

# EQUALL UPDATE

EQUALL is a USAID-funded project designed to support the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service to improve the quality of basic education in Ghana.



## *In nine months, out-of-school children gain literacy skills to enter school*

**THE Complementary Education Program (CEP) brought thousands of out-of-school children into the classroom by equipping them with core literacy skills in less than one year.**

The Complementary Education Program targeted children aged 8 to 15 in the three northern regions of Ghana, where a large number of children are out of school. Classes were taught in local languages such as Gonja, Dagaare and Gurune. Assessments have found 44% of graduates from the complementary education program attained local language literacy.

The EQUALL project implemented CEP in partnership with School for Life, a local NGO that developed the approach. In the nine-month crash course, learners acquired core reading and maths skills, and a follow-on two-month course introducing English to help them transition into regular schools. Since January 2005, over 20,000 learners have enrolled in nine districts: West Gonja, Talensi Nabdam, Bole, Lawra, East Mamprusi, Bongo, Jirapa-Lambusie, Nadowli and Bawku West.

### **CEP Changed Lives**

Whether a child has never been to school or has dropped out for many years, enrolling in CEP presented a life-changing opportunity. About 85% of CEP graduates transition into the formal school system.

The effectiveness of the program is relevant because enrolment rates are far lower in rural and deprived areas of the country. In addition, a significant proportion of pupils drop out of school between P1 and P6.

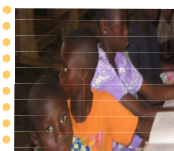
### **Post-capitation enrolment**

In 2005, the government's capitation grant abolished all fees and levies for public primary schools, leading to dramatic increases in enrolment throughout the country.

However, many districts still struggle. According to the director of education in Bole District in the Northern Region, more children are out of school than in school in his district. Mr. A.S. Moomen cites a census of children in mid-September 2006 that found only 46% of Bole children in primary school.

Part of the success of CEP came from its heavy reliance on community support and involvement. The EQUALL team collaborated with the community to identify facilitators to teach classes and form a committee of locals to oversee the program. With their input, classes were organised around community activities and the farming season. The sessions ran for three hours in the afternoon, leaving learners free to participate in household responsibilities.

Come graduation, parents and community members were invited, and they got to see GES officers informally testing their children in reading.



### **Every child needs a teacher: Community Support Teachers**

One obstacle to children's access to basic education is the severe shortage of teachers in rural and hard-to-reach areas. Thus it is the Ministry of Education's priority to provide teachers for deprived communities because they struggle to attract and retain teachers. EQUALL's Community Support Teacher program helped to meet this need. The project partnered with communities and District Assemblies to recruit and train local volunteers who were then placed in understaffed schools by the Ghana Education Service.

Since the program began in 2005, more than 400 CSTs have filled the gap in classrooms in nine districts including Bole, West Gonja, Talensi Nabdam, Lawra, East Mamprusi, Bongo, Jirapa-Lambusie, Nadowli and Bawku West.



To learn more, contact Education Quality for All CCC PMB CT41, Cantonments, Accra, Ghana  
E-mail: [equall@equall.com](mailto:equall@equall.com),  
Web site: [www.equall.com](http://www.equall.com)