



# EDUCATION BUDGET BRIEF



Ghana recently made the transition to lower middle-income status and has achieved many of the same education successes as other countries in this bracket, such as considerably expanding access to basic education and improving gender parity. Despite significant financial commitments to the education sector, the quality of learning outcomes has not kept pace with expansion in access. In addition, with the introduction of free senior high school, the lower levels of schooling have not enjoyed increases in funding.

Between 2015 and 2019, expenditure on education grew slightly faster than total government expenditure. Most of the Government of Ghana (GoG) budget is spent on the wage bill, effectively crowding out spending on goods and services, and infrastructure, which to some extent is addressed by funding from Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) and the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA).

Primary education consistently accounted for the largest share of education expenditures before 2015, when it was overtaken by spending on junior high school (JHS), senior high school (SHS) and tertiary education. This raises concerns about the equity of public spending because children from poor households rarely make it through to SHS and tertiary education.

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**Improving school readiness through kindergartens requires a combination of expanding access and improving the quality of instruction.** Investing in early childhood development has been shown to significantly improve learning achievement of children later in the education system, at JHS and SHS and even through to tertiary.



International evidence indicates that the returns on funds invested in improving ECD offer higher returns than funds spent on later levels of the education system. Also, the returns are higher if invested in meeting the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised children who stand to benefit the most from publicly-funded ECD. Even more important is that such investments address inequalities before they take root.

Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) results show that, in both 2013 and 2015, only 2% of pupils in Primary 2 could read at grade level and that 50% of those tested were unable to recognise a single word. The 2015 Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA) found that, while 46–72% of pupils scored well on procedural knowledge sub-tasks, conceptual knowledge sub-tasks were much more challenging, with nearly 75% of pupils unable to answer a single question correctly.

There are a number of factors that affect performance in primary schools, and an important contributing factor is the quality of early childhood learning. The statistics below suggest that KGs are not contributing to school readiness as effectively as they should.

In 2017, the repeater rate for KG1 was 37%, which shows that learners are entering this phase of the education system too young. Targets in the Ministry of Education's 2019 MTEF show that the Ministry aims to bring gross enrolment down close to 100% and increase net enrolment to 100%, from 75%. This will help ensure that most children at these grades are the appropriate age, which enables the KGs to deliver curriculum that is fit for purpose.

There is a significant disparity in the proportion of teachers trained between public and private KGs. Over 75% of public KG teachers are trained, but only 8% of private KG teachers are trained. Sixty per cent (14,649) of the 24 418 KGs in Ghana are private, so the scale of the KG teacher-training challenge is large. Currently, the Ministry of Education targets include expanding KGs to 4- and 5- year-olds, whereas there may be a social need to expand public KGs for 3-year-olds, since a large number of children in this age bracket are attending private KGs, which are poorly resourced.



19% out of school ratio for children of primary school age



15% of girls and 17% of boys in primary schools are at risk of dropping out because they are overage – a function of repetition and not entering primary school at the right age



71% completion for primary school compared to 88% participation rates in KGs



42% of children at age 6 are in pre-school when they should be in P1 – late enrollment contributes to this

Source: UNICEF MICS 2017 and the Education Sector Analysis, 2018

# EDUCATION SECTOR BUDGET BRIEF



# 2

The Government needs to develop a single, annual document that consolidates information on all funding and expenditure for the education sector. This will greatly facilitate co-ordination of spending across education levels, accountability, and the measurement of equity in the sector.



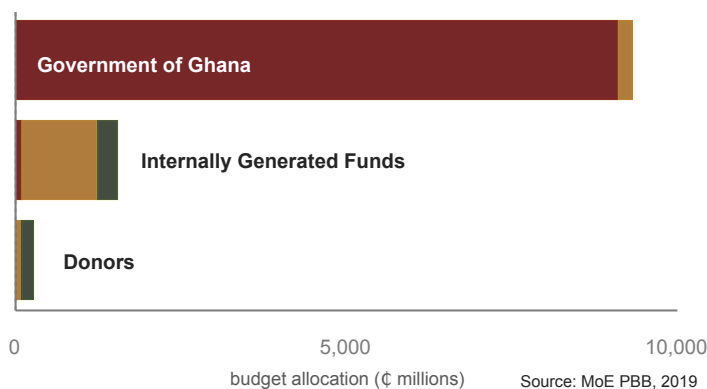
The vast majority of the funding to the education sector comes from the GoG budget. However, allocations for education are not all reflected under the Ministry of Education, but are spread across a number of other ministries as well. In addition, funds for education come from: the GETFund, which is a 2.5% levy on transactions; the ABFA, which is an earmarked portion of oil revenue (30%) used to finance the national budget; internally generated funds (IGF); and development partners. Information on infrastructure spending is particularly fragmented. This lack of a holistic funding picture undermines efforts to co-ordinate and improve the quality and equity of spending.

The Ministry of Education needs to work with the Ministry of Finance to restructure the GOG budget and expenditure reporting, possibly using the Standard Chart of Accounts, with the aim of consolidating all education allocations under the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education can also consider producing a single, annual document that provides a systematic breakdown of all funding allocations by source to the sector, showing all personnel, goods and services and capital expenditure for each level of the school system across all regions.

The Ministry of Education's 2019 Budget does not show allocations for goods and services at any of the schools' budget programmes. This is likely caused by the methods used to allocate expenditures within budgets, as the tables show that there is indeed expenditure on textbooks. Again, this points to the need for Ministry of Education to work with Ministry of Finance to restructure the format of its budget to make it more transparent. Having a holistic view of the funding of the education sector would: enable better monitoring of the availability, adequacy and predictability of the resources needed to drive school-based improvements; facilitate greater accountability and co-ordination across role-players; enable better monitoring of the balance in spending between personnel, goods and services and infrastructure; and facilitate efforts to address equity issues across districts, levels of education and who benefits from the public funding of education.

MoE Budget by Revenue Source and Allocation, 2019

■ Compensation of employees ■ Goods and services ■ CAPEX



# 3

To improve equity, the Government needs to address the backlogs in classrooms and eradicate collapsing school structures. The need is greatest among kindergartens (KG), as this sector needs to expand to accommodate unmet demand and address high pupil to classroom ratios. There are backlogs at all levels, which will take decades to address at current rates of implementation.



On average there are 55 pupils per KG classroom, but in the Northern Region there are on average 86 children per classroom – which explains why more than 41% of the classroom backlog of 5 491 at the KG level is in this region.

Government has set a target of building KGs in 1 171 primary schools to ensure all 4- and 5-year-olds are enrolled in KGs. This target will address only an estimated 62% of the backlog created by high pupil to classroom ratios for children currently at KGs.

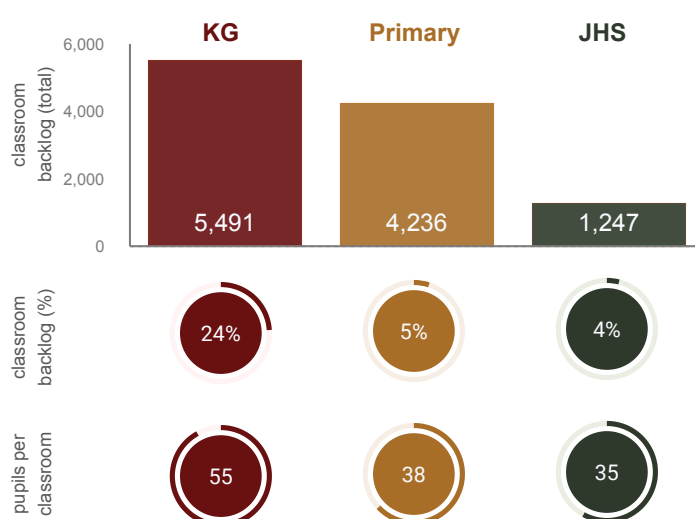
If the Government is to: achieve a 100% net enrolment ratio (NER) for KG, a target set for 2022; meet its gross enrolment ratio (GER) target; and the target pupil to classroom ratio of 25, then the government needs to build an equivalent of 6 890 KGs. At levels of implementation planned for 2019, it will take 35 years to achieve this. This highlights the need for additional investment in KG infrastructure.

Backlogs in classrooms exist at other levels in the school system: at primary level it is 4 236 (5%) and at JHS it is 1 247 (4%). At SHS there is a backlog of 2 894 classrooms (16%), which government is addressing through the provision of double-track schools and upgrading existing SHSs. There is, however, no information or targets in the Ministry of Education's 2019 MTEF on how these relatively smaller backlogs will be addressed and funded.

Government aims to rehabilitate and rebuild 8 286 collapsing school structures. In 2018, 52 of these were rehabilitated. In 2019 a further 50 will be rehabilitated. In total, this represents 1% of the need, and at this rate it will take over 150 years to address all these schools.

There is very little information in the Ministry of Education's budget regarding infrastructure spending. This is because most education infrastructure is funded via the GETFund and ABFA. However, the failure to present consolidated funding information on the education sector makes it difficult to evaluate whether infrastructure plans are synchronised with funding for personnel and goods and services. This needs to be addressed by producing a single, annual document that reflects all funds for the education sector as called for under item 1 above.

Classroom backlog (total number and % of total classrooms) and pupils per classroom by school system level, 2016



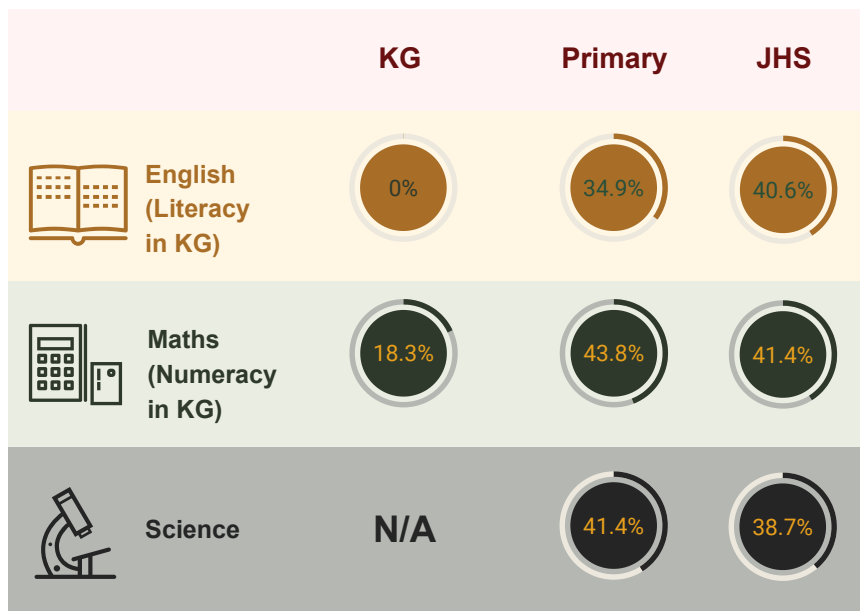


## 4

To improve quality, the Government needs to invest substantial resources in modernising how basic education is taught, including changing its approach to teacher training. This will require substantial investments in management, planning, procurement and distribution capacity – for textbooks and other inputs. It will also require a fundamental shift in the delivery and content of teacher training.



Availability of textbooks by subject and school level, 2018



Source: Compiled from MoE PBB, 2019

To improve the quality of education across all levels will require substantial investments in management, planning, procurement and distribution capacity. It will also require a fundamental shift in the delivery and management of teacher training.

Government has announced plans to increase the availability of textbooks from 2018 levels to 100% for all types of textbooks. To achieve the targets set out in the 2019 MTEF, the Ministry of Education will need to purchase three times as many textbooks as were purchased in 2018, which will require significant additional allocations for goods and services. This will also require substantial investments in systems for selecting and evaluating the content of textbooks and the procurement and distribution of them. It is important that budgets and plans are put in place to build this institutional capacity, otherwise a significant opportunity to improve the quality of learning will be wasted.

## 10.1 million

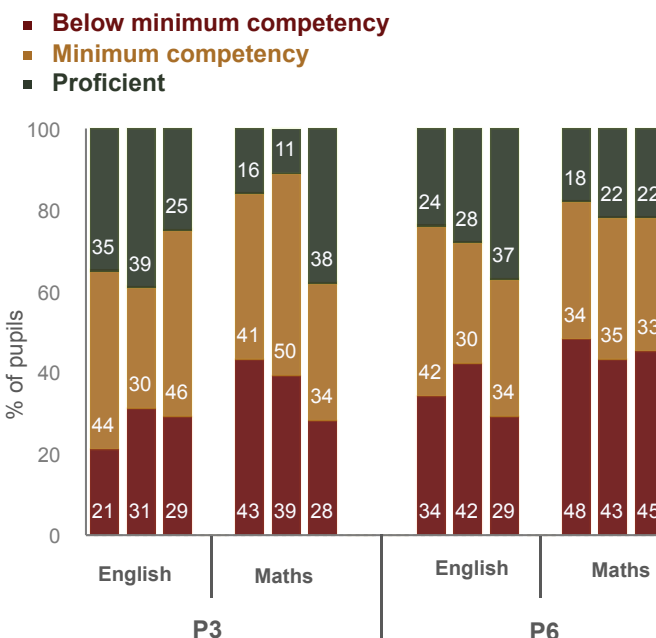
In 2018, coverage of textbooks was well below 50% for all subjects across all levels of basic education. This shortfall amounted to 10.1-million textbooks - 2.5-million for kindergarten, 5.7-million for primary school and 1.9-million for junior high school.

The figures to the right, taken from the Education Sector Analysis 2018 show worsening levels of proficiency in English and Mathematics across grades. This reveals weaknesses in teaching.

According to the Education Sector Analysis 2018, pre-service teacher education does not train teachers how to impart and develop the skills learners require to operate in a modern economy, such as critical thinking, collaboration and digital literacy. Government's management of teacher training facilities needs to be reformed so that colleges of education can control how they train teachers and so that the teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) is modernised.

Despite the Ministry of Education's targets to increase the number of teachers from 42 666 in 2018 to 49 606 in 2022, the Ministry of Education's budget for compensation of employees in the 2019 MTEF are constant from 2019 to 2022, meaning the MTEF budget allocations fail to provide the funds required to employ the additional 6 940 teachers.

Trends in NEA results, 2011 (left), 2013 (middle) and 2016 (right)



Source: Adapted from figures in MoE ESPR, 2017

## 0




Literacy workbooks were not made available in any kindergartens in Ghana in 2018



# 5

**Substantial investments are required to improve access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene facilities at schools.** Not a single school in Ghana has sanitation services that meet the SGD standards for a Basic sanitation service, i.e. improved, usable and single-sex toilets. Poor sanitation at schools contributes to the spread of enteric infections, which lead to absenteeism and have short- and long-term impacts on school performance.



	 <b>Drinking Water</b>	 <b>Sanitation</b>	 <b>Hygiene</b>
<b>Advanced Service</b>	Additional criteria: quality, quantity, continuity and accessibility to all users	Additional criteria: student per toilet ratios, menstrual hygiene facilities, cleanliness, accessibility and excreta management systems	Additional criteria: hygiene education, group handwashing, menstrual hygiene materials and accessibility
<b>Basic Service</b>	Drinking water from an improved source and water is available at the school	Improved sanitation facilities at the school that are single-sex and usable	Handwashing facilities with water and soap available at the school
<b>Limited Service</b>	Drinking water from an improved source but water is unavailable at the school	Improved sanitation facilities at the school that are either not single-sex or unusable	Handwashing facilities with water but no soap available at the school
<b>No Service</b>	Drinking water from an unimproved source or no water source at school	Unimproved sanitation facilities or no sanitation facilities available at school	No handwashing facilities available or no water available at school

Source: WHO/UNICEF 2018 Drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in schools: Global baseline report

Children spend a significant portion of their year at school. Ensuring all schools have basic drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services is essential to improving equitable access to quality education.

Improving WASH services at schools decreases the potential for disease transmission – particularly enteric infections – between students, thus reducing absenteeism and the long-term negative impacts of enteric infections on students’ nutrition and therefore their cognitive ability to learn. There is also strong evidence that separate sanitation facilities for girls and boys contributes significantly to the continued participation of girls in schools post puberty.

The figure to the left sets out the SDG standards for WASH in schools.

# ¢1.1 billion

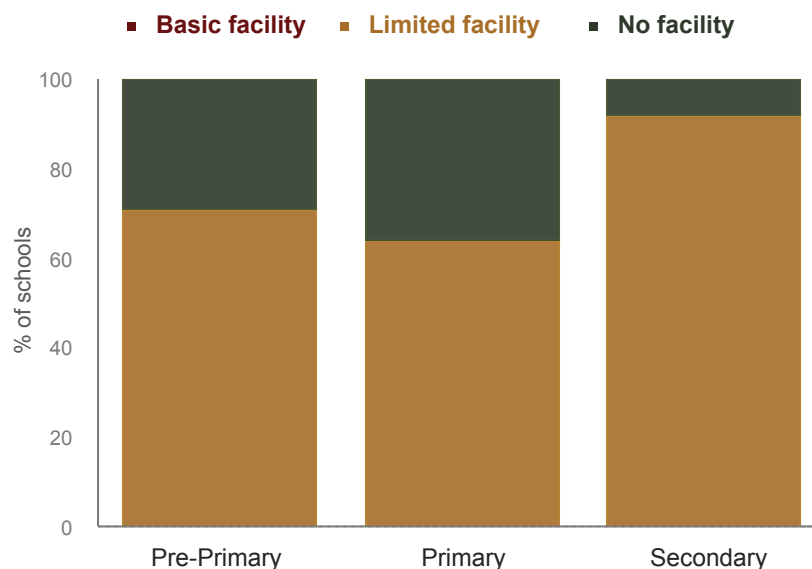
In 2017, enteric infections, diarrheal diseases and nutritional deficiencies among school-going aged children in Ghana caused ¢1.1-billion in productivity losses, equivalent to 0.7% of GDP

The figure to the right shows that, in 2017, no schools in Ghana had drinking water and sanitation services that met the “Basic service” standards.

Data presented by the Ministry of Education in their 2019 Budget shows, that, in 2016/17, only 50% of KGs had access to potable water, while 68% had toilets. This is particularly concerning as children in this age group are often not as aware of the need to pay attention to basic hygiene, and are particularly vulnerable to enteric infections. Only 44% of primary schools have functional water facilities, and 46% of SHSs have no hand-washing facility.

The Government needs to give priority to ensuring all schools have access to basic drinking water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, and this needs to be reflected transparently in the Ministry of Education’s budget.

**Sanitation facility availability by school type, 2017**



Source: WHO/UNICEF 2018 Drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in schools: Global baseline report

# 0%

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