

IMPROVING ACCESS: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE DISTRICT

1

by
**The National Centre for Research into Basic
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Problem Statement

2

Little evidence exist on how districts respond to problems of access in schools in their districts. This study investigated how Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam District (a district with poor school attendance and high dropout) deals with issues of access at different grade levels

STAKEHOLDERS OF EDUCATION AT THE DISTRICT



- District Education Oversight Committee
- District Director of Education
- Circuit Supervisors of Education
- Head teachers and Teachers
- School Management Committee (SMC)
- Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs)
- Communities

Objectives

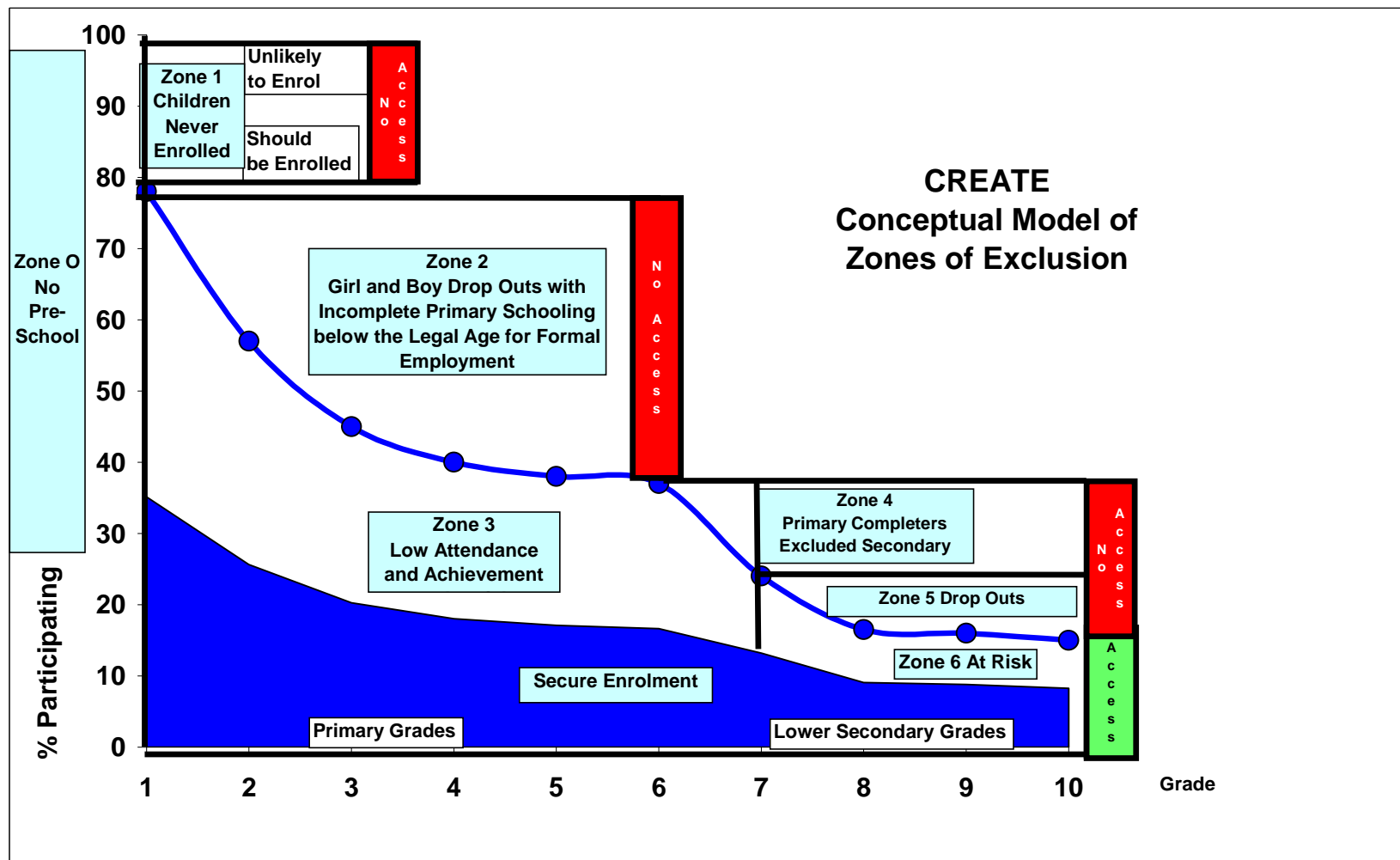
4

General objective

To examine the extent to which decentralized education governance influence access to primary education in Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam district

Specific objectives were to

1. examine the perceptions of DDEs of vulnerability in zones 1, 2 & 3
2. assess the implementation of the policy on pre-school in the district.
2. explain the roles and responsibilities of DEOC, CSs and other stakeholders in responding to issues of access to schooling in the district
3. explore the strategies used in response to addressing issues of access to education in the district
4. determine the kind of resources, capacities and structures needed to tackle the problem of access to schooling in the district



Source: CREATE 2007

Methodology

6

Research Design

- qualitative research

Population

- DDE, DEOC, CS, 86 primary schools with their PTAs, SMC, headteachers and local authorities in the communities of the selected schools

Sampling

- purposive sampling for DDE, DEOC, SMCs, PTAs
- Stratified Sampling to select 1 urban and 1 rural school in each circuit
- simple random sampling for selecting 7 circuits and CSs from 14 circuits

Findings

7

- **Zone 1 Children who never enrolled**
 - ✦ **Reasons for non-enrollment**
 - Inability of parents to provide basic needs of children (Poverty)
 - Children do not show interest in schooling
 - Irresponsible parenthood

- **Zone 2 Children who dropped out**
 - ✦ **Reasons for children to drop out of school**
 - Parental neglect
 - Parents' inability to feed children in school and provide other basic needs
 - Children walk long distances to school on unmotorable routes (see next slide)



Portion of the road to Etsii Abeka Islamic Primary School

Zones of Vulnerability cont.

9

Zone 3 children with low attendance and achievement

- ✦ **Procedure for enrolment**
- ✦ **Over age entry**
- ✦ **Repetition (see next slide)**
- ✦ **Academic performance in the district was generally low:**
 - **Eg. In 2003/04 academic year, 5 schools recorded 0% at the BECE in the district**
 - **it reduced to 3 schools in 2004/05 while the results of 2007/08 were yet to be released.**
 - **Some of the schools with the worse performance were Kokoben Presbyterian Primary and Kokwado Primary schools.**

Repetition



Table 1: Repetition of Pupils in Etsii Abeka in the 2005/06 academic year

Class	Girls	Boys	Total
P1	5	5	10
P2	3	2	5
P3	1	3	4
P4	3	1	4
P5	3	2	5
P6	2	1	3
Total	17	14	31

Table 2: Repetition of Pupils for GESDI School in 2005/06

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
KG 1	2	1	3
KG 2	2	1	3
P 1	3	1	4
P 2	2	2	4
P 3	1	2	3
P 4	3	2	5
P 5	1	1	2
Total	14	10	24

FINDINGS: improving access to education from the district

11

- The DEOC is there not only to improve access but the quality of education
- The DEOC formed a monitoring team in 2005 in response to poor performance of pupils in 2003 when 5 schools could not record a pass at BECE

- The CSs were in spite of their supervisory roles in the schools they were active in advising pupils' attendance, at risk of dropping out together with their parents, educated parents on importance of education at PTA meetings and at public gatherings
- Although CSs were doing their best, prompt payment of T&T posed a challenge in the execution of their duties



- SMCs are to manage the schools
- The head teachers are in-charge of the daily administration and are supposed to supervise the teachers who teach the pupils
- PTAs are voluntary organisations to support the administration of the schools

- Communities make efforts to accommodate children temporarily by providing shelter using local materials such as bamboo



KG 2 class in session at Abrofoa



Scholarship schemes have been initiated by
communities



Resources, capacities and structures to improve access

16

Resources

- **Capitation grant**

Capacity

- **241 trained teachers, 179 regular untrained and 103 from NYEP in the primary schools**
- **KG to JHS 3, there was a high percentage 647 (55.3%) of untrained teachers in the district constituting 436 (37.3%) regular untrained and 211 (18.0%) untrained on the NYEP**
- **Most trained teachers were in urban schools while rural schools had majority of untrained teachers (see next slide)**

Distribution of Teachers in Study Schools

17

KG/Primary School	Location	No. of Trained Trs	No. of Untrained Teachers	Total
Etsii Sonkwaa Catholic *	Rural	2	12	14
Etsii Abeka Islamic	Rural	3	4	7
Enyan-Maim Methodist	Semi-Urban	6	9	15
Owomase T.I. Ahmadiya	Rural	2	6	8
Enyan Denkyira D/A	Semi-Urban	3	3	6
Kokwado D/A	Rural	1	6	7
Bisease D/A MDCC	Urban	11	6	17
Kokoben Presbyterian	Rural	3	8	11
Ajumako GESDI/DA *	Urban	17	2	19
Abrofoa D/A	Rural	3	6	9
Amia-Ba D/A *	Rural	9	8	17
Osedze Methodist	Rural	3	5	8
Eyiakrom D/A	Rural	3	4	7
Total		66	79	145

Source: Field data in June 2008 *Schools with both KG/Primary and JHS values.

Resources, capacities and structures to improve access cont.

18

Structures

- The study identified DEOC and SMCs as the most critical structures to improve access to schooling in the district. However these structures were not functional.

Challenges

19

- CSs and DEOC were highly under resourced principally through nonpayment of fuel allowances and T&T claims when they visited schools.
- SMCs of schools visited were not functional. They only endorsed cheques to enable headteachers access capitation grants to run schools
- only the chairpersons and secretaries represented SMCs
- there were no documentary evidence (such as minutes of meetings) although they claimed they were meeting.
- PTAs were not functioning

Strategies to improve access

20

Strategies

- In-service training to build the capacity of teachers
- adoption of schools by district education officials
- empowering the DEOC to improve monitoring and supervision in schools
- sourcing existing community initiated scholarship schemes to support needy but brilliant children

Strategies cont.

21

- effective collaboration with education related NGOs to improve the resources of the schools

Eg World vision, DIFD, USAID, Safe School Project and Joan's Virgins Club (Kentucky, USA based NGO).

conclusion

22

Access to education is influenced by a number of factors:

- **poverty**
- **parental neglect**
- **child delinquency**
- **long distance of walking to school**
- **inadequate building structures (school buildings)**
- **inadequate trained teachers**

Addressing the problem of access demands the effective functioning of the decentralised structures of education in unison at the district level

Que. What can be done to make the DEOC and SMCs functional?

Suggestions

23

- The DDE should ensure that CSs are resourced through prompt payment of claims to enable them become more mobile and functional which could lead to improvement in access to schooling in the district
- SMCs in the district are not functioning. Efforts should be made to make them functional through capacity building training workshops.

THANK YOU