasters preferred to keep the tools locked up rather than having them stored in schools where there was inadequate security. Generally speaking it became evident that communities in difficult areas need a lot of local and central government subsidies for their schools to perform effectively (Nyoagbe 1993, 8). With reference to the state of schools it was maintained:

> "The stark reality however is that many communities have not been able to live up to expectation by supporting the schools. The result is schools in shades of trees, sheds made with palm branches, decrepit accommodation which have become death traps to pupils and teachers alike thereby undermining the school as an environment to promote quality education. The situation has also prevented certain communities from attracting teachers especially at JSS level." (Ibid., 11)

Community based aspect: Another problem is that the community based aspect accounts only for basic education schools. Senior secondary schools cannot be considered a real part of this policy, as can be easily seen from their small number (452). Nevertheless, if not community based, they could be linked to the particular region they are located at. ANTWI-DANSO reported that the old established secondary schools are not in favor of such policies. They undermine any such effort by preferring to admit students selected by the number of 'ones' appearing on the SSS leaving certificate. It is a laud-

able objective to maintain the high standard of the particular secondary school but it prevents a good student from a nearby area access to an established and well-known secondary school like PRESEC (Accra), even as a day-student, while his counterpart from far-away Kumasi might get admission even as a boarding student. So the elite secondary schools such as PRESEC and ACHIMOTA (Accra) continue to select students with 8 'ones' (out of a possible 9) and none below this. (Antwi-Danso 1994)

Local resource persons: Tradesmen, master craftsmen and other knowledgeable resource persons were invited to the schools in order to help in the training of pupils in a more practical way. (RoG 1994, 10)

> "Members of the community will be called upon to provide information and skills from the traditional culture as well as technical and vocational know-how." (MoE&C 1987, 6)

This was especially helpful in some of the local crafts e.g. basketry, woodcarving, textiles etc. Pupils should also be taken on educational visits to the workshops of these craftsmen to gain insight into the particular techniques of production. It is the policy to encourage each school to select a local craft whose raw materials are available locally to relate pupils to the world of work within their environment. Soon after leaving school, most of the children who do not go to SSS could be apprenticed to the local craftsmen to improve their skills. (RoG 1994, 10) It was further believed that through the technical and vocational skills taught at the JSS and the work projects at basic education level, children could become exposed to relevant skills. The program was to inculcate in them the right attitude to work and make them learn to appreciate the value of hard work (ibid.).

b)   *Formal and Informal Links to the 'World of Work'*

The formal aspect: Based on the fact that there are many public and private agencies outside the MoE who are engaged in technical and vocational training in Ghana it was decided to establish a committee in 1990 which shall set up an effective coordination mechanism to ensure utilization and efficiency of these sources; the National Coordinating Committee for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACVET). The instituted subcommittees were expected to take up the responsibilities for the:

• Formulation of policies on education and training of technicians, craftsman and other skilled middle-level personnel.
• Coordination of all aspects on the technical and vocational education and training in Ghana.

- Preparation of a basis for the establishment of the National Industrial Training Fund which will compel industry and commerce to contribute to it one percent of revenue to supplement government efforts in funding technical and vocational training.
- Rationalization of the evaluation, testing, assessment and accreditation procedures of the system. (RoG 1994, 13)

The informal aspect: Instituted on a different level are the Integrated Community Centers for Employable Skills Program (ICCES). Their objective is to teach employable skills for both groups, the JSS and SSS leavers as well as to the totally illiterate youth and adults in the local communities. For the JSS and SSS leavers, of which more than half will not further their education at any formal institution, the basic learning skills would not be adequate for guaranteeing them gainful employment. This applies even more for the group of totally illiterate youth which represent roughly 30% of the children of school age and a great number of adults. The ICCES program is run side by side with technical schools designed to provide the formal instruction for the same cohort of youth. (RoG 1994, 14)

c) *Enrollment Projections and Implications*

Ghana's education policy to provide every Ghanaian with basic education (FCUBE), and to increase access at the secondary school level for 50% of the basic education leavers (ISD 1991p. 93) has resulted in a very laudable but nevertheless problematic expansion at all levels of education. Most seriously affected is the basic education sector, which will be discussed later.

The projection below (figure 13) illustrates Ghana's immense infrastructural inputs, manpower investments and financial expenditures in the basic education sector. Immense investments will be necessary if the country is to attain its targeted gross enrollment rate of 100% in primary schools and 90% at junior secondary schools by the year 2005/06 (GoG 1994, Annex 1).
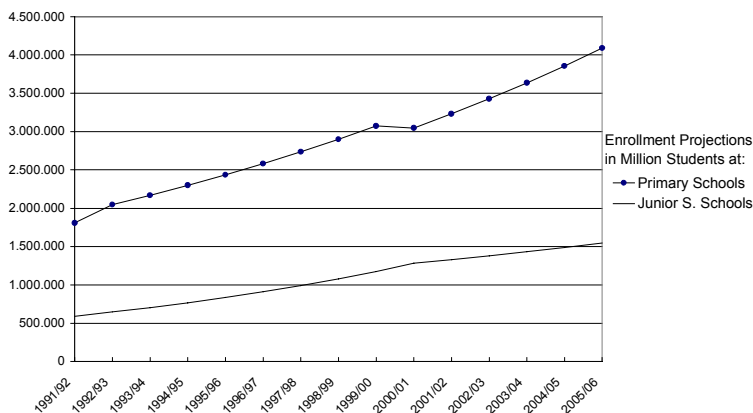
figure 13: enrollment projections based on: GoG 1994, Annex 1

Following such a policy 1,652,566 students will have to be enrolled in primary schools within the 10 years between 1995/96 to 2005/06. This is an annual growth of approximately 160,000 pupils. At junior secondary schools numbers will increase by roughly 700,000 students within 10 years (835,106 students in 1995/96 / 1,546,565 students in 2005/06, GoG 1994, 14 & Annex 1). This entails a number of serious implications:

- *Primary schools:* Based on the average size of approximately 200 pupils per primary school, 800 additional schools would have to be opened annually; or as a different example: the number of classrooms have to be annually increased by 17,000 classrooms in 1995 up to 58,000 classrooms in the year 2005 (ibid., Annex 3);
- *Junior secondary schools:* There is an increasing need for schools and classrooms. Between 6,000 to 20,000 new classrooms will have to be constructed to accommodate the rising number of students from 1995 to 2005 (ibid., Annex 3);
- certainly *more trained teachers* will be needed to instruct these classes figure 10);
- *infrastructural inputs* for buildings and equipment (teaching materials, laboratories, workshop equipment, etc.): An annual input of approximately USD 2,5 million is projected for primary schools and ca. USD 1,2 million for junior secondary schools (ibid., Annex 3);
- other *additional financial inputs* will have to be made to improve upon the standard of administration, supervision etc.

Politically speaking, the country has embarked upon the new educational reform program "to improve both access to and the quality of education as a whole." (GoG 1994, 2) As far as basic education is concerned the government's objective to achieve the goal of Free, Compulsory, Universal Basic education (FCUB) does not look promising. This can be assumed because of the fact that government's expenditures on the education sector have had already increased to 40% in 1994. Within the education sector itself, the share of basic education is 65 % in the same year (GoG 1994, 17). In the face of this immense quantitative expansion ANTWI states:

> "In view of the fact that the government cannot go on indefinitely footing the increasing educational expenditure, there is a clear need for effective policies to be formulated to enable parents and students to contribute towards the payment of the bill." (Antwi 1992, 254)

Unfortunately it is doubtful whether there can be 'effective' policies. Cost sharing must be a viable possibility on different levels. The central government will remain responsible for the payment of salaries but the newly established District Assemblies (DA's) and local communities which were made responsible for the provision of buildings and furniture for basic schools might not be able to do so. Despite the hope that as many DA's and local communities as possible will be able to take on this responsibility, experience indicates that there are many rural and remote areas in which this policy won't work. The government itself states:

> "Many communities are unable to discharge this responsibility well and many schools are therefore in very poor condition." (GoG 1994, 17)

The question, of course, is not whether the government wants to meet its former obligations, but rather whether it is able to do so. What seems to annoy many people is the attitude of those people who first sold the program, ignoring and silencing criticism, preventing scientists and the teachers' union from contributing ideas. Asked on his view about what went wrong with the educational reform the former Minister of Education and Culture, Dr. M. ABDALLAH who was then responsible for the program, simply responds: "Please let this cup pass by me." (Adedze 1994, 12)

That the present administration at MoE now clarifies that "the Central Government contribution towards the provision of physical facilities has been minimal since according to the Education Act of 1961 ..., the District Assemblies are responsible for the provision of school buildings and furniture of basic schools" (GoG 1994, 17) is laudably frank and fair but places a bad light on the reliability of government's educational policy. First of all, because the DA's were inaugurated almost 20 years later in 1989 (Ayee

1992, 51) and thus should not be charged with a legislative act dating from 1961 simply enforced by the present government. Secondly, in the government's official pamphlet (advertisement brochure) it was clearly stated that:

> "Areas found to be deficient in infrastructure will be helped ... The Ministry of Education and culture will provide the roof and the pillars of such classrooms while the affected communities will be expected to fill the walls. Support will also be provided for essential renovations of existing structures." (MoE&C 1987, 5)

Now a picture emerges that since the start of the Economic Recovery Program and Ghana's increased budgetary allocation to the education sector, the government must foster a policy of cost sharing at all levels. At first, this applies to the higher levels of education. The rate of boarders, especially those on government scholarship had to be reduced and students are now forced to purchase their own school supplies and textbooks at exorbitant prices. At the university level an innovative loan scheme introduces an element of cost recovery. (MoE 1994a, 3) Although the field of basic education is programmatically declared free in P1 and P2 and only a minimum amount is charged for classes P3 to JSS 3, local authorities have imposed additional levies and fees, generally far higher than the nominal national fee (ibid.).

5.5 Teacher Training

a) *History and Initial Critics*

In the 1940s the majority of teachers in Ghana had achieved the 4-year Post Middle Certificate. This course was temporarily suspended with the implementation of the Accelerated Development Plan for Education in 1951. From 1951 to 1960 a 2-year post-middle Certificate B course was introduced. Because it had become evident that this 2-year post-middle course was inadequate for the effective preparation of teachers, the course was phased out by the Education Act in 1961. Inadequacy was found in both sectors - the supply of basic equipment and facilities as well as the supply of qualified tutors i.e. teacher trainers. (Brookman-Amissah 1992, 11f) Those teachers holding a Certificate B are hardly to be found teaching at schools since the mid 1990s.

Since then emphasis has been placed on training teachers in a 4-year post-middle, a 3-year post secondary and a 2-year post secondary course. Leavers from all three courses were certified with the Teacher Certificate A (ibid., 12). Among them there was a large number of student teachers who did not successfully pass their exams. Despite being unsuccessful at the teacher training college, they were employed as 'teachers'. They form the group of uncertified teachers although they are different from 'pupil teach-

ers' who have no or almost no pre-service training that would qualify them as teachers. The real value of those uncertified teachers remained dubious and a hindrance to further change.

> "This group of academically unqualified teachers obviously poses a problem to the implementation of any educational reform programme for by their academic and professional background they are unable to work efficiently in neither the old nor the new system and can therefore by no means be instruments of educational innovation and change." (Brookman-Amissah 1992, 12)

Another question was whether the conditions at training colleges had changed since the Post Middle Course Teacher Certificate B was criticized for an inadequate preparation of the teachers. Surprisingly, BROOKMAN-AMISSAH'S (Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast) statement about the teaching ability of those teachers certified with the Teacher Certificate A is almost the same. They are not considered to be adequately trained for working in the new education program as well.

> "... this category of teachers because of their academic background, the nature of their training programme renders them inadequately equipped to implement the content of the new education reform programme." (Ibid.)

Consequently the vast majority of teachers teaching at the basic education level during the implementation period of the new program and even today need in-service updating courses. Considering the demands of the new subjects introduced in the junior secondary schools (JSS), the insufficient links between the primary school and the JSS and the insufficient preparation of basic education teachers, must have had some negative effects on the implementation of the program.

Besides the teacher training colleges already mentioned, there were Advanced Training Colleges offering specialist courses awarding diploma and the University of Cape Coast which offered a BA or BSC degree in education. The structure at the university level were quite complicated for those who had started with a Teacher Certificate A and intended to upgrade their qualifications to a Masters Degree in education. Efforts have been undertaken since then to establish links between the Certificate A program and the diploma and between the diploma, and the university degree. The teachers graduating from such diploma and degree programs were commonly found teaching in secondary schools and at teacher training colleges. (Antwi 1992, 114f)

Initial criticisms: At a Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) conference in 1987, A. SAWYERR, then Vice Chancellor of the University of

Ghana, maintained that teachers successfully meeting the demands of modern teaching under the new system are more of an exception than the rule. The basic qualifications a teacher should have are, he stated: i) a broad knowledge of the philosophy of the educational system in which he or she operates, ii) an adequate possession of knowledge in the subject itself and the subject oriented methodology, iii) a sense of vocation i.e. a commitment to knowledge itself and to his students (Sawyerr 1987, 4). With reference to what could be commonly observed in everyday classroom teaching SAWYERR maintained:

> "This prompts the question, how many of our teachers fit this description today? Regrettably, the impression outsiders have is that teachers of that calibre are the exception, not the rule today. Whether this be true or false, there can be no doubt about the poor image and low moral of the teaching profession in recent years." (Ibid.)

It must be noted that the start of the *Junior Secondary School Programme* in 1987 was accompanied by an extensive in-service training program in which teachers were to receive orientation on the new subjects in crash-courses. A serious problem of staffing schools with efficient teachers emerged with particular reference to the field of technical and vocational subjects (GES 1985, 6).

Doubts emerging from the short duration of the three month crash-courses made SAWYERR comment on some of the crucial aspects of the preparation of teachers for the new education system. In particular the short in-service training period designed for teachers trained in the 1970s and who had worked in the old system from that time on, would not prepare them sufficiently to operate as new technical or vocational teachers.

> "It is difficult to take seriously the idea of rediscovering and retraining the teachers supposedly trained in the late 1970s for the JSS ... no matter how grand the design of the new school-system, without an adequately trained and motivated cadre of teachers it is not likely to produce education very different from what we have now." (Sawyerr, 1987, 10)

FORSON (Language Dept., University of Ghana) supported SAWYERR'S conviction and revealed that the problem of producing qualified teachers is more serious than is generally believed. He doubts that especially teachers in the technical and vocational subjects will meet the requirements of these subjects and maintains that "We definitely haven't come up with such ubiquitous teachers. And we have to be extremely careful." (Forson, 1987) As a consequence, the teachers' preparation at the training college must be questioned and this points back to the former system's habit of recruiting inadequately prepared tutors to lecture and train prospective future teachers.

> "The problem was so serious that it was thought that teachers who were not sufficiently qualified to teach in secondary schools could nonetheless teach in Training Colleges." (Kwakwah quoted in Brookman-Amissah, 1992, 13)

The situation in 1987 was further aggravated by the inadequate 3 month orientation courses. These crash-courses were facing problems on both sides; the instructor who did not have the necessary professional background and methodological ability to instruct, and the teacher for whom the courses were apparently too short (Streicher 1988, 11). With reference to the first quantitative expansion in the education sector during the times of GUGGISBERG, one of Ghana's early school reformers in the 1920s, the country found itself in a similar situation:

> "Because of shortage of properly trained teaching staff, low pays, and the need to cater for an increased student population, there is once again the danger of falling into the trap of quantity education where quality was the goal." (Ibid)

The distressing question in the late 1980s was: "What credible program is there for training on a serious long term basis the kind of teacher required for the new system?" (Antwi 1992, 49) After the implementation period and under a new educational administration it has become evident and publicly accepted that the initial criticism referring to the inadequate preparation of not only the teachers but also of the lecturers and tutors was an issue which could not simply be ignored.

b) Teachers' Training and the New Education Program

One of the great challenges was the reorientation of existing teaching staff and the training of new teachers in order to make them fit into the framework of the new program. In a first step this applied mainly to teachers for the junior secondary schools introduced in 1987. Of course there had been teachers trained for the new program before the countrywide implementation of the JSS program in 1987; but because of economic strains and attractive salaries paid by nearby countries like Nigeria, which runs almost the same program, many specifically trained teachers had left the country.

Some of the teachers who had received specific training for junior secondary school had remained in the system but because of the delayed implementation they were forced to teach at conventional secondary schools. This category of teachers and those who were trained but did not enter the teaching profession is referred to when it is said that:

> "To begin the JSS programme, it is planned that a large number of post-secondary teachers, working in the system, most of whom were specially trained for Junior Secondary Schools, will be used." (MoE&C, 1987, 5)

The low salaries paid to teachers have led to the apparent failure of the MoE in winning back those trained teachers who had already found jobs in other sectors.

Pre-service training: To meet the challenges at that time, a new pre-service training system for primary, junior and senior secondary school teachers had to be undertaken. This was facilitated through the phasing out of the 4-year Post-Middle Certificate A course in 1991. Since then all 38 Teacher Training Colleges offer 3-year Post-Secondary courses (RoG, 1994, 41).

Generally the Ministry itself complains that the teacher training colleges have not received the same attention and support for infrastructure, instructional materials and staffing from the reform as have the schools. (MoE 1994a, 17) Various factors account for this. Most of these factors point at the inadequate infrastructure and preparation of the teacher trainees. Under these underprivileged conditions, the curriculum of pre-service teacher training had to be changed drastically to meet the requirements of the curriculum reforms at the primary and junior secondary school.

Entry requirements: For the meantime the minimum entrance requirement is the conventional post-secondary O-level. With the phasing out of the old education system the standard entrance requirement will be the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE). The idea this behind was to raise the academic and practical standard of teachers in general. To integrate a teacher training course after junior secondary school would not harmonize with the basic philosophy of the new system.

It should be noted however, that although recently the minimum requirement for entry into TTCs has supposedly been 'improved' or raised', this has always been the minimum requirement for entry into any post-secondary training institution! MENSAH concludes that a large majority of candidates who cannot gain access to other post-secondary training institutions on account of low grades will easily find entrance into TTCs. According to his observations this type of student already forms the bulk of students in the less endowed, so-called, 'rural' TTCs which, situated in remote rural areas, lack such basic amenities as a ready water supply, electricity, good roads and staff accommodation.

The academic standard of these students became even more evident when the common practice of falsifying secondary examination result slips came to light when students in the academic years 1990/91 and 1991/92

were asked to produce confirmed results their official transcripts from and by the West African Examination Council (WAEC). (Mensah 1994, 23)

Syllabuses: One of the problems in the sector of organizing the colleges was that "the college curriculum does not differentiate between primary and JSS methodology". (MoE 1994a, 24) The reorganization of the curriculum at the training colleges was an attempt to meet the needed emphasis on primary methods. As a result, all teacher training colleges (TTC) offer now eight core subjects. Education and English are to be studied throughout the three-year duration of the course. The remaining six subjects are studied in the first two years and externally examined at the end of the second year. This examination is usually referred to as the Final Part 1 Examination.

1. education	5. agricultural science
2. English language	6. cultural studies
3. basic science	7. Ghanaian language
4. basic mathematics	8. physical education

table 16: core subjects at TTC, cf: RoG 1994, 21, 42; Mensah 1994, 21

The existing 38 colleges were divided into two groups. Presently, there are 16 colleges offering electives belonging to 'Group 1'. Of these 16 colleges 13 also offer electives of Group 2. Another 22 colleges offer purely electives from Group 2. (See. RoG 1994, 21) Each student must study two of the following specialized subjects from the following two groups in addition to the above mentioned 8 core subjects. (Mensah 1994, 21)

Group 1 (16 colleges) with electives in:	Group 2 (13 mixed + 22 pure) with electives in:
• science	• vocational skills
• agricultural science	• life skills
• mathematics	• social studies
• French	• English literature
• physical education	• technical skills and technical drawing

table 17: electives at TTC, RoG 1994, 20f; Mensah 1994, 22

Subjects studied from the list below are meant to prepare the trainee in two subjects effectively so that he or she is able to teach at the junior secondary school level (ibid.). These two subjects plus education and English are externally examined at the end of the course and are referred to as the Final Part 2 Examination. Physical education and French are only offered at one TTC (RoG, 1994, 41; Mensah 1994, 22). This is especially surprising since

French is the language of Ghana's neighboring countries (Togo, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast).

Criticism: MENSAH (1994, 24 ff) criticizes three major aspects of the existing syllabus. First, due to the historical development the syllabus at TTC is generally overloaded. This ois due to an early development in the 1970s when the focus was on training 'specialist' teachers who were to concentrate on a few subjects throughout their course. Later, from the early 1980s, the training of 'generalist' teachers was favored. The specialist syllabuses were retained and even though the new syllabus was extended to fit the generalist out-look, the depth of the specialist syllabus remained unchanged. As a result the present generalist teachers has to learn to even greater depth many more subjects than were required of the (former) specialist.

Secondly, the syllabus at TTC is not properly adapted to the demands of the curriculum at primary schools. A study of the primary curriculum reveals that there are two subjects, social studies and life skills, which were not taught separately at the TTCs. Whereas social studies fell at least partially under cultural studies, life skills was neglected completely. (Ibid., 24, 26)

Considering the recent changes in the primary school curriculum the problem might have not been solved to some extent. To make the TCC syllabus fit the primary curriculum there will have to be an adaptation with regard to the present subject areas; 1) English, 2) Ghanaian languages, 3) mathematics, 4) the child and its environment 5) science and 6) arts. The same could apply to the electives to be studies for the JSS curriculum.

Thirdly, MENSAH maintains that the time for studies at TTC is too short. He maintains that according to a conservative estimate, an average of two weeks per term is lost because of activities like inter-collegiate sports, cultural festivals, mid-term breaks, and statutory holidays. He also notes that particularly first year students 'traditionally' report late because of the late release of the school certificates. "It is quite usual for such students to report 6 weeks or more late." (Ibid., 25)

This means that in practice students hardly spend the 33 weeks per year at TTC. Subtracting the two weeks which are commonly lost for activities the remaining 27 weeks per year are indeed short considering that some other factors e.g. inadequate supply of learning materials, high tutor-student ratios, congested living and study space, are a hindrance to serious studies.

Technical subjects: The attention the training of teachers for the technical and vocational subjects deserves was lacking during the development and implementation of the new program. Apart from the 3-week crash-courses, most teachers lacked any other academic or professional exposure to the newly introduced subjects. This sounds almost incredible considering that

'exposure to the world of work' was the major objective propagated to make education more relevant. AIDOO-TAYLOR maintains:

> "... that until September 1988, only the Mampong Technical Teachers' College, with an average annual output of 90 teachers trained the technical teachers and another four colleges, with total average output of 90 teachers, trained the home science teachers for the 4,500 junior secondary schools." (Aidoo-Taylor 1991, 79)

To solve the problem of training specialized teachers in the technical sector AIDOO-TAYLOR (1991) suggested transforming some of the polytechnics which are single purpose institutions to multipurpose institutions "by simply adding an education studies department to the specialist departments." (Ibid., 84f) Of course this would not be so simple but the polytechnics as regional institutions could certainly better serve as institutions for specialized teacher training programs than the conventional type of TTC. A time sharing system i.e. having the first two years (for the core subjects) based at a conventional TTC and a further specialized technical training at the polytechnics would also be possible. Another factor is that such extended multipurpose polytechnics could better serve as specialized in-service training colleges than the conventional type of TTC as propagated by the MoE (MoE 1994a, 24).

In terms of reducing costs in the teacher education sector, it would also be more cost-effective to add education studies units to polytechnics than to expand the existing conventional type of TTC. Considering the fact that all 38 TTCs are residential colleges and the government cannot afford to increase boarding facilities, the use of non-residential polytechnics as specialized TTCs could help the government to meet the needs for technical and vocational teachers for JSS and SSS at affordable costs.

In the mid 1990s MENSAH reported that the development of technical training facilities was developing slowly. Despite the increased need for teachers in technical skills and technical drawing for JSS these subjects are offered in only 10 out of the 38 TTCs (Mensah 1994, 22). The need for such subjects will also arise at the senior secondary school level despite the sufficient supply of trained teachers in general academic subjects. The sufficient supply of trained teachers in academic subjects accounts for the shortened secondary school course; but the situation is different for the supply for the technical and vocational subjects in the SSS. (Aidoo-Taylor 1991, 80)

The supply of technical/vocational tutors for TTCs somehow remains a miracle. Up to now the system had to supply only a few technical and vocational institutions with adequately trained tutors. In the early 1990s there were about 20 technical institutions whereas the number of SSS stands at

about 450 presently. According to AIDOO-TAYLOR (1991, 80) it is evident from a number of factors that the structural changes aiming at delivering scientific and technical knowledge at all levels would also demand more and better qualified teachers of technical and other vocational subjects at the senior secondary school level. This statement reinforces the questions of where all the adequately trained tutors should come from to instruct trainees to become professional teachers of these subjects?

To highlight the dimension of this problem a study conducted on the teaching of curriculum studies in TTCs should be referred to. TAMAKLOE (1994) has proved that there are distressing infrastructural and manpower problems even in this comparatively popular field. The problems described in this study can be grouped into three categories: i) lack of qualified staff, ii) lack of appropriate materials and iii) the already heavy-loaded time tables (ibid., 87). The first aspect 'lack of qualified staff' is expressively important because it reveals the country's limited capacity in producing qualified staff in specialist areas.

Training tutors to be conversant with the specific methodical and professional aspects of these pertinent technical and vocational subjects demands quite a lot. In this context introducing training courses at the university in cooperation with relevant professional boards to produce tutors different from the academic type commonly being awarded a conventional diploma from the University of Cape Coast should be considered. Certainly this applies to in-service courses in this field as well.

In the training of technical/vocational teachers it must also be considered that the curriculum at the JSS is expected to undergo some changes. Because of the policy to reduce the number of subjects by combining certain subjects, the concept of teacher training will also have to be changed towards an integrated approach of teaching technical/vocational skills.

Teaching practice: During their studies teacher-trainees are encouraged to work closely with pupils in the college's demonstration schools which are mostly in the nearby areas (Mensah 1991, 26; RoG 1994, 43). In order to reduce unit costs and increase efficiency the MoE suggested to assign trainees for a full year of field practice. This practical year should be introduced after the second year at TTC (MoE 1994a, 24) i.e. after the Final Part 1 examination conducted in 6 of the core subjects (except education and English).

Somehow it is not clear why the Ministry maintains that the introduction of one practical year 'would reduce unit costs' and that undoubtedly efficiency will be thereby increased (ibid.). Reducing unit costs would only be possible if the practical year was to replace the third year in which the stu-

dents are supposed to take courses in the elective subjects. This is probably not the intention; the 3-year course is to be extended by adding one practical year. A training system organized in such a way (2 years basic studies i.e. core subjects + 1 year field practice + 1 year further special studies) will require more qualified manpower for the supervision and guidance of student-teacher practice than the present one. As MENSAH points out guided teaching practice for trainees will reduce costs only if the locally based teachers are involved in the process of supervision and evaluation of such trainees to a far greater extent than they are today (Mensah 1991, 29).

Generally speaking teaching practice for student teachers in Ghana is suffering from poor guidance and a lack of competent evaluation. This is partly due to that fact that trainees are mostly accepted as convenient 'stop-gaps' only, enabling regular teachers to take a holiday or idle in the staff common room (Mensah 1991, 26f). This situation is occasionally interrupted by the supervisors from the college visiting the school in order to 'supervise' the students. MENSAH'S statement about supervising practice (ibid., 27f) gives reason to believe that supervision could be improved enormously. In his words, supervision is either of the 'do as you please' (when he or she is left alone) or of the 'do as I say' (when the supervisor is around) variety. To improve the conventional guidance or supervision of student teacher practice he gives a number of recommendations.

Some of the supervision inadequacies can be attributed to the kind of message the schools and are receiving from the training colleges. As long as the message from the colleges is "We are the experts, just lend us your school and we'll train the teachers" (Mensah 1991, 27) local teachers will not be encouraged to contribute to the training of student teachers. Thus, the colleges are claiming that there is a finite set of good teaching behavior and that college supervisors are the repositories of good teaching. In MENSAH'S view this is a wrong assumption. Besides, the present supervising practice assumes that every tutor has passed through teacher-training and is competent, without having had further training to function as a supervisor and councilor of students. The problem is compounded by the fact that some college tutors are themselves not trained teachers, putting even the regular teacher in a better position. (Ibid., 28).

In the study quoted the opportunities for developing a continuous and even cheaper program of supervision, assessment and counseling of students while doing teaching-practice at schools are outlined. Training and orientation courses for teachers taking trainees into their classrooms as 'cooperating teachers' should be organized. This could be done by qualified supervisors from the training colleges, universities and the Ghana Education Service in

the form of short period introductory seminars and regular in-service training. The advantage of MENSAH'S recommendation lies in its benefits for the improvement of teacher education and in its cost saving aspect.

> "With the presence of cooperating teachers in the schools the cost of organising and supervising teaching practice may be reduced because students can practice at centres far away from the colleges, and supervisors too will have to make fewer trips to supervise students." (Mensah 1991, 29)

Especially in view of the immense growth rates in teacher education the increased need of making supervision and guided student-teacher practice manageable at schools becomes evident (figure 14).

c) *Projected Demand of Teacher Supply (1991/92-2005/06)*

In the coming years there will be an immense demand for educating qualified teachers for the basic education level. To meet the needs of a fast growing student population, the number of trained teaching staff has to almost double within a decade in order to foot this development. As can be seen from the diagram below, the situation is especially demanding at the primary level. This is due to the fact that the proportion of untrained teaching staff assigned to primary schools was extremely high in the early 1990s (approximately 30%).

The proportion of trained teachers in basic education schools (primary and JSS) stands at 71 percent with a slightly higher percentage of trained teachers at junior secondary schools (GoG 1994, 14). As indicated in the diagram above, it is projected that trained teachers will replace their untrained colleagues at primary schools by the academic year 2000/01 and, respectively, their untrained colleagues at junior secondary schools by the academic year 2005/06. The demand as recorded above was officially assessed in the light of the following 5 aspects:

"i. the growth in enrolments;

ii. the pupil/teacher ratio;

iii. the number of teachers on study leave and on secondment;

iv. attrition rate of serving teachers;

v. the structure of the teaching force (e.g. proportion of trained and untrained teachers by level of training and education)." (GoG 1994, 14)
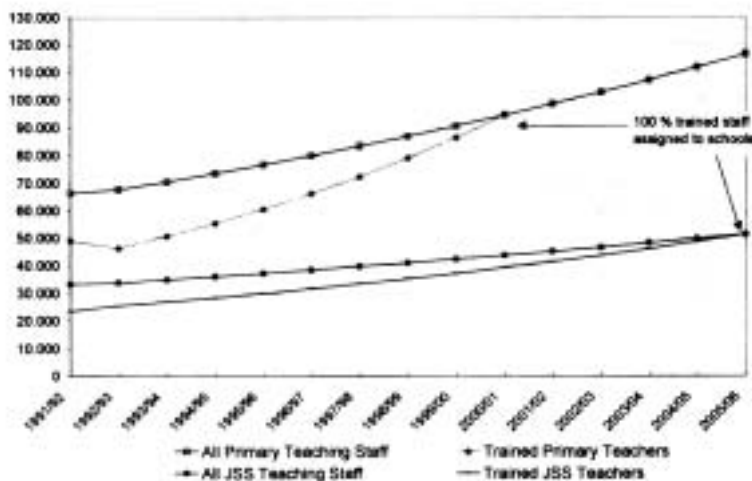
figure 14: projected teacher demand, cf: GoG 1994, Annex 2

Student-teacher ratio assumption: The most problematic aspect could be: ii) the pupil-teacher ratio, which was taken to be 27:1 at primary schools and 17:1 at junior secondary schools. It was considered that a target ratio of 35:1 for primary schools and 30:1 for JSS's would be attained within the next ten years (GoG 1994, 15). According to various other studies the 'to be attained ratio' has already been reached or even surpassed. As already pointed out in the previous sub-chapter a proxy of 27 students per class is rather unrealistic. KRAFT (et al. 1994) has referred to the official figures given by the MoE several times which are said to be in the range of 45 students per class at primary schools (ibid., 7, 40) which largely corresponds with the observations of a number of other researchers. A "policy of increasing the pupil/teacher ration to 40:1" (MoE 1994a) is therefore counter-productive. Present class sizes have in real terms already reached if not exceeded the targeted class sizes; and it should again be emphasized that the official figures on student-teacher ratios are not based on empirical findings but are the result of mathematical constructions which have probably not taken all relevant factors into account.

It is not likely that this aspect was considered in the report quoted (GoG 1994) for the projected increase of trained teachers. However this problem

turns out, the question remains whether the existing training colleges will be in a position to produce such large numbers of trained staff at all.

Calculation: From the official figures in the table below we can calculate a total annual average increase of roughly 7,800 trained teachers. This number accounts for both levels primary schools and JSS in the year 1997-2005.

The annual growth rates of the demand for trained teacher is listed separately for primary schools and JSS's (italic figures). The yearly totals appear in bold figures. All calculations are based on the initial report's figures which even contains the category 'output from teacher training colleges'; but it is unfortunately left blank. (See. GoG 1994 Annex 2) Besides the increase in trained teachers there will also be an intermediate increase in untrained teaching staff until they are finally replaced by trained teachers (figure 14).

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Primary	72,471	79,222	86,602	94,670	98,729	102,965	107,387	112,003
	+6,751	*+7,380*	*+8,068*	*+4,059*	*+4,236*	*+4,422*	*+4,616*	*+4,820*
JSS's	33,407	35,269	37,234	39,309	41,499	43,812	46,253	48,831
	+1,862	*+1,965*	*+2,075*	*+2,190*	*+2,313*	*+2,441*	*+2,578*	*+2,721*
total	**+8,613**	**+9,345**	**+10,143**	**+6,249**	**+6,649**	**+6,863**	**+7,194**	**+7,541**

table 18: projected increase in trained teachers, cf: GoG 1994, Annex 2

TTC Capacity: With reference to the capacity, the government simply assumed that the 38 restructured teacher training colleges will be in a position to produce the required types and numbers of teachers (GoG 1994, 15). Despite this proclamation there is no evidence that this target can be achieved.

However, the immense demand is evident from the calculations in the table above and there should be policies ensuring the implementation of such projections. As up to now (1994/95) there is no evidence of real actions being taken apart from the idea to convert or open teacher training colleges which are usually residential to non-residential day-colleges. This idea is dominated by 'containing costs' (MoE 1994a, 24); but it must be considered to a far greater extent that the capacity of training colleges is not only limited through the number of residential places but also by its teaching capacity - the maximum tutor-student ratio and working space. To turn the training colleges into day-schools would not solve the problem of accommodation generally. Any such policy would only shift the problem to the students who will have problems in finding accommodation because the appropriate

College A

Local
Headteacher

Local
Supervisor

Pre-Service
Training

In-Service
Training

Primary Schools
in Ghanaian
Languages

Local
Schools

Local
Schools

ZONE

Teachers posted to Primary Schools
within a designated Ghanaian language area

*figure 15: college A,
draft, cf: MoE 1994a, 66*

housing facilities would also be missing. The traditional environment is hardly prepared to rent living space to non-family members.

Thereby AIDOO-TAYLOR'S recommendation to transform some of the polytechnics into multipurpose institutions training technicians and teachers in technical subjects is supported from a very practical point of view.

d) *Pre- and In-Service Training Models*

Integrated models: Another factor that could help to meet the pressing demand for more trained teachers is the possibility of making use of those untrained or uncertified people who are already assigned to schools. In order to meet the demands of accelerated staff development in general terms the MoE has recommended the introduction of an integrated model of pre-service and in-service training which could help to improve on this aspect as well (MoE 1994a, 24, 66). According to the MoE's proposal colleges could be restructured in two different ways.

It must be noted that information on the following two proposals is quite confusing in the quoted report. Various inconsistencies signal strong evidence that these models had not been thought out consequently then.

At College type A the language or local area is the point at issue. "Trainees would be selected from the area, and would be posted to teach within the area. This could be an incentive to those who wished to live and work within their home region." (MoE 1994a 24) After the initial pre-service training teachers would continue their training in close relation with this college. Local head teachers and supervisors could serve efficiently as multipliers and mediators respectively. The zone or local based model probably works best since it involves teachers, head teachers and supervisors in the process of acquiring new concepts, knowledge and skills, thereby improving them all. This model would also serve to establish the school staff as a working team.

The most obvious advantage is that costs could be reduced if this model was implemented, i.) in terms of accommodating teachers on in-service training and ii.) in terms of expenditures for travel and transport for tutors

and supervisors. Secondly, "training organized on a school, zone or circuit level can be planned to minimize teacher absence from scheduled instructional time." (Ibid.)

At College type B training is not restricted to a certain language or a certain locality. Graduates from such colleges are sent to schools throughout the country. In turn, the college provides countrywide in-service training courses. The type B model is probably more geared to train in less common subject areas such as specific electives. This model could also improve the standard of teachers at the school level who could then serve as local experts or cooperating teachers as recommended by MENSAH in the before.

The major difference between the two models is the size of their commuter-belt which has implications on the internal organization (local-residential aspect), on the organization of replacements of those teachers on in-service training, and in terms of cost effectiveness.

It should be noted that the interpretation of the two models is largely speculative. Unfortunately the MoE report quoted which these two models are taken from does not offer much assistance in describing or interpreting the functioning of these models.

In-service training: There is the general impression that in-service training does not have a long history in Ghana, but the introduction of the education reform program has triggered off a change. Since 1987 there has been an in-service training program, initially introduced to expose teachers to newly introduced subjects and to a new educational philosophy. The first workshops were crash-courses meant for the newly introduced subjects at junior secondary school level designed for those teachers without pre-service training. (GES 1985) These developments were accompanied by various actions like the increased intake of Certificate A teachers for diploma and BA courses at the University Training College at Winneba or the Junior Secondary School Teacher Education Project (JuSSTEP) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) in collaboration with ODA/ the British Council (GES/ODA 1993).

In 1992 a handbook for principals of training colleges - The Principals' Handbook - was developed to give
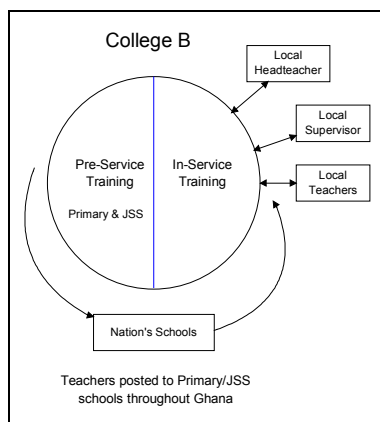

figure 16: college B,
draft, cf, MoE 1994a, 66

information about the duties and responsibilities of the senior staff and certain administrative procedures. This activity was brought to the school level in 1994 by the introduction of a handbook for headmasters - The Headmasters' Handbook - to serve as a reference book assisting them in their daily administrative work and pedagogical tasks. (GES 1994)

Contributors: Assuming that there will be general acceptance of the tasks of in-service training as a planned program of continuing learning which provides experience and knowledge for the improvement of all professional personnel and staff members through formal and informal on-the-job training, some concepts as discussed by MANU (then Program Manager of PREP) shall be outlined. (Manu 1994c) Most of the in-service training programs which the education authorities have launched in Ghana are geared towards either program implementation or towards helping participants to pass promotion examinations. There are six major contributors in this area:

1. The Teacher Education Directorate which organizes courses for subject panelists to prepare various syllabuses to be used in teacher educational institutions.
2. The Institute of Educational Planning and Public Administration (IEPA-University of Cape Coast) which organizes courses on educational leadership for the top administrative personnel of the Ghana Education Service (GES).
3. The Institute of Education (University of Cape Coast) which organizes courses on marketing schemes to those involved in the three year post secondary and diploma teacher education programs.
4. The various Subject Associations which conduct courses on their disciplines for their members.
5. The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) which organizes courses:

   - to prepare teachers to pass promotion examinations;
   - in book development workshops to train writing teachers in writing techniques;
   - for conventional O and A level classes for teachers to upgrade their academic standards;
   - and has instituted professional associations and study circles to enable teachers to understand issues on professional and trade union matters.

6. The Ghana Education Service (GES) which conducts courses on:
   - interpreting new curricula;
   - promoting some categories of teachers to become qualified for promotion as stated in the terms and conditions of the GES;
   - orientation for newly promoted GES officers. (Manu 1994c, 5f)

In-service network (figure 17): Among the deficiencies of the in-service programs mentioned is the lack of coordination between the various bodies.

It has therefore been suggested to institute a coordination committee, the In-Service Committee. The tasks of the In-Service Committee would be:

a) to define the roles of all bodies which are involved in in-service activities;

b) to serve as a liaison between pre-service and in-service programs;

c) to establish criteria for credit systems to promote teachers;

d) to keep records and provide information on in-service matters;

e) to organize trainer programs for all those who are involved in in-service activities. (Manu 1994c, 8f)

The in-service committee would thus be the clearing and monitoring house of all in-service activities. It could serve as a place of interaction where the representatives of the in-

figure 17: ISCN, daft, cf: Manu 1994c, 22

volved bodies would meet (see above 1.-6.) and as a link between these bodies and the teachers (Manu 1994c, 8-11).

In order to make such an 'In-Service Network' work and make use of the existing facilities to a maximum, close cooperation between the governmental institutions (GES, University, etc.) and the GNAT (as a NGO) would certainly be necessary.

In-service training models: Manu (1994c, 12-17) outlines 6 models which could be utilized to implement adjusted in-service training activities. A seventh model (No. 7) recommending the establishment of multipurpose Education Centers is supported by the government of Ghana (RoG 1994, 25f).

1. *The Corporation Focused Model:* It advantages if for instance the Ghana Education Service (GES) intends to introduce a particular curricular content into the schools. By using the structure of the in-service network, representatives of the districts are invited to an in-service course.

Participants would then impart their knowledge to the school staff. This could involve a certain kind of 'needs assessment' for the GES to find out the needs of teachers and students at a particular school level, district or region.

2. *The Regional Focused Model* would invite representatives from the districts and organize "trainer programs" to instruct them professionally when implementing nationally developed curriculum programs. Participants from the districts would then serve as workshop leaders to train personnel at the district level, who would in turn train people to organize school focused programs.

3. *The Teacher Center Model* is considered the most important model for the development of resources at the local level. It would include curriculum development activities, a teaching and learning aid center, exhibition of new textbooks and educational materials, a documentation center providing duplication facilities and modern teaching aids such as video films and overhead projectors. It could furthermore serve as a forum, organizing symposiums and discussions on educational issues. Teacher centers would be established throughout the country within walking distance from certain schools. The center would then serve as an interface between the schools, teachers and the local area, serving the training needs and providing teaching supplies for teachers.

4. *The School Focused Model:* To place the teacher in an active role working with students, materials, ideas and behaviors, the focus of this model is on using the real classroom setting. The program is therefore to be carried out during the teacher's normal working schedule. Under the school focused paradigm the teacher, the student and curriculum developers interact at the school. One of the major problems of the school focused model might be that
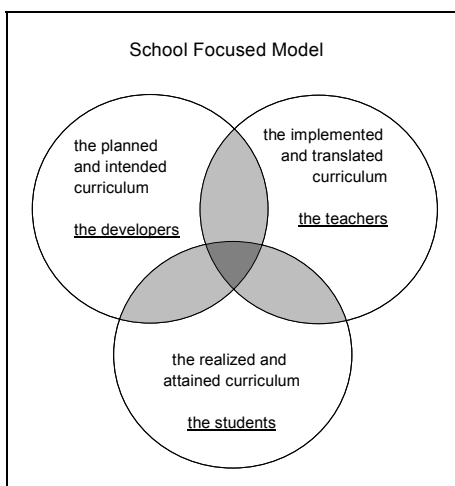
figure 18: school focused model, draft, cf, Manu 1994c, 13

it is cost-intensive in terms of transport, and consuming in terms of time and manpower.

5. *The Institutional or Idiosyncratic Model:* The University of Cape Coast and the University Training College of Winneba would be asked to strengthen their commitment in offering for instance an increased number of continuing professional development activities. It will be necessary to establish the idea of in-service education as a shared responsibility at the university in order to encourage the departments affected to organize programs in school-related courses. These courses might include degree courses and professional development workshops and would have to be offered on on both a credit and non-credit basis for teachers to improve their professional standard.

6. *University Credit Courses* should be introduced to encourage participating teachers to accumulate credits in their selected fields. A restructured university course, presently offered as a full year course would then be organized in three semesters annually so as to offer new possibilities to employ teachers. Teachers who work near the campus would be the immediate beneficiaries of this venture. The needed accommodation would also be available for teachers living far away if the university would offer courses during semester breaks.

7. The opening of *Education (Training) Centers* at all district capitals has been planned. For a start, these centers will be located at the 10 regional capitals to enable students to study within the region rather than having to move to universities elsewhere. They shall also serve as in-service training centers for teachers. Each center will comprise of 5 units: a science resource unit; a computer training unit; a distance education unit; a library and an audio-visual unit.

The centers shall also be equipped with laboratories, workshops and computers to provide comprehensive teaching and learning facilities. All these units shall be manned by trained personnel. Students should be given the chance to collect written materials and use the facilities for their studies. The Distance Education program involves the provision of instruction to students who are off campus through the use of prepared study material, recorded cassettes, television and radio programs as well as face-to-face meetings with lecturers during vacations.

This model resembles the 'Teacher Center Model' and is probably the same; the only difference is that its documentation is more elaborate.

Problems of Implementation: Manu (1994c, 23f) considers four aspects as crucial to a successful implementation of in-service-training activities:

- There is the need to set up courses to prepare teachers to be prepared for change.
- It is necessary to organize trainers' programs to educate sufficient tutors.
- Teachers should be asked to pay for such courses. In his view teachers will be prepared to pay because the accumulation of credits will qualify them for promotion.
- The GES should be in a position to provide sufficient money for the new program. It might not be necessary to appoint new subject organizers because there are already officers in each district who are responsible for in-service courses. It would be only necessary to reschedule assignments and appoint those people who have the professional 'know-how'.

Annotation: The education sector's share of the national recurrent budget had increased from the low level of 17 percent in 1980/81 to 35.1 percent in 1987. In 1994 government's share of the national recurrent budget to education stood at a remarkable 40.0 percent. Out of this, an average of 65 percent was allocated to the basic education sector between 1989 and 1994. (GoG 1994, 17) In a MoE paper dating the same year (MoE 1994a) it is maintained that 37 percent of the government's recurrent budget is allocated to education which represents a slight deviation.

Furthermore, recurrent expenditures on salaries, instructional materials, supervision, in-service training and administrative costs account for 95 percent of all government expenditures on basic education (cf. MoE 1994a, 5). It is further stated that over 90 percent is spent on salaries and allowances (GoG 1994, 17).

In view of these figures it is not likely at all that Ghana will be in a position to increase expenditure in the education sector for much more in-service training personnel and for the establishment of cost-intensive in-service training models; this is supported by a number of government reports in which it is stated that the government intends to foster a policy of increased cost-sharing and cost-recovery. In view of the common fact that "the local and community contribution to facilities and capital costs has not been impressive, even for maintenance" (MoE 1994a, 43) it is widely accepted that "the bulk of all finances for the recurrent costs of an expanded and improved basic education system will almost certainly have to come from central government expenditures." (Ibid., 5)

e) Challenges of Supervision

Background: There are many complaints about Ghanaian teachers: absenteeism, lateness and general lack of discipline are the most common.

> "It is evident that many teachers are absent, late and/or leave school early; teachers do not regularly follow the school timetable - partly because a variety of events divert the ordinary work of class, and partly because of their poor familiarity with the contents of the curriculum." (MoE 1994a, 17)

This alone could account for an increased awareness for the need for more and better supervision. Besides supervision, with an increased emphasis on discipline, there also has to be supervision in the form of counseling in order to develop teachers' abilities to conduct better lessons in the classroom because:

> "Recent graduates of the teacher training colleges, and those receiving in-service training, have had little actual classroom training in classroom methodology, and are ill-prepared to handle the new directions of the curriculum reform. One of the experiences of the reform has been that it is far easier to supply materials than effective, committed teachers" (Ibid.)

This reveals the need for ongoing counseling and assessing of teachers. Key positions are held by the headmaster of a particular school, the district supervisor, and the particular community at which a certain school is located. Supervision becomes a shared responsibility between the parents and the government as the employer. Both should have a genuine interest that proper schooling takes place.

Unfortunately supervision seems to be carried out rather inefficiently at basic education schools. To address this issue the government intended to enhance discipline among the staff and the students by increasing the head-teacher's responsibility for school management and supervision through in-service training (RoG 1994, 54). A number of in-service training courses were set up for between 1991 and 1993 in Management and Educational Administration for 190,915 primary school headteachers (Manu 1994b, 20). Trainer courses were as well organized for the 110 district training officers and the 10 regional training officers in order to decentralize training programs to the district levels and focus on school-based in-service activities (Manu 1994b, 20).

Objectives: Various training courses have already been held during the past years, focusing on the circuit supervisors abilities in:

a. promoting effective teaching/learning in all basic education schools;
b. interpreting educational policies to teachers and help them understand educational policy objectives;
c. promoting effective school management;
d. liaising between the school and the district education authorities;

e. organizing in-service training courses for the professional development of teachers;

f. promoting a healthy school environment

g. monitoring the achievement and performance of pupils and staff;

h. preparing guidelines for school supervision

i. collecting and collaging statistics on the school they supervise. (World Bank 1993, Annex 3-11)

Structure and Results: According to government policy there should be one supervisor for every 20 schools. Of the 110 districts, 85 had district education officers, but approximately 50 percent of the staff positions were still unfilled in the districts in 1994. There were approximately 250 circuit supervisors and 190 monitoring assistants posted in the same year, so that they had to cover two or more circuits. An aggravating fact to this unfortunate situation is that the lack of recurrent funds for fuel has kept many officers from carrying out school visits although it is maintained that many of them were provided with motorbikes. (MoE 1994a, 18)

In view of this considerable investment, it is clear that the administrative and supervisory structure then must have produced some results. Unfortunately there is no evidence of any improvement in the performance of classroom teachers. This can be partly explained by insufficient school visits; worthy of mention at this point is the problem of the lack of disciplinary measures which can be taken against absent or regularly drunken teachers even, when such measures are clearly warranted (ibid.).

6. Interview Excerpts: Discourse and Interpretation

In the following chapters the author assembled authentic statements in order to finally draw a coherent picture from the field. As a major difference to e.g. VAN MAANENS' book 'Tales from the Field' (1988), it has to be considered that the author became a creative factor by focusing the interviews on selected aspects and by assembling the particular quotations. In the end the author will therefore 'tell his own story', not the case .

Quotation Format: Two specific quotation formats have been used in the following referring to either Annex I or Annex II (enclosed on disk). Quotations such as (P1, 122:125) indicate their specific location in Annex I. In the example (P1) stands for primary text 1 and (122:125) for line number 122 to 125. Quotation references such as (A1.1) refer to topics in Annex II. In most cases the direct and indirect quotation references (e.g. P1, 122:125) will appear under the particular topic (A1.1).

It must be considered that direct quotations refer to the revised transcript. The quoted person might not have literally spoken these words (section 2.2a, transcripts), nevertheless those quotations were explicitly cross-checked with the initial word-by-word transcript to ensure their authenticity. Because only one third of the revised transcripts were cross-checked, authorized, and finally returned to the author, a general solution had to be found for quoting particular passages. Notably the few corrections made in those transcripts revealed that the process of transcription was successful and it was finally decided upon to make use of passages from the initial revised version.

6.1 The Structure of the Site

One of the main characteristics of the present site (figure 19) is the different nature of its components. When we speak of the *Settings at Schools* it comprises three different types of schools, the physical appearance i.e. classrooms, furniture, and arrangements such as the shift system, overenrollment in the classrooms, etc. Although *Settings at Schools* can comprise quite a number of factors, there is a consensus (i.e. agenda) about what to consider. This agenda can differ depending on a particular focus but when speaking, for instance, about components having a positive influence on successful schooling, 'everybody' will be able to name e.g. the family, infrastructural inputs and the teachers as the crucial factors. This is certainly different compared to site components such as *Society's Attitudes and Opinions* or *Teach-*

ers' Working and Living Conditions which are areas less specific and much more subject to individual interpretation, but still their content and context is quite comprehensive.
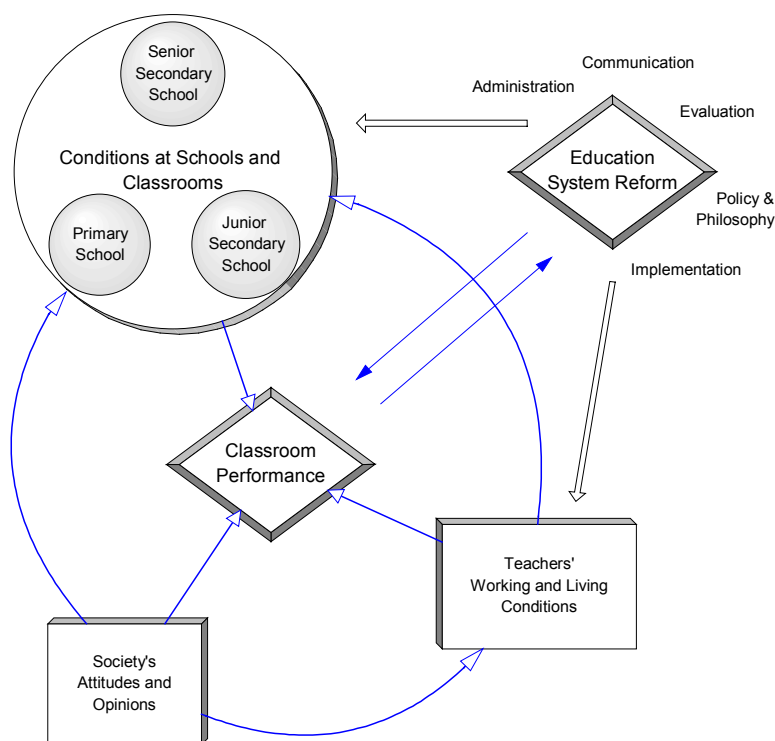
figure 19: an overview about the site

Site components such as *The Education System Reform* or *Classroom Performance* are less tangible as the aforementioned. They consist of a number of concurring and cooperating components, some of them apparent and clear others of a hidden and subliminal existence. What we consider to be *The Education System Reform* is not just an administrative act but something which consists of a very great number of decisions that resulted in a very great number of actions taken in order to bring about a change based on a particular concept. A particular *Classroom Performance* as the mutual act of both a teacher and his or her students depends for instance on the teacher's

training, his or her ability and attitude, the students' interest in the topic, their physical condition, their parents' attitude towards the schooling of their children, and the infrastructural supply of teaching and learning materials.

A description of the components of the mentioned site will be derived from views and statements made by the particular interviewees. Their composition is based upon a *Selected Code Listing* assembled as Annex II. This listing is more of a structured collection of quotations assembled in specific clusters or topics. The rough overview given about the site as documented in figure 19 was derived from a reflection about these clusters.

When describing particular site components and discussing them to their related findings I will follow the course of topics as given in Annex II. In the description and interpretation of the statements below, I put across the views of people affected by the education system in different positions, mapping out divergent and convergent points of views in order to draw up a plausible and finally coherent picture of the site.

6.2 Conditions at Schools and Classrooms

a) Class Sizes

Code Reference(s): A1.1

A general problem at schools seems to be the high enrollment rates. In concordance with KRAFT'S and YAKUBU'S findings, class sizes at primary schools and also at junior and senior secondary schools were considerably higher than stated in the official reports. Even the responsible administrative officer at MoE does not see much sense in the official statistics given, for instance, about the student-teacher ratio at primary schools which is supposed to be 28:1 (P9, 99:100). Class sizes at primary schools especially in urban and semi-urban centers were seldom less than 50, and actually mostly between 50 and 70. At Kanda I JSS the smallest was the examination class with about 49 students (P28, 15:20). Even at secondary schools held in high repute like St. Augustines, Cape-Coast class sizes have gone up to 60 (P17, 13:15).

The major problem caused by large class sizes is that of effective teaching. That, combined with an inadequate supply of teaching and learning materials (A2.3) puts the teachers in an almost powerless position.

> "What do you expect him to do in a school where they have only one textbook for a course? He will write one or two things on the black board and let students copy it. Then he relaxes. Lack of materials is one major problem and also the large population of students." (P1, 122:125)

In fact there are many facets of teaching that are influenced by high enrollment rates. Handling big classes successfully certainly demands to be abreast with modern teaching methods which most of the teachers either lack or feel handicapped because of acute shortage of teaching and learning materials. Also simple activities like correcting tests and continuous assessment are negatively affected due to the large number of students.

b) Related Policies

Code Reference(s): A1.2,3; A1.5

Apart from the high enrollment rates which seem to have a negative impact on effective teaching, there are 4 policies which are directly related to classroom teaching and seem to have a negative impact on successful schooling as well: the policies on language, instructional time, extra classes, and automatic promotion.

1. Language Policy (A1.2): The present debate is dominated by a general concern about the students' inadequate capability of using the English language as a medium of communication. Despite the popular view that children have to master their mother tongue before successfully learning a second language, most Ghanaian teachers want the students to learn English as soon as possible.

> "Every verbal communication in class one must strictly be in English and the vernacular must be taught as a subject in the class, because everything has been written in English. The pupils must be able to read and write and speak." (P 27, 180:183)

The reasons for this are obvious. Although there is an official policy to use the vernacular from primary class one to three there are no textbooks available for the students to learn reading in their own indigenous language. Apart from that there are also no other textbooks for other subjects which, if the official policy was followed, would result in teaching subjects in the local languages without textbooks from primary form 1 to three (P 7, 154:158). Teaching in the local languages would certainly as well require teachers who are conversant with the vernacular. Unfortunately teachers at JSS do not always come from the particular language area and are sometimes posted to areas where they do not speak the vernacular. This inevitably leads to a complete break-down in communication which is especially demoralizing for young teachers (P16, 179:183). Following the official language policy would then mean to start teaching reading and writing English in primary class four. Considering the English is the medium of communication in all further classes, teachers with a professional grounding in teaching English as a second language were required.

The adequate mastery of the English language remains a problem for the majority of students throughout schooling. It is not unusual to find a number of students at JSS 3 and even at SSS who have serious problems expressing themselves in English (P30, 146:153). This is certainly not just the fault of the students but related to the low standard of English spoken by many teachers (P30, 90:92) and the lack of adequate methods of teaching English as a second language.

Due to the fact that all instructions are given and all examinations are finally taken in English it becomes obvious that a successful mastery of English is decisive for students' success in formal education. Therefore, students at private schools where English is the means of communication right from nursery school on, are in a far better position than their counterparts at public schools. There, the basic problem students have is the low standard of English to the extent that communication among the teacher and the students can even break down at JSS when the teacher cannot speak the local languages (P16, 179:183).

2. Instructional Time (A1.3): According to the official policy, classroom teaching is supposed to take place from 8 to 12 in the morning. Because many teachers and students do often have to cover far distances to reach school, it is likely that tardiness of both teachers and students leads to a loss of instructional time. The laudable aim of guaranteeing at least 4 hours of instructional time is in danger because of an inflexible regulation. If the local conditions were considered, the time table could be adapted to the specific conditions of a particular area (P18, 298:306).

Another factor that contributes to short instructional time is the combination of a large number of subjects taught to a high student population and lack of instructional material. If a subject is just 35 minutes the teacher has almost no time to concentrate on proceeding in terms of content because of e.g., checking on the students' homework and assigning new homework. Considering that there is almost no material to be taken home by the students, teachers are forced to spend instructional time on writing up homework exercises on the blackboard for the students to copy into their exercise books.

The problem of short instructional time is further perpetuated by extra curricular activities such as rehearsals for Independence Day (6th March) which also do not take place at private schools, (P27, 34:39) and all kinds of students' absenteeism (A1.3b).

3. Extra Classes (A1.5): As a result of the short instructional time many teachers have decided to hold extra classes. This practice has generated a very controversial discussion. Whereas many teachers regard extra classes as

a necessity to lift students to the academic level required by the syllabus, others regards this as a disgusting habit. People point to the fact that teachers have fallen into the habit of taking money for extra classes while carelessly teaching during teaching official hours. In their opinion, there would be no need of organizing extra classes if teachers took their job serious.

Certainly the argument that teachers are less committed today than in the olden days should be taken serious but pointing to the fact alone should not keep us from inquiring into the reason why. Even if taking money alone was a reason for some teachers to teach intentionally relaxed during official hours in order to leave some of the content for extra classes (P26, 279:285) the question whether teachers in Ghana are especially money conscious or whether this is the only way of making ends meet would arise. In fact there is no convincing evidence for this argument throughout the conducted interviews but the picture which emerges is that teachers simply cannot cover the syllabus adequately due to the high enrollment rates, the few instructional hours (i.e. the short lessons - 35 min.), and the general lack of instructional materials and learning materials for the students. If teachers then decide to organize extra classes they will certainly not do that for free. It is no secret at all that salaries in the teaching sector are very low and almost everybody in a comparable income group is forced to take up a second job to make ends meet. If teachers then organize extra classes (while others search for additional sources of income as well) they will certainly not do that for free speaking neither in terms of additional income, nor in terms of covering additional costs for their transport to school, additional instructional material, etc.

4. Automatic Promotion (A1.4): By law all children are automatically promoted from primary school class one to junior secondary school class 3, in other words, throughout the compulsory nine years of the basic education cycle in Ghana. The first selective examination checking on the students' academic standard is the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) which prepares as an examination to enter 'the world of work' as well as a selective examination for entering senior secondary school.

There are three popular reasons why students are automatically promoted in Ghana. First because it is intolerable from an psychologist point of view to leave certain students behind while others are moving on (P14, 122:125), secondly because there would be a back log in some classes while others would be choked (P4, 291:292) and thirdly because the academic knowledge is not everything that counts in preparing children for life (P4, 293:296). Another argument for automatic promotion is that "even in P6 a student who cannot read can be helped by graded reading material" (P14,

119:122). A weak child could also be kept in classes with its peer group while attending a particular subject (e.g. English language and mathematics) in a lower class until he or she catches up (P14, 125:129).

Arguments against automatic promotion are first of all that the system as such does not offer an integrated mechanism to identify weak pupils. Despite the fact that there is the theoretical possibility of making 'proper arrangements' for a weak student to catch up with the requirements of the syllabus there are quite a number of students who are promoted up to JSS 1 without knowing how to write their own name (P27, 144:147) which is consonant with the results of the Criterion Reference Test. It should as well be considered that if teachers knew that students were to repeat the class if they had not acquired a certain standard by the end of the year he or she could not escape the blame (P4, 197:300). Under the current practice of automatic promotion the problem of failure is postponed until the end of the basic education cycle in class 9 when it finally becomes obvious whether the child has gained an adequate knowledge or not. According to some people's view there should be an examination to grade pupils at least by the end of primary school to identify whether and in what areas certain pupils do have deficits (P14, 130:135). If the system continues with the practice of automatic promotion it has to develop a proper inbuilt mechanism to identify and take care of deficits, "but to leave him just to go on and on without the system caring means that we are building a very wrong system" (P14, 150:154).

c) Curriculum and Infrastructure

Code Reference(s): A1.8; A2

Closely linked to the problem of inadequate infrastructure is the overloaded curriculum (A1.8). There is a general complaint of teachers about the high number of subjects and the overloaded curriculum which is a menacing hindrance to effective teaching (no materials and short lessons) as well as to the development of instructional materials for the various subjects in general. The overloaded curriculum is considered a key issue throughout the Ghanaian education system and has resulted in a discussion about raising the length of the education system which is in some people's view more of a subordinate if not an artificial (contrived) issue.

> "It is not a question of adding years rather it is a question of looking at the curriculum again and adapting and simplifying the curriculum so that it can be taught more effectively and stop overloading the curriculum." (P10, 209:214)

Resulting from the economic strains, the high number of subjects, and the overloaded curriculum lack of instructional inputs i.e. teacher's hand-

books, all kind of textbooks, furniture and even buildings has become a serious problem for effective teaching (A2). Teaching and learning materials are simply not there in sufficient numbers (P1, 118:121) and in certain fields like in sciences and in certain vocational/technical subjects the necessary equipment to teach students according to the demands of the subject is lacking as well (A4.4d; A4.5; A5.4). The magnitude of the problem can be estimated from the fact that not only big investments are affected by lack of financial means but also minor investments, like the availability of even chalk poses a problem (A2.1c).

Apart from complaints about the lack of or the inappropriate supply of textbooks in terms of numbers there are also complaints addressing the habit of not using the available textbooks at schools. According to some people's observations textbooks were provided but not used at all. (P10, 374:377) One reason that prevents teachers from not using textbooks in the classroom could be that they fear sanctions in case the books get lost or spoilt.

> "Even if the books are there, they handle them in such a way that the books are well protected because they will be held responsible if some books get missing. They say you will be surcharged. Some of the teachers will keep the books nicely and store them in a cupboard; they won't like the children to use them." (P14, 51:56)

It is probably not a common practice that books are available but not being used. Rather than that it is more likely that those books do simply not exist in sufficient numbers. However, if they were available while not being used the above mentioned statement reveals an appalling practice. This practice could be encouraged by the dilapidated condition of some school buildings which hardly protect schoolbooks against theft and bad weather.

> "In some places textbooks which were made to be used in the classroom were boxed and carried over to the chief's house because if the books were left in the premises of the school somebody would come and take them away. Maybe even the sun will destroy them because no structure protects them." (P6, 186:190)

According to many interviewees, a large number of schools are in a deplorable state and this does not only apply to primary schools but currently also senior secondary schools, especially to the newly established ones, which lack e.g. proper roofing and structures for workshops. Some sources maintain that schools often exist only by name; without a proper building and being bare of any furniture (A2.5a). While some interviewees just state that "from the infrastrucutural point of view some of them [the schools] cannot be classified as schools at all" (P20, 264:265) others go even beyond

that point and question whether the number of years spent in such schools really matters.

> "If you look at my village which is Ada ... then you realise that they do not have anything there. There are no classrooms, they don't have teachers, and so on. So whether primary school is of 6 or 7 years makes no difference." (P23, 344:349)

In the rural areas it is not unusual to find schools where pupils have to lie on their belly on the floor when they want to write (P4, 235:239). Often pupils carry stools and tables to the schools and back to the house because the community is too poor to provide the school with furniture.

> "But in several cases, parents give the children house furniture, a small stool a table to be carried to school and back because these are the things that are also used in the house." (P4, 240:243)

Indeed, when schools are lacking even the minimum facilities one can imagine that it is almost impossible for pupils to gain from tuition and this obviously affects the standard of education on all levels but especially on the primary school level.

d) Standard of Schooling

Code Reference(s): A1.6

Some people maintain that students are not learning anything in 90% of the ordinary primary schools, not only in the rural areas, and that it is quite common to find students even in JSS 3 who cannot write their own name (P10, 52:54). This finding is largely consonant with the view of many Ghanaian teachers who express their disappointment about the low standard of education especially at the primary school level (A1.6a).

Many people consider the low standard of education to be due to the inability of many teachers to teach effectively and their lack of commitment; but as explained above the problems connected with inadequate infrastructural inputs should also be considered. Furthermore, the lacking inputs contributes to making the teachers feel they are doing a job not taken serious by the government in particular and by people in general. However, the findings of the Criterion Reference Test (CRT) which prove that only a minority of the primary class 6 pupils reach the required grade in English and Mathematics reveal that the low quality of teachers' work cannot be neglected, especially because the vast majority teaching at that level have professional training (P 16, 135:138).

Certainly the low standard at primary schools is reflected in the standard at junior secondary schools which in turn affects the senior secondary school. Because of the low level at primary schools and junior secondary

schools, teachers at the senior secondary schools are forced to repeat large parts of the syllabus in various subjects to adapt students to the level taught at SSS 1 (P17, 52:56, 302:304). Shortening the secondary course to three years and implementing a very tight syllabus compounded by a lack of instructional material and lack of adequately trained teachers has resulted in very low achievements of students in the first Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) in 1993.

e) Specific Problem Areas in Schools

Code Reference(s): A3,4,5

The different types of schools in Ghana share a number of common problems but there are also specific problem areas.

As already stated, the instructional level at primary schools (A3) is comparably low. The low standard is partly due to the fact that many untrained teachers were employed at primary schools. In view of the fact that one teacher has to teach all subjects which is already a highly demanding job for trained teachers, it becomes evident that the high percentage of unqualified teachers (ca. 25%) were increasing the problem of offering quality education. One fact that worsened this problem was that the primary school curriculum remained largely unchanged. Docking the restructured JSS (pre-vocational/pre-technical orientation, etc.) to the primary school became a problem then.

When the number of subjects in the primary school was then reduced from the initial 9 subjects to four subjects it became a problem to convince the Curriculum Development and Research Division (CRDD/MoE) that a meaningful reduction was only possible by reducing the content of the syllabus. Merging subjects, shifting the content from one subject to the other, as suggested by the the CRDD would only change the structure of the curriculum, but it would be still overloaded. The CRDD's attitude could derive from a viewpoint which regards teaching a specific content as part of a particular subject as basically important to develop that discipline later on at the JSS or SSS level. It is likely then to neglect the fact that pupils at primary school do not have such boundaries but are more of a holistic understanding. (P16, 315:327)

The level at the junior secondary school (A4) is often compared to the former (lower) secondary school which prepares students to take the O-level. By doing so many people forget that most pupils had to attend middle school (which is 10 years schooling altogether) before gaining admittance to secon-

dary school. As a result of this the level of the subjects at JSS (which pupils now enter directly after six years of primary school) cannot be as high as the previous secondary school. An extremely high expectation possibly resulting from the outlined misconception could be the reason why some teachers regard the students' intellectual capacity at JSS as being low or immature as compared to former students.(P15, 474:476) .

Apart from providing students with a sound basic education, the JSS is also ladled with the responsibility of preparing students for the world of work and preparing them for continuing at the senior secondary school level (A4.3). Pupils enter JSS with a comparatively low level of accomplishment in especially English and Mathematics, a problem which sustains throughout the 3 years, owing to the fact that teachers are not able to concentrate on compensating pupils' deficits in English and Mathematics in the face of many other subjects and the overloaded curriculum. In addition to the problem of low achievements emerging in the academic subjects, preparing the students for entering the world of work is certainly difficult when the JSS is severely underressourced in terms of adequately trained teachers, availability of materials, workshops and tools (A4.5). Probably this is the reason why almost nobody is taking the concept of admitting JSS school-leavers to vocations really seriously (P16, 339:343).

Additionally there was a very unfortunate conflict from the very beginning between those people promoting the reform who understood the JSS to be a serious predisposition to vocational and technical jobs and those who emphasized exposing students to practical aspects of life. Because the first group, those who thought that students at the age of 15/16 would be capable of starting some kind of practical work (not only having a general idea), dominated in the initial implementation period, the practical subjects and the use of workshops at schools was not organized in such a way to 'just' give students an exposure to practical/vocational aspects of life. In the end this resulted in an overemphasis of vocational/technical education as opposed to a general basic education despite the fact that vocational and technical subjects could not be taught adequately. (A4.4a+e)

Because of the high expectations derived from predisposing students to the world of work, the government made no provisions for introducing a formal vocational training or apprenticeship system for those juveniles who will started working after JSS and SSS. Additionally the technical training institutes which students used to enter after JSS or SSS were also not re-

structured and properly adjusted to the new structure and content of basic and secondary education. (P14, 160:177; P6, 136:141)

Preparing students to continue at the SSS level becomes a serious problem too. For people who regard (senior) secondary education as a logical if not necessary step after JSS, the question arose of how to reorganize the basic education level (primary + JSS) as a preparation to the SSS. Many Ghanaian parents and students might consider the SSS to be 'the crucial middle of the education ladder' (P26, 180:182; E2.4) but speaking in terms of real numbers, the Basic Education Certificate Examination (after form 9, primary + JSS) will demarcate the end of formal schooling for the majority of students. The JSS is then torn between providing a sound general basic education for those students who enter the world of work and those who continue at training colleges and senior secondary schools (A4.3).

Among the many problems the senior secondary school (SSS) is facing, (A5) one very tricky issue is the level of education students have gained when entering SSS. While students have successfully passed the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and while they have acquired the necessary aggregates to enter SSS, almost all teachers at SSS complain about their inadequate academic standard. According to the teachers' point of view, the students' knowledge is not at all up to the level of the SSS. One might assume that the SSS itself has not adapted to the 'new' standard caused by the restructuring of the basic education level. Lack of proper adaptation now results in time consuming repetition of subject content to bring the students up to the level as required by the syllabus especially in subjects like English, the means of communication in all subjects, and Mathematics. (A5.1c; P17, 52:56, 61-64, 302:304)

The policy of admitting 50% of the JSS school-leavers to SSS caused a quantitative expansion which resulted in a number of additional problems. First of all there were not enough adequately trained teachers, secondly, the newly established schools especially, had problems in facilitating their schools with instructional material, workshops and laboratories. Providing classrooms and accommodation for teachers is a special problem in the rural areas. Thirdly, doing away with the boarding system resulted in endangering selection rather than redressing inequities. Parents are now responsible for finding ways and means of providing transportation for their children in the face of economic strains and an insufficient transport system.

Students living in areas where there are very few available senior secondary schools are certainly at a disadvantage and this is even worsened by the

fact that students do not necessarily get admission to a nearby school. The 'grand old secondary schools' especially those which seek to maintain they status as a boarding school in spite the government policy to change all boarding schools into day schools (so called deboardinization policy) have fallen into the habit of favoring students with extraordinary good marks, coming from private or few promoted government basic education schools rather than those who are from the nearby community schools.

f) Government versus Private Schools

Code Reference(s): A6

The biggest difference between ordinary government schools and private schools is most evident in the different academic levels of the two schools. Private schools providing a higher academic level produce students who are, for example, more successful at exams in spite of the fact that the majority of teachers there have no professional (pre-service) training. Probably not the application of better methodology but the attitude to work' makes the difference (P4, 186:188).

Teachers at private schools receiving an even smaller salary and working under insecure employment conditions are said to be teaching with more commitment than their colleagues at government schools. There laxity is said to stem from a lack of strictly applied disciplinary measures (if necessary) and this makes teachers 'a bit too overconfident as to his or her job' (P4, 212:215). Probably the impression of more committed teachers at private schools results from the strict supervision and connected disciplinary measures applied by the headmaster or proprietor. The fact that their livelihood is a daily struggle, e.g. teachers can be dismissed any time and have no legal protection, accounts for the fact that many 'teachers' private schools are there as a last resort of making money and this surely contributes to their working more seriously.

Even though statements about quality at private schools do not sound very motivating either, supervision seems to make a significant difference (P10, 10:14). When talking about adequate supervision the role of parents and PTA's should also be considered as they, too, play an important role in providing infrastructure. At private schools parents are likely to be more concerned about the progress of their children because sending a child to a private school is a well-considered decision and is connected with paying school fees as well. Well-organized PTA's are furthermore in a position to

assist the school in providing e.g. workshop facilities, additional textbooks and even in maintaining the buildings. (C2.4)

g) The Children

When taking into account the children's role or position in schooling it must be noted that many of them are burdened with a number of activities within family life. They must help their parents in their shop, trading or doing all kinds of wayside business. It is not uncommon for children especially in the urban and semi-urban areas to pay their own school fees because their parents can't afford to support them sufficiently.

As a result of crowded households the majority of children have no adequate space where they can do their homework in peace and rest. Another aspect which affects all students attending government schools is that textbooks are not supposed to be taken home. Consequently students have to buy additional textbooks or do without, relying on what they have either copied from the blackboard or taken down as the teachers' notes.

Considering these impeding circumstances it is not at all surprising that teachers complain about students having come out of the habit of learning, only this is not due to their own fault.

6.3 Teachers' Conditions

a) Accommodation and Transport

Other than in the urban areas where the major problem of teachers might be the lack of instructional material and an inadequate salary, teachers in the rural areas have to familiarize themselves with quite a number of shortcomings and deficiencies affecting their living and working conditions. (B1.1). The big differences in terms of living conditions between certain regions and the rural-urban areas is one of the reasons why Ghana has a serious problem of staffing certain schools according to the needs of the particular region or district. Areas lacking facilities which anyone would consider as basic facilities are most severely affected.

> "These are deprived areas which do not have good drinking water, no access to roads, and no electricity. Some of the schools are in very remote areas where teachers do not get good accommodation." (P2, 66:68)

Certainly teachers will do their best to avoid to living under such unpleasant circumstances. Everybody would like to enjoy good drinking water electricity and one can hardly blame the fresh teachers used to live in the urban or semi-urban areas for seeking e.g. medical reports indicating diseases which could save them from being posted to such areas.

Problems in finding accommodation in the remote areas in combination with inadequate transport facilities affects teachers in two striking ways. First, the teacher will not necessarily get accommodation (B1.2) in the village where he or she is posted to. This is related to the fact that in typical traditional settings people put up accommodation for their own domestic use. At times there is space to host family members and closely related visitors but not for renting out rooms. It is therefore not uncommon to find teachers living far away from the place they are actually posted to. In the absence of adequate transport facilities (B1.3) teachers have to cover distances of up to 8 kilometers and it is quite inconvenient to cover such distances on foot under the given climatic conditions. But even then, teachers have difficulty finding accommodations comparable to urban or semi-urban areas. Accommodation in a typical rural area mostly consists of just one room, roofed with grass, mud walls and uncemented floors which is given to the teacher or which he has to put up himself with the help of the students and the community. of Inadequate accommodation remains a problem even though the teacher would like to spend more money on renting any other better sort of accommodation than that but such is simply not available.

> "What is given to the teacher is the type of thing that the people live in. As they have been living in such conditions so long they do not see any difference." (P4, 55:57)

Providing teachers with bicycles under the impression of such inconveniences is certainly an auspicious start-off which has to be followed by supporting communities to put up houses for teachers and headmasters. A first promising step has been made by certain PREP pilot projects encouraging communities to put up housings for head teachers under the assistance of PREP and the World Bank.

The success of such measures will certainly have a positive impact on attracting a more professional teaching staff. On the other hand success is entirely linked with the communities pecuniary abilities to contribute to such projects. In the face of the newly introduced policy of decentralization, any financial support is related to establishing a system that provides the communities in a practical manner, for example, with an adequate financial

budget to meet their engagement in maintaining and setting up facilities, either by putting them in a position to charge taxes by themselves or by proving them with adequate funds from the government budget.

Lack of adequate transport facilities also affects the teachers carrying out normal everyday business, like withdrawing their monthly salary from the bank or buying things (for example, stationary goods, etc.) which cannot be bought from rural markets at a shopping center. In many cases such facilities can be found at larger settlements or the district center which unavoidably results in some teachers' spending time on traveling around during official teaching hours at least once a month instead of being in the classroom. These, in addition to the aforementioned conditions, are the most crucial circumstances militating against an adequate supply of professional teachers in rural areas.

b) The Salary Debate

Code Reference(s): B1.4

The debate on the adequacy of teachers' salaries is a very tricky one. On the one hand teachers complain about being underpaid and the fact that of teachers' salaries are low is not questioned by official sources (P2, 258; P10, 128).

> "While she is standing in the classroom her mind is in the market. All this reduces the actual teaching time, but if she does not do so, she won't survive." (P1, 279:281)

On the other hand it is certainly not only the teachers who are underpaid, but 'there is nobody in the country who earns enough' (P2, 297).

In fact, lack of remuneration in combination with lack of teaching facilities is the teachers' answer to those who complain about teachers' lack of commitment. Nobody denies that teachers had to take up other jobs in the early 1980s to make ends meet. From the teachers' point of view the situation has not yet changed to the extent that he or she can do without making extra money although some officials maintain that teachers' salaries have increased significantly in real terms (P10, 123:128). This can also be understood as a hint indicating how severely underpaid the teachers have been in the recent past. It does not necessarily mean that teachers are fairly paid today.

Quite a number of people working in the teaching profession report that they do not feel respected by society; so much so, that market women feel free to poke fun at their economic strains.

> "For instance when you go to the market and you ask the market woman to reduce the price for you, she will ask you: 'My friend are you a teacher, if you are a teacher then go away.' She knows that the teacher receives a meager salary and he can't afford 10 Cedis." (P1, 291:294)

The teachers find themselves in the middle of being held responsible for the outcome of their students in terms of examinations and practical abilities, leading to whether or when they will enter professions after school, even when lack of textbooks, workshop facilities etc. are militating against a successful teaching-learning process.

In case the teacher takes action against these deficiencies by buying additional instructional material or organizing extra classes to increase the outcome of his or her regular classroom teaching quality, he, of course, won't do that for free (P27, 348:358). It must be considered that teachers as most other people do not earn enough by their primary income source to make ends meet. Young primary school teachers earn roughly 55 USD, assisting heads of SSS, at the age of 50 earn 120 USD. Their income covers approximately 50 to 70 percent of their monthly expenditures (B1.4a). If the conditions caused by lack of inputs in terms of instructional material or because of the inadequate professional preparation of the teachers are such that extra inputs (whether in terms of material or instructional time are unavoidable) the teachers will certainly take the chance to make up for his or her expenditures by 'extra teaching' for extra money.

Certainly, the inadequate remuneration does not only have a negative influence on the teachers in Ghana and it is also not only the teachers alone whom people complain about. It looks as if quite a number of people in the Ghanaian society are forced to supplement their income by charging extra money for services which one would consider to be normal under normal conditions. Why then are teachers blamed for charging extra fees for extra services when they too are expected as anybody else to pay for the 'extra services' of their fellow Ghanaians (P27, 225:227)?

The question of work ethics (B3.2) in the sense that peoples' attitude of work has drastically changed, is then subject to economic strains and not subject to social transition. As for the 1980s absenteeism of teachers was then not a problem caused by lack of commitment but an answer to having lost the primary job as the primary income source.

"They had to leave the children in the classroom to go out trading. Those who could not bear the situation left the country and people's attitude to work changed drastically." (P2, 259:261)

When trained teachers left the country (in the late 1970s) student teachers were employed to fill the vacant places of these teachers. This contributed to lowering the standard at schools (P15, 171:176; P23, 226:230) and later the development of the new educational structure was affected by the lack of adequately trained teachers.

The problem today is whether inadequate remuneration is still preventing teachers from duly performing their services or whether increasing the pay of teachers which is still low but which has doubled in real terms over last 7 or 8 years has a positive influence at all. According to a world banker:

"It makes absolutely no difference at all because the people have gotten into the habit of trading or farming during the time where they weren't paid anything and it is very difficult to get out of the habit of trading or farming again and getting to consider that this is the prime income." (P10, 387:391)

c)   Work Load and Teaching Quality

Code Reference(s): B2.3; B3.1; B6

Besides being seriously underpaid, teachers complain about the heavy work load (B2.3). According to their opinion, the manageable class size varies at a maximum of 30 to 40 students per class. In reality the sizes are much higher (A.11a) and classes have become unmanageable for teachers (B2.4b). This is an especially apparent problem when, e.g. teachers have to mark exercises or make their continuous assessment.

"Honestly speaking, when you have a class of 70 and you teach two subjects, how many exercises can you give, sit by and mark, write your lesson notes for continuous assessment, and supervise classes?" (P27, 311:313)

In classes where the size has gone far beyond 50, where one can find 70 and more, even supervising the class becomes a problem. Giving individual attention to students and teaching child-centered is almost impossible and under such conditions it is quite understandable that teachers have problems in covering the syllabus and naturally the need for extra classes arises.

Considering the high work load, *teaching quality (B3.1)* is inevitably negatively affected and people subsequently complain a lot about the low

standard of teaching at schools. According to their point of view, the ordinary lessons appear too boring for children and they wonder whether teachers really do their work. Some sarcastically state:

> "When I enter the classrooms I think that something should be done. I don't know if it is a new form of training that is going on in the training colleges. Too boring! Save yourself energy, teacher! I think the thing is they don't prepare." (P11, 219:222)

The above observation is certainly shared by many other interviewees but it neglects the seriousness discouraging economic and infrastructural aspects and how they militate against effective teaching. On the other hand it is also very likely that many people have entered the teaching profession as a last resort. They might have made up their mind to become teachers because of lacking other alternatives on the tight job-market or because they regarded the teaching profession as a stepping to stone to other jobs (B3.4c). However, before judging finally about the quality of teachers "a whole lot of things are needed to be addressed before a final decision is taken that teachers did not teach well or the present teachers are bad, that they are not able to teach." (P15, 554:558) Even if those people who never wanted to become teachers finally end up teaching at schools, it does not necessarily mean that they cannot teach. This was a view based on the assumption that only 'teachers by heart' are good teachers and it neglects the fact that people are trained to become teachers by being trained to use particular teaching methods adequately related to a particular learning content. Those teachers might not be 'born teachers' but they are trained to do their 'job' as professionals.

Adequate job conditions are probably more important for this group of teachers than for the 'born teachers' who might work as well under less satisfying conditions just because of personal sentiments (P2, 301:303) but this should not serve as an argument to neglect complaints about inadequate salary which distracts teachers' attention from looking for money elsewhere and inadequate working conditions in terms of inadequate supply with teaching and learning materials. The thesis that many teachers in Ghana know how to teach but are mostly not willing to take up the trouble to do so, is supported by the following observation:

> "My experience is that teachers here have been made more aware of new techniques. You'll find this if you actually go and visit schools. There are 2 ways to visit the school: First you give prior warning, secondly you just show up. If you give a prior warning, then you will stand a much better chance of getting to see what you really want to see; interaction in the classroom and so forth. If you just turn up you'll find a hierarchical

lesson and so forth. This is a lecture, which only goes to prove that the teachers know that they should be doing something else." (P16, 429:437)

From the above observation a conclusion can be drawn: Teachers know how to teach and actually teach when they are supervised effectively. That underlines the fact that teachers are more or less sufficiently trained to do their job and the question that arises is whether the head teachers are by their role and status in a position to supervise classroom teachers efficiently.

Head teachers who hold a special post at schools seem to face some specific additional problems (B6). The prevailing problem seems to be that they are affected by various conditions that prevent them from doing their job properly which finally negatively affects. the supervision of their subordinate teachers. That of course does not apply to all heads. A former District Director reports:

> "In some of the schools, I found the heads being vigilant and doing their work properly so you would find everybody at school and classes are going on normal." (P2, 272:274)

On the other hand that cannot work when the head teachers are not committed themselves or don't even show up (P2, 266:267; P14, 242:244; P16, 533:535). Consequently head teachers can only have a positive influence in terms of supervision when they are physically there and furthermore sufficiently trained to supervise their colleagues on a professional level. Here the problem arises that most head teachers do not have any special qualification nor are they higher qualified in academic terms as compared to their colleagues. In other words:

> "If you want effective supervision and good work to go on in the schools, you must get at least diploma holders to be heads of the basic schools so that they are a little higher than the teachers in the schools so that the teachers will feel that they are accountable to a higher authority." (P14, 250:254)

The positive impact of supervision can also be seen at private schools (A6.2) where the proprietor himself is the head of the school or has direct control over the head who supervises the teachers.

Head teachers are furthermore responsible for collecting textbook user fees from the pupils/students, organizing and managing the schools' supplies (B6.3). Considering all that in connection with the above, it becomes evident that there is the need to qualify head teachers in the fields of school administration, supervising teachers and managing logistics.

d) Trained versus Untrained Teachers

The discussion is characterized by the subliminal expectation that trained teachers do a better job than untrained teachers. The employment of large numbers of untrained and student teachers (sometimes called pupil teachers) is often considered to be the reason for the lowering of the educational standard since the mid 1970s. Negative effects could still be felt by the introduction of the new educational structure by the end of the 1980s. Because these types of teachers were mostly working in primary schools, pupils' basic learning skills (reading, writing and arithmetic's) got affected. Efforts undertaken to train student teachers on the job turned out to be rather ineffective and officials tend to belief that student teachers are untrainable (P16, 79:82). Considering their low academic standard, the necessity to replace this category of teachers is understandable. One government official reports:

> "We have on record that the majority of them can't even write their own names correctly. And it is on record that the problem we are facing with the poor foundation in primary education is due largely to over-dependence upon pupil teachers." (P19, 37:40)

Others maintain that the type of distance education courses used to train those student teachers was not geared to train them sufficiently; it was inappropriate because the little bit of materials sent out were unreadable, uninteresting and very academic (P16, 93:94). Despite the official view, many people maintain 'that it is a pity that pupil teachers are being replaced'. Especially in the remote areas student teachers could have done a better than teachers being posted there from other job areas because they are conversant with the conditions in the particular area, speak the local language, have tight links with the community and identify with the children very much as their own (P16, 109:112).

Besides all discouraging examples there have been positive examples in training student teachers too (P16, 98:103). Deprived areas which trained teachers usually leave as soon as possible, some even without entitlements (P2, 100:102), could be staffed with student teachers from the local area. Unfortunately the current policy no longer allows employing teachers without teacher certificates and that particularly applies to the category of re-trained student teachers. Generally speaking, a laudable step in raising the teachers' professional level was undertaken on the one hand, unfortunately the implementation was not well-balanced on the other.

A very special category among the teachers without training are the National Service personnel (NS) who mostly teach at primary schools (B3.1b). According to teachers' views, they are to assist them in supervising pupils and correcting their homework. Their use should be limited to assisting trained teachers and not to have classes on their own. A classroom teacher states:

> "The national service people are the type who have not even been trained as teachers. So when they go to the class, they do pre-matured teaching. Only a little part of the stuff gets into the heads of the pupils. The next teacher will have to go back and teach the same thing again. And this goes into wasting time." (P27, 323:327)

Apart from their limited capability in professional teaching another point at issue is that the students on national service will certainly withdraw when their time has come and just leave the class. If then, in the absence of a professional teacher, the NS teacher has not taken down what parts of the syllabus he or she has covered, the following teacher will not know where to start. Asking pupils about what they have done will then serve only to a very limited extent (P27, 322:323).

All together a picture emerges: teachers without professional training are quite ineffective. This applies to untrained teachers, student teachers and as well to the young students doing their national service (NS) as teachers. The question that consequently emerges is whether solely employing trained teachers is an adequate answer to meeting the challenge of raising the level of schooling. Unfortunately there is no evidence that trained teachers are a guarantee for effective teaching. Despite increasing the numbers of professionally trained teachers, achievements in primary schools do not support the thesis that professionally trained teachers do better than others. Referring to the 1992 Criterion Reference Test a consultant states:

> "So far no results are being achieved. The CRTs show that in spite of having the majority of teachers being trained in the schools, only 2%, 3%, of primary Form 6 pupils reach the grade. Something must go very, very wrong." (P16, 135:138)

Following a wide-spread argumentation among teachers, raising the salary to an adequate level could be the answer to everything. They refer to the fact that Ghanaian teachers were highly respected in the olden times when teachers were paid fairly and also when many of them taught in Nigeria during the economic decline in Ghana (P1, 243:249; P15, 72:79). According to teachers' views, the quality of teaching is strongly connected with job

satisfaction which, last but not least, is connected with receiving an adequate salary.

This argumentation does certainly make sense but one should also consider that even if the remuneration was better it does not necessarily mean that teachers change their habits. The will to perform with committment as a professional teacher must at least be there or as the former General Secretary of the Teacher Union (GNAT) once has stated: If teachers want a higher remuneration they should underline the justness of their claim by performing as professional teachers and raising the educational level of students. At the moment there seems to be the belief that anybody can teach as good as teachers. This became clear when the revolutionary organs of the NDC announced that they would take over the classes when teachers went on striking for better salaries and pensions in 1991 (P15, 186:189). Until teachers underline their professional status by preparing students to successfully pass exams and perform well, they might not stand a good chance of convincing people that they deserve any higher salary and will probably have to live with conclusions as stated below.

> "That there are 70% trained teachers in public school doesn't mean anything at all. The rate has gone up at a tremendously rapid rate, but I don't think it is making any difference. I haven't done a detailed analysis but I don't see that there is a significant difference between the performance of the pupil teacher and the trained teachers." (P10, 83:87)

e) Education and Training

Code Reference(s): B3.3; B4

Schooling (B3.3): Teachers with only primary and middle school background were withdrawn recently under a new educational policy. In former days the schooling background of those teacher trainees who did not successfully pass their A-levels has led to complaints about their academic standard and about their motivation. It was said that especially those who did not get any other chance to further their education went into teaching as a last resort (B3.4c). Only students with secondary schools background (O and A levels) can enter into teacher training colleges these days and after a short transition period solely students with SSSCE's will get admission into teacher training which has become a full tertiary course under the new policy. The new policy was launched with the intention to raise the standard of teachers. It was assumed that those teaching in the basic education schools which include junior secondary schools should also have secondary schooling themselves.

"Some of our trainees go to JSS, others to primary schools and in order to raise the background of these teachers we felt that secondary education should be the minimum." (P2, 156:158)

Teacher training (B3.3b) will have to lay emphasis on preparing teachers to teach at the lower grades. A second major demand is that the preparation of teachers has to take into consideration that teachers have to be highly innovative and improvise a lot in the absence of adequate instructional materials. Using the lecture method at training colleges is not an adequate answer in meeting these problems. It must be taken into consideration that many lecturers and tutors teaching at training colleges were trained to be teachers at secondary schools and colleges in times when the lecture method was commonly used and today many of those lecturers and tutors prefer to instruct the way they were taught - by lecturing (B4.2.2c). This reveals the necessity to retrain those lecturers and tutors in order to make them conversant with modern teaching techniques like group teaching, the child-centered approach etc. Therefore, making teacher trainees conversant with primary methodology has developed into a very big problem for the training colleges (B4.2.2a). Despite the MoE's order to compulsory teach about primary methods during the first year (P19, 19:28) most Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) were practically not making a distinction between preparing teacher trainees for primary and junior secondary school (B4.2.3a). But even if the TTCs had wanted to do so it had become clear as outlined before that they were not staffed with adequately trained lecturers and tutors to implement such a policy:

"We realised that the initial teacher training colleges are staffed with tutors which were not trained to teach in primary methodology. The pedagogical skills they have are geared to senior secondary school teaching and any preparations that they gave to the teachers in the training colleges were more or less for that level." (P14, 22:26)

Changing the attitude of those lecturers at universities who do not value the primary education level at all is especially challenging. According to their point of view, teaching primary school methodology seems to be some sort of sub-standard. One instructor in particular has made the following experience when trying to convince university lecturers to lay more emphasis on primary methodology:

"A head of department got up and said, 'You want us to teach primary methods? You know, we are the university. Do you want me to count bottle tops with my students?' You get to hear such things publicly and it get a laugh from them. I mean not a laugh of absurdity as it should be,

but they are laughing about the seriousness of these arguments." (P16, 614:620)

Another point at issue are the educational courses taught at TTCs (B4.2.3a). According to the scheme concepts there was only one TTC at Ashanti Mampong able to train teachers in technical drawing and basic technical skills. Only about 80 teachers graduate yearly for 4,000 positions at JSSs needing to be staffed (P11, 144:149). A similar problem arose in training teachers for the cluster C complex which comprises subjects like life skills technical/vocational skills. Teachers for these subjects formerly came from polytechnics which certainly did not offer courses in teaching methodology but concentrated on matters of content.

In general it looks as if the TTCs were not well prepared for the change. Teachers were to be trained to teach particular subjects at schools but there were not adequate facilities in the field of technical and vocational subjects.. Courses in methodology did not accompany lessons taught where training facilities in subjects such as polytechnics were available. Secondly, teachers at junior secondary schools were supposed to be trained in certain subjects belonging to specific clusters. These cluster were supposed to be referred to by TTCs when selecting subjects for their syllabus, but this policy was not recognized at the colleges (B4.2.3). Additionally the policy on primary schools states that a teacher has to be in the position to teach all subjects at that level when at the same time some training colleges have chosen to prepare teachers for only 2 subjects (P1, 159:161).

However, it must also be recognized that certain changes in attitude towards methodology have taken place. The child centered approach, activity methods and group teaching have gained acceptance and the lecture method has been largely ousted (B4.2.2e). Although it must be noted that there is a very big difference between promoting new methods and actually using them. The question arises whether students will accept using new methods when lecturers and tutors practically go by the lecture method. What is the justification for university and TTCs to teach students in a completely different manner from what they are taught to teach at schools? Will it be that the time table is so tight that using the lecture method is the most appropriate?. This question applies the same for the situation at ordinary schools. And where will the students exercise these 'new methods'?. Is there sufficient time and guidance during practical training? Viewing from this angle, a claim for more practical training and less theory makes sense especially during pre- and in-service training. A lecturer who instructs in micro-teaching outlines:

".. it could be about 40% academic theory and 60% practical teaching. If we do that, they will acquire more of the skills but it looks as if it is done the other way round." (P1, 94:97)

More practical teaching could actually transpose the common trend that in all sort of in-service training programs there is the idea that teachers can be trained to teach by talking to them (P10, 344:345). In combination with an on-campus teaching practice, an off-campus teaching practice is supposed to expose students to practical teaching a practice which applies to groups of students on pre-service as well as those on in-service training courses. Although well-organized in terms of supervision and assessment (B4.3.4), serious problems arise in terms of practical implementation. Students are likely to make appalling experiences, especially when they have their first practical contact with their future profession during the off-campus teaching practice at the pre-service training level.

".. there is no link with the schools so the student is just dumped on the class and the teacher doesn't stay around to help and instruct. The quality of the practice is actually appalling. That means the theory is known, but the skills are not there and I think it is not necessarily laziness. If you're dumped in a classroom and you can't speak the language, you haven't been trained to teach properly at that level, and certainly you may know what you need to do, but you haven't ever done it before, you are neither monitored or encouraged, nor do you have any professional support ... " (P16, 485:498)

It becomes clear from the above quotation that apart from a well executed organization of off-campus training (B4.3.4) there must be adequate facilities at the schools to receive the trainees being on off-campus teaching practice. Head teachers and ordinary classroom teachers must be in a position to guide those trainees and provide them with the practical knowledge that colleges usually pay less attention to. Although the conditions at school are certainly not marvelous neither in terms of infrastructure nor in terms of adequate working and living conditions (accommodation, remuneration, etc.), there must be a reliable minimum of guidance with which schools should provide their teacher trainees.

f) Teaching Methodology

Code Reference(s): B5

The discussion about teaching methodology should consider at least two different dimensions. First, there is there is the problem of getting those teachers who taught in the old system for a longer period adjusted to the new

system and second, there is a difference between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation of modern teaching techniques.

There is probably not one major characteristic that accounts for teaching and learning problems at Ghanaian schools but a mixture of various problems: lack of knowledge about adapting the right teaching method, knowing what should be done but lacking the will to do it, and not knowing how to meet teaching problems emerging from the of lack of infrastructure and over enrollment in the classroom.

A widespread observation is that many teachers have fallen into the habit of applying simple strategies and procedures to get through with the content rather than applying modern teaching techniques to their lessons. A classroom teacher reports:

> "I start from this now -. Maybe it's reading. When it's time to finish we stop. Next time I begin here again. Wherever we get to, we stop when it's time to stop. And then next time when we have reading, those who didn't read will read, - that's the method I use." (P29, 145:151)

From the above quotation it becomes clear that the teacher is not applying a particular method but describing a procedure. Unfortunately the above case is fairly representative of many lessons. Instead of planning ahead i.e. of thinking about the objectives of the lesson and then deciding on a particular approach, teachers prefer to simply start anywhere and go on anyhow. Lack of knowledge about appropriate methods could partly account for this but it does not explain why then teachers are able to perform quite well when someone is visiting their lessons when given prior warning (P16, 429:437).

Even then there will certainly be a difference between those teachers with problems in acquiring new methods having been in the system a long time(B5.3a) and those who have recently entered the system. Applying group methods to his lesson e.g. might just be a solution to overcome the lack of materials for an old teacher (P1, 47:49) as he may stick to conventional teaching through 'chalk and talk' (B5.2a; P11, 198:200). Another excuse might be that the lack of adequate infrastructure and large class sizes do not allow use of just any 'modern' method such as child-centered teaching. If teachers question, for instance, the use of the child-centered approach when faced with a class size of 70, (P29, 156:157) grouping the students could probably be a more viable alternative and certainly a far better decision than withdrawing from an active approach to teaching by just blaming the inadequate conditions.

6.4 Education Management

education management, to name just one example, comprises various policies on financing the system, policies on posting and supervising teachers, as well as writing reports and statistics as part of a monitoring and evaluation concept. Apart from that, the quality of the educational administration itself is a decisive component, having an important influence on the making of policies at the local and as well at the international level.

a) Administration

Code Reference(s): C1.6

The teacher union (GNAT) is critical of the work of the educational administration in Ghana as is the case almost everywhere in the world but there are obvious signs of better cooperation between the union and the MoE/GES since the military regime has lost its previously strong influence. The lack of communication between the government and the local organizations in the early 1980s is accountable for many avoidable problems but should have been discussed earlier when the education reform was in its formative stage. Unfortunately 'the culture of silence was prevailing and nobody could say anything' (P6, 176:178). Cooperation was completely out of the question from the government's point of view and working in the educational sector was reduced to administration only.

> "That time our government was a military government. They felt that they know what is best for the county and politics was reduced to administration. People didn't have the opportunity to ask questions. People were just being told what to do and because they wanted to save their skin or to ensure their daily bread they were not able to criticise. " (P20, 54:58)

Another problem arose about the professional quality of the staff that was initially accountable for the implementation of the reform in the early and mid 1980s. Complaints point at the fact that persons in key positions at the MoE surrounded themselves with 'people without substance', sometimes young inexperienced students on National Service (P20, 63:65).

Over the course of the reforms, a number of incidents proved that the lack of professional knowledge had a rather unfortunate influence on its implementation. Many intellectuals were then disappointed by the fact that some people led the reform without understanding the objectives and the philosophy of education and also opposed consulting those professionals whom they considered to be anti-government (P3, 237:239). In fact, by

reading the present interviews one gets the impression that especially those who did not share the same point of view as the government were considered to be anti-government, nevertheless they could have turned out to be profound counselors.

The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) was considered to be anti-government as well for a long time. A leading member reports that they have offered technical assistance during all stages of the implementation but were told that their advice was not at all welcome (P20, 26:29). Furthermore, the government's strategy of hand picking GNAT's official members to represent GNAT's official standpoint at the National Implementation Committee has a rather unfair appeal. According to GNAT's view these people were neither appointed to represent GNAT nor were they representing the view of GNAT in terms of content (P20, 30:44). Because the government also did not invite independent teachers to represent the individual teacher's view, the Implementation Committee went to implement the reforms completely without listening to the problems at ground level (P20, 77:80). Finally the GNAT decided to 'to throw their weight behind the program to avoid further damages (P20, 21:22).

Differently some teachers might have decided not to fully throw their weight behind the program because their views and problems were not considered (P17, 140:144). Then, when the quite disappointing results of the first SSS examinations were released in 1994, both sides, teachers and the government ended up accusing each other for being responsible for that diseaster. Neither the students nor the society in general, those who were supposed to benefit from the reforms were at all helped by this situation. (P17, 180:183)

But as stated before, the situation seems to have changed considerably for the better since the early and mid 1990s. This becomes evident by the fact that communication between the government, GNAT and particular intellectuals which were excluded from the discussion before are now exchanging their views and working together. Prior to this there had never been discussions about negotiations between the World Bank and the government made open to the public. The Bank therefore had always had its share in the implementation of policies which were impositions rather than agreements officially recognized by the public (P16, 728:733).

Since a new administration has taken over in the early 1990s we can find actions of national interest being publicly debated as the 'Towards Learning for All. Basic Education in Ghana to the Year 2000' policy. The government,

different donors and a number of Ghanaian academics debated for the very first time, different objectives and strategies in various meetings (P16, 722:727).

Now that the atmosphere has changed, there is probably a way to openly discuss the sectors in need of being manned with skilled people. The central educational administration (MoE and GES), has largely been considered this necessity. There are just a few complaints about the Minister of Education, who, being in a position with emphasis on professional competence, would do well to be a learned educationist (P29, 691:696; P15, 562:567).

Others who also deal with the government's educational policy for long, consider the educational policies since the mid 1990s to be quite effective. By and large this is consonant with the view of some teachers who do not attribute the present inefficiency of the education system to those people who run the current administration, but to their predecessors (P15, 181:185).

In addition to aspects mentioned already, another two important areas should be considered. There are only a few specialists who are conversant with the problems emerging in the basic education sector which especially affects primary school education (P16, 778:784). Secondly it is very necessary to increase the professional level of the personnel working at the district offices in view of current efforts to decentralize the educational administration. The needed techniques are perhaps not there. (P24, 142:144)

> "We have to improve the quality of that personnel as we have to improve the quality of the heads of the school. Even in the district administration itself and in the regional offices there must be a thorough overhauling."
> P14, 266:269

b) Financing the System

Code Reference(s): C1.1a; C2.3

Concerning the financing of education in Ghana, two aspects should be considered. First of all, the country has relied very much on the World Bank's financial and technical assistance for preparing the introduction and implementation of 'The New Structure and Content of Education'. Secondly, the transition from a central government to more local participation by shifting power and responsibilities to the community level now represented by District Assemblies at the District Councils has not automatically led to an empowerment of the communities. They are now burdened by meeting their new obligations (e.g. administrative knowledge, provision of infrastructure) while financially being in an almost hopeless situation.

The present problems in financing education have started occurring in the initial preparation and implementation period until 1987. Although the World Bank has contributed a lot to the development of the new system during the initial preparation and implementation period up to 1987 these efforts could not be supported sufficiently by the government.

Sources maintain that not much was achieved when taking the school level as a point of reference until 1987 when Ghana benefited from the World Bank's financial and technical assistance (P6, 38:39). The complaints about the mismanagement of the financial resources became quite vehement at the time the JSS program was supposed to be implemented on a nation-wide scale in 1987. Apart from the monetary aspect, mismanagement in the field of logistics contributed as well to worsen the situation when, e.g., the junior secondary schools which were supposed to operate on a more practical level were not provided with the necessary equipment.

> "I have every right to believe that those who needed the equipment did not get them, not because the equipment did not exist but because those who were to see to it that the equipment goes to where it was expected to go, did not do their work." (P3, 211:214)

In fact some people conclude that the fact that Ghana had so many millions of Dollars from the World Bank does not mean that everything has gone well (P6, 180:182). Some attribute it to the fact that during the times of the military government a culture of silence (P6, 176:178) prevailed, and this is considered to be an obstacle to meaningful and progressive criticism. Although the government's attitude has changed, an anti-democratic approach which prevailed in the early times of civilian government was still to be observed up until the education system was operating on a full-scale level in 1993. A leading NGO politician states:

> "Again, during the process of implementation people were not involved but were told what to do. They were given directives and then even if at seminars when people had the courage to ask questions they were identified to be an obstacle. People were demoralised and discouraged to come out and give their suggestions. This happened in the period from 1987 up to 1992 December. ... People were just being told what to do and because they wanted to save their skin or to ensure their daily bred they were not able to criticize". (P20, 45:58)

In the end the schools on all level were lacking infrastructural inputs (A2) when the program was started. Additionally the capital to provide the schools with the necessary inputs was equally missing. It is just recent (1994) that the schools have been supplied with tools for the workshops and other material and that teachers have been sent to training courses. All these

things could have been done earlier (P5, 71:76). That problem is probably closely linked with the previous government's habit of implementing policies without considering professional and well-grounded criticism .

Since the nation-wide introduction of the JSS program in 1987 and since the SSS program was introduce from 1987-1990 these problems have further aggravated. The introduction of the JSS and SSS program which had fallen under the period of political decentralization saw the communities unable to share the burden of quantitative and qualitative expansion on the basic education level as had been expected by the government. Today the lack of facilities is officially recognized by the educational administration. Government officials do know that the structures are in a deplorable state and this applies to urban areas like Accra as well and not only to poor suburbs and to deprived rural areas.

The problem seems to have become so huge that today the government must admit that they cannot continue to even maintain the existing educational structures without the help of the communities (P12, 34:37). The new policy that aims at making the district assemblies responsible for the provision of buildings and infrastructure for the basic education schools could be a way out of this dilemma. Although the legal law for this policy exists since long the communities have always relied on the central government. This is related to the fact that the central government had never provided the communities with the power to implement locally adjusted policies. It is just recently under the policy of decentralization that the communities are in a position to generate taxes but still they cannot fully take up their responsibilities. Some government officials point to the fact that most people still think it is solely the government who has to care for the provision of education (E1.3b) and this attitude makes it difficult to encourage the communities to meet their newly gained obligation.

> "We want to depart from that idea. If only the communities can grasp the idea that they have to provide these structures. They have to provide the inputs for the education of our children, while government takes up the tuition, paying the teachers. Then half of our problem will be solved." (P12, 24:28)

Such a discussion endangers to neglect the limited financial abilities of the communities, insisting on the fact that the district assemblies and communities should dutifully take up their responsibilities and provide the necessary infrastructure and care for the maintenance of basic education schools (P9, 18:20). In fact the communities are really facing economic problems that are prohibitive to putting up schools and furnishing classrooms (P15, 511:512). Despite the official view that subliminally suggests that the com-

munities are just reluctant to take up their duties, people point to the fact that the communities are already burdened by a number of duties.

> "At the moment they are being called upon to contribute every now and then. I think the communities are trying very hard and to make any extra demand on them is not reasonable in view of this crisis." (P15, 517:520)

The financial aspect of supporting any activity is certainly restricted to the people's ability to pay taxes which is related to the fact that the person to be taxed must do something that demands taxation. It is almost impossible to tax citizens in a setting where most people have difficulties in making ends meet and which largely lacks a formal structure.

> "This is what is happening. The ordinary man there can hardly afford his basic needs. How do you expect such a person to contribute or pay some tax? After all, what is he doing that demands taxation? That is the first question anyway. If the man is there and he's working, generating funds, income, you ask him to pay tax, then it is okay. If the man does not generate anything on his own how can you expect such a person to pay taxes? On what? We know that only through tax the district assembly can generate some income, but if the people there are not generating anything that will give them income, you cannot tax them." (P24, 151:161)

Considering that the communities and thereupon the local people were not involved in the planning of the projects, and later on they regarded the project to be foreign (P24, 130:135), it is quite understandable that most communities, when asked to assist the government by furnishing the schools, were not willing to do so. They had experienced that although it was the government's own initial policy to provide basic education schools with the necessary basic infrastructure for primary and junior secondary schools (laying the foundation and erecting the pillars for the school pavilion, together with a canopy metal roof over it) supported ny a World Bank loan, nothing was done. According to the initial policy it would have been the part of the community to only do the cladding, provide the walls and also furnish the classrooms - now they were being made responsible for everything. (P24, 97:118)

The new policy (although originating from 1961 it was effected only recently) is based on the fact that the government could not continue to provide everything. Because of a small budget, the number of structures would have been limited to a few number of schools. Now the problem was that the district assemblies were not functioning for a long time which has to do with the government's practice of hanging onto a centralized system. Consequently, there was no local authority to cooperate with the central govern-

ment and while the population kept increasing, the whole educational system actually collapsed. The old buildings could not be rehabilitated, new ones could not be built and one can see that up to now that not much has been done. (Ibid.)

Today the government is in a rather unfortunate situation of having 40% of their accounts allocated for education. So there is certainly a limit and the government cannot allot more money for building schools. This applies as well to developing the inspectorate division of supervising and monitoring teachers. What is left is to organize better, but the real thing which would help is to involve the community on a local basis (P16, 550:553). Involving the local communities in ,e.g., checking on the teachers to show up at schools is certainly something that can be done by the local parent teacher associations but there is a limit to all these activities and as long as the communities are not in a position to take on these responsibilities the government will have to continue budgeting for educational infrastructure. A conclusion could be: Although there is a program for solving these infrastructural problems it looks as if the government is forced to go out again and look for some external funding, otherwise, progress in this direction could be extremely slow (P26, 68:72).

c) Dealing with Teachers

Code Reference(s): C1.4

One of the problems is that the government was not very successful in attracting qualified teachers to the new program when it started on a full-scale level in the late 1980s (P3, 215:216). This is related to the fact that many qualified teachers had left Ghana during the hard economic times in the early 1980s. Later, teachers were urgently needed to man the new junior secondary schools which is due to the quantitative expansion of the education system on the basic education level. Teachers were then being recruited who neither were adequately checked for a proper aptitude in teaching nor were they adequately screened as far as their own academic achievement was concerned (P10, 336:338). This resulted on the one hand in recruiting rather unqualified people (P16, 104:106) but also a high proportion of people got employed who didn't want to be teachers and never had wanted to be teachers (P10, 62:64).

A common complaint is that no conscious effort has been made to maintain the previous standard. The teacher's union is of the opinion that no matter how many teachers are needed, "if only 5 out of the 20 we need can satisfy us let's take the 5 only" (P20, 92:93). According to their argumentation the problem of training a large number of pupil teachers in the system

was already big enough and therefore not 'just anybody' should be brought in to teach (ibid, 91:94).

Probably the government (and the donors as well) counted a bit too much on an enthusiasm which was supposed to become almost 'naturally' triggered off by the introduction of the educational reform.

> "Maybe they took for granted that once you preach that there is going to be an educational reform people will automatically embrace it and will volunteer to go and teach. But you know as much as I do that education in this country happens to be one area which is least attractive and one would have expected that they would have made education as a profession attractive enough for qualified people to go in there and get themselves trained in the new techniques of teaching for the new educational system. But that has not been done." (P3, 216:224)

Supplying the regions and districts with qualified teachers on an equal basis is another crucial aspect and the related problem seems to be the MoE's own making. According to the official guidelines, teachers' postings are done centrally but this regulation applies only for the first 4 years. After that teachers receive their official entitlement from the MoE and they can then move freely to any district that employs them. Anyway, some teachers leave their post even before being entitled to it because the districts do not seem to care whether they hold an official entitlement or not.

> "But you know, we make the mistake. According to our regulations, a teacher has to stay at post for 4 years before he gets a transfer with entitlements but they prefer to leave without the entitlements. You cannot force them to stay! ... They find schools in other districts or regions and it is only the first year that they go through our outfit. Thereafter they are employed through the districts." (P2, 84:94)

Now certainly there are always some who avoid being posted to the remote rural areas by producing fake health reports (P2, 80:84) and who even leave their post without entitlements but in the end it is the official policy that allows the districts to employ teachers without entitlements. The government thereby sanctions that behavior and indirectly helps teachers to violate a meaningful policy of the same ministry (P2, 92:94) which in the end puts those districts in a powerless situation of retaining qualified teachers who suffer from the least attractive environment.

> "After the posting it becomes the districts responsibility to make sure that the teachers will retain in these areas. Because some of them are forced to go there they decide to move out after staying for the normal two, three years there. The rule is that if you have to stay at a place for 3 years before you can ask for a transfer. But because they don't want to

stay there they make their own arrangements and leave their initial post-ing. They just serve us with copies of their movements." (P19, 20:26)

It looks as if the central administration does not have a proper mecha-nism of control to guarantee deprived areas of adequately being staffed with qualified teachers. If they did, teachers would not be able to make their own arrangements with the districts to an extent where the MoE's policy of avoiding regional disparity by central postings would be severely devitalized and undermined. In the end those districts which are thought to be suffi-ciently supplied with qualified teachers send reports to the MoE, indicating vacancies that statistically cannot exist. That evokes a feeling among the people in the responsible section at the MoE to question the reports of par-ticular districts where the assumption arises that they might simply not be able or willing to control teachers' movement within their own district.

> "I have my misgivings about the postings but with that number there should not be that problem of so many vacancies which in fact are there and when you go to the school it's true. What beats my imagination is that the same district where they are telling you that there are no teachers there, and you go to the district capital and you see over staffing in al-most all the schools. Everybody wants to be in the city, in the district capital." (P19, 67:73)

That the heads of schools who suffer themselves from a lack of teachers wrongly fill their reports is a sad issue, and that the current practice does not enable a district to make a teacher stay at his or her post is a rather unfortu-nate issue too, but it is almost impossible that the central administration does not know about the common malpractice of moving without official entitle-ment. It is certainly only the central administration that can stop such mal-practice and it is another example that reveals the necessity of bottom-up communication in administration.

The second point is that according to the government's policy on primary education, it is almost unavoidable to employ teachers who are not from the area. This particular policy indicates that pupils are supposed to be taught in the vernacular in primary class 1-3 which is obviously related to the teacher's ability to speak the language. Related to the fact that in some regions secon-dary school are poorly attended, attendance at the tertiary level is also low which consequently results in a low production of indigenous teachers (P2, 55:56).

According to the government, the problems of providing particular areas with qualified teachers actually corresponds with the amenities existing there. One official maintains that the poorer the amenities are, the sparser the teachers are posted there and the poorer the quality of teachers you find there

(P19, 27:30). An appraisal system taking into consideration aspects such as teaching in a remote area combined with rewarding good teaching could probably help to motivate teachers to stay in deprived areas. Contary to that teachers are promoted based on the number of years they have spent in the system; completely neglecting the teachers' quality in terms of classroom teaching (P20, 225:229, 235:237; P16, 122:126).

Taking effective disciplinary actions against teachers who don't perform well is another factor that has contributed to laxity in public schools. Because it takes a much longer time for disciplinary action, especially dismissal, to be put into effect, teachers in the public schools have taken some sort of advantage of the fact that they do not easily lose their jobs and because the job security in these schools is higher, some might not have a very serious attitude toward their work (P4, 197:202). The disciplinary system as it operates at the moment even if working on a theoretical level and by sometimes practically suspending the salaries of a particular teacher or demoting him or her in rank (P9, 52:58) is, nevertheless, too ineffective and slow. A government official reports:

> "When there is inefficiency in our public schools, caused by the teachers, you have to give them three subsequent queries first before the matter is referred to the district director. He will also deal with that for some time. Investigations have to be done, then the report has to be sent to the region; the region will have to investigate, sent a report to head-quarters, head-quarters will have to take action and make sure that all the reports sent from the district and the region are investigated and then there is a meeting on it before final action is taken. To get a trained teacher sacked or dismissed because of inefficiency takes a longer time than in a private school." (P11, 46:55)

Another prohibitive aspect is the problem of fraternization in the system. Some people get away with misconduct because they know someone at the top who is powerful. It is possible for the head teacher himself to get transferred from a school in such a case so it is no wonder that some prefer just talking to the misbehaving teachers because of fear of being unjustly victimized rather than enforcing a disciplinary action. (P11, 59:63)

But however difficult it might be to put disciplinary measures into effect, there are a number of things that could never happen if the district administration worked properly: If a teacher never teaches or when 'the head teacher is so mad that he has to be chained down in the middle of the village' then the response by the district education officer to the parent's request to replace that teacher or headmaster can never be that replacing such a person causes too much disturbance in the middle of the term (P10, 103:111). And if

reliable sources confirm that a teacher is continuously drunk, the response from the GES headquarters ought not to be that that a breathalyser test should be used to prove that he is drunk before the person can be disciplined. (P10, 112:116) Decentralizing educational administration could also mean that somebody at the district office can check on such affairs and if necessary effect sanctions against these teachers.

Indeed, it looks quite impossible to sanction teachers even if playing extremely dirty. This can be easily demonstrated by referring to a number of cases where girl students were impregnated by their teachers or head teachers. According to a source there was a way of sanctioning such offenses in the olden days but that system of sanctioning people doesn't work anymore. Customs and norms seem to have changed which, with reference to the example before, place girls in a defenseless position. (P7, 452:458)

Taking into consideration that the sources quoted above were working in in different positions with schools all over the country, there is indeed evidence to believe that the governmental administration has severe problems in executing disciplinary measures in the public school system.

d) Supervision of Teachers

Code Reference(s): C1.2

There is the common assumption that if supervision was carried out effectively, the standard of schooling would rise; at least more schooling would take place.

Supervision is carried out on different levels in Ghana. At the highest level there is the inspectorate division which sends out school inspectors or circuit supervisors to produce a report for the MoE or GES. This report comprises a full inspection evaluation of the performance of the whole school, the particular problem areas, etc. (P23, 314:317). The following statements are based on the assumption that the inspectors and circuit supervisors do the same job that is to say, 'circuit supervisor' is the new terminus for the previous 'inspector' (P23, 321:325).

According to the official regulations, one inspector/circuit supervisor is supposed to take care of 20 schools, visit them about 8 times a year, assist the head teachers, etc. (P9, 32:35). If these newly instituted new measures worked, the central administration should be in a position to identify adequately the problem areas of particular schools.

Unfortunately there must have been some problems in appointing a sufficient number of circuit supervisors because up to the mid 1990s only 50 percent of the 500 supervisors got appointed. In addition to supervising the schools they were charged with the responsibility of focusing on in-service

training (P18, 185:188) and advising teachers in teaching particular subjects (P23, 321:325). This sounds quite ambitious when taking into consideration that even government officials complain about the lacking facilities for sufficient supervision to an extent where they almost neglect the existence of supervision on a practical level (P11, 34:38). Questioned on the fact that there are headmasters at the school ensuring that teaching takes place and that that there are inspectors supervising 20 schools each by checking on the performance 8 times a year and that this must have a positive effect, an interviewee maintains:

> "Because that system is not operating, that's why. The inspectors are not going 8 times a year to see the school and the headteachers are not filing reports. In fact at GES they don't receive reports, they don't inspect."
> (P16, 530:533)

By and large the above viewpoint is consonant with that of a high ranking GES official who points to the fact that the GES has not been able to strengthen school inspection at the district level because of lack of logistics (P19, 227:229). It is commonly acknowledged that there must be more provisions for the circuit supervisors to be able to do their job. One aspect is to provide the supervisors with facilities like motor bikes to ensure that effective supervision can be carried out practically, the other aspect is the further training of district directors and circuit supervisors (P18, 38:41; P19, 230:235).

The quality of the professional support given by supervisors might be the most crucial and decisive aspect for the effectiveness of the whole system on the instructional level. But as up to now there has been no support from the district supervisors, etc.; the subject organizers don't really go out that much and they have huge problems in giving advice as well because they lack the practical knowledge needed to give advice, nor do they make regular visits. (P16, 504:511)

But even if the system was sufficiently manned with adequately trained district directors and circuit supervisors the question would still arise whether the system will be able to work or not. According to a senior planer, well known for his regular school visits, the increase of supervisors might not change much because of the existing loyalty links between the particular supervisor and the teachers which could prevent him or her from strictly executing his or her duties.

> "Supervision of course is important, so you increase the number of supervisors, you provide them with motor cycles and other means to go round the schools but this doesn't make much difference because of the

main loyalty links between the supervisor and the outside constituency." (P10, 381:384)

Among all other components the most instrumental in bringing about effective supervision to the school level will be to involve the parents at the particular local communities. The circuit supervisor will visit the schools once in a while, whereas the parents are there all the time. A GES official says she has noticed that when parents are actively involved and interested in what goes on in the school you get much more done there. And taken from the viewpoint that basic education schools are virtually community schools, the local community should see to it that schooling actually takes place (P21, 203:209).

Although parents generally might not be in a position to decide whether the subject matter the teacher is teaching really is good or correct, they can at least ensure that he or she does something (P10, 149:153). Starting from that angle, supervision on the school level becomes a key element in the development of the school and could be intensified by making the community feel responsible for hiring and acquiring teachers (P10, 100:102). This implies to foster change into a decentralized system which to the extent that patents and thereby the PTA will actually be involved in the supervision the school, e.g. checking whether teachers actually turn up to teach (P10, 168:173).

e) *Decentralization*

Code Reference(s): C1.5; C2

The debate on decentralizing the educational administration has to take into consideration a number of different viewpoints. From the one point, community involvement goes back to the Education Act in 1961 which legislated the communities' responsibility of providing educational infrastructure at the basic education level. Unfortunately the local communities disappointed the government by not fulfilling this obligation which could be rationalized on two different levels; The District Assemblies have only been recently established (in the early 1990s) and there hadn't been a proper coordination body for the communities at the local level before, and many communities were not in a sound position to shoulder these new responsibilities from a financial point of view.

Another aspect could be that the former government's policies were not geared towards encouraging the local communities to become generally active which resulted in the community playing a very passive part, helplessly and sometimes disheartened by simply observing the deterioration of local schools rather than making any step to maintain the buildings. Taking into consideration the fact that the population has been significantly in-

creasing, the system finally collapsed. The policy of government-community cooperation as stated in a later pamphlet (MoE&C 1987) when the reform was started on a nation-wide level in 1987 did not work out and the impression arises that up to the early 1990s not much had been done (P24, 97:118) which again might be related to the inability of the majority of the local communities to generate sufficient funds (P 20, 134:136).

During the early implementation period, the central government has learnt that they might end up nowhere if they continue trying to deliver a system of education from a central system point of view, that is, bearing all the costs. Now that 40% of their budget goes for education, the government must recognize the impossibility putting more money into developing the inspectorate division etc. The government could try to organize that better, but the real thing which would help would be to involve the community (P16, 550:553). Community involvement has therefore become an imperative objective from the viewpoint of developing a manageable system to finance the increasing needs of the education system on a nation-wide level.

As has already been outlined, (chapter 6.4.b) the communities up to now have not been in a position to contribute significantly to the infrastructural development of the basic education schools as far as monetary inputs go. The government might find itself in a situation where community participation on the particular level or through the District Assemblies is at now a venture in theory and certainly a promising alternative to central administration for the future but as at present the central government will have to assist financially in various areas. The government is already doing this on a very limited level in the economically and educationally deprived areas (Northern Region, Upper-East, Upper-West and parts of Brong-Ahafo Region; P24, 26:32). Certainly some regions and districts are doing better than others and where a district is able to help itself, primary school structures as well as others educational facilities can be found (P,21 143:148), but considering that approximately 65% of Ghana's rural and urban communities have huge problems in generating income (P20, 134:136), the government might have no other chance but to extend supportive actions.

Under *the new budgeting line,* all the schools of a particular region are supposed to send their record of requirements to the regional education office. In the list of these requirements, the regions make note of particular projects they would like to implement at particular districts or schools. A composite requirement is then made which forms the budget for that particular region. By the end of the year the MoE will have received these budgetary statements from the 10 regional offices stating the schools' demands. (P24, 33:37)

On the basis of the budget line determined by the Ministry of Finance (which is normally less than the demand) the budget officers of all regions are called upon to examine their budgets in order to cut down the expenditures wherever possible. This is done in cooperation between the MoE and the regional budget officers. After the approval for implementation is granted, the administrator of the District Assembly Common Fund informs the districts about the projects which have benefited from that budget. The districts can then start implementing the particular projects. (Ibid., 37:71)

As we can see from the above, the budget officers from the regions can only deliver a proposal, recommending particular projects to benefit from the budget. In the end the decision of what projects will be supported is made in a final discussion between the regional budget officers and the officers at the MoE. By not fully decentralizing the system, the MoE seeks to maintain a certain influence guaranteeing a uniform education system which was about to lose its uniformity if these decisions had been left up to the various districts. (P24, 78:83)

The major change, then, is that now the schools and districts are represented by their own regional budget officer at the MoE who is supposed to be conversant with the problems at his or her district and defend the demands of his or her region from a well-grounded point of view. Secondly, the supervision is now left to the communities due to the fact that the few officers from the central government had never been in a advantageous position to guarantee proper supervision. This can be done more efficiently at the district level, while MoE officers can still go round to ensure that the projects are implemented in consonance with the agreements. (P24, 88:95)

Apart from the financial aspect, *involving the communities* means to inculcate in them the understanding that they, and most especially the parents must care about schooling.

Some people might go on insisting that the communities must grasp the idea that they have to provide these structures; that they have to provide the inputs for the education of our children, while government must come up with the tuition and pay the teachers. (P12, 24:28) But while they are right when talking about the long-term perspective, a short or middle-term perspective must start by changing people's attitude towards the schools located in their community. Looking at the reforms in retrospect, educationists admit, that community participation in the planning and implementation process was largely ignores so that some communities consider certain projects to be foreign projects (P24, 130:135). Changing the attitude of people to take formal schooling institutions as their own could be difficult in some cases.

"The reforms were imposed quickly as a structure, but it lacked the concern of the public, the community, and it certainly lacked the ownership by the teachers. We are now looking at that reforms saying that we now have to concentrate on quality, we now have to look at the community and people demanding something from the school not: "Here is the school but what are we doing with it?" (P16, 579:585)

There are ways to get the community involved but there are limits: to supervise the head teacher is certainly something that ought to be left to a higher authority which is quite a difference from expecting parents to be responsible for overseeing whether teachers are doing their job at school or not. The centralized model Ghana has followed has now been partly replaced and it must be discussed to what extent responsibilities can be shifted to the regions and districts. Sources from the teachers' union suggest to make teachers direct employees of these authorities complemented by a uniform policy at the national level. And if teachers were direct employees of a particular district then that district should be given sufficient power to deal with problems related to discipline and so on. (P20, 302:308). Communities would then be involved in offering education on greater scale. They would have a greater sense of affiliation with the schools which would belong to them and are there for their children. (P12, 18:21)

But when involving the newly established District Assemblies and communities to such an extent one must consider that they might not be capable of shouldering those responsibilities as now, neither in terms of money nor in terms of sufficient manpower. But if all this works in the long run and if the communities would get ultimately involved in the employment of teachers and the selection of the head teacher, then the community might look to the school ask 'what's going on here, why aren't the teachers showing up?' This was a solution to the problem of supervision although on a very low level by 'parents showing that they care and policing to teachers do teach' without increasing the supervision resources and without more money being spent on education. (P16, 546:549)

Another possibility to encourage and motivate communities to actively take part in the development of the school in their community, are the projects as promoted by the Primary Education Project (PREP).

"In a rural district where not all children go to school we selected five schools and we told the particular communities that we will give 1 million Cedis to the school that can mobilise most children to go to school. At the end of the year this 1 million will be added to whatever they build at their school. And it worked. Their involvement in our project started by sending their children to school and went on by contributing communal labour to rebuild the school. In some places they even started the

project to the roofing stage so that they will get the remaining 1 million to roof it." (P18, 314:323)

According to the experiences of PREP those communities who are actively involved in putting up a building, will also assist the government in locating the land, drawing up the site plan, and they probably leave the land free to the government though the money which is involved is also theirs. And because they consider it to be their project as well they will ensure that the contractor is doing his work. PREP's experience reveals, that community participation has become a key element in rural development and that a government-community cooperation model can be developed which could sustain even when the donor withdraws. (P18, 291:282)

The *Parent Teacher Association (C2.4)* will be the crucial link in the community-school relationship. In communities or at schools where the parents are not well educated themselves, struggling to make ends meet is not very likely to encourage them to attend PTA meetings, but encouraging parents to care more about their children's education will especially have a significant impact. (P27, 27:33; P28, 29:32) Although the PTA's role might be very limited because of the parents' educational background and because their understanding is 'sending their children to school to become big people one day' (P13, 86:93), it has become evident from the aforementioned that it is necessary for a PTA representative to check on the school and this is not demanding too much. This argument brings us back to the same result, stating that small steps can be made and might become meaningful altogether:

> "The community needs to have a PTA representative in the school on a rotational basis saying, 'This is your record of your teachers showing up this week, such and such came late'. And the community imposes this accountability on the headteacher in the school." (P16, 565:569)

The danger of overburdening the parents could be limited by guided, cooperative efforts of the communities in handling such matters. Selected examples from the work of PREP e.g. maintaining schools with communal labor or supervising and monitoring the work at school could serve as models for many communities.

But there is also the serious argument saying that the involvement of great numbers of half-literate community members can be dangerous. According to the view of a government official they can spoil things rather than improve (P25, 227:230), but that shouldn't be an argument for leaving things as they are either, nevertheless it reveals the necessity to improve the general basic education level and to introduce an integrated monitoring mechanism.

f) *Quality of Statistics and Reports*

The general impression is that *monitoring and evaluation* (C 1.3, 1.3b) on the written level has not play an important role in the development and implementation of the new education system in Ghana. Just one source from the World Bank maintains that there was a good evaluation report in 1985/86 (P10, 317:321) and he was the only one among all interviewees and a great other number of sources who knew of its existence. A different source maintains that nothing was done to evaluate the experiences of the experimental system until 1987 and that Ghana jumped right into the new system without taking into consideration the experiences made in the experimental schools (P5, 66:76) Although this source is not a pedagogue he points out what many skilled pedagogues think.

Officers at the West African Examination Council (WAEC), for instance, question that the MoE has provided specific criteria for the schools to check whether they have the materials needed for particular courses which would in the end make sense only if a proper evaluation report was then sent to the MoE which would then in turn have to inform the WAEC which schools can admit students to take A-level examinations in particular subjects. In the previous system this was done by drawing up an examination syllabus which reflected within specific parameters the conditions of a particular school. Presently, the WAEC must rely on the fact that all subjects are taught sufficiently according to the requirements of the syllabus and cannot take into consideration specific problem areas of any particular school. This responsibility has been shifted to the MoE. The WAEC officers maintain:

> "It is not our business. I am sure that the people who drew up the teaching curriculum indicated what would be needed for proper delivery. Now every school should have a check list and this should be remitted to the ministry. If things are missing it should have been reported. Then the ministry will be alerted to see how they can provide those things. Has anybody done that exercise? This is it. Somebody should have done that exercise." (P12, 239:245)

If such an exercise had been carried out and if the schools were monitored adequately, the MoE would not have run into such a mess when the first SSS Examinations in 1993 revealed that a great number of students were completely inadequately prepared. A number of omissions, e.g., the insufficient supply of manpower and instructional facilities could have been met during the preparation period of the new system.

It is not only the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and infrastructural supply at the school level that poses a problem but also

keeping statistics on the postings and movements of teachers within the system (cf 6.4c). The example of posting teachers to a particular institution only to find the same vacancies again in the subsequent report is symptomatic for the way statistics are kept. A source from the manpower division states:

"Statistically you know that we have this number of vacancies and according to the given number of teachers there cannot be any vacancy at all. But then when they send the returns you see the vacancy still remains which means that they were posted to other schools. So when you take the number of vacancies you have and the number of teachers supposed to be in the classroom, then you see that we have more teachers than those who are really there." (P19, 78:85)

From the above observation it becomes clear that looking at the manpower supply from a statistic point of view does not produce a picture which corresponds with reality. Probably many more factors must be considered. There is, at first, the problem of teachers registering at a particular school whereas they have moved to teach somewhere else. It should be the duty of the district education office to ensure that teachers do their job at their post but that is not done. One reason for this could be that particular policies militate against efficient control.

There is, for instance, a policy which protects the family by guaranteeing that husband and wife be separated by government's postings. In the case of high ranking civil servants who are often married to teachers this policy ensure that the partner is posted within the area (P19, 103:113). This again results in having lots of floating teachers registered in urban and semi-urban centers where civil servants are often posted. Primarily because of this policy, there were, for instance, 300 floating teachers officially registered at one small office in Accra (P19, 119:120). Tackling the problem of floating teachers seems to have developed into being more of a political issue which is difficult to solve because the necessity to change such a policy is obvious but difficult to execute: "because if you touch the wife of a top civil servant you certainly find problems" (P19, 121:124).

Altogether the crucial point seems to be *the way statistics are produced* (C1.7a+c). All the statistics on teachers are based on counting them as they appear on the payroll of any particular school (P16, 11:12). This has two negative side-effects: Teachers do not always teach where they are posted (see above), and they receive their salary from the school they are posted to even when they are on sabbatical leave.

" ... our policy grants study leave to teachers while they remain on our payroll. In a certain district you might have about 4,000 teachers on out

> payroll who are supposed to be in the classroom but they are all in the universities and the training colleges ... Because they will be receiving their salary they statistically continue to write their names as if they were teachers in the classrooms whereas they are not there and we are aware." (P19, 86:94)

That people in the manpower department are aware of the fact that there is a problem of dealing with more or less artificial figures as the source maintains, should be registered in official statistics and reports. Unfortunately this is not the case, as the following example reveals.

In the government's statistical report on parameters for primary schools in Ghana 1991/92 (MoE 1993a) it is stated that the pupil-teacher ratio is 28:1 These figures are probably the same figures that have entered the *World Education Report 1993* where the pupil-teacher ratio is 29:1 (p. 140). A different report, *Towards Learning for All...,* (MoE 1994a, p. 17) using the data from the same year notes this ratio to actually be based on a calculation which includes a high number of personnel presently *not* teaching in primary schools.

Confronted with the fact that the pupil-teacher ratio in one official statistic is 28:1 (MoE 1993a) while a different government report (MoE 1994a) indicates that a very large number of persons actually do not teach in primary schools but are counted as primary school teachers, a high ranking GES official reacts:

> [loudly quoting from the report *Towards learning for All...*, MoE 1994a, p. 17] "Currently the overall pupil-teacher ratio for primary schools is 28:1. This figure includes 39,000 persons not teaching in primary schools. [then comments] Actually it does not make sense to me either. I don't know where that thing comes out. (P9, 89:93)

Subsequently, the source claims that the figure '28:1' indicating the overall pupil-teacher ratio at primary schools must refer to a completely different place. He maintains that this statement does not make sense to him (P9, 94:100).

There is indeed a great confusion about whether a teaching staff which does not actually teach at the schools will appear on the payroll. One source, familiar with the practice at the Ministry of Finance maintains that this indeed is the case. The source from the GES, quoted above, rejects this view as becomes clear below. He alternately reads and comments from the report *Towards Learning for All...* (MoE 1994a, p. 16):

> [reads:] "A central policy issue is the large number of staff swelling the payroll and yet not contributing to the objectives of the reform. There are approximately 10,000 untrained attendants and 9,000 teachers being paid

under the primary school budget who are, in fact, teaching in pre-schools; almost 15,000 teachers are officially on study leave or training; and another 5,000 are detached from school. [comments:] Such a statement does not give a correct picture. That statement is not correct. [reads] 19,000 teachers being paid under the primary school budget who are in fact teaching in pre-schools. [comments] 19,000! [reads:] And almost 15,000 teachers officially ... [comments:] This is not correct. Some of them are on study leave but these are teachers in training who are given training allowance. They are not teachers! They are just in training and they are given training allowance. And that they are on the payroll is a very wrong statement. (P9, 102:116)

At least in the case of those 15,000 teachers on sabbatical and in the case of those 5,000 teachers detached from school, it is very likely that the above source is wrong. Detached teachers can, for example, be found in the MoE and the GES itself; generally speaking, everywhere in the educational administration but also as members of parliament, holders of political offices, etc. (P11, 248:295).

Unfortunately the view of the above quoted source is quite representative for certain top ranking GES officials who either don't inform themselves properly or who have problems in reading the figures which are undoubtedly sometimes assembled in quite an obscure format. But in the end policies are being made based on such figures, as happened when the World Bank officially advocated that 'reducing class sizes within the range of 25 to 50 is not likely to have a noticeable effect on primary school quality in Sub-Saharan countries (World Bank 1988, p. 4f). In this context a pupil-teacher ratio of 28:1 is certainly not a strong argument for expanding teacher education at all. Nevertheless this was necessary when considering the high demand in in-service training as well as pre-service training in order to meet the increasing enrollment ratios.

All together the facts don't look promising enough to make reliable projections which would justify cutting down the influx into training colleges. The manpower division of the GES may be of the opinion that they run the danger of over-producing teachers, (P19, 176:180) but they should probably consider all the aspects of the conclusions which can be drawn from their data.

It is clear from the above that the use of such reports and statistics is quite limited, but due to recent changes in the making of reports it is very likely that the subsequent ones will offer better quality. The report already quoted *Towards Learning for All. Basic Education in Ghana ...* (MoE 1994a) was the first joint report which was not donor-driven (P16, 718:721). Al-

though it was called a joint report, written by the government and donors, ASH HARTWELL, principal research scientist at the Institute for International Research in Washington, remained responsible for assembling the data and coordinating all the inputs. According to an in-group source he got very little information when he asked for papers on key problems and issues, strategies, policy options and so forth, so the little formal information he got was supplemented by impressions he was able to make at meetings and in the end, these many impressions were entered into the report. The Ghanaian educationists actually contributed to the writing up of the report on that level. Unfortunately this contribution remained very limited because very few scientists at the universities had any interest in and understanding of basic education. (P16, 778:784) In the end some consultants working for donors and others working for the government came in to contribute to the making of the report which was then was redrafted by HARTWELL. (P16, 739:746)

The aforementioned joint report is subject to some considerable limitations: Although Ghanaians provided information they were not assembling and writing up the report themselves. This fostered the report to be written up in a kind of 'professional' and probably artificial language which later entailed the problem that some important aspects were wrongly interpreted at the Education Reform Committee. (C1.8b)

The procedure in turn revealed Ghana's problems of having enough adequately trained scientists in education to interpret statistics and assemble such a report. Pointing to the fact that it is doubtful such reports will be read, understood and discussed at the right forums, a consultant maintains:

> "So unless the Ghanaians do it themselves we're not really going to get the full meaning, the full significance of the whole thing. I accept that point. That is one of the weak points." (P16, 759:762)

g) *International Cooperation*

Code Reference(s): C3.1, 2

Over the course of the past decade, the World Bank has become the government's most important and powerful partner in developing and implementing the new educational system. In a situation where the Ghanaians are partners in this international cooperation, receiving financial and technical assistance on the one hand but also shouldering the impacts of other related policies, it is important for them to understand the World Bank's own concept and their attitude towards the reform (C3.1a). Within this context, the educational policies of the World Bank are considered to be very double-edged. On the one hand its substantial contributions (granting loans and credits, technical assistance, provision of infrastructure, building houses for

head teachers, cooperating with local communities in re-selecting and re-employing head teachers, etc.) are commonly acknowledged (C3.1e) but on the other hand, it is largely questioned whether cost-benefit relations and experiences with education structure reforms made elsewhere in the world are applicable to Ghana (P22, 13:21).

What especially bothers some university lecturers is the World Bank's attitude of adapting education a bit too much to the needs of the world of work. One particular source points out that the World Banks' interpretation and application of education runs the danger of providing children with a second class type of education. He fears a throwback to the Phelps Stokes' view of education for the African (P3, 94:98).

There is probably a different understanding of 'predisposing children to the world of work' or 'giving them an exposure to the economic surrounding'. Contraty to the above source a popular World Bank senior planner, having guided the reforms since the mid 80s, maintains that it was the World Bank which had a big impact in down-grading the importance of vocational education in the reforms (P10, 307:308). This contrariness somehow leaves us with the problem of guessing what exactly the two parties mean or where the distinction should be made between predisposition and preparation for the economic surrounding i.e. the world of work.

In the end, the tendency to predispose or prepare students for the future materializes in a particular conception of education, which according to the above quoted lecturer, places too much emphasis on arranging the content of education towards its immediate economic usability. Subsequently, immediate usability of education fosters a dismay of the philosophical concept of education; a lesson that can also be learned form advanced societies:

> "The moment the cost-benefit relationship was introduced by the World Bank many societies including the advanced societies, started realising that education was no more the philosophers conception of education but the economist conception of education who thinks that there is a parity between input and output. Unless there is that parity, education is useless." (P3, 114:119)

He concludes that the concept which was brought to Africa, will foster the establishment of second class or second rate education, because a number of courses in schools and universities will be subject to their demand on the work-market. He maintains that computing only in cost-benefit relations is misleading because especially universities (and secondary schools as well) are responsible for guaranteeing courses to be run properly no matter what cost-benefit status they have. If cost-benefit models were to be considered

according to F.T.E models a department or a subject area might end up having only one lecturer or teacher, teaching all the subjects. (P3, 120:137)

In his opinion, this was not correct, because economists have never ever been able to evaluate the costs and profits that are caused by education, and dispite their inability to forecast the 'profits' they recommend a education model for developing countries which reduces education on it physical production. From his point of view, implementing education on such a level was somehow discriminative: the advanced countries having profited from the benefits of a broad education, now promote a education model for the developing countries which reduces education to cost-benefit relations, neglecting other aspects severely needed for social development. (P3, 122:177)

Reducing expenditures in the educational structure has indeed caused considerable resistance from the professional board of secondary school head teachers (CHASS). When the school system was restructured and the number of years was cut down from 17 to 12 years, some of the heads of secondary schools and some people in the educational administration had defended a slightly longer period of schooling in the senior secondary school. They were advocating 4 years instead of three years even as an interim solution until they were sure that all the basic requirements were provided. The World Bank as the most important donor in this sector rejected this proposal. According to one source their answer was negative because of the costs involved: "No, because it is expensive, it will cost" (P22, 22:26). A leading member of the CHASS (Conference of Assisted Heads of Secondary Schools) maintained that this reply was not satisfactory because it stressed reducing costs rather than caring about the positive outcome of the project which the country will benefit from in the long run in terms of intangible wealth (P22, 27:31).

The policy of cutting down costs won over other considerations in the end and what is left, finally, is the impression that the World Bank and the IMF economists place too much emphasis on economic aspects. Some Ghanaians have developed the feeling that their concerns about the quality of education has become a subordinate matter and that the caliber of people assigned by the World Bank and the IMF to deal with educational matters are not trained on a broad enough basis to address the matters of an education system reform adequately. A university lecturer expresses his concern about some consultants:

> "I do not know why the World Bank and the IMF economists are so obsessed with the economic aspects. It worries me in particular because I think most of them have never ever heard of philosophy and sociology of

education and they have never ever taken the trouble to read the history
of education of their own countries." (P3, 170:173)

But the impression that there is the tendency to shift the bulk of the
problems that were revealed during the preparation and implementation onto
the World Bank is certainly wrong. The same source attacking the interna-
tional consultants also reflects the government's role in the whole process. In
reference to the aspect of implementation rather than the concept, it is this
source which points out that the entire blame cannot be put on the World
Bank for their inability to equip the schools in terms of physical equipment
and human resources. It was the government's task to make a proxy on how
many schools would be needed, how much and what sort of equipment
would be necessary to implement the syllabus, and how many qualified
teachers would be needed to teach at those schools. But according to his
observations, not much was done. The distribution of the equipment was
neither properly supervised, something which resulted in actual losses, nor
did the government succeed in attracting qualified teachers when the pro-
gram was finally launched. (P3, 200:224)

The World Bank, on the other hand, didn't find it difficult to define the
lessons they have learned. (C3.1b) A senior planner simply summarizes:

"What has the World Bank learnt? Very easy. The World Bank has
learnt that it is a great deal more, or that it is very difficult to bring back
to life a system that has already died. The Ghanaian system had really
died apart from a few private schools and classes. When I started going
on it again in 1985 it was a dead system." (P10, 366:370)

He further maintains that there is only a certain kind of conventional
wisdom that one has when looking at the necessity for an effective school
system; but if these things are applied to a dead school system, it doesn't
necessarily bring it back to life again. To undermine his thesis he listed five
examples: 1. Everybody says it is important to have text books which were
then provided at least from 1987 through to 1990/91 when logistical prob-
lems started coming in with the ministry, but the text books aren't used any-
where. They can be found in a basket not being used at school. 2. In-service
training of teachers is important so every teacher has then attended approxi-
mately 2 in-service training programs over the last 6 or 7 years which has not
made any difference at all. 3. Supervision being an important factor called
for an increase in the number of supervisors; they were provided with motor
cycles and other means to go round the schools but because of existing main
loyalty links between the supervisor and the outside constituency this didn't
make much of a difference either. 4. Increasing the pay of teachers is a very
important factor and so the salary has been doubled in real terms over last 7

or 8 years. They are still absolutely low, but it has doubled. Unfortunately it makes absolutely no difference at all because the people have gotten into the habit of trading or farming during the time where they weren't paid anything; and it is very difficult to get out of the habit of trading or farming again and getting accustomed to the fact that their teacher's salary is their prime income. 5. Increasing the qualification structure of teacher training is considered to be important too, but altogether it might not make any difference at all. (P10, 374:400)

It should become clear up to this point that Ghana and her partners did not have a very sound cooperative situation and in addition to the above mentioned areas, the problem of financing the system on a sustainable basis also emerged. It has now been left up to the Ghanaian government to assign prohibitive amounts of money to maintain the achievements of the new education system. In view of the huge amount needed and considering the present economic situation this attempt looks quite discouraging. It looks as if this factor was not addressed in the formal cooperation. Allocating money to meet the prohibitive costs of the education reform was left with the donor agencies and this will pose a big problem for the government when those donors (World Bank, IMF, USAID, etc.) will pull out. P6, 198:203)

Not to ignore or even disregard the latest internationally cooperative improvements (writing joint reports, developing Criterion Reference Tests, etc.), decisions on a level of international cooperation have been made completely without considering the views of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) ever since (C3.2c). It is just recent that critically-minded Ghanaian scientists and NGOs have been invited to contribute to the development of the educational system. The report *Towards Learning for All. Basic Education in Ghana...* (MoE 1994a) was the first plan that the ministry has come out with publicly and that had been debated upon among government administrators, donors and other scientists in different forums. Formal discussions and decision making was done in closed sessions.

> "The World Bank and the few people in the ministry normally came together and decided about what had to be done and they imposed it. There wasn't a debate." (P16, 728:730)

Taking into consideration that Ghana has benefited from international assistance since the early 80s (grants and loans from the World Bank, USAID, IDA, ODA, IMF) and has relied on them in its development - as one interviewee states 'almost entirely' - the exclusion of public participation even as far as information goes, sounds very undemocratic. But what was somehow understandable - not tolerable - considering that the government

was a military government until the early 90s, such behavior of 'in camera policy' is neither understandable nor tolerable from the side of the donors. They were dealing with assets collected in democratic societies through which they supported policies lacking any public control and allowing no criticism at all.

The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) which has always confronted the government's policies on education with quite substantial criticism had, for instance, only been visited in very few cases by consultants from donor agencies. On the question whether the donors had ever been required to involve NGO's such as the GNAT on policies on educational issues a leading union member answers:

> "I do not actually know but in 1 or 2 cases some of them came and had discussions with us and we made our views known to them. For instance, we told them that we expect the government to consult us so that we can also make our experiences available. ... Anyway the ministry decided to go on without the participation of the union ... " (P20, 67:78)

The common complaints about communities being reluctant to cooperate with the government and dutifully raise or maintain the schools, furnish the classrooms, etc. are probably not only the fault of a former government, but also that of the foreign donors. The communities' reluctance to contribute to all the projects is probably as well based on the fact that neither the government, nor the donors have ever taken the trouble to involve them in developing educational structures. Complaints about their reluctance are only logical if not natural consequences indicating that the local communities still tend to regard many education projects projects to be foreign. (P24, 130:135).

6.5 The Educational Reform

a) *The Comprehension of Technical / Vocational Orientation*

Code Reference(s): D1.2; D2.1-4; D1.10b

The interviewees' conception of the introduction of the new educational system is largely just departing from the old style of grammar school education by reshaping it in order to prepare the students adequately for life. This originates from the fact that white collar jobs which the conventional higher education system initially had prepared for had run short. 'Climbing the educational ladder' from middle school to secondary school and eventually to university had become a dead end for many students. Being highly qualified but ending up without getting access to one of the desirable white-collar jobs resulted in frustration on the side of the students who then did not know what

else to do and the parents who had often made high expenditures on the education of their children finally considered this as a waste of money. Those students who often ended up home again also tended to look down upon their parents doing odd jobs while at the same time they themselves had no idea of how to start a job on their own.

Predisposing students to technical or vocational jobs was understood to be a way out of this dilemma. First of all, this was meant to change students' attitude towards manual labor in general terms and secondly they were supposed to develop a more practical concept towards a variety of jobs. This was supposed to make them self-confident about selecting a job and probably more creative in determining their own future.

People's understanding of 'predisposition' is probably decisive for the kind of inculcation of these technical and vocational subjects into school education and a later assessment of the reform's success in this field. DZOBO'S initial conception of predisposing students to vocations was more of an exposure to the world of work rather than to make them 'fit for job'. Certain examples stress that this concept is accepted by many Ghanaian interviewees (P3, 65:74; P23, 55:58; P25, 109:113).

Unfortunately the program (especially the JSS program) was sold in a way that it did not become clear to the people that "the products are not going to become carpenters but rather have the foundation" (P3, 77:78). According to a lecturer's view (P3, 94:98) it was the World Bank that tended to apply the educational reforms in the sense of this adaptation concept. Contrary to that the initial education concept promoted by the DZOBO COMMITTEE was to produce the all-rounded educated person who can understand book knowledge and also apply that knowledge practically.

This explanation is contrary to the view of the World Bank and that of a foreign consultant. A World Bank representative stresses the fact that "the original idea which was never properly put into practice was to have an employment oriented training for people" (P10, 311:13). Also the other consultant complains that the program was not well-planned conceptually because it placed too much emphasis on 'vocationalizing' education, that is to say, having a focal point on vocational training built into the curriculum. He notes:

> "If you are vocationalising to that extent, everybody should have been aware that there is a thing called vocational fallacy ... What they [the employers] really want is somebody to be aware of, for example, measurement, the basic mathematics, to be literate and to have a feeling of what they can do with their hands." (P16, 408:415)

Probably they are not referring to the initial idea but to the misconception that came up due to the type and manner of how the program was promoted by the educational administration in the early and mid 1980s (P10, 351:352). An interviewee states that according to his information, the public was made to believe that the children were capable of fending for themselves as a result of the skills they had acquired in junior secondary school; e.g., those who completed JSS and who did tailoring, should be good enough to earn a living by it (P1, 198:204).

Today even official sources admit that the government had failed to inform the public adequately about the objectives of the program (which might have changed) and as a result of this, the public had come up 'with all sorts of ideas'. Those sources attribute this to the fact that the program had been promoted in a wrong and relaxed manner by the former administration. (P12, 90:93; P25, 118:142) The ambiguous behavior of the educational administration itself, where even high ranking officials were publicly inveighing against the program (P25, 143:150), put further pressure on an already negative atmosphere especially among the urban and upper class people who were already skeptical. They feared that the vocational subjects would necessarily force their children to become, e.g., carpenters (P15, 385:390). This misconception made those groups to reject the program, although 'vocationalization' was not the initial idea, but rather a wrong interpretation of the responsible administration that had created the conflict. The following statement illustrates how a seemingly artificial conflict materialized during the early and mid 1980s:

> "Now, you cannot tell somebody who is a lecturer, a medical officer, or a judge that you will educate his children to become a carpenter; over his dead body! But with the new system we just want to expose them to pre-vocational skills in order to help them to learn to live." (P25, 122:125)

Nowadays it seems to be largely accepted that the program is focused to educating students on a general basis including academic and practical (technical/vocational) aspects. A Ghanaian basic education specialist clarifies:

> "In fact the whole principle about the reform is not purely for academic work. Up, up and that kind of thing. It is a diversified programme that takes care of the interests and talents of every individual in the system." (P14, 160:163)

One reason why the present educational administration maintains that the schools do not necessarily need any elaborate workshops is perhaps partially explained by the fact that the technical/vocational preparation has lost importance. An officer responsible for Supply and Logistics states that in the

absence of classrooms the workbenches can be used on the school's veranda or under a tree (P21, 160:165). Considering that there are dry and rainy seasons in Ghana which are an impediment to classroom teaching without proper shelter, this fairly representative view of the administration reveals some amount of ignorance about practical problems - and that the technical and vocational subjects must have lost their importance.

Under the present model, the practical subjects are now complementing the academic subjects; but it is not expected that students are being prepared, respectively, ready to enter the world of work directly after junior secondary school and start a business or vocation on their own. Taking the junior secondary school as a serious point of graduation needs to consider the fact that students at the age of 15/16 are still very young and their level of predisposition, is still to low for anybody to seriously take the idea of employing them as trained workers (P26, 196:201); the same applies to the idea of self-employment, which, in addition, requires some simple fundaments in business management and organization.

Under the prevailing conditions, students are then forced to either continue education on a higher level (SSS) or to apply for a job as apprentices. For those who choose to do the latter there should be provisions made to guarantee an appropriate technical or vocational training. A basic education specialist suggests identifying appropriate workshops, even road-side fitters, who would take these JSS apprentices for on-the-job-training and could then be assisted with further technical training for the development of their apprentices. If this was done, the professional level would rise considerably:

> "After some time we would get a generation of road-side mechanics who do not only operate by common-sense but at least have some background. They would be people you can speak to and they will understand you when you go to the shops. As it is today somebody has to interpret but we want to phase out this generations and then have a generation of people who are a bit literate and they know what they are doing. We are lacking people who can read more about the problems. (P14, 170:177).

But to achieve this there must be a system to pick the students that leave JSS at the age of 15 or 16, otherwise the present system would continue reproducing itself. It is the common belief that such a system must be initiated at least by the government which has neglected to properly prepare for the establishment of a technical/vocational training system in the informal sector to which most of the JSS leavers are moving (P20, 155:156; P23, 179:185)

Now that students graduating from JSS are no longer expected to start an elaborate kind of business on their own straight away after leaving school,

one might be tempted to believe that those students coming from senior secondary schools will be in a position to do so because they enjoyed three subsequent years of further education. This, however, is not the case although there are still voices which have not yet departed from the idea that just because they are predisposed to practical subjects the students will be able to start their own businesses. A high ranking officer responsible for the secondary education sector maintains that students from senior secondary school could be trained to the master level within six (6) months (P26, 196:201). Officers at the WAEC, in addition, are of the opinion that it was the purpose of the new system to provide students with skills, so therefore they should be in a position to set up a business (P12, 90:93).

Considering that up until 1993 there had only been one technical teacher training college in the entire country of Ghana, doubt is cast on the credibility of whether students graduating from SSS are prepared well enough to enter the world of work on a higher level other than the apprenticeship or assistant level. A dire lack of adequately trained teachers for the technical and vocational subjects (D2.4) and the immense problems resulting from the lack of facilities and equipment in the workshops as well is further worsening the situation. In view of this, the following view sounds quite realistic:

> "The SSS on its own might not be very useful if it doesn't take you a little bit further. I think the person does well to enter a profession for which he or she has acquired some rudiments." (P13, 307:312)

If such a viewpoint was to gain popularity among academics, and it is likely that the social and economic reality will contribute further support to it, the need might arise to start a new information campaign in order to inform the interested public affected as well as employers affected by this about the recent developments in the education sector. This was necessary especially in view of the increasing demand for parental and community contribution towards the successful carrying-out of the program.

b)   The Course of Implementation

Code Reference(s): D1.1a-e; D1.3

Peoples' statements about their satisfaction concerning the implementation of the program are a bit ambiguous. Generally speaking, almost everybody praises the fact that the new system was introduced and implemented at all, which does not mean that there were no objections. Some feared that there was too much emphasis placed on the vocational and technical subjects, others complained that the infrastructural inputs were too low and the teachers were not prepared well enough, and some would like to extend the duration of the three-year senior secondary course by one year in order to

raise the standard of pre-university education. But the striking aspect is that even those organizations and intellectuals who raised harsh but constructive criticism on various aspects of the program finally supported its implementation. A leading teacher union member states:

> "During our delegates conference in 1986 we told the Secretary for Education that the timing was inappropriate, but they didn't listen to us. So we decided to assist the government in implementing the whole programme." (P20, 26:29)

The preparations made, or better to say the lack of it, are considered by most interviewees to be the impeding factor for a successful implementation of the program. One source got the impression that the responsible consultants at the World Bank had the belief that the moment they start preaching the program, the equipment etc. would be almost automatically available. But not to foster a wrong impression, he finally puts the blame on the Ghanaian politicians and administrators by claiming that they at least should have inquired into how many schools and how much equipment there would have to be and the number of qualified teachers that would be needed to implement the program. (P3, 202:209) Despite having made efforts in this direction, the responsible administration seems to have lost control over planning ahead. The source maintains: "They ought to have planned this in advance. I do not think much was done." (Ibid.)

From today's point of view it can hardly be questioned that inadequate inputs in terms of material and as well in terms of manpower pose a considerable problem of putting the program successfully into effect. But despite all these complaints about insufficiencies and inadequacies every now and then, most people are convinced that these problems will be overcome and that the program will then come to its full fruition. (D1.3)

Nevertheless, the preparations initially made for the implementation of the program must have been poor. In 1987 when the junior secondary school program was started almost completely without textbooks, equipment for the workshops and adequately trained teachers, substantial omissions became evident. Taking into consideration that almost the same problems emerged again when the program was about to be implemented on a full-scale level with the launching of the senior secondary school program in 1990, the lack of professional guidance and preparation revealed an appalling dimension.

Despite the general public impression, this situation did not emerge as a big and sudden surprise. It was known that the implementation had not taken place from the bottom up. Although there are some few voices maintaining that there had been changes at the primary school level, which had unfortunately not been given the same fanfare as the changes on the junior secon-

dary or secondary school level (P, P4, 275:282), it is the common view that the reform program started from the middle 'without anybody looking at the ground' (P10, 268:271; P15, 477:480; P18, 10:13). During the testing period from 1974 to 1987 when approximately 118 junior secondary schools were introduced on a trial basis, some crucial problems had gradually become known: The students were not properly prepared for the JSS program in the primary school and after they had entered the conventional secondary school they had huge problems in coping with the form four students there. Finally most of them had to be graded as form three students which revealed at a very early stage that the academic standard of the JSS examination level could not be compared with the standard of the conventional O-level examination which is usually taken after form five secondary school. Apart from these problems in terms of structure and content, there were also no teachers trained in the technical/vocational subjects at the conventional secondary schools to further those students' education in the practical subjects. (P19, 142:153) A government official concludes:

> "That means the problem was identified as far back as 1974 but no serious effort was made to address it until we decided to introduce the new system. And when we introduced it, it did not become a question of only 118 selected experimental schools, it rather became a problem throughout the country. It's actually multiplied." (P19, 156:160)

The above self-criticism is complemented by the view of a different government official who, as well, was working under the 'old' and the 'new' administration. According to her, the administration which started the implementation of the system in the mid 1980s, had intended to implement the program gradually by increasing the number of junior secondary schools slowly and by adding one senior secondary school to three JSS's. The new system was thereby introduced parallel to the existing one, replacing the conventional secondary schools little by little until a full-scale implementation was finally achieved. She maintains that the hasty implementation was not driven by the educational administration but rather by 'those politicians who took over' then (in the mid and late 1980s).

> "We wanted to go gingerly so that we know the costs, how to get teachers with the requisite qualifications, the equipment, the materials, the infrastructure and so on. This was the reason why we were going gingerly, step by step. But when the politicians came they said: "No way - full scale implementation!" Some had nothing, some had no buildings, in fact. So everything was poorly done from that time. " (P25, 159:164)

From today's point of view it is impossible to locate those people who were actually responsible for the poor implementation of the program, but it

was certainly not first and foremost the educational administration. They had been a group of people with heterogeneous views and attitudes, subordinate to the regime's policy guideline. In the end only this fact remains: It were politician from the same regime or government that were responsible for the implementation of the program from the early 1980s to the early and mid 1990s.

There are manifold complaints about the rush in which the program was implemented and particularly about the fact that its implementation was an imposition (D1.1c+d). In view of the statements about the government's reluctance to heed advice from the national critically minded experts (chapter 6.5a) it can only be emphasized that the political atmosphere was generally prohibitive for particular individuals and NGO's such as the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) to present constructive criticism. (D1.1e) The government's reluctance, however, to listen to criticism went beyond simple ignorance. According to one source, the situation was such that during the time of full-scale implementation from 1987-1992 people felt too demoralized and discouraged to come out and give their suggestions. This developed to the extent that people no longer had the courage to ask questions at seminars for fear of being identified as an obstacle and they wanted to save their skin or to ensure their daily bread. (P20, 45:58) Taking into consideration that throughout the implementation period of the program a 'culture of silence' had prevailed, one can easily imagine how unhappy the Ghanaians indeed were about the way and manner the educational reform was implemented (P6, 173:182).

In the end criticism culminates at a point where people complain about the way and manner of how the program was introduced and implemented. It is that lack of getting properly informed that finally caused the the mass failure of the huge numbers of students taking the first SSS examination in 1993. Only then, when the results were released in 1994, the public and in particular the educational administration and the government became aware of the massive problems that schooling is suffering from throughout all levels, many of which insiders had pointed at since long.

c) *Difficulties in Comparing the Two Systems*

Code Reference(s): D1.4,5; D3.1-5

The two systems (old and new) can hardly be compared due to the fact that the system's structure and content was completely altered. The fact that the underlying principles of the two systems are basically different is revealed. The former system is said to have been quite a classy system which favored the middle class people in the urban areas, providing them with

adequate access to secondary school education while putting the people in the rural areas at a disadvantage whereby joining the middle school was often the only venture. As a major difference, the new system has a pretty uniform structure and provides the same opportunities for everyone. (P10, 273:284) The latter is supported by the fact that more higher secondary schools were opened under the new education policy and its number doubled between 1990 to 1993.

Apart from the more structural change rooted in the desire to increase and open secondary school education to a larger part of the population, the content of schooling was shifted from predominantly academic subjects to a balanced curriculum containing practical subjects as well. In the previous system students were prepared on a more or less only general philosophical concept of education which fostered to educate students in the sense of letters only. This concept of education did not to expose students to practical experiences which resulted in the fact that many highly educated people knew the theory but they did not have any practical problem solving skills. (P3, 29:31)

> "Previously education was in a way that we knew the theory but when it came to real application in everyday life people were lost." (P3, 44:45)

Exposing students to their immediate surrounding by providing them with practical and applicable experiences was the initial conception of the DZOBO COMMITTEE. This was later misinterpreted as a preparation for the world of work (chapter 6.5a). Today it is rather unclear whether DZOBO'S concept shall be taken as the underlying philosophy of the new system or whether it is a more utilized model i.e. education for the world of work.

In practical terms, the combination of new structure plus the new underlying philosophy of education (whatever interpretation) was expected to foster and increase the standard of technical and other vocations. As explained before, one of the misunderstandings was that, on a very practical level, JSS leavers were expected to be able to start a business on their own which was probably related to the expectations of giving the economy a further push, thereby diminishing the problems related to high unemployment rates. As recent experiences of the JSS leavers on the job market have proved, this is certainly not the case but, nevertheless, students should now have a better standing when entering apprenticeships. At least they have an idea about some practical aspects of certain technical or other vocations as a result of their pre-technical and pre-vocational education at the basic education level.

On a higher level the senior secondary school leavers who normally tended to seek admission into universities are now encouraged to further

their education in the non-academic sector. This is due to the fact that certainly not everybody who successfully passes secondary will do well at the university or even want to further his or her education at that level (P23, 55:58). The new concept intends to encourage students to enter different vocations and thereby providing students with a viable alternative to university education which was often seen as the only way chosen in the old system. Previously those who could not make it there were considered to have completely failed (P13, 290:296).

But considering that Ghana will not limit access to university education rather there are serious attempts to increase the number places for tertiary level students the new policy will promotes a run onto academic tertiary education. From this angle the policy is then driving to produce an increased number of secondary school leavers in order to raise the potential for manning professional sectors on a comparably high level.

Resulting from the fact that the structure and content have changed significantly it has become almost impossible to compare the examinations taken in the old system to those taken in the new system. An officer of the West African Examination Council states:

> "The two system should not be compared because they are completely different. Even the syllabuses are different. In the JSS they are doing business subjects, vocational subjects and technical subjects which was not done in the O-level. The whole structure is different." (P12, 181:184)

Nevertheless, the question remains whether the new examinations, the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE, after class 9, primary+JSS) and the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE, after class 12), replace the former internationally known and accepted O-level (after secondary school) and A-level (after 6th form / secondary upper). Here, the great majority of the interviewees is of the opinion that at least the BECE is not up to the standard of the former O-level from an academic point of view. One teacher at a well-reputed secondary school compares the ' standard of students coming from the junior secondary school with that of the former upper primary school standard (P30, 146:153).

If it was true that the standard of students in the core subjects like English and Mathematics is that low, then this must influence the quality of the SSSCE as well. And indeed there are sources maintaining that the academic standard of the SSSCE is not up to the former A-level at all. A basic education specialist claims:

> "Right now the SSS is about O-level standard so it hasn't changed anything. Except that we are probably not producing the quality students

that is all. That is what we need to address. There's nothing wrong with it." (P14, 227:230)

This view is quite popular among secondary school teachers who also compare the standard at SSS with the academic standard of the former O-level and slightly above (P17, 294:297).

Contrary to the above quotation it should be noted that it certainly makes a difference whether the standard at SSS is up to A-level or not. It is not only the university which expects secondary school students to have achieved a certain level of education. This is also an expectation of employers who expect secondary school leavers to be conversant with English and Mathematics at a certain level.

The international compatibility of the new examinations is again a different issue. Here it is the prevailing view that the Ghanaian education system must first and foremost produce students for its own system rather than to prepare them for any foreign market. This view is largely shared by Ghanaian educationists and foreign consultants (P10, 231:241; P13, 346:348, P16, 708:713). There must be ways for Ghanaian students to achieve the desired international examination by attending special schools which prepare students to take such examinations. And the necessity to produce students which have to be internationally marketable is recognized, which, last but not least, is due to the fact that Ghana's university courses do not cover all subjects; but for the meantime this seems to be less important. Anyway, from this point of view a regulation must be found for students to take the conventional O and A-level examinations; at least as an interim solution until the Ghanaian SSSCE matches the international standard.

Finally, it should be considered as well that the conditions and procedures under which the examinations were taken previously have completely changed. The most striking difference is, e.g., that students in secondary schools were formerly taught according to an examination syllabus. Teachers and students were used to study the syllabus by laying emphasis on certain topics because they expected these topics to come up at the examination. Preparing for examinations became a kind of guess work (P15, 545:553). This resulted in a behavior that reduced learning to a more or less efficient preparation course for passing examinations.

"They were being taught just to pass exams. Therefore they just taught them the basis; in mathematics the formula concepts and principles etc. Anybody called was able to reproduce certain answers." (P15, 267:270

But this practice was also supported by the official authorities (the MoE and the WAEC) who produced such examination syllabi. It were, first of all,

the examination syllabi which limited the scope of possible topics, and on this basis teachers started guessing on what particular topics might come up. Apart from the obvious disadvantages the benefits of examination syllabi materialized on that level that the specifics of certain schools, e.g. the availability of certain facilities, could be considered adequately in the final examinations. Inspectors of the MoE went round to take down these facts which were later reported to the WAEC who were then to draw up the examination questions and certain schools were excluded from particular examination subjects because they did hot have the necessary facilities (12, 246:251).

Today the questions are set by the WAEC according to the teaching syllabus which means that there is no longer any orientation for what to be taught. Teachers are now supposed to teach everything that is part of a particular syllabus. Presently the WAEC is no more responsible for monitoring the schools in order to guarantee that examination questions are set according to the facilities of a particular school. As a result, the fact that subjects not taught due to the lack of facilities or adequately trained teacher is no longer considered in the set of examination questions.

> "We are supposed to examine the contents of those teaching syllabuses at both levels, the JSS and SSS level. So that is what we do. If they do not cover the syllabuses that is not our lookout. If they do not cover it they should not blame us." (P12, 125:128)

Due to the fact that junior secondary schools and especially the newly established senior secondary schools had immense problems preparing the students for the examinations, owing to a lack of equipment and lack of adequately trained teachers in some of the technical or vocational subjects, the mass failure of students at the first SSSCE was indeed foreseeable. As an almost logical consequence of their inadequate preparation for the new type of examinations, students had begun to cheat and even teachers started to help their students at the examination hall.

Considering all the impeding circumstances that convoyed schooling until the students took *the first Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination* in 1993 the result was not all that bad. According to a consultant's view "it was actually a very, very good result" (P16, 235:241). He refers to the fact that after all 1,500 students passed in all the nine examined subjects. (Previously only four subjects had to be taken at A-levels) If the total number of students who were eligible for university entrance are to be calculated, those students who took A-levels at the conventional secondary school system (then still concurrently running) ought to be added to this number. He finally concludes that both groups together make a very big number entering

universities. (P16, 235:253) In fact, only if one looks at the total number of students (44,000) who registered for the examination the proportion of those eligible to enter universities looks small. Considering that there are only a few vacancies at Ghanaian universities, the number is comparably big.

The official interpretation of the SSSCE results did not pay attention to the fact that 35% succeeded to pass 4 or more subjects under far more difficult conditions than their predecessors. Those in the former system only had to prepare for the four subjects they finally took at the A-level examinations. Altogether the total number of those students who qualified for university entrance under the new SSSCE in 1993 did surely exceed that of the previous years. Seen from this angle, the assumption that the interpretation that the SSSCE results were interpreted in an obviously biased manner in order to condemn the previous educational administration sounds quite reasonable (P16, 231:241).

However, this quantitative interpretation should not neglect the fact that any education system that prepares students for an examination in which more than 20% do not even pass one single subject, with poor achievement levels at that, does indeed make a case for low success.

d) *Structural Criticism*

Code Reference(s): D1.7-9, 11,12

Criticism of the educational structure refers mostly to the fact that cutting down the number of years from 17 to 12 has caused a problem in maintaining the standard of secondary education. According to some people, cutting down the period of pre-university schooling by five years is quite drastic because it could just as well have been reduced by only two or three years (P22, 37:41). Those who feel that the shortage was a bit too drastic place emphasis on the fact that formerly, secondary education comprised the five years of secondary schooling plus two years of 6th form which make seven (7) years all together.

The fact that students formerly had to take a common entrance examination to enter secondary school which guaranteed a uniform standard must be considered when comparing the previous and the present system. The present system has abolished the middle school which most students attended after primary school to become adequately prepared for this entrance examination. Under the current system entrance to junior secondary school (JSS) is no longer limited to any qualitative level because Ghana follows a policy of automatic promotion. Finally, this results in students' generally having a lower academic level when entering the JSS than they previously had enter-

ing the secondary school. From this point of view the shortage was indeed a bit drastic.

One could have thought that the structural changes had been conveyed by changes in the secondary school curriculum adjusting it to the 'new' standard. Unfortunately it looks as if this was not done and students at the senior secondary school were expected to cope with the previous A-level standard.

> "So in SSS 1 when they are only 16 years they are expected to study material meant for those in the former Sixth Form. So they study the material now at SSS they were studying at the age of 19, 20 years before. Now when you explain the same concept at SSS 1 as you did before the students are unable to understand. This lack of understanding of some of the concepts is due to the fact that they are not matured enough." (P22, 42:48)

There is evidence to believe that those 'hand-picked' people who designed the SSS curriculum, most of them coming from Cape-Coast university, did their best to tie the SSS as smooth as possible to the university (P22, 96:102). This could partly be a result from the fact that most people at university don't see any reason why they should change their structure, for instance, by introducing one or two preliminary years to prepare students for the required standard as suggested by a Ghanaian scientist (P13, 254:257). A World Bank planner concludes:

> " ... the reason why people want to change the structure of the system is basically because the universities don't want to change what they are doing at all. They want to get whatever is coming out of the new system to be as close as possible to what was the previous output, so that they have to make the fewest possible changes to what they are doing. It is the common problem that you face in education systems - the tail of the dog wags the dog rather than the other way." (P10, 223:229)

This view could partly derive from the fact that people are convinced that the standard at the overseeable number of approximately 450 senior secondary schools can be raised while people tend to loose faith in improving the basic education sector in view of the huge problems the large number of primary and junior secondary schools have (P23, 344:364). Nevertheless this view reveals the prevailing opinion that no matter what changes have been made, at least the leaving certificate examination of the SSS must be as close as possible to the previous A-level. And from this point of view the above quoted metaphor hits the nail on the head: 'the tail wags the dog rather than the other way round'.

As a consequence to the idea of relating the SSS standard as close as possible to the demands of the university, teachers at senior secondary

schools complain that it is impossible to cover the prescribed syllabus in a period of three years. Although individual teachers recognize (P17, 52:74) the problems at the SSS level to have apparently developed right from the primary school up and throughout the junior secondary school, the impression arises that not much is done by Ghanaian academics in general to improve the lower levels of schooling.

The impression that academics in Ghana, except for a few, pay almost no attention to basic education is substantiated by the fact that the Education Reform Review Committee (ERRC) hardly considered that the problem of academic standard must be addressed at the basic education level. Despite this, there was, e.g., one draft document suggesting to cut one year from the primary school in order to add this one year to the SSS. Generally speaking, the ERRC largely neglected to look at the content of the subjects and the methodology and training of teachers at the basic education level, devoting most of the time to debates about structural changes and adaptations, which was reinforced by the fact that the few educationists who got admittance to the discussions only had a mandatory status. (D1.11,12)

Although the number of subjects at primary and junior secondary schools was finally cut down, the atmosphere towards recognizing the necessity to reassess the purpose and the role of the senior secondary school as well remained rather unfavorable for a change. Due to the fact that at SSS teachers were left with the problem of raising students' standard to make them finally eligible for the requirements of the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE), they were then forced to repeat large parts of the preliminary syllabus in various subjects. This reduced the actual teaching time by approximately one year meaning that only two years were left for covering the whole SSS curriculum (P17, 85:87). The increasing pressure on officials and politicians might in turn have resulted in making efforts to make the curriculum manageable within a shorter period by reducing the number of subjects and the content of the syllabus as had been done at primary and junior secondary schools (P26, 82:88).

The impression arises that it might take some time until the purpose of preparing students not only to enter university but also to prepare students for all kinds of professions will be generally recognized. Only when there is a change of attitude in this sector will the role of the SSS within the new system become clear. This might cause a restructuring of university education then. Related to the fact that the new SSSCE might not meet the standard of the previous A-level, international compatibility will become a point at issue too. The MoE must then ensure that students can taking internation-

ally accepted examinations in order to gain admission into tertiary institutions outside Ghana at private *and* certain selected government schools.

6.6 Views Related to Education

a) *About the Government's Role*

The two problems considered to be dominant are that on the one hand the government is obviously not able to meet its obligations in delivering certain services whereas on the other hand people tend to leave almost everything related to the formal sector to be done by government authorities.

Examples: The sanitation problem is a simple example which illustrates the origin of the problem. When the British left Ghana they left a functioning sanitation system although not everywhere in the country. The streets and choked gutters were cleaned by government laborers and there were even officers held responsible for ensuring that the water stored and used in the household was not contaminated by mosquito larvae. From that time on many people have stopped employing communal labor in the cleaning of the community and have left that to the government because of having been charged taxes for those services. Now that the costs for the provision of such services outnumber the income generated by taxes, services are no longer delivered by the government. As a result, the rubbish keeps accumulating, leaving both parties, government and citizens incapable of solving the problem. (E1.3e)

Another considerable factor is the corruption within the system. Although in general, complaints about corruption have become quite popular , people tend to forget that it is they who comprise the government. In the end it is the so-called simple man who contributes to this situation by taking undue advantage of his or her position. At the time when Ghanaians were ruled by a foreign power, acting against the colonial government had a kind of informal legacy:

> "When the British were there we had a phrase: 'Government's money is nobody's money.' Government was seen as a foreigner. So you became a hero when you were able to steal, to take something from the government. 'Government's property is nobody's property!' This was the mentality we had during the colonial time. Government was far away removed from the people. If you destroy a government vehicle you have not done anything bad because it is 'for somebody'." (P7, 268:276)

According to the above quoted source this mentality is still being 'dutifully carried to the bottom of the system' and it has become counterproduc-

tive today. There are obvious signs that many Ghanaian government officials haven't begun to change their attitude towards 'government'. This materializes by the fact that some do not regard themselves to be in a position where they should serve the public but rather they consider public services as an undue disturbance. Although the public complains about being served poorly and rudely, (P7, 285:286) there seems to be a tendency to sanction even the misuse of governmental i.e. public property. Those who "have really dipped their hands into government's coffers and build their mansions are going to be turned virtually into heroes" (P7, 258:260) by the public.

This reveals that there is an obvious contradiction between people's expectation that government servants must serve the people and solve their problems when on the other hand those who militate against such developments are rewarded rather than sanctioned by the same people. From today's point of view we can safely assume that the continuing rule of oppressive governments which has very often ignored people's constructive criticism towards improving the system, even during post-independence times, has fostered such counterproductive behavior rather than working against it.

Government's role in *developing and delivering educational services* stood in almost the same tradition of giving orders top-down rather than considering local needs or involving local partners and experts. This might partially explain people's idea that it is the government that has to provide all services in the formal education sector, meanwhile the government itself has made substantial efforts to depart from that idea. Nowadays it has become a common believe among government representatives that community involvement will foster the improvement of the system.

> "If we can go and educate the parents, the members of the community who are responsible for the children and they don't want to take up that responsibility fully; if we can get them to be a bit more responsible as citizens of this country half of our problems will be solved." (P12, 49:52)

From a historical point of view the implementation of this attempt had to face difficulties because people had already got used to their passive role and historically they have never made good experiences by actively influencing and even more to the point, interfering with government policies on the community level. Now government officials complain about people's inability to take up these responsibilities and tackle some of the problems on their own (P12, 28:30). Under the recent policy guideline, people's passive attitude and their expectation that everything which is connected to formal education must be provided monetarily free from government has now turned to become counterproductive.

Sending children to school and more so, the payment of school-related fees became extremely problematic when families had not gained from such an investment. Some families had sent their children to school with the idea of enabling them to get one of the desired white-collar jobs. According to a source many of those students who could not succeed in getting such a job, sat down at home and did nothing because they regarded themselves superior to their parents; this resulted, for example, in their not helping their parents on the farm. Their parents in turn felt they had wasted money on sending their children to school and based on the fact that their unemployed children would be useless at home, some parents actually started withdrawing their children from school. (P25, 88:96)

b) *Education and Expenses*

Code Reference(s): E2.2,4,5; E3.1b,c; E3.3g

The problem of making expenses on the education of their children is further aggravated by the poor economic conditions under which many parents live. These conditions hinder many parents in the rural or in the poor urban areas from contributing to the improvement of the educational sector as single households and on a general basis as a community too. Education as a national responsibility will certainly need the support of individuals and the private sector but it needs the support of the government as well until the local communities (and thereby the parents) are in a position to shoulder more of their responsibilities; some of which became legal responsibilities long ago, others just recently. (P20, 136:138)

Another aspect that has contributed to people's frustration is the fact that many people in Ghana seem to believe, ironically perhaps, that after school, the government or somebody has to give you a job. 'Ironically perhaps' because neither the formal sector, nor the informal sector has ever justified this belief and is far from meeting the expectations of employing the great numbers of school leavers.

> "This is because education in this country is more or less tied to job. Not that the jobs are there; but people believe that the higher you go up the ladder the better the chances become to get a job." (P3, 277:280)

Nevertheless this is quite an understandable viewpoint of the students and their parents who have often made considerable investments in school education. As an almost logical consequence, illiterate parents especially and even some of those who are educated have started questioning the advantage of going to school. This doubtfulness is a spin off from the belief that it is the school which should provide you with a good job. Now that people have become aware that students graduate from junior secondary and senior sec-

ondary schools and even from university without really having a good prospect of becoming employed, they have even start doubting that making a good living is necessarily related to school education. (P4, 162:170)

Generally speaking, although many parents think it is necessary to have their children educated in school, they are not convinced that expenses should be made on that account because they fear that the outcome won't justify the investment. The common belief that education pays is becoming slowly undermined by the fact that education is always a long term investment and people are burdened by many immediate problems.

> "When you are hungry, you need satisfaction immediately. Education is an investment over a period of may be 10 to 15 years before you realise the fruit of all that you had invested but the Ghanaian people have these immediate problems. P15: Group (163:168)

Another impeding aspect is that although many people still believe that education is worthwhile to pursue, an increasing number of people are getting rich without any formal school education. One source maintains that when those people started making money even without going to school, people started looking down on education. The question arises why people should care about education based on the fact that anyone who has acquired a Ph.D. faces real problems in ensuring his or her daily bread. (P1, 301:307)

Taking into consideration that in several cases parents give the children house furniture, a small stool, or a table to be carried to school and back home because this furniture is also needed in the house, it was a wrong impression to conclude on a general level that parents don't care about their children's education (P4, 236:243). In fact there are many people who have genuine difficulties in meeting expenses for the education of their children and there are also those who are wealthy enough but just not interested in taking up their responsibilities (P4, 150:151). A source reports that quite often the children do not pay the textbook user fee and other related fees which results in the fact that many students do not have exercise books and other materials to work with. Consequently teachers find difficulties in the actual teaching process and as well in finding out whether students have grasped the content because they are not able to do any homework in the absence of learning materials. (P4, 93:100)

While people commonly agree on the fact that education must be free on the basic education level some sources are of the opinion that Ghana must get parents gradually to accept the idea that education beyond this level (primary school plus JSS) has to be paid for up to a certain extent. Their view of education becomes selective at senior secondary school and those

who will benefit from attending those schools must somehow contribute towards them as well (P20, 165:169).

> "Well, if you have a child, you should be prepared to spend money on the child. It is fair enough that government provides free and compulsory basic education, but for any other form of training after that, the individual should be prepared to bear his own cost." (P24, 173:176)

Although this view is understandable from the 'rates of returns view' and introducing school fees for senior secondary education might also help to increase the budget spent on basic education, Ghana would certainly give up the goal of making access to upper secondary education more democratic. However, fees could be introduced according to the amount of parental income. A source speaking for the teacher's union suggests introducing a loan scheme for those who get university education because they stand a better chance of getting employed and their earnings will be higher than that of those who ended at the basic educational level (P20, 184:192).

c)   *The Type of Education Preferred*

Code Reference(s): E3.1c; E2.4; E2.5

The introduction of vocational aspects in Ghana's formal school education has been facing problems of getting accepted by both parents (and students) and by some government officials. Generally speaking, people in Ghana seem to have developed the idea that only if one has received upper secondary education is he or she really educated (P13, 276:278). And when you have benefited from some sort of higher education you shouldn't work with your hands but rather you should employ people to do that kind of work for you (P25, 81:83). According to a source people have not yet overcome this kind of thinking. This becomes obvious when children leave school and they do not like to work with their hands, but prefer to do anything else, such as, clerks sitting in offices, doctors or judges where no dust will touch you (ibid., 83:87). At the same time many parents foster this attitude. No matter whether this attitude is rooted in a misinterpretation or in a misinformation about the new program's objectives, it endangers the achievement of the prescribed objectives:

> "Now, you cannot tell somebody who is a lecturer, a medical officer, or a judge that you will educate his children to become a carpenter; over his dead body! But with the new system we just want to expose them to pre-vocational skills in order to help them to learn to live." (P25, 122:125)

That many parents still think that investments in the child's education should lead to one of the 'white-collar' professions is a rather unfortunate circumstance and consequently they regard the vocational subjects as just

side-lining the SSS program (P12, 99:102). The skepticism among parents in the urban areas is apparent as many of them have either ensured that their children go to or stay in the old secondary schools. This skepticism was further encouraged by the fact that also many government officials, and among them many working for the GES, sent their sons and daughters to far more academically orientated schools (P16, 344:345). This is reveals that there was also a conflict among the people working in the GES and the ministry between those supporting more the academic aspects of the system and those who preferred the technical/vocational orientation of the system.

According to official sources the order of the day must then be to inform, educate and convince the parents in the rural and urban areas that working with your hands in a vocation or having a technical occupation is as lucrative as being a doctor or a lawyer or an accountant (P12, 94:98). The advantages of the new system would be then that the students get exposed, for instance, to technical and vocational professions, and that must become clear to them. This is very different from the previous model where people were not apt to do anything else other than pursue an academic program to the highest level. If they failed to reach the goals they and others set for themselves in the previous system, then that climb to the highest level became meaningless in the end. (P13, 290:296)

Various sources maintain that the *orientation towards upper secondary education (SSS) and university* is likely to prevail for some time in the country. They attribute that to the fact that 'white-collar jobs' are still highly attractive (E2.4,5) even though employment has become a serious problem for SSS and university graduates too.

The degree of its attraction was revealed when a high percentage (almost 50%) of the students who graduated from JSS decided to continue education at the SSS level. Despite the idea to take JSS III as a serious terminal point not many students moved into apprenticeships or entered the world of work. (P26, 185:192) The decision to continue education on a higher level might not only be related to the high attraction of the SSS but also to the fact that openings for apprentices in the professional sector are few and costly. Additionally it was a government objective to enroll 50% of the JSS graduates at SSS in order to enlarge secondary enrollment rates.

However, the public reaction to the low achievements of the students at the first SSS examinations revealed that in a certain way the "spirit, that we should all end up at the university, is still with us in Ghana and because of that the results of the SSS are being looked at in terms of being a failure." (P23, 58:60) People's despair about the high number of students who could not qualify for university entrance has revealed that their attitude towards

taking the university as the most desirable avenue hasn't changed significantly although the objective of the reform was to vocationalize education to the extent of becoming a real alternative. (P23, 43:47)

d) Selected Views of the Social Environment

Code Reference(s): E1.3a,d, E1.5; E2.1; E3.1d

Population growth and education: The basic problem is that a great number of people keep on having children. It will become necessary to further expand the education system in order to maintain the present enrollment ratio as the population continues to grow. Policies which aim at reducing the population growth are unfortunately met skeptically to the extent that some ".. still believe that it is an idea of the white man to limit them." (P12, 45:46) A growing number of Ghanaian academics see the necessity of making parents responsible for the education of their children (ibid., 36:46). It is their opinion that this would automatically reduce the increase in population. If people were made financially responsible for their children's education, they wouldn't have more than they could nurture. Up until the present most people have depended on the fact that the government has taken over the financial brunt of education so therefore there has been no need for most to curb reproduction.(P24, 177:183).

Community education programs and radio advertisement on family planning have turned out to be rather ineffective. The problem of educating a rural mentality on the benefits of birth control were most likely inadequate at best. Despite substantial efforts to re-educate the people, the widespread, traditional thinking on offspring remains to be - the more children one produces, the more respected one is in terms of family status and prestige. This belief is perpetrated by the hope that out of 10 children perhaps 5 might be successful enough to help the parents when they are old. (P15, 209:216) And in view of a still ineffectively operating pension scheme this reasoning is quite understandable. It is just now that the more educated people are realizing that the more children they have, the more problems they put on themselves. But although this awareness has begun to take root for some time among educated people, it will take quite some time before the idea of population control seriously catches on and becomes popular as the problem of population growth has a long tradition in Ghana. (P15, 204:220)

It is those parents who have genuine problems in making ends meet and who have a low schooling background themselves who seem to be the most reluctant to *monitor and guide the learning process* of their children. Many of them feel over-burdened by the economic strains. According to one source, it is believed to be a waste of time to attend Parent Teacher Associa-

tion meetings and that it would better to be at the shop going about their business. Then the source added: "Because all that we are all looking for is money! So in short: They don't even have the interest of their own children at heart." (P27, 27:33)

Additionally the children's working power is often actually needed, e.g., during the harvest season on the parents' farm which applies almost exclusively to the rural areas (P13, 99:102). Children in the urban and semi urban areas are often called upon to assist their parents' business and are sometimes even threatened with not receiving the money to pay the school fees. (P27, 20:25).

However, the above quoted teacher's comment (P27) goes beyond the fact that parents are just burdened with making ends meet and that this is the only reason why they involve their children. He seems to drive at the fact that parents could care more than they are willing to do. This view is supported by an educationist who also has the impression that quite a number of people simply don't care about what or whether anything goes on at school:

> " ... in many cases where you go round to talk to the people in the community, they don't seem to care as long as their children are going to school and the GES is paying the teachers. The children may not be in the classroom, they may do some weeding or gardening out-side, or playing, but they are in the school and I think you've got to go beyond that." (P16, 554:559)

The low schooling background of the parents might partially explain that symptom. Probably some parents also don't understand the value of education and this is aggravated further by the impression that the cooperation between the school and the environment is not too good (P28, 29:32). Nevertheless it reveals that taking care of children is a serious point at issue. Another teacher, for instance, complains that parents from poor areas do not motivate their children to go to school at all which results in relatively high absenteeism rates.

> "The other problem is absenteeism which is due to their environment. - Most of them come from Nima (a poor suburb of Accra) and most of their parents are not well educated. I think that is one factor. So they don't motivate the children to come to school. They don't care whether their children go to school." (P28, 104:115)

Family problems, broken homes where the children live with their aunts cause additional problems in the guidance of the children's learning process and in the regular payment of school fees as well. (ibid., 160:162).

Some teachers feel that today *people don't respect the teacher profession*. They attribute that to the low income which then is related to a very

limited bargaining power. In previous times the teacher was a respected person in the Ghanaian society and this was reflected in a respectable salary, which was one of the highest in that society. As time went by teachers' salaries began to dwindle and respect as well (P1, 287:290). One source reports that is has become common practice to call anyone who asks for price reduction 'teacher'.

> "For instance when you go to the market and you ask the market woman to reduce the price for you, she will ask you: 'My friend are you a teacher? If you are a teacher then go away.' (P1, 291:293)

There are indeed quite a number of incidents that prove that the teaching profession has no good lobby in Ghana. The low salaries paid are certainly one important aspect. Undeniably a teacher who is supposed to be a character model has a problem with borrowing from his or her neighbor who may work at a bank and have a similar or a even lower professional qualification (P15, 135:143). But apart from the question of salary, teachers are generally not treated as members of a professional group which in turn is reflected in their salary. For instance in 1990/91 when teachers went on strike, the PNDC government encouraged the revolutionary organs to move into the classrooms and take over the teachers' positions. Teachers maintain that this clearly shows the disrespect of even the government. (P15, 186:189). One teacher concludes:

> "They feel our services are not very important and anyone at all is capable of teaching." (P15, 194:195)

e)   The Role of Education

Code Reference(s): E2.3; E3.3a-f

Education in a both formal and informal manner is regarded to be important in the Ghanaian society. The value attached to education becomes evident when taking into consideration that local languages have always had terms like 'Krachie' to describe persons being educated. And also during the colonial days people wanted their children to be educated and they carefully monitored their children's performance at school. (P15, 144:148) Although this attitude might not have been common among all groups in the Ghanaian society it looks as if it was a general trend. The fact that people have or actually take the right to withdraw their children from school whenever they think it is necessary shows that this trend has definitely changed. (P15, 151:158)

Obviously this affects children especially at primary school age where it is important for a continuous learning process to take place and where the quality of education is especially decisive for the children's success at further

levels. The general impression that primary education is not regarded to be as important as it should be is partially supported by the fact that the government is not paying the necessary attention to primary education either. A source working in the field of primary school teachers' training got the impression that there's a lot of lip service because of donor aid going into primary education but there is no real recognition of the importance of the primary school and its methodology (P16, 328:331). Some critics go even further and question whether the massive quantitative expansion at the basic education level has compelled the government and the nation as a whole to consider education as the key to development. (P20, 109:114)

On the other hand it is also largely accepted that from a historical point of view, education has played a major role in developing the country. (E3.3d) One source maintains that, compared to the uneducated person, the educated African stands a far better chance of determining the course of his or her life. He or she should be able to bring things together, sift what is good from what is bad and move on. Knowledge is especially useful for solving all sorts of problems in order to be able to move ahead.

One example is the trend of reverting back to African medical forms. Many years back there was a complete break between the so-called educated people and the non-educated people about the use of traditional medicine. Educated people did not want to understand the traditional medical system, so it has now become the order of the day. The influence of homeopathy offers a good argument for the Africans' attitude that not everything in the traditional medical system necessarily was bad; that there are some things which are good and if reformed could very well be of use. This in turn has probably encouraged educated people to re-acquaint themselves with indigenous medicine in order to apply it. (P3, 388:431)

To a certain extent education is intertwined with the question of being indigenous and with the question of what objectives schools are supposed to serve; a question which is not unique in Ghana. Indignization takes place all over the world wherever a society asks itself:

> "What shall we teach our children? And the answer is always: We will teach our children what the society in which they are working needs and not what some other society does." (P3, (514:521)

The problem in Ghana was that the educational objectives inherited from the British did not suit the needs of the society after independence; one source describes the type of education previously preferred as being primarily academic.

> " .. when we obtained independence, we realised that that system of education that enabled us to gain freedom was not the same type of educa-

tion that will enable us to survive as an independent state because during colonial times purely academic education was emphasised." (P6, 108:112)

Making education more relevant in practical terms was one answer to meet that problem, making the content more relevant in terms of cultural aspects was the other. A former official of the ministry of education and culture maintains that the idea which arose in the 1970s was that the content of the educational system could be enriched by taking up cultural aspects which might have survived in the villages, aspects stemming more from oral traditions. Recording and transcribing this material to be used in the classrooms would finally foster a continuity of the traditional system within the modern system. (P7, 15:20)

> "In that cultural policy the annual festivals of the arts and cultures were taken to be articulators. The issue of the national focus was going to be tackled from the classroom, where we can see a lot of these oral traditions and secondly, from the communities where the arts festival will also be." (P7, 21:25)

This knowledge was supposed to be transmitted through folk storytelling or essays in which the values were inculcated. In a story telling session people would sit round an old woman and in the course of the story she would seek to relay norms and values. These are the forms that were supposed to be transferred into classroom teaching. The source reports that this idea which was not implemented, left a vacuum then. The meaning of Africanisation or indigenization was that they wanted the modern African to know more about the traditional system. However, this goal was never achieved (ibid, 29:32, 54:61).

Indigenous World views like outlined by J. B. DANQUAH go back to some of the indigenous ideas and philosophies. Adapted material should have been developed to explain what was meant by this African way of thinking and let the reader absorb the things that are functionally good for the present state of development and use it. (P3, 406:412) Such efforts could have helped to close the gap between those people sticking to more traditional norms and values and those praising the Western achievements. In certain areas such gaps, e.g., in the communication between the elder and the younger generations, have developed into becoming a serious problem.

It is for instance not completely out that according to the traditional system a young person has no right to question an elderly person (P4, 252:254).

> "Traditionally speaking it is not really allowed to go on questioning an elder all the time. 'How is this, how is that?' Though this is creeping in a lot. 'Papa, how is this, why is this?' These things happen but very often

you are shut down in a traditional way. 'Oh, you talk too much!' " (P4, 255:260)

Arguing against an elderly person without getting him or her offended is somewhat difficult in the traditional society. Training for such techniques takes place on specific days during particular festivals or durbars. Young men are given the chance to counter charge elders who then have to explain everything. At the end of a durbar all people sit together discussing and drinking palm wine. After the quarrel has been settled people shake hands and drink from the same bowl. (P7, 46:53)

But apart from the cultural i.e. traditional aspects, it appears that the local languages had received more attention in the education system before independence. The source quoted above states that during the times he attended elementary school, students started school with Twi textbooks and learn to speak and read Akan fluently. The books written in Akan introduced students to their indigenous environment. Today primary school reading books inform about boating and ivy leaves which are not part of the indigenous environment and the model family that the books depict is not a typical African family, rather it is a typical European image. In terms of learning at the early stages of education, one source in particular concludes that there was probably more indigenous content to be found in school books before independence. He states that today the child is exposed to so much information foreign to his or her own environment from the age of 4,5,6 to 10 to an extent that children come home asking their parents about the names of numbers in their own indigenous language (which is Akan in the quoted example). (P7, 124:147)

A traditional chief is of the view that school education is not much affected by cultural aspects. According to his argumentation, the things done before the white man came were discarded because of being fetish-like and it is only recently that people are beginning to re-acquaint themselves with previous cultural achievements. As of now children have adapted to the Western way of living, in terms of watching television and videos, even small children play with guns, something which wasn't allowed formerly. But criticism is gradually growing. The source claims that the traditional chiefs should have been doing much more for African education, for instance writing up their view about the African way of development, because there is actually nothing written about it in the school books. More to the point, it was mainly the chiefs who were propagating the need for being in touch with cultural heritage so they should have seen to producing manuscripts for the educationists to use. He further doubts that today the children are educated enough to beat the talking drums correctly and there is even more to do in

the sense of developing a modern African culture, otherwise he states, "we go by the west all the time". (P5, 77:84, 281:284, 324:335, 345:351) Unfortunately not much was achieved in inculcating promising cultural aspects in modern education and a former official from the Ministry of Education and Culture concludes:

> "As far as I am concerned the African content or indigenisation in the educational system is far less than one expects nowadays." (P7, 79:81)

A different source states that, for instance, at junior secondary schools there is much emphasis on culture, but it is reduced to drumming and dancing, putting on Kente (a traditional cloth) or doing something like that. This is certainly an improvement over colonial days when students had to salute the British flag and say 'God save our Queen' (P6, 233:237) but it is certainly not all. Today the modern mass media contributes the most in getting people used to the idea that African things are also valuable. Indigenous culture can be found in the plays and dramas on TV and in the national theater rather than at schools. (P6, 244:249)

One could be tempted to conclude that although there were considerable improvements in terms of adapting the content of school education to the contemporary needs of Ghana (e.g. P7, 86:89) demands to enrich the content or methodology of education by indigenous aspects remains a bit nebulous lacking a clear agenda.

Considerable improvements were also achieved due to *changes taking place in the family*. A father's role, for instance, was primarily to punish a child for doing wrong rather than caring for the child and assisting him/her in many ways (P2, 236:237). Respect or behavior taught in the home was purely based on traditional norms (P5, 424:426). Despite this, one source maintains that generally speaking, the fact that a child should not ask any questions is completely archaic, especially in the town and the urban centers. According to this woman's view, children are indeed asking questions today and the traditional outlook of children being seen and not heard has been broken (P2, 232:234) Although this view is generally supported by other sources (e.g. P5, 267:270) this trend can be found predominantly in urban areas while people in the rural areas probably stick a bit more to traditional norms.

A well-known social scientist reports: In the traditional homes there could still be a disjunction between the things that the school does and the things that are done at home. In the traditional home people continue to teach the children along the lines of the informal educational system i.e. children will have to learn to do things by imitation, observation etc. And invariably

too, children have to learn what ought to be done and what not, but when they go to school, different things might be taught. No matter how low the level of schooling is, things like the explanation of the universe is taught, how a mechanical engine operates, how rains are formed, how the human body operates and the causes and the solutions to sickness. On the other hand, different explanations for these examples are taught at home. Last but not least, the kind of respect or behavior which is preferred in the traditional family is different from the demands of the modern school. The fact that the school is the perpetrator of children to ask more questions is an unconscious effort against the traditional norms. In the same respect, it is a contradiction in traditional vs. school education when a child is taught to go to the hospital when he is sick. This is bound to bring about conflict between the family upbringing and the school education. This may not necessarily apply to urban middle and upper class families because there is more of a continuity between the home and the school but it is by and large correct considering that the majority of Ghana's population still lives under less comfortable conditions in the semi-urban or rural areas. (P3, 301:330)

One should also take into account that the aspect of questioning was not formerly part of the family education and school education. It is just recently with modern trends that the child is trained to be a critically-minded person. (P8, 173:175) and that brings about some conflicts between school education and traditional education which could be partly solved by setting up parent-teacher committees so that these differences could be resolved and the school would not see itself as being impeded by the home and the home would not see the school as doing something to undermine the authority of parents (ibid., 189:192). One chief interviewed holds the view that the ideal mixture between the modern and traditional aspects in education was symbolized by the 'Sankofa', a traditional symbol which means in short that one must take into account the past to determine where to go in the future:

> "I think the Sankofa is a symbol which can teach us to reform everything we are doing. What is good, we have to take. What is not good, we have to forget totally. We shouldn't say our ancestors did this and they did that and so we also have to admire this and that. I believe that we have to forget anything which is not matching with the international or modern world, no matter what and take what is related to the international world. And if we feel it is good, we have to do it now!" (P5, 285:294)

However, in the end the investments made in education must somehow be matched by the outcome and that reveals a serious problem today. People seem to have made the experience that education only pays up to a certain point and that became evident when some started making money even with-

out going to school. Since then the social climate has changed in a way that puts people in responsible positions according to their wealth rather than to their education. This was certainly further aggravated by the fact that more people can be found having acquired a Ph.D. without being in a position to afford their daily bread. (P1, 301:313)

The most important point at issue is probably reorganizing the orientation of parents in order to make them understand the purpose of schooling. This is difficult in a country where it has become pertinent to say: I was not educated in any way, didn't go to school and yet I have a house, a wife and I am feeding my family all right, so I do not see any need for wasting time to become educated (P4, 159:161); and where parents are not very conversant or enthused about what goes on in the school except sending their children to school in order to become big people one day (P13, 86:91) and where people in the remote areas prefer their children to stay on the farm. (P18, 307:312). However, anyone who wants to become a better farmer can only be convinced that it is helpful to know how to read and write (ibid.) if in reality, a real chance is provided.

6.7 Suggestions to Improve the Education System

Code Reference(s): F1-6

Basic education: There is a widespread consensus on the fact that improving primary education deserves more attention. If the foundation at the primary level was strengthened and, e.g., education in science was improved, it is more likely that students and especially girls would opt for sciences at the JSS level. Generally speaking, a better foundation would lead to better results at the higher levels (junior and senior secondary schools).

It is also the basic education level at which students can more easily acquire and develop practical skills. Another factor would be to ensure that the schools are manned with the right caliber of teacher, to improve instructional services in the primary and junior secondary schools in technical and vocational orientated subjects. A better training and re-training of teachers is a considerable factor. Additionally a more efficient school management system would have to be introduced. (P18, 36:38)

Teacher training: One particular source suggests putting more emphasis on the training of basic education skills. His idea was to put 60% emphasis on the primary school and 40% on the SSS. He maintains that if teachers were prepared better to teach at the basic education level, there would not be the question of an additional year at the SSS level. He thinks that the problem could be solved if out of the daily 6 hours of work, 4 hours were devoted

to practical work and 2 hours to theory. Despite the government's policy of training primary school teachers in all subjects it was also possible to train specialized teachers for that level. The same source maintains that teachers could be better prepared if they were trained in only two subjects.

Changing the teachers' attitude towards teaching was another factor. He or she ought to be more of a partner to the learner, withdraw a bit from his or her dominating role and let the students come to the fore. The methodology should be as such that children play the major role during activities, asking questions so that the teacher can find out what they are learning, what is happening, why something is happening. Then the teacher can try to pull ideas together in order to help the children to draw their own conclusions. Such an approach would also make the teacher more confident as he would not be in a position to appear omniscient.

A different idea tackles the aspect of producing the urgently needed teaching materials. Teachers should be put in a position to make models of the equipment they need in the schools. Other teacher colleagues could be invited to take an active part in the process of producing the materials in order to be able to make copies of these models themselves later on. Such models and materials could be distributed at the district level through the district offices or through the resource centers.

Another aspect is that refresher courses and seminars must be based more on topics related to the environment in which the school is located. This would mean to placing a greater emphasis on teaching methodology as well. In teaching the science of electrolysis for instance, copper plates are needed to carry out the experiment according to the book, but these copper plates are not necessarily available in the villages. Teachers have to be taught what to do in the absence of copper plates. Writing booklets on how to improvise in the absence of materials could be another way to increase the ideas mentioned. Connected to the above The idea of using teachers who have done well in their regular teaching as model teachers in such refresher or in-service training seminars would couple well with the idea offered above.

Administrative services: It is suggested that the educational administration improve its services by creating a better coordination between its departments. This would make administration more effective in terms of educational planning and implementation. In close connection with suggestions to improve the administrative standard is the idea of making use of academics and other intellectuals as 'think tanks'. The responsibility of such a think

tank would be predominantly to develop policies about how to get the economy working, and, applied to the educational sector, to develop models of how to finance the education system. This would include allowing and even encouraging people to present broader visions of how to improve the system, something which has been be too restricted up until now. (P7, 423:466)

Another point for the CRDD was to develop broad themes and concepts to guide teachers through the curriculum of a specific subject rather than prescribe narrow topics. Also there should be a policy for regulating the investments of a school. This was necessary for curbing any temptation on the part of the heads of the schools to use moneys for the improvement of their favorite subject areas just to name one example. Spending money in subject areas should be based on policies rather than on likes or dislikes.

It was also the task of the educational administration to ensure students to obtain international certificates as long as the SSSCE has not gained international acceptance. This could be achieved through distant education courses which could be offered in addition for those who have already passed the SSSCE and who want to further their education outside Ghana.

Establishing criteria for effective learning and teaching was another task the educational administration was supposed to take up. According to one particular source, the country is in danger of taking almost everything acceptable. He maintains that there must be criteria defining the acceptable minimum standard in order to clarify that schooling would not work below a particular level.

> "Not even a grandiose structure, but a structure that is roofed and where you find some tables, furniture, a place for a cupboard for storing these books and so on. Not just anything where children sit and the fact that learning is going on should satisfy us." (P14, 94:97)

The same applies to identifying what makes a good teacher. Up to now there has been no appraisal system by which teachers can be assessed and promoted. Instruments of measurement should be introduced as a means of constituting a good lesson. The fact that a teachers passes an exam, uses his or her English up to a certain level and so forth is at present the means of evaluating a 'good' lesson(P16, 122:126).

As of now the majority of secondary schools available for students to attend after graduating from the basic education schools are senior secondary schools. A SSS teacher suggests increasing the number technical/vocational

schools thereby being able to award specialized upper secondary school certificates.

Another important aspect was to improve the inspection and supervision services of the MoE/GES. This would apply to both the inspection and supervision as being critical in evaluating a school's performance in general and assisting teachers in classroom teaching by means of subject organizers in particular.

Automatic promotion: It is suggested to consider the possibility of abolishing automatic promotion. Teachers who are already supervised by their heads should be held responsible for the performance of their students. It would be easier to detect whether proper teaching had taken place if decisive criteria were introduced whereby a student's ability to pass on to the next grade would be evident by the end of the year. This would certainly imply a change of parents' attitude because they tend to believe that if a child fails it must be the fault of the teacher. Although a strong argument, the fact that students must tune their minds to studies and that parents must assist and contribute to a successful learning process should not be overlooked.

Community involvement: Despite the common complaint that parents don't show enough interest in supporting the learning process of their children, there is as well the hope that parents will be interested in seeing how their children are taught and improving at school. It is necessary to encourage and involve the parents and communities in the various activities essential for improving school services and facilities, e.g., supervising whether schooling actually takes place, raising teachers' accommodation etc. If that cannot be achieved, the future of education could become bleak, because, as one source guessed, a time could come where people will not mind going to school and the maximum they desire to achieve could be simply being able to write their names (P1, 329:333).

So it is not only that the people in the communities have to be educated with the intention of accepting the fact that working with your hands, having a vocation, or being a technically-oriented person is as lucrative as being a doctor or a lawyer or an accountant as is maintained by some officials (P12, 94:98). This which was certainly a wonderful achievement but they should be made aware that education goes beyond the aspect of immediate use.

Vocational/technical training must remain an important topic in the basic education cycle because it is at that level where students acquire skills best in subjects with pre-technical/pre-vocational orientation. Investments

should therefore be increased in pre-vocational and pre-technical education (P1, 189:192). Students could then continue on to their pre-disposition either in the technical/vocational institutes, the senior secondary schools. They could also go into apprenticeships which would finally prepare them for life, but unfortunately they are too young to be really useful. Therefore it is the country's task to make arrangements or make provisions by introducing a better kind of apprenticeship system for those students. (P23, 197:208)

Appropriate workshops could include and make use of the road-side fitters as well. One source states that the students have already acquired enough basic skills to make an organized kind of workshop possible in these localities instead of building more schools for them. He maintains that this would be cheaper and you would get a group of competent mechanics on the road side and after some time we would get a generation of road-side mechanics who would not only operate by common-sense but at least have some background. They would be people one could speak to but as it is today somebody is needed to interpret. If Ghana wanted to phase out this generation then mechanics and craftsmen, for example, who are literate and know what they are doing would be needed. (P14, 164:177)

SECTION III: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Commentary: As outlined in the beginning, the course of the research changed from the initial idea of inquiring into theories about schooling, instructional learning and education in general to inquiring into the systemic problems of the education system in general, and particularly the education system reform. From a retrospective point of view, the change of topic was not only facilitated by the fact that the deplorable conditions at schools were generally militating against interviews focusing on theories of education, etc., but also the time to conduct such research was probably quite unfortunate. It was in May 1994 when I started interviewing teachers that the disappointing results of the first SSSCE examinations were released. In the following weeks and months the discussion about whom to make responsible for the slow and cumbersome implementation of the reform was dominating the scene. This certainly contributed to making teachers a bit uncooperative in discussing such intimate issues like instructional learning, didactic and methodology and philosophies of education.

However, this was not the only reason to place more emphasis on the explanation of systemic interdependence among the various components of the education system in Ghana. In a situation where schooling is facing difficulties to the extent that professional teaching performance is in danger of taking place even on a minimum level, I became increasingly interested in inquiring into the reasons of how such a situation has developed.

Arguments like 'Ghana is too poor to afford democratic quality education', 'schooling and education does not have a lobby', 'schooling is of the wrong type', or 'if only teachers would teach things would work' are much too simplistic answers to explain the problems of the education system. According to present findings Ghana is certainly not exceptionally poor, schooling has a lobby in Ghana and most teachers would like to concentrate on teaching. Additionally the changes made were, by and large, addressing the omissions of the previous education system. Also the fact that skilled people were needed to plan and implement the education system reform was adequately considered. Almost all Ghanaians involved were skilled social scientists, many of them teachers. Their foreign counterparts were skilled too and still after 15-20 years of gradually introducing the education system reform, schooling did not at all produce the expected results.

Chapter 7 will present conclusions drawn from these present findings partially verifying or falsifying the contemporary state of the art. Chapter 8 presents some more specific information on systemic communication and the interrelation of certain components of the education system in Ghana to complement these findings. Now that views on aspects of organization and and systemic interrelation have entered this research, I will outline in chapter 9 why particularly educational considerations must be approached when building or reconfiguring an education system.

Cross-references within the text such as '...clarified by ADICK (3.1a)' refer to the particular chapters in this booklet. References such as 'P30, 47:48' and 'D1.1d' refer to Annex I and Annex II respectively.

7. Findings Related to the State of the Art

7.1 Universal and Indigenous Education

As clarified by ADICK (3.1a) the development of the education system, particularly in Ghana, is rather an autochthonous invention than a European copy. Her thesis emphasizes pointing out specific characteristics as to identify schooling as an universal achievement. Not to neglect the importance of this thesis, it does not comprise the subsequent influence of missionary or colonial thinking on the later development of the structure and content of formal education. The case of Ghana demonstrates that although the invention of formal education in Ghana must be seen as an autochthonous development which establishes schooling as an universal achievement. This does not necessarily give way to the thesis that indigenous content has entered or significantly influenced schooling as such and it is this neglect what ANTWI (1.1) complains about when he states that the colonial type of education did not prepare Africans for successfully mastering their independence and developing a self-reliant economic and social system.

Indigenising education would have meant to inject indigenous aspects derived from the cultural heritage and tradition into schooling in order to establish a meaningful fusion of African/Ghanaian/indigenous and modern or European education. Although certain attempts to combine these aspects were postulated as educational objectives (table 2+3), not much was actually achieved in terms of indigenising the curriculum (6.6e). This is probably related to the fact that the integration of cultural heritage and traditional aspects was not handled skillfully enough to gradually foster a change. One interviewee, then a high ranking official at the Ministry of Education and Culture has called those cultural policies political weapons. Probably too

much force was used or had to be used to make indigenous content part of formal schooling and this corresponds with statements indicating that the reform was an imposition. (D1.1b+d; E1.1e)

Considering that not everything that can be derived from tradition and culture is necessarily good, one problem materialized on a very practical level: What institutions are there to sift what is good and promising from what is bad and counterproductive. Who decides what types of materials have to be produced? One interviewee, a traditional chief himself, argued that not even the chiefs who still play an active role in Ghana's social life, have put down any material. What worsens the case is the fact that there is also not much to be found in books written by social scientists as to explain and discuss how a fusion or mutual development of traditional and modern values can be achieved. Now that the Ghanaian society is in a transitory stage indicated by a variety of changes, e.g., the fact the youth is gradually being allowed to criticize the views of elderly people or children are gradually being encouraged to ask questions demanding for answers other than traditional and cultural explanations to world phenomenons, the questions arises whether traditional and cultural values and norms are going to be generally neglected in the future. In contemporary Ghana it is much more the modern mass media that transmits and discusses the traditional norms and values in dramas, etc. than the formal school. (E1.1e; E3.3a)

In many schools, especially in rural areas and at schools where the majority of students come from a poorer setting, there is still a clash between what the modern school teachers and what the child is supposed to practice at home. This applies to a lesser extent to middle and high income families living at urban or semi urban areas. (E3.3c+f)

It was not possible to find out when or why the previously mentioned inculcation of cultural and traditional aspects of formal schooling lost importance, but there is evidence that they lost much of their initial importance. This is probably due to the fact that more of the actual time spent in classrooms has to be used for raising the educational standard of students in English language classes and arithmetic (A1.2a). When it became evident that the primary school curriculum was too overloaded (A1.8), cultural and traditional studies which had been independent subjects previously, were, together with other subjects, integrated and condensed, forming one subject, 'the child and its environment' (table 6) in order to tighten the syllabus. However, cultural and social studies, were those subjects representing the indigenous cultural part of the syllabus. They were, according to MAZRUI (3.2a), responsible for adjusting education in order to provide new lenses for Ghanaians enabling them to evaluate what is good

and what is bad as seen from an indigenous point of view. Now the subjects to provide such 'lenses' were removed from the syllabus giving way for developing universal basic education skills such as reading and writing in the English language and arithmetic.

It is indeed important to contemplate to what extent and what aspects of tradition and culture should materialize on the educational level. One thing is quite clear, as many informal discussions during school visits with Ghanaian students about traditional culture have revealed: The importance of cultural aspects diminishes as they loose importance in the actual environment. A positive example for the maintenance of their cultural heritage is, for instance, making use of the 'talking drums' to call students to classes at some Ghanaian schools instead of using the bell. It was certainly easier to ring the bell, but if the talking drum gets replaced by the bell, then one more chance to demonstrate that beating the 'talking drums' can have an actual meaning will diminish. We all know that today's modern society can function without 'talking drums' but in the absence of any practice, traditional culture will render to becoming dead knowledge. Anyway, the question remains, what is to be done at school to solve that problem? Or has Ghana quietly departed from the idea of maintaining and adjusting a particular traditional/cultural content to the formal schooling level?

At present it looks much more as if people in Ghana tend to adopt more and more universal and thereby Western trends, hoping to accelerate their own development. Certainly, history, social studies, cultural studies and geography textbooks reflect the Ghanaian environment, but they don't pose any alternative to the conventional Western way of problem solving, enabling Ghanaian students to develop an indigenous world view. Formal schooling is an indigenous institution in contemporary Ghana although lacking an impressive traditional or cultural identity. But isn't that a universal phenomenon? Altogether it is very likely that universal trends, entailed by modern mass education will foster universal contents which is most important for, and becomes most evident at the basic education sector.

7.2 Basic Education

In concordance with conventional findings, the acquisition of basic education skills such as the early acquisition of language skills and basic mathematical concepts have also proved to be decisive for a child's further success at basic education schools in Ghana. Because English is the medium of communication from primary class 3 upwards, learning English as a second language must be considered the most crucial challenge for primary school pupils. (A1.2a; A1.6)

According to Ghana's official language policy, pupils at primary schools should be taught in the vernacular from primary school class one to class three. By this policy, the government wanted to ensure that pupils at the early learning stages will have no problems in following the teaching of particular concepts. One decisive factor hindering many teachers from teaching the vernacular is that all textbooks, even those used at the kindergarten and primary class one level are written in English. The other reasons for many teachers to bypass that regulation is the fact that they think teaching in English from the early stages is better for the pupils than teaching in the vernacular. According to some teachers' opinion, switching to English in primary class three is too late to prepare them adequately for the higher levels where the child must be perfectly conversant in English as the medium of communication. Other primary school teachers, especially untrained and student teachers (previously comprising 25%) were considered to be exceptionally bad in communicating in the English language themselves, thereby fostering pupils' inefficient acquisition of language skills. (A1.2)

Despite the importance of the English language, various tests and observations reveal that students at ordinary primary schools are particularly weak in this subject. Although the first results of the Criterion Reference Test were generally disappointing, and subsequent results have gradually become better, there is evidence that the vast majority of Ghanaian primary school students do not meet the requirements of the curriculum (A1.6a). According to some teachers it is not unusual for students to still have enormous problems in reading writing and expressing themselves at junior secondary school class three. Even at senior secondary school the low standard of the English language has a negative impact on teaching (A1.2a). This obviously impedes successful acquisition of knowledge in all subjects.

Increased and better material input and a sound learning environment would certainly help to improve basic learning skills at schools in Ghana, but with the exception of private and a few selected government schools, conditions must be considered generally poor. Buildings are often in a deplorable state and in some areas it is a common picture to find students carrying furniture, stools and tables to the school because the schools lack even the most basic of education facilities. Schools often suffer severely from an inadequate supply of low quality instructional material, although, according to official statistics they are supposedly equipped sufficiently. This applies to textbooks, materials needed in the sciences and in the pre-technical/pre-vocational subjects at junior secondary schools. (A2; A4.4+5; A5.4)

The workshops at JSS especially, are not in a condition to make one believe that technical and vocational subjects are or once have been considered the nucleus of the junior secondary school program. (More detailed below, 7.3.) From today's point of view, not merely a theoretical point of view but moreover, a realistic one, it is difficult to consider the preparative aspect of technical/vocational subjects to be a serious part of formal basic education at the school level. Probably technical/vocational subjects will only survive when converted and brought to a level where they sideline the curriculum by exposing students to some amount of practical experience. Such a concept would then much more resemble PESTALOZZI'S concept of learning by head, heart and hand than preparing students for the world of work.

Students' low learning achievement during official teaching hours gave rise to the introduction of extra classes. As extra classes gained importance, a number of people started to complain about this, accusing teachers of inventing a new source of income. Extra classes have to be paid for by the parents and take place after official or regular teaching. Teachers justify the introduction of extra classes by pointing out the overloaded curriculum and the overenrolled classes. In fact both arguments are substantial. (A1.5)

It is only recently that the primary school curriculum has been reduced from formerly nine to four subjects in order to make the syllabus manageable. Additionally, class sizes are significantly above the official figures. In concordance with other findings, class sizes at primary and junior secondary schools are between 35 to 90 students and even at well reputed senior secondary schools the average size was at 50 (A1.1a). These are somewhat different figures as given by the MoE. However, large class sizes, together with other aspects, are certainly contributing to teachers' and students' problems in covering the syllabus and this runs particularly contrary to the World Bank's general view, which considers class sizes too small.

Additionally one must consider that instructional time is very short in Ghana. Research findings estimate 600 actual teaching hours in one academic year. Most interviewees had complained about loss of actual teaching time due to extra curricular activities such as sporting events, rehearsals for independence day etc. Likewise, students are sometimes frequently absent from school. Occasionally they have to help their parents on the farm, especially during the harvesting or fishing season and students in the urban areas are often asked to contribute to the family income by doing odd jobs, sometimes helping other family members at their shop. (A7.1) The loss in actual teaching time is further aggravated by the fact that

also some teachers are absent once in a while due to having a second job. And even when they are not absent, they sometimes do not fully teach, but rather correct tests or do their preparation during class time because their second job takes up the time normally needed for such lesson preparation. (B3.2)

Another problem is that at basic education schools in Ghana students are automatically promoted from one class to the next. This means that there is actually no monitoring system except the internal examinations and continuous assessments done at classes. Only by the end of class nine, i.e., the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) at JSS class 3, students have to take a final exam. Now that the assessment and examination system is poorly supervised at this level, a number of students have been further promoted to SSS without having acquired the necessary skills (B3.5b; D3.3b). It is only recently that the introduction of Criterion Reference Tests (CRT) have made people aware of the fact that so many pupils have not acquired even the basic skills at primary class six (5.1b, A1.6a).

The fact that primary education and thereby the acquisition of basic education skills does not have a good lobby in Ghana is further worsening the case. Although people generally value education, they neglect the development of teaching practice at the early stages. In the presented research this attitude materialized in two different ways. Some interviewees complained about the fact that university lecturers can hardly be convinced of taking the idea seriously that the universities should shoulder the responsibility of teaching primary methodology and instructing at the early stages. (B4.1.2; B4.2.2a-c) According to one source, there is also only one lecturer working in that field holding a Ph.D. related to primary education. Other people seem to have already surrendered to tackling the problem of raising the primary standard in view of the huge numbers of primary schools and their immense problems (P23, 344:364).

Many people and particularly the government tend to act as if no specific training was needed to teach at primary schools, a fact probably related to the low standard at primary schools. According to some teachers this became evident for instance when teachers went on strike and soldiers were sent to teach at schools (P15, 186:195, P20, 87:90). Although this particular action might have been partially due to political considerations too, the habit of replacing vacancies at primary schools by secondary school graduates who are doing their National Service reveals the low value attached to primary teaching. Despite the fact that instructing at the early stages is especially important and needs specific skills it looks as if this fact is not seriously and adequately taken into account in Ghana. Inspite of the many problems, a

decision was finally made to place more emphasis on basic education which materializes by the fact that only students with senior secondary school certificates will be admitted to teacher training colleges in the future. This gives further support to MOSHA'S findings (3.4b) that all teachers need secondary education. (B3.3a)

LOCKHEED'S and LEVIN'S findings pointing out that efficient schools are not a mystery but dependent on particular specifics materialize at Ghana's private schools. Although private schools have more less or even untrained teachers than government schools, their superior management including particularly a better supervision of teachers' performance and a better supply of materials fosters far better results than at government schools. Private schools also ensure that homework is given to students and that it is subsequently corrected, that instructional time is not invested into sports days or rehearsals for government purposes, but used solely for teaching. (A6)

Despite the fact that working conditions are much better at government schools, as far as job security and salary disbursement are affected, teachers seem to work more effectively at private schools. Some sources attributed this phenomenon to the fact that teachers at government schools fall easily into the habit of teaching in a quite relaxed manner because they know that they can hardly be disciplined or removed (B3.1g). This reveals that proper school management, i.e. supervising the teachers' performance in order to improve instructional services, ensuring an adequate supply of education facilities, and a sound learning environment are most decisive for effective schooling and that paying higher salaries does not necessarily solve the problem of inefficient teaching.

7.3 Vocationalizing Education

The idea of introducing a sort of pre-technical and pre-vocational orientation in the curriculum of formal schooling underwent some drastic changes. In the beginning the technical and vocational subjects were more understood as a preparation of students for the world of work (D1.2b-d). This attitude has lost importance over the course of time. Initially, the curriculum developed for the JSS program comprised technical, vocational, and commercial subjects, some of them quite too specific to be taught at basic education schools (table 5). If actually introduced, subjects like metalwork, electrical installation, and automobile practice would have required intensive investments in terms of supplying sufficient equipment and skilled instructors. Also other subjects like commerce, economics,

marine science and book-keeping would have required employing skilled personnel.

The implementation of the government's initial idea to attract skilled professionals from the local areas to teach the practical subjects at junior secondary schools failed miserably (5.1c, professional instructors...). Consequently the schools had to rely on ordinary classroom teachers to instruct the technical/vocational and commercial subjects. Most of these teachers had no adequate training for professional teaching and it is only recently that teachers have become better trained at pre- and in-service training courses (D2.4). In view of the immense demands junior and senior secondary schools have in that sector, it is very likely that those subjects will remain underressourced for many years.

In addition to the inadequate supply of skilled instructors, the inadequate supply of instructional materials and poorly-equipped workshops are additional factors militating against successfully instructing those subjects (D1.3). But probably the focus on technical/vocational/commercial (t/v/c) subjects has been withdrawn anyway. This assumption is substantiated by a GES official, responsible for the supply and logistics of material. She maintained that workshops don't have to be 'elaborate'; that it is not the task of the government to supply the JSS with machinery (P21, 38:86). This gives rise to the assumption that the government has changed its initial policy; but still, subjects such as electrical installation, metalwork, automobile practice, etc. need some amount of 'elaborate' equipment in order to expose students to some practical experiences, let alone for preparing them for the world of work. If the government decided to reduce the support for the t/v/c subjects or whether they have simply lost emphasis, the responsible authorities should at least make that clear. People, schools and training institutions should be informed, if again the emphasis at formal school was shifted to general academics. Last but not least, the WAEC as the examining body would also be affected by the reorientation of such a policy.

It should also be considered that the introduction of subjects with a technical/vocational (t/v) orientation triggered off great optimism and great expectations. A major change was expected to take place after students had completed the JSS (i.e. after they had taken the BECE). The pre-technical/pre-vocational subjects were supposed to prepare mainly this group of students coming from lower income families sufficiently so that they would have a better chance on the labor market; they were expected to become useful technicians within a very short time or even start a business of their own (D1.10b). Mainly three factors have proved the interim implementation of the JSS program a failure. Two of them were mentioned

previously; a lack of an adequately trained teaching staff and a lack of instructional materials and adequately equipped workshops. But the third and probably most important factor turned out to be that the students who graduated from junior secondary school were generally considered to be too young to become skilled technicians in a short time and too inexperienced to be taken seriously when trying to start a business of and on their own. (D2.1c+d)

As a result, a growing number of JSS graduates became unemployed after school and ended up doing various odd jobs, proving nine years of basic education to have been practically useless. It looks as if MENKA'S criticism (4.2) dating from the mid 1970s (!) was right, that, in the absence of adequate facilities at schools, a proper apprenticeship should be developed to take care of the school leavers aged 15-16 in order to turn them into qualified craftsmen. Although the country became gradually aware that such young school leavers, educated under such unsatisfactory conditions, are not in a position to match skilled craftsmen or to even start a prospering business on their own, nothing was done to develop better links between the formal school and the informal training sector. (D2.3; F4)

Close to that point is that an educational reform as implemented in Ghana will have a major influence on people's occupational aspirations only when it is accompanied by structural changes on the labor market (3.3b). The case of Ghana reveals that technical/vocational subjects which have a functional character are losing relevance as schools leavers are not able to make sufficient use of them. In other words an education system reform fostering the introduction of vocationally oriented subjects at the school level must ensure that the acquired skills and abilities are needed and will be further developed later on (A4.4a). In Ghana this systemic interrelation was neglected.

Indeed, it looks as if the government is silently withdrawing from its initial idea to foster the predisposition of students to technical/vocatio-nal/commercial professions without having a clear concept of what to do with these subjects, some of them remaining in the curriculum in a different outfit. Making schooling just manageable will not make up sufficiently for the absence of an educational concept.

Another point at issue is the attitude towards manual labor that students have in Ghana. Those who are from low-income families are likely to have a better attitude toward manual labor than those who come from middle- or high-income families (E3.1c). The case of Ghana reveals that low income families cannot afford to pay extra school fees for their children. As a result,

schools attracting children from low income families are extremely poorly equipped with facilities for technical/vocational subjects. (A1.7; C2.3)

Opposed to that, students from middle or higher income families attend schools better equipped with instructional facilities and they stand a far better chance of belonging to that group of the 50% of JSS leavers who will continue at SSS. At the same time a more negative attitude towards manual labor persists among middle and high income families in Ghana. Almost ironically those students who gain most from being exposed to technical or vocational experiences at school are least encouraged by their families to enter such professions. Taking into consideration that a major concern of the formal education system reform was to increase the chances of the majority of students coming from lower income families in order to reduce the unemployment rate and boost the economy by better trained manpower input, Ghana has maneuvered itself into a very critical position.
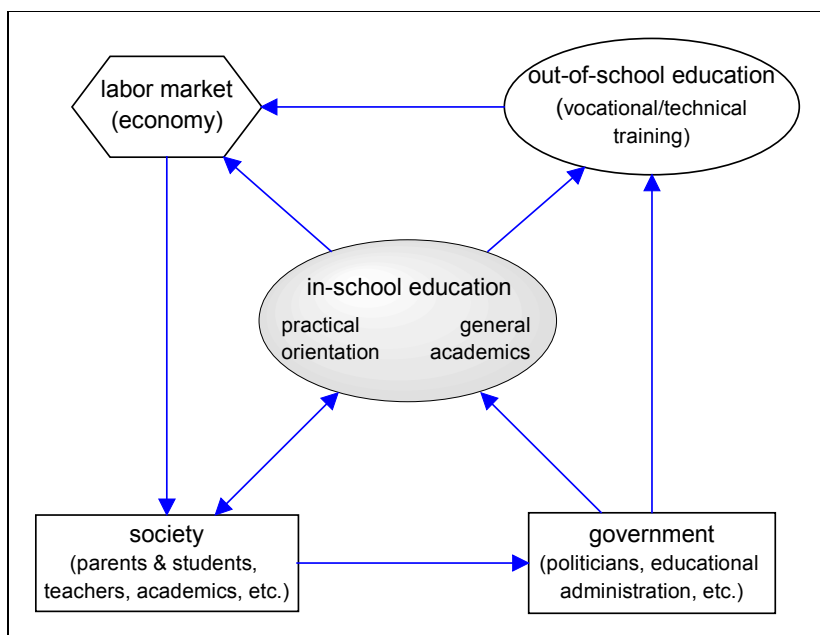
figure 20: in-school vs. out-of school education

Due to the fact that, in many other cases, vocationalizing education has proved to be a wrong decision, it was probably more effective to use the current resources to expose students to a variety of practical experiences with

the aim of 'learning by head, heart and hand' rather than further investing in a narrow technical/vocational preparation for the world of work. This proposal was substantiated by the fact that there is yet no reliable evidence showing that the professional sector really demands students having such a certain narrow predisposition (P16, 416:423).

Another factor that could have contributed to the recent trend to depart from the idea of vocationalizing education at the school level could be that expanding and vocationalizing education have resulted in extremely low academic achievements in basic learning skills, namely in the English language and mathematics. While results have not significantly justified this investment no long term answer can be given to the question whether the benefits do outweigh the costs (cp.3.3b). However, at least from the immediate cost-benefit prognosis, technical/vocational education should be better instituted in the out-of-formal schooling sector.

The remaining task of technical/vocational subjects in basic education schools and in the formal education sector respectively was then exposing students to practical experiences on a far lower level than intended initially. Practical orientation at formal schools cannot be considered as a serious alternative to professional - i.e. technical and vocational training out-of school. This necessitates developing the links between the formal school and the professional sector to foster the institution of a reliable t/v/c training system that develops students' skills after school. (F4)

7.4 Teacher Training and -Performance

Despite the World Bank's view that basic education teachers do not need secondary school education themselves and that increasing class sizes can facilitate increased enrollment rates (3.2b), experiences made in Ghana reveal that big class sizes foster low learning achievements (A1.1c). Taking into consideration that primary school teachers are supposed to teach almost every subject and that in junior secondary schools teachers are preparing students for senior secondary school it is much more an imperative demand that teachers must have secondary education themselves. Consequently the government has legislated that only students who passed the SSS examinations will have entrance to teacher training in future (B3.3a).

Teachers stand a much better chance of handling the large class sizes of approximately 40 to 70 students, when they have benefited from sound teacher training. But no matter how well they are prepared to teach, such large class sizes are certainly an impediment to effective instruction. Interviews and observations at Ghanaian schools revealed that the average

class size of approximately 45 is far to big for teachers to handle the class effectively (B2.4b).

Faulty statistics have probably also contributed to the view that Ghanaian basic education schools are sufficiently staffed with trained teachers. A thorough overhauling of statistics is a crucial point at issue for the amendment of educational planning strategies. (C1.7) An official student-teacher ratio of 28:1, as has appeared even in the 1993 UNESCO World Report wrongly suggests that Ghana's primary schools are more than adequately staffed with teachers. In actual fact this particular statistic is misleading because teachers detached from schools (being on in-service, etc.) were not subtracted from the total number of classroom teachers (P16, 11:12). Consequently there is hardly a chance of supporting the idea of producing more teachers using such faulty figures.

However, training more teachers was necessary in light of the fact that there will be an enormous quantitative expansion at the basic education level (figure 13). Additionally, there is a strong demand for more in-service courses at the primary and at the junior secondary school level; at the primary school level in order to upgrade the knowledge of the great number of teachers with no or low qualifications, and at the JSS level in order to train or re-train teachers for instructing technical/vocational subjects. Considering that there is an acute shortage of skilled teachers for the technical/vocational subjects at senior secondary school as well, in-service training and training of trainers gains an important relevance on that level too.

Although there is evidence from pre-announced classroom visits and the experiences made in private schools that teachers have the ability to perform far better than they are mostly doing during regular teaching, improving teacher training remains a point at issue. Especially when it comes to teaching at the early stages, teaching methodology is poorly developed in Ghana. (B5.2; P11, 198:201) Some teachers and what is even worse some lecturers and tutors wrongly suppose that the teaching of young children does not require special techniques, rather they seem to believe that it is just a simplified form of senior teaching (B4.2.2b). Currently there are attempts to restructure teacher training in order to foster primary methodology. This will include changing the attitudes of many teacher-training instructors towards instructing primary methodology, too; but it might not only be a matter of redirecting their attitude because especially the type of teacher-training instructor employed at training colleges (TTCs) has him/herself no experiences in teaching at the early stages. They had been trained to teach at

the secondary school level before coming to teach at the TTC. (B4.1.2a) It might become necessary to replace some of these instructors with people who are knowledgeable about new methodologies and techniques geared towards improving the teaching level at the early stages.

One important point often mentioned was about developing teachers' ability to teach in the absence of materials (B5.2d). But improvisation, as one important topic in some classes, providing alternatives to conventional teaching in the absence of a sufficient supply of material remains theoretical and is practiced in only some few college classes. Additionally, off-campus teaching practice which should expose trainees to practical teaching, suffers from inadequate guidance. (B4.2.4c)

Although some of the TTCs have now increased their courses to meet the demands for t/v subjects, the facilities for the preparative courses are certainly not optimal. As mentioned before, instruction for teaching the t/v subjects suffers from a lack of adequately skilled teacher-training instructors. Having teachers for t/v subjects trained at polytechnics should be considered. Attaching departments for pedagogic and methodology to existing polytechnics or establishing cooperative courses between polytechnics and teacher-training colleges could probably be easier that retraining instructors or staffing and furnishing the existing training-colleges with facilities needed for training students in teaching such subjects. (5.5b)

Assigning teachers to long training courses (one year for a diploma or for a B.Ed. course) causes another problem. It requires employing substitute teachers in the related schools. This results in a relatively high proportion of teachers being paid as classroom teachers but who apparently are on training leave, having registered for Diploma, B.Ed. or M.Ed. courses. Taking into consideration that teachers on training leave claim their full salary while at the same time there is the need to employ more teachers to fill the vacancies, complicates an already high financial burden; making use of teachers more effectively would certainly help to reduce expenditures.

The increased demand for in-service training results from the huge numbers of teachers teaching in the system, some of them inadequately prepared for teaching the new subjects. Besides the conventional model of in-service training that removes the classroom teachers from the school and assigns them to long courses, there are various other models, e.g., training by correspondence courses, on-the-job training and credit courses that are less wasteful in terms of manpower and monetary investment. (5.5d) Because student rates will invariably continue increasing, reducing off-school in-service training courses and introducing or converting at least some of the

courses to any kind of on-the-job training courses would reduce the immediate demand to employ more teachers in order to match the exploding enrollment rate.

A policy of continuing removing teachers from school, assigning them to long off-school courses would either mean raising the work load of those teachers remaining in the classroom or employing additional personnel to compensate for the losses. The fact that approximately one fourth ($1/4^{th}$!) of all primary school teachers are annually on training leave or detached from school further substantiates the demand to make good use of the persons appearing on the payroll.

Professional teacher performance is the next decisive factor. Particularly the lack of adequate knowledge of methodology is accountable for low teaching performance. Teachers tend to refer to the point that if they were paid adequately their work performance would be better (B1.4). A different explanation clarifies that recently people were attracted to enter the teaching profession as a kind of last resort. These persons had never wanted to become teachers but took the job as a stepping stone to other professions. (B3.4c)

However, commitment is certainly related to the fact that people expect to generate sufficient income by working in their primary job (B1.4b). Strengthening supervision will make teachers work more efficiently but its success is limited. First of all it is limited because those people employed by the government to supervise teachers are paid the same low salary (inspectors, supervisors and head teachers). Secondly, there is always a limit in pressurizing people particularly when everybody is aware of the fact that the salary of teaching as a primary job does not fulfill a family's modest expenditures and taking on a second job has become a necessity. (B3.2c)

The disbursement of low salaries is probably linked to the fact that teaching is no more considered to be a serious profession in contemporary Ghana. As it is, teachers appear to be quite in a bind: Teachers in Ghana must prove that their teaching produces results, otherwise they can't demand higher salaries; but if their teaching is supposed to produce results they must be in a position to concentrate on their primary job which means they need to be sufficiently paid. The supply with sufficient instructional material is another point.

8. Education System Adjustment

8.1 Expansion, Equity and Cost-sharing Measures

In retrospect to Ghana in the 1970s WEIS (3.1b) argued that large-scale expansion in the education system, or generally speaking increasing enrollment rates at primary schools does not necessarily mean that an education system opens and becomes less selective. He pointed out that hardly any students from lower classes could be found at secondary schools. Today the case is somewhat different in Ghana. A government policy has made access to senior secondary school attainable for 50 percent of all students graduating from basic education school. In fact the transition rate into senior secondary schools is even higher than anticipated (table 11). This necessitated the increase of the number of senior secondary schools (SSSs) and between the academic year 1989/1990 and 1993/1994 its number almost doubled (table 13).

The quantitative expansion caused by the recent reform did not start at the senior secondary school level, but already after primary school. Under the new policy there is no selective but an automatic promotion from primary to junior secondary school. To maintain a high education standard would therefore mean at first to consolidate the primary and JSS level. Although the infrastructure of the former middle schools could be used for the introduction of the JSS program, a quantitative expansion in terms of infrastructure was inevitable because the demands of the JSS program went beyond the existing infrastructure. Changes made in the curriculum, especially the newly introduced technical and vocational subjects demanded an additional supply of instructional material, workshops and equipment different from what had existed in the old middle schools.

Under the education system reform the Basic Education Certificate Examination after JSS demarcates the end of formal and compulsory basic education. The JSS has therefore become the crucial middle of the new education system and it became the bottleneck in the provision of quality education. Throughout basic education the point at issue became equity in terms of access to schools providing quality education. The problem of low educational standards at many government basic education schools became apparent as an examination of the SSSCE results revealed. Only those students who were adequately prepared at the basic education level had a fair chance of successfully mastering the exams.

Problems resulting from the quantitative expansion materialized mainly on three levels: Firstly, there had to be an appropriate policy to meet the infrastructural demands caused by the expansion on the basic education level (figure 13), secondly, schools had to be manned with teachers trained to teach the new subjects (figure 14), and thirdly, a sufficient amount of money had to be allocated to finance that quantitative expansion. Considering that the government of Ghana has already allocated 40% of its annual budget to the education sector (5.4c), this is probably another impediment to provide sufficient education facilities.

As a response to the quantitative expansion of basic education facilities, cost sharing measures were put into effect as part of the political democratization and participation policy in Ghana. Under the recent education system reform the District Councils (and their assemblies, the DAs) and local communities have become government's most important local partner in the provision of educational infrastructure. According to the government's educational policy, the District Councils and local communities were entrusted to take over the responsibility of providing sufficient facilities for the basic education schools (primary schools and junior secondary schools). Some districts in particular regions not considered to be in a position to generate enough income on their own, were excluded from this regulation.

As outlined before, huge sums of money will have to be allocated to this sector to even match the current enrollment ratio and at the same time to maintain the current standard of education. Taking into consideration that Ghana's economy has not yet benefited from the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), the austere measures of the SAP are bound to raise the public's opposition to the idea of the communities having to finance the maintenance and expansion of basic education facilities. Furthermore, the introduction of the District Councils' annual district composite budgets seems to be an insufficient arrangement (Holtkamp 1993, 148ff) for meeting the financial demands of the local communities. Consequently, increased cost-sharing, i.e., shifting responsibilities from the central government budget to the district and local communities could be rather unsuitable for developing and even maintaining the current standard in education as long as the economic situation does not change significantly.

Resulting from the fact that it is not very likely that the District councils and local communities will be able to meet the costs of an increased enrollment rate, a conclusion may be drawn with reference to the objective of the education system reform to make education more democratic or access to formal education more equal: Increased cost-sharing militates against the

provision of quality education at basic education schools located in communities where low income families cannot afford extra expenditures to support the school or their children with the provision of learning facilities, let alone additional expenditures for investments for maintaining and extending infrastructure. Despite the World Bank's view to underplay the relationship between the financial difficulties of certain countries and the declining quality of education (3.2b), the declining standard in basic education is clearly linked with the lack of means to provide even the basic facilities.
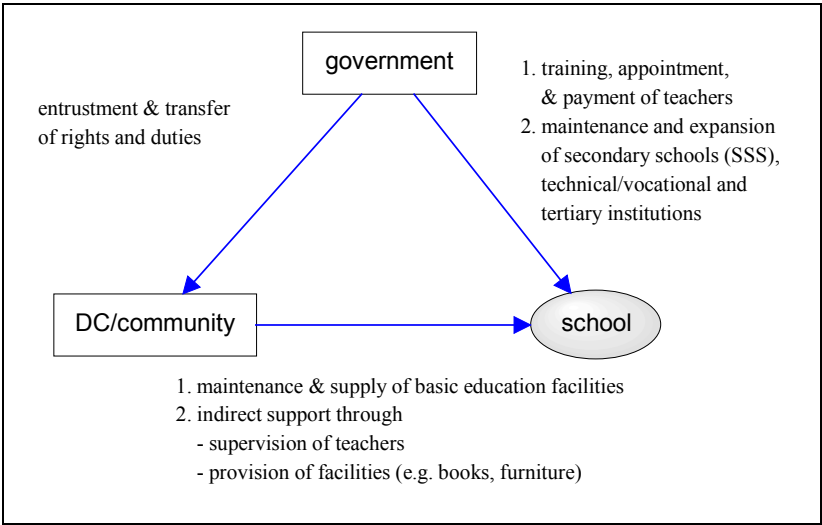
figure 21: assignment of tasks

The situation in communities where middle and upper income families are able to provide the facilities needed at the basic education level is inherently different. They are in a far better situation to levy themselves through additional school fees in order to assist the school in the provision of educational facilities. Facilities such as workshops, equipment and materials put basic education schools located in a more prosperous surrounding in a position of teaching subjects with a technical/vocational orientation more efficiently. In addition to the provision of such facilities, there is a better monetary endowment of particular schools for the furnishing and maintaining of school buildings and sanitary facilities, providing staff common or locker rooms. It should also be taken into consideration that

parents who are prepared to make higher investments into the basic education of their children (primary plus JSS) are likely to encourage their children to enter secondary schools like SSS or technical/vocational institutes.

Cost-sharing could therefore foster an increased inequity between a school enrolling students with a better financial background versus those enrolling students coming from poorer families. This was a counterproductive measure especially from the point of preparing students from low income families for a good start into the world of work or for starting professional/vocational training on the basis of pre-technical/vocational experience. This conclusion points especially to the fact that subjects with a technical/vocational orientation are more negatively affected by cost-sharing measures than others. They are particularly dependent on additional input, i.e., workshops and the related supply of material. Contrary to their better use in poorer settings where people would benefit in the future from the improvement of their professional skills, exposing students to practical aspects at school, technical/vocational orientation at such school is in danger of becoming irrelevant because the provision of the necessary facilities might be beyond the financial capacity of those people.

However such an interpretation could turn out to pose a problem: technical/vocational orientation is generally good for those who can't afford higher secondary and tertiary education, only its implementation is at stake. Anyway, if technical/vocational predisposition at the school was to contribute to the development of a professional (technical/industrial) sector it could foster social transition by creating a middle class capable of earning a decent wage, which would certainly be a significant step forward. Introducing loan schemes to enable students from a poor family background to continue at the higher secondary level could compensate for selection based on financial ability. At the same time a loan scheme proportionally based on parental income could help to finance the higher education sector.

Based on the assumption that especially poor families were supposed to benefit from making in-school education more relevant in practical terms, we must see that chiefly those who were expected to benefit most from the introduction of technical/vocational subjects at the school level are at the same time those who have the most problems in developing an auspicious environment for implementing the program. It seems as if a student's attainment of prevocational/pretechnical skills at poorly equipped basic education schools is a kind of no-win situation which is hard to break away from. Increased and better cooperation between the school and the

community is certainly a step forward in improving the situation but the speed of progress and the efficiency of all these efforts shouldn't be overrated. Consequently, cost-sharing measures must be adapted to the amount of parental income.

This is not to play down the fact that students who will not enter technical professions or other practical vocations can still gain from being exposed to practical subjects at school, but to clarify that investments are not made where they are most efficient. Educational planning and management should consider that and redirect investments in order to support the improvement of technical/vocational subjects in poor communities if they are really serious about preparing students from the underprivileged class for the world of work at the school level.

## 8.2 Supervision and School-Related Interaction

Under the current educational policy the government is involving the District Councils and local communities to support actions directed to foster and improve schooling. Still, the government education administration will remain the most important factor in the planning, management, and supervision/inspection of standards at all schools, but these actions and measures will be executed together with the local authorities. The interaction of the educational administration from a central and from a local level with the local authorities and parent teacher associations (PTAs) is demonstrated here.

One of the most important functions of the central administration must be the posting of a qualified teaching staff according to the needs of the regions and districts. Under the current policy the initial postings of new teachers takes into account the regional disparities of the country. Novice teachers receive their certificates after having been at their posts for two years, but the policy of this posting practice is undermined by a number of district offices. They employ teachers even without certificates. These teachers often escape from deprived areas lacking even the basic facilities such as sufficient accommodation good water and electricity. Consequently, the lack of cooperation between the central government, its district offices and the department responsible for salary disbursement fosters a certain regional disparity which acts against the policy objective of the government.

If the local communities were responsible for the disbursement of teacher salaries, this type of fraud, whereby a teacher is assigned to a particular school and receives his or her salary but works at a different school could be greatly limited. Such a measure would have to be sidelined and supported by regulations, e.g., making the head teachers and parent-

teacher associations (PTAs) responsible for controlling who is actually working at a particular school.

Another point at issue was to enable the district authorities to enact disciplinary measures against teachers if necessary. At present it takes a long time, if at all, until the administration reacts on petitions to discipline teachers. On the other hand, entrusting district authorities with such rights certainly bears the risk of increased corruption. But without making people aware that they run and create an administrative system for themselves and that they are responsible for the correct implementation of that particular system, neither a decentralized nor a democratic model can or would function.
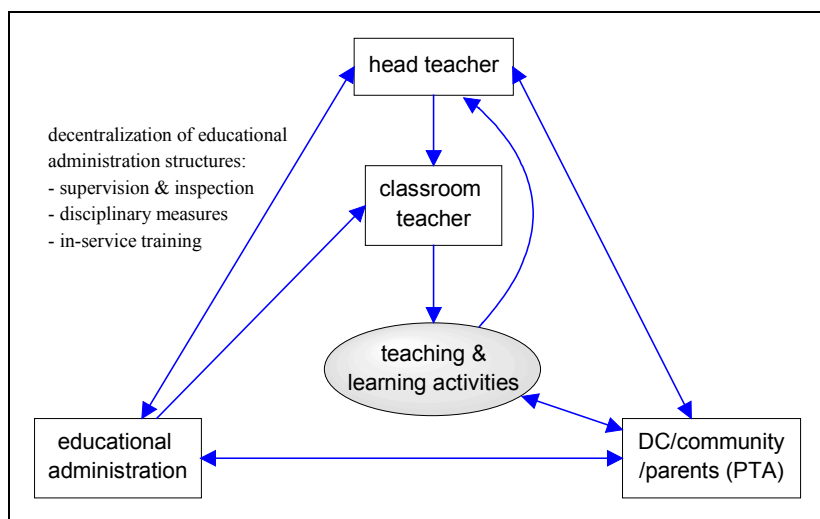
figure 22: supervision and interaction

Closely linked with enabling the local education offices to put certain disciplinary measures into effect should also be putting officers or supervisors, in cooperation with the local head teachers, in a position to assess teachers' performance. This must be done on the basis of an appraisal system; a catalogue of what makes a good teacher and what makes a good lesson. Such a system has to be agreed upon by district education officers, supervisors and headmasters and they must be instructed on how to apply such knowledge. Detailed proposals for such an appraisal system already exist and it just has to be put into effect with maybe some few alterations (see, e.g., The Headteachers' Handbook, GES 1994, unit 8).

The introduction of an appraisal system together with local in-service training courses, correspondence courses in education or on-the-job training measures would be a viable alternative to the current practice of promoting teachers by certificates only. It would consider more the actual teaching practice or performance of a teacher and teachers would no longer be removed from schools and assigned to long-term training courses.

Head teachers play a much more important role in a decentralized rather than in a centralized model. In a decentralized model they become a problem solving partner in all matters that relate the local communities and the district education office to the school. Beside the above-mentioned tasks in managing the schools as such, head teachers have become increasingly responsible for financial matters and improving the relations between the school and the community.

In addition to the school fees officially approved (textbook user fees, sports fees, culture fees and PTA fees), school-related fees can be introduced in order to improve the school budget. These additional fees have to be approved finally by the District Education Office but the point at issue will always be whether the local people are capable and willing to raise the money. The same applies to fund-raising activities which need support from the local community and the PTA. Teachers and especially head teachers need problem solving abilities and the will to tackle the emerging problems. In the end the striking point will be whether the social and economic surrounding is motivating the head teacher enough to foster school improvement rather than becoming frustrated.

Furthermore the head teacher must also monitor the teaching and learning process that takes place in the classroom. He or she should be abreast with the students' performance at the various levels in order to see whether the learning process goes on according to the syllabus. This is also the first important step in assessing teachers' performance. Teachers' performance is a major factor influencing the learning process of children and it is the head teacher's responsibility to guarantee that teaching and learning takes place according to the proper norms.

The local communities play a crucial role especially in the maintenance and extension of basic education schools (and their facilities). As was outlined earlier, a number of tasks have been transferred to them. This has led to an increased financial strain on the local communities which are at the same time expected to contribute to the supervision of schools. Parents certainly can not be expected to act as real school supervisors responsible for assessing the quality of teaching in professional terms but they should at least be in a position to find out whether or not their children are assigned

with learning activities at schools or whether they are given homework, etc. In view of the lack of professional supervision on an official level, they can give the school the feeling that there are at least parents who care whether schooling is actually taking place or not.

In case parents find anything seriously wrong going on in classes, the head of the school can be approached through the PTA. In case the school and the parents are not at good terms it might be necessary to involve the local district education office. If the PTA involves the district education office in an investigation, the official authority must then in turn contact the head teacher and his or her staff to inquire into the complaint of the PTA.

However it is probably the communication structure between the individual parents, the PTA and the community that is most promising if properly developed. On that level the basic education schools are in direct contact with the social and economic environment. If there is proper cooperation on that level, class excursions could be organized, e.g., to the local industry, crafts etc. to sideline vocational/technical subjects that suffer from a lack of equipment and learning materials. The time factor is often prohibitive for involving these local businesses to offer practical assistance at the school. Out-reach excursions could increase the readiness of local resource persons to demonstrate the work they are doing. Both students and teachers would benefit from such outreach excursions. Students might be more motivated to learn by practical experience and teachers get assistance in providing the students with a better and detailed insight into various vocations and professions. Altogether better communication between the school and the community would help to make the school more of an integrated body of social and community life.

8.3 The Interrelation of Key Factors Influencing Classroom Activities in Ghana

A difference is to be made here between key factors which directly influence classroom activities such as the needed facilities, the teacher and the students, and such factors that have a more indirect influence. However, factors such as the economic and materialistic situation of teachers, the government, the District Councils and the parents must be considered as key elements, too. One might rightly say that the economy has always had an overarching influence on almost everything that goes on in society and thereby on the education system as well, but in Ghana the economic situation of the involved parties is somewhat like a subliminal background vibration accounting for a number of serious implications.

Teachers, for instance, receive a salary from the government which is usually considered to be the primary income that has to account for the expenditures of the teacher and his family; the income is so low that one income alone is not sufficient for the expenditures of a whole family comprising, e.g., two adults plus two children. This results in many teachers having more than 'just' this one job and they usually supplement their salary by taking up a second job. Whether he or she takes on a second job besides teaching is in fact decisive for the time devoted to teaching as the primary job. Occasional tardiness or absenteeism could be linked with the fact that making extra money at a second job interferes with the performance of the first one. Linked to the fact that time devoted to a second job not only is likely to reduce time that should be devoted to the teaching profession, but finally becomes a hindrance to professional performance and it should be considered too, that commitment is likely to dwindle as the first job loses importance in accounting for the prime income. The situation is certainly different for singles but none of the interviewees has maintained that a teacher's income alone is sufficient to feed a family in Ghana.

The economy also influences the government, i.e., it determines the amount of money the government can allocate for education. This in turn affects teacher salaries, teachers' training, direct investments into facilities needed at school and it is the economy, again, indirectly conducive to the introduction of cost sharing measures, e.g., in the basic education sector through which the District Councils and parents are affected. Even without a deeper understanding of economic correlation it is probably clear that cost-sharing measures make sense only when it can be anticipated that although the government is unable to generate income by taxation, there is money in the pockets of individuals. Unfortunately that is not the case for the majority of Ghana's population.

Due to the policy of decentralization / participation and increased cost-sharing, the District Councils, communities and parents have become responsible for the supply of basic education facilities. As outlined before, means for that supply are short and many schools, not only basic education schools but also senior secondary schools, are suffering from a lack of teaching and learning materials.

This, in conjunction with a lack of methodological knowledge, lack of improvisation skills, low motivation and sometimes low work morals (sometimes due to low income) on the part of the teachers, endanger an efficient learning process at many schools. Although the situation seems to be particularly dramatic at basic education schools, newly established senior secondary schools (SSS) suffer the same and even the few well established

SSS face increasingly more problems. Increasing teachers improvisation abilities can partially compensate amenities such as lack of textbooks, lack of learning and teaching materials in science subjects and lack of equipment for practical subjects but the deplorable state of many schools is generally militating against a sound learning atmosphere at school.
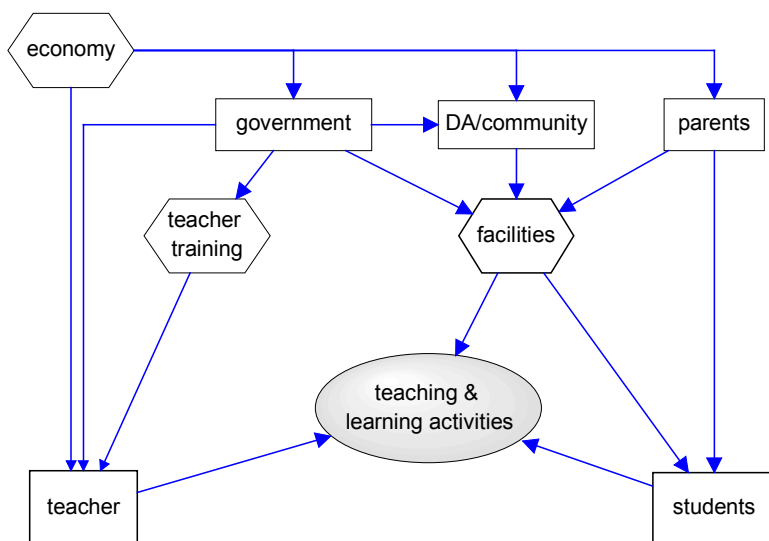
figure 23: key factors influencing classroom activities

A number of difficulties hamper sound learning conditions on the part of the students. Some students may live far from the next school and transportation is often either expensive and complicated or simply not available at all, which results in the fact that students often have to cover quite a distance on foot to reach school. This, in connection with low nutrition and sometimes even malnutrition leaves many students exhausted when finally having arrived in the classrooms.

Another aggravating circumstance is that many students have to support the family income by doing part time jobs, i.e., selling things, working on the farm, assisting parents or relatives at their business. Only little and sometimes even no time is left for the children to get prepared for the next day. Finding time, a place and peace and quiet to learn and do the homework is a serious problem for many students.

In many cases the teachers have already given up giving homework to young students because only a few turn up having done their work the next day. Such a problem is also partially linked to the fact that schoolbooks have to be left on the school premises and it is not allowed to take them home. Consequently, the students have no textbooks and no other materials except the things they had copied from the blackboard to learn with. Textbooks, exercise books, and additional readers for the children to learn from at home have to be bought privately. Because the books are comparatively costly, such materials are hardly accessible for students from low and even from middle income families. Taking into consideration that sometimes even getting enough sleep is a problem, especially when the many family members share one bedroom and live in a noisy area, being a student in Ghana can be a hard job indeed.

Controversial views within the Ghanaian society seem to exist about how children are to be educated. Families linked more to traditions and conventions (e.g. in rural areas or in lower income families in general) favor a more hierarchical model. In such families the children shouldn't ask too many questions. They are not allowed to question statements made by elders and a number of explanations about society and the world in general are linked to the traditional and a sometimes more mystical background. A modern school's approach is contrary to such a traditional approach. At school the child is expected to become a critically-minded person, someone who can defend his or her point of view and seek scientific and logical reasons to explain the world. It looks as if this kind of education is supported much more by upper class families and families living in urban and semi-urban areas in general. Children from a poor and/or rural background find themselves in the unfortunate situation of having to decide whom they should believe. In case they choose to believe what the school teaches, they might grow up with a somewhat divided personality.

9. Advantages of a Systemic Approach

The education system reform in Ghana was evolved out of philosophical, ethical, socio-political and economic considerations (table 1-3). Numerous discussions between educationists and politicians about what philosophy of education and consequently what educational policy would serve the country best accompanied the introduction of the reform. The dispute arising out of these discussions centered on three major topics: The first point at issue was making access to extensive formal basic education more democratic; secondly, the integration of the indigenous heritage into formal education; and thirdly, the relevance of labor market opportunities in view of scientific and technological developments.

The course of the introduction and implementation of the reform revealed that matters of philosophical, ethical, social and political importance became secondary to matters of feasibility. Economic strains and flaws in educational management were not met adequately nor in time to effectively compensate their negative effects. This contributed a lot to the improper introduction and implementation of the program and finally in the declining educational standards.

From today's point of view the problem is manifested on two different levels: The education system must be organized in such a way that learning takes place effectively. Problems concerning the most decisive components of the education system that have to be taken into consideration were presented in this research (section II). A brief outline for a possible reconfiguration of the education system follows in chapter 9.1 & 9.2.

As has been mentioned, the education system reform was based on objectives which also must be taken into consideration (table 1-3). If these objectives are not taken into consideration, a systemic (re)configuration will most likely follow simple rules of feasibility or cost-benefit relations as is most popular among economists. But making an education system work cannot mean neglecting educational, sociological and political objectives. These objectives are in the final analysis the most decisive ones for the quality of such a system.

The most critical problem emerges from the fact that although a catalogue of goals and objectives to be achieved by the reform was defined, some of these objectives might have changed or become obsolete after the reform was implemented. At first it should be clarified why certain objectives have lost their emphasis, and secondly it has to be determined which objectives are still valid. Although this would be necessary for

instance in the case of cultural/traditional studies or technical/vocational subjects; it has not become clear yet. Certain objectives could have become less important because they were too expensive or too demanding time in terms instructional time, or because what was to be gained from their realization is valued differently nowadays. Only after an evaluation of the objectives and their relevance has been carried out can a compromise reform program be implemented, in which those objectives of formal education which seem to be indispensable are upheld, while other objectives are adapted according to the feasibility of their realization.

In other words, no clear and reliable concept is perceptible today. School-based or educational professionalism needs, however, a defined central philosophy, a pedagogical concept and a guiding spirit to enable educational planners to make decisions about what to emphasize in order to make the system work. Although such goals and objectives were drawn up initially, they were not codified into one catalogue periodically updated with current developments and changes as a basic or 'axiomatic' directive. Such a directive could then be used for developing and adjusting deemed appropriate measures.

9.1 Objectives in Education System Adjustment

In the case of Ghana, goals and objectives decisive for guiding the education system planning and adjustment have been mentioned in various political papers and pamphlets (table 1-3). The discourse in chapter 6 about selected interview statements reveals that these goals and objectives and quite a number of interrelations between the various components of the education system were not given adequate consideration.

Phase 1: Planning the Process				Phase 2: Building the System		
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7
What are the problems?	Resulting government objectives.	Proposals to realize the change.	Identifying related factors	How are these factors interrelated?	What makes the system work?	Verification / Falsification

table 19: structuring system planning, phase 1 and 2

Although some models for process planning could have been adjusted to inform planers exactly how particular actions in planning, introducing or implementing are interrelated, it looks as if none were used. In the table below I suggest making a distinction between four steps necessary for identifying the objectives which shall be considered in the planning process (phase 1) and three steps necessary for the building or the reconfiguration of the education system.

Distinguishing between the two phases is necessary because Phase 1 consists of a table indicating how a particular objective can be achieved and whether it is addressed adequately. Such a table will not be a permanent model because the objectives and problems might change. In the case of Ghana it was, for instance, necessary to reassess the value attached to cultural/traditional studies and technical/vocational subjects. Consequently the model will evolve along with developments and changes within the country.

As we can see from table 20, the further development and transformation of objectives from one step to the next was not addressed by adequate and appropriate measures in certain cases. Although, for instance, big class sizes /overenrollment was mentioned under step one, nothing was done to address the problem. The same applies to the problem of regional disparities in terms of the supply of materials and trained teachers. However, the biggest problem might be addressing those factors related to a particular change. An answer to problems emerging in the administrative dimension was, for instance, the introduction and empowerment of regional district education offices and the entrustment of District Councils. Fostering community participation to assist the government in local school supervision and increased cost-sharing - making the local communities responsible for the supply of basic education facilities - were other important policy objectives.

A brief look at the problems of contemporary schools (chapter 4-6) reveals for instance that class sizes are still too big, that schools are still lacking instructional materials, especially in the technical/vocational subjects and that teachers still need more and better training. Consequently, the detection of such problems demarcates a new beginning of process planning or problem solving and a second generation of process planning/phase 1 starts. A complete listing of the problems remaining will probably reveal that quite a number of them resemble those mentioned before in one or the other way. Others, like unequal access to quality education at primary and junior secondary schools, are more of a transformation of previous problems.

In order to find out why the same or similar problems (re)appear throughout, I suggest to introduce a system model displaying how particular objectives were addressed in their systemic context. This is then phase two of structuring education system planning (table 19, figure 24).

Simplified example: objectives in process planning

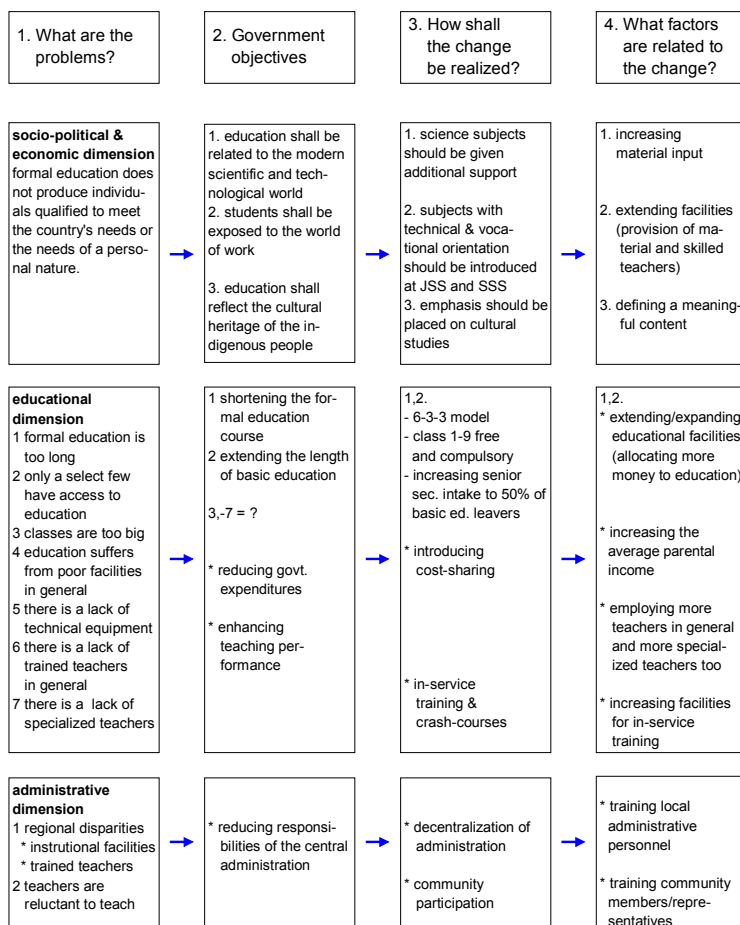| 1. What are the problems?	2. Government objectives	3. How shall the change be realized?	4. What factors are related to the change?
socio-political & economic dimension formal education does not produce individuals qualified to meet the country's needs or the needs of a personal nature.	1. education shall be related to the modern scientific and technological world 2. students shall be exposed to the world of work 3. education shall reflect the cultural heritage of the indigenous people	1. science subjects should be given additional support 2. subjects with technical & vocational orientation should be introduced at JSS and SSS 3. emphasis should be placed on cultural studies	1. increasing material input 2. extending facilities (provision of material and skilled teachers) 3. defining a meaningful content
educational dimension 1 formal education is too long 2 only a select few have access to education 3 classes are too big 4 education suffers from poor facilities in general 5 there is a lack of technical equipment 6 there is a lack of trained teachers in general 7 there is a lack of specialized teachers	1 shortening the formal education course 2 extending the length of basic education 3,-7 = ? * reducing govt. expenditures * enhancing teaching performance	1,2. - 6-3-3 model - class 1-9 free and compulsory - increasing senior sec. intake to 50% of basic ed. leavers * introducing cost-sharing * in-service training & crash-courses	1,2. * extending/expanding educational facilities (allocating more money to education) * increasing the average parental income * employing more teachers in general and more specialized teachers too * increasing facilities for in-service training
administrative dimension 1 regional disparities * instrutional facilities * trained teachers 2 teachers are reluctant to teach	* reducing responsibilities of the central administration	* decentralization of administration * community participation	* training local administrative personnel * training community members/representatives

table 20: simplified model for process planning

9.2 Systemic Communication

Applying a systemic approach to education system planning enables us to look at the problems in their systemic context. A simple process planning model might not sufficiently explain the recurrent problem of the supply of

basic education facilities, or of instructional material, but a systemic view can reveal the underlying problems by displaying the interrelation of some of the systems components. In conclusion, I will outline the possibilities of applying a systemic view in education system planning with regards to four examples:

1. As becomes clear from the systemic display (figure 24), e.g. *cost-sharing measures* make sense only when the parents and District Councils are in a position to generate enough income to take over the financial responsibility of supplying basic education schools with the needed facilities, as previously done by the central government. If parents can't contribute more additional funds to send their children to school, schooling will suffer from inadequate facilities, contributing to the declining of standards. It is also possible that parents will decide not to send their children to school because they think that low level schooling is useless in view of the high demands of the current labor market and that any investment made into schooling that doesn't produce results is a waste of money.

One action already taken was to reduce the number of subjects in the primary school, which now focuses on Ghanaian and English language, mathematics and the child and its environment. A tightening of the curriculum is also planned for the junior secondary school, among other things reducing the technical/vocational subjects to a more simple program (table 7). Reducing the number of subjects will have the positive effect of reducing costs incurred by instructional materials used. On the one hand, schooling might again become more attractive for low-income families from an economic point of view; on the other hand, schooling might become subject to cost-benefit calculations. This way of regarding education might be supported by findings placing emphasis on universal basic education skills such as reading writing and arithmetic; but reducing or limiting the curriculum to the acquisition of the three Rs (1.1a) brings up the questions of whether or not there is still any underlying pedagogic concept which goes beyond this.

More of an ethical basic consideration was that every child should have the opportunity to gain from nine years of quality basic education. Considering that the amount of money parents/communities can allocate for supplying schools with basic education facilities has become decisive for the quality level of education, the government must now ensure that cost-sharing is based on parental income. A policy of whole-sale participation, shifting the responsibilities onto the communities is certainly too simplistic.

2. Subject to systemic consideration is as well *teachers' performance.* If their performance needs to be improved especially in primary education methodology, teacher trainers at universities or TTC's must be in a position to provide sufficient instruction. If this is not done, teaching at the primary level will remain poor, which if for instance English language is affected, will also have a negative impact on further stages of learning. A more detailed inquiry into the problems of the interrelations between the teacher's schooling background, teacher training, off-campus teaching practice and the competence of teacher trainer's would require to draw up another sub-system.
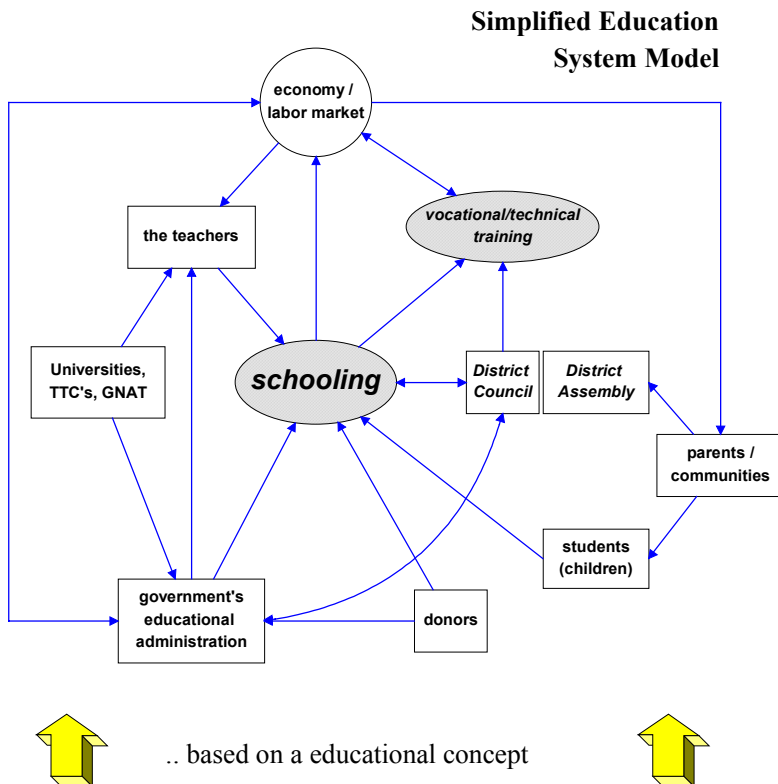
Simplified Education System Model

.. based on a educational concept

figure 24: simplified education system model

Another aspect was the consideration of the economic situation of teachers. As presented in this research, increased supervision fosters better teaching, but there is as well evidence that paying a fair salary would be a more sustainable solution. The teaching profession would then attract better people, which in turn would result in better and more committed classroom teaching.

3. Implications of government policies on *decentralizing educational planning and management:* The course of the educational reform in Ghana reveals that more could have been achieved if the government had involved all the parties that would have been able to contribute to the development and implementation of the new system. However, rather than making use of experienced and skilled academics and NGO's like GNAT. the government condemned criticism wholesale leading to the silencing (if not punishing) of constructive and meaningful criticism. Constructive criticism could have helped policy makers and educational planners to foresee and avoid a number of undesirable developments. Thus the government strengthened the fear of interfering with government policies, which then had a negative effect on attempts to involve communities in educational policies. Finally, large parts of the population have developed a feeling that formal education is the business of the central government. Still in the mid-1980s, when the implementation of the reform entered its final stage, the local communities were not involved, neither by the Ghanaian government nor by the big international donors (World Bank, USAID, ODA). This fostered communities' reluctance to contribute to projects related to formal education later on. Although the general public has recognized that many of these projects are a result from genuine goodwill, the reputation of the donors is damaged because they preferred to cooperate solely with the government and did not give individual academics or NGO's like GNAT the impression that they took their criticism and contributions to develop the system seriously.

Today the government faces a situation in which a political change in the direction of democratic rule and decentralized administration requires the active participation of local communities. Many of those individuals who were formerly branded anti-government, some of whom were severely punished for constructive criticism, have become important counterparts. Taking into consideration the negative experiences that the Ghanaian society has made with government policies over the course of the years it is very likely that people will not simply embrace a new policy until they are really convinced that the new one is different from the old.

As FOSTER (3.3c) has pointed out, educational policies which initially promoted the idea of vocationalizing education, only to withdraw from that

idea a few years later, need explanations. If people are neither told what went wrong with the initial project, nor the reason why they should have trust in government's new policy, they will certainly not fully support the change. Considering the crucial role local communities and District Assemblies/ Councils play within the new political system (figure 24) the importance to convince the local people and their representatives to actively support the new educational policy is evident. The point at issue will be whether Ghanaian society will be able to overcome counterproductive attitudes (P7, 266:277; C1.6a) and establish a new code of ethics and morals needed to make a modern administration function sufficiently.

4. Another important aspect was to reassess the value and task of technical and vocational subjects at school. If the goal of preparing students for the world of work is no longer being targeted, something must be done to consolidate these subjects' role in the formal curriculum (table 7). Consequently, out-of school vocational/technical training will gain new relevance. It would then be necessary to strengthen the links between formal schools and professional training, for instance, by supporting the local communities in setting up appropriate Community Centers for Employable Skills (ICCES, 5.4b).

Generally speaking, applying a systemic approach opens the view from focusing a simple education structure reform, taking into consideration the related components of an overarching system. From a systemic point of view the education system reform as implemented in Ghana reveals that quantitative and democratic expansion of formal education necessitates focusing only on few subjects. Due to the limited financial resources of the vast majority of the people, expanding the subject content (table 4,5,7,12) depending upon parental funding would foster the inequity between the rich and the poor.

Additionally, training specialized teachers would necessitate increasing related expenditures at time when the budget is already overstretched. One possible way out of this dilemma would be to tighten up the curriculum. Here the point at issue is that optimizing the education system must be based on a central educational philosophy or a general vision serving as a 'guiding spirit'. Otherwise, the challenges arising from quantitative expansion will be dealt with purely upon the basis of cost-benefit calculations. Issues such as the development and consolidation of cultural studies could help the country to develop a vision going beyond the conventional Western way of solving problems. In view of increased environmental degradation and increased economic inequalities Ghana should give itself the chance to find its own unique solutions to its problems in the educational sector.

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Editors Note: References marked with (*) e.g. [Anim-Addo (1994)*] are taken from daily or weekly newspapers

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