



Consortium for Research on
Educational Access,
Transitions and Equity

**Human Capital, Poverty, Educational Access and Exclusion:
The Case of Ghana 1991-2006**

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Summary

The period since 1991 has seen a general improvement both in terms of household welfare and schooling participation in Ghana. This monograph explores the patterns among descriptive indicators and uses regression analysis to examine possible causal relationships with special reference to the role of education in determining welfare and its reciprocal, the role of welfare and other aspects of economic privilege in the determination of school attendance and progression. It reviews the literature on modelling of the household consumption function as well as on modelling schooling decisions based on the household production function. Two groups of models are then fitted using data from the Ghana Living Standards Surveys. The results suggest that education levels play an important role in determining household welfare and that, for higher levels of education, these effects may be strengthening. Educational expansion has, however, meant that access to the benefits from these effects has widened somewhat. Demographic change has also played an important role in welfare improvements. In terms of absolute numbers, access to schooling in Ghana has expanded dramatically. Rates of completion and of drop-out have not improved, however, and there appears to be a worsening of age-appropriate completion rates. Nonetheless, the first half of the period since 1991 saw substantial increases in rates of ever-attendance and of current-attendance at the basic education level. This growth appears to have been driven by narrowing regional differentials, increasing welfare, urbanisation, improving gender equity, smaller and less dependent households and a reduction in the number of children involved in child labour. It is in relation to progression towards higher levels of education that more significant inequity emerges and in 2006 completion of lower secondary education in Ghana remains the preserve of children in areas and households of relative economic privilege.

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