



LEARNING WHAT MATTERS IN GHANA

EXPANDING A BREADTH OF SKILLS: AN EXPLORATION OF FOUNDATIONAL
LEARNING IN GHANA

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ACRONYMS

DDE	District Director of Education
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
FL	Foundational Learning
FLN	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
GES	Ghana Education Service
GNECC	Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition
IEPA	Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
MoE	Ministry of Education
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
NaCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NEST	Network for Education Systems Transformation
NST	National Standardized Test
SEL	Socioemotional Learning
TPD	Teacher Professional Development

ABOUT GHANA NATIONAL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN COALITION (GNECC)

GNECC is a network of civil society organizations, professional associations, education and research institutions, and other practitioners committed to promoting quality pre-tertiary education for all. Formed in 1999, the coalition has steadily grown over the years with a current membership of approximately 200 organizations. The organizational

philosophy is premised on the fact that education is a fundamental human right and key to breaking poverty cycles.

GNECC is a member of the Network for Education Systems Transformation (NEST) and partnered with the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution as part of the NEST Ghana study.

ABOUT THIS SERIES¹

How well are
education
systems creating
opportunities
for children and
young people
to learn what
matters?

Education systems worldwide face mounting pressure to prepare children and young people not just for academic success, but for meaningful participation in an increasingly complex world (UNESCO 2023). Growing evidence suggests that to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, children and young people need a breadth of skills including but not limited to literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, socioemotional learning, and civic engagement (Dweck, Walton and Cohen 2014; Martinez 2022; Radó 2020).

The Network for Education Systems Transformation (NEST), a global impact network² co-led by the Center for Universal Education (CUE) at the Brookings Institution and ten civil society organizations across Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and South Asia, seeks to understand how education systems can transform to prioritize a “breadth of skills”—

an integrated set of academic, socioemotional, and transversal competencies that enable all children and young people to thrive (Care, Anderson, and Kim 2016; UNESCO n.d.).

Central to our work is a shared exploratory question: How well are education systems creating opportunities for children and young people to learn what matters? This question acknowledges that, while concepts like “education systems,” “opportunities,” and “what matters” may differ across contexts, what binds the network is our collective commitment to understanding how education systems can transform to prioritize the development of a breadth of skills in all children and young people. Rather than prescribing universal definitions, NEST embraces locally grounded interpretations that honor the historical, cultural, political, and socioeconomic realities of each setting.

1. The introductory section includes common language for the sections “About this series,” “Framing our inquiry,” and “About this report” across all of the reports in the NEST “Learning What Matters” series. The original source is “Learning what matters in Kenya” (Gikandi et al. 2025).
2. Impact networks are complex living systems, made of interacting people, organizations, and ecosystems. In contrast to traditional organizations with linear processes and standard operating procedures, networks are dynamic, interconnected, and variable. For details about the model of impact networks, see Ehrlichman (2021).

FRAMING OUR INQUIRY: THE 4 Ps AND 3 Cs AS WORKING FRAMEWORKS

Informed by prior research from CUE at the Brookings Institution, NEST draws on two interconnected frameworks that guide our exploration of education systems transformation toward skills development. The 4P framework identifies four high-level domains of change in systems transformation: purpose, pedagogy, positioning, and power (Sengeh and Winthrop 2022; Winthrop, Morris, and Qargha 2023). The 3C framework proposes three catalytic conditions believed to enable and sustain the transformation process: commitment, capacity, and cohesion (CUE 2022; Olateju et al. forthcoming). This study finds greater alignment with the 4Ps and uses it as the key framework for analysis.

We approach these frameworks not as prescriptive models, but as working theories that require interrogation, adaptation, and potential expansion based on observations in diverse local contexts. Our methodology is deliberately abductive, that is, moving systematically between observation and theoretical inference while remaining open to alternative explanations and framework modifications. This approach reflects NEST's commitment to collaborative inquiry that is iterative, values local knowledge and expertise, and contributes to a broader understanding of education systems transformation. We recognize that meaningful change cannot be externally imposed, but must emerge from genuine engagement with local realities, assets, and constraints.



ABOUT THIS REPORT

The following country-level findings represent an early stage of inquiry in NEST's ongoing exploration of education systems transformation for skills development. Exploratory in nature, the insights emerging from Ghana's unique context are an initial step toward a shared understanding of its education landscape. While findings of this research may not be directly transferable to other settings, we believe that the patterns, tensions, and possibilities identified in this report can inform broader conversations about how education systems worldwide might better

support all children and young people in developing the skills they need to thrive. As NEST continues its collaborative work across ten countries, subsequent studies aim to deepen these insights and further refine our understanding of what enables sustainable education systems transformation toward a breadth of skills. As such, the following report should not be read as a final statement, but as part of an ongoing, iterative process of learning and discovery that contributes to an emerging field.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Current indicators suggest that learning levels in Ghana remain low, revealing a growing mismatch between the country's aspirations for economic development and social progress and the foundational skills students acquire through the education system (Ministry of Education 2019). Addressing this gap requires a systems transformation lens that goes beyond access to examine the quality and relevance of learning opportunities. This report shares findings from a research study that examined the current state of foundational learning (FL) in Ghana's lower basic schools. It analyzes the dimensions of access, quality, and relevance to assess whether and how the education system enables children and young people to develop relevant skills. FL, encompassing basic literacy, numeracy, and socioemotional skills, represents an important basis for lifelong learning and future thriving (World Bank Group 2025).³

Current indicators suggest that learning levels in Ghana remain low.

Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study involved 317 participants, including educators, school leaders, parents, and district education officials, across eight regions and 16 Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs). These sites were purposefully selected to reflect Ghana's geographic, socioeconomic, and educational diversity. The findings are intended to inform national policymakers and civil society

organizations working to strengthen education outcomes in Ghana.

The findings revealed that while commitment to FL is clearly expressed at the policy level, those responsible for implementation, particularly at the classroom level, face multiple constraints and document limited support to translate policy into action. Capacity constraints—from insufficient teaching materials and overcrowded classrooms to limited professional development and fragmented teacher development—continue to limit what is possible at the school level. Additionally, cohesion across the ecosystem remains fragmented with actors reporting that current reforms are not moving in a unified direction. Finally, coordination gaps between national, district, and school levels persist.

Recommendations focus on three mutually reinforcing priorities: strengthening capacity through targeted resource allocation and alignment of teacher professional development (TPD) with curricular reform; deepening commitment by establishing accountable resourcing mechanisms and embedding FL into teacher incentive structures; and fostering cohesion by building a shared vision across the ecosystem—including structured consultation mechanisms that give teachers, families, and communities a voice and space for dialogue in reform processes.

3. Foundational Learning (FL) represents the minimum proxy for a breadth of skills.

CONTEXT

The quality of education in Ghana is closely tied to foundational learning (FL), which equips learners with the knowledge and skills they need for future academic success, economic opportunity, and social participation. The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2018-2030 is Ghana's most recent long-term road map to transform education and align the system to the nation's development goals (MoE 2019). One of the ESP's main pillars is to improve equitable access to and participation in quality education at all levels. ESP's strategic vision also includes:

Curricular reform emphasizing essential skills for early grades through learner-centered and competency-based pedagogical approaches.

Assessment reform to track foundational competencies.

Equity and inclusion focus to ensure access for all, especially historically marginalized children (MoE 2019).

TPD and management through operationalization of the Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management Framework and teacher education reform (MoE 2019).

Yet available evidence suggests that foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) levels remain low, particularly among learners in the lower basic grades (UNESCO 2022). Results from Ghana's 2021 National Standardized Test (NST) for primary four pupils showed that 62% of pupils did not achieve basic

proficiency in mathematics, while 50% did not achieve basic proficiency in English, the country's national language (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) 2021). This deficit is further compounded by an inadequate emphasis on socioemotional learning (SEL) and the development of other transversal skills—such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration—within the national curriculum (World Bank 2019).

Historically, the educational landscape in Ghana has been characterized by disparities in access and quality, particularly in rural and underserved communities where children are often taught in overcrowded classrooms with limited access to textbooks and sanitation facilities (MoE 2021). Teacher deployment gaps in remote MMDAs have led to the reliance on untrained or underqualified teachers, as urban centers attract more experienced personnel (MoE 2021; World Bank 2019). These geographic disparities are compounded by intersecting inequities: girls, children with disabilities, and learners from low socioeconomic backgrounds face additional barriers, including stigma, inadequate inclusive infrastructure, and limited professional development for teachers serving these communities (MoE 2021; Salifu et al. 2024; UNESCO 2020)

The implications of these educational shortcomings are significant as they limit learners' future opportunities and adversely affect the nation's potential to harness a skilled workforce essential for economic growth and

Historically, the educational landscape in Ghana has been characterized by disparities in access and quality.

societal advancement. Effectiveness of educational policies and practices in enhancing accessibility, quality, and relevance of learning experiences is currently insufficiently understood, raising questions about the degree to which education systems are genuinely equipping children and young people with FL.

This inquiry is timely as Ghana seeks to align its education system with global standards while addressing local needs. Currently, the education system looks

to global standards such as Sustainable Development Goal 4, promoting inclusive and equitable quality education; the Education 2030 Framework for Action, emphasizing learner-centered and gender-responsive approaches; UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Reports, advocating for equity and accountability; and the OECD Learning Compass 2030, supporting 21st-century skills development. These standards guide Ghana's reforms in curriculum development, teacher training, inclusion, and FL.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To reflect the breadth of skills required in the Ghanaian context, the analysis uses the term *foundational learning* (FL) to encompass, at a minimum, FLN and SEL. This framing recognizes FL as a multidimensional construct that extends beyond basic academic skills to include transversal competencies children need to thrive in school and beyond (World Bank Group 2025).

The analytical framework is also grounded in CUE's 3C framework, which conceptualizes system performance through three interrelated drivers of education systems transformation: capacity, commitment, and cohesion (CUE n.d.). These drivers are used to assess the extent to which relevant actors in the education ecosystem are prepared, motivated, and aligned to expand meaningful FL opportunities, ensuring that children learn what matters.

For this study, each driver is understood as follows:

Commitment refers to the interest, engagement, and action of stakeholders to reorient and resource the education system toward a breadth of skills. It captures whether actors at all levels are motivated and mobilizing resources accordingly.

Capacity refers to the knowledge, skills, and resources required by all stakeholders to eliminate systemic barriers to breadth of skills. It captures what actors are equipped to do and where structural constraints limit what is possible.

Cohesion refers to the development of a shared vision and agenda for systems transformation. This term captures whether actors across the ecosystem are aligned on what needs to change and are working in the same direction.

These three conditions are interrelated: inadequate capacity can undermine commitment; fragmented cohesion can limit how effectively capacity is distributed and commitment is developed by actors across the ecosystem.

The study is guided by the following overarching research question co-created by NEST:

How well are education systems creating opportunities for children and young people to learn what matters?

Building on this general inquiry, the country-specific research question for Ghana was:

What are the key barriers and enablers to achieving access, quality, and relevance in FL for children in Ghana?

METHODOLOGY

REGIONS WHERE THE RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED



This study employed a mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis, combining quantitative and qualitative tools to generate a comprehensive understanding of access, quality, and relevance of FL in Ghana. A total of 317 participants were purposively selected to represent a range of roles within the education ecosystem including classroom teachers, school leaders, district-level officials, and parents. By targeting various actors in the education ecosystem, the study aimed to capture the diverse geographic, socioeconomic, and institutional contexts from sixteen MMDAs in eight regions across Ghana.

Geographic scope and sampling

Data collection tools included desk review, surveys, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations to provide a well-rounded understanding of access, quality, and relevance within the education system from various actors' perspectives.

DESK REVIEW

A desk review was conducted to examine national education policies and strategic frameworks issued by the Ministry of Education (MoE), alongside relevant administrative and performance data from District Education Offices. This review provided contextual and policy-level insights into standards for teaching quality, gender equity commitments, and skill development priorities within the education system.

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Structured survey questionnaires were administered to 51 head teachers, 101 teachers, and 149 parents to collect quantitative data on perceptions of teaching quality and learning outcomes (See Annexes 1 and 2). In addition, surveys targeting teachers and head teachers explored their perspectives on the relationship between gender inequality, teaching quality, and skills development. The survey questionnaires included both closed questions for statistical analysis and open-ended questions

to capture nuanced experiences and contextual factors.

INTERVIEWS

Sixteen structured interviews were conducted with District Directors of Education (DDEs) across the 16 districts to gather in-depth qualitative—and complementary quantitative insights—on the state of FL in Ghana (See Annex 3). The interviews explored their perspectives on teaching quality, learning outcomes, and systemic factors influencing FL.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Classroom observations were guided by a standardized checklist designed to assess teaching practices and learning environments (See Annex 4). The checklist evaluated key indicators such as teacher-student interactions, instructional methods, classroom participation, and gender dynamics. This tool aimed to identify how teaching practices and classroom environments may influence learning quality and FL outcomes. A total of 43 classroom observations were conducted across 16 districts in eight regions, at the public, basic school level in both urban and rural schools.

Data from all sources were triangulated during analysis to strengthen validity. The study used both descriptive and thematic analysis,⁴ facilitated by Microsoft Excel, SPSS and NVivo.

4. Thematic analysis was used to interpret qualitative data from interviews. This process involved data familiarization, systematic coding, theme development, and interpretive analysis. Themes such as "teacher motivation," "gender bias in schools," and "disconnect between curriculum and community needs" emerged from repeated patterns in respondents' narratives.

SAMPLE

RESPONDENT CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	DATA COLLECTION METHOD
District Directors of Education	Managers of education at the municipal and district levels	16	Structured interview
Head teachers	School leaders of various basic schools in the districts	51	Survey questionnaire
Teachers	Facilitators of learning in various basic schools	101	Survey questionnaire
Parents/guardians	Mothers, fathers, and caregivers of children in basic schools	149	Survey questionnaire

Limitations

Limitations include potential biases from data collectors—mostly teachers—despite deliberate efforts to remain objective and independent throughout the data collection process. Additionally, self-reported data may have contributed to social desirability

bias, and the non-random sampling in some communities may limit the generalizability of findings across the national landscape. Despite these challenges, the methodology provided robust insights into the state of FL within the communities studied, offering a strong basis for targeted recommendations.

FINDINGS

Drawing on the findings from survey data, interviews, classroom observations, and desk review evidence, this section examines the key barriers and enablers to achieving access, quality, and relevance in FL in Ghana guided by the 3C framework for analysis.

1. Capacity

Findings revealed that human, material, and instructional capacity constraints are some of the most dominant barriers to achieving FL in lower basic education.

RESOURCE CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The study identified insufficient resources and infrastructure as major impediments to FL in Ghana. Although national institutions have developed progressive reform frameworks such as the ESP, both technical and financial capacity constraints at school and district levels continue to hinder implementation. Data show that 66.5% of survey respondents (DDEs, head teachers, teachers, and parents) identified insufficient educational resources—including textbooks and teaching and learning materials—as the most significant

These constraints continue to slow intended pedagogical reforms at school and district levels.

factor affecting FL development. Classroom observations reinforced this finding with approximately 90% of classrooms observed dealing with challenges related to furniture, ventilation, or space. Additionally, 61.6% had limited availability of teaching and learning materials. These constraints continue to slow intended pedagogical reforms at school and district levels. Furthermore, these conditions disproportionately affect learners in rural and marginalized communities and pose particular barriers for children with disabilities. Reflecting this reality, 88.3% of respondents (DDEs, head teachers, teachers, and parents) identified the provision of teaching materials and resources as the single most important strategy for improving both teaching quality and FL.

TEACHING AND LEARNING UNDER SYSTEMIC CONSTRAINTS

Data also revealed challenges with teaching quality and instructional practices. While 69.6% of actors reported that learner-centered approaches are frequently used in classrooms, classroom observations provided a more nuanced picture. The majority of the 43 classroom observations documented evidence of learner-centered practices, yet six observations (14.0%) showed no evidence of differentiated instruction, and five (11.6%) showed no evidence of critical thinking. In these observations, instruction remained predominantly teacher-dominated, with limited opportunities for inquiry, peer collaboration, or learner-led activities.

These findings suggest that learner-centered pedagogy is being adopted but is not yet implemented consistently, thereby limiting opportunities for students to become confident, self-directed learners capable of applying knowledge in real-world contexts.

While many teachers demonstrated effort and professionalism, structural constraints also shaped what was possible in classrooms. Teachers reported feeling that their voices are not considered in curriculum design or reform processes, which can weaken their motivation and reduce the likelihood of innovation in classrooms. While the study did not directly assess teachers' participation in curriculum design or reform processes, some of the recommendations made by teachers pointed to these cycles. One teacher recommended, "Before any new curriculum is to be developed, much attention should be given to teachers by prioritizing their needs before its implementation." Another teacher also recommended, "Government should involve the classroom teachers."

Teachers reported feeling that their agency, their ability to make independent decisions about how to teach and adapt curriculum, was frequently constrained by top-down mandates and a lack of professional development support. In highlighting some challenges that affect the quality of teaching and literacy development in schools, a teacher claimed there were "inadequate professional development programs for teachers." A district director also indicated the need for

“regular provisions of learning materials and organization of workshops for continuing professional development of teachers, and also provision of infrastructure.”

CAPACITY FOR DIVERSE ACTORS TO CONTRIBUTE

Power asymmetries remain a defining feature of Ghana’s education system. Policymaking is highly centralized, limiting meaningful participation for grassroots actors—teachers, parents, and learners—in decisions about teaching and learning (Ampah-Mensah et al. 2024). The 2022 Annual Education Sector Performance Report highlights significant disparities in teacher deployment and infrastructure investment across MMDAs, with teachers frequently reporting feeling disempowered by compliance requirements that leave little room for professional judgment or local adaptation.

These exclusions are not evenly distributed. Marginalized groups face compounding barriers to participation in and benefit from education. Seventy-two point six percent of respondents reported that schools are accessible to children in their communities, yet access remains fragile for those furthest from the system’s center. Girls in rural areas face the convergence of geographical isolation and gender-based barriers with 39.7% of respondents reporting that economic constraints largely affect girls’ access, and 65.9% identifying early marriage and teenage pregnancy as major barriers. For children with disabilities in these same communities, the absence of inclusive infrastructure adds a further layer of exclusion. These patterns

reflect not just resource gaps but a systemic failure to build the capacity needed to reach all learners equitably.

2. Commitment

While actors across the study expressed strong commitment in principle to FL, findings suggest that this commitment has yet to translate consistently into the resource allocation decisions and institutional actions needed to ensure equitable access to a breadth of skills. The findings distinguished three levels at which commitment operates in the Ghanaian ecosystem. At the policy level, Ghana’s frameworks clearly articulate FL and breadth of skills as national priorities. At the institutional level, however, this commitment is unevenly translated into effective engagement and action including resource allocation, training, and accountability structures. And at the classroom level, the gap between policy aspirations and daily instruction is the most acute.

PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY EFFECTIVENESS IN ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS

The goal of broadening Ghana’s skills agenda is clearly articulated in several key policy documents, including the Education Strategic Plan 2018–2030 (MoE 2019), the National Pre-Tertiary Curriculum Framework (NaCCA 2020), and the Common Core Programme Curriculum (NaCCA 2021). These frameworks emphasize a shift toward competency-based education, aiming to build not just FLN, but also critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and SEL. Yet, findings suggest that

key actors in the education ecosystem view this as only partial commitment because it does not encompass the full range of actions necessary to ensure inclusive FL opportunities for all learners. For example, 56% of survey respondents—including head teachers, teachers, parents, and DDEs—rated educational policies as only moderately effective in addressing barriers to learning what matters, while only 18% rated them as extremely effective. This signals that while commitment is articulated at the policy level, actors across the education system do not feel that this commitment fully translates into practice, especially at the classroom level.

Moreover, the resourcing of this institutional commitment is unevenly demonstrated in practice. As reported above, two thirds of survey respondents identified insufficient educational resources as the most significant factor affecting FL development—a pattern that signals a gap between what policy frameworks articulate as priorities and financial allocations that signal genuine institutional commitment.

STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIZATION OF FL AND BREADTH OF SKILLS

A further dimension of commitment is whether actors at the school and community levels are actively engaging with and investing in broader FL goals in daily practice. Here, the findings reveal a tension: while teachers and head teachers generally perceive FL and numeracy as areas of relative strength and national policy frameworks—such as the ESP and the Common Core Programme—clearly emphasize holistic learning outcomes, the actions and investments of actors at the school

level and community level continue to revolve around academic performance and examination results. This gap is a commitment challenge: even where policy frameworks prioritize broader competencies, sustained commitment at the school and community levels requires shifting what actors value, invest in, and work toward, not just what documents articulate.

Furthermore, 55.5% of respondents rated addressing foundational literacy, teaching quality, and gender inequality as extremely important to transforming the education system, and 82.1% perceived teaching quality as having a moderate or great impact on FL skills. Classroom observations captured both the gap and the possibility for FL. While instruction in approximately 25% of classroom observations remained teacher-led, pockets of stronger learner-centered practice were also documented. An enumerator indicated in his report of a classroom observation that the “teacher used demonstration method, asked pupils questions, involved pupils in lesson delivery.” Another enumerator also stated that “The lesson was more student-centered” and “The level of the teaching was also standard,” exemplifying positive shifts toward active learning.

Beyond stated priorities, commitment was also revealed in how actors valued and described current practices. As stated above, about seven in 10 respondents, including head teachers, teachers, and DDEs, reported that teachers frequently employ interactive, learner-centered approaches, suggesting that such practices are seen as both present and worth investigating further. Self-reported patterns like this should be read alongside the

**Commitment
to FL in Ghana
is genuine but
uneven.**

classroom observation finding in the “Capacity” section, which describes more resource-constrained conditions in the classrooms directly observed; the two data sources together point to a system where interactive practices are valued and emerging, but not yet institutionalized across the education system.

Together, these findings suggest that commitment to FL in Ghana is genuine but uneven—clearly expressed at the policy level, yet only partially felt as actionable support by those responsible for implementation. Translating expressed commitment into practice requires demonstrating it through the decisions that matter most to actors on the ground: resource allocation, training structures, and meaningful inclusion in reform processes.

3. Cohesion

While actors across Ghana’s education ecosystem broadly acknowledge the need for education systems transformation, cohesion—defined here as a shared vision and coordinated agenda for change—remains insufficient. Findings showed that policies, practices, and actor priorities are not yet fully aligned, limiting the system’s ability to move in a unified direction toward FL for all learners.

ALIGNMENT BETWEEN POLICY INTENT AND QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF LEARNING

Only 27.8% of respondents believed policies have a very great impact on teaching and learning quality. While this

does not capture differences across actor groups directly, the broadly low confidence in policy impact—shared across head teachers, teachers, parents and DDEs— suggests that the current reform agenda is not generating the sense of shared direction and purpose that effective system cohesion requires.

Mixed perceptions of curriculum relevance further reflect this misalignment. Only 30.4% of respondents rated the curriculum as extremely relevant to learners’ future needs, and just 1.9% believed it was fully aligned with current and future job markets. This means the majority of actors across the system hold reservations about whether the current curriculum reflects a shared vision around learning priorities, hindering system cohesion

VARYING LEVELS OF COHESION IMPACT MOBILIZATION FOR REFORM

The study revealed that communication gaps and unclear role definitions between Ghana Education Service (GES) district offices and school heads have frequently resulted in duplication, delayed interventions, or misaligned priorities. For instance, curriculum guidance issued at the national level often reaches schools without corresponding adjustments to supervision frameworks or resource allocation at the district level. Community engagement reflected a similar disconnect where only 32.7% of classrooms showed evidence of community support for learning materials, limiting the system’s ability to mobilize local actors around shared educational goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from this study highlight that while Ghana has articulated a strong policy commitment to FL, persistent gaps in capacity, uneven commitment in practice, and limited cohesion across system actors constrain implementation. To strengthen opportunities for children to learn what matters, reforms must focus simultaneously on reinforcing capacity, deepening institutional and relational commitment, and improving system-wide cohesion. Based on the findings, the following three recommendations are provided for national policymakers, civil society organizations, and other actors within the education ecosystem:

1. STRENGTHENING CAPACITY: ALIGN TPD WITH CURRICULUM REFORM.

Findings indicated that significant constraints in infrastructure, resource availability, teacher preparation, and local participation have limited what is possible in Ghana's classrooms. Addressing these constraints requires coordinated action from the MoE, GES, and teacher training institutions as the most immediate priority for implementation within the next one to two years.

Policy actions (Lead: MoE, GES, teacher training institutions):

Prioritize targeted resource allocation to under-resourced schools, ensuring minimum standards for teaching and learning materials, classroom

infrastructure, and teacher deployment equity across urban and rural MMDAs.

Transition from episodic workshops to structured, school-based professional learning cycles focused on competency-based pedagogy.

Institutionalize peer learning communities at the school cluster level, with protected time for collaborative lesson planning aligned to FL.

Develop practical pedagogical guides that translate the Common Core and ESP goals into model lesson plans demonstrating inquiry, collaboration, and SEL integration.

DEEPENING COMMITMENT: EMBED FL INTO TEACHER INCENTIVE STRUCTURES AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION.

Findings revealed the need for strengthened alignment between national strategies and classroom realities. Genuine institutional commitment requires not only reorienting incentive structures but demonstrating that commitment through accountable resource allocation decisions. This requires MoE and GES to take joint ownership over the medium term (3-5 years).

Policy actions (Lead: MoE, GES)

Establish a dedicated, trackable funding mechanism for FL resources—including teaching and learning materials, infrastructure maintenance, and in-

service training—with transparent reporting on allocation equity across MMDAs.

Develop and deliver training aligned to learner-centered pedagogy and inclusion practices before incorporating these into teacher evaluation rubrics, ensuring teachers are supported before they are assessed.

Include learner-centered pedagogy and inclusion practices in teacher evaluation rubrics.

Direct resources to support pedagogical innovation at the school level—including materials, planning time, and peer learning opportunities—and recognize schools that demonstrate progress in integrating SEL and inquiry-based learning.

Provide micro-credentialing or certification pathways for teachers demonstrating advanced competency-based instruction.

FOSTERING COHESION: BUILD A SHARED VISION ACROSS THE ECOSYSTEM.

Findings suggest fragmentation between national policy aspirations and classroom realities and a persistent exclusion of teachers, families, and learners from reform processes. Meaningful cohesion requires not just cross-agency alignment at the national level but the active participation of

all ecosystem actors in shaping a shared agenda. This requires NaCCA, GES, and colleges of education to act in deliberate coordination, alongside structured mechanisms for local voice, as part of a broader medium-term system realignment (3-5 years).

Policy actions (Lead: NaCCA, GES, Colleges of Education, District Education Offices):

Establish structured consultation mechanisms at the school cluster and district levels, ensuring that teachers have a formal voice in curriculum implementation decisions, reform design, and professional development priorities, directly addressing the exclusion from reform processes that teachers consistently reported.

Create community school dialogue forums at the district level where teachers, parents, and community members jointly review FL outcomes, identify local barriers, and contribute to shared improvement plans.

Conduct a cross-agency alignment review between NaCCA, GES, and teacher training institutions to ensure coherence between curriculum standards, assessment frameworks, and pre-service training.

Sequence reforms to ensure teachers are trained, consulted, and adequately resourced before new curriculum expectations are enforced.

Meaningful cohesion requires the active participation of all ecosystem actors in shaping a shared agenda.

MONITORING AND LEARNING

Sustaining momentum across all three reform areas requires clear mechanisms for tracking progress. Ghana's existing tools such as the NST, annual school inspection frameworks, and teacher appraisal process, offer viable proxies for

monitoring FL and breadth of skills integration over time. To make equity gaps visible and actionable, district-level data from these mechanisms should be disaggregated by gender, location and disability status.

CONCLUSION

For children to learn what matters, the Ghanaian education system needs to focus on the relationship across capacity, commitment and cohesion so that policy, implementation and practice together support FL as a minimum proxy for a breadth of relevant skills. As such, learning “what matters” must go beyond examination performance and speak directly to learners’ ability to contribute meaningfully to society and their own futures.

The findings showed that the barriers to FL in Ghana are not the product of any single failure, but of interlocking gaps across all three catalytic conditions. Capacity constraints (from inadequate teaching materials and overcrowded classrooms to limited in-service training and skewed teacher deployment) undermine what is possible at the school level, even where teachers are motivated and committed. Commitment, while genuine in principle and reflected in strong policy frameworks, has yet to translate consistently into daily practice. The gap

between what policies articulate and what classrooms deliver remains wide, particularly in rural and marginalized communities (MoE 2019; NaCCA 2021). Despite ongoing reforms, challenges persist in ensuring alignment between curriculum reforms, teacher preparation, and implementation across national and district education structures (World Bank 2019).

Equity is a thread running through all three conditions. Learners in rural areas, girls, and children with disabilities face compounding disadvantages. They are more likely to be taught by underqualified teachers, in under-resourced classrooms, and with limited access to in-service training and community-supported learning (MoE 2021; Owoo 2025; UNESCO 2020). Systems transformation that does not explicitly address these disparities risks deepening, rather than closing, existing gaps.

The recommendations in this report—strengthening instructional capacity and resource equity, deepening

institutional commitment through accountable resourcing and incentive structures, and fostering cohesion by building a shared vision across all ecosystem actors—are not standalone fixes but mutually reinforcing actions. Strengthening teacher capacity without deepening institutional commitment will produce isolated pockets of good practice. Deepening commitment without improving system cohesion will generate misaligned effort. Progress requires all three conditions to advance together, and it requires sustained investment at the district and school levels where the gap between policy

intent and lived experience is most acute.

As part of NEST’s ongoing cross-country learning, Ghana’s experience contributes to a broader understanding of what it takes to build education systems that truly prioritize breadth of skills. Meaningful, sustainable transformation will emerge not from externally imposed frameworks, but from the genuine engagement of Ghanaian educators, communities, and institutions in shaping the learning conditions that all children deserve.

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ANNEX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE HEAD TEACHERS AND TEACHERS

SECTION A

DATA COLLECTOR INFORMATION

1. Name of data collector:
2. Contact of data collector:

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Region:
 - a. Central
 - b. Greater Accra
 - c. Bono
 - d. Bono East
 - e. Volta
 - f. Western North
 - g. Northern
 - h. North East
2. District:
3. Community name:
4. Age:
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-24
 - c. 25-34
 - d. 35-44
 - e. 45-54
 - f. 55-64
 - g. 65 and above
5. Gender:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

6. Educational level:
 - a. Secondary education
 - b. Cert A education
 - c. First degree
 - d. Master's degree
 - e. Other (please specify)

PERCEPTION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

3. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the current state of gender equality in Ghana's education system?
4. On a scale of 1-5, what is your impression about gender equality in education over the past 5 years?

BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

5. What are the main barriers to gender equality in education in your district or community? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Cultural norms and practices
 - b. Economic constraints
 - c. Access to educational facilities
 - d. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy
 - e. Gender-based violence
 - f. Lack of female role models in education
 - g. Inadequate educational policies
 - h. Others (please specify)
6. How significant is the impact of cultural norms and practices on gender equality in education?
 - a. Not significant
 - b. Slightly significant
 - c. Moderately significant
 - d. Very significant
 - e. Extremely significant
7. To what extent do economic constraints affect girls' access to education?
 - a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent
 - e. To a very great extent

8. How often do early marriages and teenage pregnancies interrupt girls' education in your community?
- a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Always
9. What is the frequency of gender-based violence in educational settings in your area?
- a. Non-existent
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Occasionally
 - d. Commonly

IMPACT ON THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

10. How do these barriers impact the quality of education received by girls compared to boys?
- a. No impact
 - b. Slight impact
 - c. Moderate impact
 - d. Significant impact
 - e. Extreme impact
11. In your opinion, how do these barriers affect the future opportunities available to girls?
- a. No effect
 - b. Slightly limits opportunities
 - c. Moderately limits opportunities
 - d. Significantly limits opportunities
 - e. Completely limits opportunities

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

12. What measures do you think should be implemented to overcome these barriers? (Select all that apply)
- a. Sensitization and awareness programs
 - b. Scholarships and financial support for girls
 - c. Building more schools in remote areas
 - d. Strengthening laws against early marriage and gender-based violence[]
 - e. Training and employing more female teachers
 - f. Developing gender-sensitive educational policies
 - g. Others (please specify)

13. Who should be primarily responsible for addressing gender equality in education?
- a. Government
 - b. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - c. Community leaders
 - d. Schools and educational institutions
 - e. Parents and guardians
 - f. Students
 - g. Others (please specify)
14. How often do you observe gender-based discrimination in school?
- a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Always
15. Can you share any personal experiences or observations related to gender inequality in education?
16. What additional recommendations do you have to improve gender equality in education in Ghana?

SECTION B

PERCEPTION TOWARD QUALITY OF TEACHING

This section assesses perceptions regarding the quality of teaching and its implications for foundational literacy and skill development.

17. In your view, how would you rate the overall quality of teaching in your local schools?
- a. Very poor
 - b. Poor
 - c. Fair
 - d. Good
 - e. Very good
18. In your view, how effective do you find the teaching methods used by teachers in your community?
- a. Very ineffective
 - b. Ineffective
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Effective
 - e. Very effective

19. In your view, how well do teachers engage students in the learning process?
- Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Significantly
 - Completely
20. In your view, how accessible are teachers to students outside of regular class hours for additional help?
- Not accessible
 - Moderately accessible
 - Very accessible
21. In your view, how often do teachers incorporate practical examples and real-life applications into their lessons?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
22. In your view, have you or your child experienced any challenges with the quality of teaching in your district/school?
- Lack of understanding of the subject matter
 - Inadequate teaching materials
 - Poor teacher-student communication
 - Insufficient feedback on performance
 - Lack of individualized attention
 - Other (please specify)
23. In your view, do teachers address the diverse learning needs of students?
- Yes
 - No
24. If Yes, how do teachers address the diverse learning needs of students?
25. How satisfied are you with the level of teacher professionalism and conduct in the schools in your district?
- Very dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Neutral
 - Satisfied
 - Very satisfied

On a scale of 1-5:

26. How would you rate the overall quality of teaching in your local schools?....
27. Do you believe that quality teaching is adequately promoting foundational literacy among students?
28. How often do teachers in your community employ interactive and student-centered teaching methods?
- a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Always
29. To what extent do you think the quality of teaching impacts the development of 21st-century skills among learners?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent

SECTION C

30. What factors do you believe most significantly affect the development of foundational literacy in basic education? (Select all that apply)
- a. Lack of trained teachers
 - b. Insufficient educational resources (e.g., textbooks, learning materials)
 - c. Poor school infrastructure
 - d. Inadequate parental support and involvement
 - e. Socioeconomic factors (e.g., poverty)
 - f. Other (please specify)
31. How would you rate the foundational literacy skills of students in your community?
- a. Very poor
 - b. Poor
 - c. Fair
 - d. Good
 - e. Very good

32. To what extent do you think foundational literacy impacts the development of 21st-century skills among students?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent

IMPACT ON 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS

This section focuses on the intersection of gender inequality, teaching quality, and literacy on skill development.

33. In your opinion, how do gender inequality and poor teaching quality together influence the overall educational outcomes for students?
- a. No influence
 - b. Slight influence
 - c. Moderate influence
 - d. Strong influence
34. How important is addressing gender inequality, teaching quality, and foundational literacy in transforming the education sector to enhance 21st-century skills?
- a. Not important
 - b. Slightly important
 - c. Moderately important
 - d. Extremely important

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

This section seeks insights into potential solutions to address the issues identified.

35. What measures do you think should be implemented to improve gender equality in education? (Select all that apply)
- a. Community awareness and sensitization programs
 - b. Financial support for girls' education (e.g., scholarships)
 - c. Implementation of gender-sensitive policies in schools
 - d. Training and hiring more female teachers
 - e. Strengthening laws against early marriage and gender-based violence
 - f. Other (please specify)
36. What strategies could improve the quality of teaching in basic schools? (Select all that apply)
- a. Continuous professional development for teachers
 - b. Provision of teaching materials and resources
 - c. Improved teacher remuneration and incentives
 - d. Smaller class sizes for better student engagement
 - e. Others (please specify)

37. What actions can be taken to support the development of foundational literacy among learners? (Select all that apply)
- a. Early childhood education programs
 - b. Parental involvement initiatives
 - c. Community literacy programs
 - d. Enhanced teacher training in literacy instruction
 - e. Others (please specify)
38. Can you share any personal experiences that illustrate the impact of gender inequality on education in your community?
39. What challenges have you observed that affect the quality of teaching and literacy development in schools?
40. What additional recommendations do you have to improve the overall education system and develop 21st-century skills among learners?

Section D: Accessibility of learning opportunities

41. How accessible are educational institutions in your area for all children and young people?
- a. Not accessible
 - b. Slightly accessible
 - c. Moderately accessible
 - d. Extremely accessible
42. How effective are current educational policies in addressing these barriers?
- a. Not effective
 - b. Slightly effective
 - c. Moderately effective
 - d. Extremely effective
- Quality of learning opportunities
43. To what extent do educational policies impact the quality of teaching and learning in your area?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent

44. What aspects of educational policy most significantly affect teaching quality? (Select all that apply)
- a. Teacher training and professional development
 - b. Curriculum standards
 - c. Availability of teaching resources
 - d. Class sizes
 - e. Teacher evaluation and accountability
 - f. Others (please specify)

RELEVANCE OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

45. How relevant is the curriculum in your area to the needs and future aspirations of students?
- a. Not relevant
 - b. Slightly relevant
 - c. Moderately relevant
 - d. Extremely relevant
46. How do educational policies influence the relevance of the curriculum to real-life applications and future job markets?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent
- Impact of policies and practices
47. To what extent have recent educational reforms affected the overall educational experience of students in your area?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent
48. What specific policies or practices have had the most positive impact on education in your community?
- Recommendations and solutions
49. What measures should be implemented to improve accessibility to education for all children and young people? (Select all that apply)
- a. Financial aid and scholarships
 - b. Improved transportation infrastructure
 - c. Inclusive education policies for children with special needs
 - d. Community awareness programs
 - e. Flexible schooling options (e.g., evening classes, online learning)
 - f. Others (please specify)

50. What strategies could enhance the quality of education in your area? (Select all that apply)
- a. Regular and comprehensive teacher training
 - b. Increased funding for educational resources
 - c. Smaller class sizes
 - d. Enhanced teacher evaluation and accountability
 - e. Development of innovative teaching methods
 - f. Others (please specify)
51. What initiatives could be undertaken to ensure the curriculum is relevant to students' future needs? (Select all that apply)
- a. Curriculum review and update processes
 - b. Industry partnerships for practical learning
 - c. Emphasis on STEM education
 - d. Integration of life skills and career guidance
 - e. Adoption of technology and digital tools in teaching
 - f. Others (please specify)
52. How frequently do schools offer programs or courses that you consider valuable for future success of students?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent
53. What percentage of the curriculum do you believe is relevant to current and future job market?
- a. 100%
 - b. 80%
 - c. 60%
 - d. 40%
 - e. 20%
54. Can you share any personal experiences or observations regarding how educational policies and practices have impacted learning opportunities in your community?
55. Can you share some experiences where the education system successfully prepared a student for real life

ANNEX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

SECTION A

DATA COLLECTOR INFORMATION

1. Name of data collector:
2. Contact of data collector:

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Region:
 - a. Central
 - b. Greater Accra
 - c. Bono
 - d. Bono East
 - e. Volta
 - f. Western North
 - g. Northern
 - h. North East
2. District:
3. Community name:
4. Age:
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-24
 - c. 25-34
 - d. 35-44
 - e. 45-54
 - f. 55-64
 - g. 65 and above
5. Gender:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

6. Educational level:
 - a. Secondary education
 - b. Cert A education
 - c. First degree
 - d. Master's degree
 - e. Other (please specify)

PERCEPTION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

3. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the current state of gender equality in Ghana's education system?
4. On a scale of 1-5, what is your impression about gender equality in education over the past 5 years?

BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

5. What are the main barriers to gender equality in education in your district or community? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Cultural norms and practices
 - b. Economic constraints
 - c. Access to educational facilities
 - d. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy
 - e. Gender-based violence
 - f. Lack of female role models in education
 - g. Inadequate educational policies
 - h. Others (please specify)
6. How significant is the impact of cultural norms and practices on gender equality in education?
 - a. Not significant
 - b. Slightly significant
 - c. Moderately significant
 - d. Very significant
 - e. Extremely significant
7. To what extent do economic constraints affect girls' access to education?
 - a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent
 - e. To a very great extent

8. How often do early marriages and teenage pregnancies interrupt girls' education in your community?
- a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Always
9. What is the frequency of gender-based violence in educational settings in your area?
- a. Non-existent
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Occasionally
 - d. Commonly

IMPACT ON THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

10. How do these barriers impact the quality of education received by girls compared to boys?
- a. No impact
 - b. Slight impact
 - c. Moderate impact
 - d. Significant impact
 - e. Extreme impact
11. In your opinion, how do these barriers affect the future opportunities available to girls?
- a. No effect
 - b. Slightly limits opportunities
 - c. Moderately limits opportunities
 - d. Significantly limits opportunities
 - e. Completely limits opportunities

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

12. What measures do you think should be implemented to overcome these barriers? (Select all that apply)
- a. Sensitization and awareness programs
 - b. Scholarships and financial support for girls
 - c. Building more schools in remote areas
 - d. Strengthening laws against early marriage and gender-based violence
 - e. Training and employing more female teachers
 - f. Developing gender-sensitive educational policies
 - g. Others (please specify)

13. Who should be primarily responsible for addressing gender equality in education?
 - a. Government
 - b. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - c. Community leaders
 - d. Schools and educational institutions
 - e. Parents and guardians
 - f. Students
 - g. Others (please specify)
14. Can you share any personal experiences or observations related to gender inequality in education?
15. What additional recommendations do you have to improve gender equality in education in Ghana?

SECTION B

PERCEPTION TOWARD QUALITY OF TEACHING

This section assesses perceptions regarding the quality of teaching and its implications for foundational literacy and skill development.

16. In your view, how would you rate the overall quality of teaching in your local schools?
 - a. Very poor
 - b. Poor
 - c. Fair
 - d. Good
 - e. Very good
17. In your view, how accessible are teachers to students outside of regular class hours for additional help?
 - a. Not accessible
 - b. Moderately accessible
 - c. Very accessible
18. In your view, have you or your child experienced any challenges with the quality of teaching in your district/school?
 - a. Lack of understanding of the subject matter
 - b. Inadequate teaching materials
 - c. Poor teacher-student communication
 - d. Insufficient feedback on performance
 - e. Lack of individualized attention
 - f. Other (please specify)

19. In your view, do teachers address the diverse learning needs of students?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
20. If Yes, how do teachers address the diverse learning needs of students?
21. How satisfied are you with the level of teacher professionalism and conduct in the schools in your district?
- a. Very dissatisfied
 - b. Dissatisfied
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Satisfied
 - e. Very satisfied

On a scale of 1-5:

22. To what extent do you think the quality of teaching impacts the development of 21st-century skills among learners?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent

SECTION C

Factors affecting the development of foundational literacy and its impact on development of literacy skills.

IMPACT ON 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS

This section focuses on the intersection of gender inequality, teaching quality, and literacy on skill development.

23. In your opinion, how do gender inequality and poor teaching quality together influence the overall educational outcomes for students?
- a. No influence
 - b. Slight influence
 - c. Moderate influence
 - d. Strong influence
24. How important is addressing gender inequality, teaching quality, and foundational literacy in transforming the education sector to enhance 21st-century skills?
- a. Not important
 - b. Slightly important
 - c. Moderately important
 - d. Extremely important

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

This section seeks insights into potential solutions to address the issues identified.

25. What measures do you think should be implemented to improve gender equality in education? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Community awareness and sensitization programs
 - b. Financial support for girls' education (e.g., scholarships)
 - c. Implementation of gender-sensitive policies in schools
 - d. Training and hiring more female teachers
 - e. Strengthening laws against early marriage and gender-based violence
 - f. Other (please specify)
26. What strategies could improve the quality of teaching in basic schools? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Continuous professional development for teachers
 - b. Provision of teaching materials and resources
 - c. Improved teacher remuneration and incentives
 - d. Smaller class sizes for better student engagement
 - e. Others (please specify)
27. What actions can be taken to support the development of foundational literacy among learners? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Early childhood education programs
 - b. Parental involvement initiatives
 - c. Community literacy programs
 - d. Enhanced teacher training in literacy instruction
 - e. Others (please specify)
28. What challenges have you observed that affect the quality of teaching and literacy development in schools?
29. What additional recommendations do you have to improve the overall education system and develop 21st-century skills among learners?

Section D: Accessibility of learning opportunities

30. How accessible are educational institutions in your area for all children and young people?
 - a. Not accessible
 - b. Slightly accessible
 - c. Moderately accessible
 - d. Extremely accessible

31. How effective are current educational policies in addressing these barriers?
- a. Not effective
 - b. Slightly effective
 - c. Moderately effective
 - d. Extremely effective

QUALITY OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

32. To what extent do educational policies impact the quality of teaching and learning in your area?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent

RELEVANCE OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

33. Applications and future job markets?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent

IMPACT OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES

34. To what extent have recent educational reforms affected the overall educational experience of students in your area?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

35. What measures should be implemented to improve accessibility to education for all children and young people? (Select all that apply)
- a. Financial aid and scholarships
 - b. Improved transportation infrastructure
 - c. Inclusive education policies for children with special needs
 - d. Community awareness programs
 - e. Flexible schooling options (e.g., evening classes, online learning)
 - f. Others (please specify)

36. What strategies could enhance the quality of education in your area? (Select all that apply)
- a. Regular and comprehensive teacher training
 - b. Increased funding for educational resources
 - c. Smaller class sizes
 - d. Enhanced teacher evaluation and accountability
 - e. Development of innovative teaching methods
 - f. Others (please specify)
37. What initiatives could be undertaken to ensure the curriculum is relevant to students' future needs? (Select all that apply)
- a. Curriculum review and update processes
 - b. Industry partnerships for practical learning
 - c. Emphasis on STEM education
 - d. Integration of life skills and career guidance
 - e. Adoption of technology and digital tools in teaching
 - f. Others (please specify)
38. Can you share some experiences where the education system successfully prepared a student for real life

ANNEX 3: INTERVIEW WITH MUNICIPAL/ DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

SECTION A

DATA COLLECTOR INFORMATION

1. Name of Data Collector:
2. Contact of Data Collector:

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Region:
 - a. Central
 - b. Greater Accra
 - c. Bono
 - d. Bono East
 - e. Volta
 - f. Western North
 - g. Northern
 - h. North East
2. District:
3. Community name:
4. Age:
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-24
 - c. 25-34
 - d. 35-44
 - e. 45-54
 - f. 55-64
 - g. 65 and above
5. Gender:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

6. Educational Level:
 - a. Secondary education
 - b. Cert A education
 - c. First degree
 - d. Master's degree
 - e. Other (please specify)

PERCEPTION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

7. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the current state of gender equality in Ghana's education system?
8. On a scale of 1-5, what is your impression about gender equality in education over the past 5 years?

BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

9. What are the main barriers to gender equality in education in your district or community? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Cultural norms and practices
 - b. Economic constraints
 - c. Access to educational facilities
 - d. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy
 - e. Gender-based violence
 - f. Lack of female role models in education
 - g. Inadequate educational policies
 - h. Others (please specify)
10. How significant is the impact of cultural norms and practices on gender equality in education?
 - a. Not significant
 - b. Slightly significant
 - c. Moderately significant
 - d. Very significant
 - e. Extremely significant
11. To what extent do economic constraints affect girls' access to education?
 - a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent
 - e. To a very great extent

12. How often do early marriages and teenage pregnancies interrupt girls' education in your community?
- a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Always
13. What is the frequency of gender-based violence in educational settings in your area?
- a. Non-existent
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Occasionally
 - d. Commonly

IMPACT ON THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

14. How do these barriers impact the quality of education received by girls compared to boys?
- a. No impact
 - b. Slight impact
 - c. Moderate impact
 - d. Significant impact
 - e. Extreme impact
15. In your opinion, how do these barriers affect the future opportunities available to girls?
- a. No effect
 - b. Slightly limits opportunities
 - c. Moderately limits opportunities
 - d. Significantly limits opportunities
 - e. Completely limits opportunities

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

16. What measures do you think should be implemented to overcome these barriers? (Select all that apply)
- a. Sensitization and awareness programs
 - b. Scholarships and financial support for girls
 - c. Building more schools in remote areas
 - d. Strengthening laws against early marriage and gender-based violence
 - e. Training and employing more female teachers
 - f. Developing gender-sensitive educational policies
 - g. Others (please specify)

17. Who should be primarily responsible for addressing gender equality in education?
- a. Government
 - b. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - c. Community leaders
 - d. Schools and educational institutions
 - e. Parents and guardians
 - f. Students
 - g. Others (please specify)
14. How often do you observe gender-based discrimination in school?
- a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Always
15. Can you share any personal experiences or observations related to gender inequality in education?
16. What additional recommendations do you have to improve gender equality in education in Ghana?

SECTION B

PERCEPTION TOWARD QUALITY OF TEACHING

This section assesses perceptions regarding the quality of teaching and its implications for foundational literacy and skill development.

17. In your view, how would you rate the overall quality of teaching in your local schools?
- a. Very poor
 - b. Poor
 - c. Fair
 - d. Good
 - e. Very good
18. In your view, how effective do you find the teaching methods used by teachers in your community?
- a. Very ineffective
 - b. Ineffective
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Effective
 - e. Very effective

19. In your view, how well do teachers engage students in the learning process?
- Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Significantly
 - Completely
20. In your view, how accessible are teachers to students outside of regular class hours for additional help?
- Not accessible
 - Moderately accessible
 - Very accessible
21. In your view, how often do teachers incorporate practical examples and real-life applications into their lessons?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
22. In your view, have you or your child experienced any challenges with the quality of teaching in your district/school?
- Lack of understanding of the subject matter
 - Inadequate teaching materials
 - Poor teacher-student communication
 - Insufficient feedback on performance
 - Lack of individualized attention
 - Other (please specify)
23. In your view, do teachers address the diverse learning needs of students?
- Yes
 - No
24. If Yes, how do teachers address the diverse learning needs of students?
25. How satisfied are you with the level of teacher professionalism and conduct in the schools in your district?
- Very dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Neutral
 - Satisfied
 - Very satisfied

On a scale of 1-5:

- 26. How would you rate the overall quality of teaching in your local schools?
- 27. Do you believe that quality teaching is adequately promoting foundational literacy among students?
- 28. How often do teachers in your community employ interactive and student-centered teaching methods?
 - a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Always
- 29. To what extent do you think the quality of teaching impacts the development of 21st-century skills among learners?
 - a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent

SECTION C

Factors affecting the development of foundational literacy and its impact on development of literacy skills.

- 30. What factors do you believe most significantly affect the development of foundational literacy in basic education? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Lack of trained teachers
 - b. Insufficient educational resources (e.g., textbooks, learning materials)
 - c. Poor school infrastructure
 - d. Inadequate parental support and involvement
 - e. Socioeconomic factors (e.g., poverty)
 - f. Other (please specify)
- 31. How would you rate the foundational literacy skills of students in your community?
 - a. Very poor
 - b. Poor
 - c. Fair
 - d. Good
 - e. Very good

32. To what extent do you think foundational literacy impacts the development of 21st-century skills among students?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a great extent

IMPACT ON 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS

This section focuses on the intersection of gender inequality, teaching quality, and literacy on skill development.

33. In your opinion, how do gender inequality and poor teaching quality together influence the overall educational outcomes for students?
- a. No influence
 - b. Slight influence
 - c. Moderate influence
 - d. Strong influence
34. How important is addressing gender inequality, teaching quality, and foundational literacy in transforming the education sector to enhance 21st-century skills?
- a. Not important
 - b. Slightly important
 - c. Moderately important
 - d. Extremely important

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

This section seeks insights into potential solutions to address the issues identified.

35. What measures do you think should be implemented to improve gender equality in education? (Select all that apply)
- a. Community awareness and sensitization programs
 - b. Financial support for girls' education (e.g., scholarships)
 - c. Implementation of gender-sensitive policies in schools
 - d. Training and hiring more female teachers
 - e. Strengthening laws against early marriage and gender-based violence
 - f. Other (please specify)
36. What strategies could improve the quality of teaching in basic schools? (Select all that apply)
- a. Continuous professional development for teachers
 - b. Provision of teaching materials and resources
 - c. Improved teacher remuneration and incentives
 - d. Smaller class sizes for better student engagement
 - e. Others (please specify)

37. What actions can be taken to support the development of foundational literacy among learners? (Select all that apply)
- a. Early childhood education programs
 - b. Parental involvement initiatives
 - c. Community literacy programs
 - d. Enhanced teacher training in literacy instruction
 - e. Others (please specify)
38. Can you share any personal experiences that illustrate the impact of gender inequality on education in your community?
39. What challenges have you observed that affect the quality of teaching and literacy development in schools?
40. What additional recommendations do you have to improve the overall education system and develop 21st-century skills among learners?

Section D: Accessibility of learning opportunities

41. How accessible are educational institutions in your area for all children and young people?
- a. Not accessible
 - b. Slightly accessible
 - c. Moderately accessible
 - d. Extremely accessible
42. How effective are current educational policies in addressing these barriers?
- a. Not effective
 - b. Slightly effective
 - c. Moderately effective
 - d. Extremely effective

QUALITY OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

43. To what extent do educational policies impact the quality of teaching and learning in your area?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent

44. What aspects of educational policy most significantly affect teaching quality? (Select all that apply)
- a. Teacher training and professional development
 - b. Curriculum standards
 - c. Availability of teaching resources
 - d. Class sizes
 - e. Teacher evaluation and accountability
 - f. Others (please specify)

RELEVANCE OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

45. How relevant is the curriculum in your area to the needs and future aspirations of students?
- a. Not relevant
 - b. Slightly relevant
 - c. Moderately relevant
 - d. Extremely relevant
46. How do educational policies influence the relevance of the curriculum to real-life applications and future job markets?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent

IMPACT OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES

47. To what extent have recent educational reforms affected the overall educational experience of students in your area?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent
48. What specific policies or practices have had the most positive impact on education in your community?

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

49. What measures should be implemented to improve accessibility to education for all children and young people? (Select all that apply)
- a. Financial aid and scholarships
 - b. Improved transportation infrastructure
 - c. Inclusive education policies for children with special needs
 - d. Community awareness programs
 - e. Flexible schooling options (e.g., evening classes, online learning)[]
 - f. Others (please specify)

50. What strategies could enhance the quality of education in your area? (Select all that apply)
- a. Regular and comprehensive teacher training
 - b. Increased funding for educational resources
 - c. Smaller class sizes
 - d. Enhanced teacher evaluation and accountability
 - e. Development of innovative teaching methods
 - f. Others (please specify)
51. What initiatives could be undertaken to ensure the curriculum is relevant to students' future needs? (Select all that apply)
- a. Curriculum review and update processes
 - b. Industry partnerships for practical learning
 - c. Emphasis on STEM education
 - d. Integration of life skills and career guidance
 - e. Adoption of technology and digital tools in teaching
 - f. Others (please specify)
52. How frequently do schools offer programs or courses that you consider valuable for future success of students?
- a. Not at all
 - b. To a small extent
 - c. To a moderate extent
 - d. To a very great extent
53. What percentage of the curriculum do you believe is relevant to current and future job market?
- a. 100%
 - b. 80%
 - c. 60%
 - d. 40%
 - e. 20%
54. Can you share any personal experiences or observations regarding how educational policies and practices have impacted learning opportunities in your community?
55. Can you share some experiences where the education system successfully prepared a student for real life

ANNEX 4: GENERAL INFORMATION

This Classroom Observation Form is designed to evaluate and document the effectiveness of teaching practices that cater to the diverse learning needs of learners at the foundational level. This form typically includes sections that seeks to find out the barriers to gender equality in the classroom, Perceptions and experiences of students, Parents, and Community Members regarding teaching Quality, Factors Affecting the Development of Foundational Literacy and Its Impact on availability of learning materials, Impact of Educational Policies and Practices on Learning Opportunities and Opportunities for Learning what matters. It also captures observations on student engagement, the use of various instructional strategies, and the overall classroom environment. By using this form, observers can provide constructive feedback that supports teachers in refining their instructional approaches at the foundational level.

DATA COLLECTOR INFORMATION

Name of data collector:

Contact of data collector:

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF SCHOOL

Region:

District:

School:

Grade:

Subject:

Period/time:

Teacher:

Date:

RQ 1: BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION IN GHANA

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION	YES	NO
1) Gender participation	Description		
2) Teacher interaction	Participation opportunities, encouragement in the classroom		
3) Gender-sensitive materials	Balanced teacher-student interactions by gender e.g. Teacher response toward learners answers		
	Inclusiveness and absence of gender bias in teaching materials		
	Seating arrangements in response to gender dynamics;		
4) Classroom Environment	Ventilation		
	Spacing,		
	Appropriate type of classroom furniture.		
5) Teacher Attitudes	Teachers' attitudes and expectations toward students of different genders clearly exhibited		
Comments:			

RQ 2: PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS REGARDING TEACHING QUALITY

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION	YES	NO
1) Teaching effectiveness	Effectiveness of teaching methods and strategies exhibited.		
2) Learners engagement	Levels of student engagement and participation impressive. Eg Students worked well in groups and differentiated learning approaches.		
3) Parental involvement	Evidence of parental involvement in learners' homework.		
	Does the community support with learning materials.		
4) Community support	School infrastructure		
	School maintenance		
5) Feedback mechanisms	Presence and effectiveness of feedback mechanisms in the classroom		
Comments:			

RQ 3: FACTORS AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY AND ITS IMPACT ON AVAILABILITY OF LEARNING MATERIALS.

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION	YES	NO
1) Resource availability	Availability and quality of literacy resources in the classroom.		
2) Literacy instruction methods	Application of foundational literacy methods.		
3) Student literacy levels	Assessment of students' literacy levels in place.		
4) Evidence of differentiated learning approaches	Incorporation of differentiated learning approaches in the classroom.		

Comments:

RQ 4: IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES ON LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION	YES	NO
1) Implementation of educational policies in the classroom	Are educational policies being implemented in the classroom eg Inclusive Education		
2) Accessibility of education	All learners have equal opportunities in participation in teaching and learning.		
3) Support services	Availability and effectiveness of support services for students		

Comments:

RQ 2: PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS REGARDING TEACHING QUALITY

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION	YES	NO
1) Curriculum relevance	Relevance of the curriculum to real-world applications shown		
2) Student engagement	Levels of student engagement and motivation in the classroom		
3) Critical thinking	Opportunities for developing critical thinking and problem-solving		
4) Creativity and innovation	Opportunities for fostering creativity and innovation		
5) Supportive learning environment	Overall supportiveness of the learning environment		

Comments:

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