

Complementary Basic Education Programme



The Government of Ghana, with the assistance of the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), has launched a Complementary Basic Education (CBE) programme. CBE is being implemented through the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service in collaboration with non-state partners across the country. CBE provides literacy and numeracy classes in the mother tongue to out-of-school children between 8-14 years of age. We have launched a scale-up of the CBE programme, to reach an additional 120,000 children, meaning that a total of 440,000 children will be enrolled in CBE.

THE COMPONENTS OF THE CBE PROGRAMME:

- National CBE scale-up to reach 120,000 out-of-school children in Ghana's most deprived communities
- Policy implementation and framework to govern the relationship between non-state providers and the Government to reach these remaining out-of-school children
- Standardised package of teaching and learning materials
- Research and building the evidence base to demonstrate what works in reaching the remaining out-of-school children

HOW DO CBE CLASSES WORK?

Children who are out-of-school are invited to join the CBE classes which start in early October and end in July each year. During the yearly cycle the learners learn to read, write and numerate in their mother tongue language. In addition to literacy and numeracy, children are taught about important life skills. Classes are run for at least 25 children of which 13 learners are girls; the classes are taught by a 'facilitator', often a Senior High School graduate from within the community. Classes are usually taught in the afternoon, to enable children to support their parents with household tasks in the morning. Following completion of the CBE cycle, the children integrate into nearby primary schools, typically at P4 or P5 level.

“Apart from learning to read and write, I also learned numeracy, good sanitation practices, personal hygiene, plays, songs, stories, tree planting, and the dangers of teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and bush burning”. (CBE graduate from Bunglung, Savelugu District)

In partnership with Government of Ghana and UKAID



CBE Background

The HISTORY OF CBE

Non-state providers have been delivering CBE in Ghana for over 15 years with support from a number of development partners; for example, DFID Ghana has supported School for Life, one of the longest-running CBE programmes in Ghana, since 2008. This new, scaled-up version of the CBE programme will build on the strong results already achieved by School for Life.

“School for Life has brought a high level of consciousness about the importance of education. The children have learnt to read and write and do numeracy in their own language.” - (Malido focus group discussion, Sfl Impact Evaluation)



WHY DO WE STILL NEED CBE?

In spite of huge increases in enrolment in primary school in the past decade, a significant number of Ghanaian children, mainly in the rural and poorest areas, are still unable to attend school. The Government’s poverty alleviation measures which include the provision of the capitation grant, free school uniforms and books, and abolition of school fees, enabled thousands of children all over the country to enter school. Yet estimates of out-of-school children range from half a million to one million children, with a large proportion in the Northern regions. Many children from deprived households are required to participate in domestic chores, agricultural or other work, and are therefore excluded from basic education.

THE RESULTS:

- 90% of children ‘graduate’ from CBE
- Around 78% go on to attend primary school
- To date over 150,000 children have graduated from CBE classes through SFL support and integrated into the public school system
- 3% increase in the national Gross Enrolment Rate due to CBE

“After I completed School for Life I was enlightened and my attitude changed. I began to respect my parents. My parents also saw that I could now read and write so they were happy and allowed me to continue to formal school ” - (CBE graduate from Yendi)



From out-of-school kid to university student



“The methodology is simple. It uses the mother tongue, and learning is based on everyday life and what happens in the children's environment and culture.” - (Yendi District Education Officer)

Abubakari Sulemana Hafiz has a lot to be proud of. He is one of 11 undergraduates who are part of Ghana's first cohort of veterinary science students at the University of Ghana. This achievement is even more impressive as until he was 14 years old, he had not been to school. Abubakari comes from Kumbungu district in Ghana's northern region where many families simply cannot afford the opportunity costs of sending their children to school. Abubakari explains that his story is common:

"Children are kept out-of-school so they can work to help support their families – selling goods at the market, doing manual labour on the farms, or rearing cattle."

Until School for Life, a CBE implementing partner, came to Abubakari's village in 1999, he was living with his cousin and looking after their farm. After completing a cycle of CBE, Abubakari was able to transition to formal school:

"Straight after, I went to Kumbungu primary school. My teacher knew that I was a School for Life graduate and really supported me to improve my English skills, and recognised that I enjoyed Maths. She was the one who pushed me to enter into the northern region's Science and Maths competition where I came first. That really gave me the confidence to continue my education and go onto to senior high school, and become the first person in my family to go to university."

For Abubakari there is no doubt that CBE has changed his life:

"It is hard to believe that I am now living in the capital, and studying veterinary science. I really hope to be able to help increase Ghana's agricultural productivity, so we can grow more and do that more efficiently, and rear healthier animals. This will also help poor families, like mine, to be able to send their children to school."

CBE, communities and non-state providers

“School for Life is successful because of the flexible time table and school hours. It favoured both the parents and the children. For example, on market days most children in the formal school don’t go to school.” *(Gushegu District Education Officer)*

A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

CBE is an example of a public-private partnership approach. The Ministry of Education is finalising a CBE Policy, which will lay out the governance structure for the CBE programme. Ghana Education Service (GES) will manage CBE at a national level, and GES district officers will oversee local implementation. Non-state providers will continue to provide the CBE classes.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Much of the success of CBE is due to the strong community involvement. Animation sessions take place before each yearly cycle of CBE, and the non-state providers explain the importance of CBE to the community. Many community members attend, including Chiefs and Elders, and all have the opportunity to ask questions. The School For Life programme deputy manager, Mr Braihman explains:

“In every community where we start School for Life, we hold a large discussion forum where we explain what we do. If the community wants to start a programme, they go onto elect a committee of 3 women and 2 men who oversee the programme.”

“During Facilitator courses, we were constantly reminded to further our education; I thought about it and after working for a while as a volunteer teacher I applied and went to Tamale Polytechnic.” *(Abdulai Mohammed, Chirifoyili, former-facilitator)*

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF FACILITATORS?

CBE lessons are delivered by facilitators, who are carefully selected from within the communities. The facilitators can identify with the children and can facilitate in the local language. The CBE programme provides extensive training to the facilitators. As well

benefitting the community, CBE is beneficial to the facilitators themselves, many of whom go on to further their education, entering tertiary institutions such as the College of Education.



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