

Distance Education and Network Communication Development in Ghana



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Profile of Ghana

- Capital: Accra
- Administrative Regions: 10
- District Assemblies: 138
- Population: 20 million
- Area: 238,537 Sq. Km
- Temperature: 21-32 deg. Cel.
- Annual Rainfall: Av. 2.030mm
- Government: Parliamentary Democracy
- Income per Capita: US\$290 (202)

EDUCATION DATA

- Primary - 14,683 (3,239,462)
- Junior Secondary - 7,696 (1,121,887)
- Senior Secondary - 553 (333,002)
- Technical/Vocational - 23 (20,495)
- Polytechnics - 10 (24,656)
- Universities - 17 (84,078)

Introduction

- *“Technological advancement has given new life to education”* Roblyer (2003)
 - Distance education is becoming a vehicle for delivering education

Areas of Examination

- Educational policy reforms
- History of Distance Education
- Current status of ICT deployment to support Distance Education
- Distance Education delivery: Special reference to University of Education, Winneba, University of Cape Coast and the University of Ghana, Legon
- Challenges faced by Distance Education in Ghana, and
- The way forward

Factors Leading to Recent
Educational Reforms
In
Ghana

Global Trends: Education and Use of ICTs

- Otto Friedrich (1982): computers are beeping their way into offices, schools and homes by the millions spearheading a process that is changing the course of all other processes.
- For Third countries the effect will be widening the digital divide
- World Development Report: - *[ICTs] greatly facilitate the acquisition and absorption of knowledge offering developing countries unprecedented opportunities to enhance educational systems ...*

Global Trends: Education and Use of ICTs

- ICT offers increase in opportunities for economic development and plays a critical role in rapid economic change

Government International Agreements

- Governmental agreements to international goals and targets have contributed to renewed commitment to education. These agreements include:
 - **The Millennium Development Goals**
 - **The Dakar Educational Goals**

The Millennium Development Goals

- eradicating extreme poverty and hunger
- achieving universal primary education
- promoting gender equality and empowering women
- reducing child mortality
- improving maternal health
- combating HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases
- ensuring environmental sustainability and
- developing a global partnership for development

The Dakar Educational Goals ...

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children especially girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality
3. Ensuring that learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes

The Dakar Educational Goals

4. Achieving a 50% in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for adults
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' equal and full access to and achievement basic education of good quality
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence for all so that recognized measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all especially in literacy and essential life skills.

Educational Policy Reforms

1. The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003): An Agenda for Growth and Prosperity – *education a means of reducing poverty; achieving universal literacy; tele-education as a vehicle*
2. The Basic Education Sector Improvement Programme Policy Document: Free and Compulsory Basic Education (fCUBE) (1996) – *basic education fundamental building block*
3. National Education Forum (1999) – *equal access to pre-tertiary and secondary institutions; vocational programs; adult literacy – tele-education a means*

Educational Policy Reforms ...

4. President's Committee on Review of Educational Reform in Ghana (2002) – *equal access to education; life-long education; call for open college system (DE), utilization of ICT*
5. President's Committee on Review of Educational Reforms: Meeting the Challenges of Education in the 21st Century (2003) – *increased access to education; opportunities out-of-school at secondary and tertiary levels*
6. Information and Communication Technology for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD) Policy (2003) – *widen access to education; ICT deployment*

History of D.E. in Ghana

1900	Promotion of Correspondence Courses
1948	Establishment of Institute of Adult Education
1960	Establishment of Workers College
1982	Establishment of Modular Programme for untrained teachers
1991	Study of the needs of distance education in Ghana instituted
1995	Approval given for 4 public universities to start D.E. Programmes
1997	Inauguration of Ghanaian Distance Education Association (GHADEA)
1997	Establishment of National Distance Education Council

WHY DISTANCE EDUCATION MODE

- Limitation of space in the universities
- Limitation of educational facilities
- Need to increase access to tertiary education
- Need to improve educational delivery
- Need to bring education closer to students

Target Audience for DE in Ghana

- At the tertiary level for professional and vocational training
- At the secondary level for basic adult education
- In-school and out-of-school Junior Secondary School (JSS) and the Senior Secondary School (SSS) levels students who wish to upgrade their formal qualifications.

Target Priorities ... Direction govt. Resources

1. Untrained teachers in basic school whose qualifications do not satisfy the agreed minimum
2. Youth and adults who have left the JSS or even the SSS without adequate qualifications to move to the next level of formal education or skill development programmes
3. Adult who has completed the basic stage of functional literacy programmes but for whom there are very little opportunities for continuing education.

CURRENT STATUS OF
DISTANCE EDUCATION
DELIVERY AT INSTITUTIONAL
LEVEL

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

1998	Teachers	Post Diploma (deg.) in Education	198
2000	Teachers	Post Diploma (deg.) in Education	108
2002	Teachers	Diploma, Basic Education	1,095
2003	Teachers	Diploma, Basic Education	2,063
2004	Teachers	Diploma, Basic Education	2,117
2005	Teachers	Diploma, Basic Education	1,491
2006	Teachers	Diploma, Basic Education	4,596
2006	Teachers	Post Diploma, (deg.) Basic Education	777
2007	Teachers	Diploma, (deg.) Basic Education	10,000

Total Beneficiaries

22,445

Mode of delivery – Print, audio-video recording and face-to-face support

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST – Centre of Continuing Education

2001	Teachers	Diploma – Education Diploma – /Commerce/Mgt Post Diploma – Education Post Diploma - Business	709
2002			2,306
2003			2,721
2004			2,960
2005			5,285
2006			7,300
2007			14,000
Total Beneficiaries			35,281

Note; Mode of delivery-Print (modules) using face to face and school-based system to support trainees

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE- Teacher Education Division

2004	Untrained Teachers	Dip. Basic Educ.	4,771
2005	Untrained Teachers	Dip. Basic Educ.	8,583
Total Beneficiaries			13,354

Note; Mode of delivery- Print (modules) through face to face and school-based system to support trainees

The programme is aimed at upgrading over 24,000 untrained teachers in the basic schools, especially, in the disadvantaged/rural areas. It is a four year programme being organized in phases throughout the country

OTHER Non-Teacher Training INSTITUTIONS

- University of Ghana, Legon
- Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA)
 - more advanced in using Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) facilities in distance education delivery
- Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST)
- Kludjeson International (Private University)
 - Serves as centre for distance education courses for University of South Africa and Leicester University of the UK

Present Mode of DE Delivery

- Printed Materials: developed by subject/curriculum experts under guidance from editorial and learning specialist
- Pre-recorded audio and video materials using ICT
- Student Support and Tutorial Services
- TV broadcast used by the Presidential Special Initiative-Distance Learning (PSI-DL)

Administration and Management of Distance Education

- University administrative structure
- Subsidiary Distance Education Directorates or Units
- Study Centres

Current Disposition Towards ICT enhanced Distance Education

- There is political and professional recognition of the necessity to harness the power ICT tools to education expansion campaigns
 - To train huge numbers of untrained teachers
 - To provide out-of-school youth and adults with opportunities to life-long learning and acquire skills needed for today's tech-driven economy
 - To bridge the digital divide

Current Status of ICT

Fixed Telephone Providers	Number of Subscribers
Ghana Telecom	
- Subscriber base	345,581
- Pay phones	11,430
Westel	
- Subscriber base	2,816
- Pay phones	168

Mobile Phone Providers	Number of Subscribers
Areeba (MTN)	2,180,000
Mobitel	770,154
Kasapa	136,828
Ghana telecom (One Touch)	711,119
Total	3,798,096

National Tele Density:
Population

19%
Approx. 20 Million

Current Status of ICT ...

Summary of Service Providers including Internet Service Providers

Category	Number Authorized	Number Operating
National Fixed Network Operators	3	2
National Mobiles Cellular Network	4	4
Paging Service Providers	10	-
Internet Data Service Providers	151	27
VSAT Data Operators	162	57
Public/Corporate Operators	83	25
FM Stations	137	84
TV Stations	28	4 Free on air 4 Pay per view

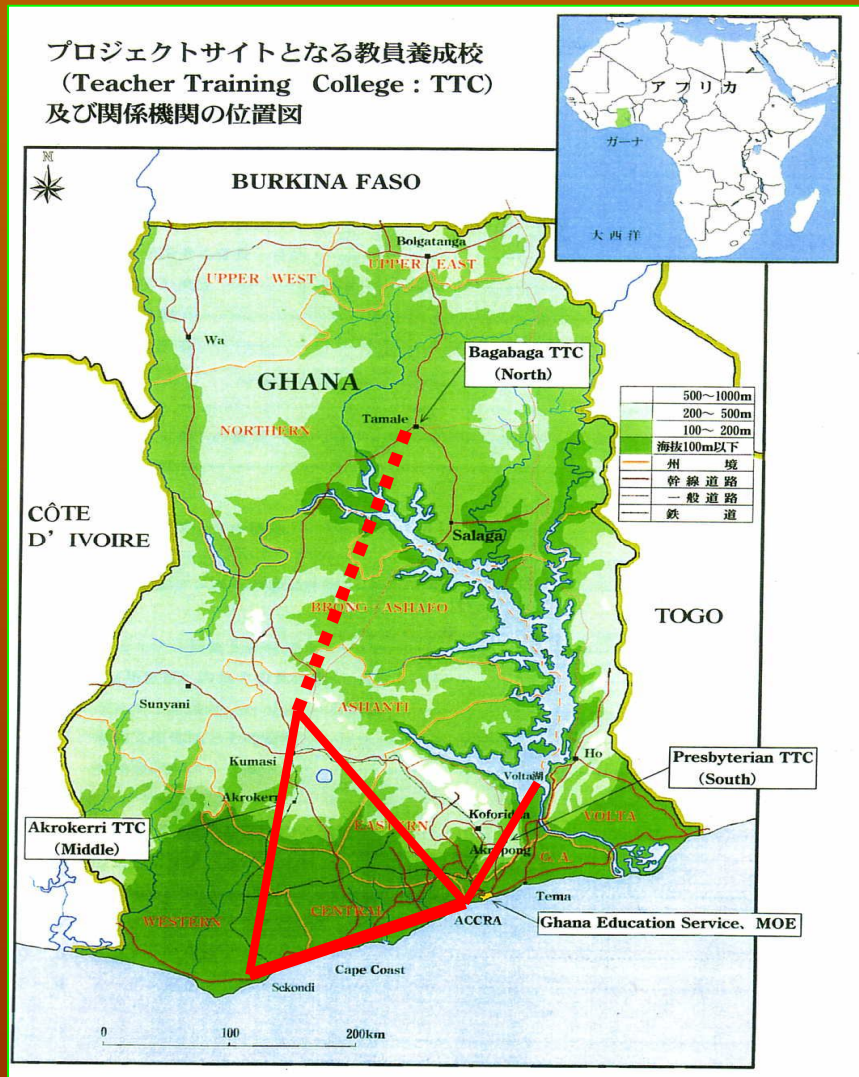
Proliferation of Computers

- A survey of government ministries and public sector organizations on the extent of ICT usage, and accessibility of infrastructure and computers revealed that:
 - ICT is mostly concentrated in the urban areas of Greater Accra (Accra being the capital of Ghana)
 - More schools are now being equipped with computers through donor organizations, parent-teacher associations, old-student associations and government.
 - ICT facilities and support services such as electricity and computers are lacking at the rural areas

Govt. Initiatives to improve ICT...Capacity Building

- Ministry of Education lists about 20 initiatives with the following objectives:
 - Empower the youth with requisite ICT skills
 - Empower the working force with requisite ICT skills
 - Improve teaching and learning through the use of ICT
 - Provide accessibility to education through the use of ICT

Government Initiatives to improve ICT...Infrastructure Development



National Communication Backbone Fibre-Optic Layout: This project expands on existing fibre-optic network. When completed, it will provide data communication linkages through out the country. There are plans to collaborate with the private sector to tap into the network.

Govt. Initiatives to improve ICT...Infrastructure Development

1. i-Advance Project: An initiative with Intel Corporation and local computer assembly firms to provide affordable computers for students, teachers and government employees. As of date one thousand (1000) computers have been produced.
2. The e-Ghana Project – ICT use to facilitate governance
3. ICT initiatives by Donor and United Nations Agencies – objectives include capacity building and accessibility to hardware

Challenges Faced by ICT Enhanced DE

- Inadequate ICT facilities and communication infrastructure
- Inadequate expertise in the development and management of DL
- Inadequate ICT personnel
- Inadequate financial resources
- Poor public perception of DL
- Absence private sector participation in DL and ICT
- High cost of bandwidth
- Inadequate bandwidth
- Lack of coordination in the development and deployment of DL
- Lack of robust domestic infrastructure
- Inadequate regulatory instrument for supporting ICT and DL

The Way Forward

- Capacity building for faculty members, course tutors and administrators
 - need for systematic distance education training programmes
- Support for research aimed at improving quality distance education delivery
- Provision of basic infrastructure to upgrade the study centres
- ICT is costly hence the need for public/private partnership to undertake projects
- Govt. to promote competition in tele-communication to reduce high cost
- Involve communities in partnership schemes to overcome financing challenges

CONCLUSION

- It is obvious from this presentation that Ghana has not yet gone far enough as far as distance education is concerned even though quite a number of institutions are involved.
- However, some modest gains have been recorded. If the issues identified under the way forward are vigorously tackled we hope to catch up with others very soon because we are convinced that distance education will help us address the problem of access and quality education for all.
- To meet the country's social and economic development targets ICT-enhanced Distance education must be exploited.
- Thank you for your attention