

**Addressing child labour through education:
A study of alternative/complementary initiatives in
quality education delivery and their suitability for
cocoa-farming communities.**



Summarized Version

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1. Introduction

The steady decline in national education standards in Ghana over the past two decades has been recognized as a serious hindrance to the country's development. The sector is consequently experiencing a renewed focus by government on the importance of quality and on reaching remote rural areas. Unfortunately, the very features which make cocoa flourish have the opposite effect on schooling. In addition, deficiencies in management at both state and community levels have led to a virtual vacuum of ownership of schools, which seriously undermines educational quality.

ICI commissioned this study in recognition of the fact that persistently low quality of basic education in cocoa-growing areas will hamper all other efforts to eliminate WFCLs and FLs. The study thus has a two-fold purpose: to examine the existing quality of education in a sample of cocoa-growing communities and to review existing quality education initiatives with a view to potential replication and/or adaptation in cocoa-growing communities. Based on a critical analysis of the quality problems and a matching up of the most appropriate aspects of existing initiatives, the study proposes realistic options for quality improvements.

ICI wishes to design an intervention responding to the findings of this study, in collaboration with the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE), through its National Programme for the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour in Cocoa (NPECLC). Through this programme, collaborative links will also be formed with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MOESS) whose current Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2003-2015 has many objectives of direct relevance to the needs of cocoa areas and clearly states that in allocating resources, particular emphasis will be given to poorer areas. The areas of overlap between the objectives of this study, of the ESP and of the NPECLC education objectives, indicate that in pursuing an initiative to improve quality education in cocoa-growing areas, ICI would be working directly towards major policy targets of the GOG.

2. Definition of quality in education

Definitions of quality solicited from people interviewed in this study reflected the main points from a definition in a 2000 UNICEF paper which include the following:

Learners should be healthy, well-nourished and supported by families and communities. Schools should be adequately resourced, safe and gender-sensitive environments. Curricula should furnish children with basic skills esp. literacy and numeracy and teaching should be child-centred.

3. Implications of educational quality for child labour

This study suggests that poor educational quality in rural areas is actually the biggest deterrent to children being enrolled in school. It identifies three different types of costs termed 'direct cost,' (the actual recurrent costs to parents such as uniforms and stationery) 'opportunity cost,' (children becoming 'misfits' by not learning any other livelihood but not acquiring a proper education either) and 'damage risk' (children being exploited and abused by teachers). In the light of these realities, rural parents must be seen as dissatisfied clients of the education system rather than as illiterates ignorant of the 'value' of education. Education simply *does not have value* without quality and given the severe quality problems in many cocoa communities today, farming is actually a better livelihood option for children than schooling. This causal relationship between education and child labour is borne out by the fact that the volume of labour decreases significantly for children attending quality schools.

4. Current quality of education in cocoa areas and needs analysis

Based on an analysis of the current quality of education in sample communities, the chart below indicates the necessary areas of intervention for quality improvements.

Critical objectives for quality education initiatives in cocoa-growing areas	
Socio-cultural	1. Addressing parental illiteracy, ignorance of rights, disengagement with education; 2. Promoting parental ownership of schools and involvement in school management and supervision, building their confidence as educational stakeholders; 3. Promoting parental responsibility for children's education; 4. Finding role models for children, preferably among their own communities; 5. Promoting cultural unity, sense of belonging, desire to invest in cocoa communities.
Political: issues of leadership and policy engagement	6. Addressing issues of governance and leadership in culturally heterogeneous c'ties; 7. Strengthening community capacity to participate in local governance structures; 8. Bringing about closer relations between communities and government authorities by strengthening CSOs, including PTAs and SMCs; 9. Strengthening government capacity to respond to needs of communities.
Economic	10. Addressing the poverty, unstable economics, money management of cocoa farmers; 11. Building community capacity to advocate for own resources; 12. Improving services/infrastructure in remote communities to reduce inaccessibility and the burden of domestic drudgery esp. 'girls' labour'; 13. Improving and increasing educational infrastructure and fulfilling basic quotas of educational resources.
Academic	14. Making education needs-based; 15. Giving children the building blocks of learning: language, literacy and numeracy; 16. Tackling linguistic barriers arising from illiterate background and multi-culturalism; 17. Providing adequate numbers of teaching staff and motivating teachers to stay at post; 18. Promoting child-centred teaching methodologies; 19. Streamlining the curriculum and making it more relevant; 20. Integrating out-of-school children into formal education.
Gender	21. Promoting gender balance among teaching staff; 22. Addressing gender disparities which put girls at a disadvantage; 23. Addressing the enabling gender environment - traditionally low status of women; 24. Finding role models for girls.
Geographic	25. Overcoming barriers of access for children - long distances, harsh terrain and climate; 26. Addressing the significant loss of instructional time caused by annual rainfall.

5. Review of quality models

(a) Parallel models

Private schools and unit schools are considered as parallel models with particular reference to supervision. In this respect private schools have a clear advantage and a case study is given of the Pastor John Kumah Preparatory School in the Wassa Amenfi West district, which, despite very poor infrastructure and the complete absence of trained teachers, has achieved excellent standards of quality, due primarily to strong ownership.

(b) Review of donor and NGO initiatives in improving educational quality

This review looks at a representative sample of external initiatives targeted partly or fully at improving educational quality and is structured as a critical account of these programmes' activities, impact and challenges in the relevant areas of intervention, and arranged in same thematic order as the 'critical objectives' chart above. Initiatives reviewed are by Action Aid, CARE International (SCORE, BECS and YES), Ibis (EfE), ISODEC, ILO/IPEC (LUTRENA and WACAP), NNED, Olinga Foundation, RAINS/CAMFED, School for Life, USAID (QUIPS, EQUALL and GAIT II), VSO and WUSC.

On the basis of the review, initiatives considered particularly suitable for cocoa communities are those that:

1. Are needs-based, rights-based and work within mainstream realities;
2. Respond well to the geographical and resource challenges of remote communities;

3. Build capacity for all three elements necessary for quality education - (1) teaching, (2) management and (3) resources – as much *at community level* as possible;
4. Build community capacity to advocate for quality education as a right and be well represented in local government;
5. Address leadership and governance challenges;
6. Strengthen CSOs (including SMC/PTAs) for c'ty leadership and education advocacy;
7. Address the enabling environment through adult literacy programmes, advocacy empowerment and gender sensitization;
8. Prioritizing gender and treating it as a cross-cutting issue in all programming;
9. Have a high use of PRA/PLA methodologies in all aspects of programming;
10. Make the relationship between government authorities and community representatives positive and functional in both directions;
11. Emphasize supervision above all other prerequisites for quality education.
12. Improve basic literacy and numeracy at primary level;
13. Provide complementary education programmes mainly in mother-tongue literacy;
14. Provide local pupil teachers (LPTs).¹

The programmes that respond best to these specifications are integrated ones with an education focus. This is because quality education in deprived areas is an issue that needs to be addressed from many angles at once. Given the extreme difficulty of the gender issue in remote cocoa areas however, gender-targeted initiatives have additional best practices to offer. Below is a summary of most suitable initiatives.

Action Aid	Needs- and rights-based, well-integrated approach with empowerment and advocacy factored into all programmes, experience working in remote communities with complementary approaches; REFLECT an excellent tool combining adult literacy with community (and gender) empowerment through PLA techniques. Incorporation of PRA/PLA into all aspects of programming.
CARE International	Experience working in cocoa communities within remote forest areas. Addressing education via the empowerment of communities through CSOs; good IEC outreach specifically targeting quality education issues in cocoa areas.
EQUALL	Mother tongue literacy initiatives, CEP programme in conjunction with SfL, provision of LPTs, involvement in provision of distance learning options for LPTs.
GAIT II	Needs-based, highly integrated approach, addressing education via the empowerment of communities, mainly through CSOs. Bringing stakeholder groups together with PRA/PLA activities, to facilitate the process of communities claiming their rights and government authorities responding positively.
Ibis	Needs-based, integrated approach, experience working in remote communities, new interest in working in cocoa communities, proposal to Danida for wing schools to serve remotest communities.
School for Life	Needs-based approach, complementary education programme in mother tongue literacy well tailored to local context with strong emphasis on supervision and high level of community ownership and involvement. Experience working in very remote areas, upcoming programme on wing schools.
CAMFED	Committed to girls' and women's education and empowerment. Has gained experience in some of the most challenging areas for gender in Ghana ie. northern Ghana, and is thus well-placed to respond to the needs of cocoa areas.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. The enabling environment: socio-cultural, political, economic

Being needs-and rights-based

This approach steers away from the over-simplicity of poverty as an explanation for child labour and promotes: Information and capacity-building; Formation of collaborative

¹ Several terms for such teachers have now become familiar – ‘REV’, ‘CST’, ‘volunteer teacher’ etc. For the purposes of this study however, they will be termed ‘local pupil teachers’ or ‘LPTs’.

networks; Building communities' self-esteem; Designing initiatives with adequate input from communities.

Addressing the socio-cultural complexities of cocoa farming communities

Designing activities to address: The challenge of achieving representative leadership in ethnically diverse communities; The need to involve traditional leadership fully in education; The low sense of pride and common purpose in cocoa communities.

Having a cross-cutting gender focus

Gender is “a tough nut to crack” in these remote rural areas and must be made to cut across all aspects of programming. A clear gender policy is needed in ICI's YDK programme and in its projected education programme under the NPECLC.

Attaining a high level of self-sufficiency at community level

This means building the capacity for all three elements necessary for quality education – (1) teaching, (2) management and (3) resources – as much at community level as possible.

Material resources: infrastructure, services and educational facilities

Advocate for the timely provision of government-obligated services and infrastructure to remote cocoa areas; Build community capacity for the necessary application procedures; Encourage industry partners to donate such infrastructure

Advocacy and assistance to improve government response to educational needs

At district level: Bring together community members with representatives of DAs and DEOs; Enter into cost-sharing agreements with DAs for complementary education programmes; Facilitate DA sponsorships of teachers; Facilitate information flows between district and policy levels to promote the implementation of *existing* policy provisions intended to make the state education system more flexible and responsive to the needs of cocoa areas. At the policy level: advocate for: Increased quotas for GES pupil teachers and the lowering of qualifying criteria for such teachers.

6.2. Teaching and Learning

Complementary Education Programme (CEP)

Academic interventions must place strong emphasis on supervision and be firmly embedded within integrated programmes which also feature community capacity-building. For this reason, School for Life's approach is highly recommended for the setting up of a CEP.

Wing/feeder schools²

Assist remote cocoa communities apply to the GES for wing schools. Such schools could potentially serve clusters of hamlets deep in the forest.

Deployment of local pupil teachers (LPTs)

Design a programme for the deployment of LPTs in cocoa communities, while ensuring the furthering of their skills by sponsoring their re-sitting of SS exams and supporting them to take the UTT/DBEP modular course. Consider also assisting JSS graduates from remote communities to further their education with a view to becoming pupils teachers, or sponsored teacher trainees who will return and teach in their communities. Investigate the possibility of obtaining national service teachers for remote communities. A monitoring system should be put in place whereby a support officer visits LPTs on a regular basis.

Quality Interventions in GES schools

Design a programme to be run in partner communities concurrently with the CEP, which will improve conditions in state schools and create links between them and the CEP. Create opportunities to bring GES teachers together with LPTs and CEP facilitators operating within the same communities; Encourage a two-way collaboration between school management and community leadership structures.

Support to private schools

Support private education initiatives in cocoa communities, esp. in cases where interest already exists to establish private schools; Take timely action to assist in the GES

² Also known as ‘feeder schools’, these are small schools which only run kindergarten to P3 grades and are generally found in remote areas. They give the youngest children the opportunity to attend school without having to travel long distances.

registration of genuine cases of unregistered private schools in remote areas, to avoid their closure as recommended by the Ghana National Association of Private Schools (GNAPS).

Promoting gender equity in education

Provide special incentives to attract female teachers to remote communities; Address problem of sexual harassment of female teachers; Incorporate gender approaches into institutional practices; Tackle the issue of teenage pregnancy; Raise awareness on the issue of ‘girls labour’ and its negative impact on their education.

Out-of-school children

Conduct data gathering exercises on numbers of out-of-school children and take steps to ensure they are enrolled either in formal school or in the CEP; Target not only cocoa-growing areas but also areas identified as sending sources of trafficked cocoa child labourers, with quality education initiatives; Get fostered children enrolled in school.

6.3. Collaboration with other education stakeholders in Ghana

GOG: MMYE, MOESS and District Assemblies

MMYE has invited ICI to be a partner in the implementation of the NPECLC. It has recommended the drawing up of an MOU and has suggested the integration of interventions designed in response to this study with the education objectives of the NPECLC. ICI should embrace them all with a few emphases and precautions as guidelines, including the need to give priority to the basic education level and to emphasize poor quality of education as a *cause* of child labour that takes precedence over poverty and ignorance. With reference to the MOESS’ sector-wide approach (SWAp), ICI needs to be aware of the systematic process spelled out in the ESP for the coordination of stakeholder activities. ICI/MMYE should aim for maximum collaboration with the District Assemblies in whose districts it will be working and to seek cost sharing arrangements with them as much as possible. ICI should also inform itself as much as possible about the impending decentralization exercise that will bring DEO functions under the DAs.

Donor and NGOs colleagues

ICI/MMYE should seek consultation, collaboration and/or replication with the following organizations/programmes:

School for Life	Complementary education model, wing schools.
Action Aid	REFLECT adult literacy/advocacy empowerment programme etc.
EQUALL	RIPE (BTL/BTE) project.
GAIT II	Linking up CSOs with Civic Unions established through GAIT II, etc.
Ibis	Investigate potential for collaboration/avoid duplication with a quality education initiative for cocoa-growing areas to be funded by TOMS.
CARE Int.	Investigate potential for collaboration/avoid duplication with ‘Rural Education Project,’ a pilot project funded by Cargill.
CAMFED	Investigate possibility of CAMFED including cocoa-growing areas in its projected new Ghana programme.

Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)

Collaborative links with GNAT are important considering the proposed interventions with regard to teachers. GNAT is well decentralized and can therefore be an important ally in providing support officers to monitor teachers and LPTs.

Networking

ICI should join national education coalitions including GNECC. It is additionally recommended to set up a forum of NGOs collaborating on the NPECLC.