

A PRESENTATION ON THE STATE OF EDUCATION BY THE
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION HON. PROF. NAANA JANE
OPOKU-AGYEMANG, AT THE MEET THE PRESS SERIES HELD
AT THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE
ROOM ON 18TH OCTOBER, 2016

Hon. Minister for Communication and Chairman for the occasion,

Hon. Deputy Ministers,

The Chief Director,

Directors of Education,

Heads of Agencies,

Friends from the Media,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Meet the Press series have, over the years, given the Ministry of Education the opportunity to share with the general public our efforts towards improving Education service delivery in the country. It has also afforded us the opportunity to receive feedback on issues they care most about. This time, the Ministry wishes to refer to the near four year mandate of government from 2013 to 2016, while for the purposes of comparison and clarity of context, and go beyond 2013 at appropriate times.

Mr. Chairman, over the past four years, the Ministry and its twenty agencies working with all our stakeholders have formulated and implemented policies and programs that have led to steady and significant progress in the provision of quality, equitable and accessible education, and strengthened the management of education service delivery.

Our central argument rests on the premise that while we continue to work towards the elimination of outstanding and evolving challenges in the education system, we can conclude that we have done well as a country and that our state of education is stronger than before. Education can get even better. We have advanced an approach that allows a holistic view and interconnected actions at all levels and kinds of education, based on the conviction that everyone matters; that everyone can learn, can progress, and can succeed, regardless.

Mr. Chairman, my presentation will dwell on our achievements from 2013-2016 in the following areas:

- Education Management and Administration
- Basic Education
- Secondary Education
- Non-Formal Education
- Inclusive and Special Education and
- Tertiary Education

A. EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Chairman, realizing that our effort at providing equitable access to quality education can only succeed in an environment of efficient

management and administration of the sector, the Ministry has over the past four years implemented the following measures among others that have led to improvement in service delivery at all levels. The use of 'we' covers all our stakeholders:

1. We have strengthened Human Resource Management at the pre-tertiary level with emphasis on teacher training and professional development and at the tertiary level through faculty development
2. We are reforming the legal, Institutional and Regulatory environment to empower our agencies including NCTE, NAB etc. to enable efficient governance of educational institutions and more effective responses to emerging issues
3. We have made significant progress in our quest for the passage of the education decentralization Bill to facilitate the management of basic education at the local level
4. We have provided opportunities to increase access to second cycle education through BECE Re-sit
5. We continue to improve the credibility of examinations through improved supervision and monitoring, stakeholder education and adoption of more efficient technologies
6. Working with all our key stakeholders from academia, NGOs and Development Partners, we have taken a critical look at the Language Policy and are finalizing the roadmap for implementation.
7. To motivate teachers, non-teaching staff and students for continued improved performance, we have sustained the Best Teacher Awards and have introduced the Best School Award

8. We have continued to formulate and implement policies to improve learning and examination outcomes based on the reports of the various National Educational Assessments (NEA) and Early Grade Reading and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGRA/EGMA) carried out over the period
9. To stem the collection of unauthorized fees, the Ministry working with the Ghana Education Service Council has standardized and are implementing measures to enforce the payment of approved school fees
10. We have reformed the National Service Scheme to enhance its operations and financial management
11. We have resourced and operationalized our three regulatory bodies namely the National Inspectorate Board (NIB), National Teaching Council (NTC) and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) for proficient service delivery
12. We have provided more opportunities for Distance Learning and Open schooling
13. We have strengthened the students loan trust fund and leveraged its capacity to lend and recover loans
14. We have continued to subsidize the payment of utilities in educational institutions.
15. We have sustained our engagement with key stakeholders including the Teacher Unions, MMDCEs, Faith Based Organizations and directly with students through institutional programs and events, and the Campus Connect program

Mr. Chairman, permit me to now elaborate on some of the measures we have outlined above.

1. Human Resource Management with Emphasis on Non/Teaching Staff

Mr. Chairman, recognizing that the teacher is at the center of our effort to improve management and administration of education service delivery and achieve the desired quality outcomes, the Ministry has over the past four year prioritized human resource management, and has made significant progress in the following areas:

- Human resource reforms – HRMIS (PSC), Teacher recruitment/replacement, promotion/upgrading, early processing of salaries and Payroll Management
- Improving teacher training and professional development (T-TEL, PTPDM, UTDBE, INSET, Management Training, Learning, Cockcrow, Maths and Science training, ICT training)
- Enhancing quality education through improvement in teacher accountability (Zero Tolerance for teacher absenteeism)

The total staff strength of GES has increased by 18.2%, from 247,254 in 2008 to 292,238 in 2016. The teaching staff constitutes 78% of the 2016 figure.

• Improvement in Payroll Management

Mr. Chairman, measures have been put in place to improve payroll management. Some of these measures include biometric registration of all staff in the Education service, Electronic Pay Voucher Systems

(EPVS) to validate workers at post before payment as well as periodic head counts of staff.

The introduction of these mechanisms has helped to reduce 'ghost' names on the Payroll.

A total number of 2,441 names have been deleted from the payroll and 1,209 names are being investigated.

In order to improve staffing, the Ghana Education Service (GES) has reviewed staff norms for personnel planning and recruitment. This is being integrated into the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) being implemented by the Public Services Commission to provide accurate, valid and reliable data and strengthen controls around entrance, existence, exit, promotion and positions for heightened efficiency in payroll management.

Payment of Salary Arrears

Facilitation of the payment of salary arrears has resulted in all deserving teachers/staff required to submit completed Payment of Salary Arrears Form with the appropriate attachments to be validated by the Audit Service.

Mr. Chairman, between 2015 and 2016, 36,673 applications have been validated by the Audit Service and payment effected. Work on the remaining applications received is on-going.

To prevent and solve the persistent recurrence of salary arrears, a number of measures, including the following have been adopted:

- Receipt of Financial Clearance before any recruitment
- Recruitment approval processes have now been assigned to the Director-General and the regional directors
- Introduction of online processing of recruitment

- Receipt by applicant of letter of employment with specific terms including date of commencement of work

Promotion of Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

Mr. Chairman, a total number of 30,582 teachers were promoted between 2012 and 2015.

In 2016, a total of 20,769 applications for promotion to various ranks were received. Out of this number, 19,916 applicants have been shortlisted to attend promotion interview scheduled to take place on 25th October, 2016. Emphasis henceforth will include meeting specific targets

Improving Teacher Training and Professional Development

Improving teacher training and professional development is a pre-requisite for sustaining quality education. It is for this reason that over the past four years, the Ministry of Education working with teachers, teacher training institutions, our development partners and other stakeholders have implemented interventions to:

- i. Transform Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL)
- ii. Extend and support the Untrained Teachers in Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE)
- iii. Develop, register and licence teachers through the Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM)
- iv. Increase the number of Colleges of Education and expand the intake for teacher training

- v. Initiate the training of 51,000 teachers to support implementation of the revised language policy to facilitate early grade reading and numeracy

In addition, we have carried out training in the following areas:

- i. ICT training for teachers to support teaching and learning
- ii. Management and leadership training programs for heads of schools and assistants as well as District and Regional officers of education
- iii. Mathematics and Science training for teachers and the
- iv. Regular In-Service-Training for newly trained teachers and circuit supervisors

During the period under review, opportunities were provided to teachers to upgrade themselves through Sandwich program as well as the granting of study leave for career enhancement at the universities

Mr. Chairman, permit me now to elaborate on a few of these programs.

Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL)

The objective of the project initiated in 2014 to Transform Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) in Ghana through the following:

- Training and coaching for Colleges of Education (CoE) tutors in Mathematics, English and Science;
- Support the institutional strengthening and management of CoEs, including training of its Principals;
- Support the Ministry to reform the pre-service curriculum;

- Establish a Challenge Fund to finance innovative initiatives in CoEs and their partner districts and schools;

To date, T-TEL has supported the National Teacher Council (NTC) to develop the National Teaching Standards for pre service teacher education in Ghana.

Under the project, a draft national teacher education curriculum framework has been developed.

Grants totaling approximately GH¢ 2,000,000 have so far been disbursed to 23 colleges to implement innovative concepts that would improve the quality of teaching and learning, and ultimately the skills of student teachers.

T-TEL has also developed handbooks for student teachers and their mentors to use on teaching practice. **40, 769** books have been distributed to student teachers.

Untrained Teacher Diploma in Basic Education Program (UTDBE)

The UTDBE program is a four-year programme with the main objective of improving the quality of teaching and learning by reducing the percentage of untrained teachers, particularly in deprived areas. It provides an opportunity for untrained teachers to receive appropriate support to become professional teachers. The Ghana Partnership for Education Grant (GPEG), has, provided a total amount of GH¢19.5 million, for training 6,563 untrained teachers (2,430 females and 4,133 males) from 75 beneficiary districts to receive professional training under the UTDBE program.

Enhancing quality education through improvement in teacher accountability (Zero Tolerance for Teacher Absenteeism)

Mr. Chairman, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, as I have no doubt you are aware, the Ministry adopted a policy of zero tolerance for teacher absenteeism in order to enhance accountability, and increase teacher presence as well as time on task in schools. After the minister and her team had initiated surprise visits to countless schools throughout the country first hand, the National Inspectorate Board (NIB) and Ghana Education Service (GES) were resourced to intensify both external and internal monitoring in basic schools, among many other functions.

I am happy to report that after three years of its implementation, the rate of teacher absenteeism has declined from 27% in 2012 to 7% in 2016.

My special commendation goes to the various stakeholders including the teachers themselves, the Teacher Unions, traditional authorities, district education officers, and the parents who supported the Ministry to achieve this result. I also wish to thank everyone for their cooperation which has helped improve the image of our most cherished profession.

Mr. Chairman, we will continue to champion this course until the rate of teacher absenteeism is brought to zero.

In-Service Education and Training (INSET) Programme

In the four-year period, a total of 12,085 Mathematics and 2387 Science teachers across the country were trained. In addition, 5,626 non-core subject teachers and 5,923 Heads from public Basic schools in the 75 deprived districts and low-performing schools (public and private) were also received training as well in the ensuing year.

Accelerate ICT education

Mr. Chairman, in our effort to accelerate ICT education at the basic education level, 81,000 basic school teachers have been trained since 2013 to enable them acquire the requisite skills in the use of ICT to facilitate teaching and learning. A total number of 54,500 Laptops were procured and distributed to basic school teachers, and 60,000 laptop computers were distributed to public basic schools across the country.

i. Reforming the legal Institutional Environment

In order to strengthen governance of educational institutions to improve efficiency of education service delivery, the Ministry has over the past two years embarked on a process to review the legal and regulatory framework of some of its agencies. To date, three (3) Bills have been passed into Acts of parliament and accented by H.E the President. These are:

- **Technical University Act, 2016 (Act 992)**

The Technical Universities Act, 2016 (ACT 992) will upgrade Polytechnics into Technical Universities to deepen and raise the

standards of technical education, clear career paths for those who choose to travel the route of vocational technical education; address academic placement and alignment in the job market, make technical education more relevant and attractive to the youth.

- **University of Environment and Sustainable Development (UESD) Act 898**

To increase access and improve equity at the Tertiary level, the University of Environment and Sustainable Development Act, 2015 (ACT 898) was enacted by Parliament to disseminate knowledge related to development in environment, agro-business and train students to appreciate the issues of environmental challenges and provide solutions to emerging global trends.

- **Chartered Institute of Taxation Act, 2016**

The Chartered Institute of Taxation Act, 2016 (Act 916) has been passed to regulate the practices of Taxation as well as ensure that professional standards are maintained by members of the institute.

The current status of work on the remaining Bills is as follows:

- **Tertiary Education Research Fund Bill**

The Bill will provide a more sustainable means of funding research to drive national growth and development. It will support, publicize and provide funds for research in Public Tertiary

Institutions. The Bill has been approved by Cabinet and is currently before Parliament for consideration.

- **The Chartered Institute of Bankers Bill, 2015**

The Chartered Institute of Bankers Bill, which is currently at Parliament, is to ensure that banking and banking services are provided in a manner that is consistent with economic policies. This will help control, direct and manage banking practices, ethics and training.

- **National Accreditation and Qualification Authority Bill, 2015**

The National Accreditation and Qualification Authority Bill will ensure provision of quality, relevant academic and practical discipline in approved tertiary institutions. The Bill will also ensure the development of a qualifications framework for academic and professional qualifications.

- **The National Commission for Tertiary Education Bill**

The NCTE Bill will provide clear guidelines for the administration of tertiary education and institutions designated as institutions of tertiary education in Ghana.

- **Ghana Book Development Council Bill**

The purpose of the Bill is to establish the Ghana Book Development Council to oversee the development, regulation and effective planning of the book industry in Ghana. This is a very

important bill that has a direct bearing on the quality of education. It is currently at the Attorney General's Department.

ii. Decentralising Education Management

Mr Chairman, one of the strategic goals of the ESP 2010-2020 is to improve education service delivery by devolving resource management and decision-making to regions, districts and institutions, while the responsibility for establishing norms, guidelines and general systems accountability remains at the centre.

The Ministry has made progress in the Education Decentralisation process. The draft Bill has undergone extensive consultation and review with various Educational stakeholders including the GES Council, Ministerial Advisory Board, Teacher Unions, Religious Bodies in Education, Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS), Coalition of NGOs in Education, Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) and Traditional Authorities. The Bill is currently in Cabinet for consideration.

iv. Providing opportunities through BECE Re-sit to increase access

Mr Chairman, as a means of giving opportunities for more JHS graduates to have access to secondary education, a total number of

1,181 and 1,413 candidates took advantage of the first and second BECE re-sit Programme respectively to improve on their performance. Many have been mainstreamed into the SHS system.

v. Improving credibility of examinations

Mr Chairman, I wish to announce that our effort to reduce examination malpractice and leakages is yielding great result. In 2016, both the BECE and WASSCE recorded no leakages at all. Kudos WAEC. There were as well very minimal incidences of examination malpractices. I wish for our learners especially to believe, that what matters in life is what they achieve through efforts, regardless the outcome; and as stated above, everyone can improve. The Ministry, working with WAEC, will intensify the implementation of measures already adopted and introduce new ones to further maintain the credibility of examinations at both the JHS and SHS levels.

vi. Reviewing the Language Policy

Mr Chairman, research has shown that better learning outcomes are achieved at the early stages of education from KG to Primary 3 through the use of the language already acquired by the learner as a medium of instruction. In Ghana however, the language policy has since 1925 changed several times. This unstable policy environment has denied education authorities the ability to establish systems, processes,

procedures and accompanying teaching and learning materials to ensure early grade literacy and numeracy.

To address this issue and ensure that children are equipped with the right foundational skills for further learning, the NCCA, through the Ministry and in collaboration with key stakeholders have completed the draft Revised Language Policy and is currently undergoing stakeholder review.

vii. Strengthening Education Leadership and Management

Mr Chairman, recognising that good leadership and effective management are critical for learning outcomes in schools, the Ministry has since 2013 implemented measures to improve leadership and management at all levels of the pre-tertiary educational cycle.

During the period under review, the total number of management staff trained increased from 35% in 2013 to 72% in 2016. This includes 5,923 basic school heads and 712 management staff of SHS.

viii. Engagement with stakeholders

National Education Sector Annual Review (NESAR)

Over the past four years, the Ministry sustained the conduct of The National Education Sector Annual Review (NESAR) to engage key stakeholders from academia, NGOs, Faith Based Organisations, MMDAs, Development Partners, the general public, the media etc., to

review our performance against targets set in the Education Strategic Plan. The review also created the platform for the Ministry to discuss critical and emerging issues as well as offer opportunity for stakeholders to make inputs into the budget preparation process for the ensuing year.

Dialogue with Teacher Unions

The Ministry continued its periodic engagement with teacher unions to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. In 2015/16, the collaborative engagement focused mainly on validation of documents between the unions, Fair Wages and Salaries Commission and Audit Services to clear outstanding promotion/salary arrears, payment of Vehicle Maintenance Allowance, Transfer Grant, and Annual Salary Incremental Credits.

Campus connect

The Ministry continued its engagement with students at the tertiary level through the Campus Connect Initiative. The initiative which gives students the opportunity to appreciate policies of government focused on issues such as utilities, security on campus, curriculum, and facility user fees among others. It as well afforded for first hand interaction with a cross-section of the student population to share policies, perspectives on many issues including health, transportation, law, the economy, security, governance, social matters and related matters. Those were indeed fine moments that allowed us to build bridges

between direct government appointees and the general run of students.

Engagement with Metropolitan Municipal District Chief Executives (MMDCEs)

To improve accountability and quality of education delivery in public pre-tertiary schools at the local level, the Ministry in 2014, initiated a planned programme to hold yearly discussions with MMDCEs.

Engagements with MMDCEs were subsequently held in 2015 and 2016.

Discussions held centered on the roles and responsibilities of MMDCEs as Chairs of the District Education Oversight Committees (DEOCs) in ensuring supervision and monitoring of schools within their jurisdictions to enhance quality education delivery at the local level. Other topics discussed included: education decentralisation, monitoring of infrastructural projects especially the Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP), and constitution of audit teams on teacher presence and time on task as a strategy to ensure effective teaching/learning, accountability, the role of the community in education delivery among many others.

These engagements have to a large extent facilitated improvements in teacher presence and supervision in our basic schools.

B. BASIC EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman, government's Basic education programme over the past four years has focused on improving equitable access to quality, child-friendly universal Basic education with emphasis on Teacher Professional Development and accountability, Social Intervention Programmes, Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials and Infrastructural Development at the following levels:

- Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)
- Primary and Junior High School Education

i. Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)

Mr. Chairman, under the Early Childhood Care and Development program, the Ministry committed to:

- Increase access to Early Childhood Care and Development through encouraging the establishment of ECCD facilities
- Improve Quality of Teaching and Learning through increase in the number of qualified teachers and the allocation of more resources for the provision of KG facilities.

Increase in Access to Early Childhood Care and Development

Mr. Chairman, progress made in the establishment of ECCD facilities by government and its stakeholders including the private sector to increase access and promote the survival, growth and protection of children is evidenced by the following performance indicators.

Allocate more resources for the provision of KG facilities

In fulfillment of its commitment to allocate more resources to ECCD facilities, government has since 2013 increased public education expenditure on KG from an average of 3.8% of total education expenditure between 2005 and 2008, to an average of 6.5% between 2013 and 2016.

Mr. Chairman, these resources have enabled government to recruit and pay more teachers at this level and also provide the following facilities:

- Rehabilitation of 345 KG classrooms
- Construction of 1,347 KG Blocks
- Provision of 1,875 KG tables and Chairs

Improve Quality of Teaching and Learning

Establishment of Special schools in designated Colleges of Education

Mr. Chairman, in order to ensure that teachers in ECCD receive specialized skills in the delivery of quality teaching and learning at that level, the Ministry through the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) has established Special schools in 7 out of the 43 Colleges of Education. These are:

- Ola College of Education, Cape Coast
- Presbyterian College of Education, Aburi
- SDA College of Education, Asokore
- St. Louis College of Education, Kumasi

- Tamale College of Education
- Jasikan College of Education and
- Tumu College of Education

ECCD Service-extension and Pre-service Training Programmes

As part of ECCD service-extension and pre-service training programmes, the University of Cape Coast and University of Education (Winneba) currently offer certificate, diploma, degree and post-graduate courses in Early Childhood Education.

Mr. Chairman, these interventions have led to significant improvements in performance indicators relating to KGs. In order for the public to appreciate the results of the interventions better, we need to step back in time and deepen the context:

In line with its commitment to encourage private sector participation in pre-school activities, a number of ECCD facilities, public and private increased by 34.6%, from 16,439 in 2008/09 to 22,123 in 2015/16 academic year, while the gross enrolment ratio increased from 92.9% in 2008/09 to 123.8% in 2015/16.

It is instructive to note that whereas in 2008/09, 31.3% of the 29,111 teachers engaged in public KGs were trained, by 2015/16, 65.9% of the 37,717 teachers engaged in KGs were trained.

The gender parity index also improved from 0.99 in 2008/09 to 1.01 in 2015/16 academic year.

ii. Primary and Junior High School Education

Mr. Chairman, the focus of Government policy in Primary and Junior High School Education during the period under review included the removal of financial and physical barriers in order to increase equitable access. Interventions towards raising the quality of education at this level focused on the provision of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)/Logistics , improvement in management and administration of education service delivery as well as professional development of teachers.

In order to increase Equitable Access,

The Ministry continued and expanded its Social Intervention Programs in basic education in the following ways:

- Introduce Complementary Basic Education program to bring out-of-school children to school
- Implement the Girl's Participatory Approach to Student Success (GPASS) program to encourage girls to remain and complete their education
- Built new school infrastructure, rehabilitated and expanded existing ones
- Provided the much needed Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) and logistics

First, the Social Intervention Programs

Mr. Chairman, Government continues to implement various social intervention programs aimed at reducing the cost of education for families and households. These to a large extent have reduced the financial burden on parents, thereby enabling more children especially from deprived homes to access education more than ever. The key interventions include the following:

- **Capitation Grant**

Mr. Chairman, during the period under review, government continued to pay capitation grant to all public basic schools across the country. A total amount of GH¢ 95.2 million has been released since 2012/2013 academic year for the payment of capitation grant. Currently, over 5.5 million pupils in 38,714 public basic schools are benefiting from the capitation grant.

The Grant was increased by 100% for 11,650 public basic schools in 75 deprived districts who, under the Ghana Partnership for Education Project (GPEG), received additional per capita funding. In addition to this, the schools received a base grant of GH¢800, GH¢1,200 and GH¢1,000, per KG, Primary and JHS respectively.

- ***BECE Subsidy***

Government continues to provide subsidy for the conduct of the BECE for both Public and Private registered candidates. Between 2013 and 2016, a total amount of GH¢61.3 million was spent to subsidize the

cost of registration for 1,651,687 candidates for the BECE. It is instructive to note that the amount paid by government per registered candidates has increased from GH¢14.0 per candidate in 2010 to GH¢44.10 in 2016, while at the same time the total number of candidates increased from 350,899 to 460,900.

- ***Provision of School Uniforms***

A total number of 787,485 school uniforms were distributed to pupils in Public Basic Schools in selected deprived communities in the country between 2012/13 and 2015/16 academic years.

- ***Provision of School Sandals***

Mr. Chairman, in 2015, government expanded the social intervention programmes with the introduction of sandals for needy pupils. To date, a total number of 40,000 made-in-Ghana school leather sandals have been distributed to pupils in selected deprived Public Basic Schools for the period between 2015 and 2016.

- ***Provision of Exercise Books***

Between 2012/13 and 2015/16 academic year, government procured and distributed a total of 46,958,160 exercise books to pupils in public basic schools across the country.

- ***Material support to needy Pupils/Students***

During the period under review, assorted items including bicycles, footwear, uniforms, bags, notebooks, school bags, mathematical sets, solar lamps and calculators were procured and distributed to total number of 155,781 pupils as incentives to encourage them to go to school regularly and to stay in school.

Second Intervention: Complementary Basic Education

The CBE programme continues to impact significantly on reducing the numbers of children who are out of school in Ghana. Between 2013/14 and 2014/15, a total of 78,799 out-of-school children have been enrolled under the programme. Out of this, 72,491 children have completed and 66,901 have transitioned into the formal school system. Currently, additional 52,823 out-of-schools have been enrolled for the 2015/2016 academic year. We welcome the proposal for a tracking study by the DFID.

Third Intervention: Girl's Participatory Approach to Student's Success (GPASS)

Mr. Chairman, the Girl's PASS programme enables girls significantly at risk of dropping from school to attend, remain and complete Junior High School. The programme has provided a package of school items such as school bags, sandals, mathematical sets and supplementary readers as well as registration fees for the BECE in a form of a scholarship package to selected girls. In total, 60,000 girls from 75

deprived districts have benefited from the scholarship package between 2013 and 2016.

As a result of this intervention and arguably of others as well, the current transition rate from JHS 3 to SHS in the deprived districts is 78% compared to a national average of 69% in 2014/2015. While we express happiness about this figure feel encouraged to improve it.

Fourth and final intervention: School Infrastructure Development

As part of efforts to remove the remaining 60% of schools under trees, a total of 2,031 out of 2,936 school projects awarded since 2010 have been completed and handed over.

In addition to this, the Ministry with support from its development partners and local government authorities have since 2013 completed the following projects:

- 1,129 Classroom Blocks
- 739 Toilet Blocks
- 73 Teacher Accommodation Blocks
- 472 Urinals
- 622 schools rehabilitated
- 82 boreholes

The following classroom blocks were constructed by government to facilitate the elimination of the Shift System:

- 350 number 3-Unit Classroom Blocks for Primary

- 162 number 3-Unit Classroom Blocks for JHS
- 20 number 3 storey 18-Unit Classroom Blocks with Library and other ancillary facilities (millennium School Blocks). Mr. Accra Mayor – excellent job done by you and your team; thanks on behalf of all the beneficiary children.

Mr. Chairman, a total of 151,154 tables and chairs were procured and distributed to primary and JHS schools across the country between 2013 and 2016.

In spite of all the efforts being made to provide quality infrastructural facilities at the basic level, there still remains classroom structures that require renovation; the Ministry is working tirelessly to improve the situation, in collaboration with the Assemblies.

Improve the Quality of Teaching and Learning

Significant efforts have been made in the provision of quality education at the Basic level. These include the following:

- Provision of school supplies/logistics and Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)
- Initiation of the Learning project to improve early grade reading for over two (2) million children while supporting training for over 50,000 teachers
- Training and professional development of teachers (already discussed under human resource management)
- Review and implementation of the Language Policy (already discussed under management and administration)

Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)

Mr. Chairman, during the period under review, the following school supplies were provided:

- 472,800 Teachers Notebooks
- 653,700 Class Attendance Registers
- 4,994,328 boxes of White Chalk and 180,000 boxes of Coloured Chalk

In addition, the following teaching and learning materials were also provided:

- 12.8 million core textbooks were procured and distributed to public basic schools
- 2.5 million Dictionaries were procured for distribution to all public basic schools.

Various types of TLMs were also provided to the 11,650 Basic schools under the GPEG Project in the 75 deprived districts through district and school-level funding. These include wall displays, teachers' notebooks, maps, teachers' guides, etc.

Primary and Junior High School Performance Statistics

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to announce that the implementation of Social Intervention Programmes (SIPs), Infrastructural Development

and the provision of other resources at the Primary and Junior High school levels have resulted in the following key performance indicators.

The number of primary schools has increased by 24.9% from 17,881 in 2008/09 to 22,335 in 2015/16. Similarly, enrolment in primary schools increased from 3.7 million to 4.3 million.

The number of teachers engaged in primary schools increased from 114,421 in 2008/09 to 142,520 in 2015/16 academic year, while the percentage of trained teachers increased significantly from 58.4% to 78.0%.

During this same period, gross enrolment increased from 94.9% to 111.3% and net enrolment increased from 88.5% to 91.5%.

Mr. Chairman, it is instructive to note that the Gender Parity Index increased from 0.9 in 2008/09 to 1.01 in 2015/16.

Mr Chairman, at the Junior High school, the number of schools increased from 10,213 in 2008/09 to 14,832 in 2015/16. Enrolment also increased from 1.3 million to 1.6 million.

Similarly, the number of teachers engaged at the JHS level increased from 75,409 in 2008/09 to 107,099 in 2015/16, while the percentage of trained teachers in public Junior High Schools also increased from 76.7% to 89.6%.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT (NEA) RESULTS FROM 2005 TO 2016

The National Education Assessment (NEA) is a biennial national and regional representative measure of pupils' competency and proficiencies in Mathematics and English at primary grades 3 and 6 (P3 and P6). The NEA tests are based on national curricula and are made up of 30 to 40 multiple-choice questions, administered collectively to pupils.

An analysis of NEA results over the period 2005 to 2016 shows an improvement in proficiency levels in both numeracy and literacy. At primary 6, overall distribution of pupils reaching proficiency, that is, obtaining a score of 55% and above in Mathematics at P6, improved from 9.8% in 2005 to 25% in 2016. At primary 3, overall distribution of pupils reaching proficiency in Mathematics improved from 18.6% in 2005 to 22.0.

Proficiency in English for pupils in primary 3 also showed improvement from 16.4% to 37.0% from 2005 to 2016 respectively. For pupils in primary 6, proficiency in English improved from 23.6% to 36.0% from 2005 to 2016 respectively.

Performance in English stands to improve considerably by paying attention to the uses of L1 at the lower levels, improving the teaching

of reading at the basic levels and de-emphasizing teaching language away from literature.

C. SECOND CYCLE EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman, under the second cycle education, government committed to **expand equitable access to quality** secondary education and make it progressively free through the following interventions:

(i) Equitable Access

- Expand Capacity of Secondary Education through the construction of 200 Community day SHS with a focus on underserved Communities
- Expand capacity of existing secondary schools to increase Access
- Reduce Cost burden on Parents by increasing subsidies paid to students
- Strengthen the Computerized Schools Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) to place all students in one of the various options of secondary education

(a) Community Day Senior High School Project

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to report that, with the active collaboration of all stakeholders, the Community Day SHS project has made significant progress. Out of the 123 under construction, the first batch of 42 schools is ready to admit SHS students for the 2016/2017

academic year. Some admitted students well ahead of the completion schedule.

With improvement in school management, reduction in teacher absenteeism, increase in the provision of teaching and learning materials, upgrading of untrained teachers, review of syllabi at the CoEs, advancements of T-Tel, admission of candidates who are eager to become teachers and the determination of the students themselves to succeed, the right active participation of communities as well as many other intangible interventions, we can and will work assiduously towards raising the quality of education in the country.

b) Expand Capacity of Existing SHSs to Increase Access

The Ministry, with support from the Local government (MMDAs) and other stakeholders continued with its ongoing programme to expand classrooms, dormitories and other facilities in existing secondary schools. Over 1000 classroom blocks, 180 Dormitory Blocks, 18 Teacher's Flats, 20 Science Laboratories, 40 WC Toilet facilities and other academic and non-academic facilities have been completed for Senior High Schools across the country between 2013 and 2016.

Under the Secondary Education Improvement Projects, facilities in 50 existing SHS have been upgraded.

In spite of all the efforts to address infrastructural deficit at the secondary level there still remains a number of uncompleted classroom structures which has brought about congestion in some schools. Government is working assiduously to address the situation.

c) Removal of cost barriers

Further to the expansion of physical access, the Ministry also operationalized initiatives, inline with its philosophy as a social democratic party, to reduce the cost of education. The measures initiated include:

Progressively Free Secondary Education

Mr. Chairman, the Ministry commenced implementation of Progressively Free Secondary Education Programme to make secondary education free through gradual absorption of fees paid by students.

12 fee items amounting to **Gh¢ 162 per student per year** was absorbed for **320,488** day students in the 2015/16 academic year. These fee items include Examination, Library, SRC dues, Entertainment, Science Development, Sports, Culture, Science and Maths Quiz, Co-Curricular activities, ICT, Development Levy and Utilities.

The programme is scheduled to be expanded in the 2016/17 academic year to cover **120,000** boarding students. It is estimated that an amount of Gh¢ **85,318,200.00** will be paid to support **458,700** students in the 2016/17 academic year. All day students, including those in all Community Day Schools are beneficiaries under the programme.

SEIP Scholarships

To further reduce cost burdening parents, Government under the Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP) is supporting 10,400 needy students, particularly girls to complete a full cycle of secondary education.

The value of the scholarship is approximately GH¢ 6,000 per student for three years. So far, 5,643 students have received scholarships under the scheme of which 60% are girls.

In 2013, Government increased the subsidy per student from Gh¢ 64.35 to Gh¢ 92.40 for general students, and Gh¢ 65.85 to Gh¢ 93.90 for technical students, for general running of the institutions. This represents an increase of 45.6% and 42.6% respectively.

d) The Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS)

As promised, measures have been introduced to improve on the system's effectiveness. Under this initiative, many more private schools were included in the system.

In addition, the Ministry engaged stakeholders to review the CSSPS and improve on its operations.

In 2015, 439,091 students representing 100% of all qualified students were placed in by CSSPS. The real solution, as the ministry sees it, is to raise the level of performance in all the schools through many interventions, including student determination to succeed.

II. Quality Improvement

Mr. Chairman, the Government is committed to improve the quality of secondary education. Measures pursued in this regard include:

- Science Resource Centre Project
- Integration of ICT in Teaching and Learning
- In-Service Training for Mathematics and Science Teachers
- Production and procurement of Core Textbooks
- Recruitment of Mathematics and Science Teachers

Science Resource Centres Project

The Ministry continued with the science resource centre project to cover 300 un-served schools. The beneficiary schools were provided with science equipment, science software, ICT, electronics items and chemicals. In addition, 1,200 science teachers and laboratory technicians were trained in the effective use of the equipment during the 2015/2016 academic year. **Mr. Chairman**, Government also extended the project to establish science resource centres at University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba. This is intended to help build the competencies of pre-service teachers to handle schools' science programme towards long term sustainability of the project.

Integration of ICT in Teaching and Learning

To further improve teaching and learning in secondary schools, Government invested in measures to integrate ICT in teaching and learning. The initiatives include:

- **iBox / iCampus**

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it gives me special joy and honour to announce the iBox a unique offline version of an adjoining iCampusgh online platform. While the latter functions as a regular web, the former – the iBox – is able to support browsing via Wi-Fi and cable connections but without internet connectivity. We thought this time, to use local expertise; we believed we had in good supply. Both systems were conceptualized by one of our own, Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CENDLOS). A team of local companies researched, designed and developed the system. In order to actualize our faith, Government has procured 160 iBoxes - an ICT package containing the lesson texts, video, interactive exercises, and interactive practical lessons and additional material for distribution to 125 low performing senior high schools benefiting from the quality improvement of the secondary education improvement projects (SEIP).

That there were those developed by others we could just go and purchase was clear. We thought we do too much of it, deepening our dependency and dampening our confidence; we should create as well. The product by CENDLOS is good. And in any case, at the time of conception, that the outcome was not going to be perfect was beside the point; that we were willing to try was more important for us; that we were determined to improve the outcome was most important of all. We look forward to the national launch, preferably by HE the President of the Republic.

- **E-Transform / E-Learning**

The Ministry is also implementing E-transform to among others, improve the communication infrastructure in 200 senior high schools in

Ghana. The beneficiary schools will receive internet connectivity and be equipped with computer laboratories.

Similarly, **E-learning project** is being implemented to provide connectivity and other ICT hardware, software and SHS content to 230 Senior High Schools.

Mr. Chairman, altogether, 555 public SHSs are currently being supported with ICT infrastructure to improve quality under the outlined interventions.

- **Procurement of Core Textbooks**

To further enhance teaching and learning as well as learning outcomes at the SHS level, government is in the process of procuring 3.6million core textbooks and 137,216 teachers guide for distribution to all public senior high schools. It is expected that the distribution of these textbooks will improve the student core textbook ratio.

- **Recruitment of Maths and Science Teachers**

Mr. Chairman, the Ministry has currently prioritized the teaching and learning of Mathematics and Science as a means to reverse the historical trend of poor performance in Mathematics and Science in the country. In this connection, 2,400 additional Maths and Science Teachers were recruited and deployed in 2016 to fill vacant places and strengthen staff in public senior schools.

Re-branding of Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET)

Mr. Chairman, under the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), government committed to provide quality skills training to the youth by re-branding both formal and informal TVET programs as follows:

a) National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP)

The Ministry continued with implementation of the National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP) to provide skills to Ghanaian youth between the ages of 16-24.

Under NAP, beneficiary youth are attached to master craft persons to undergo apprenticeship. The trainees are also provided with the necessary tools and equipment to facilitate their training.

Notable achievements under the programme included:

- **5,000** JHS leavers trained in garment making, cosmetology, welding and fabrication, auto mechanics and electronics in 70 selected districts
- **3,500** master crafts persons trained in current industry trends, book keeping, customer service, ICT skills, health and safety standards as well as business ethics
- **10** TVET institutions and **3,500** apprentices benefited from Gh¢3 million worth of various tools and equipment
- **300** TVET professionals were provided with specialized training in the Competency Based Training (CBT) delivery mode

Additionally, a project to develop institutional framework for regulating informal sector apprenticeship and skills upgrading in the informal sector is on-going with a grant amount of 10 million euros.

Also, **25,000** TVET learners/workers and Master Craft persons are currently undergoing training.

b) Ghana Skills and Technology Development Project (GSTDP)

Mr. Chairman, the objective of Ghana Skills and Technology Development Project (GSTDP) is to develop skills and technology for key sectors of the economy through improvements in the quality of formal and informal training.

Under the project, Government established the Skills Development Fund (SDF) to support and finance innovative technology and skills development by training institutions, trade associations and businesses.

Key achievements under SDF included:

- **646** formal and informal businesses, Trade Associations and Training Institutions were awarded a total of **50.2 million dollars** as grants for various skills development and technology acquisition
- **103,683** workers in the formal and informal sectors have so far received innovative skills training in various trade areas
- **13,300** new jobs have been created under the SDF

- **105** New training courses have been developed, awaiting accreditation by COTVET into CBT courses
- **567** new technologies have been developed for uptake by the private sector

Mr. Chairman, in addition, **139** new technologies have been adopted by participating firms; examples include:

- **1,000** members of the Progressive Electronics Technicians Association of Ghana have acquired skills in the servicing of LCD/LED, Tablets and related gadgets to increase and diversify their productivity.
- Protein baits technology which was developed by the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission for controlling fruit flies on citrus farms.
- **7,181** farmers were supported to upgrade their agronomic skills and acquire innovative technology to increase productivity. Among the beneficiaries is the Ghana Rice Inter-Professional Body which has increased rice output by over 100%.
- Support for Solar PV installation and training facility at Ghana Telecom University (GTUC). **1,000** electricians were trained in the installation and maintenance of solar systems.

c) Development of Skills for Industry (DSIP) Project

Mr. Chairman, the key objective of the project is to equip the youth with quality middle level technical and vocational skills needed in the Ghanaian economy.

The achievements chalked in this area are as follows:

- Scholarships were awarded to **1,520** students including **333** females in Polytechnics and Technical Institutes
- Scholarships were also awarded to **2,000** apprentices in the informal sector
- **800** Master crafts persons were trained in Competency Based Training (CBT) methods of instruction
- Government has also invested US\$60.3 million to expand TVET capacity by constructing modern school infrastructure in **13** Technical and Vocational Institutes.

Mr. Chairman, the facilities being constructed include workshops, dormitories, staff accommodation, administration blocks and lecture theatres. The beneficiary schools are:

- Ada Technical Institute (Greater Accra Region),
- Akwatia Technical Institute (Eastern Region),
- Amankwakrom Technical Institute (Eastern Region)
- Asuansi Technical Institute (Central Region),
- Bolga Technical Institute (Upper East Region),
- Kpando Technical Institute (Volta Region),
- Nkoranza Technical Institute (Brong Ahafo Region),
- Dabokpa Technical Institute (Northern Region),
- Wa Technical Institute (Upper West Region),
- Krobea Asante Technical Institute (Ashanti Region)
- Takoradi Polytechnic (Western Region)
- Accra Polytechnic (Greater Accra Region)

Mr. Chairman, the Ministry has sponsored the training of **148** instructors at the Diploma level, **20** instructors at the Masters level and **5** faculty members at the PhD level in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in TVET institutions.

In this vein, I would like to thank all ministries who provide vocational/technical education for their cooperation and understanding.

Key Performance Indicators

The investment made to expand access and improve quality of teaching and learning resulted in an increase in the number of Senior High Schools from 670 in 2008/09 to 856 in 2015/16. Consequently, enrolment also increased from 490,334 to 851,312 in 2015/16.

Mr. Chairman, the number of teachers engaged at the Senior High School level increased from 22,521 in 2008/09 to 40,547 in 2015/16 academic year.

The following key performance indicators were also recorded within the period under review:

- Transition rate from JHS to SHS has increased from 51% in 2012 to 67% in 2016
- Completion rate at the SHS level has increased from 31% in 2012 to 46% in 2016
- WASSCE achievement of A1-C6 in six subjects increased from 20.2% in 2015 to 24% in 2016

- On core mathematics, proportion of students who score A1-C6 increased from 25% in 2015 to 32.8% in 2016.
- On integrated science, proportion of students who score A1–C6 increased from 23.2% in 2015 to 48.5% in 2016.
- We know we have a long way to go to improve on the passes of D7 and E8. We can and will get there.

D. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND OPEN SCHOOLING

Mr. Chairman, the ESP 2010-2020 for non-formal education is to provide opportunities for those outside the formal education system to have free access to meaningful high-quality user-friendly education and training, whether through inclusive or complementary provision, approved or informal apprenticeships, distance education or technical and vocational skills development initiatives.

Mr. Chairman, the following key interventions were undertaken under the Non-Formal Education sub-sector during the period under review:

National Literacy Programme

Mr. Chairman, the Division undertook various programmes and activities to facilitate the achievement of its objectives over the past four years. Through a stakeholder consultation, a draft NFE policy was developed to provide a framework for the delivery of a National Literacy Programme.

Furtherance to this, a Scheme of Service has been drafted in consultation with the Public Services Commission to provide a framework for staff management and grant the legal basis for securing financial clearance for recruitment.

Mr. Chairman, other activities included:

- Collaboration with key stakeholders in the design and delivery of functional literacy programmes
- A total of **494** Batch **19** local language classes are on the ground and engaging in functional literacy activities.
- A total number of **11,325** learners have been enrolled and are currently participating in the activities of these classes. Of the total number of learners, **57%** are female
- Enrolment into the **21** Month-English language classes for batch 5 currently stands at **17,647** out of which **70.9%** are female, the highest since the programme began
- The **21**-month cycle has been reviewed and the duration shortened into a nine month programme.

In addition, the NFED is collaborating with Mondelez International (Cadbury Ghana) towards the establishment of classes in 30 cocoa growing communities in the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern and Western Regions.

Conversion of NFED into an Agency

Mr. Chairman, efforts were made to convert the Division to an Agency status of the Ministry. In this regard, extensive stakeholder consultations were conducted to fine-tune the NFED bill which is currently at the Attorney General's Department for advice.

OPEN SCHOOLING

Mr. Chairman, the Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CENDLOS) was created with the aim of harmonising distance learning at all levels and boosting training in skills using open

learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. CENDLOS' aim is to plan and implement a structure that will ensure a sound Open and Distance Learning (ODL) environment as well as create opportunities in learning for skills among the youth and the citizenry at large in search of new or improved job placements.

As part of efforts to effectively harmonize distance learning activities, the Ministry of Education in consultation with the Public Service Commission has developed a draft Scheme of Service for CENDLOS.

Mr. Chairman, the Center for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling in 2013, produced 4,776 folders of audio-visual lessons on video compact discs (VCDs) and distributed to 535 Senior High Schools. Additionally, in 2014, a total of 355,500 VCDs were dubbed, tested, packaged into 7,677 folders and distributed to schools. In 2015, at the junior high school level, the production of 70 lessons of Social Studies, 70 lessons of Integrated Science, and 120 lessons of Basic Design and Technology for JHS1 were deployed for the benefit of schools. As well, 150 Audio-visual lessons have been produced for Junior high schools including development of an Interactive eLessons: furtherance to this a concept framework for production of 180 units of Interactive eLessons is at 90% completion.

Over the period, a number of capacity development programs have been carried out to guarantee the sustainability of the e-learning platforms through training of:

- (i) 36 teachers and IT engineers in eContent development
- (ii) 73 District ICT Coordinators as Master Trainers in the use of iCampusgh, iBox and eContent

Development of eContent programs also showed significant progress over the 4-year period under review. The success include, production of eContent for SHS 1 English, Mathematics, Integrated Science and Social Studies; and eContent in three forms- namely-: (i) Learner Text (notes, video scripts, quizzes, questions and answers) is completed; (ii) Audio-visual lessons: 150 out of 200 lessons produced; (iii) Interactive eLessons: Concept frameworks for production of 180 units of Interactive eLessons is 25% complete and on-going

The Pilot Open School System enrolled 632 learners in 13 study centres in 2013, offering programmes in JHS, SHS and National Vocational Training Institutes (NVTIs). Fifty-two of these learners (specifically comprising prison inmates and out-of-school youth) registered for BECE, WASSCE and NVTI examinations. In 2014 there are 514 learners enrolled.

Further offering open resources for teachers and students in mainstream schools, CENDLOS developed a prototype *eLearning* platform for an online classroom, and also trained 17 TVET writers in e-content development.

Key Achievements

- Pilot Open School System: 615 learners are currently enrolled in thirteen (13) study centres offering programs in JHS, SHS and TVET
- Production of eContent for SHS 1 English, Mathematics, Integrated Science and Social Studies. eContent is in three forms as follows:

- Audio-visual lessons: 50 lessons have been produced to complete the contract requirement of 200 lessons
- Interactive eLessons: Concept frameworks for production of 180 units of Interactive eLessons is 50% complete and on-going
- Development of Open Education Resources (OER) Policy for Ghana: 1st Draft is ready.
- Progress on Key Initiatives, Programs, and Projects Implemented
- The current status of the implementation of the ICT component of the SEIP implementation Project in low performing schools is as follows:
 - Campusgh project- development of *eLearning* Platform for online classroom for Senior High Schools: 75% complete and on-going
 - Production and installation of sets of iBoxes with Interface in selected SHS – 50 sets of iBoxes with Interface representing 31% delivered by supplier
 - Production of eContent for SHS 1 English, Mathematics, Integrated Science and Social Studies:
 - Learner Text (notes, video scripts, quizzes, questions and answers) – 100% complete
 - Audio-visual lessons: 100% complete
 - Interactive eLessons: Concept frameworks for production of 180 units of Interactive eLessons is 50% complete and on-going

- It is expected that by the beginning of the new academic year in September 2016, CENDLOS will deploy *Canvas* portal and install *iBoxes* in at least 80 low-performing Senior High Schools.

Our overall aim is to ensure that students can decide to succeed and will be supported to do so, regardless.

E. INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman, under the Inclusive and Special Education programme, basic schools in 48 districts across all ten regions are currently practicing Inclusive Education (IE). Since 2012, UNICEF has supported the Special Education Division to implement and expand IE in 14 districts. Progress has been made in the following areas:

- All schools in the 48 districts are implementing IE.
- All Heads of schools circuit supervisors and Deputy Directors in charge of Supervision have been trained in IE and Basic screening techniques to be able to identify children with disabilities and Special Educational Needs (SENs).
- Basic screening materials for vision and hearing and other needs have been allocated to all District/Circuits/Schools that are implementing IE.
- Wheelchairs have been distributed to physical challenged pupils who are in need of assistance in this regard.
- An Inclusive Education policy which includes an implementation plan has been developed and launched.

In 2014/15 6, a total of 853 pupils were enrolled in special schools, an increase from 6,180 in 2012/13, representing an increase of 10.9%.

We need to intensify efforts to reach many in the very complex area of special needs to include children who are autistic, and those who will learn differently from the majority of our learners. I invite our training institutions to expand training opportunities in the Special Education departments to go beyond the hearing and visual impaired. Everyone can be assisted to learn.

F. TERTIARY EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman, Government continues to initiate policies and programmes in the Polytechnics (some now Technical Universities), Colleges of Education and Universities to enhance the capacity of graduates from our tertiary institutions to drive the socio-economic transformation of the country.

In this regard, Government through the Ministry of Education has demonstrated its commitment through the implementation of the following measures:

- a) Expansion of Access in Colleges of Education
- b) Conversion of Polytechnics into Technical Universities
- c) Upgrade of both residential and academic facilities in the Universities
- d) Establishment of the Eastern Region University
- e) Training of Faculty Members
- f) Augmenting Operations of Medical Schools

g) Encouraging Private Sector Participation

a) Expand Access in Colleges of Education

Mr. Chairman, government has over the past four years taken steps to improve the supply of teachers at the basic level by expanding access to Colleges of Education through the following:

- Migration of Colleges of Education
- Establishment of new Colleges of Education in the medium term;
- Expansion and upgrading of facilities in all Colleges of Education and the
- Removal of the Admission Quota in the Colleges of Education

Migration of Colleges of Education

The Ministry in collaboration with the National Council for Tertiary Education has developed a harmonized Scheme of Service and Conditions of Service for staff after the passage of the Colleges of Education Act 2012 (Act 847) for the transition of COEs to Tertiary Status

Following the attainment of tertiary status by thirty-eight (38) Colleges of Education, the Ministry of Finance has approved the migration onto the Colleges of Education Payroll. By this approval, salaries, retention premium, critical support allowances and conversion difference are to be paid to eligible staff.

The Ministry has reconstituted the Governing Councils of all 38 Colleges of Education and key management members have been trained to build their capacity for their new role.

Establishment of New Colleges of Education

Mr. Chairman, in line with the pledge to construct 10 new Colleges of Education in underserved areas to improve on teacher supply to Basic schools, Government has absorbed five existing private Colleges of Education as public Colleges of Education. These Colleges are:

- St. Ambrose College of Education, Dormaa Akwamu in the Brong Ahafo Region
- Al-Faruq Islamic College of Education, Wenchi in the Brong Ahafo Region
- Gambaga College of Education, East Mamprusi District in the Northern Region
- St. Vincent College of Education, Yendi Municipality (Gamazi) in the Northern Region
- Bia Lamplighter College of Education in the Western Region

Mr. Chairman, existing infrastructure in the absorbed colleges will be upgraded. In this regard, contracts have been awarded for the provision of the following facilities in each of the 5 new Colleges:

- Construction of Lecture Hall/ Laboratory
- Construction of Hostel Block

- Construction of Multi-Purpose Hall
- Construction of Model School Block and
- Construction of Principal's Bungalow
- Construction of 2-Storey Administration

In addition to the absorption of the five colleges, plans are underway to absorb 2 more Private Colleges of Education in the Ashanti and Eastern Regions.

Government has also commenced work on the construction of three (3) **new** Colleges of Education at Katamanso in the Greater Accra Region, Besease in the Central Region and Bole in the Northern Region in a bid to expand access at the tertiary level.

Upgrade of Facilities in CoE

Mr. Chairman, government has expanded and upgraded facilities in all the existing 38 Colleges of Education. In this regard, the following academic and residential facilities have been provided and or upgraded from 2013 to date at the Colleges of Education:

- Completion of 5 Hostel blocks while an additional 6 are at various stages of completion
- Completion of 9 Classroom Blocks
- Completion of 10 master's bungalow and 7 staff blocks while an additional 9 are at various stages of completion
- Completion of 7 Administration blocks, 2 Assembly Halls, 2 Auditoria and 3 Library blocks.

- Other infrastructure projects provided include Science laboratory blocks, ICT Centers, Staff Development Centers and Kitchen/Dining Halls

Removal of Admission Quotas in CoE

Mr. Chairman, our resolve to increase admissions of teacher trainees into Colleges of Education and reverse the trend of high percentages of untrained teachers in the GES, which is detrimental to quality education delivery, has led to government implementing a number of interventions notable amongst them being the removal of the admission quota system by replacing the teacher trainee allowances with student's loan.

The removal of the admission quota system has resulted in an increase in admissions of over 60%.

b) Conversion of Polytechnics into Technical Universities

Mr. Chairman, the President, His Excellency, John Dramani Mahama in his 2013 State of the Nation Address announced the programme for the conversion of Polytechnics into Technical Universities. The move is to help reposition the polytechnics as strategic institutions to train high level technical skills in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) areas for the country's economic and national development agenda.

In this regard, the Ministry, in September 2013 set up an eight-member Technical Committee to among other things develop a road map for implementing the policy.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to re-state that the Technical University Act, 2016 (Act 922) has been enacted by Parliament to pave the way for the conversion of the first phase of six (6) polytechnics namely, Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Ho, Sunyani and Koforidua Polytechnics to technical universities from September, 2016.

The Ministry has also received the report of the expert review panel on the re-assessment of Cape Coast and Tamale Polytechnics to be considered for conversion to technical universities. Consequently, an executive approval has been given to upgrade the Cape Coast and Tamale Polytechnics to technical universities bringing the total number of new Technical Universities to eight (8).

Mr. Chairman, government will assist the remaining polytechnics through re-tooling of their laboratories, renovation of existing infrastructure, deepening governance structures; the running of accredited Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) programs to merit their conversion to technical universities.

Upgrading of Facilities in Polytechnics

Mr. Chairman, in line with the conversion process, government initiated a number of infrastructure projects to expand and upgrade facilities at the various Polytechnics. These include:

- Construction of an 8-storey ICT/Library complex and completion of four Engineering Blocks, each including workshops, laboratories, classrooms, lecture theatres, offices, under the Government's Skills Development initiative project in Accra Polytechnic;
- Refurbishment of the Engineering Block with 500 sets of furniture for the machine shop at the Tamale Polytechnic;
- Construction of Ultra-Modern Hotel, Catering and Information Management Block as well as 3-storey lecture hall (G-Block) at the Sunyani Polytechnic
- Installation of new mechanical engineering equipment at the engineering laboratory and the construction of 5-storey school of engineering Block at the Koforidua Polytechnic. A 4-storey classroom and office Block have also been completed.
- Construction of 4-storey students Hostel is currently on-going at the Bolgatanga Polytechnic.
- Cape Coast Polytechnic has also seen the construction of four 8-unit Blocks of flats for staff.
- Mechanical, electronic and electric learning systems have been installed at Kumasi, Ho and Takoradi Polytechnics. Installation of similar equipment is currently on-going at Koforidua and Tamale Polytechnics. The next phase of installations will cover Cape Coast, Sunyani, Bolgatanga and Wa polytechnics. The installations of the equipment that include those for renewable energy,

automation and mechatronics, process control, machining, fluid power and mechanical and process control learning systems.

The Ministry invites the public, especially those with dissenting views, to read our reports which have been made public for some two years now. Reference to these will ground criticism in objective reality, without prejudice to opinions. The ministry remains open to informed criticism, having made no claims to perfection.

c) Upgrade Academic and Residential facilities in Public Universities

Mr. Chairman, government continues to assist the existing public universities to enhance their infrastructure to expand access and also to promote effective teaching and learning. In this regard, the following academic and residential facilities were provided to public universities over the period under review. Some have seen advancement in construction. We urge management to continue prioritization of these projects for effective completion:

UHAS and UENR

Mr. Chairman, the construction of the School of Basic and Biomedical Sciences at Sokode-Lokoe in the Ho Municipality, the first of the eight (8) schools and two (2) institutes expected to form the total infrastructural facilities of the **University Of Health And Allied Sciences** has been completed and handed over.

The following projects have also been completed and handed over:

- 10 new Lecture Halls
- Laboratory complex block
- 6 classrooms converted to accommodation for lecturers
- Completion of outstanding works at the Nurses Training School
- Rehabilitation of Vice Chancellor's lodge
- Rehabilitation of Oncho Centre Building for the School of Public Health in Hohoe

The following projects are currently completed or are in various stages of completion ongoing at the **University for Energy and Natural Resources (UENR)**:

- 2-storey library and ICT laboratory complex building
- 2-storey classroom block with offices
- Work has also started on the Dormaa Campus of the University of Energy and Natural Resources

Mr. Chairman, these expansion projects coupled with other interventions have resulted in an increase in enrolment by 122 percent and 264 percent respectively for UHAS and UENR over the period.

KNUST

- Completion of a 5-storey Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

- Completion of a 4-Storey College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Construction of Int. Rural Arts/Cultural Studies Building
- Construction of 4-Storey Examination Halls & Lecturers' Office
- Construction of School of Veterinary Medicine Building Complex

University of Ghana

- Completion of Hostel Block for the School of Nuclear and Allied Sciences
- Construction of Arts Multi-Purpose Facility
- The Faculty of Arts Building Project
- The Extension of Dental School
- Renovation of Cafeteria for College of Health Sciences

University of Cape Coast

- Construction of new central administration block
- Construction of Administration, Library and Laboratory blocks for school of medical sciences
- Construction of school of business building complex
- Construction of school of agriculture complex
- Construction of student union complex

University for Development Studies

- Completion of 3-Bedroom Bungalow
- Completion of 4-Storey Administration Block
- Conversion of Girls' Hostel into Laboratory
- Construction of a Multi-Purpose Auditorium
- Construction of 3-Storey Student's Dissection Rooms and Laboratory
- Renovation and Extension of Graduate School Block
- Supply and Installation of Computers and Accessories

University of Education

- Construction of Educational Studies Block for Faculty of Education Studies at the Main and Ajumako Campuses.

Campus Development Programs at GIJ and NAFTI

Work is at an advance stage for the construction of the new site of the Ghana Institute of Journalism at North Dzorwulu. The project has a 4-Storey 12 Unit lecture hall, 350-Seater Auditorium, Administration Block and other auxiliary structures. The project is about 65% complete and work is currently on-going with the support of the GETFund to ensure early project completion. This will assist to further enhance access and position the institution to train world class journalists and media practitioners.

Mr. Chairman, government has also taken steps to transform the National Film and Television Training Institute (NAFTI) into a College

of Media and Creative Arts under the Ministry of Education. Cabinet has approved a Memorandum in this regard and processes are ongoing in liaison with the National Council for Tertiary Education to ensure the transformation of NAFTI. The Bill for the transformation of NAFTI is currently at the Attorney General's Department for onward transmission to Parliament for their consideration and passage into law. In this regard, a provision has been made in the 2017 budget for the institute.

d) New Public University in the Eastern Region

Mr. Chairman, in line with the Government's vision of providing a public University campus in every Region of Ghana, a Presidential Taskforce was constituted to develop a roadmap for the establishment of the University of Environment and Sustainable Development in the Eastern Region. Land has been secured in Somanya and Donkorkrom for the siting of the university.

The University of Environment and Sustainable Development Act, 2015 (Act 898) has been enacted by Parliament. Government is vigorously pursuing funding options to commence the construction of key facilities.

Student Loan Scheme

Upward Review of Loan Amounts

In line continuous demands by relevant Student groups to make the student Loan Amount more realistic to cost, the Students Loan Trust

Fund has approved the upward revision of the Students loan Amount from a between GH¢650- GH¢1600 over two semesters to GH¢1000- GH¢2000 payable over two semesters. The new minimum and maximum Students Loan amount of GH¢1000 and GH¢ 2000 respectively took effect in the 2016/2017 academic year.

Students Loan Plus

The Students Loan Plus (SL-Plus) has been designed to cater for students who gain admission to tertiary institutions but are financially handicapped even in raising the initial, time bound registration fees. The SL-Plus is an extension of the qualification period for a regular student loan to include the Tertiary Admission Phase.

e) Faculty training

Government continues to see universities as engines for social change and expansion of prosperity. The need for trained and skillful graduates is highly dependent on the quality of teaching in higher education. This informed government's decision to make allocations from the GETFund for the training of faculty members to enhance and elevate their professional abilities in their field of work.

Over the past four years, government has provided a total amount of GH¢ 25,500,000 in the GETFund formula for faculty development and research for faculty members from all public universities.

f) Private Sector Participation in Tertiary Education

Mr. Chairman, government believes that education, including tertiary education is a shared responsibility. The participation of the private

sector is a significant policy initiative by government, backed by the constitution. Government has provided the enabling environment for the private participation in higher education. The measures include:

- The extension of tax exemptions for private tertiary institutions for educational materials
- The expansion of the Student's Loan Trust to cover private tertiary institutions. Over 6,000 private tertiary students have benefited from the student's loan scheme
- Allocation of vehicles to some selected private tertiary institutions
- Provision of scholarships to students in private tertiary institutions

A presidential charter was granted to Central University in 2016 making it a fully fledged university that can now award its own degrees and certificates, while the public defends their quality.

The National Accreditation Board has taken steps to ensure that programmes run by the institutions meet the minimum standard required. Further, the National Council for Tertiary Education in liaison with the National Accreditation Board has produced a national policy on siting of tertiary education institutions and mounting of new programmes to among other things regulate the number of private tertiary institutions.

Mr. Chairman, the number of private tertiary institutions has seen an increase from 51 in 2012 to 63 in 2016. Private tertiary institutions

enroll about 20% of total enrolment in tertiary institutions. A review of this Bill is underway to extend its remit and provide adequate support in view of the changing landscape of tertiary education, world-wide.

Qualification of Students to Tertiary Institutions

As government made remarkable improvement in access to tertiary education, efforts were also made to ensure the right caliber of applicants into tertiary institutions as a quality measure. As a result, government through the NCTE and NAB ensured strict adherence to entry qualifications into all the tertiary institutions, regardless.

Mr. Chairman, clearance was given in 2016 to recruit a total of 1,018 lecturers into all public universities. I have already mentioned staff employed into other levels of education. These facts defeat any argument of a ban on recruitment into our educational institutions including our universities. The strategy has been to shift to a mode of employment that allows for proper financial forecasting and planning by government and arguably for faculty as well.

The implementation of policy interventions at the tertiary level has resulted in the following:

At the colleges of Education, total enrolment increased by 35.5% from 26,978 in 2008/09 to 36,563 in 2014/15. The percentage of female students increased from 41.9% to 43.8% over the same period.

In the polytechnics, enrolment went up by 39.6% from 38,656 in 2008/09 to 53,978 with the percentage of females increasing from 29.7% to 34.1% over the same period.

Mr. Chairman, the percentage of students reading science related programs increased from 29.0% to 43.4% over the same period.

University enrolment increased from 102,548 in 2008/09 to 147,180 in 2014/15.

Before I bring my address to a close, Mr. Chairman, please allow me to share a selection of our **significant achievements**:

In 2015, Ghana was selected along with China and Mongolia to launch the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report on Education at the UN Headquarters in New York. The honor came as a result of significant strides Ghana had made in the MDGs. This is global acknowledgment of advancements in education by Ghana. That we knew, put the spotlight on us regarding the SDGs that were then awaiting universal assent. We confidently played our role in the concept towards SDG4 and I am glad to inform you that we have our draft agenda towards 2030 all laid out. We are happy to have influenced the world body to develop and sustain a holistic view of education, both vertically and horizontally.

- **BECE PERFORMANCE (*under Basic Education*)**

Mr. Chairman, the performance of the Public Basic Schools in the BECE is improving. In the 2016 Presidential awards presented to the Best 20 students by His Excellency the President, 13 of the awardees came from the Public Basic Schools. That was unprecedented.

I also want to put on record that we recorded the best Basic Education Certificate Examination (B.E.C.E) results ever this year. In 2014, 11 students got a raw score of 500 and above, highest 507. In 2015, 2 candidates had 500m or more, the highest being 504. This year, Three Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Four (3994) candidates obtaining the raw scores of 500, the highest being 564, the highest ever. This comes on the heels of no exam leakages. Yes, or children can. Surely the interventions (retraining; community participation; provision of teaching and learning materials; student efforts are working).

THE WAEC EXCELLENCE AWARDS (*Secondary Education*)

Mr. Chairman, the WAEC Excellence Awards saw Ghana shining again. The eligibility was the student to obtain a minimum of straight 8As in one sitting.

In 2007, a candidate from Ghana picked the 3rd prize. In 2008 and 2009 Ghanaian candidates swept all the three prizes. It must be noted that in 2010 when Ghana did not take part in the WASSE due to the educational reforms, there was no winner. In 2011, Ghana collected the 1st and 2nd

prize. Notably, from 2012 till date, Ghanaian students have swept all the three prizes.

The candidates who emerged winners for the May/June 2015 WASSCE are as follows:

- 1st Prize - Jessica Ayele Quaye ,
- 2nd Prize - Ruth Ewura-Ama Awadzi,
- 3rd Prize - Danelle Amo-Mensah

All from one school Wesley Girls High School in Cape Coast; this has never happened in the history of WAEC. Wesley Girls, the government has a very special package to mark this historical and unique achievement to be announced later by HE the POG.

Significant achievements in our Universities (*Tertiary*)

Mr. Chairman, permit me to share some significant achievements in our Universities in the past four years or so.

Centers of Excellence

Various institutions continue to build centers of excellence to improve the quality of research at the various campuses. The ACEs Project Development is one of such initiative to promote regional specialization among participating universities in areas that address regional challenges by strengthening the capacities of these universities to deliver quality training and applied research.

Ghana, won three proposals: Two of the Centers were selected at the University of Ghana, and one at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. They are:

- West African Centre for Cell Biology of Infectious Pathogens (WACCBIP), University of Ghana, Legon;
- West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI) into an African Centre of Excellence for training plant breeders, seed scientists and seed technologists, University of Ghana, Legon;
- Regional Centre of Excellence for Water and Environmental Sanitation, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.

The total project amount is US\$24. The Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education has happily played its part, fully convinced of the centrality of research to development. We look forward to great results in delivering regional, demand-driven, quality training and applied research in partnerships with regional and international academic institutions as well as relevant employers and industries.

- In June this year, the Thompson Reuters rankings placed the University of Ghana at the seventh position among tertiary institutions on the African Continent and in the band of 601-800 institutions worldwide, according to a release by the Times Higher Education (THE) World Rankings.

- The Times Higher Education World Universities Rankings are generated from five pillars, each of which represent a key area of higher education excellence – teaching (the learning environment), research (volume, income and reputation), citations (research influence), industry income (knowledge transfer), and international outlook (staff, students and research).
- At the University of Energy and Natural Resources, Staff of the Earth Observation Research Innovation Centre (EORIC) has designed Eco drones for monitoring illegal activities in our forests and agricultural farms management.

The University has succeeded in securing COSMIC-2/ FormoSat Ground station for numerical weather forecasting, a project to be funded by the US Government and the Taiwanese Space Agency. It will be the first of its kind in Africa. I am also aware of the inroads they are making into the production of solar panels.

- At the University of Mines and Technology (UMAT) progress has been made by the Faculty of Mineral Resources Technology in the development of a direct smelting technology to help eliminate the use of mercury by small scale miners in the gold extraction process. It is instructive to know that the project has received international recognition and patronage by the small scale miners.
- The University is making progress to get technology in bauxite upgrading using waste plastics which will make it possible to upgrade the ore to 90% alumina from our bauxite as against the

present grade of 40 to 45%. As a result of the increase in the grade of the ore, the price increase would be about 10 times. Another area faculty members are focusing on is a polymer reduction technology where carbonaceous material found in plastic waste will be used to produce metallic iron instead of having to import the conventional material from China.

- The University is also researching to develop a new technology that will use the same plastic waste to produce diesel fuel. It is heart-warming to know that significant amount of liquid fuels can be produced from pure water sachets. These are phenomenal developments the University is making to help reduce the plastic waste in our system drastically.
- UMAT has also made a research that has made it possible to produce activated carbons from local waste materials such as palm kernel shells and coconut shells in the laboratory. The derived activated carbons have qualities comparable to those imported for various industrial uses such as for gold adsorption.

POLYTECHNIC ACHIEVEMENTS (Tertiary)

Mr Chairman,

We have successfully turned most of our Polytechnics into Technical Universities. During my country report to at meetings of the Executive Board of UNESCO, I had the opportunity to share with the world body

our advancement on this score. I am happy to share the commendation and indeed a number of countries wishing to learn of our processes to get to this point. Thanks to Dr. Afeti and his team, the NCTE and everyone else for recognizing the importance of such upgrade.

I would like to share some significant achievements from Kumasi Polytechnic as an example of the many creative innovations happening across our Polytechnics now Technical Universities: The institution has developed a solar mechanized wheel chair for the easy mobility for our physically challenged brothers and sisters.

The Polytechnic has developed solar smart bags fitted with solar panels and power banks to charge and store energy for mobile phones, tablets/Ipads, MP3s, radio, cameras and laptops. With this development the rural folks and our businessmen and women can comfortably operate their mobile electronic gadgets at any point in time.

The Polytechnic has established a Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency with the support of COTVET under its Skills Development Fund to provide long-term support to local and regional businesses that will deliver products and services related to renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Kumasi Polytechnic benefited from a COTVET fund to establish an ultra-modern laboratory to assist teaching and learning in the field of engineering.

The Polytechnic has patterned with JUSKAN Company to develop an appropriate technology that recycles plastic waste into fuel.

Mr. Chairman, these are just a few; there are many success stories to tell from each campus. We need a whole new opportunity to Meet the Press with these achievements. Congratulations to everyone who expresses faith in our system.

Education in Ghana is good; it can get even better.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, over the period, we have expanded physical access through the construction of new schools; reduced cost barriers to education by introducing new subsidies and scholarships; improved quality through the provision of input and the re-training of teachers and also strengthened the management of education service delivery. We recognise the numerous challenges that the sector continues to encounter. However, we are working very hard to overcome them with the help of all our key stakeholders.

At the basic level, we have strengthened school supervision to reduce teacher absenteeism, and significantly increased textbook availability. Further, teacher quality has been improved by supporting untrained teachers to acquire professional training.

At the secondary level, we have expanded equitable access through the construction of new community day schools and the

implementation of progressively free SHS to reduce cost barriers. We have also equipped the laboratories of schools and re-trained teachers in low performing schools to enhance their capacity.

Furthermore, we have made significant progress at re-branding technical and vocational education training (TVET) through expansion and upgrading of facilities in TVET institutions and also built the capacity of staff at TVET institutions.

At the tertiary level, we expanded access by establishing 2 new universities. In addition, we successfully converted polytechnics to degree awarding technical universities.

Mr. Chairman, given the progress made, we can confidently conclude that even though we have much further to go, access and the standards and quality of education in Ghana over the past four years have improved.

I thank you all for your kind attention.