YOUNG ARTIST
PROMOTION
Ama Otema.
SPONSOR A CHILD PROGRAM.
DEVELOPMENT
Making FDIS in Africa work for women, in search of the best practices in Developing Countries.

DEVELOPMENT
The Hope & Future of the vulnerable populace; what’s their fate?

EDUCATION
Status of education to neglected children in Ghana; Impact on Genre Next

WHAT WE DO?
Free medical care for pregnant women in Ghana.

EDITORIAL
What inspiration behind PAAJAF project?

SUMMARY

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YOUNG ARTIST PROMOTION
Ama Otema.
PAAJAF project started on April 15, 2007 which Philip was inspired to start the foundation with Juliet, who had the same intent to help neglected children because Philip had to work many jobs to support his own way through school. He stayed home for four years after completing junior high. After completing school Philip wanted to invest in his community and give children and adults the opportunity that he never had – a free, quality education.

The purpose of this magazine is to help and encourage young people to engage in journalism, improve their writing skills and showcase their creativity to the world and to promote activities of the youth. The magazine is the product of PAAJAF’s Youth Journalism project. The Youth Journalism (YJ) is a program aimed to create young media outlets where there will be a more diverse range of young people who benefit from global news and may advance a career in journalism.

The YJ program is a great place to grow personally and professionally. Young people will have the opportunity to brainstorm story ideas, write, and create art. Participants can learn about journalism, graphic art, and photography as well as meet people in relevant professions and work with a mentor to develop further skills.

As the year 2011 has just commenced, we wish to present you this magazine from our research conduct, we need to look into the issues of child education system in Ghana, health: free care for pregnant women and women education, development and job inclusion. Also PAAJAF wishes to express its gratitude to you for your generosity and contribution to our projects. The year 2010 has marked three years of continuous struggles and commitments to make a difference in the lives of underprivileged children, youth and women.

PAAJAF owes 2010’s achievements to your generosity that allowed us to pay the school fees for neglected children and provide literacy education (non-formal education) for adults who did not get a chance to attend school in Gbawe Community.

We appreciate that you take an interest in helping disadvantaged children, youth and women in Ghana to break free from the cycle of poverty through becoming empowered, informed, skilled and educated citizens.

Thank you.
Philip Appiah
Co-founder/Executive Director

PAAJAF
Foundation

23-09-11

Who fed the dogs yesterday?
a) fed b) fed c) fed d) fed

Who drew the picture?
a) John b) John c) John d) John

Why did the dog break the window?

Who was the destination before I left?

Who has the dog?

How long before the car started a): 20 minutes b) 15 minutes c) 10 minutes d) 5 minutes
WHAT WE DO?

Providing Adolescents and Adults with Jobs for Advancement in the Future (PAAJAF) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that focuses on providing Basic facilities (Food, shelter, clothing), Information (Healthcare, Community building, Job training) and Education for underprivileged children, youth and women. It is a registered NGO with a Certificate of Recognition from the Department of Social Welfare in Ghana – Certificate Number D.S.W./4003 and Register General G21, 781. It has affiliation with United Way Ghana, GlobalGiving, Global Health Council and Gift In Kind International.

Base on our vision and mission, we have the following current programs gear towards meeting our goals: Sponsor a child, Education, Teen Centre, Adult Education, Children’s Networking, Youth Journalism, Health and Wellness Education, and Exchange Program.

For the year 2011, we are delighted to inform you that we will be carrying on PAAJAF projects and are depending 100% on your donations both cash, in-kind and partnership. PAAJAF urgently requires an office space to coordinate a team of local and international volunteers and to manage programs of the foundation; an amount of $13,500 is needed. Having an office will enable PAAJAF to: enlist local volunteers in a professional setting, meet with and support program participants, have contact with a variety of stakeholders engaged in PAAJAF work, use ICT and other equipment for global networking, and maintain an efficient filing and storage system also to work on this magazine to provide you more stuff.

To see more about the contents of our programs please visit www.paajaf.org.

SPONSOR A CHILD PROGRAM

WHAT IS SPONSORSHIP?

Sponsorship is a very personal way to share your blessings with an impoverished child. Through regular contributions, you’ll help improve a needy child’s life with basic necessities, such as health care, education assistance, durable clothing and shoes, improved living conditions and more. Additionally, you being a burden sharer, your help will give a needy child an emotional and mental comfort because he or she has known that someone cares for him or her elsewhere.

I’M READY TO SPONSOR A CHILD TODAY, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Please, drop us email today, fill the form, write the name of the child you want to sponsor. An amount of $1 per a day or $30 per a month can bring life and hope to a needy child.

WHAT BENEFITS GO TO A SPONSORED CHILD?

Your sponsorship helps us provide a needy child with life’s basic needs – education, health care, and nutritious food. PAAJAF steps further to do the following deductions from any fiscal contributions – 3% to General Fund for administration purposes and 2% for Educational infrastructure.

IF ONE IS COMMITTED TO A PARTICULAR LEVEL OF SPONSORSHIP, CAN HE/SHE GIVE MORE SOME MONTHS?

Yes, the additional money will be designated for the foundation’s general fund. (Unless you specify to a particular project). The support we receive through the child sponsorship program is typically insufficient to cover the complete monthly support of a child. We also use those funds to cover operational expenses.

HOW LONG WOULD A SPONSORSHIP LAST?

Normally, sponsored children are coming from a very poor family, and would otherwise not be able to attend school without a package. Sponsored children generally continue school till higher secondary. After that, they have a solid basic education, and can work to earn money for self. Some are very bright and can continue up to the University. If a needy child cannot continue his or her study, PAAJAF would inform the sponsoring parent(s) about it.

HOW ARE CHILDREN CHOSEN FOR SPONSORSHIP?

Members in the community help identify the most vulnerable children in the area. Then, PAAJAF takes up fact finding research to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the claim. It is only when a child’s level of need is considered to be critical then he or she is recommended for sponsorship. Even here, the consent of the families is requested for approval before PAAJAF can take it up.

AS A CHILD SPONSOR, WHAT WILL I RECEIVE FROM PAAJAF?

When one becomes a child sponsor, one will receive a Welcome Package from PAAJAF – letter of introduction from the sponsored child by PAAJAF. Each year, a sponsor shall receive a report detailing the progress of the sponsored child and the community project in general. This report also includes an updated photograph of the sponsored child.

CAN I VISIT MY SPONSORED CHILD?

A visit to your sponsored child and their community is a rewarding way to see the benefits of your contributions. You must contact PAAJAF at least three months before your intended departure date and before you make any travel arrangements.

SHOULD I WRITE TO MY SPONSORED CHILD?

PAAJAF strongly encourages you to write to your sponsored child. Children love to hear from their sponsors and often treasure the letters and photos that are sent. Please note that while your letters may reach your sponsored child within a few weeks, the response time can be quite long (up to six months, in some cases). When writing to your sponsored child, use the PAAJAF’s address.

WHAT IF I NEED TO DISCONTINUE MY SPONSORSHIP?

If we realize that your circumstances may change and that you may no longer be able to sponsor your child. Simple inform PAAJAF about your situation need to discontinue.

WHAT IF I CANNOT MAKE MY CHILD SPONSORSHIP PAYMENTS?

Should you be unable to make regular child sponsorship payments, please contact PAAJAF as soon as possible to explore the range of options available.

CAN I SEND GIFTS TO MY SPONSORED CHILD?

You are welcome to send simple gifts with your letters and cards. Please send only flat items such as photos, bookmarks, stamps or stickers in an envelope not bigger than “6x9”. (Please do not send parcels or cash.)

All correspondence must include: PAAJAF’s postal address (exactly as it appears). Your sponsored child’s name. Please do not write your address inside the letter.

To see who need your sponsorship visit our website www.paajaf.org
You Can Make a Difference
Foreign direct investment (FDI) is considered to be of significant importance for the economies of developing countries. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in case of Africa FDI is a main tool for handling economic problems. Indeed African countries are highly dependent on foreign specially FDI. Aside from bringing financial resources, the other benefits that FDI brings are innovative technology and management practices, and in most cases access to foreign markets and employment for locals. Amongst other benefits, FDIs bring sophisticated HR practices which are extremely important in ensuring equal opportunity for females during the recruitment and promotion processes. Protecting women’s interests and empowering them is crucial for sustainable development of Africa. There is a significant amount of data that proves the empowerment of women and their involvement in economies and politics of developing countries increases the countries’ economic competitiveness. These evidences are collected from such developing countries as India, Brazil and South-East Asian countries.

A Nobel Prize Laureate Mohammad Yunus’ micro-finance program for impoverished people showed that investing in women pays off greatly. Women were found to be better at managing credit and paying back credit. Their financial gains were spent not only on support of their families, but also on education of their children, their own education and they attracted other women to entrepreneurship. While it was reported that men were not as reliable, and in the majority of cases they did not invest in the education of their wives or children. Therefore when investing in women, governments invest in the future of their countries. Investment in women simply means a better use of human resources. This example is especially relevant to Africa, where many challenges can be dealt with if women are given sufficient resources and given equal opportunities to men. The experiences of African Development Bank reinforce this statement.

Women are the most vulnerable part in the African job market. Even in 2007 when the African economy demonstrated its highest economic growth of 6%, women made up only 70% of employed population. Therefore, women were hit the hardest during the period of decline starting in 2008.

In times of the economic recession it is of major importance to use all available resources, especially human resources, wisely. Women make up half of Africa’s population if not slightly more. However, even the jobs of those employed are by and large unstable, dangerous jobs in low-profit sectors.

Despite the fact that FDI inflows to Africa have declined since the economic recession, they still make up a considerable amount of the financial resources for the region. Therefore, with the right regulation and practices, FDI can assist in resolving the issues of African women regarding education and employment.

Global recession caused changes in various sectors of developing and developed countries. African countries should use these changes as an opportunity to increase their competent workforce by involving women. Developing countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Russia implemented effective immigration regulations for proper utilization of FDI in the past few years. These regulations force companies operating through FDIs, like MNEs, to work towards improving the local job market of skilled and professional workforce.

For instance, Kazakhstan and Russia implement strict immigration regulations regarding employees brought from abroad. If a foreign specialist is to work in the country, the MNE has to prove and provide evidence that it is impossible to find a local specialist for the job. If there are local specialists available for the position, foreigners are prohibited from occupying the post. If the foreign specialist is brought in, the MNE has to arrange a local replacement for them within a one-year period. This arrangement involves training and education. For each foreigner brought in, the MNE has to send ten local employees for specialist training programs, with preference being given to women and youth. Furthermore the CSR programs of MNEs involve an education sector. Most of the oil and gas corporations offer free tuition to world renowned universities and stipends for education abroad for fulfillment of scarce and rare workforce, such as engineers.

African countries should set their own rules for migration to encourage special quotas for recruiting a local female workforce, and educating and providing special training for them. In addition, MNEs should be encouraged to train and educate female candidates for skilled worker positions. There could be provision of incentives such as easier access to domestic industries, lower tax rates, financial subsidies, etc. With natural resources native to their land and property of their country, governments should exploit this advantage to its fullest.

One of the many challenges in the implementation of such regulations can be the unwillingness of African governments. Africa is highly dependent on FDIs and can be pressured to keep an investment-friendly environment. Another point is that African governments are dominated by men, and women’s involvement in higher level government is rather limited. This indicates that initiative for making FDI beneficial for the development of women and directing investments into financing industries where there is a large female workforce may not be well received.

If women make up a half of Africa’s population then Africa is using only half of its workforce potential. When African countries start using the full potential of their human resources, their economic growth could equal the economies of India and even China. One way to do this is for FDIs to be directed into the finance sector by improving the investment environment and conditions for loans and credit provided to female entrepreneurs. Economically empowering women by making better loan and credit programs with low interest rates specifically designed for them would create a favorable environment for growth.

Additionally MNEs brand reputation has now become strongly connected with their corporate social responsibility (CSR), which can be used to foster the women’s empowerment process. Gender gap problems in Africa are widely renowned, therefore any action taken by MNEs to empower African women are met with applause from the international community. And this policy is being exploited by large MNEs and considered major part of their CSR programs. Such global corporates as Royal Dutch Shell, General Mills, Uniliver and Samsung boast that their CSR initiatives are directed towards empowering women. African governments can encourage these initiatives in their own countries with the announcement of special awards, letters of appreciation and by granting the support of MNEs interests.

Strategies toward the empowerment of women include programs for raising literacy among women and girls, creating a favorable environment for micro-credits and loan provisions specifically designed for women; the development of entrepreneurship, and a variety of trainings and skills workshops. Such practices are usually initiated by NGO and international organisations, however if they are brought in as mentioned, bring innovative management practices and technology, therefore their role is of particular importance when setting up these practices. A specific regulation or a law does not have to be adopted for these purposes if there is no significant obstacle. A special agreement can be arranged between the government and an enterprise (or several enterprises).

For example in the case of ASEAN countries Japanese FDIs were directed into supporting female-led micro-enterprises through a special agreement. The ASEAN policy of empowering women economically also includes a wonderful initiative of setting up a regional exchange program for females. It involves cooperation and organizations specialized in micro-finance and micro-credit sectors to train women and provide first-hand guidance for business start-ups. It is not only a workshop, but a great opportunity for networking. It brings together women interested in entrepreneurship and corporations that provide the finance. Women can find partners for their business, share their experience, whilst corporations can find clients with a business potential.

Another interesting fact is that ASEAN started investing in training and workshops for women with a purpose of involving them in business and economy during the economic recession of 1990s. As a result female-led enterprises started appearing, followed by regional forums which helped with networking amongst women entrepreneurs and foreign and local investors. These activities without a doubt contributed into ASEAN’s recovery from an economic crisis.

Such initiative and support from higher-ups are of significant importance for African women as well. A lot of international forums and conferences were held and are being held on empowerment of women and empowerment and gender issues in Africa. Most African countries have ratified policies and regulations reached by agreement of participating countries, however regionally there is frequently misconduct between African countries and their governments. For better progress it is necessary that African governments have stronger cohesion as a region in dealing with issues of empowerment of women. Besides, ASEAN cases prove that networking is an essential tool in developing enterprises and encouraging entrepreneurship. The number of female entrepreneurs is limited in Africa, however if they were brought together to share their experiences and knowledge and joined with potential investors during annual forums and workshops, it certainly could help develop entrepreneurial minds and possibly create business partnerships.

When African countries start using the full potential of their human resources, their economic growth could equal the economies of India and even China.
Women are accountable for 48-80% of agricultural work, however they occupy low-paid and unskilled worker positions. The main reason for which is a social standing of women and cultural bias about them, which leads to lack of sufficient support in education and skills training for women. MNEs can provide funding for females in certain areas of this growing sector where there is an insufficiency in specialists. It really is an investment into the development of MNEs local specialist labor force which leads to the decrease in need for expatriates who are financially demanding (considering relocation expenses, various compensations and bonuses).

CHALLENGES FOR IMPLEMENTING NEW REGULATIONS REGARDING FDI:

All African countries are interested in and put much effort into attracting FDI. Therefore, African governments implement policies that would attract FDI, which sometimes are against the best interests of the host-country’s population. FDI is interested in a cheap labor force. If the quality of worker’s rise, so will their salaries. This may not be very appealing for foreign investors as they are extremely interested in cost cutting. However, it should be emphasized that training locals to replace expatriates (i.e. foreign workforce) is very cost-efficient in the long term. There is a simple reason for that: the gap in the development of economies of that host-country from the FDI contributing country. Salaries of the skilled workers and professionals of African countries are in most cases ten times lower than that of their colleagues for example from EU countries.

The main challenge in implementing regulations and policies to make a better use of FDI is in the need to leave the current policy behind. Right now FDI are dictating terms and conditions and in order to make FDI work for African women, governments have to reverse the situation, which is not going to be easy to say the least. However if African countries develop strong regional institutions and start seeing each other not as competing forces when it comes to FDI attraction, but as allies, the power struggle between them and FDI would be in their favor. It has to be remembered that such efforts would pay off greatly for countries of the continent, as it leads to their sustainable development, unemployment and poverty reduction, and a better educated population.

Statistics also indicates that women in Kumasi form about 51.2% of the total population in the metropolis and their roles have mainly been defined and shaped along biological and cultural lines. Women as homemakers and caregivers are challenged to provide food security and material needs and are therefore actively engaged in economic activities.

As such, they are easily disposed to all forms of abuse, domestic violence against women, lack of proper parental care, denial of paternity, general lack of access to quality education and health care (even when 4.5% of the country’s GDP was spent on health in 2003) and interest of the physically challenged pushed aside.

The Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly report has also shown that the concomitant effect is the proliferation of numerous social problems includes and is not limited to juvenile delinquency, street children, child labor, child maintenance, child custody, denial of paternity, rehabilitation of people with disability (PWD) orphaned and abandoned children, inability to pay hospital bills and abscinding from hospital; welfare whilst in prison, people in general distress, hard drug abuse & addiction, services for the destitute, child abuse/child labour.

Amongst Factors Leading to Prevalence of Social Problems are Irresponsible parents, Single parent families, Broken Homes, Breakdown of the extended family, Large Unemployed population, general poverty, Migration and so on.

As a way of contributing to improved quality of life of the people of Ghana by supporting Population, Reproductive Health and Gender policies and programmes, the UNFPA is currently implementing its Fifth Country Programme of Assistance to Ghana (CP5), which was the outcome of negotiations between the Government of Ghana (GOG) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) within the general framework of the programme of assistance that Ghana has been receiving from UNFPA.

Three Sub-Programmes have been formulated for implementation, namely:

1. Reproductive Health (RH).
2. Population and Development (P&D), and
3. Gender and Empowerment of Women

Planning, programming and implementation of population, reproductive health and gender programme activities are undertaken at the national, regional and district levels. Selected Non-governmental Organisations, Civil Society Organisations, Community Based Organizations and Faith Based Organizations at local and national levels are implementing the programmes. These work with the District Assemblies and decentralised agencies to mobilise the adolescents/youth, female and other vulnerable and excluded persons. Amongst the activities being implemented under each component of the programme are:

Reproductive Health Component:
- to Support Capacity Building of Media, Strengthen Youth Involvement in Reproductive Health,
- ensure Reproductive Health Commodity Security and Contribu-
to Strengthening National Health Management Information System.

Population and Development:
- to enhance Capacity for Integrating Population Variables, Support Tertiary and Research Institutions on Population and Development Issues.

Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment:
- to Promote Enforce-
ment of Existing Laws and Strengthen Institutions Dealing with Women and Children

A very innovative element in the CP5 is that the programme was developed with the full participation of the government and civil society partners under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The programme is aligned with the Ghana/Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPR5-ll), the National Population Policy, the Programme of Work of the Ministry of Health within the framework of Sectorwide Approaches (SWAPs) and the National Gender Policy.

It has also been noted that the government should consider introducing community-based home care for people with disabilities and the vulnerable, as a cost-effective way of caring for the vulnerable. So also is the need for a policy on home-based care service in the country as these would help save the state money in hospital cost and give persons with severe disabilities assistance to start working.

The Government of Ghana has done quite a lot to ensure protection of children and women against such vulnerability. As a follow up on the UNICEF consultation conference on Violence against Children held in May 2005 in Bamako. The Government has subsequently designed a five year plan initiated in the department of Children (DOC) of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs by Information research and Advocacy Division (IRAD) to deal with the problem.

It is also paramount that Ghanaians change their negative attitude and mindset about persons with disabilities. Care-givers of disabled people really need to perform their duties with love and compassion. Home care makes it possible for care recipient to remain at home in a safe environment and in some cases have more independence as well.

Education as a bedrock for success and development cannot be over emphasized. Presently Ghana has about 21,530 primary schools, 8,830 junior secondary schools, 900 senior secondary schools, 52 public training colleges, 3 private training colleges, 5 polytechnic institutions, 4 university public tertiary institutions, 8 public universities and over 45 private tertiary institutions. Most Ghanaians have relatively easy access to primary and secondary education. These numbers can be contrasted with the single university and handful of secondary and primary schools that existed at the time of independence in 1957. Ghana’s spending on education has varied between 28-40% of its annual budget in the past decade. All teaching is done in English, mostly by qualified Ghanaian educators.

With about 83% of its children in school, Ghana currently has one of the highest school enrollment rates in West Africa. In 2007, the adult literacy rate 63%, with males at 71.7% and females at 58.3%. The ratio of girls to boys in the total education system is 1.09%, which for a West African country is a considerable achievement. Now based on this statistics, we can deduce that some 500,000 children still remain out of school due to constrains in resources to build schools, provide adequate teaching aid, textbooks and train new teachers.
Yes, rather than think of what the country can do for us, we ought to think of what we can do for the country as a wise man once said. This also does not stop the country from doing all that is necessary in empowering her citizens to be better equipped to be a plus and a blessing to their community, economy and nation at large. This will go a long way to make her citizen stand confidently to declare her National pledge, not just with mere words, but with a deep understanding and passion for those very sensitive words declared in the country’s national pledge, viz:

I promise on my honor to be faithful and loyal to Ghana my Motherland.
I pledge myself to the service of Ghana, with all my strength and with all my heart.
I promise to hold in high esteem our heritage won for us through the blood and toil of our fathers; and I pledge myself in all things to uphold and defend the good name of Ghana.
So help me God.

According to the 2009 Failed States Index, Ghana is ranked the 53rd least failed state in the world and the second least failed state in Africa after Mauritius. Ghana ranked 124th out of 177 countries on the index. Ghana also was placed 7th out of 48 sub-Saharan African countries in the 2008 Ibrahim Index of African Governance which was based on data from 2006. The Ibrahim Index is a comprehensive measure of African government, based on a number of different variables which reflect the success with which governments deliver essential political goods to its citizens. However, much more is still expected, and will continue to be expected.

With the traditional education pattern, the courses taught at the primary or basic school level include English, Ghanaian language and culture, mathematics, environmental studies, social studies and French as a third language are added, integrated or general science, pre-vocational skills and pre-technical skills, religious and moral education, and physical activities such as music, dance and physical education.

With much regard and high recommendation of this traditional educational system, there is also a strong need for an expanded vocational and technical education and training. Often time, the “so called” vulnerable tend to be able to undergo the basic of this education system, but do not have a guarantee for long term success and continued relevance in the corporate world due to constant upgrade and need for more qualified and certified professionals in the corporate society. As such, the basic education obtained will no longer be enough. So there are more chances for long term success, relevance and productivity for those who having not gone beyond the basics of education, but have been able to develop sound vocation and technical skill.

The financial barrier to health care has been one of the government’s priorities in the last times. In the Africa region had been implemented health policies to reduce this financial barrier with particular emphasis on high priority services and vulnerable groups. In 2008, Ghana’s government announced the implementation of the policy of free medical care for pregnant women, which will be implemented through the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). In the 2004-2008 time period had been implemented different health policies in Ghana. In 2004, was introduced an exemptions policy for delivery fees. It was intended to cover all facility costs for intrapartum care in both public and private facilities. Initially payment was effected through the local government administration but later through the health system. Funding was provided from a debt relief fund, under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. This was gradually phased out and was replaced by health insurance in 2008.

The Honourable Minister of Health declared the high maternal mortality in the country as a national emergency and highlighted the need to accord greater priority to reproductive health services. The estimate of the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) in Ghana in 2005 was 560 per 100,000 live births (range: 200–1,300). The proportion of deliveries attended by skilled health personnel declined from 54% to 35% between 2005 and 2007. This decline may be linked to the under-funding and then abolition of the exemptions policy for delivery fees (introduced in 2004) and the health worker strike of 2007. The Countdown to 2015 report indicates that Ghana has only half of the recommended minimum national provision of Emergency Obstetric Care services.
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

If we read some independent analysis of the implementation of the policy we can see they suggest that inequalities can decrease in response to a universal exemption. In the 18 months after fee exemption was introduced, the largest increase in facility utilization in Hwale Region was amongst the poorest (first quintile), while in Central Region it was amongst the poor (second quintile). In terms of household payments, the incidence of catastrophic out-of-pocket (OOP) payment was found to fall. 10

Using the poverty head count, the proportion of households falling into extreme poverty as a result of their delivery payment reduced from 2.5% before the policy to 1.3% after. Ensure an adequate fund is crucial for success implementation. To do that, is extremely important requires a realistic planning and budgeting, and a reliable and long-term source of funding. The labour will be interagency: will require inter-ministerial negotiations with the Ministry of Finance and the ability to deliver and document policy success.

One of the lacks of the delivery exemption policy in Ghana is the clear lines of responsibility with a unit within the Ministry having a specific responsibility to develop, fine-tune, manage and monitor the policy. This is very important to coordinate the national implementation and has an important role on the evaluation of policy results. A rigorous system of monitoring and auditing was not in place and would be needed in the longer term for cost control. In Ghana, as in many countries, user fees fund much of the recurrent non-salary costs of care. If this revenue stream is not adequately replaced, it is not realistic to expect providers to implement an exemptions policy effectively. Analysis of funding flows found that while funding was available from the national level facilities benefited from the exemption scheme, gaining a more reliable stream of funding. 11

Another important question for success implementation is the staff. To get an appropriate care is crucial have a motivated staff. In Ghana, staff reported working long hours (79 hours per week for public midwives, 109 for doctors, and 129 for medical assistants, who are in sole charge of health centres around the clock). The increase in workload over the period of policy introduction was indirectly compensated by a rising general health worker pay level. 12

Policy evaluation

As we can see, the monitoring component play an important role to detect problems, work on it, and being success in the implementation. An early evaluation gives the opportunity to analyse each implementation step, including the budget assignment and the long-term planning. We can say that evaluation established from the beginning contribute to resolve the detected problems easily. The monitoring should involve Ministries of Health in partnership with independent evaluation institutions. Interagency work is very important too.

CONCLUSION

To reduce the mortality for mothers and her babies Ghana’s government should have an effectiveness implement of the policy of free medical care for pregnant women and assure quality of services. The key is the implementation process. If the process include a real budget, a long term planning, an evaluation implemented from the beginning, is more probably reach a significant reduce of the mortality for mothers and her babies.

The experience of Ghana suggests that delivery exemptions can be effective and cost-effective, and that despite being universal in application, they can benefit the poor. But we do not forget the need for adequate funding, and for strong institutional ownership, both lacks on the Ghana policy implementation. 13 It is also important to monitor the financial transfers which reach households, to ensure that providers are passing on benefits in full, while being adequately reimbursed themselves for their loss of revenue. Another question to be considered is the motivation for the staff and the inclusion of all providers in the process.

There is an important lesson from the Ghana policy: certain mistake will be detected on the Ghana policy implementation. It is also important to monitor the financial transfers which reach households, to ensure that providers are passing on benefits in full, while being adequately reimbursed themselves for their loss of revenue. Another question to be considered is the motivation for the staff and the inclusion of all providers in the process.


8. Global Health Action 2009; DOI: 10.3402/gha.v2i0.1881


11. Global Health Action 2009; DOI: 10.3402/gha.v2i0.1881


13. Global Health Action 2009; DOI: 10.3402/gha.v2i0.1881

Children around the world do not have access to good education and primary schooling for various reasons. On average it takes about 20 years for a child to complete their education. Education however is essential. Without education, children do not have the opportunity to escape from the poverty trap. Educated children will have opportunities for a good job while the children without education are condemned to heavy, dangerous and badly paid jobs. Focus on Educational Foundation with its educational policies in several countries tries to help these underprivileged children to improve their living conditions. Ghana is also one of the countries that have sought to increase the literate population since independence fifty years ago and the 1992 Constitution made basic education a right for all Ghanaians. This constitution made basic education both free and compulsory.

Children from wealthy families usually benefit from attending private schools while children who are from poor families attend public schools. In the present day dual income families parents want to compensate for the lack of time they are able to spend with their children and to ensure the right upbringing and priorities in there children put them in the most reputed and expensive schools. But economic disparities and uneven income is a major hurdle which restricts access to the children from low income families even though they are more capable and deserving. Children from the public schools get spoon fed and concentrate less on acquiring real knowledge. They know that they will get selfless support from there parents even though they do not perform. Most children in Ghana begin their education at the age of three or four. They first enter nursery school which is then followed by two years in kindergarten. After kindergarten the child then moves to primary school, junior high school, senior high school and then finally university. Before there were more boys enrolled in schools than girls but with the implementation of equal rights for men and women there are about the same number of boys and girls enrolled in schools in Ghana now.

The major factors which create impact on the education of the neglected or children in general and force them to discontinue there studies can be categorized as:

- lack of proper access to education
- parental neglect and poverty
- child labour and child trafficking
- child prostitution and slavery
- victims of military use

Location often contributes to a child's lack of access and attendance to education. In certain areas of the world it is more difficult for children to get to school. Girls trail respectively behind. It is generally believed that girls are often discouraged from attending primary schooling, especially in less developed countries for religious and cultural reasons. There are millions of children whose labor can be considered forced, not only because they are too young to choose to work, but also because they are, in fact, actively coerced into working. These include child bonded laborers and children whose labor is pledged by parents as payment or collateral on a debt as well as children who are kidnapped or otherwise lured away from their families and imprisoned in sweatshops or brothels. In addition, millions of children around the world work unseen as domestic help given or sold at a very early age to another family. A study by the International Labor Organization on children in prostitution reported that incidence of children in prostitution is steadily increasing and children under 18 make up between 5 percent and 20 percent of prostitution depending on the geographical area. According to sources*, over 200,000 children work as slaves in West and Central Africa. Boys are usually sold to work on cotton and cocoa plantations while girls are used as domestic servants and prostitutes. In some cases, children are kidnapped outright and sold into slavery while many other families sell their children, mostly girls, for as little as $1. Around the world, children are singled out for recruitment by both armed forces and armed opposition groups to exploit them as combatants. Approximately 250,000 children under the age of 18 are thought to be fighting in conflicts around the world and hundreds of thousands more are members of armed forces who could be sent into combat at any time. Although most child soldiers are between 15 and 18 years old, significant recruitment starts at the age of 10 and the use of even younger children has been recorded. Easily manipulated, children are sometimes coerced to commit grave atrocities, including rape and murder of civilians using assault rifles such as AK-47s and G4s. The children are made to do everything else on the earth but study due to these burning factors which clearly deplete the small children of there basic fundamental right which is to right to study.

The government of Ghana has decided to give extensive support and importance to this important issue and have taken extensive measures to eradicate the consequences it might have on the genre next such as:

**Increasing enrolment:**
In 2005, to increase access to basic education, the Government introduced the capitation grant, a subsidy paid by the government, which scrapped the majority of school fees. Enrolment swelled in classrooms across the country. Primary school enrolment rose from 79 percent in 2006/07 to 89 percent in 2007/2008*. In addition, a school-feeding program was started in selected schools in the most deprived districts.

**Education Strategic Plan:**
The Government's Education Strategic Plan (2010–2020) has the following as its first two guiding principles:

- to eliminate gender and other disparities in the education system
- to include disadvantaged children in mainstream schools wherever possible

Ghana is also pursuing the Millennium Development Goals and Education to ensure that all children are in school and for girls to equal with boys' enrolment. Annual assessments of pupil performance by the Ministry of Education suggest that school children are reading well below expected levels. Not only do many pupils drop out before reaching Primary six, but also about three quarters of pupils who complete Primary six do not learn to read, nor are able to do basic arithmetic.

**Children’s School Performance:**
Annual assessments of pupil performance by the Ministry of Education suggest that school children are reading well below expected levels. Not only do many pupils drop out before reaching Primary six, but also about three quarters of pupils who complete Primary six do not learn to read, nor are able to do basic arithmetic. The National Education Assessment, 2007 (Ministry of Education) have come up with the following statistics,

- 26 percent of pupils who complete Primary 6 are functionally literate
- 22% of Primary six pupils attain proficiency in English
- 10% of Primary six pupils attain proficiency in mathematics

To improve the educational standard of the children in April 2007, the Government launched a New Education Reform. The main goal was that maximum children become more functionally literate and numerate by the time they complete basic education.

The Ghana Education Service is developing a National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NLAP). This work involves developing a literacy approach based on learning to read first in Ghanaian languages in order to function better in the society.
Administration:

The Government of Ghana is the main provider of basic education for the nearly 3 million children in basic schools. The Ministry of Education is in charge of policy and direction. Actual implementation is carried out by the Ghana Education Service (GES), which is represented at the local level by the District Education Office.

An education reform program in 1988 began decentralization of the education sector aimed at making the system more efficient and responsive to community needs. Decentralization gave local government responsibility for school infrastructure and supervision of basic schools. Despite the gains, progress is not evenly distributed in the country, and the quality of basic education has only improved marginally. Poor and rural areas and the three northern regions lag behind in the field of Education.

Decrease in disparity in education:

Currently, at the national level, there are 96 girls attending school for every 100 boys (source: EMS). But primary completion rates for girls are lower than for boys, drop-out rates are higher for girls, and girls’ enrolment lags behind boys at JHS and SHS level (source: EMS). Formidable obstacles such as a shortage of teachers willing to work in rural environments, poverty and hunger keep children out of school and hamper their ability to learn. In addition, the quality of education is poor. In 2007, Government assessments found only one quarter of class six pupils were functionally literate. The government is taking extensive measures to decrease the disparities in education among both the boys and girls for a better literate country.

There are a few major challenges that are faced by the education sector which act as an obstacle in the development of the education status in Ghana which are as follows,

- Gross inadequacy of teachers in some places of the country
- Insufficiency of some school infrastructure (classrooms, sanitary facilities, etc.) in some places in the country
- Unfavorable socio-economic and cultural factors
- Topography of the country plays a prominent part as it makes it geographically hard to reach areas especially for the children
- Low enrolment of children with disabilities and children with special needs

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EXTENSIVE MEASURES BY THE GOVERNMENT TO DECREASE THE ILLITERACY RATE IN GHANA

Ghana has since 1951, and especially after independence in 1957, made significant strides in its education system. Presently the system is the result of major policy initiatives in education adopted by both the present and past governments. Some of the laws, policy documents and reports, like the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme (FCUBe) (1996) have helped in meeting the educational needs and aspirations of the people. In recent times, the government’s commitment towards achieving her educational goals has been expressed in the following policy frameworks and reports:

5. Education for All (EFA, UNESCO, Dakar, 2000) – international paper
6. The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) covering 2003-2015
   In 2004, the Government of Ghana came out with a White Paper on Education Reform. The White Paper Reform outlines a portfolio of reforms and objectives spanning the entire education sector, which are to be implemented from 2007 and have major targets identified for 2015 and 2020. The key objectives of the White Paper Reform are twofold. First and foremost to build upon the ESP commitments and ensure that all children are provided with the foundation of high quality free basic education. Secondly to ensure that second cycle education is more inclusive and appropriate to the needs of young people and the demands in the Ghanaian economy.

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Ama Otema, a young Ghanaian who has vast skills in art making. She started singing from her infancy and was a leading member in her Church’s Choir and Mass Choir, also sang in school and in her church’s outreach programs. She is currently a Sunday school teacher in her church at Gbawe in Accra, Ghana - COP - Bethel Assembly in Gbawe District. She has gotten passion from her infancy and to date. All the songs were written by herself. Her first gospel tracks (album), which is ready and waiting for a producer to bring the message to the world, spread, heal and encourage hopeless, oppressed and those in captivity, that they should cast their burden unto the Lord, since they have a redeemer. The tracks are in Ghanaian language and titled “Fa Dan No” in English, means Give up to him or cast your burden unto Him. The album consists of ten (10) tracks and has 50 songs composed but not yet recorded due to lack of funding and a producer to bring them to market. The current album which has composed and recorded, and, is waiting for a producer, a percentage of sales proceeds will go to PAAJAF’s child education (scholarship) fund to support and invest in the lives of impoverished children so that they too can feel as being part of the world.

You can see an Ama Otema’s video on PAAJAF website: www.paajaf.org
To sponsor or become a producer, just drop email to PAAJAF Foundation at info@paajaf.org

I choose to engage in art making because, I want to communicate the command (gospel) to the world and through this medium and the help of God I believe I can do better. Also I want to help underprivileged children to receive quality education that I did not have.
What is politics and who is the youth in Africa? How are the political trends in Africa influencing the behaviour of the youth and is there hope for the African youth? Is there a future for Africa through the eyes of the African youth? This indeed are very crucial questions that if we were to get an answer then my thoughts expressed through this article would be sterile in a different direction. In most introductory political science lectures in various universities, politics has been defined to students as “who gets what, when and how”. In African countries this is just not a definition to the term politics, it is the real thing, the inside story, it is part of our daily lives, what is happening on the ground.

In Africa, the end has always justified the means, be it in politics, economics and in social circumstances. For a long time the African people had accepted the status quo despite the discomfort, for a long time in Africa people lived under regimes and governments that did not uphold their interests… until Tunisia woke up North Africa and showed Sub-Saharan Africa that “Yes it can be done.”

The youth in Africa have the potential to influence change… not just change but positive change. The collective voice of the youth is a powerful voice-a force that cannot be reckoned with. Let me take you through a closer look at the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. One factor that is conspicuously notable is the fact that the youth have made the most contributions in mounting pressure on the regimes and leaders to step down. With one voice they spoke, with one voice they decide they are not leaving Tahrir Square, not until Hosni Mubarak resigns… and guess what… Mubarak resigns-the pressure is too much, the people have spoken. “We want change!”

Once upon a time, to be precise the date is 1 September 1969, a group of junior military officers led by Gadhafi stage a bloodless coup d’état against King Idris. They abolish the monarchy and proclaim the new Libyan Arab Republic. A republic that was meant to uphold the dreams and hopes of the Libyan people and the future generations. Yes it started out well but something went wrong somewhere. The leaders lost it along the way. power corrupted the Libyan bourgeoisie and as they made the power more absolute, it corrupted them absolutely. Perhaps they never handed over the button when the time came, hence the damage.

Our Leaders, the people the African youth have looked up to have let us down in various ways. Africa has crowned selfish leaders in power, some even re-crowning themselves as “rulers for life”-power hungry leaders who would rather die than let democracy prevail in their countries.

The Future does not belong to the older generation, it belongs to the younger generation and that is why the African youth today are so aggressive in wanting to be involved in the decision making processes in their various countries. The several revolutions in Tunisia, then Egypt then Libya have shown the world what power lies in the hands of the youth.

Muammar Gadhafi in Libya accused them of being high on drugs supplied to them by the alkaeida. I mean how is this possible? If this statement by Muammar would be proven to be true, then I guess Africa owes alkaeida-what a great act of kindness that Would be from the alkaeida? Africa’s future does not lie in the hands of leaders like 68 year old Muammar Gadhafi but the future of Africa lies with the African Youth.

According to the United Nations Report on the Global situation of the Youth, 2. most young people approximately 85 percent live in developing countries. It is the developing countries that are crippled with issues of poor governance, unemployment, diseases, poor infrastructure and so on. Africa as a continent has along way to go. It is the youth in Africa who hold the dreams of Africa in their hands. If Africa is to be free from poor governance, poverty and neo-colonialism then the African youth needs to do something about the current situations. I am trying to think of another group of people in the African societies that can bring change but nothing is coming in my mind-no name. No one…nothing all I see inscribed in my mind is “the African youth”.

Africa’s youth often bear the brunt of political violence, while many of the continent’s leaders are in their 60s or 70s-having achieved wealth through depriving the populace and seeking to protect what they have accumulated illegitimately through their political positions that they hold on to.

Having accumulated much for themselves and their future generations why would they care about the rest of the people and yet they are assured they have enough wealth to see them through their sunset years! This is a mentality that has been passed on from leader to leader in Africa just the way the concept of “coalition government” is being passed on in the African countries after disputed Elections where the looser refuses to step down.

On 16 June 1976 a spontaneous uprising by students in Soweto was brutally suppressed by the police and hundreds were killed. If it were not for the youth of South Africa, I don’t know if South Africa would be free today. The African Youth has been in the forefront in campaigning for democracy and good governance in South Africa. That famous uprising is today commemorated as a national holiday in South Africa. It is indeed a reminder of the great years of direct political action by the youth of south Africa. Is the African youth of today still interested in politics? From what we have seen in Kenya (2008) Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. The African Youth Is more alive and Kicking now than ever. The African Youth Should Not Leave Politicking to the grown ups. Just apart from casting the vote, the youth has a role to play in decision making.

We keep on saying the future of Africa depends on the youth - is it time to let them determine our politics? My answer is Yes. Definitely. African young youth have had enough of older people using them to gain power positions and at the end of the day they do not have a role to play in politics. It is high time the voices of the youth are not just heard in streets but also in parliaments across African States. This is what the youth of Africa have been fighting for - to be captains of their own destinies. While the youth have a huge amount of energy and creation, it is also true that this energy should be monitored by elder ones. We should not exclude the youth from the politics because one way or another they will get involved, and we sure know that if they get involved out of frustration then the police and military will be called in to follow the orders of their 60 year old masters. Perhaps it is the time for the youth to occupy the frontline seat and be part of the solution for a better life for all.

There is also the fact that, in the political history of most African countries, the youth, especially university students, stand up for the rights of the general public and act as a voice to the voiceless this should be used as a platform by the older generations of politicians to find out what this young people are trying to say and address their issues to avoid a future political crisis.

As history reveals it, the role of youth has been very crucial in African politics. However, it is unfortunate that the youth of yesteryear, the likes of Gadhafi and Mugabe have turned into brutal ‘hunters’ today. As the ancient philosopher Plato put it, Democracy is about the rule of the majority if the youth are in the majority I think we should also give them a chance in politics and governance so that we get to see what they claim they can do. It is time the youth take their voices to the streets to also give them a chance in politics and governance so that we get to see what they claim they can do.

The importance of youth as the backbone of society cannot be undermined. There are voices all over Africa agitating for a fresh wind of leadership. A responsible government should listen to the voice of the people and this includes the voice of the youth before implementing any policy.

1. Rael Awuor is a 22 year old political science student at the University of Nairobi and a freelance journalist with Thomson Reuters in Nairobi. She hopes that her writings will have some positive impact on the people who read them and stir change in the political institutions in Africa.
